

Tanveer is Sony player-of-the-match Bangladesh hold holders in Asian youth opener

Sports Reporter

Bangladesh got off to a dream start in the 8th Asian Youth under-16 football finals when they held defending champions Oman in their opening first round group B match played at the Al-Sadd Stadium in Doha, Qatar, on Thursday night.

On the inaugural day of the ten-team final round from which the top three will qualify for the World Youth Cup, Bangladesh displayed a fine brand of soccer against the powerful Oman side and took the lead at the stroke of the

breather through forward Masood Khan Johnny.

The dapper striker, who plays for Agrani Bank, shot Bangladesh into the lead with a power-packed grounder after being brilliantly fed by midfielder Tanveer Chowdhury.

Inspired by the first-half lead, Bangladesh maintained the initiative against the Omanese in the second half. However, it was a defence lapse, which helped the holders to equalise in the 60th minute with forward Sameer Sayeed intelligently placing the ball home from a corner.

Undaunted by the mishap, Bangladesh kept Oman almost cornered in their own half for the remaining period but failed to get a winner because of the defensive tactics adopted by their counterparts.

The only distinct chance for Bangladesh came during the dying minutes when Tanveer, who designed the first goal and eventually won the Sony player-of-the-match award for his brilliant passing game, got the ball unmarked inside the danger area. However, lady luck did not favour him as his right-footer hit the cross-piece to emanate further frustration in the Bangladesh tent.

Apart from the Bangladesh mission officials, a huge number of Bangladeshis working in Doha were present at the Al-

Sadd Stadium to cheer the boys. Bangladesh will take on Bahrain in their next match tonight at 9:15 pm BST.

The Bangladesh squad: Abu Sayeed, Firoz Mahmud Tito, Shahnoor Rahman Rony, Sultan, Hasan (Kamal), Kanchan, Monwar, Chandan (Dablu), Tanveer, Johnny and Dipu (Hanif).

**Schools chess
 Royal extends
 lead**

Yanur Rahman Royal maintained his solo lead in the 13th Bata Schools chess competition with seven and a half points after the eight round at the NSC chess room yesterday, reports UNB.

In the day's round, Royal of Arafat's Scientific School drew with Mahtabuddin Robin of Hajrat Shah Ali Model School.

Three players — Mohammed Javed, Mehedi Hasan Parag and Tanvir Talukder Newton — followed the leader securing seven points.

Mahtabuddin Robin and Abul Kalam Azad managed the third position with six and a half points.

The final round of the tournament will be held Sunday at the same venue at 1 pm. Prize will be distributed at 5:30 pm.

Nat'l schools hockey Rajshahi Kasba High lift title

Rajshahi Kasba High became champions of the BKSP 3rd national schools hockey tournament beating Chuadanga M A Bari High by 4-3 in tie-breaker at the Savar BKSP ground yesterday, reports UNB.

The match rolled into the tie-breaker after the scheduled time's play ended in a 2-2 draw.

State Minister for Sports, Youth and Cultural Affairs Obaidul Quader was present and distributed the prizes.

Inter-college h'b'll Dhaka Poly emerge champs

Dhaka Polytechnic Institute emerged champions of the Power inter-college handball competition defeated Notre Dame College 15-14 in the final at the Mirpur Shaheed Suhrawardy Indoor Stadium yesterday, reports UNB.

Polytechnic led the first half 9-8.

Ariful Haq scored highest 6 and Saidul 5 for the winners. Abdul Quader netted 5 goals while Kamal and Kanak 4 each for the losers.

President of the Bangladesh Olympic Association (BOA) Lt Gen Mahbubur Rahman witnessed the final and distributed the prizes.

Earlier, in the third place deciding match, Rifles School & College came from behind to beat BCIC College by 20-19 goals following sudden death.

The winners were trailing 6-7 in the first half of the match which ended 14-14 during the regulation time.

Zahidul netted 9 and Shahidur 4 for the Rifles while Raju scored 6 and Rony 4 for the BCIC.

Amjad Hossain of Dhaka Polytechnic Institute was adjudged best player-of-the-competition while the Government Shaheed Suhrawardy College awarded the fair play trophy.

Pakistan expect tough battle in KL Games

KARACHI, Sept 4 (AFP/Internet): Pakistan's cricketers expect to face tough competition in the Commonwealth Games after arch-rivals India included star batsman Sachin Tendulkar in the India team.

Pakistan's second string left for Kuala Lumpur on Thursday.

"It will be tough in the pool matches and then we will be facing India or Australia in the semis," Pakistan captain Salim Elahi said before departing for Malaysia.

Pakistan have sent their First XI to Canada, where they will vie in five one-day internationals with India for the third Sahara Cup starting from September 12.

Australia, led by Steve Waugh is tipped as the favourites in the inaugural competition in the Games.

