

Did U Know?

During World War II, the US navy hired Reuben Fine, a world champion chess player, to calculate the probability of where enemy submarines might surface!

What to WATCH

ESPN
Australia vs Zimbabwe
Tri-Series, 9th ODI
Live at 9:15 am
Sportscentre
Sports News
Live at 8:30 pm

STAR Sports
Australian Open
Men's/Women's Fourth Round
Live at 6:00 am
Futbol Mundial
Repeat at 12:30 pm
Sportsline
Sports News
Live at 8:00 pm

Star WHIZZ KID
COMPETITION 205

Tick the correct answers, post to
The Daily Star
Win attractive prizes
Competition closes at 8 pm
Jan 30, 2004 and draw

1. Who won the 25th National Women's Chess Championship title?
Shabana Parveen • Rani Hamid • Zakia Sultana

2. Who lifted the Hopman Cup tennis title?
Australia • America • Russia

3. Steve Waugh has played how many Test matches?
132 168 200

4. David Seaman quit football at

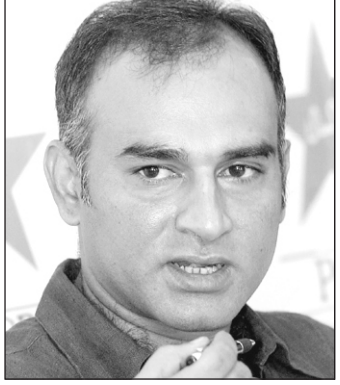
Name
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Class Roll No.

School Address

Phone: (If any)

TALK TURKEY



Aamir Sohail
(Former Pakistan cricket's chief selector)
"My career is as commentator so I have decided to leave (as selector) and it's not on a bitter note."
After he was sacked by Pakistan Cricket Board.

DAY'S EVENT

Western Union Premier Football League
Badda Jagarani vs Sheikh Russell KC (2:30 pm)
Brothers Union vs Dhanmondi (4:30 pm)
Venue: Sher-e-Bangla Nat'l Stadium, Mirpur
Nat'l Cricket League (Day-3)
Chittagong vs Dhaka
Venue: Comilla Stadium
Khulna vs Sylhet
Venue: Shamsul Huda Stadium, Jessore
Rajshahi vs Jessore
Venue: Rangpur Cricket Garden

Mahmud urged to rethink



PHOTO: ANISUR RAHMAN

BUT HIS PADS WILL KEEP PLAYING: Khaled Mahmud presented this pair of pads to Alok Kapali when the retiring Bangladesh captain came to the Bangabandhu National Stadium to bid goodbye to his teammates yesterday.

Cricket

SPORTS REPORTER

It was a touching scene at the Bangabandhu National Stadium yesterday when Khaled Mahmud walked on to the field to bid farewell to his teammates.

The gutsy cricketer, who surprised everybody by announcing his retirement from international cricket after being dropped from the Zimbabwe-bound Test squad on Saturday, took the centre stage of attraction during the final training session of the national team.

Clad in tight jeans and a blue shirt, the ever-smiling Mahmud received an emotional reception when everybody starting from new captain Habibul Bashar to the youngest member of the team Rajin Saleh came down to the former captain and requested him to revert his retirement decision.

Affectionately called Chacha by his teammates Mahmud however ruled out the possibility of reconsidering the decision.

"I took the decision after talking with my family and there is no chance to change my decision. But I'm really moved the way my teammates expressed their love for me today," said Mahmud.

The 32-year-old also brought his best pair of pads to present them to Alok Kapali, who was finding it difficult to holding back his tears.

Mahmud, who rejected the selectors' offer to continue his international career in the one-day version of the game, said that it was not an emotional decision rather a logical one.

"I don't want to stay on as a half player. But I can tell you one thing

that I was not treated fairly," said a piqued Mahmud, who played 12 Tests and 53 one-day internationals.

But the soft-spoken Mahmud did not forget to wish all the luck to his successor Bashar. He however warned the top batsman of the country not to get intimidated with foreign influences while on the field.

"He (Bashar) should be allowed to dictate when on the field. Even when he wants to gamble, everybody should back him instead of imposing the decision on him," said Mahmud.

Bashar on the other hand termed his long-time partner as a great motivator and requested Mahmud to change his mind.

"Everybody loves him because of his personality. It was only because of him that I have got a disciplined team. I request him to change his decision," said Bashar.

Chief selector Faruque Ahmed, who deemed Mahmud not fit for the Test team, once again said that their decision to include him in the one-day was a wise move.

"I know him. He is a fighter. I believe he took the decision emotionally. He was not an obvious choice in the longer-version but he could still contribute greatly in the one-day matches," said the chief selector.

Whatmore on the other hand was not interested to be drawn into the matter since the Australian apparently didn't want Mahmud in the Test fold with whom the famed coach started his Bangladesh assignment.

"I respect his emotion. But I do not get involved into issues that came out in the newspapers today," said the 49-year-old.



THE LAST LESSON: Mahmud having a talk with coach Dav Whatmore.



WHY DID YOU RETIRE? Vice-captain appoint Rajin Saleh makes a point.



