

Sport

Rajshahi cricket

From Our Correspondent
RAJSHAHI Nov 7: Ramnagar Cricket School defeated Al Rashid Club by eight wickets in the inaugural Shaheed AHM Qamruzzaman Hena Smriti cricket tournament at the Katakhal Adarsha Degree College ground today.

Al Rashid opted to bat first and collected 122 runs in 22.4 overs before being all out. Mobin was the destroyer accounting for five Al Rashid batsmen.

In reply, Ramnagar reached the target of 123 in just 15.1 overs for the loss of only two wickets.

Sanchoy of the winners scored an unbeaten 48.

KABADI
Meanwhile, Abalhani Krira Chakra and Raj Sporting Club won their respective matches in the district kabadi league at the local gymnasium today.

Abalhani beat Mohuabagan Club 44-19. In the second match, Raj Sporting defeated Bandhan Krira Chakra by 48-21 points.

C'NAWABGANJ SOCCER
Meanwhile, Simon scored a hat-trick as NPCB outplayed Joint Brothers 3-0 in the Chapamawabganj District Football League at the District Stadium today.



Indian cricketers, including the new pace sensation Zaheer Khan (2nd from R), waiting at the VIP Lounge of Zia International Airport on their arrival yesterday. —Star photo

BCCI to quiz 'em all



NEW DELHI Nov 7: India's cricket board will cross-examine five domestic players, a team physiotherapist and a groundsman charged with fixing matches by a federal police agency, an official was quoted as saying Monday, reports AFP.

The Central Bureau of Investigation (CBI), which levelled the charges against the five players, asked tax officials to share information collected during raids on the cricketers' homes in July.

K. Madhavan, Inquiry Commissioner for the Board of Control for Cricket in India (BCCI), said in interviews to private television networks he would summon the seven people for cross-examination.

The CBI in a bombshell match-fixing report last week named former captain in Mohammad Azharuddin, Ajay Jadeja, Nayan Mongia, Ajay Sharma, Manoj Prabhakar and physiotherapist Ali Irani.

"I am going to judge the CBI report by calling the players and recording their statements," Madhavan told the "Aaj Tak" network.

Madhavan, a former CBI official, said: "The players should be given a chance to say how far they agree with the CBI report and whether, according to them, there are errors. If there are errors, why so."

In another interview Madhavan said criminal proceedings could be launched against "certain" players in case they possessed unaccounted wealth, adding he would try and obtain additional information from the CBI.

"I would try to obtain more material from CBI, especially relating to statements of cell-phone calls made by the players," he said.

"The CBI report is a combination of a bit of match-fixing, a bit of information passed on and money accepted for introduction of players to bookies,"

Madhavan added a groundsman at Delhi's Ferozshah Kotla ground, who had been charged by the CBI with doctored the pitch for a Test match in 1996, would be cross-examined.

CBI sources, meanwhile, said the federal agency was in touch with inland revenue officials for information they had collected during nationwide raids on July 20-21 in homes and offices of players, bookies and board officials.

"The income tax authorities possess a wealth of information and all we need is to cross-examine them to establish our case that some of these cricketers have been earning a bit on the sly," a highly-placed source said.

The revenue officials have also said they will soon ask the tainted players to pay up huge taxes on their hidden wealth.

The tax department unearthed unaccounted money running to millions of dollars during the raids, codenamed "Operation Gentleman".

The five players have been banned by India's cricket board from playing in domestic or international matches.

Besides the Indians, nine foreign players from England, West Indies, Pakistan and Sri Lanka were named in the CBI report.

Jadeja on Saturday described the report as "concocted" saying talking to bookies was not a crime. Mongia on Sunday pleaded not guilty and accused Azharuddin of levelling false allegations.

Two of the several bookies named in the CBI report are also linked to a Delhi Police probe which in April implicated former South African skipper Hansie Cronje and four of his teammates for fixing matches in India.

