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Day 3: RP Gains 17 More Medals, is Sixth in Team Standing

Palembang—Average in height but endowed with colossal will, Elaina Kristine Flores was rock solid in preventing a total gold medal drought for Team Philippines on Sunday in the 26th Southeast Asian Games.

Just when gold medals were slippery eels in many fronts Flores outlasted a pesky Thai, Watchareewan Tomas, in the women bouldering event of sport climbing, one of three new disciplines of the SEAG—the two others being bridge and roller skating-- and a bidder to become an official event of the 2020 Summer Olympics. The bronze went to Singapore's Sue Ann Chung.

Flores and the Thai figured in a dead heat in the final round, an issue that was settled by referring to their qualifying round performance which favoured the Filipina.

Prior to the delivery of the Flores surprise package, Team Philippines had a harvest of four silver medals in athletics, two from swimming and one from synchronized diving plus eight bronze medals, rather lean and could be telling in the short 11-day race among 11 nations.

On Day 3, host Indonesia revved up while Thailand assumed its rightful place in the picture and so did Vietnam for the 1-2-3 slots. Singapore, which was in second place on Day 2, slid to fourth, while Malaysia went up a notch from sixth to fifth, dislodging the Philippines.

The present order in the medal standings after two days had the host country with 37 gold medals, Thailand 20, Vietnam 15, Singapore 12, Malaysia 9 and the Philippines 5, including the one taekwondo jin Camille Manalo won Saturday but was only credited Sunday in the official web site of the Games.

Youth Olympian Jessie Khing Lacuna submitted 1:52.23 in the 200 free while divers Jaime Asok and John Rexel Fabrega collected 344.51 in the 10m platform synchronized event which triggered a silver rush from the track and field venue inside the Jakabaring Sports City here.

Ageing long jump bet Henry Dagmil (7.78m) seems to be slowly fading as he surrendered the gold to Thai Sukhasvas Supanara (7.86m) and Rosie Villarito threw the spear 47.35m far behind the 48.8m distance covered by Thailand's Natta Nachan.

The two other athletics' silver came from Melvin Guarte, who yielded the gold by two hundredths of a second in the 1,500m run and Archand Christian Bagsit in the 400m race.

Slightly outshone for the day were mountain bike cross country rider Nino Surban, karate-do kumite fighters Jayson Ramil Macaalay, Mae Soriano and Ronnel Balingit, taekwondo jins Karla Jane Alava, Samuel Thomas Morrison and the 3m springboard synchronized tandem of Sheila Mae Perez and Cesceil Domenios and Benito Maranag, who wound up behind Dagmil in long jump.

"We had some opportunities, particularly in track and field events, but we failed to cash in. Swimming is Singapore's turf so we need to work harder," assessed Deputy Chief of Mission Romeo Magat.

Philippine Olympic Committee President Jose Cojuangco maintained high hopes of a better finish this time even if the number of events increased to the disadvantage of Filipinos who are entered only in 39 sports.

"This is peculiar to the SEA Games but we have to keep pace. I am confident that our athletes understand their predicament and are ready for the challenge," Cojuangco stressed.

True enough, world champion Dennis Orcollo beat Indonesia's Muhammad Zulfikri, 7-5, in the 8-ball pool singles semi final to make Monday's 1 p.m. final against Ricky Yang of Indonesia.

In the quarterfinal of the women's side are Filipinas Rubilen Amit and Iris Ranola.

Early leader John Paul Gomez lost to compatriot Darwin Laylo in rapid blindfold chess but remained as co-leader with three points and the latter stayed in a large of bunch of two pointers.

The Philippines also opened up its campaign on a very high note by stopping Thailand, 9-2 in baseball where Indonesia guns to unseat the Filipinos as the regional king.

At the softball field, the Philippines bounced back from an opening day loss to Indonesia by tripping Singapore, 11-1.

Sunday was unproductive in archery where Florante Matan was eliminated in the four distances of recurve, canoe and kayak races where twins Alex and Alvin Generalo, Dany Funelas and Norwell Cajés could not pose a challenge. In fencing, Almario Vizcayno, Joshua Jerahmeel Paunil, Joanna Franquelli and Jylyn Nicanor were all booted out in individual epee and sabre events.

Surban's bronze came on the heels of the silver medal of fellow mountain bike specialist Joey Barba Saturday and was the saving grace for his teammates Eboy Quinones, Alvin Benosa and Leopoldo Japitana who managed only fifth, sixth and ninth in the MTB cross country.

Those who came up empty in karate-do were kumite warriors Rexor Romaquin, Michael Badil and Ramon Antonino Franco.

Table netters were just as dry as Rodel Valle and Arlene Borja, and Ting Ledesma and Sendrian Andrea Balatbat bowed out of the mixed doubles series.

Three pencak silat entries in tanding—Aileth Guballo, Mark Coronel and Jo Marie Rivas—were all ousted in the elimination phase.

Each of the Philippines' singles entries, Michael Corporal and Mary Jane Munar, failed to land a podium finish in the petanque final.

Dhil Andreson Lee also gasped in the finals (100m fly) after Banjo Borja crashed out in the morning heats of the 50m breaststroke.




In mixed pairs of chess, Oliver Barbosa defeated Megaranto and Catherine Perena drew with Sukandar, also of Indonesia. That left the RP duo with 3.5 points after two rounds and a tie for the lead with Vietnam.

After drawing a first round bye Joey Antonio lost his opening match in standard Asean chess.

In the only early athletics finals, Eliezer Sunang wound up just fourth in shot put.

Julius Nierras made it past the qualifying run of the 400m, as did Sheena Atilano in the 100m hurdles. However, they both faded in the evening finals.

Medal Tally for 26th SEA Games November 13, 2011

	 Gold	 Silver	 Bronze	Overall Medal
Indonesia	40	29	20	89
Thailand	20	16	24	60
Vietnam	16	17	19	52
Singapore	12	12	17	41
Malaysia	9	10	15	34
Philippines	5	9	13	27
Myanmar	0	5	9	14
Lao PDR	0	3	7	10
Brunei Darussalam	0	1	1	2
Cambodia	0	0	1	1
Timor Leste	0	0	0	0
Grand Total	102	102	125	329