



Did U Know?

Greece became the first nation to win a major championship with a foreign coach. This had never happened in 11 previous European Championships and 17 World Cups.



ESPN

New Zealand vs West Indies
NatWest Series, 9th ODI
Live at 3:45 pm

STAR Sports

Sportsline
Live at 8:00 pm

TEN Sports

Copa America
Argentina vs Ecuador
Live at 6:30 am
Costa Rica vs Paraguay
Live at 4:15 am (Friday)
Brazil vs Chile
Live at 6:30 am (Friday)



Stuart Carlisle
(Zimbabwe batsman)

"It turned out we were all sacked three times in a month. Can that have happened anywhere before?" Explaining the unique situation in their country.



Tick the correct answers, post to
The Daily Star
Win attractive prizes
Competition closes at 8 pm
July 9, 2004 and draw shortly afterwards

- How many Test matches will India play against Bangladesh in December?
Three Two Four
- Who is Pakistan's new cricket coach?
Miandad Woolmer Marsh
- Who won the Rating chess title?
Rajib Rakib Reefat
- Who is the youngest scorer at UEFA Euro 2004?
Rooney Vanlanthen Ronaldo
- Who scored the first goal at Euro 2004?
Zidane Karagounis Flgo

Name

Class. Roll No.

School Address

Phone: (if any)

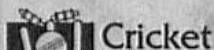
Pioneer football

UNB, Dhaka

Nawabpur KC moved into the 10-team super league of the Shineeupur 21st Pioneer Football League with a 2-2 draw against Khilgaon Juba Sangha in the central zone match at the Basabo Tarun Sangha ground yesterday.

Following is the results of other matches:
North zone (Kamlapur Stadium)
Kalachandpur Ekadosh- 9,
Maghbazar Sabuj Sangha- 1
Jirabo SC- 6, Madhubagh FC- 2
South zone (Mirpur Outer Stadium)
Bangladesh SC- 1, Mirpur FA- 0
Islambagh Lucky Seven- 0, Dripta Tarunya FA- 0
East zone (Dhupkhola ground)
Mansoor SC- 2, Pali Unnayan Sangha- 0
Narayanjanj FA- 1, Titu SS- 1

Bashar's men safe Asia Cup on despite suicidal bombing



SPORTS REPORTER

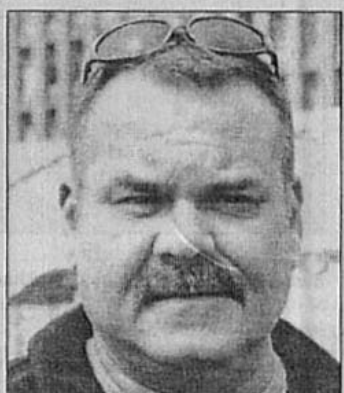
The Bangladesh national cricketers, who are now in Sri Lanka preparing for the Asia Cup starting July 16, were safe and sound and not shaken by the suicidal bomb blast in Colombo yesterday.

Coch Dav Whatmore informed the Bangladesh Cricket Board yesterday over telephone that the incident in the Lankan capital did not affect the team's plans as they would play their second warm-up match tomorrow (Friday).

The opponents will be the same Invitational XI who lost the first practice match to the visiting Tigers by 29 runs.

Whatmore also informed that the Bangladesh team was residing far away from the place of the bombing and the players were not feeling insecure.

AFP adds from Colombo, Sri Lanka's cricket authorities expressed confidence on staging next week's Asia Cup tournament despite Wednesday's suicide bomb attack that killed five people.



DAV WHATMORE

ple inside a high security zone in the capital.

Sri Lanka Cricket (SLC) said there were no cancellations for the

six-nation tournament from July 16 to August 1 and that authorities were prepared to arrange maximum security for the teams and the fans.

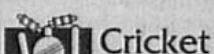
"We have no reason to change our plans," SLC spokesman Ray Illangakoon said. "As far as we are concerned, the tournament will go ahead as scheduled."

Officials said Colombo's first suicide bombing in nearly three years was directed at a Tamil government minister bitterly opposed to the Tamil Tiger rebels, who are waging a drawn-out campaign for a separate state.

