



QUOTES OF THE DAY

My flat's right outside the McDonald's so every day I look and think, 'One more week and I'll be in that queue'.

- British boxer Savannah Marshall with modest dreams

At home in Mauritius our whole house is covered with rackets and shuttlecocks. Even the burglar bars in the windows are made as a shuttlecock.

- Mauritius shuttler Kate Foo Kune

Normally I ride to Stevie Wonder tunes but they told me I don't have the rights to use that. I can live without a lawsuit from Stevie.

- Sweden's equestrian rider Patrik Kittel on having to change the music to his dressage programme



Sprint king Usain Bolt (C) eased to victory in his 200m heats, cruising past his beleaguered opponents and having a few glances around before ambling across the finish line to seal his spot in Thursday's semifinal.

PHOTO: REUTERS

'100m is always the hardest one for me'

ATIQUÉ ANAM from Rio de Janeiro

After having completed an unprecedented treble of 100m sprint titles on Sunday night, Usain Bolt entertained questions from the media. The 20-minute press conference, where silver medallist Justin Gatlin and bronze medallist Andre de Grasse were also present, was mostly about Bolt, his achievement, his relationship with Gatlin and his future goals. Here are some of the excerpts from that press conference.

On the race

The start wasn't as good as I wanted but after the semis, I was a lot more confident. I knew I got a bad start but I told myself, 'Don't panic, take your time'. I knew (Justin) Gatlin was going to have a good start but I told myself to take my time and chip away the lead.

On winning his fifth individual Olympic sprint gold medal

This is very important. I never knew how nervous I was until I started competing. I could tell that in my mind it was very important so I had to get it done. For me it is big because to do this three times... no one has ever done it before or even attempted it.

On his achievement

Somebody said I can become immortal. Two more medals to go and I can sign off. Immortal.

On his bid for three gold medals in Rio

It's a good start. There will always be doubters. But I'm in better shape than last season.

On his rivalry with Gatlin

He is a great athlete without a doubt. He always pushes me to run fast. He makes you be at your best at all times.

On the booing of Gatlin

That's the first time I've gone into a stadium and they've started to boo (Gatlin). It surprised me.

On how he feels after his first race

I'm feeling good. I'm happy. As I said, I've got the first one out of the way so I'm happy about that. So now it's all about execution and getting it right when it comes to the finals.

It's definitely going to be a good semifinals. There are a



lot of guys running fast. So there's going to be some stacked semifinals. It's good. It gets you running and gets you up to speed to go out there in the finals.

On the schedule in which the semifinals started at 21:00 and the final at 22:25

It was very hard to run fast because the turnaround time was really, really, really short. It was ridiculous as far as I am concerned because I felt so good in the semifinals.

That is why the race is slow. There is no way you can run and go back around and run fast times again. It was hard for us.

On a potential showdown with 400m world record holder Wayde Van Niekerk

He can't beat me over 200m. I am not worried about that but I am really proud of him because when he came to Jamaica I said to him, 'Listen, you are the only person that I think can break this 400m world record'. He keeps on going, so for me I wasn't really surprised that he got it tonight. He looked in good shape.

On turning his gaze towards the 200m

I am always confident about the 200; the 100m is always the hardest one for me.

On a recurring dream he has where he is being chased

Hopefully the dream will stop. It is always that same dream every now and then, but it is a good dream because they never catch me.

Can we dream on an Olympic scale?

AL-AMIN

The excitement emanating from the Rio Olympic Games over the last 14 odd days has been a thrilling experience for any Bangladeshi sport lover despite the challenges he or she is confronting regarding the odd timing of events. It has been a case of staying awake very late at night or an early morning wake-up call to stay tuned to live events from Rio de Janeiro, which is nine hours behind Dhaka.

Still, it is worth watching since it is a complete package in which the finest athletes from across the world assemble to 'live their dreams' in events ranging from football to fencing, from sprint to canoe sprint, from swimming to cycling, from gymnastics to golf, from water polo to wrestling et al.

But for the watching Bangladesh audience the cheer or appreciation for glorious human endeavour has nothing to do with their own heroes, none of whom have ever won an Olympic medal for this thriving sport-loving nation. Bangladesh is one of 73 NOCs (National Olympic Committees) in the IOC's (International Olympic Committee's) list of 206 nations that has never won an Olympic medal. More abjectly Bangladesh is the most populous country that has not won an Olympic medal.

Is this a big deal when the motto of the Olympic movement is participation rather than winning? What about the rest of the region; Bangladesh is not the lone South Asian nation that has not hit the Olympic medal. Nepal, Maldives and Bhutan have also failed to put their names on the Olympic score-sheet. Think about India, who swept the regional multi-event games a year ago but are yet to win a medal in Rio 2016.

One can keep on arguing for days about Bangladesh's misfortune in the biggest show on earth that takes place every four years. The facilities for athletes here is at a premium, the infrastructure is poor and the patronage leaves a lot to be

desired. And one can hardly deny this ground reality. Besides, for a country which is making its ninth (summer) Olympic appearance in Rio since its first venture into the global jamboree in the 1984 Los Angeles Games, inspiration to draw from a few athletes with wild-card appearance is too much to ask for.

This is the only occasion one of our athletes -- golfer Sidikur Rahman -- competed in an Olympic Games on merit. It's certainly a small step forward despite the fact that Siddikur performed badly and finished second last among 60 competitors. The others made their exit from the first preliminary round heats with a couple improving their individual marks.

