

Rain the spoiler in Rajshahi

From Ahmed Ahsanuzzaman



RAJSHAHI, Oct 5: Rain ruled out the first day's play of the week-long Gold Leaf ITF Bangladesh-Pakistan satellite tennis circuit championships here today.

Referees' supervisor Peter Malik of India and chair umpire Lawrence De Walls of Netherlands postponed the day's proceedings at around 4 pm this afternoon and announced new fixtures for tomorrow.

Accordingly the matches scheduled for today will be held tomorrow from eight am onwards, at the Rajshahi Tennis Complex at Club Road. Sixty participants including 20 ATP ranked players are taking part in the first phase of the four-leg tournament which awaits official inauguration tomorrow.

Minister for Planning A M Zahuruddin Khan will formally inaugurate the tournament as the chief guest. State Minister for Youth and Sports Sadek Hossain, Kabir Hossain, State Minister for Land and Barrister Aminul Haq, State Minister for Law and Justice will be present as the special guests along with Mizanur Rahman Minu, Mayor of the Rajshahi City Corporation.

The chief and the special guests are expected to be in Rajshahi anytime tomorrow afternoon.

Also due Tuesday is the top seed and last year's champion Laurence Tielemans of Italy, eighth seed Sylvano Simone of the USA, ninth seed Shige Kanrogi of Japan, 16th seed Nebojsa Todorovic of Yugoslavia and Marek Mickoski of

Czechoslovakia. Second seed and Indian Davis Cupper Zeeshan Ali is already here, along with other players who have been put up at the Rajshahi Parjatan motel. The original seedings list had to be realigned as some of the participants have withdrawn their names. Pakistani Rashid Malik was one of the few players who earned promotion in the seedings list. Originally seeded at number six Malik is now ranked fourth after Sean Cole of Great Britain, the third seed of the meet.

Jeroen Hejnhuis of Germany, previously seeded tenth, now enjoys the status of sixth seed.

Gaurav Natekar who was a member of the Indian Davis Cup team that defeated England recently at home has climbed four stairs up to be seeded seventh.

Sylvano Simone of the USA has parted with his original position at number 12 to be

the new eighth seed. Shige Kanrogi became the ninth seed from his 13th position while Sofronio Palahang of the Philippines is the new tenth seed, originally placed at number 16. Sandeep Kirtane the 18th seed, is the new eleventh seed.

The four wild card berths for the hosts have been confirmed with Hiralal of Dhaka, Zahirul Islam Manik and Shaiful Islam Mukta of Rajshahi and Arif Iftikhar of Pakistan the lucky quartet as two — becoming others one from Dhaka and one from Rajshahi — missed out in the lucky draw.

The main draw comprising 32 players, which include the four wild card entrants, will begin from Wednesday. The doubles qualifying round will also begin on the same day.

Second seed Zeeshan Ali, son of Indian Davis Cup coach Akhtar Ali told this correspondent that he feels very much at home in Bangladesh.

Ranked 125th in the ATP ratings in 1990, the 22-year-old Calcutta-based player understands Bengali pretty well but cannot express himself in it. Zeeshan represented India in almost every notable tournament around the world. He has been included in the Indian national squad for the 16-team Davis Cup final round, the draw of which will be held on October 22.

Defending singles champion of India, Zeeshan visited Bangladesh twice before — first time in 1983 and again in 1985.

An admirer of Ivan Lendl and John McEnroe, Zeeshan is a devout Moslem. "Religion is something very important," quipped the Urdu-speaking, polite Indian.

Meanwhile, the tournament, originally scheduled to be concluded on October 11 might be dragged over a day because of the delayed start until Oct 12.

Inter-varsity soccer semis today

Sports Reporter

Defending champion Dhaka University made it through to the last four when they finished Group B leaders with a cent per cent winning record, having beaten their last group opponents Bangladesh Agricultural University 3-0. In the inter-varsity soccer meet at the Mir Mosharraf Hossain Hall playground yesterday.

Chittagong University, who had earlier gone down to the title-holders on Sunday 1-2, also booked a semifinal berth as they gained the runners-up position of Group B. They completed their preliminary round engagements with a 2-1 record after thrashing Islamic University 8-0 in their last group encounter yesterday.

In the first match of the day, the reigning inter-varsity kings Dhaka University had it their way from the very kick-off with a far superior blend of soccer. Lipu scored in the very third minute of play to put his side a goal ahead.

