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Did U Know?

Zimbabwe cricket captain Heath Streak keeps himself fit by playing football with his childhood friends, the farm labourers. He is also an expert hunter on his father's cattle farm. His mother calls him a child of the African bush.



What to Watch

- Ekushey TV**
Bangladesh vs Zimbabwe
Second & Final Test
Live at 2:00 pm
- ESPN**
English Premiership
Newcastle vs Sunderland
9:30 am
- Cricket Classics Boycott's Best
England vs Pakistan
Fifth Test 1987
11:30 am
- Cricket Classics Boycott's Best
England vs Australia
Second ODI 1989
7:00 pm
- English Premiership
Highlights at 12:00 am (Friday)
- Star Sports**
Cricket Magazine India's
Greatest Cricket Moments
Australia vs India
'98 Pepsi Triangular Series
First ODI Highlights
11:00 pm

Hello from Harare

Cricket

AL-AMIN, Harare

Bangladesh captain Naimur Rahman must be a worried man as he goes in to the second Test at Harare on Thursday.

Naimur, who takes extreme pride in his ability, is the kind of person who relishes leading by example. However, his exploits in the tour so far have been anything but inspiring.

The right-hander made 22 and 6 in the first Test while his off-spin bowling was treated with disdain by the home batsmen.

Although Naimur was by far the best Bangladeshi bowler in the country's inaugural Test against India at Dhaka in November, where he recorded a six-wicket haul in the Indian first innings, here in Zimbabwe however, he has failed to make any impact on seam-friendly pitches.

Whether the dip in form is affecting Naimur mentally was not

clear, but he looked short on motivation during the Bulawayo Test and so was the team.

And there was a distinct lack of communication between the skipper and his senior teammates



NAIMUR RAHMAN

which prompted speculations that all was not well inside the squad.

Now the best way out of these negatives for Naimur would be if he makes a worthy contribution to his team's cause in the second Test.

That would be on the 26-year-old's mind because he knows, 'a captain who leads from the front, is the best captain.'

TIGERS IN LION'S DEN!

The national cricketers met the King of Africa on Wednesday.

The players travelled to the Lion's Park, which is 22km away from the capital, in the morning where they came face to face with Africa's pride, the lions.

Following the adventure with the big cats, the excited team enjoyed a brief safari watching birds and visiting the Snake's World.

Two members of the squad — Javed Omar and Habibul Bashar — did not make the trip, as they had been there the previous day.

Sher-e-Bangla coast



SPORTS REPORTER

A brilliant half-century from Rony guided Sher-e-Bangla High School of Natore to an emphatic 73-run win over Nawabganj High School their zonal match of the Standard Chartered 19th National School Cricket Championship at the Natore Stadium on Wednesday.

Rony scored 63 as Sher-e-Bangla High, batting first, scored a commanding 204 in 34.3 overs.

In reply, Nawabganj High were restricted to 131 for nine in the stipulated 35 overs.

Away at the Majidee Stadium, AC High of Noakhali beat Samad Academy of Laxmipur by two wickets.

In the other matches, Ulipur High of Kurigram beat Hajipara High of Thakurgaon by nine wickets at the Kurigram Stadium. Mo-

hini Mohan Bidyapith of Kushtia recorded a two-wicket win over Keramat Ali Pilot High of Bagerhat, Sarnakali High of Gopalganj beat Narayanjan High by four wickets at the Gopalganj Stadium while Jhalakathi Government High defeated Latif Municipal School of Patuakhali by five wickets at the Jhalakathi Stadium.

SCORES IN BRIEF

Hajipara High School (Thakurgaon): 75 all out in 26.3 overs (Rony 15, Ranjit 5/10, Krishnamo 3/19)

Ulipur High School (Kurigram): 76 for 1 in 21.2 overs (Umon 28 n.o., Palash 21)

Result: Ulipur High School won by nine wickets.

Samad Academy (Laxmipur): 110 all-out in 28.4 overs (Sadat 20, Ali 3/19, Farug 3/22)

AC High School (Noakhali): 112 for 8 in 27.1 overs (Pauline 25, Sohel 3/24)

Result: AC High School won by

two wickets.

