

T SPORTS

Federation Cup
Chittagong Abahani
vs Bashundhara Kings
Live from 5:00 pm
TEN 1 & SONY SIX
Australia vs India
Second Test (Day 4)
Live from 5:30 am
(Tuesday)

PTV SPORTS

New Zealand vs
Pakistan
First Test (Day 4)
Live from 4:00 am
(Tuesday)
STAR SPORTS
South Africa vs Sri
Lanka
First Test (Day 3)

Live from 2:00 pm
SONY SIX
Big Bash T20 League
Perth Scorchers vs
Adelaide Strikers
Live from 2:15 pm
STAR SPORTS
SELECT 1
English Premier
League

Crystal Palace vs
Leicester
Live from 9:00 pm
Chelsea vs Aston Villa
Live from 11:30 pm
Everton vs Manches-
ter City
Live from 2:00 am
(Tuesday)



Jafar Iqbal hitched a ride on Mohammad Atikuzzaman after the latter scored Mohammedan's second goal against Muktiyoddha Sangsad in a Federation Cup encounter yesterday. The Black and Whites went on to win 4-1, with Abiola Nurat netting a late brace.

PHOTO:
AMRAN HOSSAIN

Mohammedan back in contention with big win

SPORTS REPORTER



Mohammedan SC bounced back strongly in their final group match of Federation Cup, handing an emphatic 4-1 defeat to Muktiyoddha Sangsad KC at the Bangabandhu National Stadium yesterday.

New signing, Nigerian forward Abiola Nurat, struck a brace after one goal apiece from Habibur Rahman Shohag and Mohammad Atikuzzaman. Uzbek forward Akbar Ali Kholdarov had earlier levelled the margin for Muktiyoddha Sangsad, who have been struggling to clear their players' payments due to financial constraints.

Smarting from a 0-3 drubbing at the hands of archrivals Abahani in the first match, Mohammedan had no option but to go for a straight victory over the All Reds to keep their quarterfinal hopes alive, a stage the popular outfit qualified

for thrice in the last five editions.

However, the last edition's semifinalists initially struggled against Muktiyoddha Sangsad, who exposed the Mohammedan backline time and again like Abahani did in the first match, but the freedom fighters' side could not cash in on those opportunities due to poor finishing.

Muktiyoddha Sangsad could

Mohammedan SC 4 - 1 Muktiyoddha Sangsad	
Habibur-42	Akbar Ali-68
Atikuzzaman-68	
Abiola Nurat-80, 83	
Bangladesh Police 2 - 2 Sheikh Jamal DC	
Swadhin-10	Omar Jobe-50
Ariful Islam (OG)-76	Solomon King-78

have taken a lead in the 27th minute but Tarikul Islam drove wide from inside the box. Five minutes later Mohammedan striker Aminur Rahman Sajib surprisingly drove over the crossbar from inside the six-yard box.

Mohammedan finally broke the deadlock in the 42nd minute with

Shohag finding the back of the net with a left-footed free kick taken on the top of the box.

They however hacked huge pressure from Muktiyoddha Sangsad, who went close to levelling the margin thrice before Akbar Ali equalled with a header in the 68th minute. Five minutes later, Muktiyoddha Sangsad could have taken the lead but Tarikul Islam squandered an opportunity despite dancing past two defenders inside the box.

After surviving the close calls, Mohammedan started to press and restored the lead in the 75th minute when Atikuzzaman nodded Japanese Uryu Nagata's goal-bound header home after a poor clearance from Muktiyoddha's Akbar Ali.

Mohammedan then looked more vibrant up front with Sajib and Nurat interplaying nicely between themselves. Nurat received a Sajib lob inside the box to create space on his left foot before placing it into the far post in the 80th minute. Then Nurat, playing one-

two with Sajib, sealed the victory with a powerful shot in the 83rd minute to help Mohammedan join Abahani on three points. If Muktiyoddha Sangsad drop points in their last match against Abahani, Mohammedan and Abahani will advance to the knockout stage.

In the day's second match, Bangladesh Police held three-time Fed Cup champions Sheikh Jamal DC to an exciting 2-2 draw to keep their quarterfinal hopes alive from Group A. The stalemate put Sheikh Russel into the last eight from the same group with their 1-0 win over Police in the first match.

However, any result other than a defeat for Sheikh Jamal will put Police out of the race.

Swadhin gave Police a lead in the 10th minute before Omar Jabe levelled it in the 50th minute. Defender Ariful Islam struck their own net in an attempt to clear the ball to help Police restore the lead in the 76th minute. However, the lead lasted only two minutes as Solomon King levelled the margin with a volley from close range.

Mahbub powers Navy to Victory Day title

SPORTS REPORTER



A hatrck from promising striker Mahbub Hossain steered star-studded Bangladesh Navy to the title of Victory Day Hockey tournament following an emphatic 5-0 win over Bangladesh Air Force in the final at the Maulana Bhasani Hockey Stadium yesterday.

Mahbub, a striker of under-21 national team, came into this tournament after playing in the President's Cup tournament. He was the star of the show for the star-studded side, which boasts a number of national team players including veteran forward Rasel Mahmud Jimmy.

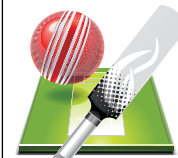
While Bangladesh Air Force had produced some resistance during their 3-1 defeat against Navy in the group stages, they looked helpless in yesterday's match.

Mahbub started Navy's goalfest in the 18th minute and scored two more in the 33rd and 40th minutes to complete his hatrck. Ashraf Islam made it 4-0 in the 51st minute from a penalty corner before Moinul Islam Koushik sealed the victory in the 53rd minute to ensure another trophy for Navy this year following their victory in Shaheed Smriti Hockey tournament in February.