And this trend is destined to continue in Tokyo in four years' time unless we -- an athlete, a home-grown coach, an organizer, a patron and the nation as a whole start dreaming and more importantly do all the hard work to fulfil that dream. After all, the Olympic Games are not all about a Usain Bolt or a Michael Phelps. It's about the making of a Bolt or a Phelps.

The Rio Games have already provided a few magnificent stories of underdogs surprising the world audience with golden performances. Monica Puig's victory against world No 2 Angelique Kerber in the women's tennis singles final gave Puerto Rico its first ever Olympic Games gold medal; Joseph Schooling beat his idol Phelps to win Singapore's first Olympic Games gold; 41-year-old Hoang Xuan Vinh secured Vietnam's first-ever gold in the men's 10m air pistol event; Fiji men's rugby sevens team not only won their first Olympic Games gold medal, it was their first ever medal of any colour. Majlinda Kelmendi's -52kg Judo gold marked Kosovo's golden Olympic debut in Rio.

There will surely be a few underdog stories to hit Tokyo 2020. The burning question is whether there are any determined Bangladeshi athletes preparing to be one of those underdogs?

Raju looking for more spin

SPORTS REPORTER

For the next one week, Bangladesh's High Performance Unit spinners will focus on turning the ball a lot more and learning variations under the former Indian slow left-arm bowler Venkatapathy Raju, who is in Dhaka to conduct a week-long bowling camp at the Sher-e-Bangla National Stadium in Mirpur.

Raju, who will be working along with the likes of Shohag Gazi, Saqlain Sajid and the young Mehedi Hasan Miraz, attended his first session with the 'Tigers' yesterday.

"There is already skill available. We are just asking them to be a little more relaxed and work on getting more variations on the ball. If you see, most of the bowlers often forget to put in more revolutions on the ball.

"They just try to bowl quicker and quicker and then finish their four overs and go. We basically want them to have more variations without changing their actions," said Raju, adding that the habit of putting in more revolutions will help Bangladesh's spinners extract more turn when they go abroad and play on wickets that don't suit spinners.

He will also focus on working with the trajectory of the bowlers. "The trajectory has to be good as well. In T20 cricket, when you are bowling quicker, you tend to forget the loop. No matter what kind of a delivery you bowl, the flight is important," he said.



Arambagh's Nigerian striker Kester Akon (2nd from R) tries to wiggle away from Rahmatganj players during their JB Bangladesh Premier League match yesterday.

Arambagh hold Rahmatganj

ANISUR RAHMAN from Mymensingh

Lightweights-turned-contenders Rahmatganj MFS missed an opportunity to go to the top of the JB Bangladesh Premier League as they were held to a 2-2 draw by Arambagh KS at Rafiq Uddin Bhuiyan Stadium yesterday.

Rahmatganj, the joint leaders till the fourth round, however still had something to cheer about at the end of their fifth match as the Old Dhaka outfit remain unbeaten. They are currently in second position, alongside holders Sheikh Jamal and Muktiyoddha Sangsad with nine points each, two points behind leaders Chittagong Abahani.

Meanwhile, Arambagh leapfrogged to sixth with six points from five matches. Amid scorching heat and high humidity, players from both sides struggled to keep their tempo. The first half of the match belonged to Arambagh, while Rahmatganj dominated the second half to keep their unbeaten run intact.

Rahmatganj made a brilliant start as they took the lead in the fourth minute through Congolese Siyo Zunapio, who drove a grounded shot into the net after

Shoel Mia headed the ball down. That was his fourth goal and it took him to level with the league's top-scorer, Muktiyoddha Sangsad's Ahmed Kolo Musa.

Despite the brilliant start, their lead only lasted nine minutes as Arambagh found an equaliser through Sajidur Rahman Sajid. Cameroonian midfielder Yoko Samnick released an inch-perfect long ball from his own half to find Sajid, who beat goalkeeper Samiul Islam Masum with a left-footed shot in the 13th minute.

Nigerian striker Kester Akon came close to scoring, but his curled free-kick was topped over nicely by Masum. However, Masum conceded as Shariful Islam Sajid headed from close range following a corner from Abdullah in the 21st minute.

With the match locked at 2-2, both sides played cautiously and seemed content to take one point instead of risking it and possibly losing all three points.

বাংলাদেশের সর্বাধিক বিক্রিত #1 পেইন্ট ব্র্যান্ড

BERGER Robbialac

রাজত্ব কীভাবে ইচ্ছেকেন

MEDALS TALLY

Country	Gold	Silver	Bronze
United States	27	24	26
Great Britain	16	17	8
China	15	14	18
Russian Federation	11	12	13
Germany	9	7	6
Italy	8	9	6
France	7	9	9
Japan	7	4	16
Netherlands	7	2	3
Australia	6	7	9
Republic of Korea	6	3	5
Hungary	6	3	4
Spain	4	0	2
New Zealand	3	6	0
Brazil	2	4	4
Kazakhstan	2	3	5
DPR Korea	2	3	2
Kenya	2	3	0
Canada	2	2	9
Poland	2	2	3
Colombia	2	2	0
Cuba	2	1	3
Switzerland	2	1	2
Belgium	2	1	1
Greece	2	1	1
Thailand	2	1	1
Croatia	2	1	0
Uzbekistan	2	0	4
Azerbaijan	2	0	2
Jamaica	2	0	2
Iran	2	0	1
South Africa	1	5	1
Sweden	1	4	1
Denmark	1	3	4
Belarus	1	2	2
Czech Republic	1	1	5
Romania	1	1	2

(The medals tally was updated at 10:00pm Bangladesh time)