

Chattala Cup Tk. 7.5 lakh gate cash

Sports Reporter

The gate of the Chattala Cup football tournament, jointly organised by Bangladesh Football Federation and Chittagong Zila Krira Parishad in aid of the flood victims, has been sold to an agency for seven and a half lakh taka. The organisers expect some more fund from sponsorships.

The four-team tournament begins this evening at the floodlit Chittagong MA Aziz Stadium with Muktiyoddha Sangsad Krira Chakra from Dhaka taking on local Mohammedan Sporting Club in the opening match. State Minister for Youth and Sports Obaidul Quader will inaugurate the tournament.

Abahani Krira Chakra and Regensea Club of Chittagong are the other two sides taking part in the robin league from which the top two teams will qualify for the September 15 final.

The matches will start everyday at 5:30 pm.

Meanwhile, Premier Division league champions Muktiyoddha Sangsad, the only team participating from the capital, left the city yesterday morning for Chittagong by a special train.

FIXTURE

- Sep 9 Muktiyoddha Sangsad KC v Ctg Mohammedan SC
- Sep 10 Ctg Abahani KC v Regensea Club
- Sep 11 Ctg Mohammedan SC v Regensea Club
- Sep 12 Muktiyoddha Sangsad KC v Ctg Abahani KC
- Sep 13 Muktiyoddha Sangsad KC v Regensea Club
- Sep 14 Ctg Abahani KC v Ctg Mohammedan SC
- Sep 15 Final

C wealth Games

F Karim off-shoots his national duty

Sports Reporter

A news report by Fazlul Karim, manager of the Bangladesh shooting team to the 16th Commonwealth Games, which was published in a Bengali national daily yesterday, has raised questions about the integrity of Bangladeshi officials accompanying sports delegations abroad.

Karim, an executive committee member of the Bangladesh Shooting Federation, sent a news report on Bangladesh shooters' performance in the badge match competition of the Games on Monday which is a clear violation of the code of conduct of sports officials when they are representing the country.

When contacted, Anwarul Haque Helal, deputy secretary general of the Bangladesh Olympic Association (BOA) told the Daily Star last night that it was breach of discipline.

"We are trying to contact him (Fazlul Karim) in Langkawi, Malaysia, which is the venue for the shooting events. It is 500 km away from Kuala Lumpur. We will ask him to stop writing for any individual daily. Besides, on his return, we may also ask from him an explanation," said Helal.

The Bangladesh Shooting Federation general secretary Afzal Karim admitted last night that he has heard about "the news" but had not seen the paper. He declined to make any comment.

No Shahbaz or Tahir

KARACHI, Sept 8: Pakistan hockey authorities today categorically denied recalling axed stars Shahbaz Ahmed and Tahir Zaman for the Commonwealth Games and termed such a move out of the question.

"We have selected the best team for the Games and there is no question of recalling Shahbaz Ahmed and Tahir Zaman," Pakistan Hockey Federation (PHF) president Akhter Rasool told AFP.

Rasool's reaction came after reports from Kuala Lumpur suggesting Shahbaz Ahmed, Tahir Zaman, Mohammad Shahbaz, and Naveed Alam, all axed from the Commonwealth Games squad, had been recalled.

Shahbaz Ahmed along with Zaman and Alam are currently in the Netherlands to play league hockey on a lucrative contract.

Hockey is included for the first time as a medal sport in the 68-year history of the Games.

Pakistan overhauled its hockey team after finishing a poor fifth in the World Cup hockey tournament expelling six senior players including the mercurial Shahbaz Ahmed and captain Tahir Zaman in July.

Pakistan is in Group B of the competition with Kenya, Malaysia, England, Canada.

The federation president said the target of Pakistan team was Sydney Olympics in 2000, and Commonwealth Games would give an ideal preparation.

Pakistan's first match is against Kenya on September 9.



Malaysian Prime Minister Mahathir Mohammad (C) being escorted by Prince Edward (L), president of the Commonwealth Games Federation, towards the reception area prior to the opening of the Games general assembly yesterday. — AFP photo

Fish out of water



KUALA LUMPUR, Sept 8 (Reuters/Internet): Cricket prepared its debut in the Commonwealth Games on Tuesday with stars doing things they are just not used to -- mingling with athletes from a dozen sports and practising with tennis balls.

The game, rarely seen with other sports, shed some of its isolation as players checked in at the Games village, which is radically different from the usual comfort of first class hotels where top international cricketers usually stay.

"We have to. There is no other way," Indian captain Ajay Jadeja told Reuters in the spangly new International Zone building next to the 16th Commonwealth Games village where some 4,000 athletes from around 70 nations will stay.

