

Roman, Diya shoot into finals

SPORTS REPORTER



Bangladesh's Roman Sana and Diya Siddique stunned their more adept Indian counterparts to reach the recurve individual event finals of the 3rd ISSF International Solidarity Archery Championships at the Shaheed Ahsan Ullah Master Stadium in Tongi yesterday.

Bangladesh will now vie for gold in five events -- men's recurve individual, women's recurve individual, men's recurve team, men's compound team and women's compound team events -- today.

The tournament's top-ranked archer, Roman, carried his fine form from qualification to reach the recurve men's individual final as he easily beat India's Bishal Changmai by 6-2 set points in the semifinals. Although Roman lost the first set, he bounced back strong to win the next three sets and ensure an encounter in the final against Thailand's Denchai Thepna, who beat India's archer Reza Shabani by identical 6-2 set points in the other semifinal.

However, other Bangladeshi archers -- Hakim Ahmed Rubel, Tamimul Islam and Emdadul Haque Milon -- failed to progress. Rubel lost to India's Bishal by 0-6 set points, Tamimul lost to India's Reza by 4-6 set points and Kazakhstan's Andrey Kuzmin defeated Milon by 7-1 points.

In the women's recurve individual event, the unheralded Diya was steadfast in competing against a superior opponent and secured her first-ever final berth at the international level.

Diya won a nerve-wracking tiebreaker after the semifinal was locked at 5-5 with Iran's Parmida Ghassemi hitting eight against Diya's nine. Earlier, Diya recorded a 7-3 win over Iran's Niloofar Alipoor in the quarterfinals. Bangladesh's Hera Moni had won a gold medal in the same event during the inaugural edition of the championships.

Diya will now face another Iranian archer, Shojamehr Shiva, who reached the final by defeating India's Bari Komalika in a tiebreaker after the match finished in a 5-5 deadlock.

Although Diya confirmed her spot in the final, teammates Beauty Roy, Ety Khatun and Nasrin Akter had to quit the race from either the first or the second round.

During the last edition, Bangladesh won gold medals in the men's and women's compound individual events, however, the hosts were unable to defend those titles this time.

Holder Ashim Kumar Das was eliminated from the second round after losing to Chinese Taipei's Lin Chu Wei by 141-148 points while Milon Molla and Abul Kashem Mamun also lost to their respective rivals in the second round.