Sher-e-Bangla High School (Natore): 204 all out in 34.3 overs (Rony 63, Baki 47, Raju 2/39)

Nawabganj High School: 131 for 9 in 35 overs (Towfiq 25)

Result: Sher-e-Bangla High School won by 73 runs.

Keramat Ali Pilot School (Bagerhat): 115 all out in 32.3 overs

Mohini Mohan Bidyapith (Kushtia): 117 for 8 in 29.2 overs

Result: Mohini Mohan Bidyapith won by two wickets.

Narayanjan High School: 17 for 9 in 40 overs

Sarnakali High School (Gopalganj): 178 for 6 in 32 overs

Result: Sarnakali High School won by four wickets.

Latif Municipal School (Patuakhali): 122 all out in 32.4 overs

Jhalakathi High School: 123 for 5 in 20 overs

Result: Jhalakathi High School won by five wickets.

Ctg Div I cricket starts tomorrow

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Chittagong

Rising Star Club and Andorkilla Krira Ekadosh play in the opening match of the CJKS-Ispahani First Division Cricket League at the MA Aziz Stadium on Friday.

Chittagong City Mayor ABM Mohiuddin Chowdhury is expected to open the 21-team league as the chief guest.

The Chittagong Jila Krira Sangstha held a press conference at the CJKS gymnasium on Wednesday. CJKS vice-president Dastagir Chowdhury presided.

It was revealed that the sponsors MM Ispahani Limited have agreed to pay Tk.4.41 lakh.

Each team will be allowed to register two players, including a foreigner, from either the Dhaka Premier and First Division Leagues.

Cricket committee secretary Syed Abul Bashar, CJKS general secretary Shahed Asgar Chowdhury, managing director of Ispahani Minhaz Uddin and former national cricketer Nurul Abedin Nobel were also present.



Bangladesh's Javed Omar (L), Al-Shahriar (M) and Habibul Bashar stretching during practice in Harare on Wednesday morning. Al-Shahriar will be keeping wicket in the second Test beginning today after Khaled Masood fractured his right ankle during the first match in Bulawayo last week.

Shoab cleared?

REUTERS, Lahore

Pace bowler Shoab Akhtar has been cleared following concerns over the legality of his action, the Pakistan Cricket Board (PCB) said on Tuesday.

It said a 'final report' from the University of West Australia showed that the bowler, dubbed the 'Rawalpindi Express', was not guilty of throwing.

It added in a statement that the report would be forwarded to the International Cricket Council (ICC), the sport's governing body.

Shoab has twice been cited over his action. The first time was in Perth in the third Test against Australia in December 1999, throwing his career into doubt.

New Zealand umpires Doug Cowie and Steve Dunne then reported him during a one-day international against New Zealand in Dunedin at the end of February.

Shoab, who rivals Australia's Brett Lee for the title of the world's fastest bowler, has since been working on his bowling at the university in Perth, under the guidance of former Australian Test bowler Dennis Lillee and other experts, to make sure his arm does not straighten during delivery.

Earlier on Tuesday he was included in Pakistan's squad to tour England next month after recovering from the latest in a string of injuries.

One of the sport's most exciting players, he has featured in 15 Tests, taking 45 wickets, and was also in the Pakistan team which reached the 1999 World Cup final.

If he is reported again, the ICC will appoint an official to help him improve his action.

Victoria beat Agrani Bank

SPORTS REPORTER

Victoria Sporting Club earned their seventh win in the Premier Division Cricket League defeating Agrani Bank by two wickets in a Relegation League match at the Dhanmondi Cricket Stadium on Wednesday.

Pakistani opener Rezwana Omar top-scored with 69, as Victoria, chasing Bank's 211 in 50 overs, cruised to the target with more than six overs to spare.

Omar faced 49 balls for his 69 which included one six and 13 fours. He was well-supported by compatriot Rashed Hanif who chipped in with a 44-ball 34.