Bangladesh, Hong Kong, India, Pakistan, Sri Lanka and the United Arab Emirates will take part in the Asia Cup tournament which involves 13 matches, including nine day-and-night matches.

Matches are to be played in Colombo as well as in Dambulla, a four to five hours drive from the capital.

Harbhajan back for India



AFP, Madras

Prolific off-spinner Harbhajan Singh was on Wednesday named in India's 14-man squad for the Asia Cup in Sri Lanka later this month, ending a seven-month absence from international cricket due to a finger injury.

Harbhajan, who turned 24 last week, underwent surgery on his bowling hand after the first Test in Australia last December and missed the rest of the Test and one-day series against the world champions and the subsequent tour of Pakistan.

"Harbhajan is a world-class bowler and it is great to have him back," said Indian coach John Wright of the spinner who has claimed 104 one-day wickets from 82 matches.

Harbhajan will team up with veteran Anil Kumble to bolster India's spin attack in the six-nation tournament against defending champions Pakistan, Sri Lanka, Bangladesh, Hong Kong and the United Arab Emirates (UAE).

Also back for the July 16-August 1 event is opening bowler Zaheer Khan, who missed the last two Tests against Pakistan in April because of a hamstring injury.

Zaheer is one of the three left-arm seamers in the squad along with Ashish Nehra and Irfan Pathan. Laxmipathy Balaji takes the fourth fast bowling spot ahead of Ajit Agarkar.

Sachin Tendulkar, the world's most prolific one-day batsman with a record 13,134 runs and 37 centuries, heads the strong Indian batting that includes skipper Sourav Ganguly, Virender Sehwag, Rahul Dravid, Venkatesh Laxman, Yuvraj Singh and Mohammad Kaif.

Test wicketkeeper Parthiv Patel has been retained in the squad despite the team management making it clear that Dravid will continue to don the gloves in one-day cricket to accommodate an extra batsman.

"Dravid may not be a specialist wicketkeeper but he has been great behind the stumps over the last two years and we plan to continue with that policy," Ganguly said.

It will be India's first international engagement since the tour of

Pakistan in March-April when they won the Test series 2-1 and the one-dayers 3-2.

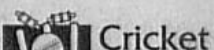
SQUAD

Sourav Ganguly (captain), Virender Sehwag, Rahul Dravid, Sachin Tendulkar, Venkatesh Laxman, Yuvraj Singh, Mohammad Kaif, Parthiv Patel, Anil Kumble, Harbhajan Singh, Zaheer Khan, Ashish Nehra, Irfan Pathan, Laxmipathy Balaji.
Coach: John Wright.



GIVE ME THE BALL: Indian spinner Harbhajan Singh during a practice session of the national team at a camp in Madras yesterday.

Shoaib in Asia Cup side



AFP/REUTERS, Karachi

Pakistan on Wednesday announced a 14-member squad for the defence of their Asia Cup crown due to start in Sri Lanka next week.

Fiery pacer Shoaib Akhtar has been included in the team to spearhead Pakistan's Asia Cup title defence after recovering from a rib injury sustained in the April series against India.

Rivals India, hosts Sri Lanka, Bangladesh, United Arab Emirates and Hong Kong also feature in the event from July 16-August 1, last held in 2000 and won by Pakistan.

Pakistan, Bangladesh and Hong Kong are placed in Group A while India, Sri Lanka and the UAE are in Group B.

Two teams from each group will qualify for the single league of four teams, with the top two teams meeting in the final.

"We have announced the team after discussion with captain

Inzamamul Haq and coach Bob Woolmer and believe that this side has the capability to defend the Asia Cup," chief selector of Pakistan Cricket Board (PCB) Wasim Bari told AFP.

"We have selected Shoaib Akhtar after satisfying ourselves that he is 100 per cent fit and with the consent of the captain and coach," Bari told Reuters.

"Pakistan's coach Bob Woolmer assessed Akhtar's fitness in the training camp and conveyed that he is ready to spearhead Pakistan's attack in the Asia Cup," he said.