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Kuerten sends Pavel packing

LYON, Nov 7: Top seed Gustavo Kuerten ended the giant-killing run of Andre Pavel, knocking the Romanian out of first-round contention at the 800,000-dollar Lyon Grand Prix 7-6 (7/5), 6-4 Monday, reports AFP.

Pavel was fresh from an upset last week in Stuttgart of Andre Agassi, beating the American draw card out in the third-round of the Masters Series event.

But there was no mistaking who was in charge of the match at the Palais des Sports as the Brazilian, leader of the season-long ATP Champions race, had his way in straight sets.

Kuerten advanced into a match against French tennis minnow Michael Llodra, who accounted for Spaniard Albert Costa 7-6 (8/6), 1-6, 6-3.

So angry was the Iberian loser that he smashed his racket to sticks and strings before going to the net to shake hands after the defeat on Taralex carpet.

Llodra, aged 20, improved his match record to 5-5 on the year.

Kuerten is one of five players who have already qualified for the end-of-season Masters Cup in Lisbon. The others are Marat Safin, Magnus Norman, Pete Sampras and Andre Agassi.

Second seed Agassi opens his campaign on Tuesday, playing qualifier Sargis Sargsian, his occasional doubles partner.

Gauck Rafter outlasted Argentine Gaston Gaudio 6-4, 4-6, 6-4 while South American Mariano Puerta beat Michael Chang 7-6 (7/4), 6-4.

Rafter has made Lyon, one of the main centres for top French food and wine, one of his "personal" events in Europe, reaching the quarter-finals in 1994, 1995 and 1998 from four previous appearances.

But the serve-and-volley right-hander has never been able to get past the last eight.

Rafter spent almost 30 minutes before wrapping up the opening set against an Argentine he'd beaten on clay last year in Rome.

Gaudio rumped a backhand into the net to lose the opener, giving the Australian the early edge. But the South American slipped to a 3-1 lead on a break to level the set. Rafter pulled it out with a late break in the third.

"It's not the best time to come to Europe, but this and Paris are among my favourite tournaments," said the 27-year-old Rafter, who next faces Younes El Aynaoui.

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Germans cruise

SAINT PETERSBURG, Russia. Nov 7: Eighth-seeded Spaniard Vicente Fernandez crashed out of the Saint Petersburg Open Monday, losing a second round match to Markus Hantschk of Germany in straight sets, reports AFP.

Lying 69th in the ATP Champions race, Hantschk got off to a lively start, breaking Vicente's serve early in the opening set. He managed to hold on to his advantage to win it 6-4 in 42 minutes.

They exchanged breaks throughout the second, but Germany's 22-year-old was slightly more precise to win the set 6-4 and the match in 89 minutes.

Another German, Rainer Schuttler, easily ousted Harel Levy of Israel to book his second round spot at the green set carpet court of Saint Petersburg's indoor tennis stadium.

The 24-year-old Schuttler, who is currently 56th in the ATP race, defeated Levy in straight sets 6-1, 6-3 in just 68 minutes.

Schuttler will face either his compatriot and seventh-seed David Prinosil or Italian veteran Gianluca Pozzi in the second round.

Belarus player Vladimir Voltchkov barely broke sweat, ousting Magnus Gustafsson of Sweden in straight sets 6-3, 6-2 to make the second round.

Voltchkov, who is 60th in the ATP race, looked completely in command throughout his first round showdown with 23-year-old Gustafsson winning in just one hour.

Spanish demand third team

MADRID, Nov 7: The Spanish football federation has demanded that FIFA's world governing body allow them a third Spanish team to compete in the World Club Championships which they host next summer, it was revealed Monday, reports AFP.

The Spaniards want the number of teams competing extended from 12 to 16 and that FC Barcelona be allowed to join the tournament which takes place from July 29 to August 12.

They want an enlarged tournament to provide five places for European (UEFA) sides, four for Latin America (Conmebol), two each for Africa, Asia, and Central America and the Caribbean (Concacaf) and one for Oceania.

