

What to WATCH

SONY ESPN
Euro Qualifiers
Greece v Finland
Live from 1:45am (Tuesday)

SONY SIX
Euro Qualifiers
Ireland v Denmark
Live from 1:45am (Tuesday)

TEN 1
Euro Qualifiers
Italy v Armenia
Live from 1:45am (Tuesday)
TEN 2
International Friendly

Montenegro v Belarus
Live from 11:00pm
Euro Qualifiers
Spain v Romania
Live from 1:45am (Tuesday)

DAY'S EVENT

National Cricket League
Four-day match, Day Three
Rajshahi v Rangpur

Venue: SKS, Rajshahi
Khulna v Dhaka Division
Venue: SANS, Khulna

Barishal v Dhaka Metro
Venue: BDS, Barishal
Chattogram v Sylhet

Venue: SCS, Bogura

Germany, Croatia seal their spots

AFP, Paris



The Netherlands, Germany and World Cup finalists Croatia qualified for Euro 2020 on Saturday as the trio booked their places at next summer's finals.

Austria also made it through to the tournament, which kicks off in Rome on June 12, with 16 sides now ensured of a spot at the 24-team event and only four places remaining from the main qualifying route.

They join other big names such like world champions France, Spain and England.

Ronald Koeman's Dutch needed a point to qualify for their first major tournament since coming third at the 2014 World Cup and got what they needed in a goalless draw with Northern Ireland in Belfast. The draw allowed fierce rivals Germany

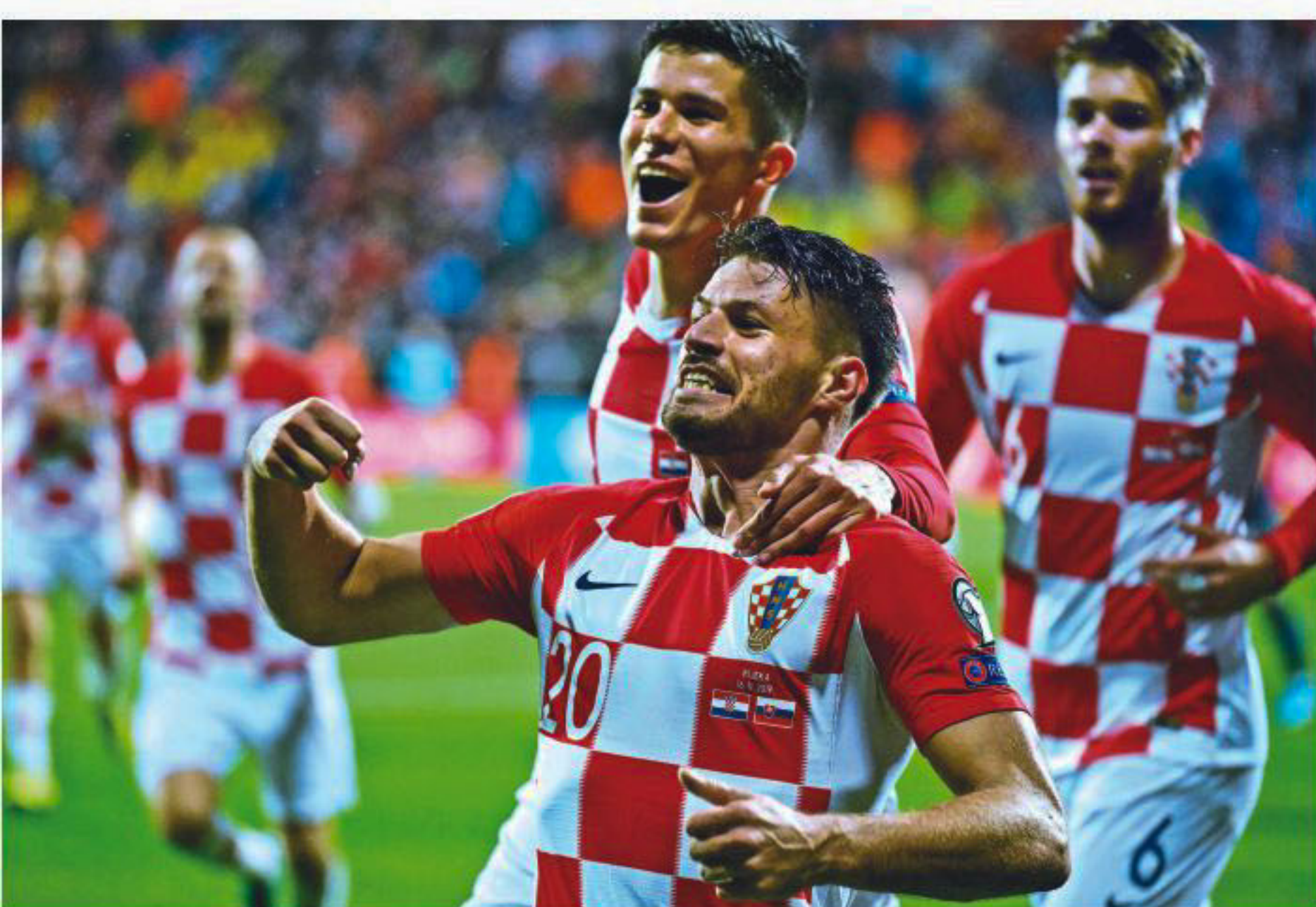
to move top in the group as Toni Kroos hit a brace in a simple 4-0 win over Belarus in Moenchengladbach which saw them qualify for the Euros for the 13th time in a row.

