



Did U Know?

The ongoing Test between Bangladesh and Australia is only the second Test match at the Chittagong Divisional Stadium. The first Test at the venue was between Bangladesh and Sri Lanka held last month.

What to WATCH

BTV & STAR Sports

Bangladesh vs Australia
2nd Test, Day Three
Live at 10:00 am

TEN Sports

India vs Pakistan
1st ODI
Live at 5:30 pm

ESPN

South Africa vs New Zealand
1st Test, Day Four
Live at 1:30 pm

UEFA Champions League
Ac Milan vs Barcelona
Live at 12:30 am (Wednesday)



Jose Mourinho

(Chelsea manager)
"For me (Michael) Ballack is one of the best players in the world. He has everything and his intelligence on the pitch impresses me. I also like him as a person."



Bangladesh vs Australia
2nd Test, Day Three
Venue: Chittagong Divisional Stadium

Best & worst ton of Oram

REUTERS, Centurion

New Zealand all-rounder Jacob Oram smashed a career-best 133 against South Africa on Sunday and then rated it as his best and worst century.

Oram's dogged display rescued New Zealand from 45 for five to 327 all out in response to South Africa's first innings total of 276.

"Technically and just from a playing point of view it was probably my worst out of the three (centuries)," Oram, who was playing his first test in 18 months after struggling with injuries, told reporters.

"I honestly did not feel very comfortable at all, I'm not sure if that was the pitch or just being away from the game and trying to get up to speed.

"But from the situation we were in at 45 for five it's probably my best, because I had to work hard and we got ourselves a very good lead.

"At the end of the day 133 is damn satisfying and I'm very happy to have contributed to our team.

"There are days where I feel a million dollars and it doesn't work for me, so I'm very happy to take this."

Oram faced 169 balls and hit 18 fours and two sixes to give New Zealand a 51-run innings lead.

South African coach Mickey Arthur admitted his team had let the New Zealanders off the hook.

"We wanted a pressure-free day tomorrow, we wanted a nice lead but that was not to be," Arthur said.

"We didn't take the initiative after lunch and we let them get away."

Reporters shun Test for the second day

SPORTS REPORTER

Shocked, insulted and disgruntled sports journalists held meetings and discussions all day yesterday with Bangladesh Cricket Board (BCB) and police high-ups in Chittagong as the newsmen boycotted the second Test match between Australia and Bangladesh at the Divisional Stadium for the second consecutive day.

A decision was also reached late last night that the boycott would go on for the third day today, which is also the third day of the Test match.

BCB officials Aziz Al Kaiser Tito, Rafiqul Islam Babu, Zahid Hossain were sent to the port city by board president Ali Asghar as his representatives. Dastagir Chowdhury, the venue co-ordinator was also present in the meeting.

An eight-member committee at the meeting represented the journalists where they pressed a nine-point demand in light of this unprecedented incident.

The journalists called for full security at all grounds. They demanded the correct description of the incident including the modification of the claim that the journalists were trying to spoil the match. The journalists wanted the Chittagong Metropolitan Police (CMP) to amend the press note it issued after the

incident on Sunday.

They also wanted the BCB to condemn the police brutalities and an investigation and punishment of CMP DC (Port) Ali Akbar and Sergeant Anwar.

The journalists doubted the role of the BCB officials as most of them were absent during the incident. The president left for Abu Dhabi to witness matches between India and Pakistan, while the general secretary Mahbul Anam, reported to have arrived in Dhaka yesterday, was completely out of the scene. The absences were significant as the journalists felt betrayed and disgusted by the police actions.

Compensation of destroyed cameras and medical costs should also be paid fully by the cricket board, the journalists pressed. However, all these demands were agreed upon by the BCB officials present at the meeting.

It was known that as per the existing rules the police generally do not have the authority to enter the ground as they did so casually on Sunday. As to who issued the order is a complete mystery to all.

But there were some consolations as Bangladesh players, including captain Habibul Bashar, visited the injured journalists and offered them moral support.

