Bangladesh face Lanka today in Yokohama

Sports Reporter

Smarting from the humiliation of an eight-nil drubbing at the hands of hosts Japan, the Bangladesh footballers take on South Asian neighbours Shri Lanka in their second match of the 1994 World Cup Asian Zone Group F qualifying first leg at Yokohama's Mitsuzawa Stadium today. The kick-off is at 11:00 am Bangladesh time.

IN the other match of the day, Thailand will meet the United Arab Emirates at Tokyo's National Stadium.

The Shri Lankans have played two matches in the five-team robin league. They lost the first encounter to the UAE, who represented Asia in the 1990 World Cup finals in Italy, by four goals to nil. In their second match the Lankans lost to Thailand by a solitary goal.

Of course there was not one among the patriots optimistic enough to expect the Bangladesh team to win against the formidable Japanese who are in the midst of a big soccer awakening, harbouring hopes of hosting the 2000 World Cup. Yet, the huge margin of defeat stunned even the most ardent supporters of the game back home.

Depressed Bangladesh Football Federation(BFF) officials last night were not too keen to talk about the dismal performance of coach Kazi Salahuddin's boys.

Joint Secretary Shah Abul Kashem, while giving his shocked reactions to The Daily Star last night, tried to proffer the apology that despite the result "It is the best team we have in the country under the best coach".

He tried to argue that the team hadn't had enough practice matches to prepare for the tournament, a point made by coach Salahuddin himself while talking to newsmen in Dhaka on the eve of the team's departure for Tokyo.

However, many local football followers felt there could hardly be any plausible excuse for the pathetic performance put up by our players on the field against the Japanese. Some experts, preferring anonymity, told The Daily Star that perhaps coach Salahuddin's ultra-defensive approach, employing a 3-5-2 formation, only helped to aggravate Bangladesh's plight by giving too much space to the marauding Japanese forwards inside the Bangladesh half of the pitch. This might explain why the Bangladesh defenders gave in to the constant, unrelenting pressure, trying vainly to ward off the Japanese attackers who scored at will.

However, after Sunday's opening debacle, coach Salahuddin promised a much improved showing against their neighbours in today's game. Local fans are waiting eagerly to see if those words were really spoken with any conviction.

But if those words prove hollow at the end of the day it will only go to underline the fact that while everyone else has been making strides, some by leaps and bounds, our football has not only been stagnating but, in fact, sliding towards a deeper abyss.

Sydney's bid gets a boost

SYDNEY, Apr 12: Sydney's bid for the 2000 Olympic Games had the support of foreign diplomats in Australia and business leaders worldwide, bid spokesman Bruce Baird said today, reports AFP.

Baird, who is New South Wales State Transport Minister, said Sydney's bid has been endorsed by the United States, Japan, Switzerland, Kuwait, India, Zimbabwe, Portugal, Algeria, Austria, Poland, Malaysia, Egypt, New Zealand and Finland.

The NSW Chamber of Commerce had written to Chambers of Commerce worldwide and diplomatic missions in Sydney seeking support, Baird said.

"The response has been overwhelming, messages of support have come from all points of the world," he said, adding: The responses speak following terms of Sydney's natural beauty, Sydney as an economic nerve centre in the Asia-Pacific region, its capacity for handling overseas visitors and impressive infrastructure."

He said that many countries, "particularly those in southeast Asia and the Pacific, see an Olympics in Sydney being a boost for tourism and business in their own country."

Baird said the letters from business groups and diplomats was yet another indication that Sydney would be a popular choice as venue for the Olympics.

Sydney is competing with Beijing, Manchester, Istanbul and Berlin for the right to host the summer Games.

The International Olympic Committee will make its decision in September.

Liton's ton for Mymensingh

Sports Reporter

A scintillating hundred by Harunur Rashid Liton enabled Mymensingh to emerge as the Group A champions in the 19th Gold Leaf national cricket championship at the Sylhet Stadium yesterday.

Liton, the Mohammedan Sporting opener, cracked an unbeaten 126 off 111 balls as Mymensingh, batting first, rattled up 222 runs for five wickets in a curtailed match reduced to 35 overs-a-side because of a delayed start owing to a rain-soaked pitch following over night showers.