"Overall we did well, but at the moment I don't include us among the favourites for the European title," said Kroos, echoing coach Joachim Loew's comments from earlier in the week.

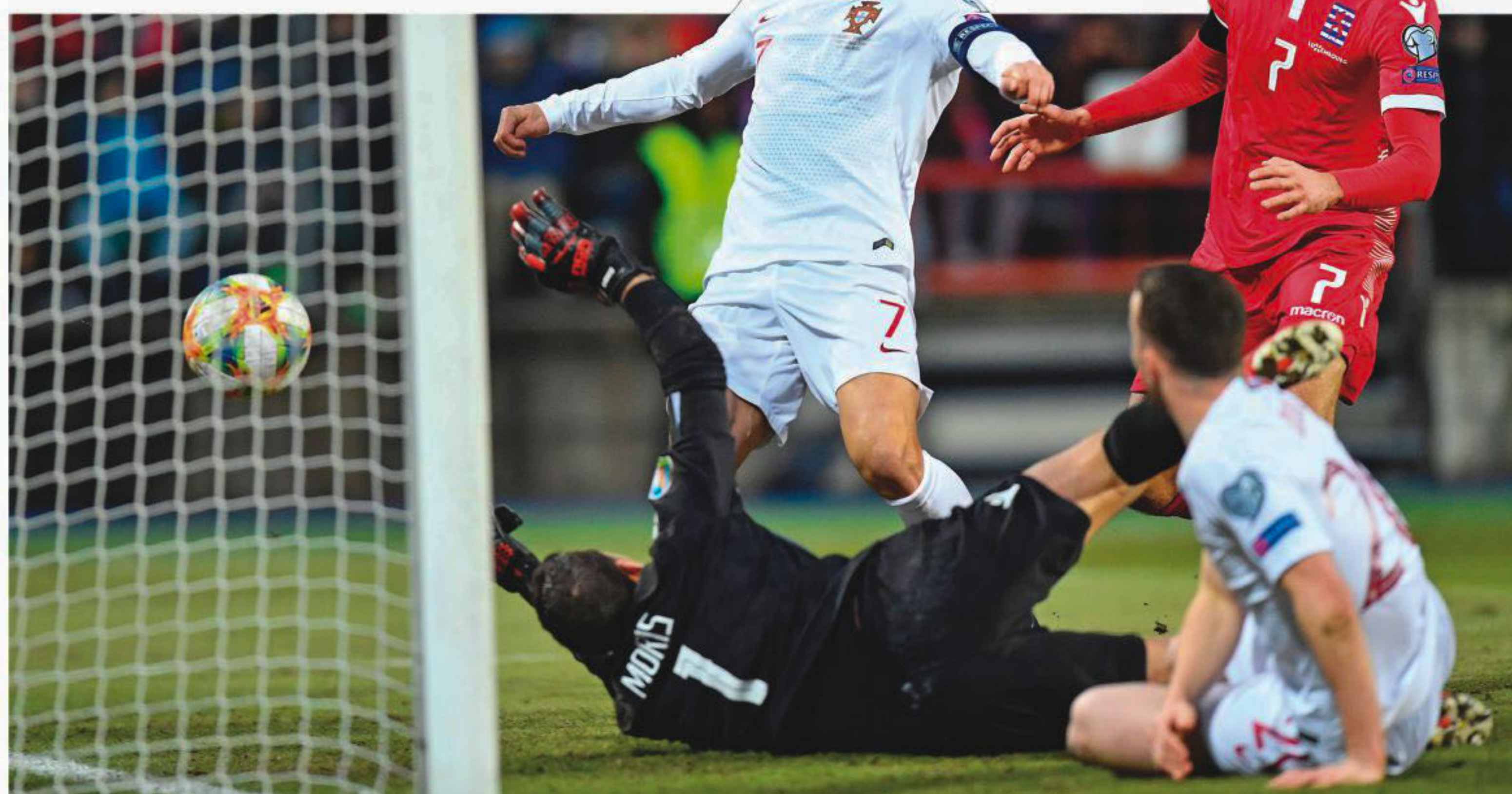
Meanwhile, Croatia survived a scare to secure their place in the Euros after coming from behind to beat Slovakia 3-1 in Rijeka.

