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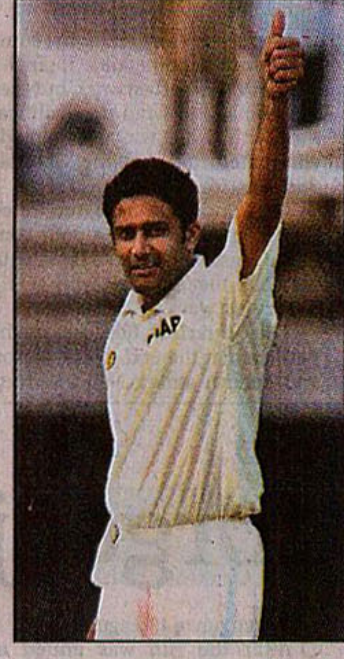
Kumble crowned king

Cricket
AL MUSABBIR SADI

It was the moment he had been waiting for but when it finally came, all Anil Kumble did was clench his fists in celebration and that was it. He had just become the top wicket-taker for India in Test cricket but he kept things cool amidst cheering teammates and went about giving the finishing touches on a job the pacemen had begun in the morning.

Mohammad Rafique -- trapped lbw just three runs shy of a deserved half century -- was the Indian legspinner's 435th victim, which took Kumble past Kapil Dev's haul of 434 wickets on the first day of the first Test at the Bangabandhu National Stadium yesterday.

Having equalled Kapil's feat in the Kolkata Test last month against South Africa, the Bangalore veteran was destined to achieve the feat in



ANIL KUMBLE

Bangladesh but at one stage, it seemed he would have to wait a little longer as seven overs went by without success.

But the magic moment came with the fourth delivery of his 12th over and he finished with one more wicket.

"It's definitely a kind of relief to get there," said Kumble after the day's play.

"I was really happy that I could get to the 434 in Eden Gardens. It was a really special moment, my family was there, my wife was there. But unfortunately she couldn't travel to Dhaka."

Now that Kapil has been topped, the premier Indian spinner's next goal is reaching the 500-mark.

"I am relieved but again people are saying 'get to 500', so I'll have to put up with it. I just have to go out there and keep getting wickets," the 34-year-old said.

Kumble, who has taken 67 wickets this year, felt that like all spinners

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BD tour of India looks likely in April

SPORTS REPORTER

Bangladesh's proposed tour to India next April appears to be on track despite the busy international schedule of both teams.

Bangladesh Cricket Board (BCB) sources said that "According to the International Cricket Council's five-year programme, the tour is very much on but they need time to ensure the trip."

It was learnt that Board of Control for Cricket in India (BCCI) is planning to arrange a triangular series involving Sri Lanka and Bangladesh during the series.

"BCCI has not postponed the tour and we are also hopeful to visit India in April," said the BCB official.

But with Pakistan leaving India in the first week of April and Bangladesh scheduled to tour England in early May, that leaves just a month for India to hold two Tests and the triangular series.

Asked why India wanted a tri-series, the BCB official said: "India will not gain financially from the Bangladesh series that's why they are determined to have a triangular series involving Sri Lanka who will be free at the time."



PHOTO: ANISUR RAHMAN

PATHAN PACKS A 'PANCH' Indian sensation Irfan Pathan has given the verdict before umpire Jeremy Lloyd as he gets Rajin Saleh lbw for nought. Pathan bagged a five-for, his first in Tests.

Abahani smile after 3 years

SPORTS REPORTER

The talk of the day apart from the Bangladesh-India first Test was definitely the Premier Cricket League battle between two perennial rivals in Fatullah where Abahani recorded a nervy four-wicket win over Mohammedan Sporting Club yesterday.

It was Abahani's first league win

after six straight losses to their archrivals over the last three years but if all the hype was surrounding that game, unheralded newcomers Agrani Bank's triumph over Brothers Union, which gave them solo lead after four rounds, was no less deserving of a headline.

League runner-ups City Club meanwhile, made heavy weather of beating Uttara Club for their second win.

ABAHANI-MOHAMMEDAN
The absence of captain Habibur Bashar, Nafees Iqbal, Mohammed

Rafique and Mashrafe Bin Mortuza -- all in the first Test side -- and veteran Minhajul Abedin pulled out before the game, cost Mohammedan dear as they were bundled out for 119.

Kenyan star Steve Tikolo led Mohammedan but his decision to bat first on a moist green-top wicket was baffling as Abahani new ball duo Gazi Alamgir (4-22) and Debabrata Pal (2-32) ran riot.

Number nine Anwar Hossain made 26 and with the help of 29

SEE PAGE 14 COL 2

Everything but the pitch

SPORTS REPORTER

The setting was perfect for Test match. But somebody forgot to tell the curator at the Bangabandhu National Stadium.