Pakistan is placed in Group D of the 16-team competition, which also features New Zealand, Kenya and Scotland.

"We have players of calibre but lack the international experience. Our first task will be to qualify for the pre-finals," said Elahi, who is one of only four batsmen to score a century in a one-day international debut.

Besides Elahi, five other Pakistani players — Shoaib Akhter, Shahid Nazir, Akhter Sarfraz, Mohammad Hussain and Javed Qadeer — have represented Pakistan in one-day internationals.

Pakistan will play their opening match against Scotland on September 9. They will face Kenya on September 12 and New Zealand on September 15.

The semifinals will be played on Sept. 16 and 17 while the final is slated for September 19.

Former wicketkeeper Nausad Ali is the manager and former opener Mohsin Khan is coach.

SQUAD
 Salim Elahi (captain), Shahid Nazir, Azhar Shafiq, Akhter Sarfraz, Shoaib Akhter, Mohammad Hussain, Javed Qadeer, Kashif Ahmed, Mohammad Javed, Salman Huda, Asif Mahmood, Wajahatullah, Asif Mahmood and Taimur Khan.

AS Roma put up for sale

ROME, Sept 4 (Reuters/Internet): The owner of AS Roma said he plans to sell his Italian Serie A club after covering the club's losses in his six years at the helm.

"I'll put Roma at the disposition of whoever wants it," club owner Franco Sensi told the Messaggero newspaper in an interview.

"I've called in an international company to value the club. They'll come up with a price. I'll make it public and will wait here. In this chair, for news from the buyer," Sensi was quoted as saying.



Brooke Shields exults during husband Andre Agassi's US Open second round fixture against Guillaume Raoux on September 3. — AP/UNB photo

Tiger Cup Hosts romp into final

HANOI, Sept 4: Hosts Vietnam unleashed unprecedented jubilation in the streets here on Thursday by advancing to the finals of the Tiger Cup football tournament after an upset 2-0 victory over Thailand, reports AFP.

Vietnam outplayed the heavily favoured Thais before a supercharged crowd of nearly 23,000 fans, who went wild at the final whistle.

In Saturday's final Vietnam will meet Singapore, who beat Indonesia 2-1 earlier on Thursday in Ho Chi Minh City.

Thailand dominated the opening minutes but the tide turned when Troung Viet Huong scored a goal against the run of play after 15 minutes, igniting fans and his teammates alike.

From then on the Vietnamese ran on inspiration for the rest of the match.

Hockey's double delight for Tk 5

Sports Reporter

Newcomers Cantonian Sporting Club will take on Bangladesh Sporting Club in the opening match of the Green Delta Insurance First Division hockey league, which begins at the Moulana Bhasani Stadium this afternoon at 2:30 pm.

In the day's other match, Wari Club will meet Bachelors Club at 4:15 pm.

Eight teams are taking part in the league which will be held on double-leg basis.

The other four teams are: Bangladesh Railway, Dhaka Ansars, Victoria SC and Sonali Bank.

The rate of tickets for two matches everyday has been fixed at Taka five.

Viv's Antigua no pushovers

KUALA LUMPUR, Sept 4: Former West Indian great Viv Richards insisted today that his Antigua side could upset Commonwealth Games gold medal favourites Australia and India, reports AFP.

The three countries are all drawn in the same group in the battle for a semifinal berth and the 46-year-old Richards warned his rivals they should not take him lightly.

The Antiguan attack will be led by the fearsome Curtly Ambrose who has wreaked havoc with Australian Test sides in the past.

Also in the squad is former West Indian skipper Richie Richardson and free stroking wicket keeper batsman Ridley Jacobs.

"I don't see why we can't score 250 to 270 runs against both of them. Our players are professionals and we are not intimidated by names. We have a healthy respect for them but anything can happen on match day," said Richards, who amassed 8,540 runs in Test cricket.

But for Aussie captain Steve Waugh it is India, especially following their decision to include superstar Sachin Tendulkar in the squad, and not Antigua that worries him.

"Bad news" confessed Waugh when told about the last minute decision to call up Tendulkar, who has originally picked to play by the Indian side for the Sahara Cup series against Pakistan in Canada.

"You lose one game and you are out of the competition basically," added the 34-year-old from Sydney.

But Waugh, twice international cricketer of the year, tried to put a brave face on Tendulkar's inclusion.

"I guess he's only human like someone else and we've got him out cheaply quite a few times but he has not a few good hundreds against us," said Waugh.

"Even though he's still a great player, we can still get him out."

"Realistically we should beat Antigua and then India is a crunch game. Whoever wins that will go into the semifinals," said he Aussie skipper.