CHANGING OF GUARDS: Mahmud (L) and Habibul Bashar shake hands.

Action restarts today

SPORTS REPORTER

WESTERN UNION
সার্বিক প্রতিযোগিতা
WESTERN UNION FOOTBALL LEAGUE

After six days of unscheduled break, the Western Union Premier Division

Football League resumes at the Sher-e-Bangla National Stadium in Mirpur today.

Sheikh Russell Krira Chakra will take on Badda Jagarani Sangsad in the first match of the day at 2:30 pm while league leaders Brothers Union will face bottom club Dhanmondi in second fixture at 4:30 pm

The first round of the double-legged championship will end tomorrow with the Dhaka derby between perennial foes Abahani and Mohammedan Sporting Club at the same venue.

The league came to an abrupt halt on January 20 when a group of Mohammedan supporters invaded the ground at the Sher-e-Bangla National Stadium demanding the postponement of the competition until punitive measures taken against the club by the Dhaka Mahanagari Football League Committee (DMFLC) were revoked. Supporters also attacked the Referees' Association office in the evening of the same day prompting the match officials to stop conducting matches on security ground.

The problem started after the

DMFLC declared Muktijoddha Sangsad 2-0 winners against Mohammedan as the Black and Whites refused to play the last six minutes of their January 15 disputing the equalising goal against them.

The DMFLC also deducted a point from Mohammedan's previous tally and handed their captain Jewel Rana a one-match suspension for misbehaving with the referee and linesman.

The club also announced that it would boycott the league if the authorities didn't entertain its demands.

DMFLC initially stopped the league for another two days and extended it by two more days on Thursday. It then handed over the responsibility of solving the matter

on Bangladesh Football (BFF).

BFF on Saturday sat in an emergency meeting where its president SA Sultan withheld the suspension of Jewel. BFF also extended the lay off by a day.

Mohammedan on Saturday night agreed to return to the league.

Meanwhile, Abahani in a hastily called media briefing yesterday, demanded that Jewel be punished. Otherwise the club warned that it might inform the matter officially to the Asian Football Confederation (AFC) and FIFA.

Abahani also confirmed that they would face Mohammedan tomorrow as the club was not in favour of boycotting the championship

PREMIER DIVISION LEAGUE TABLE									
Teams	M	W	D	L	GF	GA	Points		
Brothers Union	8	5	3	-	19	4	18		
Muktijoddha	9	5	3	1	15	6	18		
Abahani	8	3	5	-	19	8	14		
Arambagh KS	9	4	2	3	6	10	14		
Mohammedan SC	8	3	4	1	15	5	12		
Sheikh Russell KC	8	3	3	2	7	5	12		
Victoria	9	3	1	5	6	16	10		
Dhaka Wanderers	9	2	2	5	6	18	8		
Badda Jagarani	8	1	1	6	3	13	4		
Dhanmondi	8	-	2	6	8	19	2		

Chittagong take innings lead

ISPAHANI Mirzapore Tea
5th National Cricket League

SPORTS REPORTER

A five-wicket haul by off-spinner Sabbir Khan handed Chittagong an important 106-run first innings lead against leaders Dhaka on the second day of their four-day Ispahani Mirzapore Tea Fifth National Cricket League match at the Comilla Stadium yesterday.

The tourists resumed the day on 38 for nought in reply to Chittagong's 254. But a middle-order collapse saw them get out for 148, conceding a 106-run deficit.

The home team stretched the lead to 178 as they scored 72 for one in the second knock when the stumps were drawn for the day.

At Jessore, a 63-run seventh wicket stand between Nasirul Alam and Mohammad Rana gave Sylhet innings some respectability as they managed 181 after resuming the day on 31 for 2.

Khulna, in reply, were 13 with-

out loss when play ended for the day.

Meanwhile, play finally started at Rangpur with Barisal reaching 144 for five on the second day after the first day was called off due to foggy weather.

SCOREBCARDS

Scoreboard on the second day of the three four-day Ispahani Mirzapore Tea Fifth National Cricket League matches played at different venues across the country yesterday:

CHITTAGONG V DHAKA

Venue: Comilla Stadium

CHITTAGONG: First innings 254 all out in 76.2 overs (Anisul 27, Masum 20, Salahuddin 64, Faisal 13, Azam 12, Mukter 37, Ahsanullah 44, Raihan 15; Neeyamur 1-27, Mahfuzur 1-45, Elias 3-34, Sanwar 2-48, Mosaddeq 3-84)

DHAKA: First innings (overnight 38 no loss)
Rashedul b Muballik 23

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Zia, Rani victors

SPORTS REPORTER

Grand Master Ziaur Rahman and International Women's Master (IWM) Rani Hamid earned 4 points each after the end of the fifth round games of the first International Open Chess tournament at Chennai, India yesterday.

Zia beat Mari Arun of India and Rani beat MB Muralidharan of India. Zakia Sultana and Afroza Khanam Bably earned 2 points each and Hafizul Islam Chapal earned 1.5 points.