The first Test between Bangladesh and India had to be delayed by two hours when umpires realised that pitch at the Big Bowl was too damp because it had been watered on Thursday morning and left to dry.

However, as the sun stayed away for much of the day, the wicket remained soaked until Friday.

"The wicket was prepared in the knowledge that the first Test would start on Thursday. We found cracks on the surface on Thursday morning that's why it was heavily watered," sources said.

Although the delay came as a big blow for spectators they however enjoyed the Sachin Tendulkar, Irfan Pathan and Virender Sehwag respond to their cheers.

Tailor-made for them

Cricket
SPORTS REPORTER

Indian pace sensation Irfan Pathan achieved his first five-wicket haul as Bangladesh failed to repeat their show against India they had done four years ago in the inaugural Test at the same Bangabandhu National Stadium.

Then under the supervision of a local coach, Bangladesh made 400 in their maiden Test appearance but high-profile Dav Whatmore's charges were far behind from their predecessors as the home side were dismissed for a paltry 184 in 57.5

overs.

Young Mohammad Ashraful was the only batsman to show resistance on the day against the Indian attack with a defiant unbeaten knock of 60 but the credit should also go to Mohammad Rafique who added a valuable 47.

When most of the Bangladesh top batters were found wanting against the left-arm Indian seamer Pathan, who returned with five for 45 from 16 overs, the youngest Test centurion of debut Ashraful thought that batting was not at all a difficult task on the wicket.

"The wicket was fantastic for batting. There was bounce on the track but I could pick the ball early to

carry my innings which my teammates could not. I was determined to stay at the crease as long as possible and never lost my concentration while watching the dismissals on the other end," said the 20-year-old right-hander.

Despite Pathan's success, Ashraful said that the other left-arm pacer Zaheer Khan, who picked up two wickets including the prized scalp of Bangladesh captain Habibur Bashar, gave him real trouble.

"Pathan bowled brilliantly but he hardly gave me trouble as I felt easy against incoming deliveries," explained the fluent stroke-maker, who clobbered six boundaries in his

135-ball innings.

"It was a real sporting wicket where both bowlers and batsmen should have got assistance. But unfortunately, our top-order once again failed to click. To stay in the middle I simply checked myself from playing any loose shot," he added.

He said that he just played straight against Pathan when he faced two hat-trick balls in the innings.

He also promised that he will try not to drift away from form in the rest of the series like some previous series.

"In the last five series I started

SEE PAGE 14 COL 2

SCORES IN BRIEF

Venue: Fatullah Cricket Stadium MOHAMMEDAN: 119 all out in 45.4 overs (Anwar 26, Tikolo 12, Wasse 17, extras 29, Alamgir 4-22, Debabrata 2-32, Naimur 1-24). ABAHANI: 120-6 in 37 overs (Imran 32, Naimur 32, extras 30, Anwar 3-23, Dollar 2-43, Sunny 1-24). Result: Abahani won by four wickets.	Venue: Dhanmondi Cricket Stadium AGRANI: 231-8 in 50 overs (Mabud 32, Rakibul 109, Bashar 20, Iqbal 27, extras 26, Zia 1-49, Odoyo 2-38, Rezaul 1-37, Kamrul 3-43, Litu 1-33). BROTHERS: 196 all out in 46.5 overs (Naeem 14, Selu 18, Jahangir 47, Halim Shah 52, Anwar 12, Shanful 14, extras 15, Shuva 2-40, Al Amin 1-22, Majid 2-46, Russell 1-26, Iqbal 2-40). Result: Agrani won by 35 runs.	Venue: BKSP UTTARA: 185 all out in 48.3 overs (Amran 33, Tiku 24, Anisul 14, Biplob 41, Rashed 18, Mahmood 14, extras 23, Alamgir 3-26, Jamal 1-28, Mehraz J-3-35, Mahmud 1-27, Royadi 1-38). CITY CLUB: 188-7 in 49.1 overs (Mehrab Jr 32, Mehraz 37, Moniruzzaman 16, Majid 15, Tushar 30, Mahmud 27, extras 21, Ashiqur 1-19, Mobalik 1-47, Mahmood 2-35, Shaful 1-34, Amin 1-32). Result: City Club won by three wickets.
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What to WATCH

BTV & ESPN
First Test
Bangladesh v India
Day 2, live at 9.30 am

ESPN
English Premier League
Liverpool v Everton
Live at 6.40 pm
Newcastle v Portsmouth
Live at 8.55 pm
Final score
Live at 11 pm

STAR Sports
Primera Liga
Albacete v Barcelona
Live at 1.30 am (Sunday)

