

SPORT



Cricket salvages gold-less day in Kathmandu

Sports Reporter from Kathmandu

Bangladesh's men's and women's cricket teams registered convincing victories in the T20 events on the fourth day of the South Asian Games, a day that passed with Bangladesh failing to add to their tally of four gold medals.

The men's cricket team romped to a 109-run victory over minnows Maldives, thanks to a five-wicket haul from left-arm spinner Tanvir Islam.

However, there were frustrating performances in the 200m sprint where Bangladesh's Shirin Akter finished seventh with a timing of 25.59 seconds in the women's event while Saiful Islam finished seventh in the men's event with a timing of 21.70 seconds.

Silver and bronze in kho kho
Bangladesh men's kho kho team lost to India by 16-9 points in the final -- a repeat of last edition's final -- to settle for a silver medal. The women's team, meanwhile,

On a day when Bangladesh failed to add to their tally of four gold medals in the South Asian Games in Nepal, Bangladesh's men's kho kho team went into a frenzy after securing a silver medal following their defeat by 16-9 points against India in the final yesterday. PHOTO: BOA

The Bangla-loving Japanese

Atique AnAm from Kathmandu

"Nah, bhalo lage na. Duijon injured hoia gese," said the Bangladesh karate team's Japanese coach Tetsuro Kitamura in clear, if colloquial, Bengali following the women's team's close defeat to Pakistan in the final of the women's kumite event of the 13th South Asian Games in Kathmandu yesterday.

It was nice to hear a Japanese coach speaking such fluent Bengali, but it felt nicer when he spoke of his affection for Bangladesh and its people.

Kitamura first came to Bangladesh in 1985 as a karate coach under a JICA (Japan International Cooperation Agency) project. It is mandatory for every JICA representative to have a basic three-month training on the language of the country to which he or she is sent. That helped him get a grasp of the basics of the language, but his numerous trips and stays in Bangladesh since has made him as fluent as a regular Bangladeshi, as well as fall in love with the local culture.

"This is my first home. I like the people here and the family bonding. People have a good heart. It's not like this in Japan where people are too busy and too self-centred," said the veteran coach, who also represents a Japanese crab-exporting company that collects crab from hatcheries in Satkhira.

Kitamura, who makes trips to Japan every three months to see his wife, is not the only Japanese coach who has made Bangladesh his home.

Takahiro Taguchi is an adviser of the swimming team who, like

Japan. I like working here," said Taguchi.

While Japan and JICA have been one of the closest friends of Bangladesh in their development activities, things took a tragic turn after a string of terror attacks on foreigners, culminating in the Holey Artisan Bakery attack in 2016 which took the lives of 24 people, including seven Japanese citizens, who were working here.

JICA contemplated stopping their activities in the country but continued with those as the situation improved, thanks to anti-terror drives by the government.



TETSURO KITAMURA



TAKAHIRO TAGUCHI

The youngster from the High Performance team bagged five wickets for 19 runs as Bangladesh bowled Maldives out for 65 after posting 174 for the loss of four wickets. Soumya Sarkar (46), Mohammad Naim (48) and skipper Nazmul Hossain Shanto (49) helped Bangladesh post a challenging total, which the Maldivians were simply unable to counter.

Tanvir was happy with a five-wicket haul and admitted that the wicket at the Tribhuvan University Ground was helpful for spin bowling.

"The wicket gripped, turned and bounced a bit, which helped the spinners. I tried to pitch the ball in the right places and got the wickets," said the spinner, who hails from Barishal.

It was Bangladesh's first match and they will take on Bhutan, Nepal and Sri Lanka in their remaining round-robin games.

There was an even more dominant victory for the women's team, who romped to a 10-wicket win over Nepal in Pokhara.

Fielding first, Bangladesh bowled the hosts out for 50 runs, with Rabeya Khan taking four wickets for eight runs. Murshida Khatun's unbeaten 23 and Ayesha Rahman's unbeaten 26 powered Bangladesh to the victory target in 7.4 overs.

Al Amin jumps to bronze
Long-jumper Al Amin won a bronze medal to give Bangladesh their second medal from athletics following Mahfuzur Rahman's silver in high-jump the previous day.

The Navy athlete, who had won a bronze at the 2010 Games, cleared 7.6 metres to settle for third position. India's Lokesh Sathiana (7.87m) won gold while his fellow Indian Swaminathan Rabh won silver (7.77m).

"This is a dream medal for me. Considering the state of athletics in Bangladesh, I'm happy with this bronze," said the 30-year-old athlete, adding that they do not get proper facilities in the country.



This is a dream medal for me. Considering the state of athletics in Bangladesh, I'm happy with this bronze.
AL AMIN
Long-jump bronze winner

beat Sri Lanka by two points to win a bronze medal.

