



Hosts top Group B

SPORTS REPORTER

Bangladesh thrashed newcomers Bhutan 3-0 in the last match of the first round in the third South Asian Football Federation (SAFF) Championship at the floodlit Bangabandhu National Stadium yesterday.

Ariful Kabir Farhad struck twice and substitute Rokonzaman Kanchan added the third in the 78th minute to ensure the hosts' third straight win and the top spot of Group B with maximum nine points.

Bangladesh's victory against the tiny Himalayan nation was never in doubt even after coach George Kottan fielded a team of reserves.

Kottan gave a rest to nine regular players ahead of the big semifinal clash against defending champions India.

Earlier, in the first match of the day, Maldives came from behind to beat Nepal 3-2 to set up a clash with Pakistan in the other semifinal.

Both semifinals will be held on Saturday.

Farhad, coming in for first-choice striker Kanchan, gave Bangladesh

a third minute lead stabbing a loose ball from close after a Moni low cross from the left came off the gloves of a shaky Bhutanese custodian Jigme Singye.

The fleet-footed attacker doubled the margin nine minutes into the second half heading home a Saiful floater from the right.

The third Bangladesh goal was a beautifully worked move by two second-half substitutes.

Ace striker Alfaz, who came in the 56th minute for Saiful, lobbed a perfect cross to an unmarked Kanchan who made on mistake to rattle the net with a spectacular header.

Bhutan, who came to Dhaka to make their first international appearance, left home with three defeats. Apart from that they failed to score a goal in the meet.

The inexperienced Bhutanese however came close to scoring a dream goal in the 40th minute when Sonam Jamthso slipped the ball past the goalkeeper.



PHOTO: STAR
Shaven-headed Bangladesh forward Arifur Rahman Farhad slots the ball home past a diving Bhutan goalkeeper in the third SAFF championship match at the Bangabandhu National Stadium yesterday. The hosts won 3-0.

PHOTO: STAR
Two ansars mount guard in front of the Muktiyoddha Kalyan Trust Hospital at Mirpur in the city, which has remained closed for the last five years depriving war-wounded freedom fighters of healthcare.

Eradicate mosquito, keep city clean: PM

BSS, Dhaka

Listening to all concerned on a host of development issues, Prime Minister Khaleda Zia yesterday issued directives to the authorities concerned to enhance the beauty of the capital and to eradicate the mosquito menace by keeping it always clean.

Her directives came at an inter-ministerial coordination meeting on different development programmes under various departments in Dhaka City Corporation (DCC) areas.

During the two-hour long meeting held at the Prime Minister's Office, the mayor of Dhaka, ministers and officials discussed the pros and cons of the existing mechanism for the cleanup of Dhaka City including its waste disposal management, and giving serious consideration to take necessary steps to enhance its beauty.

Listening to all concerned on a host of development issues, Khaleda Zia directed the DCC to clean the city without wasting time to lessen the sufferings of city-dwellers.

The prime minister suggested establishing four dumping grounds in four corners of the burgeoning city for its garbage disposal instead of disposing the waste at different points.

She called for the use of both machine and manual methods for cleaning the city and checking the mosquito menace.

Khaleda Zia suggested reviving the earlier timing of disposing garbage from 12 midnight to 8 in the morning, ensuring proper management of garbage disposal boxes at different points, erasing wall writ

Narayanganj municipal polls today

OUR CORRESPONDENT, N'ganj

Elections to the Narayanganj Municipality take place today amid tight security.

Sources said about 1500 police and ansars have been deployed in the nine wards of the town to prevent any trouble during polling. Police have already taken position at different polling centres in the town.

The administration has identified 12 centres as most risky and has taken special security measures to ensure smooth polling at those centres. "No one will be allowed to create any trouble and we are determined to clamp down on any disruptive activities," said Nur Mohammad, district superintendent of police.

Returning officer and ADM

Filling stations make windfall in spurious fuel

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Filling stations in the city are selling adulterated petrol and octane as the prices of the fuels have been increased, alleged many car owners and drivers yesterday.

The filling stations are mixing kerosene with petrol and octane for undue profits, cashing in on a government order for price hike of fuels except kerosene, they said.

On January 5, the government increased the prices of octane, petrol and diesel to Tk 35, Tk 33 and Tk 20 up from Tk 30, Tk 28 and Tk 17 a litre, but the price of kerosene remained unchanged at Tk 17 a litre.

Now, the difference in price between kerosene and octane is one lakh 59 thousand 120 taka, kerosene and petrol one lakh 41 thousand 480 taka and kerosene and diesel 26 thousand 10 taka a tank (nine thousand litres).

The BPC is planning to mix chemical dye with petroleum to control sales of the adulterated fuel and now checking whether it is possible.

However, Abdur Rahman, president of the filling stations association, and Mohammad Nazmul, organising secretary, could not be reached for comments yesterday.

Doors shut on the war-wounded

SABRINA KARIM

The Muktiyoddha Kalyan Trust Hospital in the city has remained closed for the past five years while most war-wounded freedom fighters lack proper medical facilities.

The hospital at Mirpur was established on December 16, 1979 with the intention to provide medical facilities to war-wounded freedom fighters and their families. It began operation in 1981 under the supervision of Muktiyoddha Complex Fund Committee and continued till 1993.

The trust had leased out the hospital for 10 years to the 'Muslim Ummah Corporation,' a non-government organisation, on January 15, 1994. However, the agreement was cancelled four years later after the corporation failed to pay the Muktiyoddha Kalyan Trust as agreed. The trust got hold of the hospital again on December 29, 1998 and

since then it has been at a standstill.