It was Lipu again who doubled the margin 10 minutes later. Rest of the first half remained goalless. Mahbubur Rahman Roxy, a national booter who plays for Dhaka Senior Division runners-up Mohammedan Sporting Club, netted the third for the winners 15 minutes in to the second half.

Having already conceded three goals the losers were more concerned in keeping the margin within respectable limits instead of trying to reduce it, which resulted in a defensive strategy on their part.

The next 30 minutes of the match saw Dhaka University toiling hard for goals which were not to be found.

Unlike the champions, Chittagong University found their path smooth as silk. They dominated the match from the moment it started, taking the lead in the very fourth minute through Tipu.

At the end of the first half, the winners were up by half a dozen goals with Gias and Munna adding one goal each.

The breather must have done the trick for Islamic University as they were much better in defending their citadel, only letting two more goals in.

Mamun netted the seventh goal of the match while Tipu, who was in a scoring spree, desirably closed the account to make it 8-0.

In the semis, Dhaka University will take on Group A runners-up Rajshahi University at 1-30 while Chittagong will be up against the hosts and Group A leaders Jahangir Nagar University.

Ctg Siraj soccer

CHITTAGONG, Oct 5: The final match of the Siraj Metropolitan Kishore football league 92, organised and conducted by the Chattogram Metropolitan Krira Sangstha and sponsored by Elite Paint Group of Companies, will be held on October 8 at the Dampara Police Line ground here, a Sangstha press release said, reports BSS.



From left to right: Matur Rahman, K M Shakoor, Mujibur Rahman and Farhad Hossain attended a press conference in connection with the ninth Dr Q M Motahar Hossain international masters' chess tournament at the Bangladesh Chess Federation conference room yesterday. —Star photo

QM int'l meet from today

Sports Reporter

The ninth Gazi Motahar Hossain Chess tournament is going to be formally inaugurated this afternoon at the chess room of the National Sports Council.

Sixteen players including eight foreigners and eight locals are taking part in this 15-day long championship.

National champion and FIDE Master Rezaul Bin-Sattar, FIDE Master Ziaur Rahman, FIDE Master Tahmidur Rahman, Saifuddin Lavlu and Ziaul Qader Tuhin are the confirmed participants from Bangladesh.

Women's national champion Rani Haimid, Jamilur Rahman and Khandaker Kayes Hassan are the other Bangladeshi participants while the eighth spot remained shrouded in confusion.

Service b'ball

Sports Reporter

Bangladesh Army earned the right to play in the final of the Inter-Services basketball championship when they registered a narrow seven-point victory over Bangladesh Air Force at the BAF Sports Complex, Kurmitola yesterday.

Both teams started the match on an even pace and ended the first half tied 29-29.

The second half began in similar style with the two teams attacking and counter-attacking. But towards the end the Air Force cagers failed to hold on, relinquishing the game at 45-58.

Bangladesh Army face Bangladesh Navy in the final match today.

Div II soccer

Sports Reporter

The Sonali Bank Second Division football super league witnessed a drought of goals yesterday as the winners of the Day City Club and Bangladesh Boys Club could gather only three goals among them in their respective matches.

In the first match of the day, City Club squeezed through to a solitary-goal victory over Shantinagar Club at the Hockey Stadium.

Rezaur Rahman found the mark for the winners.

Bangladesh Boys Club were more efficient than the City as far as scoring was concerned, producing one goal more Club players, in their 90-minute work-out.

Bayazid Sheikh opened the account for the victors while Fariduzzaman struck to make it 2-0, a margin that proved well beyond East End Club's means.

In a press conference called at the chess room yesterday Bangladesh Chess Federation (BCF) Vice President KM Shakoor disclosed that the BCF had decided to leave out International Master and former national champion Zillur Rahman Champak as the federation expressed its inability to comply with the player's demand for an appearance fee of Taka 8000.

Champak's place will be filled by either Rezaul Huq or Niamul Huq Nuru.

Amidst stifling heat the conference, arranged a day before the inauguration of the tournament, ended in a kind of Pandemonium as journalists and federation officials got involved in a wrangle over the Champak issue.