Doll cleared to play

BONN, Sept 4: Former German international Thomas Doll has been given the green light by FIFA to play for Hamburg SV even though he has been banned in Italy for using an illegal substance, the Bundesliga club said on Thursday, reports Reuters.

Hamburg SV said in a statement that a ban on the midfielder imposed in Italy is limited to Italy and that he is free to play elsewhere.

Doll, 32, was banned after failing a test in May. The Italian Olympic committee had tested Doll and his teammates at AS Bari and detected forbidden substances.

A second test had also found metabolized benzodiazepam, an anti-inflammatory drug. Doll has denied the doping charges.

Lanka welcomes heroes

COLOMBO, Sept 4 (Reuters/ AFP/Internet): Sri Lankan cricketers returned home on Friday to a heroes' welcome and heaps of praise from the local media for winning the one-off Test against England.

Cricket officials, families and well-wishers crowded the Colombo airport to garland and greet captain Arjuna Ranatunga and other members of the team that defeated England by 10 wickets at the Oval on Monday.

"Magnificent men return today" and "A triumphant return" read the headlines of Friday's local newspapers.

"Arjuna Ranatunga, Sri Lanka's captain cool," will lead the squad that smote English cricketing pride for a six down the gangway of Air Lanka's UL 504 at Katunayake today," the state-owned Daily News said.

Off-spinner Muttiah Muralitharan bagged a match winning haul of 16 wickets to spearhead the victory, while opening batsman Sanath Jayasuriya hit 213 runs in Sri Lanka's first innings.

"While that win saw Sri Lanka add to their away-Test triumphs, it also significantly signalled to the cricketing world that Sri Lanka had crossed the bridges where we could match any nation shoulder to shoulder," the independent island newspaper said.

Messages of congratulation have poured in for the world champions from all quarters during the past few days, including one from President

Chandrika Kumaratunga who is currently in Durban at the Non-Aligned Movement summit.

Gala events were planned in the central hill town of Kandy for Muttiah Muralitharan, a confectioner's son, when he arrives at his home later on Friday.

While in London, Arjuna Ranatunga said he would feel no sympathy for England coach David Lloyd if he lost his job after questioning Muralitharan's action.

Ranatunga spoke out after Lloyd said he had doubts over match-winner Muralitharan's bowling after he took 16 wickets to rout England.

No coach should make comments like that about their rivals, I don't care if he loses his job," Ranatunga said, as his team prepared to leave for home.

Personally I feel that when a side loses they should look at their own problems rather than what's wrong with their opponents.

"We didn't take him seriously, in fact it's just made us more determined to go out and win."

The England and Wales Cricket Board (ECB) has warned that Lloyd, who said he had certain "opinions" about the off spinner's action, could face the sack if he did not accept his explanation over his remarks.

ECB chief executive Tim Lamb had already accused Lloyd of being insensitive and inappropriate.

Muralitharan, a finger spinner who also rotates his wrist, was called for throwing a few years ago in Australia. Some umpires felt he was straightening his arm illegally during his delivery. His action, however, seemed to have become accepted since then.

Ranatunga added: "We knew Murali had been cleared by the International Cricket Council and that's all that matters."

Sri Lanka also beat England and South Africa in a one-day tournament during their tour here. They will be back in May to defend their World Cup title.

Hashan skippers SL at C'wealth

COLOMBO, Sept 4: Hashan Tillekeratne is to captain Sri Lanka's squad of 14 in the Commonwealth Games cricket tournament in Malaysia starting next week, reports Reuters.

Tillekeratne, a left-handed middle order batsman who has been in and out of the team during the past year, will have Mahela Jayawardene as his vice-captain, the Board of Control for Cricket in Sri Lanka said today.

Most of the players who took part in Sri Lanka's historic first victory in a Test in England earlier this week were not included in the squad.

The International Cricket Council (ICC) said last month the Commonwealth Games matches would not be given official one-day international status.

SQUAD
 Hashan Tillekeratne (captain), Mahela Jayawardene, Russel Arnold, Aviska Gunawardana, Chandika Hathurusinghe, Upal Chandana, Tilan Samarawarna, Suresh Perera, Mario Villavarayan, Indika de Seram, Lanka de Silva, Indika Gallage, Pradeep Hewage, Malintha Warnapura.

McGrath ruled out of Games

SYDNEY, Sept 4 (Reuters/Internet): Australian fast bowler Glenn McGrath will miss the Commonwealth Games cricket tournament in Malaysia starting next week after breaking down in a practice match on Friday.

The lanky paceman may also be in doubt for Australia's tour of Pakistan beginning later this month after injuring his groin during the warm-up game against the Australian Cricket Academy.

"I was starting to build up a bit of rhythm when all of a sudden I felt a pain in my right leg which is totally opposite to the other injuries I've had," McGrath said.