Jahangir with 44 and Zakir with 28 were the other notable scorers for the winners. Khokon of Narsinghdi took three wickets for 30 runs.

Chasing 223 for victory Narsinghdi were allout for 55 runs with Plabon of Mymensingh taking four wickets for only eight runs. Pappu claimed two scalps for only three runs.

Himel and Sumon were the only two Narsinghdi batsmen to offer any resistance by scoring 23 and 14 respectively.

With yesterday's win Mymensingh joined the seven other qualifiers — Narayanganj, Kushtia, Faridpur, Jessore, Rajshahi, Bangladesh Biman and Dhaka University — who, along with reigning champions Chittagong and runners-up Sylhet, will form the ten-team final round scheduled to start in Dhaka from tomorrow, Wednesday.

On the opening day, defending champions Chittagong will take on Group E champions

H. R. LITON ... 126 n. o.

Jessore at the Dhaka Stadium while Group F champions Rajshahi will face last year's runners-up Sylhet at the Dhanmondi Cricket Stadium.

CHARITY MATCH

Meanwhile, an exhibition match between league champions Abahani and runners-up Mohammedan Sporting Club has been planned to raise funds for ailing cricketer Hira, who has been suffering from paralysis.

Organised by the Dhaka Cricket Players' Welfare Association (DCPWA), the match — a day-night affair between the two popular clubs will be played at the Dhaka Stadium on April 23.

The rates of tickets for the match: Gate No - 1 -Taka 100; Gate 3A -Taka 50; 3B-Taka 30 and general galleries Taka 10 each.

Ctg cricket

CHITTAGONG, Apr 12 : Nasirabad Sporting Club and Baikali Krira Sangstha qualified for the final of the Metropolitan junior cricket competition beating their respective opponents in the semifinals here today, reports BSS.

Nasirabad Club beat JAR Sporting Club by ten runs at the Railway Pologround.

Nasirabad batted first and scored 112 runs in 30.3 overs.

Dhafin of Nasirabad was the highest scorer with 59 runs. Zia of JAR Sporting took three wickets for 16 runs.

In reply, JAR Sporting were all out for 102 runs in 23.2 overs.

Asif 22, Akbar 16 and Zia 12 were the main contributors for JAR.

Dhafin, Zahed and Nahid of Nasirabad claimed two wickets each.

In the other semifinal Baikali outplayed Kattali Krira Sangstha by eight wickets at the Dampara Police Lines ground.

Kattali batted first and scored 92 runs for eight wickets in the stipulated 30 overs. In reply, Baikali reached the victory target of 93 losing only two wickets in 23.4 overs. Shubha of Baikali scored 49 followed by Tabdil and Khurram who made 16 each.

Lulu leads Abahani home

Sports Reporter

Last year's league runners-up Abahani Krira Chakra reached the final of the Independence Day hockey tournament in a commanding style when the popular club beat giant-killers Sadharan Bima Krira Sangstha by three goals to one in the first semifinal at the Hockey Stadium yesterday.

The Dhanmondi club, so far the most impressive outfit in the tourney, led the first half of an entertaining encounter two goals to one.

On a day that saw as many as four field goals, national player Jamil Parvez Lulu, scored twice with skipper Mahbub Harun chipping in with one in between. Murad pulled back one for the losers.

Spearheaded by Jamil Parvez Lulu, the skilful forward who after having spent a year with Mariner Youngs returned to his old club, Abahani displayed fine attacking hockey on a soggy, slow pitch.

In fact the winners shot into the lead in the first minute of the match when Lulu flicked the ball home following a goalmouth melee (1-0).

Far from being in a quandary because of an early set-back, the insurancemen who caused a few raised eyebrows with an upset victory against Dhaka Mariner Youngs Club last Saturday, girded their loins and carried out a few incisive sullies.

Abahani, who played an open game with the express intention of consolidating their position, suddenly discovered themselves at par with their opponents when Murad, Bima's nippy forward, sounded the board with another field goal in the 27th minute (1-1).

Stung by this reversal Abahani revved up their operations and the besieged Bima defence was made to grovel under relentless pressure built by a series of penalty corners. However, the score line remained unchanged as Abahani players, particularly crack-shot Jumman Lusai, failed to convert any of the five penalty corners that came their way.