The World Cup runners up needed just a point to ensure qualification from Group E but Robert Bozenik stunned the home crowd when he tapped the away side ahead in the 32nd minute.

However it was one-way traffic in the second half and Croatia's qualification was never in doubt once Nikola Vlasic drilled home the leveller.



Croatia forward Bruno Petkovic (C) celebrates with teammates after scoring during a 3-1 win over Slovakia in a Euro 2020 Qualifier match in Rijeka on Saturday. PHOTO: AFP



Cristiano Ronaldo stabs home his 99th international goal, Portugal's second in a 2-0 win over Luxembourg in their Euro 2020 qualifier last night. The strike was Ronaldo's 14th international goal of 2019, the most he has recorded in a year. PHOTO: AFP

Incensed Ronaldo gets 99th

REUTERS, Luxembourg



Portugal captain Cristiano Ronaldo slammed Luxembourg's pitch as a "potato field" and also said he had not been fully fit in recent matches after the European champions won 2-0 on Sunday to qualify for Euro 2020.

Ronaldo scored his 99th Portugal goal late in the game, having notched a hat-trick in a 6-0 win over Lithuania three days earlier, but it was far from a vintage performance on a pitch full of divots at the Josy Barthel stadium.

"It's difficult to play on these pitches -- it was a potato field, I don't know how teams of our level are supposed to play on these pitches," he told reporters. "It wasn't a good spectacle but we did our job... I'm looking forward to my fifth European Championship."

The 100th goal will come naturally. Records are there to be beaten and I am going to beat them.

CRISTIANO RONALDO
PORTUGAL CAPTAIN

The 34-year-old had joined up with the Portugal squad after being substituted during Juventus' 1-0 win over AC Milan the previous Sunday. Juve coach Maurizio Sarri then said that Ronaldo had been struggling with a knee problem for some time.

"In the last three weeks, I have been playing with limitations," Ronaldo said. "But there was

no controversy -- you (the media) created that.

"I tried to help Juventus. Nobody likes to be substituted but I understood because I wasn't in such good shape," he added.

Ronaldo said he was also "not 100 percent" in the two Portugal matches.

"I sacrificed myself for the team," he said. "We could have missed out [on Euro 2020]. Thankfully, I haven't been injured much in my career but it can happen. It's a pain that prevents me from being 100 percent, but I always try to play. They created a big controversy where it didn't need to exist. I'll be back to 100 percent soon."

Iranian striker Ali Daei holds the world record with 109 international goals.

"The 100th goal will come naturally," he said. "Records are there to be beaten and I am going to beat them."

Gurbaz blitz sinks Windies

AFP, Lucknow



Teenage opener Rahmanullah Gurbaz hit an attacking half-century to set up Afghanistan's 29-run series-clinching win over West Indies in the third T20I on Sunday.

Gurbaz hit 79 off 52 balls as Afghanistan posted 156 for eight, a total their bowlers defended by restricting the West Indies to 127 for seven in Lucknow.

They won the series 2-1 after losing the opening game and being swept in the preceding ODIs 3-0.

Paceman Naveen-ul-Haq took three wickets to choke the West Indies' chase despite a valiant 52 by wicketkeeper-batsman Shai Hope.