Opportunity and challenge in store for local umpires

SPORTS REPORTER



Bangladeshi umpires have been conspicuous by their absence from the International Cricket Council's (ICC's) elite panel, from which umpires are usually chosen to officiate in Test matches.

One of the main reasons for their absence is the lack of experience in operating Test matches as local umpires have not officiated in Tests since 2002.

In ODIs, there is a combination of one ICC umpire and a local umpire, while in T20Is, local umpires are in charge.

Although there are no umpires from Bangladesh in ICC's elite panel of umpires, there are four in the ICC international panel of umpires. Sharfuddoula Ibne Shahid, Tanvir Ahmed, Masudur Rahman Mukul and Gazi Sohul are on the international panel but are yet to experience officiating Test matches.

With the ICC Cricket Committee recommended the appointment of local match officials (umpires and match referees) on an interim basis to avoid international travel in the wake of the COVID-19 pandemic, it will be a huge opportunity for the Bangladeshi umpires to showcase their talents in the upcoming

home series against the West Indies.

So far only four Bangladeshi umpires have had the opportunity to officiate in Test matches -- AFM Akhtaruddin, Showkotur Rahman, Mahbubur Rahman and Enamul Haque Moni.

Enamul, who already retired from umpiring, said the upcoming home series against West Indies will be a huge opportunity for local umpires to showcase their worth. The visitors are scheduled to play a two-match Test series along with a three-match ODI series.

"Obviously, it's a great opportunity. It's a huge honour to officiate in a Test match and I think it's a great opportunity for Bangladeshi umpires. As far as I know, the local umpires will officiate in Test matches due the Covid-19 pandemic so it's a great chance for Bangladeshi umpires to showcase their talent.

"If local umpires could perform well on the field and also as TV umpires, then I am sure the ICC will think that Bangladeshi umpires are capable enough to be promoted to the top stages in the coming days," Enamul told the media yesterday.

While it will be a big opportunity, it also will not be easy for relatively inexperienced Bangladeshi umpires to take sole charge in the uniquely demanding atmosphere of a Test match.



Lampard rips into 'lazy' Chelsea

REUTERS, LONDON



Chelsea manager Frank Lampard let rip at his players following their 3-1 Premier League defeat at struggling London rivals Arsenal on Saturday, saying their "lazy" performance had cost them the chance of going second in the Premier League.

A penalty from Alexandre Lacazette and goals from Granit Xhaka and Bukayo Saka helped a youthful Arsenal side seal their first league win in nearly two months.

"It was an opportunity to go second against a team that are having a tough time," Lampard, whose side dropped to seventh, told Sky Sports.

"You either make it difficult for them or you give them a little opening and we did that from minute one and continued for 45 minutes. It was lazy to give away a penalty and lazy to give away a free kick that he

(Xhaka) puts in the top corner."

Chelsea improved in the second half and scored in the 85th minute through Tammy Abraham to make it 3-1 before Jorginho missed a penalty with a poor effort.

"We fought ... but in the first half we gave ourselves too much to do... I'll take responsibility on the outside but the players also have to take responsibility," Lampard added.

"The message was clear, Arsenal are a dangerous team. When you go out and play 60% or 70% then you're not going to win any Premier League games."

Arsenal manager Mikel Arteta said he was delighted with the win that lifted his team to 14th.

"It doesn't get any better than winning a London derby against Chelsea on Boxing Day," he said. "Hopefully this is a turning point. I know they can play at this level."

"Let's carry on. We still have big things to improve on."

Pink City V-Day Sports held

STAR SPORT DESK

A daylong Ispahani Pink City Victory Day Sports Carnival was held at Pink City Model Town on Saturday. Organised by Pink City Sporting Club, the carnival involved residents of all ages - men, women and children - of Pink City and it featured such as badminton, table tennis, six-a-side cricket and seven-a-side football. Habibul Bashar, former captain of the Bangladesh national cricket team and currently a selector was present as the chief guest while Rizwan Farouq, president Pink City Sporting Club, presided over the proceedings.

Rahane defies weight of captaincy

REUTERS, MELBOURNE



Ajinkya Rahane defied the weight of the India captaincy and scored arguably the most important century of his international career against Australia on Sunday, with his unbeaten knock of 104 drawing praise from regular skipper Virat Kohli.

Rahane's performance on the second day of the Boxing Day test in Melbourne was a soothing balm for the tourists, who are still smarting from their thrashing inside three days in the opener in Adelaide where they registered their lowest innings total of 36.

"Another great day for us. Proper test cricket at its best. Absolutely top knock from Jinks," tweeted Kohli.

With Kohli leaving the wreckage of the Adelaide test behind him as he returned to India for the birth of his first child, Rahane was left to pick up

the pieces at the Melbourne Cricket Ground and responded in emphatic style.

In addition to his cultured batting on Sunday, Rahane's deployment of the leg-slip position to dismiss three



home batsmen on Saturday impressed pundits, including former Australia captain Ricky Ponting.

Looking to shake things up after Adelaide, Rahane made four changes for the second test and his picks have

already made significant contributions in the first two days.

Quick Mohammed Siraj claimed two important wickets, while fellow debutant Shubman Gill scored a fluent 45 opening the innings.

Rahane helped consolidate India's position by adding 57 runs with the recalled Rishabh Pant and took India past Australia's first innings score of 195 with his burgeoning century-plus partnership with Ravindra Jadeja.

Rahane was dropped twice in his knock, which brought up his 12th test century, but it was still an education for Gill.

"This knock was all about patience," the 21-year-old said.

"When you play such high-quality bowling attack, you sometimes go into a shell and you are not able to score."

"The way he played, it was such a magnificent knock to watch."

THE FINAL

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