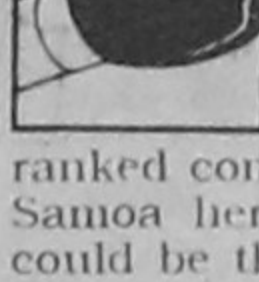
Spanish champions Deportivo La Coruna and European champions Real Madrid have gained automatic entry into the competition.

However, Brazilian outfit Corinthians, who won last year's inaugural World Club Championship, will not defend their title in the tournament.



A WorldTel crew member checking an extension cable at the Bangabandhu National Stadium yesterday. —Star photo

Tyson next for Lewis?



LAS VEGAS, Nov 7: Lennox Lewis defends boxing's heavyweight championship against top-ranked contender David Tua of Samoa here Saturday in what could be the final prelude to a title showdown with Mike Tyson, reports AFP.

The 35-year-old champion from Britain risks his World Boxing Council and International Boxing Federation crowns against a much smaller 27-year-old foe similar in size to Tyson, but with the punching power of the ex-champ's youth.

"My focus is on David Tua," Lewis said. "But people want to hear about the Tyson situation. There's a big fight out there and people want to see it."

Tyson stopped Andrew Golota last month, leaving the Polish fighter in a hospital with a concussion and broken cheekbone in what Tyson said would be his final fight.

But Tyson dropped by a Lewis workout last week in New York and Lewis figures a big-money title bout will be too much for Tyson to ignore -- provided duelling pay-per-view television backers can put aside differences to make the fight.

"After I dispose of Tua, the opportunity will be there for Tyson," Lewis said. "Right now Tyson is in retirement. But I don't believe he will go out like that."

"People around him will talk him into it. There's too much money involved for him not to. If he fights again, I have something to feed him."

He means fists -- big gloved fists for the man who earlier this year said after a victory in Britain that he would eat Lewis' children. Tyson advisor Shelly Finkel said Lewis would face an intimidation factor against Tyson.

The Lennox Lewis than goes into the ring against Mike Tyson will not be the same Lewis that goes in against David Tua," Finkel said.

Tua, 37-1 with 32 knockouts, is 5-foot-11 and 245 pounds. But taller Lewis faces a punishing puncher who said he must knock out the champion rather than try for a decision.

Tua said Lewis-Tyson talk diminishes the threat he poses. "Lewis and his people are talking so much about fighting Tyson. That shows disrespect," Tua said. "That's good. They're not really prepared for what I have."

Tua has a powerful left hook and he stopped his past seven rivals, including Robert Daniels in three rounds last July in his most recent fight.

Lewis, Britain's richest athlete at 80 million dollars according to British Age, is 37-1 with one draw and 29 knockouts. The 35-year-old stopped South Africa's Frans Botha in the second round last July in his most recent bout.

"Everyone says the Tua fight will be tough," Lewis said. "All the emphasis is on his power and that's the only thing they can emphasise. What else does he have? I have power and speed and boxing skills."

"I'm out to prove Tua is not going to make his name off me. This is a defining moment for him."

After Tua, who has waited two years for a title chance, there is no rival to Lewis who sparks as much fan interest as Tyson, including the man who twice beat Tyson -- Evander Holyfield.

Holyfield owns the World Boxing Association belt stripped from Lewis for fighting unbeaten Michael Grant last April rather than John Ruiz, who lost a controversial decision to Holyfield for a tainted

WBA title in August. Lewis' unification triumph over Holyfield here a year ago after a disputed draw set the stage for Grant, Botha and Tua. And for Lewis, Tyson is quickly becoming a now-or-never proposition.

"The shine has gone off Tyson," Lewis said. "He has been beaten twice by Holyfield and his last few fights have been travelling circus shows. He has fans. They look at him when he was Tyson. Tyson today is a different man."

Lewis called Tyson a shadow of his former self against Golota and said he takes the oncoming challenger's threats lightly.

"I don't take it 100 percent because I realise he's a disturbed person. It's like listening to a madman," Lewis said. "I want to get all the misfits out of boxing. Mike Tyson is the last misfit. He's the No. 1 misfit."

