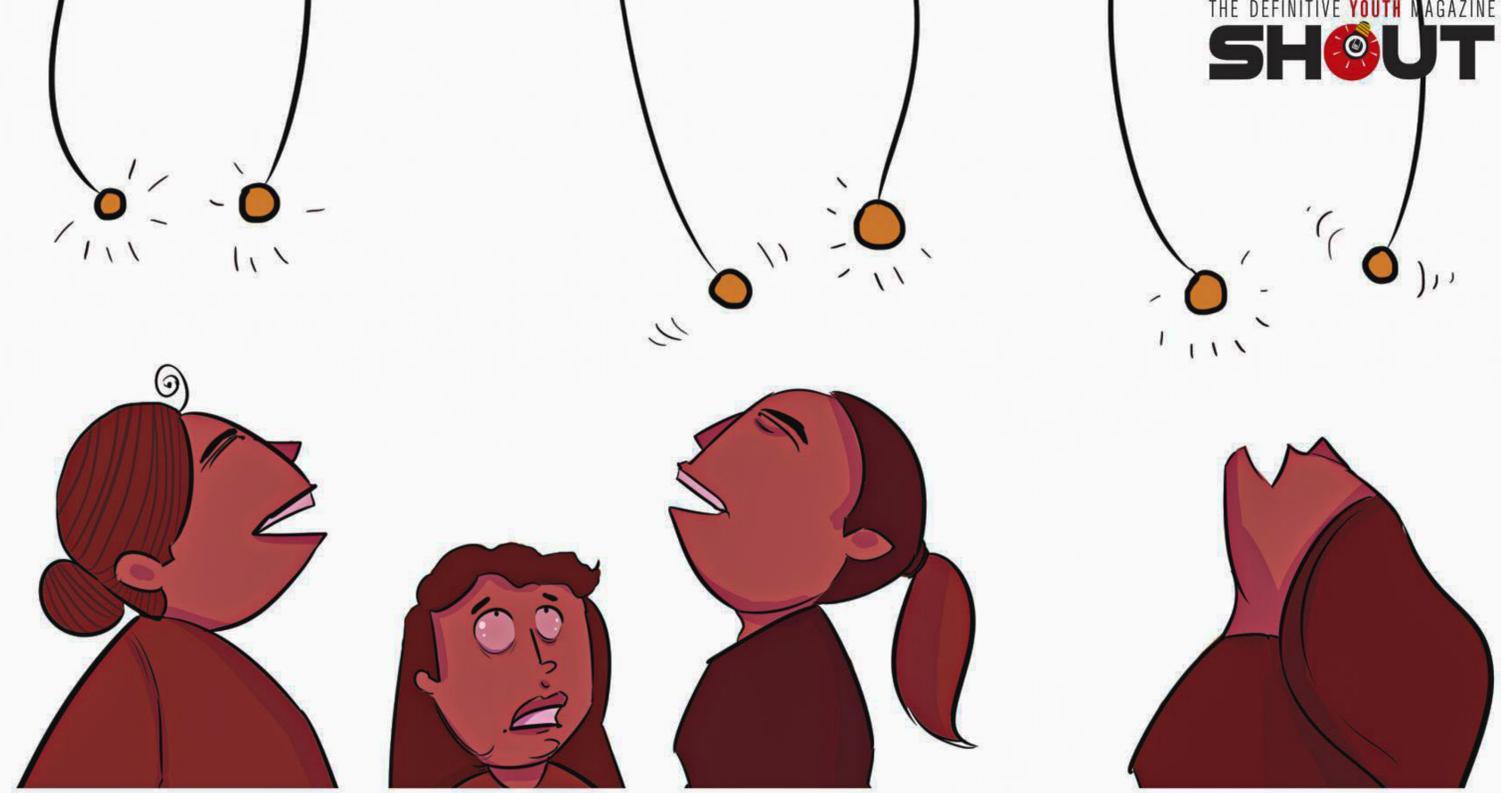


CHIGALYMPICS

Childhood games as Olympic events



FAISAL BIN IQBAL

The stage had been set. With over three hundred athletes from over a hundred participating countries, Bangladesh was set to host the first-ever Chigalympic Games. The host nation had left no stone unturned in the planning of the entire event. From the festivity to the security, everything was perfectly organised, every detail accounted for. By the time the teams had begun to arrive, Bangladesh was prepared to host one of the biggest events in the history of sports and nostalgia. And it did.

LUKOCHURI

The lukochuri duels were some of the most intense matches of the tournament. The games were all one-on-one. Given a finite but large area and a fixed amount of time, player from one country had to seek the player of the other. Then they switched places and repeated for another set. The winner of the duel is the first one to win two out of three sets. Bangladesh along with fifteen other nations had managed to reach the knockout stages of the competition, and not surprisingly, reached the finals. A fierce final battle took place between Bangladesh and Canada where the hosts took the gold, leaving Canada with silver and UK with bronze, decided in a third-place playoff.

