



(L-R) Faisal Ahmed and Kajal Mia set two of the four records in swimming events on the fifth day of the Bangabandhu 9th Bangladesh Games at the Syed Nazrul Islam Swimming Complex in Mirpur yesterday. Bangladesh Army's Faisal won the 400m freestyle gold in record time while Bangladesh Navy's Kajal grabbed gold in 200m butterfly with a new record.

PHOTO: FIROZ AHMED

## Records tumble as electronic timer lies unused

SPORTS REPORTER

The Syed Nazrul Islam Swimming Complex in Mirpur continued to see records tumble in the Bangabandhu 9th Bangladesh Games in hand-timing mode as the newly-installed electronic timer is not being used.

Following six records on the first two days, there were four more records in the pool on Monday, thanks to efforts from Kajal Mia, Jewel Ahmed, Faisal Ahmed and the Bangladesh Army relay team. The total tally so far of 10 records is nothing surprising as the 2019 national swimming championships witnessed more than 20 national records.

Yesterday Kajal set a new record in 200m butterfly by clocking 2:10.92 minutes, eclipsing previous record of 2:11.57 minutes set in 2019 by Jewel. Jewel, himself, improved his own timing in 50m backstroke, clocking 00:27.97 seconds. He had earlier set a record in the same event in 2019 with a timing of 00:28.12 seconds.

Like Jewel, Faisal also bettered his previous record in 400m freestyle after clocking 04:18.23 minutes. The previous record set in 2019 was 04:18.25 minutes.

Both Jewel and Faisal from Bangladesh Army were happy to set new records, but not satisfied with the false impression of hand-timing.

"I am happy to have improved

### HIGHLIGHTS

As many as 13 national records in 21 events were made in cycling. Five records were made on the final day at Banani Army Stadium yesterday.

Four more records were made by Kajal Mia, Jewel Ahmed, Faisal Ahmed and in 4x100m men's relay on the third day of swimming events at Syed Nazrul Islam National Swimming Complex in Mirpur. A total of 10 records were made in swimming.

Weightlifter Mostain Billah and Smriti Akter also joined cyclists and swimmers in writing their names to the record book. Mostain made a record in snatch of the 61kg category by lifting 106kg before lifting overall 227kg to win the gold medal. Smriti also made a record in snatch of the 49kg category by lifting 66kg. She lifted a total of 139kgs to win gold medals.

Magura DSA clinched the title of the women's football event with a 3-2 win in a penalty shootout against Brahmanbaria after the match ended in a 1-1 draw at Kamalapur Stadium on Sunday night.



**Bishwas Faisal Hossain**  
Five gold medals in cycling

Sylhet DSA, Bangladesh Army, Satkhira and Bangladesh Krira Shikkha Protisthan moved into the last-four of men's football event in Cumilla yesterday.

Bangladesh Ansar emerged champions in skating after grabbing all 12 golds -- six gold each in men's and women's categories -- at Sheikh Russel Roller Skating Complex yesterday.

Prolific archer Ruman Sana was knocked out from recurve individual event after losing 1-7 to Jewel Khan of Dhaka Archery Club in 1/8 competition on Sunday.

SA Games gold medalist archer Sohel Rana was also eliminated from the compound individual event after losing to Faysal Ahmed in the quarterfinals yesterday.

my national record as Bangladesh Army gave us every facility for the Bangladesh Games despite a big gap in training due to the

coronavirus pandemic," said Jewel. "Of course, we are not happy with the hand-timing record because we can't get exact personal

timing. We struggle at international competitions and see a big difference with foreign swimmers in those competitions," said Jewel, who currently holds five national records.

Faisal said, "Despite having pain in my hands, I am really happy to set a new national record. However, we would have been happier if the time was recorded through the electronic timer."

In 2019, the National Sports Council (NSC) renovated the swimming complex spending Tk 8.5 crore and installed a new electronic timer worth approximately Tk 4 crore.

However, the electronic timer is not being used to record timings as officials claim the device is not working properly and it is backdated.

"We have not been handed over the electronic timer from the National Sports Council even though the installation work completed in 2019," Bangladesh Swimming Federation's general secretary MB Saif said. "We are not using the electronic board because it can't provide timing of all lanes at a time, so we can't take any risk which is why we use stopwatch."

