



Did U Know?

No gymnast had ever achieved a perfect score of 10, until Romanian gymnast Nadia Comaneci scored perfect 10's seven times at the 1976-Montreal games.



What to WATCH

- BTV**
Nitol-Tata Nat'l Football League
MSC Dhaka vs MSC Jhenidah
Live at 4:15 pm
- ESPN**
Asia Cup Cricket 2004
Pakistan vs Hong Kong
Highlights
Repeat at 8:00 am
Sportscentre
Live at 8:30 pm
- STAR Sports**
Asian Cup Football
China vs Bahrain
Repeat at 9:00 am
Sportsline
Live at 8:00 pm
- TEN Sports**
Copa America Quarterfinals
Highlights at 4:00 pm



Brett Lee
(Australian fast bowler)
"Playing in India is a huge challenge and requires a lot of grit."

Lankans pile up challenging score

AFP, Dambulla

Kumar Sangakkara and Mahela Jayawardene plundered 116 runs off just 88 balls to help Sri Lanka post a challenging 282-4 against India in the Asia Cup Group-B league match here on Sunday.

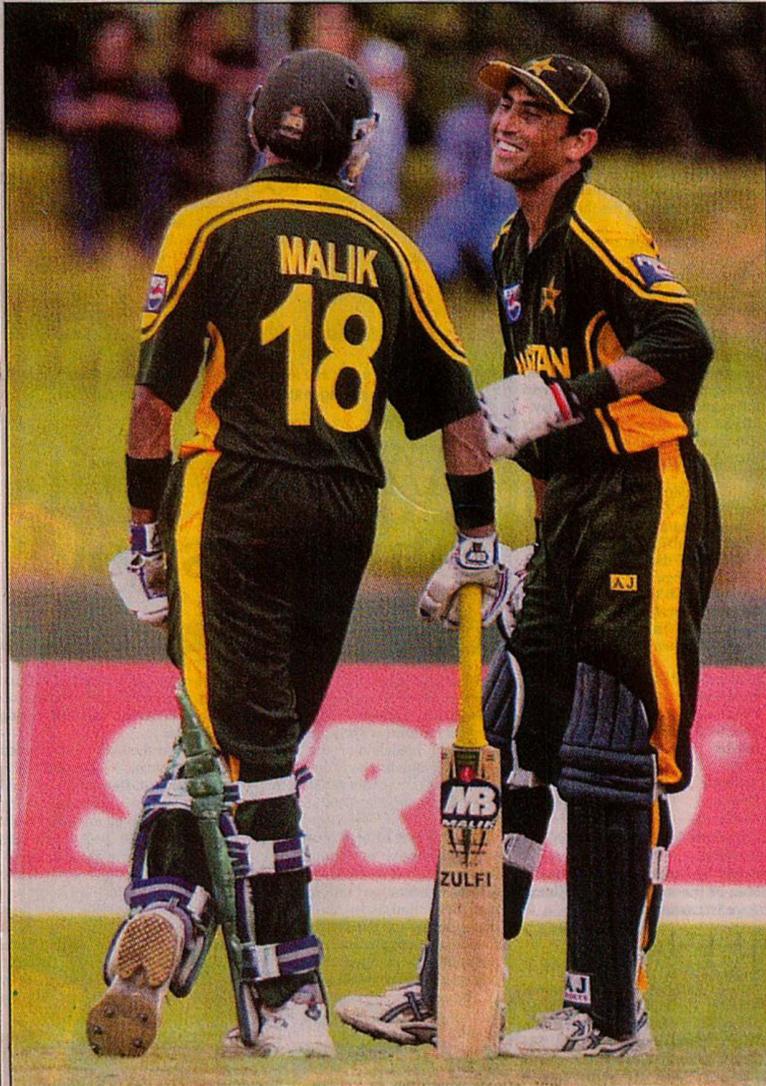
Jayawardene smashed an unbeaten 58 and left-handed Sangakkara a solid 57 to capitalise on the efforts of their top-order batsmen after their team had elected to bat in the day-night game at the Rangiri International Stadium.

