

Parupalli Kashyap shocks World No.1 Chen Long to enter Indonesia Open Semis

India's 2014 Commonwealth Games Gold Medal winning shuttler Parupalli Kashyap stunned China's world No.1 and top seed Chen Long 14-21, 21-17, 21-14 to reach the Semi-finals of the \$800,000 Indonesia Open Superseries Premier here on Friday.

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Jakarta: Ace Indian shuttler Parupalli Kashyap rallied to shock World No. 1 Chen Long, continuing his giant-killing spree to enter the Men's Singles Semifinals of the Indonesian Open Super Series Badminton tournament here today. Kashyap, ranked 12th in the World, came from behind to beat the top seed Chinese 14-21 21-17 21-14 in a contest that lasted an hour and three minutes.

The Commonwealth Gold-medallist was consistent with his smashes and impeccable with his net play against his more fancied opponent. One of the fastest movers and hardest hitters in the World, Long failed to counter Kashyap's odd, precise smashes and started committing unforced errors. Incidentally, Kashyap's last victory against Long came in this very tournament in 2012.

In the opening game, Kashyap was hardly a match to Long, who not just opened up a 6-2 lead but consistently moved ahead. Although Kashyap caught up with him on a couple of occasions but once the Chinese broke away from a tied 11-11 position to 16-11, there was no looking back for him. Long comfortably sealed the first game 21-14.

The second game went neck-and-neck till 7-7 before the Indian managed to take a slight lead and hold on to the advantage always keeping his nose ahead. Even though the experienced Chinese kept breathing down his neck, Kashyap wriggled out of some tricky situations to take the game to the decider.

In the third game, Kashyap broke away from tied 2-2 to take a 9-3 lead, even as Long committed too many unforced errors, hitting wide and long to hand over a massive 14-5 lead to the Indian. In the end, it was a cake walk for Kashyap, who made full use of his chances to sail through. **By winning 21 points out of the 35 played, Kashyap sealed the game 21-14 and the match, thus booking his place in the Semi-finals.**

On the other hand second seed Saina, winner here in 2009, 2010 and 2012, got off to a great start, smashing with aggression at the Istora Gelora Bung Karno Stadium. The 25-year-old launched a fierce attack on the Chinese, winning five consecutive points to take a strong lead. The Hyderabadadi won 21 points out of 37 played, thus going one up by 21-16.

Fifth seed Shixian, 2010 Asian Games Champion, as always with a never-say-die attitude, came back strongly in the second game. She snatched six consecutive points and gave 2010 Commonwealth Games Champion Saina very little to level things up 1-1 with a 21-12 victory.

The deciding game saw a nail-biting finish as both the shuttlers went all out at each other. Although Saina took the lead -- at one point of time held a healthy 13-8 advantage - the formidable Chinese came back strongly, winning five consecutive points to equalise at the 15-point mark before sealing the game 21-18. With this win, Shixian, 25, took a 7-6 lead in career meetings over her Hyderabadadi opponent.
