



## Did U Know?

India lost their second successive Test to Pakistan at Chinnaswamy Stadium, Bangalore. After two successive drawn Tests between the two countries in November 1979 and September 1983, India lost by 16 runs in March 1987.

## What to WATCH

- BTV**  
Independence Day Gold Cup  
Brothers vs Muktiyoddha (Final)  
Live at 4:45 pm
- TEN Sports**  
WC Soccer Qualifier  
Argentina vs Colombia  
Live at 5:00 am (Thursday)  
Brazil vs Uruguay  
Live at 7:00 am (Thursday)
- ESPN**  
Sportscentre  
Live at 8:30 pm
- STAR Sports**  
ATP Masters Series  
Last Sixteen  
Live at 8:00 am  
WC Soccer Qualifier  
North Korea vs Iran  
Live at 12:30 pm  
South Korea vs Uzbekistan  
Live at 5:00 pm  
Sportsline  
Live at 8:00 pm  
WC Soccer Qualifier  
England vs Azerbaijan  
Live at 12:30 am (Thursday)

## DAY'S EVENT

- Independence Day Gold Cup**  
Brothers vs Muktiyoddha (Final)  
Venue: BNS
- Ispahani Nat'l Cricket League**  
(Four-day, Day Three)  
Dhaka vs Sylhet  
Venue: Sylhet Stadium  
Chittagong vs Rajshahi  
Venue: CDVS  
Barisal vs Khulna  
Venue: Barisal Stadium

# Wayaskarani waltz



SPORTS REPORTER

Paceman Wayaskarani Palash set Chittagong Divisional Stadium ablaze by recording the best ever figures in the country's first class history as the home team bounced back against Rajshahi on the second day of the seventh round of the National Cricket League yesterday.

Wayaskarani, a find of the GrameenPhone pacer hunt campaign, took eight for 69 as he single-handedly bundled out Rajshahi for 180 to leave the low-scoring match nicely poised. No Bangladeshi bowler has ever taken eight wickets in an innings in a first class match. It was also the best figures in the NCL bettering left-arm spinner Saifullah Khan Gem's seven for 22.

Wayaskarani's effort enabled Chittagong to take a slender first innings lead of 26 runs which they had extended to 207 by close with two wickets in hand.

Another star of the day was Golam Rahman Himel of Sylhet whose purple patch continued as the opener slammed his third hundred of the season to help the hosts dominate leaders Dhaka on the second day which saw full action following a rain-interrupted Day One.

Barisal batsmen Proshenjit Bose and Nadif Chowdhury were both dismissed in the nervous nineties but Barisal still rattled up a healthy

384 in their first innings against visiting Khulna.

**CHITTAGONG - RAJSHAHI**  
Wayaskarani had started the day with two wickets under his belt as Rajshahi resumed on 81 for 2. But the stocky quick then ran through the Rajshahi batting in a 17.5 over spell to enhance his growing credentials. This was the second five-wicket haul for the paceman follow-

ing his 5-52 against Dhaka.

Number eight Sohrawardi Shuvo (43 from 82) was the only batsman to offer resistance against the marauding Wayaskarani.

Chittagong also suffered a middle-order collapse as they slumped to 181 for eight from 81 for one in their second innings. Opener Masumodullah spared the blushes

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Record-breaking Wayaskarani ... 8 for 69

# Mohammedan sack coach Kang

SPORTS REPORTER

Mohammedan Sporting Club set a new example in local football when they sacked their Korean coach Man Young Kang on Sunday. It is the first time that a coach has been removed for failing to deliver the goods.

The decision was taken in the club's executive committee meeting on Sunday following the Black and Whites' poor showing in the Independence Day Gold Cup football tournament.

Mohammedan lost 3-1 to Muktiyoddha Sangsads in the group phase before crashing 2-0 in the semifinals against Brothers Union.

Mohammedan's additional general secretary Mustaqur Rahman expressed his frustration following a wretched start to the season.

"It is unfortunate that Kang could not inspire the team despite getting all the supports from us. The Korean players also failed to impress," Mustaqur said.

He informed that the club is planning to hire former Mohammedan player and ex-Nigerian international Emeka.

The popular Motijheel outfit, who failed to lift a single trophy last season, began their camp under Kang -- who had coached the national team and Muktiyoddha back in the early 90s -- four months earlier.

# A final of new colours



SPORTS REPORTER

It might not be the clash football connoisseurs would have liked most but the first final of the domestic football season could not have offered two better opponents when a rejuvenated Brothers Union and Muktiyoddha Sangsads meet in the final of the Independence Day Gold Cup today.

Bangladesh Television will telecast the match, which kicks off at 5pm, live from the Bangabandhu National Stadium.

Prime Minister Khaleda Zia is expected to grace the final and hand over the gold cup to the winning captain.

The final is a break with tradition after both crowd favourites Abahani and Mohammedan were eliminated in the semifinals.

Brothers, who handed Abahani a 2-0 defeat in the first semifinal, will be looking for a third trophy in a row after lifting the Premier and National League titles last season.

