



I had a dream of raising the Bangladesh flag on a stage like this with the national anthem playing. The dream started when I got called for the national team camp after three years of service for Bangladesh Army. Today that dream has come true.

DIPU CHAKMA
SA Games gold-winner

Dipu Chakma stunned all and sundry as he unexpectedly clinched Bangladesh's first gold medal of the 13th South Asian Games in the taekwondo event yesterday. He made the day more memorable by clinching a bronze later on.

PHOTO: BOA

Medal-rush in karate events

SPORTS REPORTER from Kathmandu



Bangladesh bagged one medal each in all nine events of karate on the second day of the 13th South Asian Games in Nepal yesterday.

Mostafa Kamal won silver in 55-kg category of men's kumi while Mounjera Barna won silver in the same weight category of women's kumi event. Apart from those, Bangladesh bagged seven bronze medals in other events of the discipline, which is being held at Satdobato in Lalitpur.

The medal-rush began with young Humaira Akhter Antara winning Bangladesh's first bronze medal of the Games, after narrowly missing out on final of women's individual kata.

Antara, who is a recent HSC-graduate from Dhaka, finished third in the first round comprising of five competitors.

"I am happy to win the first medal for the country. I would have been happier had I made it to the final, which I missed due to a small mistake. I will try to win a better medal tomorrow in kumite event," Antara said after the event.

Pakistan's Shahida won gold in the event, which was the first medal-deciding event

of the Games, beating Nepal's Chanchala Danuwar in the final.

Later, Hassan Khan Sun won a bronze medal men's individual kata, finishing third among four participants.

Sun had struck gold in the 2010 SA Games in Dhaka, but this time his effort was not good enough to match those of karatekas from Nepal and Pakistan.

Nepal's Manday Kaju Shreshtha won the gold while Pakistan's Inamatullah grabbed the silver medal.

Meanwhile, Bangladesh men's volleyball team failed to win a medal from these Games after suffering a 3-1 sets defeat to Sri Lanka in the place-deciding match.

Meanwhile, the Bangladesh women's cricket team will begin their journey for gold today when they take on title contenders Sri Lanka in their first match of the Twenty20 competition in Pokhara today.

This is the first time women's cricket has been included in the Games' roster even though men's cricket was featured once in the 2010 edition in Dhaka. Bangladesh won gold there, and the men's team this time, captained by Najmul Hossain Shanto, will start their campaign against Maldives at the Tribhuban University Ground tomorrow.

Chencho punishes sloppy booters

ATIQUÉ ANAM from Kathmandu

Bangladesh coach Jamie Day, in the pre-match press conference, had said that despite their two comfortable victories at home last month against Bhutan, the opening match of the South Asian Games in Kathmandu could be difficult. The coach, however, probably did not imagine that his team would save one of their worst performances for the opening match.

The coach was very disappointed following his side's 1-0 defeat against Bhutan and admitted that it was a sloppy and sluggish performance from his charges, while giving credit to Bhutan for a deserved victory.

"Bhutan deserved to win. They created probably the same amount of chances, but better chances, and moved the ball better. We were sloppy and sluggish, and were not good in decision-making," the English coach told the media after the match.

Chencho Gyeiltshen's 65th minute goal, a fine finish after the Bangladesh defence was caught napping on a clever through-ball, sealed the match in favour of Bhutan as Bangladesh failed to raise their game in the remaining minutes.

The Bangladesh team, which came to Nepal five days ahead of the tournament without any



Bhutan's Chencho Gyeiltshen (L) struck the only goal of the game in the 65th minute to condemn a below-par Bangladesh to a losing start in the 13th South Asian Games in Kathmandu yesterday. PHOTO: COLLECTED

preparation camp, looked ragged and lacked cohesion in every department right from the first half and things only got worse after the break.

Despite playing poorly, Bangladesh had a glorious chance to break the deadlock in the 38th minute when Mohammad Ibrahim floated a perfectly weighted cross from the right for Saad Uddin. This was probably the best delivery from a Bangladesh player all through the game but Saad, who was unmarked at the far post, failed to make the proper connection.

The coach conceded that it was

a costly mistake, but felt all the outfield players were equally poor, including the three substitutions he made in the second half -- Mahburur Rahman Sufil for Nabib Newaz Jibon, Arifur Rahman for Rabiul Hasan and Rakib Hossain for Biplu Ahmed.

"Saad should have scored in the first half," Day said. "None of the players, except for goalkeeper Zico maybe, came out with any credit to their name."

It was hard to imagine it was the same Bangladesh team -- most of the players of the Olympic team are in the senior side -- that had almost

beaten India on their home ground and ran Qatar close in the World Cup Qualifiers at home in October.

It seemed as if playing counter-attacking football and defending deep against better teams, which they do very well these days, Bangladesh have forgotten how to play attacking football when the opposition is not pressing hard. But then again, that was probably only one aspect of the game and they failed in all the other aspects as well.

The coach stopped short of saying it was the worst performance during his tenure, but his expressions said how disappointed he was and that the challenge of reaching the final had become mountainous as they face SAFF champions Maldives in their second game today.

"I know we can do lot better. We need to raise our level for the next three matches," the coach said. "But if we play like this, there is no chance of playing in the final."

Bangladesh had beaten Maldives on penalties to claim the bronze medal in the last SA Games in India three years ago, but with games against Maldives, Sri Lanka and hosts Nepal still remaining, it already looks like a tall ask for Day's men to secure a medal this time around.

In the second match of the day, Maldives played out a goalless draw against Sri Lanka.