Champak, according to BCF officials, had earlier expressed his inability to take part in the tournament because of his exams. Later, in a written application to the Federation, he wanted an appearance fee for participation which one official termed as 'amoral'. While defending the moral stand of the federation, the concerned official seemed to have ignored the monetary interest which every game nowadays holds out for its exponents.

The fact that Champak had the rough end of the stick in his dealings with BCF was further vindicated by the fact that nearly Taka 20000 is being spent for every foreign International Master.

Pakistani International master Mahmood Ahmed Lodhi whose rating is 2425 has already arrived while Yemeni IM Hamid Mansoor Qazi (2295) is expected to arrive today.

The Indian contingent comprising IM Lanka Ravi, IM Krishna Kanti Murugan (2360) IM Arun Vaidya (2350), PDS Girinath (2347), Rahul Shetty (2305) and Atanu Lahiri (2280) will arrive on October 7.

Bangladeshi players Ziaur Rahman (2380) and Syed Tahmidur Rahman (2265) who have a completed IM norm each, will find themselves graduated as International Masters with a norm each from this Masters tournament.

National champion Rezaul Bin-Sattar's rating is 2335, FIDE Master Tahmidur Rahman is 2265 and Ziaul Qader Tuhin is 2215.

Taka three lakhs have been earmarked for the tournament which will be played on a round robin system. Beximco, the unofficial sponsors, have already paid the money to the BCF for the smooth holding of the tournament, noted as belonging to third in category of international competitions.

Information Minister Nazmul Huda will formally inaugurate the tournament this afternoon as the chief guest. The draw of the fifteen-round tournament will be formalised today with the actual tournament getting underway from tomorrow.

Meanwhile, a BCF press release said that the federation has compiled a calendar upto April of 1993. A rating tournament will be held immediately after the QM Masters tournament.

Sponsors have been found for the proposed first ever Grand Masters' tournament, to be held in Dhaka in January next.

Cricket's croesus

LONDON, Oct 5: Pakistan pace ace Waqar Younis is reportedly poised to become the richest cricketer in history, reports AFP.

The Mail on Sunday claims that the world's number one bowler has agreed a contract worth more than 250,000 pounds over the next three years with English county Surrey.

For that he will receive a luxury rented flat, a top-of-the-range car, a bonus for every appearance he makes and every wicket he takes for the county, and cash incentives linked to Surrey's performances.

The English tabloid newspaper also claims that Waqar has asked Surrey for between 1,500 and 2,000 pounds to represent the county at non-speaking engagements.

All this comes on top of the deals he signed recently with Qaser sports to model boots and clothing, and Pepsi Cola to advertise the drink on television.

Niaz to skip Tilburg meet

Sports Reporter

Grand Master Niaz Murshed will not take part in the prestigious Tilburg chess tournament in Holland scheduled to start from October 8, on health grounds.

Niaz, who finished joint runner-up in the recently concluded festival chess tournament in Doha, Qatar, had earlier decided to take part in the knockout tournament featuring 112 competitors.

World champion Garry Kasparov will be one of the eighty Grand Masters expected to participate in this meet which will include 32 International Masters also.

Div III soccer

In the only match of the Third Division soccer super league at the Mirpur Stadium yesterday Lalmatia Club and Bashabo Tarun Sangha ended their 90-minute affair 1-1 to share points.

Badda Jagaroni Sangsad will take on Kadamtala Sangsad at Mirpur Stadium at four this afternoon.

World Sixes — rise of a new ball game

HONG KONG, Oct 5: The all round success of the first ever World Sixes tournament played here over the weekend has given cricket an entire new ball game applauded by players and spectators alike, reports AFP.

The tournament, featuring six a side teams battling out encounters of two five-over innings, now promises to become an annual event to rival the world renowned Hong Kong Rugby Sevens.

While the overjoyed organisers were basking in the glow of pulling off a major coup featuring stars from around the world, the players themselves were complimentary of the two days of cricket which was a mixed bag of fun and serious action.

Former West Indian captain Viv Richards was in the frontline of support for the tournament being played every year.

Soccer result

Sports Reporter

In the second match of the Pioneer league inter-zonal football league, the South Zone registered a 1-0 victory over the East Zone at the Mirpur Stadium yesterday.

The league comprising five zonal teams — North, South West, East and Central — had its inauguration on Sunday with North Zone edging past South Zone 2-1.

Thirty booters will be selected from the league for a one month intensive training programme under the auspices of the Bangladesh Football Federation.