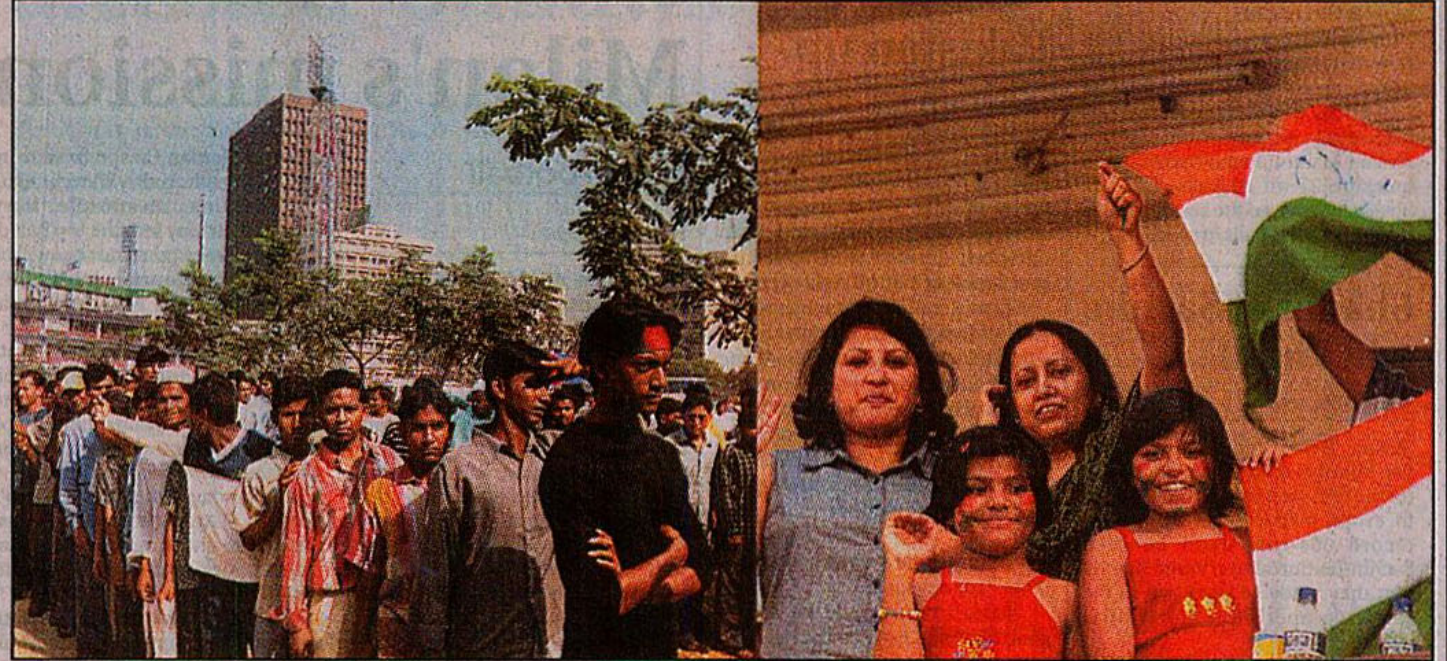


PHOTO: ANISUR RAHMAN

CRICKET CRAZY! (L) Local fans stand in long queues for the first day's ticket of the Bangladesh-India Test outside the Bangabandhu National Stadium. (R) Indian expatriates take the opportunity to cheer their team from the VIP enclosure.

DAY'S EVENT

Green Delta Premier Hockey
Manner Youngs v Wari Club (3 pm)
Maan Bangladesh GM Chess

Zia, Hai lead the pack

SPORTS REPORTER

Grand Masters Ziaur Rahman and Dao Thien Hai of Vietnam are jointly leading with maximum two points at the end of the second round games of the Maan Bangladesh

SEE PAGE 14 COL 3

Of security and fans

SPORTS REPORTER

It was a rare sight. All shops at the Big Bowl even at the adjacent hockey stadium were closed on the opening day of the first Test.

On the eve of match authorities issued a circular to Stadium shop owners to down their shutters after Indian security officials wanted to ensure players' safety.

The large number of spectators also didn't mind the tight security measures and in fact welcomed the steps.

SEE PAGE 14 COL 2

Pakistan up against it

Cricket
AFP Perth

Pakistan were facing an uphill battle in their final hit-out before next week's Test after falling 138 runs behind Western Australia at stumps on the second day of their four-day match on Friday.

After being dismissed in its first innings for 262, Pakistan struggled in the field against the host state which clocked up 404-9 declared in reply at the Western Australian

Cricket Association ground.

In their second innings Pakistan had faced just one over for four runs with Salman Butt on three and Imran Farhat yet to score the not-out batsmen.