Minute before the short whistle Abahani got the desired lead when skipper Mahbub Harun latching on to a neat through down the middle placed the ball wide off an advancing Bima custodian Karim into the goal (2-1).

The goal suddenly took the wind out of Bima's sail and Abahani enjoyed an uninterrupted session of dominance.

Bima's substitute custodian Javed, however, provided the silver lining in a dismal second half performance of his side.

The young goalkeeper left his charge more often than not and on at least at four occasions he thwarted the marauding Abahani forwards from toting up to the two-one lead.

The prodigal nature of Abahani forwards was also responsible for the goalless second half as the wastrels of the field muffed up some golden opportunities.

It took the veteran Lulu to put an end to this trail missed opportunities when the crafty forward, who came back to Abahani following a belated mutual understanding between Mariner Youngs and Abahani, when he hit the ball into the net from close in the 65th minute (3-1).

TEAMS

ABAHANI KC: Ijtiaz Hossain, Jumman Lusai, Mamunur Rashid, Abdullah Piru, Khurshid Alam, Mahbub Harun (Bias), Abu Zafar Tapan, Akhter Hossain (Aminul Islam Liton), Jamil Parvez Lulu, Alamgir Alam and Zahid Hossain Raju (Fazal).

SADHARAN BIMA: Abdul Karim (Javed), Nazmul, Jobel Lusai, Moni, Taherul, Malik Chunnu, Fazlu (Wahab), Chand (Naqib), Bappi, Murad and Habib.

TODAY'S MATCH

Mohammedans vs Usha KC (3-30 pm)

Boca Juniors win bruising battle

BUENOS AIRES, Apr 12: Three players were sent off as Boca Juniors beat arch-rivals River Plate 2-0 in a typically bruising encounter between Argentina's two most popular teams on Sunday, reports Reuter.

River Plate, playing in their own stadium before a 55,000 crowd, also had seven players booked.

The team coached by Argentina's former World Cup captain Daniel Passarella started as favourites against a Boca Juniors side ridden with internal bickering.

But Uruguayan forward Sergio Martinez silenced the crowd by opening the scoring in the seventh minute with a simple goal following a corner.

Boca Juniors goalkeeper Carlos Navarro Montoya kept River Plate at bay with some fine saves before Alberto Acosta scored a second goal early in the second half.

The sendings off began as tempers frayed.

Boca Juniors' Paraguayan striker Roberto Cabanas and Hernan Diaz of River Plate were given their marching orders when they clashed in the 67th minute.

Boca Juniors' former international midfielder Carlos Tapia followed shortly afterwards for a second bookable offence.

Chess results

Sports Reporter

Abu Kashem Bhuiyan and ANM Ruhul Quddus of Bangladesh Textile Mills Corporation with full six points from as many matches jointly led the table of the Dhaka Metropolis qualifying chess for the national championship at the National Sports Council chess room yesterday.

Kashem beat Rezaul Haq and Quddus outplayed Jahangir Alam in their respective sixth-round matches of the day.

Afzal, who beat Ali Amzad Mintu yesterday, earned five and half points to follow the top two.

Those, who collected five points each, were Reza, Jahangir, Abdullah Al-Rakib, Shaikh Shahadat Hossain Ratna, Majibur Rahman, Monir Hossain and Tofazzal Hossain Tipu.

Those, who got four points each, were Khorshed Alam, Arifuzzaman, Nooruddin, SM Shawkat Hossian, Jahangir Alam and Saifullah Russel.

An Abahani forward takes over as the Sadharan Bima skipper fails to control the ball after losing balance during the first semifinal of the Independence Day tournament at the Hockey Stadium yesterday. Abahani advanced to the final beating the insurancemen 3-1.

— Star photo

Maharaj to defend Pak quartet

PORT OF SPAIN, Trinidad, Apr 12: Trinidadian human rights lawyer Ramesh Lawrence Maharaj flew to the nearby Caribbean island of Grenada on Sunday to defend four Pakistani cricketers charged with possession of marijuana, reports Reuter.

Shortly before his departure, Maharaj told Reuters the drugs were found near the players on the beach, not on the players themselves. He suggested the possibility that the team members might have been framed.

Police in Grenada have said the eight hand-rolled cigarettes, which were being tested in a Barbados laboratory, were found on the beach chairs the players had brought from their hotel to the ocean-side on Thursday evening at the Grand Anse Beach resort.