Office hockey

UNB, Dhaka

Morning Sun earned a facile 3-0 victory over Bangladesh Army in the super league match of the Office Hockey League at the Maulana Bhasani National Hockey Stadium yesterday.

The match was locked goalless in the first half.

In the day's other match, Friends Library Limited beat BKSP 3-2. The first half ended 2-2.

Wait for more from Laxman

AFP, Adelaide

Indian run-machine VVS Laxman warns he can do much better after scoring three one-day international centuries in a week.

Laxman's 131 in the three-run win over Zimbabwe at Adelaide Oval on Saturday continued a triangular series batting bonanza for the stylish strokemaker, following two unbeaten hundreds against Australia earlier in the week.

Not only was it Laxman's highest score in a one-day international but it was also the first of his five career limited-overs centuries not to come against Australia.

"When I went back into the dressing room all the players congratulated me that it was the first time not against Australia, but against Zimbabwe," Laxman said.

"It was good, especially with the situation we were in, losing three wickets for four runs, I'm very satisfied that in that situation I went on to get 100."

But he said he was still to hit top form, a claim which should send a shiver through Australia's bowlers ahead of the tri-series finals next month.

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Shoaib Imran's bet

Cricket

AFP, Karachi

Former cricket great Imran Khan Sunday said Pakistan's bowling attack would test India's batting powerhouse in the forthcoming series, with pace bowler Shoaib Akhtar holding the ace.

"Pakistan has a balanced bowling attack which will test the Indian batting and for me, Shoaib holds the ace as he is the deadliest bowler in modern day cricket," Imran, a former Pakistani captain and all-rounder, told this news agency.

"Shoaib is the real match winner and with Mohammad Sami, Shabbir Ahmed and Umer Gul in back up, the home bowling will give (India) a tough time," said Imran, who is now a member of parliament in Pakistan.

"The way Shoaib swung the match at Wellington goes to prove his worth as the most destructive bowler and he can wreck any batting line up on any wicket," said Imran.

Akhtar, the fastest bowler in the

world, finished with six for 30 off 18 overs in New Zealand's second innings in the second Test in Wellington late December to set up a famous win for Pakistan.

The revived three-match Test and five-game one-day series between India and Pakistan in March-April is eagerly anticipated. It will be the first time India has toured Pakistan for 14 years.



IMRAN KHAN

"India is on a high and their batting clicked in Australia, but

Preparation pleases Whatmore

Cricket

SPORTS REPORTER

Bangladesh coach Dav Whatmore said that the Tigers now have the right approach and can assess the situation better.

"I think attitude and understanding are the main differences between previous series' and the coming series," said Whatmore yesterday while talking with reporters after his charges had their last practice session at the Bangabandhu National Stadium before their departure for the African nation of Namibia on January 28.

A 16-member Bangladesh team will leave on Wednesday night for Namibia where they will play three limited-over and one three-day match against the ICC associate members before leaving for Zimbabwe on February 10.

For new skipper Habibul Bashar it will be a second trip to

Zimbabwe but a much different one than the first.

"We were totally raw when we first toured Zimbabwe. But now we have experience. I am confident of a better performance this time," said Bashar.

The 31-year-old thanked his predecessor Khaled Mahmud for transforming the squad into a fighting and organised unit.

"Mahmud regrouped the team after our World Cup disaster, which was a great achievement. It has made my job easier," said Bangladesh's most successful batsmen.

Whatmore expressed his satisfaction over the extensive preparation of the Bangladesh team. A number of expert foreign coaches and specialists assisted Whatmore in preparing the Tigers.

"It was a very wonderful two-months preparation for the team. We started the camp in December and after Christmas, we resumed it in the first week of

January. I am totally satisfied with the preparation," said Whatmore.

Former Bangladesh coach Trevor Chappell worked as a specialist fielding coach while Sri Lanka-born Australian Owen Mattau gave batting tips to the Tigers. Australian psychologist Anthony Stuart conducted special sessions with the cricketers to make them mentally stronger.

Whatmore however cautioned his boys that there was no chance of taking Zimbabwe lightly although they are struggling at the moment in the international arena.

"I think it is silly to take any opponent lightly because we are the underdogs no matter who we play against. And Zimbabwe played brilliant cricket recently against the West Indies on their home soil," said Whatmore.

Whatmore believed that the players improved in bowling and fielding but he was still a bit worried about his batters.

Tragic!

AFP, Sydney

An Australian cricketer was killed by a lightning bolt in a country league game in New South Wales state, police said Saturday.

Witnesses said 31-year-old David Evans' bat exploded after lightning struck his helmet as he stood at the crease late Saturday afternoon at Bombardery, about 120 kilometres (92.4 miles) south of Sydney.

"Ambulance officers were called and administered treatment at the scene, however the man was pronounced dead on arrival at Shoalhaven Hospital," a police spokesman said.

Matt Sawkins, 13, and his father Graeme, were both knocked to the ground and slightly injured by the lightning.

SA make 263

STAR SPORT MONITOR

Hosts South Africa made 263 for four in 50 overs in the inaugural one-day international against West Indies at Newlands in Cape Town yesterday.

South African captain Graeme Smith won the toss and chose to bat.