The pair dominated the Indian attack with their aggressive shots, helping their team score 83 in the final 10 overs.

Left-handed opener Avishka Gunawardene set the stage for the closing-overs onslaught with an

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DAY'S EVENT
Nitol-Tata Nat'l Football League
BU Panchar vs Kararhar Narsingdi
(2:15 pm)
MSC Dhaka vs MSC Jhenidah (4:15 pm)
Venue: Momenshahi Stadium



DOUBLE ACTION: Pakistanis Shoaib Malik (L) and Younis Khan, both of whom scored a century against Hong Kong yesterday, chat in between overs during the Asia Cup match at Colombo yesterday.

Pakistan too hot for HK

AFP, Colombo

Centuries from Younis Khan and Shoaib Malik powered Pakistan to a 173-run victory over Hong Kong in the Asia Cup Group A match here on Sunday.

Younis (144) and Malik (118) tormented the inexperienced Hong Kong bowlers during a 223-run stand for the third wicket as Pakistan amassed 343-5 after electing to bat at the Sinhalese Sports Club ground.

The defending champions then dismissed Hong Kong for 165 after the Duckworth-Lewis method came into effect as the target was revised to 339 from 47 overs due to a brief spell of rain.

Pakistan topped Group A and were joined in the Super League by Bangladesh, who had earlier beaten Hong Kong.

India and hosts Sri Lanka, playing a day-night match at Dambulla on Sunday to determine Group B winners, also qualified at the expense of the United Arab Emirates.

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U-17 booters leave for Thailand today

SPORTS REPORTER

A 20-member Bangladesh Under-17 football team leaves Dhaka today morning for Thailand to play some practice matches as part of their preparation for the AFC U-17 Championship.

Coach Shahidur Rahman Shantoo's charges are expected to play four practice matches against local selections.

The AFC Under-17 final round is scheduled to be held in Japan in September.

Bangladesh have been pitted in Group-D with Uzbekistan, Qatar and Iraq.

SQUAD

Mazharul Islam, Rabatul Kabir, Imdadul Haq, Sarwar Hossain

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Kabua bails Muktis out

SPORTS REPORTER



Holder Muktijodha Sangsad Kriya Chakra was indebted to a second half strike from Burundian booter Kabua as they launched their 4th Nitol-Tata National Football League's final round campaign with a solitary goal victory over Chittagong Mohammedan Sporting Club in the opening day's first match in Mymensingh.

Incidentally, just weeks earlier Kabua was helping Chittagong Mohammedan secure the Port City's Premier Division league title.

The Momenshahi Stadium made a forgettable debut as host venue for the prestigious event with the ground resembling something like cultivable land with puddles every-

where. Stagnant rainwater made the outfield unusually heavy and ball controlling was understandably difficult.

After an energy-sapping first half Kabua broke the deadlock in the 57th minute when he pushed the ball in after a cross from Saiful Islam Moni slipped from the grasps of Mohammedan custodian Titoo.

The Chittagong team, who had beaten Muktijodha in the competition last season, had some long-range shots only to show for despite their enthusiasm but those did not give country's number one goalkeeper Aminul Haque much trouble.

Muktijodha coach Shafiqul Islam Manik boosted his forward line brining in experienced marksman Rukumuzzaman Kanchan and fresh recruit Enamul after the

regrouped and dominated proceeding from there on and were rewarded when Kabua scored the winner.

Yellow cards: Prodip, Ghansha, Matiuur Munna, Deen Mohammad and Belal (Muktijodha), Arman Aziz and Johnny (Chittagong Mohammedan).