SQUAD

Inzamamul Haq (captain), Yousuf Youhana (vice-captain), Imran Farhat, Yasir Hameed, Imran Nazir, Younis Khan, Shoaib Malik, Abdul Razzaq, Moin Khan (wicketkeeper), Mohammad Sami, Shoaib Akhtar, Shabbir Ahmed, Danish Kaneria, Rana Naveedul Hassan.
Coach: Bob Woolmer.
Manager: Haroon Rasheed.
Trainer: Murray Stevenson.

Akhtar had to go through a stringent fitness test after first saying he could not be considered for the tournament because of a rib cage injury and then saying he was available.

Akhtar's injury -- which came in the decisive Rawalpindi Test of the series which Pakistan lost to India -- was seen as suspicious and was examined by a Pakistan Cricket Board (PCB) medical commission.

The PCB let him off with a warning saying the tests conducted remained inconclusive.

Middle order batsman Younis Khan and opener Imran Nazir earned recalls but fast rising pacer Umar Gul was left out after he failed to regain full fitness from a back injury sustained in the series against India.

"Everybody had to learn from his mistakes and we hope that this young team learns from theirs in the home series against India," said Bari.

Pakistan lost both the one-day and Test series against India, their first defeats in both forms of the game on home soil against the arch rivals which resulted in coach Javed Miandad's termination.

MSC stay unbeaten CCC, Abahani to fight for 2nd place

CU CORRESPONDENT

Milon kept Chittagong City Corporation Ekadash's hopes to become runners-up in the CJKS-Elite Paint Premier Football League alive when he scored the goal in a 1-0 win over Regency Sports Club in the last match at the MA Aziz Stadium here yesterday.

With this win, the City Corporation side finished with 20 points in nine matches, same as Abahani. The two teams will now compete in a play-off for the second place.

The CJKS officials will meet soon to decide the date of the play-off.

In another encounter, champions Mohammedan Sporting Club maintained their unbeaten run by beating last year's runners-up Agarabad Nowjoan Club 2-1.

Mohammedan finished with 25 points with eight wins and a draw.

BKSP Greens group champs

SPORTS REPORTER

BKSP Greens emerged group champions when they recorded a 3-1 win over India's SSSA in the last group match in the BKSP Cup Under-16 football tournament at the BKSP ground in Savary yesterday.

The winners led the first half 1-0 through a five-minute strike from Towhid while Al Amin doubled the lead early into the second half.

Ganeshwar pulled one goal back for the Chandigarh outfit, the only foreign team in the meet, but Alamgir sealed the victory for the hosts.

While BKSP won their both matches, SSSA returned without any point after two losses.

Khulna finished runners-up to qualify for the semis from the group.

In the other group, BKSP Reds drew 1-1 with Dhaka Division to end with five points. The Reds will have to wait for the result of the Dhaka-Chittagong match to know whether they will make it to the last four.

In the other match of the day, Chittagong Division thrashed Barisal Division 5-1 with Waisi slamming four goals.

Premier squash

BSS, Dhaka

Omar Bhai, Deepak Chauhan, Ram Gopal and Sentu Chauhan won their respective Premier Division matches of the 2nd AP-AccessTel Open squash tournament at Dhaka Club Squash Court yesterday.

Omar Bhai of Gulshan Club beat club-mate Abdus Sattar Nini 9-4, 9-2, 10-8.

Ram Gopal earned a comfortable 9-2, 9-2, 9-2 win against Rocky of Gulshan Club.

Deepak Chauhan of Dhaka University after avoiding early challenge to defeat Asimul Haque of Dhaka Club 9-7, 9-1, 9-5.

Sentu Chauhan of Dhaka Club won against his club-mate Mamun 9-4, 9-2, 9-5.

In B-Division matches, Tanveer of Dhaka Club scored an easy 9-1, 9-3, win over Major Sarwar of Dhaka Army Club.

In the over-40 division Brig. Kamal of Dhaka Army Club beat Tanveer of Gulshan Club 9-1, 9-10, 9-1.

Badal Chauhan of Dhaka Club sweat hard to win against Shahidul Haque of Cricket Board 9-5, 9-6.

Miandad lends a helping hand

AFP, Lahore

Pakistan cricket legend Javed Miandad has promised to fully support his replacement as national team coach Bob Woolmer despite being acrimoniously sacked from the post last month.