BCCSL assigns 1-man inquiry commission

COLOMBO, Nov 7: The Board of Control for Cricket in Sri Lanka, (BCCSL) Monday appointed a one-man commission of inquiry to probe the allegations of match-fixing against two of its cricketers, reports AFP.

The two -- former skipper Arjuna Ranatunga and middle-order batsman Aravinda de Silva -- were named as recipients of bribes by India's Central Bureau of Investigation (CBI).

The Board named Desmond Fernando, a member of the International Cricket Council's code of conduct committee, to head the commission of inquiry. BCCSL president Thilanga Sumathipala said.

Fernando, a well known human rights lawyer and former president of Sri Lanka's bar council has been given 30 days to conduct the inquiry and submit his report. Sumathipala said.

He has been given total freedom to visit India and other countries to gather evidence.

Sumathipala said Fernando would investigate matches played by Sri Lanka over the past 10 years and his report would be forwarded to the Minister of Sports, Lakshman Kiriella for further action.

Ranatunga and Aravinda figured in the CBI report after they were named by Indian bookie Mukesh Kumar Gupta.

The Indian bookmaker said the two Sri Lankan cricketers were among several international cricketers, who received bribes from him to fix matches. Both players denied the allegations.

Clijsters enters top 20

MIAMI, Florida, Nov 7: Belgium's Kim Clijsters broke into the WTA top 20 for the first time following her victory Sunday in the final of the Leipzig tournament, reports AFP.

At 17 years old, she is the youngest player in the top 20.

Clijsters, the daughter of a former Belgian international footballer, moved up 11 places thanks to her win in Germany to occupy the 20th spot just ahead of her compatriot Dominique Van Roost.

The weekend's other winner, Chanda Rubin of the United States, moved up to 11th spot.

Table with 2 columns: Player, Points. Lists names like Hingis, Davenport, Williams, Seles, N. Pietrangeli, S. Williams, Pierce, Sanchez-Vicario, Tauziat, Kournikova, Rubin, Coetzee, Capriati, Huber, Dementieva, Testud, Muzenich, Halard-Decugis, Frazier, Clijsters with their respective points.

Chase qualifiers

NEW YORK, Nov 7: Rising Russian star Elena Dementieva and former child star Jennifer Capriati were among the latest four players to qualify for the elite 16-player field for next week's season-ending Chase Championships, reports Reuters.

American Chanda Rubin, who beat Capriati to win the Bell Challenge title in Quebec City on Sunday, and Chase Championships regular Amanda Coetzee of South Africa also nailed down berths for the season finale at New York's Madison Square Garden, the WTA Tour announced on Monday.

The 19-year-old Dementieva, who burst into the women's tennis spotlight this year by reaching the US Open semifinals and followed that up by taking the silver medal at the Sydney Olympics, will be making her Chase Championships debut.

The 24-year-old Capriati returns to the year-end women's championships after a seven-year absence. She played in the then Virginia Slims Championships for three successive years (1990-92) as a teen sensation.

Rubin, 24, who locked up her spot among the year's top 16 performers with her victory in Quebec City, makes only her second appearance in the season finale and first since 1995.

The steady Coetzee, 29, clinched a berth in the championships for the eighth consecutive year.

The quartet brings the list of qualifiers to 14 with the last two places in the draw to be determined this week.

Letter from Athens

ATHENS, Nov 7: Athens Olympics chief Gianna Angelopoulos-Daskalaki on Tuesday mailed a letter to the president of the International Olympic Committee -- only this time she wasn't complaining about anything, reports AP.

Angelopoulos-Daskalaki inaugurated a limited edition series of stamps for the 2004 Olympics by mailing letters to Juan Antonio Samaranch, Greek President Costis Simitis, Pope John Paul II, and the speaker of Greece's parliament.

Each stamp bears the 2004 logo, a white wreath-shaped olive branch on a blue background.

"From 1896 Greece was able to pass through philately, through Greek stamps, the symbol of the Olympic Games to the whole world, which is the most recognizable symbol in the whole world," said Angelopoulos-Daskalaki.