TEAMS

Muktijodha Sangsad: Aminul, Lajuk, Deen Mohammad, Ghansha, Prodip, Matiuur Munna, Belal (Papal), Biddiut (Kanchan), Kabir (Enamul), Moni and Kabua. Chittagong Mohammedan: Titoo, Shaiful, Dulal (Rintu), Anupam, Prodip Barua, Ishrafil, Arman Aziz, Zahed Parvez, Enamul, Johnny (Yousuf) and Walid (Kamrul). Referee: Mansoor Azad. Man of the match: Kabua (Muktijodha)

BEFORE THE KICK-OFF

No one off wonder

SPORTS REPORTER



Wajed Gazi has spent 25 years as a coach and he dreamed one day that his charges would win a major domestic soccer competition.

And that wish almost came true after Sheikh Russel Kriya Chakra announced their arrival on the Bangladesh football scene by finishing runners-up at the first time of asking in this year's Dhaka Premier Division Football League.

Veteran he may be but there is no doubting his passion for the beautiful game even though he is aged 65. Now Gazi is looking forward to getting another chance to fulfill his

ambition in the Fourth National Football League, which kicked off yesterday.

Even before making their debut Russel has already been perceived by rivals as one of the leading contenders in the competition.

"We will prove that our success in the Premier Division was not a fluke. I am confident that my young boys will leave no stone unturned to surpass that success," said confident Gazi, who took over the team last year.

The shrewd tactician who earned a name for himself coaching Muktijodha to third place in the Dhaka league in 1987 also enjoyed a long stint with Arambagh helping the club to finish fourth several times.

"But I hope to end my coaching

career with a championship success. I couldn't achieve it because of some behind the scenes difficulties with my former clubs but the Sheikh Russel's management set up is totally different," said Gazi, who started his coaching career with Rahmatganj MFS in 1980, without elaborating.

He believed that all the Dhaka giants are almost similar when talking about local recruitment except for Brothers Union, which purchased almost all the national stars.

"There is a lack of quality players right at the moment that's why nobody apart from Brothers Union can claim they are superior, so that's why we have a very good chance at the NFL title," explained Gazi.

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Implementation the key

AL MUSABBIR SADI from Colombo



Bangladesh will go into the second phase of the Eighth Asia Cup knowing they will be in the middle of a war of three difficult teams fighting for pride.

Pakistan are the defending champions. Sri Lanka obviously enjoy home advantage while India look like clear favourites.

But there will be only two teams in the August 1 final and all three

Asian giants are expected to come down heavily on their youngest brother, knowing that a big win against the Tigers will go a long way towards reaching fulfilling their aspirations.

Being the whipping boys of world cricket is nothing new for them, especially when the team cannot overcome its age-old problem, which is top order frailty.

While teams like India and Sri Lanka boast at least seven specialist batsmen, Bangladesh apparently have six in their 14-member squad for the six-nation meet. Alok Kapali,

went nine matches in a row without reaching double figures and Javed Omar and Rajin Saleh, are notoriously slow starters.

But surprisingly, Javed, returning after a lengthy, has been the star performer in both two group matches, notching back-to-back half-centuries.

The doughty right-hander's good form may have answered part of the problem. But his partner Mohammad Ashraf, who began the tour with a match-winning 125 in Bangladesh's first warm-up match, failed to make any impact against

either Hong Kong or Pakistan.

Captain Habibul Bashar has not found a way to transform his excellent Test form into the one-day arena.

Rajin gives the impression he always bats as if his side is playing for a draw in a five-day contest. So, he is hardly a match winner.

Definitely coach Dav Whatmore's work is cut out with a vulnerable batting line-up and bowling attack that is at best restrictive.

The scenario in recent matches has been like the repeat of famous soaps where nothing seems to

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Azharuddin speaks

AL MUSABBIR SADI from Dambulla

Forced to leave the cricket field after being found guilty of match-fixing, former Indian captain Mohammad Azharuddin made a surprise appearance as a television commentator during the India-Sri Lanka match at Dambulla yesterday.

Although the wistful Hyderabad batsman has been out of the scene, Azhar still draws attention wherever he goes. So it was quite natural for a group of Bangladeshi reporters to approach the flamboyant yet controversial character. He was more than happy to share his thoughts with the inquisitive journalists.