Muktiyoddha, who edged past Mohammedan 1-0 in the other semi, on the other hand will be out to stop the Orange men from Gopibagh in their tracks.

Both teams are evenly matched in almost every department. However, Muktiyoddha will have a slight edge as they have the best goalkeeper in the country in captain Aminul, who returns to the side after missing the semifinal due to a one-match ban.

The Reds will also welcome back their creative genius Arman, who also served a one-match ban along

# Pepsi v'ball begins

SPORTS REPORTER

Khulna blanked hosts Narail 25-13, 25-18 and 25-19 on the opening day of the final round of the Pepsi inter-district volleyball tournament at the Bir Shreshtha Noor Mohammed Stadium yesterday.

Dhaka and Kushtia also won in straight sets when they beat Satkhira (25-12, 25-19, 25-22) and Gazipur (25-17, 25-20, 25-21) respectively.

In other games, Rajshahi defeated Comilla 25-13, 17-25, 25-18, 25-19 and Rangpur won a five-setter against Pabna 25-18, 18-25, 25-19, 18-25 and 15-10.

with Nigerian striker Paul Nwakuchwu.

The only worry for Muktiyoddha coach Shafiqul Islam Manik will be the absence of striker Moni and defensive midfielder Pappu, suspended for the final after picking up two yellow cards.

But Muktiyoddha's biggest weapon from set pieces Belal, who is already famous for his cannonball throws, will undoubtedly be the biggest threat for Brothers.

Brothers coach Wajed Gazi admitted that the Belal factor is one of the key areas they would have to overcome.

But Gazi believed that he had enough firepower with Russian goal poacher Victor Edwards, who has so far slammed five goals including a hat-trick in the 4-0 demolition of Abahani, raring to go for the kill.

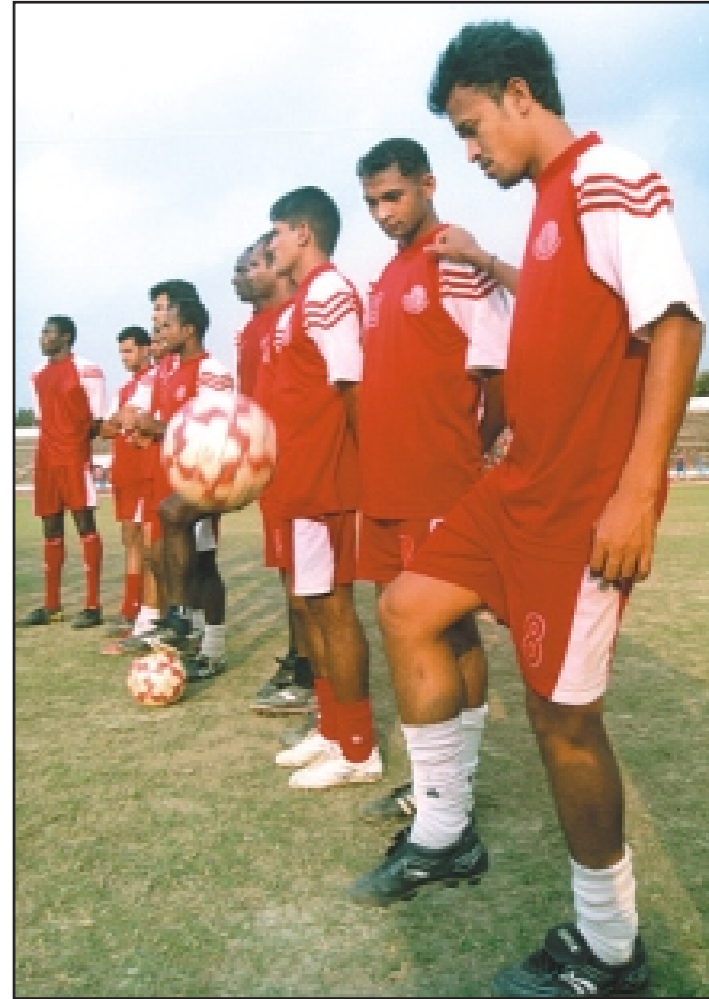
"Our focus is to start the new

season with another title. There is pressure because it is a final but the players are used to this kind of situation," said the Brothers coach.

"Muktiyoddha is a very strong team and Belal could turn out to be the main factor. We have to be careful but I think my backline can handle those missile-like throws."

His Muktiyoddha counterpart Manik, who will not be able to instruct his charges from the sidelines because of a two-match ban, felt it would have a bearing on his team's performance.

"I believe my boys are professional and they will rise to the occasion even if I'm not there. A trophy will be a boost for the whole season, so we are looking forward to it," said the former national footballer.



Muktiyoddha Sangsads booters line up before starting their training session at the Army Stadium yesterday.

# Talk of annual Indo-Pak series



AFP, New Delhi

Two absorbing Test series in the space of 12 months have encouraged officials from India and Pakistan to seek to play out one of cricket's great rivalries every year.

Moves were afoot Tuesday to draw up a timetable under which the arch-rivals will cross each other's borders every year to cash in on the hysteria generated by what one official said was "the best advertisement for Test cricket."

