



Did U Know?

Rajin Saleh of Bangladesh scored unbeaten 108 from 113 balls in the fourth and final ODI against Kenya. It was his best performance and maiden century.

What to WATCH

- TEN Sports**
Sri Lanka vs Pakistan
First Test, Day Four
Live at 10:30 am
- ESPN**
New Zealand vs West Indies
3rd Test, Day Five
Live at 4:30 am
- UEFA Champions League**
Inter Milan vs Villarreal
Live at 12:30 am (Thursday)
- STAR Sports**
UEFA Champions League
Olympique Lyonnais vs AC Milan
Live at 12:30 am (Thursday)

TALK TURKEY



Andriy Shevchenko
(AC Milan striker)
"He is just incredible. To me, he is better (at free kicks) than Ronaldinho. He can take them in many different ways. Ronaldinho is good when close to the goal." About Olympique Lyon midfielder Juninho.

DAY'S EVENT

4 day Test (Day One)
Bangladesh A vs Sri Lanka A
Venue: Shaheed Chandu Stadium Bogra

Agent for cricketers

SPORTS REPORTER

Six national cricketers including captain Habibul Bashar has signed a deal with a local agent on Tuesday to take care of their personal endorsements till next year's World Cup.

Vice-captain and wicketkeeper Khaled Mashud, left-arm spinner Mohammad Rafique, Mohammad Ashraf, Javed Omar and Shahrir Nafees Ahmed were the other cricketers signed the agreement with SBSL (Sky Business Services Limited) in a function at local hotel yesterday.

It was the first time in the country the players came under an agency, which will bargain for their personal sponsorship deals.

"It is an new initiative in the country. I think it will open a window for our players in the commercial market. SBSL will work as our agent till next World Cup," said Bangladesh captain Bashar.

Dravid delighted

REUTERS, New Delhi

India's Rahul Dravid hailed off-spinner Harbhajan Singh after the captain's bowling gamble clinched a 39-run victory in the first one-day international against England on Tuesday.

Harbhajan, with a career-best five for 31, dismissed England for

Sultan irks booters

SPORTS REPORTER

Just three days ahead of the AFC Challenge Cup kicks off, national footballers and team management both were unsettled by Bangladesh Football Federation (BFF) president SA Sultan's remarks that there had been complaints of indiscipline against the players during previous tours in Thailand.

Sultan told at a press briefing on Monday that the BFF decided not to send the team to Thailand for preparation due to bitter experience.

"There have been complaints of indiscipline and lack of competitive practice matches when we toured Thailand," the BFF chief had said and his remarks sparked anger at the national camp at BKSP.

"The president's comments will have negative effects on the players and with only three days left before the tournament starts, I think it would be difficult to recover," said team leader Ashrafuddin Ahmed Chhunu to the Daily Star on phone from BKSP yesterday.

"The whole team management is shocked at the remarks because we have been handling a very disciplined team so far. If there had been any complaints, the coach would be the first one know and then the manager and me," said the former national footballer who heavily condemned Sultan's statement.

"The coach had wanted to prepare the team in Thailand but the BFF has failed to do its duty. I think he is now trying to hide the federation's failure and blame it on the players."

"It was an embarrassing situation for the booters who received phone calls from their family because they wanted to know whether their close ones were involved," Chhunu added.

The National Team Management Committee including its chairman Kazi Salahuddin also visited BKSP yesterday to calm the footballers and the coach, who has taken the opportunity to delay announcing the final squad.

The proposed practice match yesterday against a youth side had been cancelled earlier to avoid further injuries and Argentine coach Diego Cruciani will name his final team tomorrow, just before the tournament deadline.

Bangladesh have already lost key defenders Hassan Al Mamun and Mohammed Sujun through injury and the team management has ruled out any chance of recalling dropped senior players. The team will be finalised from the present 24-member squad.

Bangladesh begin their campaign on the opening day on April 1 against Cambodia.

Bhaji stymies England

Cricket

AFP, New Delhi

trapped leg-before by Harbhajan in the next over after hitting two sixes and four boundaries in his 37-ball innings.

"I was not confident of defending such a total but strange things can happen. We had a chance when we got Pietersen and Flintoff. Harbhajan bowled well after a good first over from Pathan," said captain Rahul Dravid.

England, who squared a three-trapped leg-before by Harbhajan in the next over after hitting two sixes and four boundaries in his 37-ball innings.

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Harbhajan Singh celebrated his comeback with a superb all-round show to guide India to a 39-run victory over England in the first one-day series in Pakistan last month due to a finger injury, finished with 5-31 as India defended their modest total of 203 by dismissing England for 164.

England were comfortably placed at 117-3 before losing their last seven wickets for 47 to concede a 1-0 lead in the seven-match series.

Harbhajan was also India's batting hero, top-scoring with a gutsy 37 on a bowler-friendly pitch. He eventually upstaged England seamer Kabir Ali, who took 4-45 for his maiden international four-wicket haul.