Pakistan's captain Javed Miandad gives a big smile as he accepts the winner's cup after the final of the Hong Kong international six-a-side cricket tourney on Sunday. Pakistan defeated India in a highly charged final between the familiar foes. —AFP photo

Another area which will have to be looked into next years is the format of the tournament.

On Sunday, two games, between New Zealand and West Indies and between Hong Kong and England, were academic as Pakistan and India had already qualified for the final from their respective groups.

Teething problems, aside, the general opinion was that the Hong Kong Sixes was here to stay.

And who could argue in the light of the non-stop action — hard-hitting batting with more than 100 sixes walloped, brilliant fielding with a handful of unbelievable catches, and some superb bowling.

The latter, was of course mainly due to Pakistan's twin talents, Wasim Akram and Waqar Younis, who showed that the ball was mightier than the bat — even in a tournament tailor-made for batsmen.

Muktijoddha in Paura Cup final

Our Correspondent

NARAYANGONJ, Oct 4: The second semifinal of the Paura Gold Cup went the same way as the first.

First with Dhaka First Divisioners Muktijoddha Krira Sangsad edging past local BSEC (Dockyard) 7-6 in the tie-breaker to earn the right to meet Mohsin Club in the final on Friday next. The scheduled time ended in a 2-2 tie yesterday at the local Osmani Stadium.

On a rain-soaked pitch before a jampacked crowd, BSEC Dockyard adopted the attacking role from the onset, forcing the Dhaka team to think of nothing but defence.

Dockyard's Mizan made up for his two earlier misses when he defeated Muktijoddha custodian Salim with a superb angular shot from the D-box edge after dodging past several players 13 minutes into the game.

Dockyard augmented their lead in the 36th minute when Monem Munna, hired from Dhaka league champions Abahani Krira Chakra, lobbed the ball over goalie Salim from within the D-box. Except for this lone goal, Munna failed to live up to his fans' expectation during the rest of the match.

The lucklustre performance of Muktijoddha during the first half was partly due to goalkeeper Salim, who failed to settle down and looked confused and shaken, stumbling on several occasions thereby creating immense pressure on his fellow defenders.

In the second half the tide changed. Down 0-2, the Mukti-

two-kilogram (4.4 pound) bat, worth 50,000 pounds sterling (90,000 dollars), was first lifted by Miandad after Pakistan — had made sure their name would be the first engraved on it.

Despite the euphoria of conducting a successful tournament, the organisers now face the task of acquiring recognition from the cricket boards of the nine Test nations and also the support of the International Cricket Council.

They need official support as that would mean top-class players guaranteed every year.

Unlike the Rugby Sevens, cricket's top professionals were paid appearance money to play in Hong Kong.

They promised us a fee and we were all paid," said Asanka Gurusinha, one of Sri Lanka's leading batsmen.

Organisers hope that if they can get the individual boards to support them, then not only would competitive teams be guaranteed, but also costs

shootout. Aman, Raqib, Shimu and Ranjit netted for Dockyard with Laxmi being the sole culprit.

BSEC Dockyard were also defeated by Muktijoddha last year in the Paura Cup semifinals.

The Deputy Commissioner of Narayanganj witnessed the exciting match.

Muktijoddha will meet local Mohsin Club in the final on Oct 9.

Home Minister Abdul Matin Chowdhury is expected to grace the final as chief guest and give away the trophies.

Fourteen teams, including six from Dhaka, took part in this year's meet.

TEAMS

Muktijoddha Sangsad: Salim, Sohail, Iqbal, Shiper, Zahid, Zia Babu (Cap), Foyez Babu, Moshtaq (Riaz), Shabbir, Rana, Hiru (Dolon).

BSEC (Dockyard): Atiq, Abul (Ashit), Ranjit, Salauddin, Aman, Munna, Zakir (Ripan), Shapan, Mizan (Laxmi), Raquib, Shimu.

N'khali Samity meeting held

Sports Reporter

The sub-committee on sports of the Dhaka-based Greater Noakhali Samity on a meeting October 1 finalised the details to stage a gold cup football tournament in Dhaka, says a press release.

Teams from Feni, Noakhali and Lakshampur are expected to participate in the tournament.



Action from yesterday's Sonali Bank Second Division football super league match between City Club and Shantinagar at the Hockey Stadium. City club won 1-0. —Star photo