On being asked about his training for the Chigalympics, the Bangladeshi gold medallist said that he had been training all his life for this very day. "You see, I have been hiding from my insecurities since childhood and have been seeking attention ever since I reached puberty. All this has helped me in the long run to achieve what I have today," he commented.

PEN FIGHT

From the desks of young and animated school kids to an Olympic stage, the game of pen fight holds a rather symbolic position in the event. This sport is the physical representation of the phrase "the pen is mightier than the sword".

The pen fighting event had some of the youngest athletes ever. With over thirty countries participating in the event, each game was played between four players as the winner was decided by the last pen standing. USA, Germany, India, and China dominated the initial rounds of the competition. They were teams that no one wanted to face in the knockout stages. The hosts on the other hand, went into the tournament as the underdogs. But they sent shockwaves around the world when they eliminated India and Malaysia in the quarters and semi-finals respectively.

The final battle took place between Germany, China, USA, and Bangladesh. The hosts looked sloppy in the opening minutes of the game but they quickly rectified themselves as the game made progress. Despite not having a metallic body and sturdy weight like its competitors, the Bangladeshi pen managed to strike a few amazing blows one of which saw the elimination of the German team pen. After that, it wasn't long before China eliminated USA, only to be pushed off the stage by the Bangladeshi 0.5mm pen. A loud cheer echoed across the stadium as fans were treated to a sporting spectacle.

The school's backbencher, now Chigalympic gold around his neck, dedicated his victory to the country and to his teacher, who had prophesied his shenanigans would amount to nothing in the future.

BOROF-PANI

Borof-pani was another high-voltage event the crowd was looking forward to. Each team had eleven players at their disposal and the winning team of each match was decided by the least amount of time the team members had to stand idle as the borof.

Russia, Canada, and the United Kingdom were favourites to bring home the gold. However, the host nation and her neighbouring countries were no quitters. India and Bangladesh went on to dominate the first two rounds of the event as they moved on to the knockout rounds. UK then went on to eliminate Canada and then India before losing to Bangladesh in the semis. The final match was held between Russia and Bangladesh.

The hosts were all over the field in the first half of the match but were quick to understand the Russian playing tactics. Russia was putting in a lot of effort to breach their opponent's formation and that's where Bangladesh got them. They played their divide-and-conquer tactics as they turned the Russians into ice one by one, snatching the gold away from them. Mother Russia was not happy about it at all.

BISCUIT RACE

The 200-metre biscuit race was one of the most awaited events at the Chigalympic Games. An athletic track at the end of which there were biscuits suspended at a height of 7 feet from the ground; to win, you needed to run the length of the track and be the first one to grab the designated biscuit with your mouth.

The biscuit race saw the largest turnout of the games. People were on the edge of their seats as the umpire fired his air gun into the open blue skies. In the male event, it looked like there would never be a clear winner as each and every one of them ran like wild leopards

across the track. But one man who goes by the name of Insane Screw, managed to outrun the others in a fierce competition. He went on to win the gold for his country followed by Spain and Portugal coming second and third respectively.

In the female event of the race, 20-year old Saleka Begum from Bangladesh took home the gold medal after she left the other competitors to bite the dust. Saleka dominated her sprint and finished the track within less than a minute.

"I visualised the other competitors as my problems once I heard the gunshot," said Saleka. "You see, I am a professional when it comes to running away from my problems and responsibilities and that, today, has helped me to reach my goal."

CHHOWA-CHHOWI

Known as 'tag' to the outside world, the intense game of chhowa-chhowi was another spectacular event to follow during the Chigalympics. Roughly translating to "touchy-touchy", the game was another important event for the teams to showcase their dominance to the world.

The rules were simple. Eight players from eight different teams were placed in a large but finite space. Each player will be the "it" for a period of ten minutes. The player will then go on to tag the other players. After the final player was done being it, the scorecard was decided based on the number of tags each player had made.

By the end of the first round of the event, the hosts were already eliminated after they were run down by their opponents multiple times in their match. The semi-finals were very exciting to witness. The intense rivalries between USA and Mexico, India and Pakistan, and United Kingdom and France – who were supported only in this event by the rest of European countries – had really heated up the event. Finally, after all the drama and excitement, Russia came out victorious with the gold medal, followed by Ukraine and Croatia with silver and bronze respectively.

After a week of intense matches and drama, the curtain finally fell on the inaugural Chigalympics. This peculiar games was perhaps one of the most thrilling sporting events the world had ever seen. As the country recovers from the excitement of the games, we now wait eagerly for the years to pass till the curtains are raised once again and the excitement is unleashed once more.

Faisal wants to be the very best, like no one ever was. To survive university is his real test, to graduate is his cause. Send him memes and motivation at abir.afc@gmail.com