Our protest goes on

SPORTS REPORTER

Dear readers, we apologise to you for the second successive day for not providing you any coverage on the second Test between Bangladesh and Australia. You all know that we are protesting the police atrocities on journalists in Chittagong on Sunday. Please bear with us. However, like yesterday we are publishing the scoreboard:

SCOREBOARD

Scoreboard at stumps on the second day of the second and final Test between Bangladesh and Australia on Monday:

BANGLADESH: First innings 197 (Saleh 71, Mashud 34 n.o.; Gillespie 3-11, Warne 3-47, MacGill 3-68).

AUSTRALIA: First innings (overnight 76-1)

Hayden c sub (Kapali) b Rafique 29
Jacques c Nafees b Rafique 66
Gillespie not out 28
Ponting not out 19
Extras: (lb-6, w-3) 9
Total: (For two wks in 46.4 overs) 151
Fall of wickets: 1-67, 2-120.

Bowler	O	M	R	W
Mortuza	9	1	30	0
Shahadat	12	2	48	2
Rafique	13	4	30	2
Razzak	12.4	3	37	0

Toss: Bangladesh
Umpires: Aaleem Dar (PAK) and Ian Howell (RSA)



THE PICTURE SAYS IT ALL: The empty Press Box during the second day of protests against police atrocities on journalists at the Chittagong Divisional Stadium on Monday.

Mercury goes up in UAE

India, Pakistan renew rivalry for noble cause



AFP, Abu Dhabi

Pakistan are hoping to stop India's winning run when the arch-rivals clash in two off-shore matches at world cricket's newest centre on Tuesday and Wednesday.

The day-night one-dayers will be held at the 16,000-capacity Zayed Cricket Stadium on the outskirts of Abu Dhabi, the second venue after Sharjah to host cricket international matches in the United Arab Emirates.

Proceeds from Tuesday's match will be donated to millions of survivors of the 7.6-magnitude earthquake, which rocked the Kashmir Valley on October 8 last year, killing more than 73,000 people in Pakistan and 1,300 in India.

The Indian will share revenues from the second game on Wednesday and Pakistan cricket boards after setting aside a million dollars for the hosts.

India are buoyant after completing a 5-1 rout of England at home on

Saturday, giving Rahul Dravid's side a 17-5 record in one-day cricket since November. Pakistan have also won four of their last five one-day series under Inzamam-ul Haq, but are still hurting by the 1-4 loss to India at home in February.

Pakistan coach Bob Woolmer said it was important for his side to defeat India in the two matches to win back their confidence.

"It's needless for me to elaborate on an India-Pakistan series," said the former England cricketer. "These games draw massive interest around the world."

"Our team is in high spirits for the two games. We certainly would like to have our names as the first-ever winners at this venue."

"Obviously India is not an easy team to beat. They are playing well at the moment but Pakistan has got the type of players to match them in all departments of the game."

India rode on the young shoulders of Yuvraj Singh, Mahendra Dhoni and Irfan Pathan against England, but the absence of injured superstar Sachin Tendulkar and the poor form of Virender Sehwag and

Mohammad Kaif is worrying the team management.

"We need both Veeru and Kaif at their best but I am glad there are others willing to raise their hand for the cause of the team," said captain Rahul Dravid.

"We have always had good contests against Pakistan and it should be no different in these two games as well."

TEAMS

INDIA (from): Rahul Dravid (captain), Robin Uthappa, Virender Sehwag, Yuvraj Singh, Mohammed Kaif, Suresh Raina, Mahendra Dhoni, Irfan Pathan, Harbhajan Singh, Ramesh Powar, Ajit Agarkar, Munaf Patel, Venugopal Rao, Shanthakumaran Sreesanth, Rudra Pratap Singh.

PAKISTAN (from): Inzamamul Haq (captain), Imran Farhat, Shoaib Malik, Younis Khan, Mohammad Yousuf, Kamran Akmal, Shahid Afridi, Danish Kaneria, Abdul Razaq, Mohammad Asif, Rao Iftikhar, Navedul Hasan, Faisal Iqbal, Abdul Rehman.

Dream day for Afzal

SPORTS REPORTER

A blistering double century by Afzal helped Residential Model School earn a massive 203-run victory over Dhanmondi Tutorial in the Standard Chartered Young Tigers National School Cricket tournament at the East End Club ground yesterday.