"Woolmer and I share a long-time friendship and since he sought my advice I invited him for a dinner Tuesday night and we exchanged thoughts over coaching Pakistan," Miandad told AFP on Wednesday. "Our aim is the same -- to move Pakistan cricket forward."

Miandad said he would always be ready to offer his advice in future. Woolmer has indicated he wants to keep Miandad as a member of his back-room team.

"I was hurt at the manner my contract was terminated but I have always put the acrimony behind me and have worked for the sake of the country," said Miandad, whose three tenures as Pakistan coach have ended prematurely.

"I am not the coach but I will be there as part of the coaching team."

Woolmer, who joined Pakistan's

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Dhaka giants want time

SPORTS REPORTER



Lack of preparation was the main concern for the big guns ahead of the 12-team final round of the fourth Nitol-Tata National Football League due to be

held at four different venues across the country.

The first phase of the final round commences July 13 at Mymensingh but the contenders for the title haven't had the chance to train as most players were busy playing in the Chittagong Premier Football League, which only concluded yesterday.

The Dhaka teams expect their booters to return to the capital by today but it will be impossible to begin full preparation within a couple of days as the players will be understandably tired after a grueling month.

The NFL tournament committee had requested the six automatic qualifiers -- Muktiyoddha Sangsad, Mohammedan Sporting Club,

Brothers Union, Abahani, Sheikh Russel Kira Chakra and Chittagong Mohammedan Sporting Club to submit a 25-member respective team list including two guest recruits. Each team will also be allowed to field two foreign players in a match. But the sides were yet to respond which has forced the organisers to fix a deadline which is July 10.

The top clubs meanwhile wanted the competition deferred by at least fifteen days.

Shafiqul Islam Manik, coach of the reigning champions Muktiyoddha, said that it was unfair to allow only four days for preparation before such a big tournament.

"You can't expect quality football from teams without adequate preparation. We have requested football federation to delay the start but they have not heard our pleas," said Manik yesterday.

The Reds' coach believed that it would be very difficult for the players to overcome the burnout factor after the Chittagong League.

"They had to play nine matches inside a month and they are bound to get tired," he added.

Amer Khan, the manager of

Dhaka Premier League champions Brothers Union, also echoed the same sentiment but was hopeful of carrying on the Premier League form to the NFL. This will be the Gopibaghat team's first appearance in the NFL.

"We are yet to start the camp because our top players were involved in other competitions. I feel the BFF should seriously take into consideration our request of delaying the league. However, I still believe that we are capable of completing a double with the team that we have," said Amer adding that two Ugandan footballers will join the squad soon.

Abahani, who had a forgettable last season, were also facing similar problems.

"Lack of preparation is a big headache and it would be better if we get at least fifteen days to train," said the former national captain whose side is expected to start training today.

When the reputed clubs were concerned with their preparation, Premier League's surprise package Sheikh Russel KC meanwhile were looking to further establish them

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Scotland, Ireland invite Tigers

SPORTS REPORTER

The Scottish Cricket Limited and Ireland Cricket Union have invited Bangladesh to play a few limited-overs practice matches before the ICC Champions Trophy.

Bangladesh are pitted against South Africa and the West Indies in their group in the Champion Trophy, which will be held in September in England.

The Bangladesh Cricket Board has accepted the invitation but has not chalked out the tour details.

Nat'l tennis final today

SPORTS REPORTER

The men's singles final of the National Tennis Championship was postponed yesterday due to rain.

The match will take place at the National Tennis Complex today morning between top seeds Amal Roy and Murad Hossain.

The age-group matches, however, held yesterday afternoon.

In the U-17 boys singles Anwar Hossain moved into the final beating Shah Newaz 6-3, 6-2 while the other semifinal between Pritul Mondal and Ranjan Ram was going on when the last report filed.

In the girls U-13 singles, Mahin Mohid set up a meeting in the final with Rahima Akhter after winning the semifinal against Nipun by 6-2, 2-6, 7-6.

The age-group final will also take place today.

SPORTS REPORTER

Japan Football Association (JFA) will assist its Bangladesh counterpart in staging the Under-16 Youth Football Championship in September this year, said JFA's international committee member Ichiro Fujita.