Earlier, electing to bat, Agrani Bank scored 211 all out in 50 overs.

Skipper Selim Shahed hit 63 off 77 balls with three boundaries and Sajjad Kadir added 38.

SCORES IN BRIEF

Agrani Bank: 211 all out in 50 overs (S Shahed 63, Sajjad 38, Sohag 33, R Hanif 6/59)

Victoria SC: 215 for 8 in 43.1 overs (Omar 69, R Hanif 34, Kapali 27, Bappy 3/47)

Result: Victoria SC won by two wickets.

DAY'S EVENT



Premier Division Cricket Super League
Abahani v Bangladesh Biman (Bangabandhu National Stadium)
Premier Division Cricket Relegation League
Brothers Union v City Club (Dhanmondi Cricket Stadium)



CRICKET CONNECTS: Two Zimbabwean girls get their faces painted in the Bangladesh (R) and Zimbabwe national colours.

No only to cricket

AGENCIES, New Delhi

The Indian government reacted angrily Wednesday to a threat by the national cricket board to pull out of major tournaments, including the 2003 World Cup, unless New Delhi clarifies its stand on playing Pakistan.

"The government's policy of not playing Pakistan in the present circumstances is a final one," Sports Minister Uma Bharti told reporters.

"India's self-respect and prestige, which are more important than everything else, will not be compromised," she said.

"The government takes foreign policy decisions keeping in mind national interests. The board has no business to dictate policies to us."

"The government is very, very firm not to have bilateral cricket matches against Pakistan in the prevailing circumstances," Bharti said. "Cricket has come to represent the national sentiment."

Indian teams in other sports will be allowed to play against Pakistan, she told a news confer-

ence. She also left the door open for India to play Pakistan in cricket, if it were unavoidable, as a part of a multinational event.

"The government decides its policy on the basis of national interest and not on extraneous

considerations," she said. "For me the honour of the country is above everything."

"In the case of multinational events, even in cricket, there might be an unavoidable situation," she said, adding that there was a difference for bilateral tours.

"We've just cleared the junior Indian volleyball team to play a tournament in Pakistan and we gave sanction to the Pakistan table tennis team to play in the Commonwealth championship in India," she said.

"We'll also be inviting Pakistan for the Afro-Asian Games in New Delhi in November."

India's sporting links with Pakistan have been severely curtailed since the two countries were involved in an armed conflict in the border state of Kashmir in 1999.

Government clearance is mandatory in India for any international sports event — at home or abroad.

The Indian government stopped its cricket team from playing a Test series in Pakistan



Mark Waugh

(Australian cricket superstar)

"I reckon he'll play another eight to 10 years and I would be surprised if he doesn't get more than 40 centuries."

While wishing Indian maestro Sachin Tendulkar on his 28th birthday Tuesday.

Siraganj cricket

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Siraganj

Rahmatganj Boys Club recorded a 16-run victory over Dhangara Boys Club in the Bhasani Smriti cricket tournament at local stadium yesterday. Winning the toss, Rahmatganj decided to bat and scored 176 all out in 40 overs.

In reply, Dhangara made 160 losing all wickets in 38.2 overs.

Iraq advance

REUTERS, Almaty

Iraq advanced to the last round of the World Cup Asian Zone qualifiers after a hard-fought 1-1 draw against nine-man Kazakhstan in their final Group Six match on Wednesday.

The two sides, who between them had three players sent off in the final three minutes, had also drawn 1-1 in their first meeting in Baghdad a week ago.

Iraq edged Kazakhstan on goal difference after scoring 28 and conceding five in six matches in a group which also included minnows Nepal and Macao. The Kazakhs finished with a 20-2 goals record.

Kazakhstan had to win their last match in order to advance and they led 1-0 after Oleg Litvinenko surprised Iraqi keeper Amer Hussain with a powerful 25-metre blast into the top corner in the 32nd minute.

But Haidar Majid equalised with a well-taken volley inside the box 10 minutes later.



Zimbabwe coach Carl Rackemann (R) explains something to his captain Heath Streak during a practice session in Harare on Wednesday.