There was the familiar rain. But it was rain of an unfamiliar kind as cricket staged its first major show in the tropics. A tropical thunderstorm broke in the late afternoon and swamped hopes of match practice. The downpour also raised doubts on whether the matches could be played at all on Wednesday, when cricket was scheduled to make its debut in the September 11-21 Commonwealth Games.

Indian cricketers arrived at the TNB Sports Club ground to practice, but had to stand and watch as the rain saturated the ground where they are due to play Antigua on Wednesday. Sachin Tendulkar, one of the world's greatest batsmen, took up his bat and practised his art with a tennis ball under the overhanging roof of the pavilion.

Asked if the match with Antigua would go ahead on schedule, Indian coach Krishnamachari Srikkanth told

Reuters: "We will have to wait and see about that now." The eight grounds to be used in the competition are spread around the Klang Valley around Kuala Lumpur and are largely untested and some players were far from happy.

"It's too hot," moaned Australian off-spinner Gavin Robertson, standing close to Kenyan athletes singing merrily, unmindful of the humid, sweaty climate. Australian captain Steve Waugh said his team was still finding its feet. "I think we are getting there," he said.

India open their bid for the gold medal against an Antigua side considered minnows because they represent only a small bit of the strong West Indies. But Jadeja said he was not taking them lightly. "No match is an easy match," he said.

Australia, the favourites, face Canada in their first match on Wednesday.

Since Australian men's hockey veteran Ric Charlesworth took over as coach, they have become World and Olympic champions and have a long unbeaten record in tournament play.

They have the world's two outstanding women players in Alyson Annan and Nikki Mott. Their most serious challengers for the title are New Zealand, South Africa, Scotland and an England side strengthened by the return from injury of top forwards Tina Cullen and Mandy Nicholson.

The performance of the New Zealand women will be watched with particular interest -- they have been wearing jackets whose pockets are filled in practice to combat the tropical heat and humidity.

The Australian men are also optimistic of gold after finishing fourth at the World Cup, just ahead of medal rivals Pakistan, who were fifth, one spot ahead of England.

Eighth placed Canada is also ambitious -- and so is India, the one-time hockey powerhouse which finished only ninth in the World Cup and who face Australia in their first match.

The teams have been divided into two groups and the top pair in each will go through to the semi-finals.

Croft to have knee surgery

LONDON, Sept 8 (AFP/Internet): England spin bowler Robert Croft is to have knee surgery on Tuesday in the hope he will then be fit for the start of this winter's Ashes tour of Australia.

Croft will miss the remaining matches of Glamorgan's season to correct the problem, which was diagnosed following a scan as a small cartilage tear.

Although the short-term prognosis was good, the club's medical advisers consulted with England officials and felt it was sensible to correct the defect now as the team departs for Australia within six weeks.

BHF gets tough Victoria coach, players fined and banned

Sports Reporter

Six players and the coach of Victoria Sporting Club have been reprimanded by the league committee of Bangladesh Hockey Federation (BHF) for their part in verbally abusing the umpires after their lone goal defeat to Sonali Bank in the Green Delta Insurance First Division hockey league last Sunday. The decision was taken in an emergency meeting of the committee on Monday night.

Abdul Malek Chinnu, a former national player and now the manager of Victoria Sporting Club, has been fined taka 3,000 and suspended for five matches while six other players--Rajib Ahmed, Shamsuddin-Ahmed, Nasir Bhutto, Sadequr Rahman, Morsalin and Noor Mohammad, have been fined taka 1,000 each and asked to submit written apology to the federation for their unbecoming behaviour on the ground. Besides, the six players have also been declared *persona non grata* at the BHF office, VIP and VIP gallery of the Moulana Bhasani Stadium for one year.

When told by organisers that BHF's prayers were always answered, Jadeja had one look at the damp turf and responded: "Bring him on. We all need him."

Heavy rain, a daily feature for the past four days, has increased the workload of groundsmen more used to laying out matting wickets for local matches.

"We worked hard to get the turf wickets ready for the tournament, but the weather has not helped us at all," a Games official said.

Despite the presence of batting maestro Sanchin Tendulkar, India know the conditions are ideal for Ambrose and

but they have to beat us first," Richards said.

Canada, who take on Steve Waugh's full-strength Australians at the Kelana Jaya Stadium on Wednesday, complete the toughest of the four groups which will send one team each into the semifinals.

The Aussies, coming off their off-season, will miss their best bowlers Glenn McGrath and Shane Warne through injuries.

In other opening matches, Sri Lanka take on hosts Malaysia, Jamaica play Zimbabwe and under-strength Pakistan meet Scotland.