But it was the 17-year-old Gurbaz who stood out with his second T20I fifty after the Afghans were in early trouble at 12 for two. Gurbaz put on a crucial 50-run stand for the fourth wicket with former captain Asghar Afghan, and surpassed his previous T20I best of 61.

The two teams will next play a one-off Test starting November 27.

SCORES IN BRIEF

AFGHANISTAN: 156 for eight (Gurbaz 79; Paul 2-26)

WEST INDIES: 127 for seven in 20 overs (Hope 52; Naveen 3-24)

Result: Afghanistan won the match by 29 runs and won the three-match series 2-1.

Player-of-the-match: Rahmanullah Gurbaz.

Player-of-the-series: Karim Janat.



Rahmanullah Gurbaz steered Afghanistan to a series-clinching win against the West Indies yesterday with a 52-ball 79. PHOTO: AFP

BKSP dominate youth archery

SPORTS REPORTER

Bangladesh Krira Shikkha Protishtan (BKSP) finished top of the table with eight gold, six silver and six bronze medals on the medal-deciding final day of the Ter 3rd National Youth Archery Championship at the Shaheed Ahsanullah Master Stadium in Tongi yesterday.

The sports institute won gold medals in recurve youngster boys', recurve cadet boys', recurve cadet girls', recurve junior boys', compound cadet boys', compound cadet girls', recurve junior boys' team and recurve cadet boys' team events.

Tirondaz Sangsad finished second on the medals table with two gold, three silver and four bronze medals. Dhaka Army Archery Club and Bangladesh Ansar won the other two gold medals.

Hopeful swimmers leave for Nepal

SPORTS REPORTER



In a bid to coping with high altitude and getting used to 25-metre pool in host country, national swimmers left for Nepal yesterday for final preparation for the upcoming South Asian (SA) Games, some 16 days before the start of swimming events of the 13th regional multi-sports extravaganza.

In the last edition of the games in 2016, Bangladesh bagged a total of four gold medals, and two of those came from swimming. Both were won by Mahfuza Khatun Shila, but she has not been included in the Bangladesh contingent. However, the Bangladesh Swimming Federation (BSF) is dreaming big of beating the last edition's medals tally -- 17 medals (two gold and 15 bronze) this time around.

"Though we had initial plan of sending the squad to China for training, we later decided to send the swimmers to Nepal in a bid to acclimatising with high altitude and getting used to with the 25-metre pool as our swimmers are used to swimming in 50-metres pool," BSF general secretary BM Saif said on the eve of the departure of the team, which comprises 13 male and eight female swimmers.



Swimmers and officials pose for a photograph with Bangladesh Swimming Federation President and Bangladesh Navy chief Admiral Aurangzeb Chowdhury prior to their departure for Nepal yesterday. PHOTO: BSF

British-born-Bangladeshi female swimmer Junayna Ahmed is supposed to join the squad on November 29 in Kathmandu straight from England.

Japanese coach Yorikazu Tamayama is

accompanying the swimmers.

"We are hoping to produce better results compared to the previous edition as the swimmers have been training for the last ninth months. We can't assure gold medals

but there is good possibility of winning gold in male breaststroke event," Saif said, adding that Ariful Islam, who underwent a 13-month training in Spain under Olympic Games scholarship, will compete in that event.

Saif is also pinning hopes on Junayna, who will compete in nine events while Bangladesh will take part in over 30 events of the discipline.

BSF, in association with Bangladesh Olympic Association, arranged training for the swimmers in Nepal by renting a private 25-metre pool along with gym and steam bath facilities.

"The federation is banking on me because I was in Spain for more than one year under an Olympic scholarship and I will try to repay the faith of the federation," Ariful said before the team's departure.

"I think I have good chance in 50m and 100m breaststroke events. If winning gold is not possible, I can bag silver medals but I will certainly win at least a medal," Ariful said, adding that he has bettered his timing from 1.70 minutes to 1.30 minutes in 100m breaststroke event after training in Spain.

Romana Akter said, "I bagged a bronze medal in 100m breaststroke in the last edition of SA Games, but this time I have gained much experience and I hope to produce better result than the last time."