Maharaj said he was approached by the Pakistan manager Khalid Mahmood to represent the players.

Arrested and charged were team captain Wasim Akram, vice-captain Waqar Younis, the Pakistan's leading strike bowler, Aaqib Javed, a pace-man, and leg spinner Mushtaq Ahmed.

They have been released on bail.

Also charged were two English women — Susan Ross and Joan Coughlin — and a native of Grenada, Irvin Wilson.

They were to appear in court on Tuesday to answer the charges.

Grenada's Prime Minister Nicholas Brathwaite has said the incident was "unfortunate" and expressed the hope that the rest of Pakistan's tour of the Caribbean would not be aborted.

The team on Saturday started a three-day match in Grenada with the West Indies under-23 team. The first of three Test matches in Trinidad is scheduled to start on Thursday at the Queen's Park Oval.

Japan dominate in AAAA meet

JAKARTA, Apr 12: Iran's Hamid Sajjadi and Japan's Minori Hayakari won the men's and women's gold medals respectively in the individual event in the Japan dominated second Asian cross country race here Sunday, reports AFP.

Sajjadi clocked 32 mins 02 secs to beat Dinesh Kumar of India (32.10) and Japan's Fumio Uchi (32:14) in the men's senior individual 10-kilometre race organised by the Asian Amateur Athletic Association (AAAA).

Hayakari took the women's six*kilometre senior individual race in 21:28 beating compatriots Junko Tsukamoto (21.40) and Kayoko Aginara (21.48).

In the senior team race, India's three-man senior team took first place followed by Shri Lanka and the host team. In the women's team event Japan took the gold, with India taking silver and Vietnam the bronze.

In the men's junior individual race Awadh Nasher of Yemen won in 25:40 over the eight kilometres ahead of countryman Anwar Muhammad (25:57) and Gheibali Mohebbi of Iran (26:11).

Yemen also took the honours in the junior team race followed by India and Iran.

In the women's junior individual race Japan took a clean sweep over four kilometres with Noriko Wada first in 13:56 Kanako Haginag second in 14:02 and Keiko Hatawakan third in 14:03.

In the junior team event Japan also walked off with the gold followed by India and Vietnam.

"Japan athletes have always tried hard. They deserve it," AAAA chairman Mohamad Hasan told journalists after the race, adding what was important was that Asian athletes had worked hard to popularize the sport.

Two Koreas may send joint TT team to Sweden

TOKYO, Apr 12: The two Koreas could field a united team again at next month's world table tennis championships in Sweden, reports Reuter.

"South Korea and North Korea have not yet filed entry applications for the coming meeting but we understand that would imply they are still searching for ways to come up with a joint team," International Table Tennis Federation president Ichiro Ogimura said late on Sunday.

Communist North and capitalist South Korea, still technically at war, formed a unified team for the first time for the 1991 championship.

But Japan's Kyodo News Agency quoted unnamed sources as saying such a joint team would not be easily formed this time, mainly because of the North's decision to withdraw from the Nuclear Non-proliferation Treaty (NPT).

Spinners put Pakistan on top

ST GEORGE'S, Grenada, Apr 12: Pakistan, with four of their players facing charges of drugs possession, concentrated on cricket to good effect on Sunday and gained the upper hand in their match against a West Indies under-23 side, reports Reuter.

Pakistan finished the second day of the three-day game 278 runs ahead with four second innings wickets intact as a Trinidadian human rights lawyer flew in to defend captain Wasim Akram and three other players charged with marijuana possession.

Akram, fellow fast bowlers Waqar Younis and Aaqib Javed and leg-spinner Mushtaq Ahmed were released on bail after being arrested late on Thursday. They are due to answer the charges on Tuesday.

All except Aaqib are playing in the current match, which went ahead after the whole tour had appeared in jeopardy.

Mushtaq claimed three wickets on Sunday and Akram and Waqar took one apiece as the under-23 side were dismissed for 184 in their first innings in reply to Pakistan's 284 for two declared.

But top bowling honours went to left-arm spinner Nadeem Khan. Nadeem took four for 21 in six overs including the wicket of Horace Waldron, topscorer for the home side with 44.