When India visited Pakistan in March-April last year for their first Test series there in 15 years, the tourists won the first match in Multan, Pakistan drew level in Lahore and India won the third in Rawalpindi.

Pakistan's first series on Indian soil in six years, which ended in Bangalore on Monday, was equally riveting with all three Tests taking a decisive turn in the final session of the last day.

The series ended 1-1, with Pakistan drawing level in Bangalore with a 168-run victory after India had won the second Test in Kolkata by 195 runs.

The first Test in Mohali was drawn due to Pakistan's superb fightback after they led by just 53 runs with four wickets in hand. The seventh-wicket pair of Kamran Akmal and Abdul Razzaq batted for most of the final day to deny India victory.

Pakistan Cricket Board (PCB) chairman Shahrar Khan confirmed he was in talks with Indian officials to hold a series every year.

"India and Pakistan playing each other provides the best advertise-

ment for Test cricket," Khan told AFP.

"The last two series have whetted our appetite. It is good for the sport and good for both countries."

An average of 30,000 fans attended each day's play in Mohali, Kolkata and Bangalore, while millions on both sides of the border and around the world followed the matches on television.

With sponsors falling over themselves to lend their names to the series, the respective cricket boards and television companies made a quick killing.

The PCB reportedly netted 20 million dollars during last year's visit by India. The current tour, with six one-day internationals to follow, is estimated to generate as much, if not more.

India are slated to tour Pakistan in January next year for three Tests and six one-day internationals

before taking part in the limited-overs Asia Cup in Pakistan.

The International Cricket Council's schedule, which has the 10 Test-level nations playing each other home and away every six years, makes special allowances for traditional contests like the England v Australia Ashes tours and the India v Pakistan series.

Cricket ties between India and Pakistan have often been suspended due to political tensions. There were no bilateral tours between 1960 to 1978, 1989 to 1999 and again from 2000 to 2004.

Officials, however, are eager to make up for lost time.

"We have agreed in principle to play each other every year," Indian cricket board official Gautam Dasgupta said. "We are working out the details."

# Ponting prompts Aus win



AFP, Auckland

Australia completed their rout of New Zealand with an emphatic nine-wicket win in the third Test with a day to spare here Tuesday, comfortably wrapping up the series 2-0, and underscoring their reputation as one of the greatest cricket sides ever.

In a frantic chase to beat rain and fading light, captain Ricky Ponting blasted an unbeaten 86 at a run-a-ball pace and Justin Langer was on 59 when they reached their 164-run target in the 30th over under the Eden Park floodlights.

The only wicket to fall was that of Matthew Hayden as Australia set out determined to wrap up the Test in four days rather than risk the weather on

Wednesday after being denied victory in the second Test because of rain.

While the jury is still out on whether this Australian side is definitely the greatest of all time, they were hailed as a "once in a lifetime" team by New Zealand captain Stephen Fleming.

"It was a mauling," Fleming said as he summed up the series.

"I'm disappointed that we couldn't put up more of a fight. There are plenty of reasons and excuses but the criticism's got to be taken on the chin -- we were just well and truly outplayed by a great group of players in a once in a lifetime team."

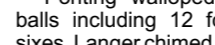
The manner in which Australia dealt to New Zealand underlined the vast gulf between the trans-Tasman neighbours which Ponting readily acknowledged.

"We have played some great cricket," he said.



I WISH I DROPPED IT! Australia's Glenn McGrath is about to take the catch off Daniel Vettori of New Zealand on the fourth day of the third and final Test in Auckland yesterday.

# Selectors go for probables



SPORTS REPORTER

The national selectors submitted a 20-member preliminary squad to the Bangladesh Cricket Board (BCB) yesterday for the tour of England in May.

The four-member selection panel had initially planned to announce the Tigers' final squad for the two-match Test series consider-

ing the fact that the selected players would not be able to play in the ongoing National League.

But they preferred a more conservative approach keeping in mind the tour's duration and injury problems.

"We changed our decision regarding submitting a preliminary squad because it is going to be a long trip and also we have injury problems. We have requested the Board to give us a fitness reports on Mohammad Rafique, Nafees Iqbal

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# McGrath opts for waiting

AFP, Auckland

Faced with the choice of taking his 500th Test wicket at a packed house of 30,000 at Lord's, the home of cricket, or in an empty New Zealand rugby ground, and the answer was obvious for ageless Australian paceman Glenn McGrath.

McGrath ended the third Test against New Zealand stranded one short of the landmark on 499 Test wickets before a handful of spectators at Eden Park here Tuesday.

Australia's next Test isn't until the Ashes series against England at Lord's in London in July.

"As a cricketer, there is no better place (than Lord's) to take a major milestone like 500 wickets," said McGrath who lies fourth on the all-time Test wicket-takers list behind teammate Shane Warne's 583, Sri Lankan Muttiah Muralitharan's 532 and West Indian Courtney Walsh's 519.

The 35-year-old had a chance of reaching 500 against New Zealand,

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