Computer World BD, the service providers of the newly-installed electronic timer, had previously denied all allegations and claimed US-based Daktronics Electronic timer was working fine but the swimmers were not touching the pads properly.

## 'We are not planning to have a bigger squad'

SPORTS REPORTER



Despite the rising number of coronavirus infections across the country over the last one month which forced the government to impose a seven-day nationwide lockdown and prompted the Bangladesh Cricket Board (BCB) to suspend the third round of the Bangabandhu National Cricket League, the board is positive about the national team's upcoming tour of Sri Lanka this month.

The Tigers are scheduled to travel to the island nation on April 12.

It has been learnt that the BCB has asked the players to stay at home and that the selectors are going to announce the squad for the two-match Test series, part of the ICC test Championship, within a couple of days.

As the cricketers returned from their tour of New Zealand on Sunday, the members of the Test side will not hold a training camp in Bangladesh ahead of the tour.

"We are planning to announce the Test squad for the Sri Lanka tour within the next couple of days. However, we are not planning to have a bigger squad this time

like we picked for the New Zealand tour. We are confident about having Mushfiqur Rahim, who got injured and was unable to take part in the T20I series in New Zealand, recovered fully ahead of the Sri Lanka tour," selector Habibul Bashar told media yesterday.

According to sources, the players are keen to travel to Sri Lanka for the upcoming series where the visitors will play an inter-squad two-day warm-up game on April 17 and 18 at the Chilaw Marians Cricket Club Ground in Katunayake.

Both Tests will be played at the Pallekele International Cricket Stadium in Kandy, with the first Test scheduled to start on April 21 and the second one to begin on April 29.

Sri Lanka Cricket backedtracked from its decision of imposing a strict quarantine protocol, which had forced the BCB to cancel a planned tour to the island nation in September last year.

Quarantine protocols were later relaxed for a touring England side in January this year where the visitors were asked to isolate for three days after landing in Sri Lanka before being allowed to practise among themselves in the next four days.



## HURKACZ STUNS SINNER

Jannik Sinner congratulates Hubert Hurkacz, who was vaulted into the top 20 for the first time in his career on Sunday after clinching his maiden Masters 1000 title at the Miami Open, a win he said provided added "motivation" to succeed. Poland's Hurkacz downed Sinner 7-6(4), 6-4 in the men's final as a handful of double-faults in the match proved costly for his 19-year-old Italian opponent. "I had a big belief in myself... Winning the tournament like this like gives you extra, I think, like motivation and self-confidence," said 24-year old Hurkacz, now 16th in the world. The 19-year-old Sinner would have been the Miami event's youngest winner had he defeated Hurkacz. "When you're 19 and playing finals, obviously it's tough, and I wanted to win. It has been a good week anyway. But obviously I'm not here for making finals, I'm here to win tournaments. It's going to be back to work and then we will see what I can do on the clay," said Sinner.

PHOTO: REUTERS



## Solskjaer hails improving Greenwood

REUTERS

Manchester United manager Ole Gunnar Solskjaer said Mason Greenwood is adding a new dimension to his game after the young forward scored an instinctive winner in Sunday's 2-1 Premier League victory over Brighton & Hove Albion.

Former United striker Danny Welbeck headed Brighton into a 13th-minute lead before Marcus Rashford equalised and Greenwood, 19, got on the end of a speculative Paul Pogba volley to complete the Old Trafford side's comeback.

"I'm so happy for him... When he gets those goals, we know that he's going to add another dimension to his game," said Solskjaer, who will be without defender Eric Bailly for "a little while" after he tested positive for COVID-19 on international duty with Ivory Coast.

"I'm pleased with his overall performance again very good. He was bright, tidy, clean on the ball, hit the post and one that went over the bar, maybe deflected, in the second half."

## IPL to continue despite lockdown

AGENCIES



Royal Challengers Bangalore batsman Devdutt Padikkal has become the third player to test positive for COVID-19 ahead of the new Indian Premier League (IPL) season, which begins on

Friday.

Delhi Capitals spinner Axar Patel and Kolkata Knight Riders batsman Nitish Rana tested positive for the virus after joining their teams.