Afzal hammered 200 off just 95 balls that included 21 fours and a six, helping his school to a mammoth total of 418. He also captured four wickets as Dhanmondi Tutorial were bowled out for 215 in pursuit of an improbable chase.

However at the Dhaka University ground, BKSP topped that score when they scored 452 runs and completely annihilated Shahin English Medium School by 403 runs.

Opener Asif Ahmed smashed 126 runs off only 91 balls including sixteen fours and three sixes. In reply, BKSP bowled out SEMS for a paltry 49. Forkan took three wickets for the winners.

In the other matches, Willes Little Flower High School, Sunrise Pre-Cadet School, Scholastica and Hazi Ahal High School won their respective matches at different venues of the city.

Germany clinch four-nation hockey title

AFP, Monchengladbach

World champions Germany beat Spain 1-0 to win the men's Four-Nations field hockey tournament here on Monday.

The hosts and Spain had both won their opening two matches against Argentina and India at the weekend to set up the Easter Monday decider.

India survived a second-half comeback from Argentina to clinch third place with a 3-2 victory, although they looked far more comfortable when leading 3-0 at half-time.

The three-day tournament was a test event for the 2006 World Championships due to be held here from September 6-17.

Media partner for school football

SPORTS REPORTER

Web portal bangladeshinfo.com has signed an agreement with Aktivision Advertising Limited, the organiser of the schools' football tournament Bangalink Tiger Trophy, to become media partner of the event at a signing ceremony in Dhaka yesterday.

The portal will provide all information and results of the competition on its website (www.bangladeshinfo.com), according to the agreement.

Chief operating officer of Aktivision Shakib Lohani and Tanjirul Bashar, the head of sales and marketing of bangladeshinfo.com, signed the agreement.

The tournament begins on April 21.

Brothers host Al Ahed today

SPORTS REPORTER



Dhaka league and Federation Cup winners Brothers Union will be pitted against Lebanon's Al Ahed in a do-or-die match of the AFC Cup Group A in Dhaka today.

The match will kick off at the Bangabandhu National Stadium at 4pm.

Both sides are bottom of the table with one point each from two rounds and only a win can keep them alive for a quarterfinal berth ahead of Bahrain's Al Muharraq, who lead the group with seven points. Indian side Mahindra United are second with three points.

"We are passing through a bad time and a win will give us some consolation," said Brothers' veteran coach Wajed Gazi referring to the national team's disastrous 6-1 defeat in the quarterfinals of the recently concluded AFC Challenge Cup to eventual winners Tajikistan.

"I am confident that we will play better this time as the national players will be available for the game," said Gazi, whose side lost to Muharraq 2-0 before holding Mahindra 2-2 at home.

Still, he will miss services of key defender and captain Mohammed Sujon, who will need further two weeks to recover from an injury that also kept him out of the AFC Challenge Cup. Brothers will be without any foreign booter but national number one custodian, on loan from Muktiyoddha Sangsad, will inspire the Dhaka outfit.

"We have a good chance to go to the second phase if we win in the match. There is no other way but to win and we will try our level best," said Al Ahed coach Jamal Al Haj on the eve of the match.

"The players are bit tired because we are in the middle of the league," said Jamal whose side are fifth in the competition despite having six internationals and foreign recruits from Sierra Leone and Nigeria.

Al Ahed, who booked their seat in the competition after lifting the Lebanon Cup last year, reached the AFC Cup quarterfinals in 2005 and will heavily depend on young strike partnership of Abbas Atwi and Hassan Matouk to deliver the goods. However, coach Jamal marked Bassem Marmar as his key player for the game.

Ahed lost 2-0 to Muharraq in their opener and drew 2-2 with Mahindra.

Marvan out of England tour

AFP, Colombo

Sri Lanka suffered a severe setback ahead of their England tour when captain Marvan Atapattu was sidelined with a recurring back injury, an official said on Monday.

Atapattu, 35, who was picked in the 16-man squad subject to a fitness test, was ruled out by Sri Lanka's medical staff for the three-Test series, chairman of cricket selectors Lalith Kaluperuma told AFP.

"When he sat out of the Pakistan series we were expecting that he would recover in time and be available for the tougher challenge in England, but he has failed to recover," said Kaluperuma.