Left-arm seamer Irfan Pathan did the early damage when he had Andrew Strauss caught behind with an outswinger and then trapped Owais Shah leg-before with one that came in sharply in his dramatic opening over.

Pathan ended the innings with the wicket of Liam Plunkett. Part-time spinner Yuvraj Singh also chipped in two wickets, including that of Kevin Pietersen.

"It's nice to be back among wickets. The God was very kind. I was confident of taking wickets on this pitch which was low and slow in the afternoon," said Harbhajan, who managed just eight wickets in three recent Tests against the tourists.

England's chances receded sharply when Ashes heroes Pietersen (46) and Andrew Flintoff (41) fell in quick succession.

The pair threatened to take the game away from India with their aggressive knocks before Yuvraj got the crucial breakthrough. Pietersen was caught at the mid-wicket boundary while attempting a big shot.

England captain Flintoff was



India captain Rahul Dravid (L) and spinner Harbhajan Singh rejoice at their victory over England in the first ODI in New Delhi on Tuesday.

Chittagong take top honours

Cricket

SPORTS REPORTER

Chittagong might have failed to lift the four-day title of the just concluded National Cricket League but they took away the individual honours.

The port city players claimed top positions in batting and bowling charts in the country's lone first-class competition.

Out-of-favour Ehsanul Haque, Gazi Salahuddin, Faisal Hossain and Nazimuddin finished among the top batsmen in the seventh edition.

Captain Ehsanul scored highest 955, with an average that is a shade under sixty including two centuries and eight half-centuries.

Second in position is Golam Mabud, the wicketkeeper-batsman from Sylhet. He scored 721 runs with one century, followed closely by Barisal captain Hannan Sarkar with 719 runs. From Khulna, Nazmus Sadat played the lowest number of matches but ended at number four of the batting chart.

Champion Rajshahi has none of their batsmen in the top ten. Only Naeem Islam scored 559 runs, to finish anywhere close to

the top bracket.

Among the bowlers, veteran pacesman Hasibul Hossain, from Sylhet was the highest wicket taker with 57 wickets, with two 10-wicket and seven 5-wicket hauls. Chittagong off-spinner Yasin Arafat also finished with an impressive haul of 50 wickets.

From Rajshahi, all-rounder Mushfiqur Rahman took 39 wickets to finish at number three in the top bowlers' list. Gangling off-spinner Sabir Khan and young left-arm Ilias Sunny of Chittagong also were among the top wicket-takers this year.

TOP TEN BATSMEN

Name	M	I	NO	Runs	HS	Ave	100	50	Team
E. Haque	10	17	1	955	138	59.68	2	8	CTG
G. Mabud	10	20	1	721	122	37.94	1	4	CTG
SYLHET									
H. Sarkar	10	18	1	719	121	42.29	1	5	BARISAL
N. Sadat	6	12	0	661	151	55.08	2	3	KHULNA
G. Salahuddin	8	15	0	628	115	41.86	1	4	CHTUNG
S. Hossain	10	20	1	615	101	32.36	1	4	KHULNA
Al Sahariar	8	15	0	593	102	39.53	1	5	DHAKA
Imran Ahmed	10	18	1	589	85	34.64	0	4	BARISAL
Faisal Hossain	8	12	0	582	180	48.50	1	4	CTG

TOP TEN BOWLERS

Name	Mat	W	Ave	Best	5	10	Team
H. Hossain	9	57	16.00	6-62	7	2	SYLHET
Y. Arafat	10	50	27.18	6-56	2	0	CTG
M. Rahman	9	39	18.64	5-40	2	0	RJSHI
A. Salahuddin	10	34	20.64	5-27	1	0	BARISAL
E. Sunny	7	31	23.45	5-46	2	0	CTG
Z. Rahman	9	30	25.66	5-82	2	0	KHULNA
T. Jubair	7	28	19.46	5-83	1	0	DHAKA
S. Zabir	5	25	20.04	5-43	1	0	RJSHI
A. Kabir	7	24	24.45	5-56	1	0	RJSHI
S. Khan	5	23	19.26	7-81	2	0	CTG



Banglalink's communications manager Solaiman Alam (2nd L) addressing a press conference in connection with the AFC Challenge Cup at the BFF Bhaban on Tuesday.

AFC Challenge Cup banglalink presenting sponsor

SPORTS REPORTER

The Asian Football Confederation (AFC) yesterday unveiled banglalink, one of the leading cellular phone operators in the country, as the presenting sponsor of the AFC Challenge Cup beginning in Bangladesh on April 1.

Footwear manufacturers Bata and Partex Beverage were announced as official partners of the 16-nation tournament organised by the Asian football governing body.

"The AFC is proud to have banglalink, Bata and Partex Beverage as official partners. The involvement of these corporations will go a long way in promoting this event and football in Bangladesh," said AFC marketing manager Hicham El Amrani at a press conference.

SL in driving seat

Cricket

AFP, Colombo

Sri Lanka staged a fine second-innings batting display to move into the driver's seat on the third day of the first Test against Pakistan here on Tuesday.