The stylish batsman announced his arrival on the world stage with a record three successive Test centuries against England in 1984.

At the age of 42, Azhar still looks as young as ever. Considered the most successful Indian captain, his luminous career came to a grinding halt when the BCCI imposed a life ban on him in the year 2000 after he played his last one-day match against Pakistan in Dhaka in the Asia Cup. When he left, the right-hander had the highest ODI aggregate of 9,378 runs including seven centuries from

334 matches. A brilliant slip fielder, Azhar's 99-match Test career featured 22 hundreds and 6215 runs.

Excerpts of the interview: The Daily Star (DS): How do you

rate the present India team?

Mohammad Azharuddin (MA): They are a good side. There are a lot of young players, lot of good left-arm

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LONG TIME NO SEE: Former India captain Mohammad Azharuddin (L) talks to Asian Cricket Council chief executive Syed Ashraf Haque at the Rangiri International Stadium in Dambulla yesterday.

ICC concerned at Azhar's media job

AFP, New Delhi

The International Cricket Council (ICC) queried on Sunday Mohammad Azharuddin's presence as a commentator at the ongoing Asia Cup in Sri Lanka, saying tainted players had no place in world cricket.

The former Indian captain, serving a life ban from cricket on match-fixing charges, was hired by an Indian news TV channel to comment on the tournament and was issued media accreditation by the organisers, the Asian Cricket Council (ACC).

ICC president Ehsan Mani, on a visit to India to meet the country's cricket officials, said he would query the ACC about the accreditation.

"We at the ICC are very displeased at this, because there is zero tolerance for people accused of match-fixing," Mani told reporters.

"The ICC has no power to stop Azharuddin from attending matches, but we will ask the organisers how official media accreditation was issued to him."

"Tainted cricketers have no place in the game."

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NO CHANGE! Peruvian goalkeeper Oscar Ibanez (2nd L) fails to stop Argentine Carlos Tevez's (not in the picture) free kick at Elias Aguirre Stadium in Chiclayo, Peru on July 17.

Tevez carries Argentina



REUTERS, Chiclayo

Copa America hosts Peru were dumped out of the tournament at the quarter-final stage on Saturday when Argentina beat them 1-0 with a brilliant Carlos Tevez free kick.

Colombia will meet Argentina in Tuesday's semi-final in Lima after two quick goals before halftime, the first from teenager Abel Aguilar, gave them a 2-0 win over rank outsiders Costa Rica in Trujillo.

ARGENTINA 1; PERU 0

Tevez, 20, scored his first international goal in the 61st minute, only three minutes after replacing Andres D'Alessandro, to silence a partisan 25,000 crowd in Chiclayo.

Argentina survived despite having captain Roberto Ayala sent off for a second bookable offence in the 82nd minute.

Coach Marcelo Bielsa admitted he had not been sure whether bringing Tevez on was the best move.

"When I made the change, I had my doubts," he said. "I thought the team was in its best part of the game and I wasn't sure it was in our best interests -- but I went ahead and did it anyway."

Argentina had slightly the better

of the first half and just about deserved their win in a rough and bad-tempered game.

Paraguayan referee Carlos Amarilla, who always likes to let the game flow, overlooked a number of tackles which would have been judged fouls by most other referees.

Peru sorely missed Bayern Munich striker Claudio Pizarro, who is out of the tournament with a head injury, and teenager Jefferson Farfan, who was suspended. Andres Mendoza was again frustrated as he completed his 11th international without scoring.

Peru's best spell came immediately after the goal when Nolberto Solano crashed a free kick against the crossbar and Roberto Palacios

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Cricket Quiz 04

Where is the Lords Cricket Ground?

A England B India C Bangladesh D Pakistan

Answer by sending SMS* to the number 2003
e.g. If your answer is A then write Quiz04 A and send it to 2003

For each quiz, five correct answer providers (selected by lottery) will receive attractive prizes!!

Official Sponsor of Bangladesh National Cricket Team