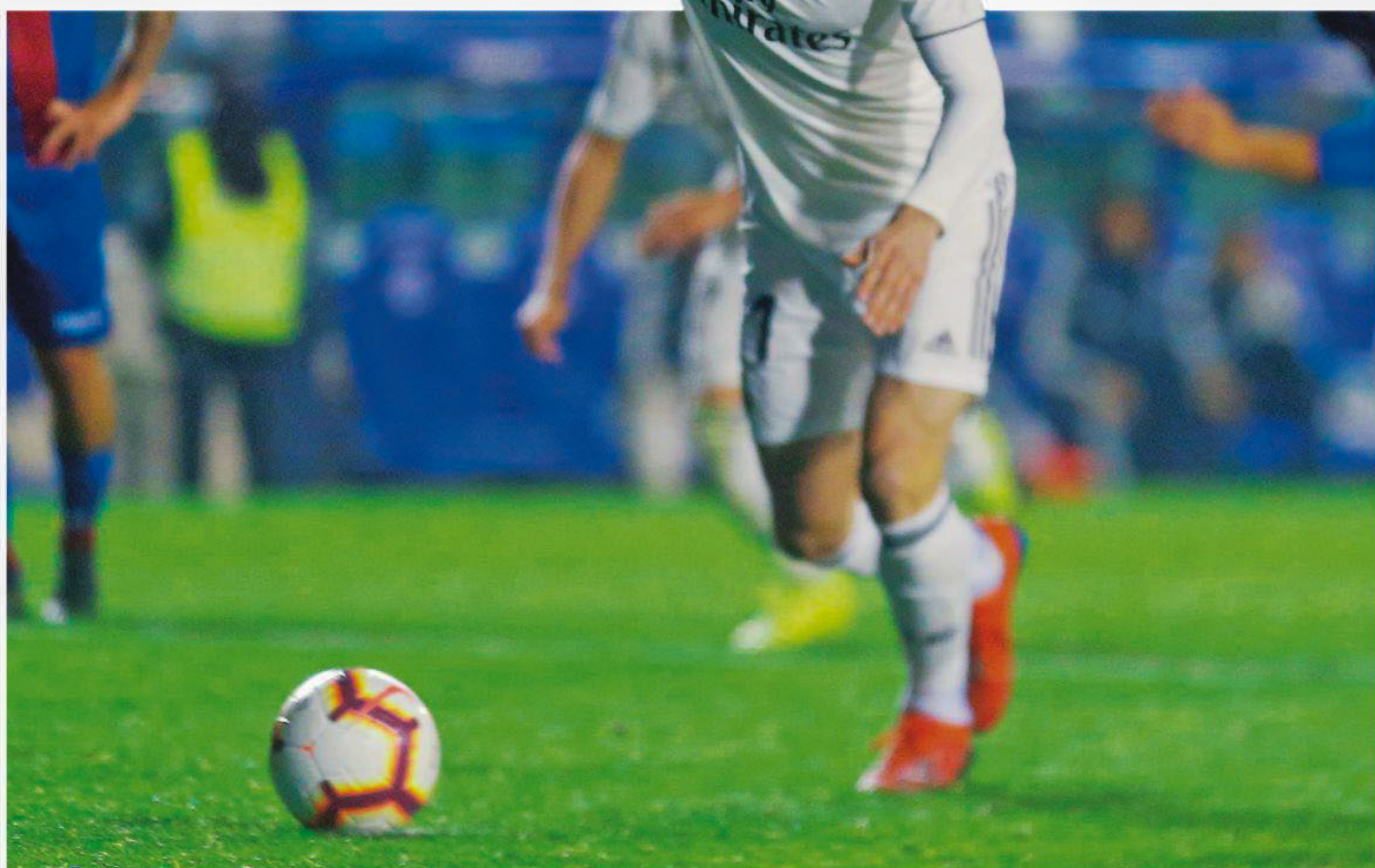
In the women's compound individual event, Bonna Akter and Susmita Banik were eliminated from the semifinals. Bonna gave the tournament's top-ranked Kristina Heigenhauser a run for her money but the German eventually won by 141-139 points while Susmita lost to India's Isha Ketan 140-144.

However, Bangladesh did win three bronze medals in the compound mixed, recurve mixed and men's compound individual events yesterday.



Roman Sana and Diya Siddique pose for a photograph after reaching the recurve individual finals of the 3rd ISSF International Solidarity Archery Championships at the Shaheed Ahsan Ullah Master Stadium in Tongi yesterday.

PHOTO: COLLECTED



Real Madrid forward Gareth Bale is about to convert a controversial penalty to secure a 2-1 win against Levante in the La Liga at Estadi Ciutat de Valencia on Sunday.

PHOTO: REUTERS

Bale penalty gives Real contentious win

REUTERS, Valencia



Real Madrid's Gareth Bale came off the bench and coolly converted a controversial penalty to secure a 2-1 win at Levante in La Liga on Sunday as the European champions rode their luck to stay within nine points of leaders Barcelona.

Real came under heavy pressure early on but Karim Benzema gave them the lead towards the end of the first half from the spot after a penalty was correctly awarded for handball by Enis Bardhi following a Video Assistant Referee (VAR) review.

Levante, who pulled off a shock 2-1 win over Real at the Santiago Bernabeu earlier this season, deservedly drew level on the hour mark with a sliding finish from Roger Marti, who had struck the woodwork twice before the interval.