The government employs a team of 10 ansars and two officers to guard the hospital with all its valuable equipment. This arrangement costs the government Tk 77,000 per month.

However, the guards suffer various inconveniences.

"It is hard for us to look after the huge hospital area with such a small manpower," said the ansars in-charge. Moreover, there has been no supply of water for the past one year. "We have to fetch water in buckets from other places," noted ansar Mobarak. He also mentioned that gas connection was severed eight months ago.

At least 273 of the 3,200 war-wounded freedom fighters who needed treatment for one reason or another across the country have died. Most of them died because of lack of proper medical facilities, said



PHOTO: STAR
(From left) LGRD Minister Abdul Mannan Bhuiyan, Women and Children Affairs Minister Khurshid Jahan Haque, Awami League General Secretary Abdul Jalil and advisor of the past caretaker government Rokia Afzal Rahman attend a roundtable titled "Child Rights in National Policy", organised by the Prothom Alo in the city yesterday. (Story on page 3)

18 fall sick due to fume from faulty generator

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Seventeen students and a teacher fell sick from suffocation caused by fume from a faulty generator at the Daffodil Institute of Information and Technology (DIIT) at Kalabagan in the city.

The incident took place when 31 first-year students of the institute sat for examinations in two rooms on the fifth-floor of a six-storey building. At about 12 noon, the students fainted.

The injured were taken to Samrita Hospital and later shifted to the Dhaka Medical College Hospital (DMCH).

Latifur Rahman, on-duty doctor at the DMCH, said the students are out of danger and would be released

Over the last few days, the northern region of the country has been facing artificial scarcity of kerosene, according to newspaper reports.

Meanwhile, the Bangladesh Petroleum Corporation (BPC) issued a letter to the deputy commissioner of each district to take initiatives to control the adulteration.

Abul Kashem, a driver of the Gabtali-Gulistan minibus service, has said the engine acts up if the vehicle runs on adulterated fuel.

Munir Hossain, a car owner, aired the same allegation without mentioning any filling station that sells adulterated fuel.

The Bangladesh Standard and Testing Institute (BSTI) started collecting samples from different filling stations in the capital for test, said Lutfar Rahman Khan, a BSTI director.

On Tuesday, a BSTI press release said it collected 12 samples of octane, petrol and diesel from four filling stations in Narayanganj

Rajuk walks away with Gulshan walkway

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Once again Rajuk has taken up a walkway project in Gulshan, deviating from its own plan to demarcate property and develop the Gulshan-Banani-Baridhara Lake.

In the past, Rajuk filled up part of the lake along its banks for building walkways but 'secretly allocated' residential plots created this way to politically-backed influential individuals. Rows after rows of plots were created and roads built in the lake area over the last 20 years on various pretexts.

The prime minister had directed Rajuk on June 20 last year to take steps to demarcate the lake and develop the lake area. But other than taking up a project for building walkways, Rajuk has 'virtually done nothing' in this regard so far.

A Rajuk official admitted the walkway project is 'unplanned'. It is an 'isolated venture, a highly motivated one with bad intentions.'

In 2000, Rajuk had undertaken a Tk 120 crore lake development project, which envisaged saving the lake from encroachments and pollution and development of its

banks with various amenities. A consultant was also engaged. But internal feud over the 'share' of such a big project eventually threw it into uncertainty. In a letter dated December 26 last year, Rajuk cancelled its contract with the consultant, saying the process of engaging a new consultant would begin soon, sources said.

"It is not understandable why Rajuk should take up a walkway project when an integrated project is in the offing," said a top official in the Ministry of Housing and Public

Time for anti-AIDS steps: Nafis Sadik

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Dr Nafis Sadik, special envoy of the UN secretary-general, said Bangladesh needs timely investment in preventive measures to maintain low HIV and AIDS prevalence.

She was speaking at a press conference yesterday in the city.

She noted that despite low prevalence of HIV/AIDS, less than one per cent among sex workers, Bangladesh is a high-risk country

for many reasons.

The population age structure is extremely vulnerable to HIV, she said. There are thirty million people below the age of twenty years, and there is evidence that young people are experimenting with commercial sex and multiple partners. Yet, it is generally believed that only a few segments of the population are at risk of HIV, she added.

Moreover, the low level of knowledge of the general population

Cold wave to continue for 2 more days

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The current spell of cold wave, which has been sweeping across the country for the last one week or so, may continue for two more days, the Met Office forecasted.

A mild cold wave persisted over Tangail, Jessore, Satkhira, and Kushtia, and a severe one over the northern parts of the country including Dinajpur and certain areas in Rajshahi.



PHOTO: STAR
Students of the Daffodil Institute of Information and Technology are on intravenous saline at DMCH after they fell sick from suffocation yesterday.

Tofail, Saleem not freed yet

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Neither Awami League leader Tofail Ahmed nor journalist Saleem Samad was freed from jail until 7.00pm yesterday although the High Court directed the government to set the two free, if they are not wanted in any other case.

	Sun Rises	Sun Sets
Jan 16		5-33 pm
Jan 17	6-44 am	

Prayer Timings		
Jan 16		
	Azan	Jamaat
Fair	5-40	6-10
Zohr	12-45	1-15
Asr	4-00	4-15
Maghrib	5-39	5-45
Esha	7-00	7-30

Source: Islamic Foundation