An unbroken 115-run stand between Kumar Sangakkara (77) and skipper Mahela Jayawardene (69) took the home side to 242-2 at the close after opener Upul Tharanga (72) put them on track for a big total.

Sri Lanka, who gained a thin nine-run first innings lead, were 251 runs ahead with eight wickets in hand after left-hander Sangakkara and Jayawardene milked the bowling on a pitch that played easier than on Monday.

Sangakkara completed his 20th half-century and became only the seventh Sri Lankan to complete 4,000 Test runs during the knock, in which he has so far hit eight fours off 169 balls.

Jayawardene, who was lucky to be dropped by wicket-keeper Kamran Akmal off leg-spinner Danish Kaneria on 54, has so far hit ten fours and a six in his 28th Test fifty.

Sangakkara also added 74 for the second wicket with Tharanga, who was dismissed for 72 in Kaneria's first over after tea.

Tharanga struck 12 fours during his 133-ball knock and added 53 for the opening stand with veteran Sanath Jayasuriya (13).

Jayasuriya was dismissed by

seamer Mohammad Asif, who had him caught down the leg-side by Akmal after he mishit a pull shot.

Sri Lanka earlier put up a spirited display to restrict Pakistan to 176, with their bowlers removing the last six batsmen for 52 to gain a narrow lead.

Pakistan, resuming on 124-4, were in trouble as paceman Farveez Maharoof returned his best bowling figures of 4-52.

Maharoof, who captured two



Sri Lanka batsman Kumar Sangakkara sweeps the ball during the third day of the first Test against Pakistan at the Sinhalese Sports Club Ground in Colombo on Tuesday.

BD-SL second A Test from today

SPORTS REPORTER

Boosted by Mashrafe Bin Mortuza's inclusion, Bangladesh A take on their Sri Lankan counterparts in the second and final four-day Test that begins today at the Shaheed Chandu Stadium in Bogra.

The first match ended in a draw at BKSP where Bangladesh left-arm spinner Enamul Haque hogged the spotlight for the home side securing ten wickets and captain Jehan Mubarak for Sri Lanka with sparkling knocks off 140 and 99 not out.

The national selectors made three changes in the side from the first match including Mashrafe, who had missed entire four-day matches in the domestic competition as well as the home Test series against Sri Lanka due to back pain.

Besides the leading Bangladesh new ball bowler, out-of-favour pacesman Mohammad Sharif and off-spinner Jamaluddin Babu has also been included.

The two teams will be involved in a three-match one-day series starting from March 4 at Bogra.

TEAMS
BANGLADESH A (from): Nazmus Sadat, Nafees Iqbal, Tushar Imran (captain), Sakib Al Hasan, Mehrab Hossain Jr, Mushfiqur Rahim (wicketkeeper), Jamaluddin Babu, Mahmudullah Riyad, Shafaq Al Jabir, Tapash Baisya, Enamul Haque Jr, Mashrafe Bin Mortuza and Mohammad Sharif.
SRI LANKA A (from): Jehan Mubarak (captain), Shantha Kalavittigoda, Jeewan Mendis, Chamara Silva, Malintha Gajanayake (VC), Kaushal Silva, Gayan Wijekoon, Akalanka Ganegama, Ishara Amarasinghe, Mahela Udawatta, Suraj Mohamed, Ranganatha Herath, Ian Daniel, Charith Jayaweera and Malintha Wamapura.

Six-shooter Warne leads Australia to series victory

Cricket

AFP, Durban

Shane Warne grabbed six wickets to spearhead Australia to an unbeatable 2-0 series victory over South Africa on Tuesday.

Leg-spinner Warne claimed six for 86 as Australia won the second test by 112 runs.

The visitors won the first match in the three-test series by seven wickets in Cape Town. The final test starts in Johannesburg on Friday.

South Africa, who were set a target of 410, were dismissed for 297 with less than eight overs left in the match.

Mark Boucher fought hard for his undefeated 51.

Warne, who began his first spell unchanged from the 16th over before lunch until an hour after tea, bowled to a field that at times featured a silly mid-off, silly point, two slips, a leg slip and a forward short leg.

However, before Warne came into the attack in the 18th over of the day, South Africa seemed to have a reasonable chance of saving the match.

De Villiers (46) and captain Smith (40) put together South Africa's best opening partnership in five Tests against Australia before Warne struck twice in ten balls.

The pair put on 91 and were looking comfortable when acting

captain Adam Gilchrist brought Warne on. De Villiers stretched forward to Warne's fourth ball, lost his balance and Gilchrist made a smart stumping.

Warne made a second breakthrough when Smith played a sweep shot and the ball looped to Justin Langer at leg slip. Smith was given out by umpire Steve Bucknor although replays suggested the ball had come off his left forearm.

Warne had first innings century-maker Jacques Kallis leg before when Kallis missed a sweep and in the next over he held a simple catch at first slip when a lifting delivery from Stuart Clark was deflected off



Australia's spin-wizard Shane Warne (C) and teammates appeal successfully against South Africa batsman Jacques Kallis during the fifth day of the second Test at Kingsmead in Durban on Tuesday.