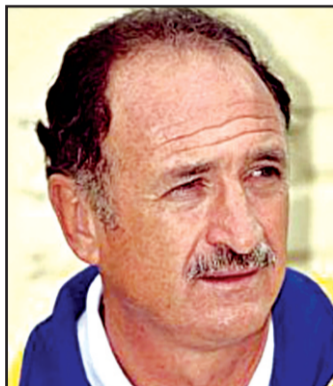




Did U Know?

The lowest total score in an innings of a Test match is 26 scored by New Zealand against England at Auckland in 1955.



Luiz Felipe Scolari

(Portugal football coach)
"I think during my time in Portugal he will become one of the captains of our team because he has the charisma for it, he has potential."
On Cristiano Ronaldo.

What to WATCH

TEN Sports

Pakistan v West Indies
First Test, Day Two
Live at 10:30 am
ESPN

English Premier Football League

Reading v Tottenham Hotspur
Live at 7:25 pm

Arsenal v Liverpool
Live at 9:55 pm

STAR Sports

Tennis Masters Cup
Live at 1:00 pm

Primera Liga
Osasuna v Real Madrid
Live at 11:55 pm

Barcelona v Zaragoza
Live at 2:00 am (Monday)

Bangladesh finish 2nd

SPORTS REPORTER

Bangladesh lost to hosts India by 61 runs in the final of the Special Olympics Invitational Cricket tournament in Mumbai yesterday.

Batting first, India notched up 186 for five and in reply, Bangladesh were bowled out for 125 runs.

In their previous matches, Bangladesh defeated Pakistan by 6 runs on November 8 before thrashing Sri Lanka by 139 runs in their final group game at the same venue on November 9.

The intellectually disabled athletes will participate in seven disciplines that includes football, cricket, swimming, gymnastics, table-tennis, badminton and badminton in the Shanghai World Olympics that is scheduled to take place October of next year.

Rajbari, Dhaka win big

SPORTS REPORTER

Sujon took four wickets as Comilla defeated Cox's Bazar by four wickets in the National Cricket Championship in Chittagong yesterday.

Comilla made light work of a lowly 105 runs scored by Cox's Bazar as Moballick James scored 36 but it was Sujon who ripped through the beach town's batting order to take four for 28.

At the Faridpur Stadium, Rajbari trounced Madaripur by 69 runs. Having scored 191 runs, Hasan took 3-19 as Madaripur were bowled out for 122 in 48.2 overs.

Dhaka also won comfortably at the Mymensingh Stadium after bowling out Sherpur for only 59 runs. It took them only 15.1 overs to overtake the target, losing two wickets.

Khulna had Mahub (34*) to thank as the young batsman salvaged their innings after it faltered in chasing 72 runs set by Bholia in the Barguna Stadium. Khulna lost six wickets in their pursuit.

In the services and education group, Jahangirnagar University

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Walkover or not, MSC in trouble

Hockey

SPORTS REPORTER

Local giants Mohammedan Sporting Club face relegation from the Premier Hockey League after giving walkover to Usha Kriya Chakra in yesterday's Super Five match.

Usha came to the Maulana Bhasani National Hockey Stadium in time for a 2.45pm start and the two Indian umpires waited 15 minutes more than the regulation ten minutes before deciding to call it a day as Mohammedan did not appear.

Acting general secretary of Bangladesh Hockey Federation (BHF) Khwaja Rahmatullah told after an informal emergency meeting of the executive committee members last night, presided over by vice-president Pratap Shankar Hazra, that the incident will stand as a walkover and they will continue the league.

"We have talked with the BHF

president and he has told us to stick to the rules. Now the final decision about Mohammedan's fate will be taken at a full executive committee meeting," Rahmatullah said.

According to bylaws, teams forfeiting matches will be relegated to the next division. The EC meeting on this issue is likely to be held after return of general secretary Shamsul Bari, who left Dhaka for London yesterday.

Mohammedan's refusal to play was a decision in demand of proper punishment of a few players who were engaged in a brawl during Wednesday's Abahani-Usha match.

There was a brawl between Abahani defender Khokon, who was yellow carded by the umpire for a temporary ban, and Usha's Pakistani midfielder Mohammed Saqlain and the match was abandoned after 58 minutes following crowd violence.