Sri Lanka, the World Cup champions, are without most of their Test stars and have a strong Zimbabwe to reckon with in Group A. Pakistan, led by former Test opener Saleem Elahi, have Kenya and New Zealand to tackle in Group D.

Group C matches will begin on Thursday with Shaun Pollock's South Africa taking on Northern Ireland and Barbados playing World Cup qualifiers Bangladesh.

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Bangladesh Sporting, Wari share top wrung Iqbal hums the same tune



Iqbal Singh scored his second hat trick in as many appearances to guide title aspirants Bangladesh Sporting Club to a comfortable 4-0 win over Bachelors Club in one of the two Green Delta First Division hockey league matches played at the Moulana Bhasani Stadium yesterday.

Iqbal, the lanky Indian who scored a hat trick when Bangladesh Sporting thrashed promotees Cantonian Sporting Club in their inaugural match three days ago, continued with his impressive striking rate and struck thrice in the space of ten minutes to keep his side atop the eight-team table with full six points from two matches.

The winners led the first half 1-0.

Wari Club, who beat Cantonian Sporting Club 2-1 in the first match and Cantonian Sporting Club on the day, also share the top spot with six points from two matches.

Davinder Singh, one of the four Indian players for the old-timers, put Bangladesh Sporting ahead with a field goal in the 21st minute.

Sports Reporter

Although Bangladesh Sporting dominated the entire first session with a series of offensives, it was their poor marksmanship which denied them from increasing the margin.

Undaunted by their first half failure to find the mark as often as they would like, Bangladesh

Sporting maintained their initiative in the post lemon period with Iqbal Singh single-handedly taking command.

Although it took 15 minutes of the second-half to transform the score line to 2-0 with Iqbal blasting the board with a power-packed hit, the match turned to be an one-sided affair from then onwards with Iqbal completing his treble with two more brilliant field goals in the 52nd and 60th minutes.

The winners will face Dhaka Ansars in their next match on September 11.

Earlier, in the day's other match, Wari Club posted a slim 2-1 victory over Cantonian Sporting Club.

The winners led the first half 2-0.

Khurshid Hossain Setu put Wari off the mark with a field goal in the 12th minute and Arifur Rahman doubled the margin 15 minutes later.

Rajibul Alam pulled one back for the newcomers in the 44th minute.

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Curtly & Co make India edgy

Fingers crossed for cricket

KUALA LUMPUR, Sept 8 (AFP): Ajay Jadeja's Indians and Commonwealth Games organisers were seeking out a holy man to help save cricket's debut at the event here Wednesday.

Bomoh, a legendary Malaysian miracle man who prays to keep the rain away for important occasions, was needed as rain threatened to wash out the Games.

The Indians have every reason to pray for clear skies as they take on Antigua's fiery pace attack led by Curtly Ambrose on an unpredictable wicket at the Kilat Club on Wednesday.

When told by organisers that Bomoh's prayers were always answered, Jadeja had one look at the damp turf and responded: "Bring him on. We all need him."

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Captains told to keep control

KUALA LUMPUR, Sept 8 (Reuters/Internet): Captains of the hockey teams battling for gold at the Commonwealth Games have been told they will have help to control their teammates on the field or suffer the consequences.

They could even be suspended along with an offending team-mate, said Peter Crane, director of the men's tournament which starts in Kuala Lumpur on Wednesday.

A captain might suffer double the consequences if he or she leaps into an on-field argument, he said.

"If a player is suspended for one match, the skipper may be barred for two," Crane said.

Hockey is making its Commonwealth Games debut, two days ahead of Friday's official opening, with Australia the favourites for the gold medals in both the men's and women's competitions.

Crane, an Englishman, and South African Jean Field, director of the women's event, took strong lines on the captains' role in pre-tournament meetings with team officials and umpires.

Crane said captains can be a buffer between their players

and umpires. They know their players better and must help to control players likely to flare up and must co-operate with the umpires.

It would be a major upset if the Australian women failed to collect gold.

Since Australian men's hockey veteran Ric Charlesworth took over as coach, they have become World and Olympic champions and have a long unbeaten record in tournament play.

They have the world's two outstanding women players in Alyson Annan and Nikki Mott. Their most serious challengers for the title are New Zealand, South Africa, Scotland and an England side strengthened by the return from injury of top forwards Tina Cullen and Mandy Nicholson.

The performance of the New Zealand women will be watched with particular interest -- they have been wearing jackets whose pockets are filled in practice to combat the tropical heat and humidity.

The Australian men are also optimistic of gold after finishing fourth at the World Cup, just ahead of medal rivals Pakistan, who were fifth, one spot ahead of England.

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