Mostafa Kamal (L) and Mounjera Barna won silver medals in individual karate events for Bangladesh yesterday. PHOTO: BOA



Bangladesh wicketkeeper-batsman and Khulna Tigers star Mushfiqur Rahim was back to training in Mirpur yesterday to prepare for the Bangabandhu Bangladesh Premier League, which is set to start from December 11.

PHOTO: MUSHFIQUR'S FACEBOOK PAGE

SHORT CORNER

Challengers confirm Gayle participation

Bangabandhu Bangladesh Premier League (BBPL) side Chattogram Challengers confirmed through a press release yesterday that West Indies star player Chris Gayle will be playing for the side in this year's Bangladesh Premier League (BPL).

There was confusion regarding the participation of the 40-year-old with Gayle himself claiming that he wasn't aware of being included in the BPL draft.

"Gayle has a slight hamstring injury. It will take some time for him to return to cricket being fully fit. But he never had any intention of not playing the BPL. We might not get him at the beginning but he will feature for Chattogram Challengers in the latter part of the tournament," Chattogram managing director K.M Rifatuzzaman said in the press release. -- SPORTS REPORTER

Six wickets, zero runs!

Nepal's Anjali Chand wrote her name into the history books on Monday when she ended a women's T20I match against Maldives with bowling figures of 6/0.

Batting first after they won the toss, Maldives could only get 16 runs on the board and the hosts overhauled the target in just 5 balls in the second innings.



Anjali struck thrice in the 7th over and twice in the 9th over before wrapping up the Maldives innings in the 11th over. The medium pacer bowled just 13 balls in the entire match.

With the extraordinary feat, Anjali broke the record for the best figures in women's T20Is. Before her, Mas Elysa of Maldives had held the record with figures of 6/3 against China in 2019.

Nepal are competing with the Maldives, Bangladesh and Sri Lanka in the 4-team tournament and the best two at the end of a round-robin stage will enter the gold medal match. -- AGENCIES

Jamshed to go on trial for bribery

Former Pakistan cricketer Nasir Jamshed will go on trial in Britain on Tuesday accused of being part of an alleged spot-fixing bribery conspiracy in the Pakistan Super League.

Yousef Anwar, 36, and Mohammed Ijaz, 34, admitted Monday conspiring to offer bribes to professional cricketers,

before a scheduled trial in Manchester.

The pair pleaded guilty to conspiring together between November 2016 and February 2017 to offer financial advantages to players in the Pakistan Super League, with the intention of inducing them to perform improperly by failing to play competitively in good faith.

They also admitted the same charge in relation to players taking part in the Bangladesh Premier League between November 2016 and December 2016.

Jamshed, 33, an opening batsman, denies being part of the bribery conspiracy in relation to the PSL.

Prosecutors will open their case against him on Tuesday at Manchester Crown Court.

British nationals Anwar, from Slough, west of London, and Ijaz, of Sheffield in northern England, were granted bail ahead of sentencing, expected to take place early next year.

Jamshed has played Test, one-day and Twenty20 international cricket for Pakistan. --AFP

Flower not coming for BBPL

SPORTS REPORTER

Bangabandhu Bangladesh Premier League side Rangpur Rangers will not have Grant Flower as head coach for the tournament, team director Akram Khan said yesterday.

The Zimbabwean was present during the players' draft last month and even formed the team, but the 48-year-old will not be available after taking the job as Sri Lankan national team's batting consultant.

"Flower is not coming, so we have appointed Mark O'Donnell from New Zealand as the head coach of Rangpur," Akram told the media.

Flower was already in talks with the Sri Lanka board when he came to Bangladesh and he opted to take that Sri Lanka job. He was previously the batting coach of Pakistan.

O'Donnell has worked as a coach in Auckland and also has experience coaching in T10 cricket and the Abu Dhabi T20 league. Meanwhile, Rangpur roped in Pakistani batsman Ahmed Shehzad, adding to their list of foreign players like Shai Hope and Mohammad Nabi. Mustafizur Rahman, Mohammad Naim and Taskin Ahmed are Rangpur's local stars.

Root double gives England thin edge

AFP, Hamilton

Joe Root could not hide his delight after a masterful 226 ended his run drought and gave England a much-needed boost in the second Test against New Zealand on Monday as they ended day four believing they can square the series.

It took a five-wicket haul for the tireless Neil Wagner to bring England's first innings to an end at 476, a lead of 101.

At stumps, New Zealand were 96 for two and needing to bat late into the final day although rain may yet have the last word with further showers forecast for Tuesday.

"It felt good," a beaming Root said as he put a stream of low scores behind him. New Zealand openers Jeet Raval (nought) and Tom Latham (18) were out

early in their second innings, and for Raval it continued a disappointing run in which he has failed to reach double figures in six of his last 10 innings.

But after being 28 for two, New Zealand's most skilled batsmen Kane Williamson and Ross Taylor prevented further damage with Williamson on 37 at stumps and Taylor on 31.

If Raval was feeling the pressure of his slump with an away series against Australia looming, he need only look Root's timely double century to see fortunes can change.

SCORES IN BRIEF
NEW ZEALAND: First innings 375 and second innings 96 for 2 (Williamson 37 not out, Taylor 31 not out 31; Stokes 1-17)
ENGLAND: First innings 476 all out (Burns 101, Root 226, Stokes 26, Pope 75; Southee 2-90, Wagner 5-124)



England's Joe Root celebrates his double century on the fourth day of the second Test against New Zealand at Seddon Park in Hamilton yesterday. PHOTO: REUTERS