Pakistan shuffled their order in their second innings, dropping first innings century-makers Shakeel Ahmed and Asif Mujtaba down the order to give others some batting practice.

Makeshift opener Zahid Fazal hit an attractive 80 as Pakistan, with a first innings lead of 100, reached 178 for six.

Zahid was run out two overs before the close with a direct hit from mid-on by opposing captain John Eugene. He faced 101 balls and struck 11 fours and two sixes.

Akram batted number four but did not last long, trapped

NADEEM KHAN... 4 for 21

lbw without scoring by fast bowler Vasbert Drakes who had dismissed Rashid Latif in the same fashion earlier in the over.

Pakistan were expected to declare today early enough to give their bowling attack time to chase victory as they seek a psychological boost ahead of the first Test against the West Indies beginning on Thursday. The two teams drew a five-match one-day series earlier in the tour.

SCOREBOARD

Sunday's second day close of play scoreboard in the cricket clash between the West Indies Under-23 XI and Pakistan.

PAKISTAN: First innings 284-2 dec

WEST INDIES UNDER-23 XI

RG Samuels c Akram b Mushtaq	23
PA Wallace c Mujtaba b Ataur Rehman	40
AFG Griffith c Nadim Khan b Mushtaq	29
JJ Eugene c Latif b Akram	13
S Chanderpaul st Latif b Mushtaq	0
HR Waldron c and b Nadim Khan	44
CO Browne c and b Nadim Khan	3
HAG Anthony c Akram b Nadim Khan	6
V C Drakes c Sohail b Nadim Khan	17
F A Rose lbw b Younis	0
C E Cuffy not out	0
Extras: (b-6, lb-1,nb-2)	9
Total:	184

Fall of wickets: 1-48; 2-86; 3-96; 4-96; 5-137; 6-140; 7-146; 8-184; 9-184.

Bowling:	O	M	R	W
Akram	8	1	30	1
Younis	8.2	2	53	1
Ataur Rehman	7	0	37	1
Mushtaq	9	2	36	3
Nadim Khan	6	2	21	4

PAKISTAN: Second innings

Aamir Sohail c Griffith b Cuffy	25
Zahid Fazal run out	80
Rashid Latif lbw b Drakes	19
Wasim Akram lbw b Drakes	0
Shakeel Ahmed c Eugene b Cuffy	23
Waqar Younis b Chanderpaul	14
Asif Mujtaba notout	2
Nadim Khan not out	2
Extras: (lb-2, nb-10, w-1)	13
Total: (for six wickets)	178

Fall of wickets: 1-29; 2-64; 3-68; 4-118; 5-166; 6-176

Bowling:	O	M	R	W
Rose	6	1	34	0
Cuffy	9	0	20	2
Drakes	7	0	31	2
Anthony	10	3	31	0
Chanderpaul	15	1	60	1

Caniggia will have to wait a while

ROME, Apr 12: Argentine striker Claudio Caniggia may have to wait more than a month before learning how long he will be banned from soccer after testing positive for cocaine, reports Reuter.

The AS Roma striker was found positive for the drug in a second and conclusive dope test on Tuesday and faces a ban of between six months and two years.

The Italian Soccer Federation said on Wednesday it had passed the documents on the case to its chief legal officer who must now summon the federal disciplinary committee to rule on the punishment.

The player and his club are allowed 10 working days to prepare a defence and, given the Easter holiday, the meeting will not take place until April 23 at the earliest.

Caniggia, who tested positive after the Roma-Napoli league match on March 21, can subsequently appeal to Italian soccer's "High Court" which would meet early next month.

The long-haired Roma forward is the second Argentine international to be caught up in a cocaine scandal in Italy in recent years.

CLAUDIO CANIGGIA

Diego Maradona, who captained the Argentine squad featuring Caniggia to the 1990 World Cup final, was banned for 15 months after testing positive for cocaine when he was playing for Napoli in March 1991.

Caniggia is hoping his punishment will be milder so he will be available for the World Cup finals in the United Sates in June and July next year.

"Claudio told me that he was very upset but he is awaiting the results from the disciplinary committee with confidence," his lawyer Settimio Aloisio told Italian newspapers.

"He said he would not leave Italian soccer. At the age of 26 he does not feel he is finished. He thinks he could be back for the American World Cup," the Buenos-Aires based Aloisio said after phoning Caniggia in Rome.