It resumed on Thursday to be completed and the league committee punished two officials -- one from Usha and Abahani each.

All but out of title race, Mohammedan rejected the punishment claiming it 'not enough' and they asked the federation to watch video footage and punish the involved players and officials.

Mariner Youngs Club also joined Mohammedan in unison but Rahmatullah told that the federation will request Mariners to play in today's match.

When reminded of the countrywide blockade starting from today, he added that the federation will take a decision about halting the league depending on the future situation.

Mohammedan, however, had submitted a letter to the BHF at 12.30pm yesterday proclaiming their decision not to play.

League committee secretary Moinuzzaman Pila admitted that the committee received a letter from Mohammedan.

"When we received the letter there was not enough time to call off the game. Had we received it a

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Chittagong close-in fielders appeal unsuccessfully for an lbw decision against Sylhet batsman Golam Rahman during the third day of their Ispahani Mirzapore 8th National League encounter at the Chittagong Divisional Stadium yesterday.

PHOTO: STAR

Booters leave for HK tomorrow

SPORTS REPORTER

Hasanuzzaman Babloo has picked seven senior footballers for Bangladesh's last match in the 2007 Asian Cup qualifiers against Hong Kong on Wednesday.

Lara, whose previous best of 44 in Pakistan was in his debut Test 16 years ago, hit eight boundaries during his fighting 155-minute knock.

Dwayne Bravo and Dave Mohammed, who batted with Lara, managed 32 and 35 runs respectively.

Gul dismissed the tail in no time for his third five-wicket haul in his 12th Test, also completing 50 wickets in Test cricket.

SEE PAGE 18 COL 1

Hosts are in command

Cricket

SPORTS REPORTER

Dhaka have to wait to take five remaining Barisal wickets for an indefinite period as today's siege programme has postponed the fourth day's play at the Fatullah Stadium, after Mohammad Rafique's three-wicket burst put the hosts in the driving seat at the end of the third day of the Ispahani Mirzapore 8th National Cricket League yesterday.

Barisal were set a challenging 247 to win after Dhaka were bowled out for 227 runs in their second innings. At the end of the day Barisal

were reduced to 78 for five.

Away at the Chittagong Divisional Stadium, the hosts were also in pole position to win their first encounter as Sylhet were forced to follow-on after being bowled out for a meagre 100 in their first innings. When they went to bat again, they reached 130 for two. Today's play in Chittagong is also under question due to the siege programme but the local police have confirmed security to the players but if situation worsens, the match will be shifted to Monday, according to match referee Rafiqul Alam when contacted over telephone last night.

The entire day's play at the Rajshahi Divisional Stadium was called off due to rain and later, bad light. The hosts were leading by 9

runs on the second day.

DHAKA v BARISAL

Barisal seamer Ishraq Sonnet scalped overnight batsman Anwar Hossain (9) early in the day. Test opener Javed Omar fell seven overs later to the left-arm medium-pace Sajidul Islam and that opened up the Dhaka middle-order.

Number seven Nadif Chowdhury then joined Marshall Ayub but their dangerous sixth wicket partnership was shut down by off-spinner Ali Arman Rajan who took the wicket of Marshall with the score on 182 in the middle session. After that Rajan ran through the lower order of the hosts,

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Gul, Nazir destroy WI

Cricket

AFP, Lahore

Fast bowler Umar Gul took five wickets and fellow paceman Shahid Nazir grabbed three to dismiss the West Indies for 206 on the first day of the opening Test at the Gaddafi stadium in Lahore on Saturday.

Gul returned figures of 5-65 and was ably supported by Nazir (3-42) after West Indies captain Brian Lara fought a lone battle with a pugnacious 61.

Pakistan had reached 39-1, with Mohammad Hafeez on 11 and Younis Khan on 10, when bad light

ended the day's play with 18.1 overs still to play.

Younis completed 1,000 runs in the calendar year when he reached two. Opener Imran Farhat fell leg-before to Jerome Taylor for nine.

