

Arambagh owe Shoeb one

Arambagh Krira Sangha retained their place in the 10-team Premier Division football league...

Shoeb scored the all-important goal for Arambagh in the 44th minute.

Both Arambagh and Rahmatganj have 22 points on completion of 22 league matches...

Earlier, in the day's first relegation league match, Agrami Bank Club outplayed Victoria Sporting Club 3-0.

Schools h'ball from tomorrow

The ninth Bata schools handball tournament organised by the Bangladesh Handball Federation (BHF)...

A total of 15 schools in the girls' division and 12 in the boys' division are taking part in the tournament.

The girls' competition will start at the Sultana Kamal Women's Sports Complex ground in Dhanmondi tomorrow...

In the inaugural match defending champions Vicarunnessa Noon School will take on Gurnunnessa Girls' School at 3 pm.

State Minister for Youth and Sports Obaidul Quader will formally declare the tournament open.

A press conference in connection with the tournament, was held at the NSC conference room yesterday.

BHF president Lt Col (Retd) Abdul Hamid and tournament director Syed Bazul Karim briefed the press about the various aspects of the tournament.

Hamida Ali, the vice-president of BHF and M S Alam, the marketing manager of sponsoring company Bata Shoe Limited, were also present on the occasion.

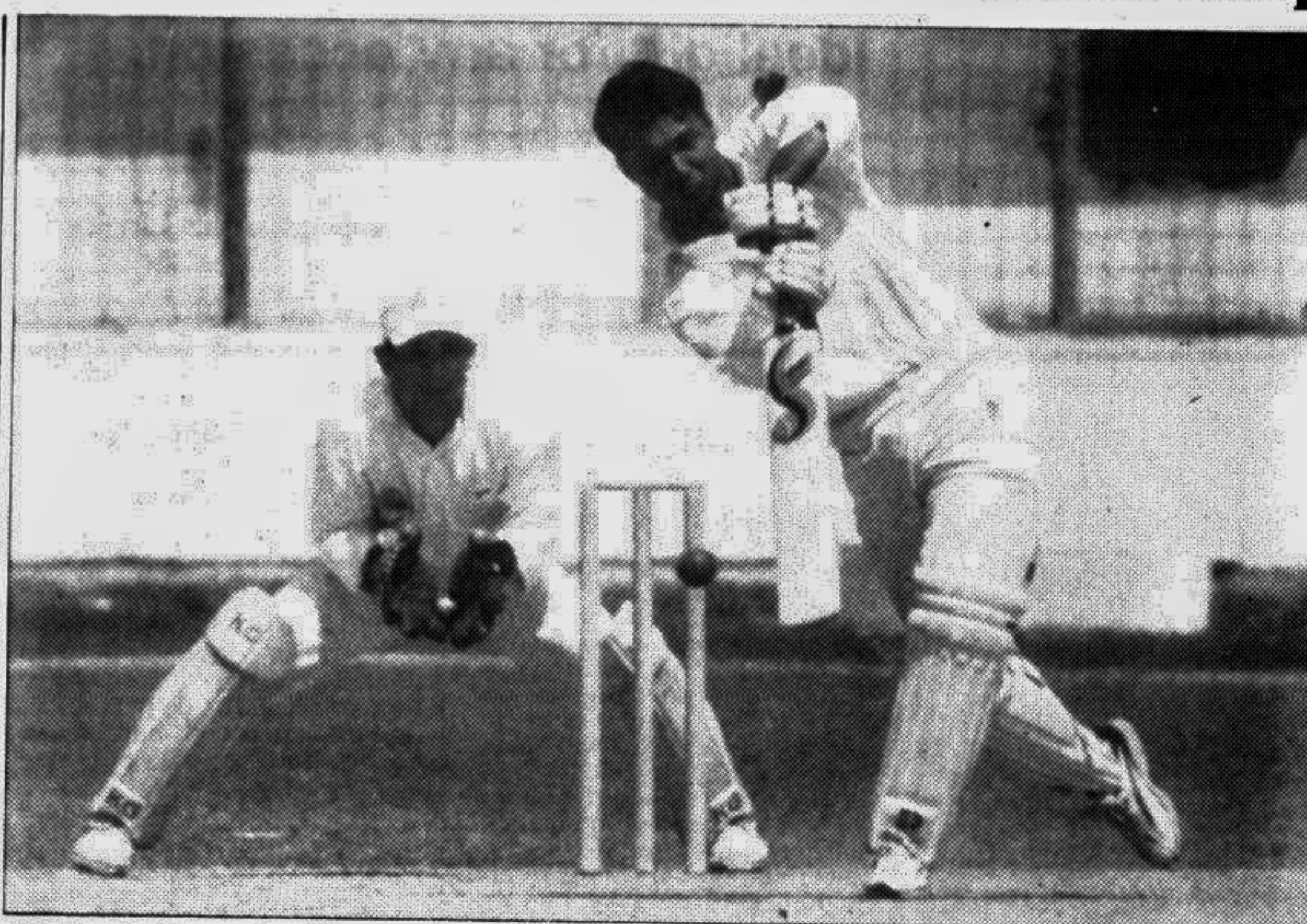
A budget of Tk 2,48,720.00 has been estimated to run the tournament of which Bata will provide Tk 1,60,000.00.