Newspapers have speculated that Caniggia will be banned for a year.

Brescia defender Edoardo Bortolotti was given a 12-month ban after testing positive for cocaine after a Second Division match shortly after the Maradona case two years ago.

The spokesman added no moves had yet been taken to impose a temporary suspension on Caniggia but Roma are clearly not planning on selecting him for any more matches.

Furious fans force postponement

RIO DE JANEIRO, Apr 12: A Brazilian soccer match was abandoned when fans, furious at two controversial refereeing decisions, threw stones on to the pitch, reports Reuter.

In another game at the weekend, Sao Paulo coach Tele Santana an outspoken critic of Brazilian referees, was sent off for the second time in a month for criticising the match official.

The Bragantino-Corinthians match in the Sao Paulo Championships erupted in chaos following two decisions against Corinthians within the space of three minutes.

In the 72nd minute, with the score 1-1, a thundering shot by Bragantino's Gil Baiano hit Corinthians forward Paulo Sergio on the hand. The referee awarded Bragantino a penalty, ignoring desperate Corinthians appeals that the handball was accidental.

When the arguing died down, Gil Baiano himself stepped up to convert the spot kick.

Three minutes later Corinthians forward Viola headed what would have been an equaliser from a free kick but the goal was disallowed for handball by a teammate.

Corinthians players surrounded the linesman protesting, while fans behind the goal began throwing stones onto the pitch.

The referee abandoned the match while police brought the fans under control. There were no reports of injuries or arrests.

A decision has yet been taken by the Sao Paulo Football Federation (FPF) over the result of the match. Santana, sent off against Bragantino last month, was shown the red card again in the 24th minute of Sao Paulo's 2-1 win over Marilia.

Referee Marco Spironelli said afterwards Santana was sent off for "constant complaining".

Santana was facing a hearing later on Monday for "anti-sporting behaviour" after he stormed off the bench in disgust at a refereeing decision during a game with Ponte Preta.

Sao Paulo midfielder Pintano and Marilia midfielder Amauri were also dismissed in the second half, both for violent fouls.

Palmeiras, who beat Portugues a 2-1, continue to lead Group A of the Sao Paulo Championship. The top six teams in the group qualify for the second stage along with two teams from the weaker Group B.

Fluminese beat Volta Redonda 1-0 to take the first stage of the Rio de Janeiro Championship unbeaten. Striker Ezio scored the only goal of an undistinguished match.

Goram Scottish player-of-year

GLASGOW, Scotland, Apr 12: Glasgow Rangers goalkeeper Andy Goram has been named player-of-the-year by the Scottish Football Writers' Association, reports AFP.

The Scottish international won by a sizeable margin from teammate Ally McCoist, last year's winner. Two more Rangers players, striker Mark Hateley and midfielder Stuart McCall, were third and fourth.

Goram, who has recorded 22 shut-outs this season, claimed the award for several memorable displays in the European Cup and for Scotland in World Cup qualifiers.

ATP rankings

MONTE CARLO, Apr 12: Leading men's singles rankings issued by the Association of Tennis Professional on Monday:

1. Pete Sampras (US) 3,736 Points
2. Jim Courier (US) 3,563 Points
3. Stefan Edberg (Sweden) 2,972 Points
4. Boris Becker (Germany) 2,680 Points
5. Petr Korda (Czech Republic) 2,452 Points
6. Goran Ivanisevic (Croatia) 2,294 Points
7. Andre Agassi (US) 2,245 Points
8. Ivan Lendl (US) 1,959 Points
9. Michael Chang (US) 1,899 Points
10. Michael Stich (Germany) 1,801 Points
11. Andrei Medvedev (Ukraine) 1,721 Points
12. Thomas Muster (Austria) 1,659 Points
13. Richard Krajicek (Netherlands) 1,610 Points
14. Malivai Washington (US) 1,590 Points
15. Karel Novacek (Czech Republic) 1,571 Points
16. Wayne Ferreira (South Africa) 1,564 Points
17. Sergi Bruguera (Spain) 1,550 Points
18. Guy Forget (France) 1,519 Points
19. Henrik Holm (Sweden) 1,388 Points
20. Alexander Volkov (Russia) 1,309 Points