Bronze rush in wushu
Bangladesh won seven bronze medals in wushu yesterday. Sadia Akter, Bashana Khandaker and Rita Biswash won bronze in separate weight categories for women while Milon Hossain, Rakib Khandaker, Rubel Khan and Selim Ahmed won in different categories of men's wushu. Bangladesh's Sajib Hossain has, meanwhile, reached the final by beating his Sri Lankan counterpart in his category.

Still calm before the BBPL storm

Sports Reporter

Even as the Bangabandhu Bangladesh Premier League (BBPL) nears its start date of December 11, the usual pre-BPL excitement is missing. Teams like Dhaka Platoon, Chattogram Challengers, Rangpur Rangers and Sylhet Thunders did start practising at the Academy Ground in Mirpur yesterday but the foreign players and coaches of the respective teams -- other than those of Dhaka Platoon, the only team in BPL with a local coach in the form of Mohammad Salahuddin -- are yet to join.

domestic T20 league.

Sylhet Thunder all-rounder Mosaddek Hossain, who practised with his team yesterday, said that this edition will be a platform for players to prove their mettle ahead of the T20 World Cup in October 2020.

"BPL is a great platform for creating players. The ones who will play well here will have a chance to feature for the national side. We have the T20 World Cup coming up. I am looking forward to doing well," said the 23-year old all-rounder.

Meanwhile, unlike Mosaddek, Chattogram Challengers' wicketkeeper-batsman Nurul Hasan was inclined to keep his targets to himself.

"I am more willing to work for the aim I have for the BPL rather than just talking about it. I try not to speak out loud about the target I have set for myself," said Nurul after practice in Mirpur yesterday.

Bangladesh's SA Games gold-medalist karateka Marzan Akter Priya was hospitalised after being injured during the team karate semifinal yesterday. She was kicked on the back of her head by a Sri Lankan opponent. Fortunately, scans revealed that she had not sustained any serious injury or concussion and karate federation general secretary Kyaw Shwe Hla confirmed that she was out of danger.



PHOTO: BOA



Rajshahi Royals opener Liton Das practised individually at the academy ground in Mirpur yesterday ahead of the upcoming seventh edition of the BBPL. PHOTO: BCB

Transfers return, uncertainty remains

Sports Reporter

The Bangladesh Cricket Board (BCB) is all set to reintroduce the pool system in the next edition of the Dhaka Premier League (DPL), the country's most prestigious fifty-over domestic competition.

When domestic and national players had gone on a three-day strike from October 21 to 23, one of the more important points in their 13-point demand was a return to the traditional players' transfer system by which the players can choose their own clubs and negotiate salaries instead of the players-by-choice lottery system first introduced in 2013.

It was learned that an out-of-favour national cricketer who had played for Tk 20 lakh last season asked for Tk 55 lakh for the next edition and according to Mohammedan Sporting Club official Tarikul Islam Tito, such demands would only cause trouble for the players.

whether they will have to be cleared first. I am aware that many players are yet to confirm their team despite some of the clubs having already started to form their squads.

It was learned that the Cricket Committee of Dhaka Metropolitan (CCDM) was in the final stages of forming a pool of 48 players, from which each team will pick four players in next year's DPL.

Faced with the strike that shook the country's cricket, the CCDM had almost instantly agreed to return to the players' transfer system from next season. But with the players' pool in place it is unlikely that all the cricketers will receive the same amount of money that they were expecting earlier. The reason behind the BCB's decision to introduce the players-by-choice system was mainly because of the players high salary demands, which according to the clubs were unrealistic and tough to fulfill.

"I think those players will be in trouble unless they start reducing their demands. A club can take a maximum of four players from the pool, but if a club decides to take less than four players, I don't know whether the unpicked players can be picked as they were before or

As the DPL is the biggest source of income for a majority of domestic players, especially those who do not get a chance to play the lucrative Bangladesh Premier League, the cricketers were desperately waiting for a return to the traditional players' transfer system. It seems, however, that despite a return to the old system there is still some uncertainty.

"The proposal to introduce a pool for the DPL was discussed but nothing is finalised yet. We are waiting for CCDM chairman [Kazi Inam Ahmed] to arrive, after which we will take a decision in this regard, and if that is approved, we will prepare the pool accordingly," said a BCB official, who wished to remain anonymous.

I think those players will be in trouble unless they start reducing their demands.
TARIKUL ISLAM TITO
Mohammedan Sporting Club official

"One club official contacted me and said that they are thinking of picking me and I accepted their offer, saying that they should pay me in cash. All of a sudden the club official called me and said that they are not ready to sign me up as they want to see how it goes in the transfer market," said an experienced performer, request anonymity.