SHORT CORNER

Shakib drops off Test rankings too

Having disappeared from the International Cricket Council's (ICC's) ODI and T20I all-rounders' rankings last week, Bangladesh all-rounder Shakib Al Hasan's name was absent from the Test all-rounders' rankings published yesterday.

Shakib was banned for two years by the ICC on October 29 for not reporting corrupt approaches by a bookmaker in 2018.

The Test rankings are refreshed after every Test match, and after the end of the first Test between India and Bangladesh ended on Saturday, the former Bangladesh captain's name was not included in the fresh rankings.

Before his ban, Shakib occupied the first, second and third positions in the ODI, T20I and Test rankings respectively.

Bangladesh batsman Mushfiqur Rahim, meanwhile, moved up five places to number 30 in the Test batsmen's charts after his innings of 43 and 64 in the first Test. Bangladesh pacer Abu Jayed picked up four wickets against India and advanced 18 places to move to 62nd place after just his sixth Test.

--SPORTS REPORTER

Pattinson banned

Australia fast bowler James Pattinson was suspended yesterday for player abuse, ruling him out of the first Test against Pakistan this week with skipper Tim Paine saying he had let down the team.

The paceman was found guilty of breaching Cricket Australia's code of conduct during Victoria's Sheffield Shield game against Queensland last week.

Given it was his third breach in the past 18 months, the incident triggered a one-match suspension.

--AFP

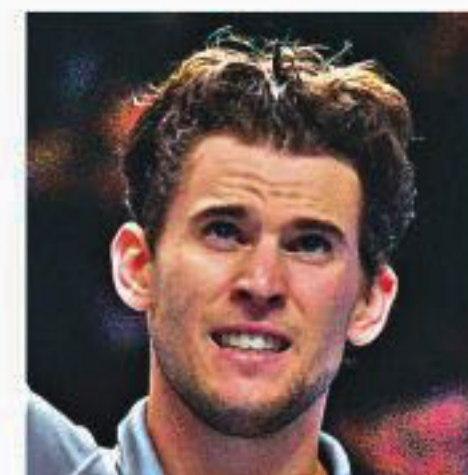
Sacked for 27-0 win

The coach of an Italian junior league team was sacked on Saturday for inflicting a humiliating 27-0 defeat on their opponents.

Paolo Brogelli, president of Invictasaurio slammed his team's win over rivals Marina Calcio as "disrespectful".

"We learned with amazement and regret the score of the match in which our junior team scored 27 goals," Brogelli said. "Our board has decided, unanimously, to sack (coach) Mr. Riccini. Our coaches have a duty to train and, above all, to educate children. This has not happened today."

--AFP



Thiem joins Tsitsipas

AFP, London

Dominic Thiem beat defending champion Alexander Zverev on Saturday to join Roger Federer's conqueror Stefanos Tsitsipas in the final of the ATP Finals in London.

The Austrian fifth seed saw off the big-serving German 7-5, 6-3 after Greece's Tsitsipas, making his debut at the tournament, had earlier beaten Federer 6-3, 6-4.

Thiem is playing in his fourth ATP Finals but during his first three trips to the season finale, he won only three matches and never advanced out of the group stage at the O2 Arena.

PANASONIC OPEN

Siddikur 8th, Zamal 30th

SPORTS REPORTER



Siddikur Rahman finished tied for eighth while his compatriot Zamal Hossain Mollah finished a distant 30th in the Panasonic Open India, which concluded at the Classic Golf and Country Club in Gurgaon yesterday.

Siddikur was in with a chance of claiming a rare Asian Tour title after finishing the second round of the three-round event just two strokes behind the leaders.

However, as is often the case with the 34-year-old golfer, last-round blues hit Siddikur again as he started the round in the worst possible way. The two-time Asian Tour winner played three bogeys in the front nine to slip out of contention. However, three birdies at the back nine helped Siddikur finish at a respectable eighth position with a score of eight-under-par (208), earning himself a paycheque of 8667 US dollars.

17-year-old Kim Joohyung of Korea won his maiden title with a score of 13-under-par (203) after India's Shiv Kapur blew a one-stroke lead on the final hole with a double-bogey.

Zamal, meanwhile, finished joint 30th with a score of four-under-par (212) following a two-under in the final round. The two-time PGTI winner started the day brilliantly, firing four birdies in the first five holes but two bogeys in the back nine compromised his chances of a top-10 finish.