Agassi rolls on

SCOTTSDALE, Arizona, Mar 9: Andre Agassi won his second tournament in a row Sunday, defeating Australian Jason Stoltenberg 6-4, 7-6 (7/3) in the ATP Tour event here, reports AFP.

TODAY'S MATCHES

Janakantha Premier Cricket Super League: Brothers Union vs Surjo Tarun Club (Dhaka Stadium) First Division Football Super League: Badda Jagaran vs Mirpur Chalanika (Mirpur Stadium, 3 pm)



Abahani all-rounder Niamur Rashid leaves his crease to drive during a Janakantha Premier Division super league match against Bangladesh Biman at the Dhaka Stadium yesterday. —Star photo

Niamur Rashid dazzles with all-round performance Abahani's reign extended

Bangladesh Biman can be thrashed by almost anybody these days but their 58-run debacle against Abahani Krira Chakra yesterday helped the Dhanmondi outfit to retain the Premier Division League title with the luxury of a Super League game to spare.

Winning the toss in the morning, the reigning champions, wearing black badge to commemorate the memory of former Indian Test cricketer Raman Lamba, scored a fighting total of 209 for eight in the stipulated 50 overs.

Abahani wrapped up the match and the league when they shot out the national airlines for a meagre 151 in 44.1 overs. The sun was a long way from setting as Abahani began celebrating their 12th triumph in the Dhaka league.

Champions Abahani will take on their arch-rivals Mohammedan Sporting Club on March 13, a clash that will have its usual sparks in spite of yesterday's decisive upset.

The outcome of yesterday's match left the popular Dhanmondi outfit six points clear at the top of the six-team Super League as they raised their tally to 26 points.

It was yet another resplendent team effort yesterday that led Abahani to their 13th win in the league against only two defeats with almost everybody making a large or little contribution to their total.

With Sri Lankan recruit Avishka Gunawardana making his debut by opening the innings with the ever-reliable Azam Iqbal, Abahani got off to a flying start collecting 27 runs in five overs.

But the scoring rate sauntered after Gunawardana was yorked by Biman's right-arm medium-pace Mofizur Rahman in the last ball of the fifth over after he scored a 17-ball 15.

The 20-year old tall left-handed batsman who came in as a replacement for Raman Lamba, showed his prowess with two successive boundaries in the two previous deliveries.

But he failed to keep his cool and went on to hit his third successive 36 balls without any boundary while Salahuddin was unbeaten on 11 when Abahani closed their account.

Left-arm spinner Saleh Ahmed and right-arm medium-pace Athar Ali Khan captured two wickets each for Biman giving away 30 and 38 runs.

In reply, Biman were bundled out for 151 in 44.1 overs, thanks to some inspirational bowling by left-arm twacker Saifullah Khan and some sparkling fielding by Niamur Rashid.

Saifullah, the highest wicket-taker in the league last season, finished with four for 39 from his 9.1 overs while Niamur, who top-scored for Abahani earlier in the first session, was also instrumental in four dismissals taking three good catches and the wicket of Faruque, who surprisingly opened the Biman innings yesterday instead of going one-down.

Middle-order Habibul Bashar, was Biman's Lorie Ranger but fighting a lost battle with a gutsy 68. Coming in to bat at number three with Biman losing their first wicket (Athar Ali) without any score on the board, Bashar, also of Bangladesh, played the sheet anchor role to repair the Biman innings with his third fifty of the league.

After losing Faruque (1) on 13 in the sixth over, Bashar added 65 runs for the third wicket along with Pakistani middle-order Mansoor Akhter (28) before the latter was caught by Gunawardana at the long-on off a Salahuddin delivery.

Even after Mansoor's return, Biman kept alive their slim hopes. But they conked away with Bashar in the 39th over when he was caught by Azam at short fine leg. It was an incoming ball from Saifullah going down the leg which Bashar tried to sweep across to square-leg but he missed the line, only to top edge to Azam. In his more than three-hour stay at the crease, Bashar faced 111 balls from which he hit only three boundaries.

Once Bashar departed on 128, it seemed only a matter of time. The Abahani boys took another six overs to dismiss the remaining four batsmen.

The jubilation of the champions ran deep into the night.

South Africa were three wickets away from squaring the three-Test series against Pakistan.