Real, who lost 2-1 at home to Girona in their last outing, struggled to impose themselves and Brazilian teenager Vinicius Jr was again their stand-out performer as more experienced players like Toni Kroos and

Luka Modric gave sluggish displays.

Real were then awarded a hotly-contested penalty following another VAR review when Casemiro went down theatrically after light contact from Levante substitute Cheick Doukoure.

Wales forward Bale, who had only replaced Benzema minutes earlier, deceived Levante keeper Aitor Fernandez with an ice-cool finish from the spot but barely celebrated the goal, brushing away teammates who tried to congratulate him.

Real are third in the standings on 48 points, two behind Atletico Madrid who beat Villarreal 2-0 earlier on Sunday and still adrift of Barca, who won 4-2 at Sevilla on Saturday.

Real had defender Nacho Fernandez sent off for a second booking late in the game, although the Spaniard's first yellow card meant he had already been ruled out of next Saturday's 'Clasico' at home to Barcelona in the league.

Real also meet Barca in the second leg of their Copa del Rey semifinal on Wednesday with the tie level at 1-1.

Levante's Ruben Rochina, meanwhile, received a second yellow card

for venting his fury at the officials from the sidelines after being replaced by Doukoure, having earlier been booked while he was on the pitch.

"It was a very difficult game, they played a block of five players in midfield and it was very hard for us to create chances, but we took advantage of the opportunities we got and fortunately they did not," said Real defender Dani Carvajal.

Carvajal also defended the second penalty Madrid were awarded, which had sparked furious protests from Levante's players and coaching staff.

"I was 25 metres away and I could hear the kick, I'm not a referee and they have a tough job and if the referee gives a penalty and the VAR ratifies it then it must be a penalty," he said.

But Levante president Quico Catalan was bemused by the decision, saying: "The more replays I see the less I understand it. I've seen it 37 times and it seems very, very harsh to me".

"If Doukoure had really hit Casemiro he'd have had to be taken off in an ambulance, and it surprises me even more that this penalty was awarded due to VAR."

Rosell trial kicks off

AFP, Madrid

Former Barcelona president Sandro Rosell went on trial Monday in Madrid for money laundering, Spain's National Court said.

Rosell, his wife and four others are accused of "large-scale money laundering" of at least 19.9 million euros (\$23 million) since 2006 relating to television rights and sponsorship in Brazil.

The 54-year-old was due to take the stand on Monday or Tuesday.

By early afternoon on Monday, he had still not spoken as the court examined procedural issues.

Prosecutors at the Madrid-based National Court have called for the ex-Barca boss to be jailed for 11 years and fined 59 million euros.

The Rosells are accused of hiding money illegally obtained by Ricardo Teixeira, the former head of the Brazilian Football Confederation.

Baki misses out on final

SPORTS REPORTER

Following Shakil Ahmed's disappointing performance, two-time Commonwealth Games silver medalist Abdullah Hel Baki frustrated in the ISSF World Cup by finishing 31st out of 95 shooters in the 10m Air Rifle event in New Delhi, India yesterday.

Baki, who scored 616 to qualify for the finals of the same event before narrowly missing out on a gold medal in the Commonwealth Games at Gold Coast last year, bettered his qualification score to secure 624.7 out of 654 points. However the 29-year-old shooter fell 3.7 points short of ensuring his place in the eight-shooter final.

Iran's Mohammad Amir Nekounam was the last shooter to qualify for the finals with a score of 628.4 while Russia's Sergey Kamenskiy, China's Yukun LIU and Zicheng HUI bagged gold, silver and bronze medals respectively.

Although Baki bettered his score, teammates Rabiul Islam and Arnab Sharar produced poor results by finishing 73rd and 88th with scores of 618.9 and 609 points respectively.

Earlier on Sunday, Shakil became 45th out of 76 shooters in the 10m Air Pistol event by scoring 570, some 13 points less than the eighth and last shooter to qualify for the finals.