She was referring to a series of stamps issued when Athens last hosted the games in 1896, an event that marked the rebirth of the Olympics.



Players of the Biochemistry Department, who became champions in the inter-department football tournament of Dhaka University, receive the trophy from Pro Vice-Chancellor Prof M Shahadat Ali after the final at the central playground on November 6. The biochemists beat Soil Science 4-3 in tie-breakers.

SA's opening woes over



JOHANNESBURG, Nov 7: Fixing the problems at the top of the order has turned South Africa's fortunes around, said opening batsman Gary Kirsten.

Kirsten and his side trounced New Zealand 5-0 in the one-day series and he believes their good form will continue when the Tests begin.

The 32-year-old said: "I think our performances in this series have proved that we've corrected our shortcomings. The top order discussed our previous collective failings and decided in no uncertain terms that it could not carry on here."

The collapse of the opening order in the final one-day international did nothing to sway Kirsten's conviction.

The left-hander who was dismissed for 25, said: "The top order chose this particular occasion to suffer our first batting collapse of the series. In the past, it's no secret that we've relied heavily on Lance Klusener to save games for us."

"But Lance's heroes on Saturday was the first time in five games that he, together with Jonty, Mark and Shaheek, had to compensate for the top order's failings and I think that's a nice balance, rather than the other way around."

"I think the way our batting went on Saturday only proved the progress we've made in that department."

However, the South African said that the Kiwis shouldn't be discarded ahead of the Test series.

"New Zealand have been heavily depleted by injuries. It's been quite sad really and a 5-0 series loss is definitely not a true reflection of New Zealand's ability," he said. "The foundation has been set for what should be a humdinger of a Test series. New Zealand should be a far stronger proposition."

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with their top bowlers able to operate for longer periods at a time."

However, he believes that the Kiwis will face an uphill battle with Roger Twose and Chris Cairns absent from their side.

He said: "It will be interesting to see how their batting comes along without Twose and the injured Cairns, their two most influential players on tour so far."

"They could have definitely have done with Twose to strengthen the middle order and it's surprising that he says he doesn't want to play Test cricket, preferring to concentrate on the one-day game."



Chief of Air Staff Air Vice-Marshal Jamal Uddin Ahmed (R) handing over the winners' trophy of the Bangladesh Air Force annual inter-base athletics championship to the members of Base Zahurul Haque at Kurmitola yesterday. In all, they won 11 gold, 9 silver and 6 bronze medals.



Sri Lanka's cricket chief Thilanga Sumathipala addressing a press conference in Colombo on November 6. —AFP photo

CROSSWORD By Eugene Sheffer

ACROSS 39 Nursery schooler line 41 One side of the DOWNS 1 Sail support 2 St. Louis attraction 3 Sikorsky or Stravinsky 4 Tourists' stopovers 5 Mainer's memento 6 Switch positions 7 Job safety grp. 8 Also-ran 9 Like Sean? 10 Pound of poetry 11 Imagines

Crossword grid with numbers 1-32 indicating starting positions for across and down words.

Solution time: 27 mins. NUMB CUI TACK ASTA USA ALOE PEIARUJAM HOLY RITTO WRITTES GROLL JAMAICAN AVA HUMAN HIE BENJAMIN BAMA ALPS PAPER GAGGLE JAN AOGG DOORJAMB PURE OWL OVIEN SEED NET SEGA Yesterday's answer

CRYPTOQUIP

ET M QEPLAEQPMJB TWUPBAH EAH HWQP. OWYJX EA SBOWIB M LYIEQP SEUX? Yesterday's Cryptquip: I WENT TO SEE A VERY GOOD SHAKESPEARE PLAY DEALING WITH HENRY VIII: "KING LEER."

Today's Cryptquip Clue: I equals M The Cryptquip is a substitution cipher in which one letter stands for another. If you think that X equals O, it will equal O throughout the puzzle. Single letters, short words and words using an apostrophe give you clues to locating vowels. Solution is trial and error.