Earlier Gul and Nazir dispelled fears Pakistan would miss their two key strike bowlers Shoaib Akhtar and Mohammad Asif, who were banned after testing positive for banned steroids last week.

Gul took four wickets in his third spell after lunch, including the prize wicket of the world's top batsman, Lara. Gul conceded just 11 runs.

The West Indian captain hit Gul for two boundaries to reach his 48th Test half century, surprisingly his

first in five Tests in Pakistan. Gul had his revenge when he produced an unplayable in-swing which took an edge off Lara's bat for a regulation catch to wicket-keeper Akmal.

Lara, whose previous best of 44 in Pakistan was in his debut Test 16 years ago, hit eight boundaries during his fighting 155-minute knock.

Dwayne Bravo and Dave Mohammed, who batted with Lara, managed 32 and 35 runs respectively.

Gul dismissed the tail in no time for his third five-wicket haul in his 12th Test, also completing 50 wickets in Test cricket.

Gul said the absence of Akhtar and Asif put him under greater responsibility and he enjoyed getting Lara out.

"All wickets are special but when you get Lara out, it is something very special," said the lanky pace-man from Peshawar.

Lara was disappointed with his team's batting.

"I don't think there were many great demons in the pitch but we didn't apply ourselves as we should have on the first day of the first Test of a series," Lara said.

The West Indian captain hoped his side would stage a fightback on day two.

"Hopefully, we can restrict Pakistan to a small total and get an opportunity to bat and score big in the second innings," he said.

The first session belonged to the home team who bowled well with Nazir leading the way.

West Indies, who won the toss and elected to bat, were given a confident start before Gul struck by removing opener Daren Ganga for three.

Nazir then took three wickets off 12 deliveries to rock the tourists, trapping Chris Gayle leg-before for 34, Ramnaresh Sarwan (three) caught in the slip and Shivnarine Chanderpaul (five) leg-before to leave West Indies reeling at 52-4.

Gayle hit six boundaries in his rapid 34.

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PHOTO: AFP

Pakistan seamer Umar Gul (R) sets off to celebrate after having West Indies captain Brian Lara caught behind during the first day of the first Test at the Gaddafi Cricket Stadium in Lahore on Saturday.

Dehring warns slack venues

Cricket

AFP, Port-Of-Spain

World Cup chief executive Chris Dehring told the nine venues hosting next year's Caribbean tournament that they could be stripped of matches if their preparations are not up to scratch.

The International Cricket Council (ICC) next Wednesday begins a tour of all the venues starting in Barbados, which will host the final.

But Dehring issued a stern warning to those whose preparations for the event are deemed to be below the mark.

"The ICC, Cricket World Cup 2007 and all the major stakeholders in the event will be carrying out a thorough inspection and assessment of the preparedness of all host venues one final time during the coming weeks," Dehring told reporters.

"If there are countries not meet-

ing the requirements, our board and the ICC are fully prepared to take the tough decisions and relocate matches to those host venues which demonstrate they are ready.

"This event is about to impact all of our lives and we need every single person -- from the workers in the airlines and at the airports, to taxi and bus drivers, workers in hotels, restaurants, on construction sites and in the civil service -- to take personal ownership of the tournament and raise their game; much in the same way that we are asking our West Indies team to raise theirs to win the coveted trophy."

Dehring hinted that Caribbean media were not giving the tournament, which opens in Jamaica on March 10, proper consideration.

"It's time for the media to put the World Cup into greater focus," he said.

"This is not just sports news, but it impacts news, business, finance, Dehring told reporters.

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Music stops!

PTI, Lahore

The Pakistan cricket team's strong influence of religion came to light again on Saturday when they forced the event managers to stop playing music during the lunch interval of the first Test against the West Indies.

An official said on condition of anonymity that the Pakistani players had specifically told the event managers not to play any music during the breaks as it was the time they prayed together.

The event managers for the West Indies series have made arrangements to play popular songs on loudspeakers during breaks and at the fall of each wicket for the entertainment of the crowds which turned out in decent numbers on the first day of the Test.

"This match is all about providing entertainment to the spectators and I would say even the players are basically entertainers. But on Saturday we were surprised when they told us don't play the music, we want to say our prayers", the official lamented.

"The instruction surprised us as

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