



Mushfiqur Rahim punishes one with vim and vigour on way to a happy debut for Abahani in the Dhaka Premier League. The right-hander led from the front with a magnificent 124-ball 127 as the defending champions began their campaign with an 81-run victory against Partex SC at the Sher-e-Bangla National Stadium in Mirpur yesterday.

PHOTO: FIROZ AHMED

Mushy's first in three years sets up opening win

SPORTS REPORTER



It was a display of hunger to score runs regardless of the size of the platform from a top-class cricketer as Mushfiqur Rahim, featuring for Abahani for the first time in his career, struck the first century of the season and helped his side clinch a commanding 81-run win over Partex SC in the opening game of the Bangabandhu Dhaka Premier League yesterday.

Mushfiqur scored a 124-ball 127 at the Sher-e-Bangla National Stadium in Mirpur, which featured eleven fours and four sixes, and found support from half-centurion Mosaddek Hossain. Mohammad Saifuddin struck a blistering 15-ball 39 towards the end with five sixes as the team post 289 for seven in fifty overs.

In reply, Partex SC never looked like posing any kind of threat and lost wickets at regular intervals. Nazmul Hossain hit a team-high fifty as they were eventually bowled out for 208 runs in 48.4 overs.

Abahani's left-arm seamer Mehedi Hasan Rana bagged four wickets while left-arm spinner Taijul Islam took two.

Earlier, Abahani had found themselves in a spot of bother after Mushfiqur elected to bat as they lost in-form opener Liton Das in the first over when the right-hander was bowled by pacer Rony Hossain.

Things went from bad to worse as pacer Jaynul Islam, playing just his second list A game yesterday, removed Mohammad Naim and Nazmul Hossain Shanto to leave Abahani struggling at 27 for three.

It was a dream start for Jaynul, who managed to pick some of the top Bangladesh wickets while bowling four maidens in his first spell. He had at one point given away just five runs from six overs for two wickets.

Mushfiqur steadied the ship, scoring his first run off the 24th ball that he faced, but Aminul

SCORES IN BRIEF

ABAHANI V PARTEX

ABAHANI: 289 for 7 in 50 overs (Mushfiqur 127, Mosaddek 61, Saifuddin 39 not out; Jaynul 3-28, Tasamul 2-29)

PARTEX SC: 208 all out in 48.4 overs (Sayem 24, Tasamul 43, Dhiman 36, Nazmul 53; Mehedi 4-55, Taijul 2-30)

Result: Abahani won by 81 runs.

Player-of-the-match: Mushfiqur Rahim.

Islam and Afif Hossain departed cheaply at the other end as Abahani crashed to 67 for five inside 22 overs.

Mushfiqur and Mosaddek then added a 160-run partnership for the sixth wicket to change the complexion of the game for the defending champions. Mushfiqur reached his fifty off 75 balls and started to accelerate, registering his 12th List A hundred off 111 balls.

He eventually departed in the 45th over, becoming Jaynul's third victim, but the 32-year-old, who scored a first hundred in the DPL in three years, informed that he was feeling some pressure initially as he was playing for Abahani for the first time.

"I didn't play in the DPL last year so it should be after two years. Obviously, I personally feel that this is the top league in the country and the start is good. That was not on my mind [scoring a hundred after three years] but it feels good. Everyone was nervous at the start which is normal. The defending champions are always under pressure. Whether it's a big or small team, Abahani always plays for win. At the end of the day, it feels good that my team won," Mushfiqur told reporters after the game.

Mushfiqur was a Mohammedan fan in his younger days, but he said that he had change

allegiance because of Abahani's passion to remain the best in the business.

"We have heard a lot of stories about Abahani-Mohammedan encounters where players had to wait till night to get out of the stadium due to the madness from the supporters. Now we play a lot of international cricket where the fans come in numbers to

Obviously, everyone is worried and concerned. It's important for us to be careful and pray because there is not much to do. It will take some time to adjust. I have seen the game between Australia and New Zealand and it looked weird without supporters at the ground as the players had to fetch the ball from the stands. Bangladesh is a cricket-mad nation and my message for the fans is to maintain some distance while watching a game at the ground, remain careful and take measures.

MUSHFIQUR RAHIM
ABAHANI CAPTAIN

support us. It's difficult for them to take some time off and watch league games as well. To be honest, I was a Mohammedan fan back then but Abahani, being a top team, always tried to build a champion caliber team be it in cricket or football. So gradually my affection started to be diverted towards Abahani," he said.

Young guns fire Old DOHS

SPORTS REPORTER



With key contributions from a couple of the members of the ICC Under-19 World Cup-winning team, Old DOHS SC started their Bangabandhu Dhaka Premier League campaign with a 25-run win over Legends of Rugganj at the BKSP in Savar yesterday.