The world's fastest bowler Shoaib Akhtar with 2-41 from 17 overs was one of the best in an otherwise lacklustre Pakistan bowling attack which conceded 384 runs during the three sessions.

But even he was unconvincing, appearing lethargic at various stages late in the afternoon and bowling only in short spells before being

rested midway between the tea break and stumps.

His fast bowling partner Mohammad Sami was generating good pace on the bouncy wicket but was used into the breeze for many of his 17 overs on Friday while the slower all-rounder Abdul Razzaq bowled downwind.

When he was given a chance to bowl from the other end, Sami made the breakthrough his team desperately needed when he had Marcus North caught behind after lunch to end a 166-run partnership with

SEE PAGE 14 COL 5

Rain spoils finale

Chappell-Hadlee Trophy shared

Cricket
AFP, Brisbane

Rain washed out the Chappell-Hadlee Trophy one-day cricket series decider between Australia and New Zealand without a ball bowled at the Gabba here on Friday.

The inaugural series will finish all-square at one-all after New Zealand took the series opener by four wickets in Melbourne last

Sunday before Australia hit back with a 17-run win in Sydney on Wednesday.

The washout meant the trophy has no rightful home until Australia tours New Zealand in February for a Test and one-day series.

The umpires and South African match referee Mike Procter abandoned the match at 1815 AEDT (0815 GMT) without a ball bowled.

"It was certainly shaping up to be a great day today," Australian captain Ricky Ponting said.

"Obviously, it was a very disap-

pointing end as far as the players are concerned and I think everyone was looking forward to today after what happened down in Sydney (during game two)."

New Zealand skipper Stephen Fleming said his side would continue to develop in time for the rematch early next year.

Fleming admitted after the frustrations of a two-nil Test series whitewash he would have taken a one-all draw before the one-day series started last Sunday.

SEE PAGE 14 COL 2

Mercedes Trophy Golf held

STAFF CORRESPONDENT, Gg

The Mercedes Trophy Golf Tournament was played at the lush green Bhatary Golf and Country Club here yesterday.

Rancon Motors Limited, together with its partners for the tournament; Siemens, Lucas, Toshiba RANGS Industries & RANKSTEL conducted the second edition of the invitational tournament.

All Mercedes-Benz aficionados participated in the grand event. The tournament was inaugurated by Major General Iqbal Karim Bhuiyan, GOC of Chittagong Area. Abdur Rouf Chowdhury, chairman of Rancon Motors (A sister concern of Rangs Group) and Romo Rouf Chowdhury,

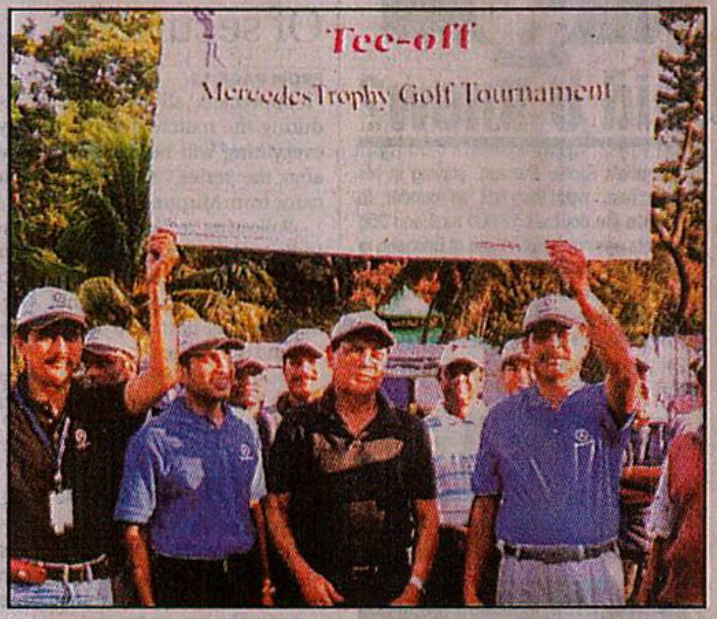


PHOTO: STAR

Abdur Rouf Chowdhury (C), chairman of Rancon Motors (A sister concern of Rangs Group) and Major General Iqbal Karim Bhuiyan (R), GOC of Chittagong Area, inaugurate the Mercedes Cup Golf Tournament yesterday.

SEE PAGE 14 COL 1

Bangladesh-India Series Quiz 2

What is Bangladesh's highest test run in an innings?

A 298 B 365 C 416 D 322

Answer by sending SMS* to the number 2003
e.g. If your answer is A then write Quiz1 A and send it to 2003

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

*Charge Applicable

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