The veteran football organiser, who arrived in Dhaka on Monday, made this remark after a successful meeting with the Bangladesh Football Federation (BFF) yesterday.

"I am happy to announce that the JFA will provide financial support to the BFF as a goodwill gesture. I have studied the plan of the BFF and I think it would immensely help generate enthusiasm among the youths," Fujita told reporters at the BFF office.

The BFF planned to organise the juvenile tournament involving 70 teams including 64 districts.

Fujita, who served the Asian Football Confederation for 15 years as a member of the technical committee, hoped that the success of the event would open new avenues of cooperation between the two federations.

"The plan is good and the JFA will continue its support provided that the BFF make it a successful annual event in its calendar."

"I strongly believe that the Under-16 competition is most important at age-group level," said the 65-year-old, who is no stranger in this part of the world. The frequent traveller has previously visited Bangladesh over ten times.

"You can not improve if you don't have a strong base at the age-group level. The competition will help you build a strong team for the AFCU-17 Championships in future," he commented.

But Fujita refused to disclose the amount they have promised the struggling BFF. It was however learned that JAF will give half the amount of BFF's proposed budget of

US dollars 40,000.

Fujita, who leaves Dhaka tomorrow, will return to supervise the tournament in September.

A former instructor of coaches, Fujita also said that his government is keen to construct a modern gymnasium in the newly built Football Bhaban.



ICHIRO FUJITA

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Gayle ousts England



AFP, London

Chris Gayle's 132 not out in his 100th one-day international took West Indies into the Natwest Series final with a seven-wicket win against England at Lord's here Tuesday.

Not even a total of 285 for seven featuring a record stand of 226 between all-rounder Andrew Flintoff (123) and Andrew Strauss (100) -- the Middlesex captain's maiden one-day international hundred -- could prevent England extending a losing streak batting first that stretched back to last year's World Cup.

It also meant that every completed game in this tournament had been won by the team fielding first.

West Indies, who face New Zealand at the Rose Bowl on Thursday, will be up against the already-qualified Black Caps in Saturday's Lord's final.

Gayle, together with Ramnaresh Sarwan (89), put on 187 in 188 balls for the second wicket as they took the game away from England.

Left-handed opener Gayle, the man-of-the-match, faced 165 balls with one six and three fours as West Indies won with five balls to spare.

Ricardo Powell added late impetus with a dashing 33 not out of 22 balls in an unbroken stand of 68 with Gayle.

Gayle, 24, whose nine one-day international hundreds have all

come overseas, said: "Once myself and Sarwan set up the game, eventually Ricardo came in and batted really well. He took a lot of pressure off me as well."

It was tough on Flintoff who for the second match in a row found himself making a hundred in a losing cause after his 106, his maiden one-day international century, in Sunday's six-wicket reverse against New Zealand.

But England were left reeling the fact that the containing all-rounder was unable to bowl because of an ankle injury.

Paul Collingwood and Vaughan's combined 10 overs cost 68 runs, while fast spearhead, Stephen Harmison, usually a reliable source of wickets, had an equally fruitless return of 10 overs for 51.

Earlier left-hander Strauss and Flintoff's stand of 226 rescued England from the depths of 54 for three against a Windies attack lacking pacemen Jermaine Lawson (114) and Ravi Rampaul (shin).

It was an England one-day international record for all wickets surpassing the previous best of 213 set by Neil Fairbrother and Graeme Hick against the West Indies at Lord's in 1991.

SCOREBOARD

Scoreboard of the one-day triangular Natwest Series match between England and West Indies at Lord's on Tuesday:
ENGLAND: 285 for 7 (Bradshaw 123, Strauss 100; Gayle 3-57, Best 2-42)
WEST INDIES

Gayle not out	132
Devon C Jones b Gough	10
Sarwan c Jones b Anderson	89
Lara c Jones b Anderson	10
Powell not out	33
Extras: (lb-7, w-5)	12

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MAN-OF-THE-MATCH: West Indies opener Chris Gayle responds to the crowd's applause after reaching his century against England at Lord's on July 6.

PHOTO: AFP