After being asked to bat, DOHS were bowled out for 230. Opener Anisul Islam Emon top-scored with 59 runs while Rakin Ahmed made 48 and young Mahmudul Hasan Joy, who scored a hundred against New Zealand in the U-19 World Cup semifinal, added 35.

Off-spinner Shohag Gazi bagged three wickets while pacers Mohammad Shahid and Al Amin Hossain took two wickets each for Rugganj.

In reply, U-19 pacer Avishek Das was instrumental alongside pacer Abdur Rashid. The duo bagged three wickets each for DOHS while left-arm spinner Rakibul Hasan picked up two.

Rugganj were struggling throughout their chase even as Pinak Ghosh offered some resistance with a team-high fifty and were bundled out for 205.

In the day's other match at the Khan Shaheb Osman Ali Stadium in Fatullah, Taibur Rahman's unbeaten hundred helped Prime Doelshwar SC secure an eight-run win over Brothers Union.

Doelshwar were in trouble from the start, but Taibur held firm at one end and struck his second List A hundred, finishing on an unbeaten 94-ball 110, which featured five sixes and seven fours, as the batting side posted 238 for seven in fifty overs. Left-arm spinner Saqlain Sajib picked up

SCORES IN BRIEF

OLD DOHS V LEGENDS OF RUGGANJ

OLD DOHS: 230 all out in 49 overs (Anisul 59, Rakin 48, Mahmudul 35, Pritom 33; Shahid 2-41, Al-Amin 2-51, Sohag 3-54)

LEGENDS OF RUGGANJ: 205 all out in 50 overs (Pinak 53, Sabbir 18, Jaker 28, Sunzamul 40, Sohag 3-35, Avishek 3-44, Rakibul 2-28)

Result: Old DOHS won by 25 runs.

Player-of-the-match: Avishek Das.

PRIME DOLESHWAR V BROTHERS UNION

PRIME DOLESHWAR: 238 for 7 in 50 overs (Imran 34, Marshall 26, Taibur 110 not out, Enamul 23; Saqlain 2-27)

BROTHERS UNION: 230 all out in 49.4 overs (Junaid 97, Tushar 51, Rahatul 31; Rejaur 4-36, Sharifullah 2-47 2)

Result: Prime Doelshwar won by 8 runs.

Player-of-the-match: Taibur Rahman.



TAIBUR... 110 not out



AVISHEK... 3 for 44

two wickets for the bowling side.

Chasing the rather small target, Brothers Union were shaky from the start and lost wickets at regular intervals, although Junaid Siddique held on and made 97.

experienced Tushar Imran also scored fifty, but having hardly any partnerships proved to be the biggest reason behind Brothers' downfall yesterday as they were eventually bowled out for 230 in 49.4 overs.

Slow-medium pacer Rejaur Rahman bagged four wickets while off-spinner Sharifullah took two wickets for Doelshwar.



Playing matches in empty stadiums is a growing reality for sporting bodies all over the world due to the coronavirus pandemic but that cannot be attributed to yesterday's Bangabandhu Dhaka Premier League opening match between Abahani and Partex Sporting Club at the Sher-e-Bangla National Stadium in Mirpur. The reason behind the huge vacant seats in the gallery was that the attraction of the once hugely popular domestic competition has gradually diminished, with the focus shifting to international cricket.

PHOTO: STAR

CORONAVIRUS FALLOUT

Valencia confirm five positive tests

Valencia confirmed on Sunday five of the club's players and staff have tested positive for coronavirus, including Argentinian defender Ezequiel Garay.

Valencia said all those affected were "now at home, in good health and obeying self-isolation measures."

Garay, who was set to miss the rest of the season with a knee injury, became the first player in La Liga to confirm a positive test earlier on Sunday.

"Clearly I've got off on the wrong foot in 2020," Garay wrote on social media. "I've tested positive for the coronavirus, I'm fine and now just listening to the health authorities, at the moment in isolation."

Valencia confirmed more cases shortly after Garay's announcement. "Valencia CF confirm five positive cases of the COVID-19 coronavirus have been detected amongst first team staff and players. "All of these persons are now at home, in good health and obeying self-isolation measures."

Valencia played behind closed doors on Tuesday in the Champions League against Atalanta, the Serie A team based in Lombardy, one of Italy's worst-hit regions by the virus.

After playing the first leg away at Atalanta on February 19 without restrictions to supporters, Valencia was one of the first Spanish clubs to take precautions.

--AFP

আতঙ্কিত নয় সচেতন হোন

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কোভিড-১৯

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