On the penultimate day of the final Test in Port Elizabeth yesterday, the tourists had slumped to 120 for seven chasing an improbable target of 394 runs for victory before bad light stopped play.

All-rounder Azhar Mahmood (30) was at the crease with Waqar Younis. Left-arm chinaman Paul Adams captured three wickets.

Agencies add: South Africa resuming at their overnight 94 for two, a lead of 281, went on to declare their second innings at 206 for seven.

One-down Jacques Kallis and Hylton Ackerman put on a 78-run partnership for the third wicket.

Kallis reached 69, his first half century of the series before being caught by wicketkeeper Rashid Latif off Mahmood in the last over before lunch. Ackerman made 42.

Fast bowler Waqar Younis bagged four for 55 and ten in the match to become the first Pakistani to do so against the Proteas.

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Sports Reporter



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Zakir (5), in the next three overs before Salahuddin and Khaled Masood made the unbeaten 25-run partnership for the ninth wicket which came from just 22 balls.

Masood was not out on 19 off 36 balls without any boundary while Salahuddin was unbeaten on 11 when Abahani closed their account.

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Sports bodies go to polls from toady

The much-sought month-long elections in different sports federations begins at the National Sports Council (NSC) from today.

Off the 32 federations, affiliated with the NSC, the governing body of local sports, elections of the Bangladesh Women's Sport Association (BWSA) and Bangladesh Bodybuilding Federation (BBF) will be held at the conference room from 10 am to 5 pm.

Although the BWSA is likely to offer a single panel for the 29-member executive committee, sources close to the BBF forecast a two-way close contest between Latif-Alam and Nazrul-Mehbub panels. To drum up its campaign, Latif-Alam panel brought out a colourful procession around the Dhaka Stadium yesterday.

In BWSA, 109 voters will exercise their franchise while at the BBF 67 councilors will elect a 21-member executive committee.

However, NSC, as per constitution, will nominate presidents and one executive committee member of each federation. The election of executive members in different federations will mark an end to the much-criticised ad-hocism and relinquish the supreme power of the NSC. The elected committees will run the office for the next three years.

AKC-BIMAN SCORECARD

Table with columns: BOWLING, O, M, R, W. Lists bowlers like Mofizur Rahman, Mizanur Rahman, Athar Ali, Ziaur Rashid, Saifullah Khan, and their statistics.

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Result: Abahani KC won by 58 runs.

Stacy, Daniela steal the show

SINDELINGEN, Germany, Mar 9: American Stacy Dragila and Czech Daniela Bartova ended an eventful week for the women's pole vault indoor world record by both setting a new best of 4.48 metres on Sunday, reports Reuters.

At the Sindeling indoor meeting they bettered the previous record of 4.47 metres set by Australian Emma George on Saturday in Adelaide.

Pakistan pray for a miracle

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HAIL THE CHAMPIONS: The Abahani players and officials led by skipper Akram Khan go for a lap of honour after ensuring championship in the Janakantha Premier Division league by beating Biman yesterday. —Star photo

Title dedicated to Lamba

Abahani Krira Chakra dedicated their twelfth Premier Division cricket league title to Raman Lamba, the former Indian Test player who died after sustaining a severe head injury while playing for Abahani in this year's league.

"We are dedicating our victory to Raman Lamba," said the cricket chairman of Abahani Limited Mostafa Kamal, MP, after the popular Dhanmondi outfit lifted the coveted title defeating Bangladesh Biman by 58 runs in the penultimate Super league match at the Dhaka Stadium yesterday.

"His untimely death was a stunning blow for us. He was always a very special man for Abahani. We have placed the memories of Raman Lama in our hearts to transform the unfathomable sufferings into a great victory. And I could not think of a better way to pay homage to Lamba and his bereaved family," said Kamal, who looked extremely elated after the match.

The former India opener died at a city hospital three days after sustaining a head-injury while fielding at forward short-leg without a helmet during a crucial league match against Mohammedans on February 23.

Abahani's inspirational skipper Akram Khan looked a relieved man after retaining the title. The portly right-hander gave credits to the collective effort and conviction of his players.

"When Raman bhai died, we were thrown in depths of despair. But the pains of his loss motivated us to do what he had wanted. I'm feeling happy for the former Indian Test player who died after sustaining a severe head injury while playing for Abahani in this year's league.

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Advertisement for 'Daka Sidi Karporeshon' (Dhaka Sidi Karporeshon) featuring a crossword puzzle and a cryptogram. Includes text about the competition and contact information.

Crossword puzzle by Eugene Sheffer and a cryptogram. Includes the crossword grid, clues, and the cryptogram text.

Project Director Jamuna Multipurpose Bridge Authority Allenbury, Tejaon, Dhaka-1215

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