Sarri still has respect of players: Luiz

AFP, London



David Luiz says Kepa Arrizabalaga's refusal to be substituted during the League Cup final against Manchester City does not show that Maurizio Sarri has lost the respect of his Chelsea players.

Sarri's position is precarious after a run of poor results but his team put in a valiant performance in Sunday's match against City, who had beaten the Blues 6-0 just two weeks earlier.

City retained the trophy with a 4-3 penalty shootout win at Wembley, but the match was overshadowed by a bizarre incident when Kepa declined to go off, sparking an angry response from the manager.

The Italian coach and Kepa later said the incident was the result of a misunderstanding and Luiz was adamant the players are on Sarri's side.

"The coach has the power over the group. He has our respect," Luiz said. "For me, there is not a problem here for that. We all believe in his philosophy, we all believe in the way he wants us to play."

"That's why we did a great game against the best team in Europe at the moment. Apart from that, it was a misunderstanding and we all want to do what is best for Chelsea."

Former Chelsea midfielder Michael Ballack believes the Chelsea hierarchy need to take a strong stance on the matter, to support Sarri.

"It was not a good picture for Chelsea," Ballack told talkSPORT radio. "The board has to say something because it is really, really important that the players respect the



MAURIZIO SARRI

coach and respect each other. Something shouldn't happen like that."

Kepa saved Leroy Sane's penalty in the shootout, but could have done better with Sergio Aguero's effort that slipped under his body as City retained the trophy after a goalless draw.

"It is never easy for us to listen from afar," Luiz added about the Kepa incident. "I didn't know if the coach wanted to make the change because it was his decision or because he (Kepa) had already been on the floor twice."

"Kepa was saying 'no, I'm good, I can stay on the pitch', but from far you can't understand."

"I'm sure if Kepa knew the coach wished to change him because it was his decision, he would have come off because he is a great professional, he is a great boy and would respect that."

Month-long training for under-20 footballers

SPORTS REPORTER

Having completed a three-month long talent hunt programme, the Bangladesh District and Divisional Football Association (BDDFA) is all set to provide a month-long training camp to eight divisional teams before beginning the proposed Sheikh Kamal U-20 Football tournament in April.

The BDDFA, in association with the District Football Associations and District Sports Associations, conducted the talent-hunt programme across the country in a bid to form divisional teams for the U-20 football tournament. Through the programme 240 footballers -- 30 from each of the eight divisions -- were selected.

"The BDDFA was working to revive

the country's football, which has a glorious past. The BDDFA helped districts to complete its leagues and so far, 44 districts completed their respective leagues. We want districts to keep activities going and because of that, we completed the talent-hunt programme in the last three months," BDDFA secretary general Ruhul Amin Tarafder said at a press conference yesterday.

"We are now going to train those 240 selected footballers for one month, beginning from Wednesday at eight places."

"After the month-long training, each divisional team will feature 19 players as we want to hold a U-20 tournament named after Sheikh Kamal from April," continued Tarafder, adding that they have

appealed to the Bangabandhu Trust for the approval of the tournament's name.

Tarafder went on to inform they would select 50 players from the tournament for training round the year so that those players might get opportunities at the national level.

Tarafder, chairman of Saif SC, also announced that they would hold a club championship this year with the participation of the district league champions.

Former footballers Sheikh Mohammad Aslam, Imtiaz Sultan Jonny, Hasanuzzaman Khan Bablu, organisers Ashikur Rahman Miku, Asaduzzaman Kohinoo and Sirajuddin Mohammad Alamgir, among others, spoke on the occasion.



Ahead of the scheduled start of the Dhaka Premier League T20 fixtures at the Sher-e-Bangla National Stadium yesterday, four teams present at the venue observed a moment of silence in solidarity with victims of the Chawkbazar fire which claimed the lives of at least 67 people.

PHOTO: STAFF