"If I'd had another week until the start of the Commonwealth Games I think I would have been alright but as it is I'll have to take a rest."

McGrath has been struggling with a groin strain for most of the year. He missed Australia's final Test against South Africa in January as well as their tours of New Zealand and India.

He was cleared to play at the Games in Kuala Lumpur after successfully completing the Princess Diana benefit match at Lord's in July but broke down again after bowling just five overs on Friday.

His place in the side will be taken by Queensland paceman Andy Bichel, who recently toured Scotland and Ireland with Australia's A team.

Sri Lanka's skipper Arjuna Ranatunga talking to newsmen on arrival at Colombo yesterday after the triumphant tour of England.

— Internet photo

Malaysia's moment of truth

KUALA LUMPUR, Sept 4: Malaysia's dream of becoming an international sports centre of the future will come face to face with reality when the country hosts Asia's first Commonwealth Games next week despite an economic crisis which has brought much of the region to its knees, reports AFP.

Neon covered palm trees and colourful banners already lace the streets as the city braces for next Friday's opening ceremony for a Games which organisers vow will be the "biggest and best-run Commonwealth Games" in the championships' 68-year history.

Despite financial constraints, the government is still spending some 1.7 billion ringgit (406 million dollars) on new sporting facilities, infrastructure and city beautification projects.

"The memories we want to leave behind are that the 1998 Games are the best run, and that Malaysia is a good host and has broken records," Hashim Ali, chairman of the organisers Sukom ninety-eight, told.

Hashim, a retired general who is also the brother in law of Prime Minister Mahathir Mohamad, said the economic slump had not excessively affected Sukom's pockets, with 90 per cent of the Games budget already fulfilled.

More than 6,000 athletes and officials from some 70 former British colonies are to take part in 15 events from September 11 to 21, almost double the size of the 1994 Games in Canada. Four team sports — cricket, field hockey, netball and rugby — will make their appearance for the first time.

All the events will be held in and around Kuala Lumpur, except shooting which takes place in the northeastern island of Langkawi an hours flight away.

Organisers are attempting to sign up singers Celine Dion and Rod Stewart as well as Irish quartet the Corrs for the closing

ceremony, to be attended by Britain's Queen Elizabeth.

Malaysia hopes, the event will generate much-needed tourism revenue — estimated at 100 million ringgit — to boost the battered economy.

The government is launching a two-week cultural festival during the Games, targeting an estimated 60,000 to 70,000 tourists expected for the event.

Abahani's hockey committee

Sports Reporter

Abahani Krira Chakra on Thursday formed a 35-member hockey committee for the running season with Afzalur Rahman Sinha as its chairman.

The committee includes four vice chairmen, two joint secretaries, a secretary, a co-ordinator, a manager, an assistant manager, a coach and 23 members.

The following is the new committee:

Chairman—Afzalur Rahman Sinha, Vice-chairmen—Harunur Rashid MP, Momen Uddin Ahmed, M Musa Miah and Ahmed Iqbal Hasan, Co-ordinator—Khaja Rahmatullah, Secretary—Zahidur Rahman Pushkin, Joint-secretaries—Jamil Parvez, Lulu and Shahidullah Dolon, Manager—Ehsan Nammi, Assistant Manager—Aminul Islam Chowdhury, Coach—Jumman Lusa, Members—Abdus Sadeq, Mohammad Mohsin, Ibrahim Saber, Sabbir Yusuf, Shahabuddin Ahmed, Arshad Khan Tara, Sagir Ahmed, Masood Ahmed, Bohanur Rashid Mukul, Jinal Abedin Ratan, Mozammel Haque Manzu, Hafizur Rahman Zoarder, Sanwar Habib Sinha, Mahabubul Haque Dilip, Zaki Ahmed Ripon, Sheikh Arshad Ali, Kabir Ahmed, ATM Kamrul Islam Sohel, Nurur Islam, RM Zafar Hasan, Khaja Manzoor Nadeem, Salauddin Chowdhury Tisa and Habibur Rahman.

Transport concerns have been partly laid to rest with last month's launch of a new rail link, part of a second phase of a 3.5 billion ringgit mass-transit network linking the city to the main sports complex.

But plans to build a station on a second train line running past the sports complex have failed to materialise.

The Atlanta Olympics fundered over its chaotic transport for athletes and officials. Next Friday will see if the Malaysian organisers learnt the lesson.

Doubts meanwhile remain over some of the newly built sporting facilities.

More than four million dollars has been spent to renovate the velodrome but during a pre-Games test it was discovered the track was bumpy in areas and it had to be redone.

Critics claim that a new velodrome could have been built for the amount spend on the renovations.



The 16th Commonwealth Games mascot sipping Pepsi with members of the Malaysian contingent at Kuala Lumpur yesterday. — Internet photo