Participants will have to stay in a restricted health environment for this year's IPL, which will be played across six venues in India, initially without spectators.

Bangalore are scheduled to face five-time champions Mumbai Indians in the season opener on Friday at Chennai's MA Chidambaram Stadium.

Meanwhile, Sourav Ganguly, the Board of Control for Cricket in India (BCCI) President, has confirmed that the IPL 2021 will proceed as scheduled notwithstanding the weekend lockdown imposed in Maharashtra by the government in wake of the recent surge in Covid-19 cases.

From Friday 8 pm to Monday 7 am the state will be in lockdown, only essential services, and transportation including buses, trains, and taxis will be allowed. Wankhede Stadium will host 10 matches this season from April 10 to 25. However, the former India captain has assured the tournament will continue as planned.



**Bangladesh ace paceman Mustafizur Rahman reached India to play the IPL. "Landed in India safely and mission IPL starts with Rajasthan Royals. Keep me in your prayers," he wrote on his official Facebook account.**

## Guardiola knows Dortmund better than anybody

AGENCIES

Manchester City's pursuit of an unprecedented quadruple continues on Tuesday when they welcome Borussia Dortmund to the Etihad Stadium for the first leg of their Champions League quarter-final tie.

City are the clear favourites heading into the tie. But Borussia Dortmund will be out to show that they have what it takes to pull off an upset.

City's success this season can, of course, be attributed to their scintillating attacking play and final-third devastation,



but defensively they have also evolved into a very stubborn and resilient side, culminating in seven successive clean sheets in the Champions League, a record only bettered by Arsenal in 2005-06 (10 in a row).

Haaland, though, has proven capable of cutting open even the most obdurate of defences, and he will likely have a say in this meeting.

Dortmund invest heavily in the future of their squad and pay agents huge sums to bring in top young talent, City manager Pep Guardiola said ahead of Tuesday's quarterfinals against the Germans.

"If any one person in the city of Manchester knows Borussia Dortmund, it's me," Guardiola said. "About the culture of that club, the way they play."

"I will not find one single player at Dortmund without quality. They spent a lot of money on young players and pay a lot of money to agents to bring these players there because they have an incredible quality."

### CHAMPIONS LEAGUE QUARTERFINALS



### HIGHLIGHTS

Real Madrid and Liverpool have won three games apiece out of the six matches played between them in the tournament.

Liverpool have lost their last three games against Los Blancos in the competition, but in the two teams' only previous two-legged knockout European tie, the Reds won 5-0 on aggregate against Real in the last 16 of the 2008-09 season.

Manchester City and Borussia Dortmund met in the UEFA Champions League group stage in 2012-13, the only two previous meetings between them saw a 1-1 draw in Etihad and a 1-0 Dortmund win at Signal Iduna Park.

Man City have won only 1 of their previous 4 quarter-finals of the tournament, whereas Dortmund's record in the same stage is: won 4, lost 4.

## Real, Liverpool meet in a repeat of 2018 final

AGENCIES

Two of the most successful teams in the history of the European Cup will lock horns in the Spanish capital on Tuesday night as Real Madrid welcome Liverpool for the first leg of their Champions League quarterfinal.

Madrid, who are 13-time winners of the competition, will be looking to secure an advantage at the Alfredo Di Stefano Stadium ahead of the reverse fixture at Anfield on April 14.

Two of the European Cup's most successful clubs meet in a repeat of the 2018 final. Madrid won that one before Liverpool went one better 12 months later; neither side has been going great guns in 2020/21, particularly the Reds, but both have a habit of pulling a top performance out of the bag, particularly in this competition. Madrid will have to do it without the injured Sergio Ramos, though.

Los Blancos have hit a touch of form of late, as Zinedine Zidane's team heads into this big clash on the back of an 11-game unbeaten run in all competitions, including nine wins after a weekend 2-0 win over Eibar in La Liga.

When it comes to the Champions League, Zidane's team also have a stellar recent record.

Jürgen Klopp's team seems to have now recovered from their major slump in February and March. The Merseysider's go into this clash on the back of three straight victories in all competitions, having kept clean sheets in all three wins.