"Obviously it's a severe blow for us. He was our best batsman in England four years ago in the Test series and with him out we will find it extremely difficult to fill that slot."

Jehan Mubarak will replace Atapattu, but Sri Lanka will have an inexperienced pair at the top of the order.

Mahela Jayawardene will lead the side in Atapattu's absence and wicket-keeper Kumar Sangakkara will be elevated as vice-captain.

Team physiotherapist Tommy Simsek said Atapattu might have to undergo surgery if he wanted to prolong his career.

"Marvan's problem was that the disc bone on his back was touching a nerve and we were hoping that it

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A lesson for minnows

AL MUSABBIR SADI



The two best teams may have not featured in the final of the AFC Challenge Cup, the 16-nation meet designed for emerging nations, which concluded in Dhaka on Sunday. But there was no doubt that Tajikistan won the trophy as the best team.

The draw played a major role in Sri Lanka's path to the grand finale as they were pitted against comparatively weaker teams in the Chittagong half of the competition. India's decision to send their youth team perhaps eased the way of Sri Lanka, not even among the top teams in South Asia, who crashed 4-0 in an embarrassingly one-sided final.

And many felt that, Palestine, Kyrgyzstan and hosts Bangladesh - who all competed to be one of the final pairings from Dhaka -- deserved to be in the last four.

During the tournament, organisers Asian Football Confederation (AFC) followed the FIFA model for an international tournament and deployed two technical study groups for Chittagong and Dhaka to analyse every match, the strength and weaknesses of the teams.

Bader A Jalil Shehab, a former Kuwait international and member of the 1982 World Cup squad who headed the group in Dhaka as AFC Instructor, admitted that the four teams from Dhaka were better equipped than their Chittagong counterparts.

"The groups here were stronger.

There's nothing we can do about draws. But it is good for the teams because by playing stronger opponents, you can evaluate your strength and judge where you stand in Asian level. Not only that, you would know answers why a team like Bangladesh lost 6-1 to Tajikistan. The coaches have to evaluate, discuss and see the reasons and put a programme how to develop technically," said Bader, who first came to Dhaka in 1978 as a player of Kuwait during the 28th Asian Youth Football.

"We analysed all the teams, how they play, how they deal with the game, team formation, how they attack, how they defend, who are the key players, how they deal with setpieces. It's overall team and competition analysis.

Bader, who was youth team coach and the director of coaches and youth development in Kuwait for 12 years before joining, said they divided the teams in Dhaka in three levels -- Tajikistan and Palestine on top, Kyrgyzstan and Bangladesh at second and the rest in third level.

"The competition would be very useful for them, but it showed us that they need a lot to develop. The main thing I saw that the players were not well prepared. I mean not for this tournament, but I'd rather say the youth were uneducated. So, we have to work with these countries at grassroots and youth level and in coaching education and principles of developing football like administration, league, finance, media and communication.

He told that the AFC feels it as its duty to cooperate with the countries who do not have these facilities.

"AFC will put the hands if the federations ask for help but they have to show that they are more willing than AFC."

"Tajikistan were the best and Palestine playing them in final would have been great. But in my opinion, Palestine did not deal with their quarterfinal well. They were out of shape and despite having three days' rest before match against Kyrgyzstan, they looked tired. I don't know why they did not recover, maybe due to lack of exposure, discipline and education. It was clear how Kyrgyzstan were playing but the coach did not show any reaction or had any influence in the game.

Criticising Bangladesh's strategy and poor performance by the senior players, he opined that the type and quality of the players are not helping.

"Technically they are ok, average, but physically very weak. The organisation was not so good. Tajikistan were the stronger team and the hosts played an open game. If you go back all the games, Tajikistan always pressed for a goal in the first ten minutes and struggled when they failed. If you play compact or numerical against them, they show slow reaction. Bangladesh failed to do this and the best thing would have been to counter attack. Bangladesh were more quicker but when one player touches the ball once in 45 minutes, you have no chance.

"Still, Tajikistan are not ready to compete at higher level. Because of slow reaction, they face problems under pressure, like against

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New Zealand batsman Jacob Oram hoicks one across the line during his knock of 133 in the first Test against South Africa at the SuperSport Park in Centurion on Sunday.

PHOTO: AFP