

Malaysia Beat Asian All-Stars En Route To Final
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KUALA LUMPUR, April 13 (Bernama) -- Malaysia confirmed thier place in the final of the 2013 Axiata Cup after they beat an Asian All-Stars side 3-0 in the semifinal at the Kuala Lumpur Badminton Stadium in Cheras here Saturday.

National singles chief coach Rashid Sidek said he was confident Malaysia would be able to defend the title if Datuk Lee Chong Wei was available for the final.

Chong Wei had to give the semifinal a miss to welcome the arrival of his first child today. His wife, former top national women's singles player Wong Meng Chew, delivered a baby boy at 1.36am at the Gleneagles Hospital here.

The couple have given their son the Christian name of Kingston but have yet to decide on the Chinese name.

"Winning both the singles today was beyond expectations, I had only expected one point (in the singles) but the players showed excellent performance.

"They appeared more confident, committed and more focused in each of the match today. Their performance was certainly much better than in the earlier showdowns," he told reporters after the clash.

Rashid was all praise for Liew Daren for his fighting spirit in winning his match although losing the first set and Sonia Cheah for being in control of her game.

Sonia Cheah, the world number 46, delivered Malaysia's first point when she easily beat world number 10 Tai Tzu Ying in 21-18 and 21-16.

Liew Daren, the world number 10, was stretched to three sets by Lee Hyun Il before prevailing in 22-24, 21-12 and 21-12.

Liew had lost to the same palyer at the group stage in 27-25, 13-21 and 18-21.

The winning streak was continued by the mixed doubles pair of Chan Peng Soon and Goh Liu Ying.

The world number three pair despatched off Ashwini Ponnappa and Tarun Kona in 21-8, 18-21 and 21-17.

The other semifinal clash between Thailand and Indonesia will take place at 7.30pm Saturday night.

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