

## Barisal floor Khulna

### Dhaka escape Kapali's web

ISPAHANI  
MIRZAPORE TEA  
6th National Cricket League

SPORTS REPORTER

Dhaka's tailenders denied Sylhet two certain points when the Isiphani Sixth National Cricket League leaders survived Alok Kapali's spinning web on the final day of their seventh-round four-day match yesterday.

Both sides collected two points from the rain-interrupted match according to the by-laws as one side could not complete their first innings at the Sylhet Stadium.

Dhaka, on 32 points, have now opened up a eight-point lead over second-placed Rajshahi while Sylhet slipped to bottom of the table along with Barisal and Khulna, all three on 16 points.

Also Thursday, Barisal crushed neighbours Khulna by 260 runs for their first outright victory in the tournament. Chittagong, who lost to Rajshahi in the seventh round, are third with 20 points.

**SYLHET-DHAKA**  
Skipper Alok Kapali responded to his omission from England-bound preliminary squad, by capturing seven for 61 as Sylhet pressed to

take a first innings lead in a bid for four points but Dhaka's lower-order held the fort to reach 282-9 at close of play.

In reply to Sylhet's first innings total of 313, Dhaka resumed on two for no loss and lost opener Anwar Hossain without any addition to the total.

Opener Rashedul Haque (41) and one-down Javed Omar (48) added 80 runs for the second wicket before national discard Kapali began his career-best spell, destroying the defending champions' middle-order in the final two sessions.

Dhaka slumped to 125-6, losing five wickets in 13 overs, but Mahmudullah Riyad and Mehrab Hossain halted the slide during a 70-run stand for the seventh wicket.

Riyad made a patient 48 from 102 balls while former national opener Mehrab, who came to bat at number eight, scored a more sedate 51 from 153 deliveries.

Kapali's legbreaks again brought Sylhet back into contention when he removed both batsmen but Dhaka's last pair Anwar Munir and Dipojal saw off the remaining six overs during an unbroken 19-run stand for the last wicket.

Kapali, who bowled 30 overs in a row after scoring 54 in the Sylhet innings, was adjudged man-of-the-

match.

#### BARISAL-KHULNA

Away at the Barisal Stadium, Nadif Chowdhury picked the last five wickets as the hosts shot out Khulna for 167 in their second innings.

Overnight 210-4, Barisal batted 19 overs in the morning before declaring their second innings on 269-8.

Set an improbable 428-run victory target, Habibul Bashar's men skittled out in just 49 overs with some resistance coming from wicketkeeper Sahagir Hossain (42) and Manzarul Islam (41). They lost their last five wickets for just 30 runs in 12 overs as left-arm spinner Nadif reaped through the tail.

Nadif, adjudged man-of-the-match finished with a match haul of nine for 97 after taking 5-58 in the second innings.

#### SCORES IN BRIEF

##### SYLHET-DHAKA

Sylhet: 313

Dhaka: 282-9 in 102 overs (Rashedul 41, Anwar 1, Javed 48, Mehrab 11, Ashraful 18, Mahmud 2, Riyad 48, Mehrab 51, talha 19, Munir 6 n.o., Dipojal 6 n.o., extras 36, Nazmul 1-23, Rezaul 1-27, Kapali 7-81).

**Result:** Match drawn

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STAR AGAIN! Photographers take snaps of Pakistan all-rounder Shahid Afridi and his teammates on their arrival at Cochin International Airport yesterday. Afridi has made a memorable return to the Pakistan side after months in the wilderness.

PHOTO: AFP

**Mukti off to Turkmenistan today**

SPORTS REPORTER

A 16-member Mukti Jodha Sangsads leave Dhaka this afternoon to play their third round match of the AFC Cup against Nebitchi FC of Turkmenistan.

The match will be held at Nebitchi's hometown Balkanbat, some 500 kilometres away from capital Ashgabat on April 6.

Coach Shafiqul Islam Manik already left yesterday and will be joined by the rest of the team in Bangkok.

Despite making a bright start with a 0-0 away draw against Indian giants East Bengal, the Dhaka Federation Cup champions must have to win their away fixture if they are to keep their hopes alive following a 3-0 thrashing at home to Jordan's Al Faisaly last month.

The Reds, however, will miss key defender Rajani, who was sent off against Al Faisaly in Dhaka.

The squad includes two foreign defenders, Rwandan Harry and Ghansah of Ghana.

Mukti Jodha's football secretary Sheikh Ataur Rahman, one of the three officials of the touring party, informed that they have made a request through the Bangladesh Football Federation to their Turkmenistan counterparts to stage

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## Did U Know?

Virender Sehwag's innings of 201 is the highest for India against Pakistan at Bangalore. The only other centurion for India against Pakistan at this venue was Sunil Gavaskar—an unbeaten 103 in 1983-84.



**Jose Mourinho**  
(Chelsea manager)  
"If Roman Abramovich helped me out in training we would be bottom of the league and if I had to work in his world of big business, we would be bankrupt."



**TEN Sports**  
West Indies v South Africa  
First Test, Day Two  
Live at 8 pm  
**ESPN**  
Sportscentre  
Live at 8.30 pm  
English Premier League Preview  
Taped version at 9 pm  
Here We Go  
Same Day Delay at 10.30 pm  
**STAR Sports**  
Sportsline  
Live at 8 pm

## StanChart school cricket

SPORTS REPORTER

Six matches of the Standard Chartered Young Tigers National School Cricket Championship were washed out yesterday due to inclement weather.

In the day's two rain-curtailed matches, Loreto (153-7) defeated Bir Shreshtha Abdur Rouf Rifles (85) by 68 runs at the Dhamondi Club ground while Maple Leaf International (202) beat Dhamondi Tutorial (164-6) by 38 runs at the Dhamondi Cricket Stadium.

The final of the Independence Day Gold Cup football tournament between Brothers Union and Mukti Jodha Sangsads, which was washed out on Wednesday, is likely to be held on April 11.

It looks to be the best possible date for the Bangladesh Football Federation (BFF) but it needs Prime Minister Khaleda Zia's consent to set the date for a fresh final. The Prime Minister was due to distribute prizes after the final, which was abandoned after 12 minutes of play.

The BFF will sit on Saturday to finalise a new date.

If the final is held on April 11, the BFF can also have AFC president Mohammed Bin Hammam as a guest on the occasion. Hammam is due to arrive in Dhaka the day before to inaugurate the newly built BFF Bhaban.

**WI 96-2**

SPORTS REPORTER

West Indies reached 96 for two at lunch on the opening day of the first Test against South Africa at Georgetown yesterday.

Opener Wavell Hinds was batting on 54 and debutant Donovan Pagon on 29 after the hosts lost two wickets on 24 with paceman Andre Nel dismissing Devon Smith (11) and Daren Ganga (0) in the sixth over after stand-in captain Shivnarine Chanderpaul had won the toss.

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PHOTO: AFP  
Colombian goalkeeper Miguel Calero clearing the ball from the feet of Argentine striker Hernan Crespo at the Monumental stadium in Buenos Aires on March 30.

## Argentina stay top



REUTERS, Rio de Janeiro

Ecuador and Paraguay emerged favourites to join Argentina and Brazil as South America's representatives at next year's World Cup after good results in Wednesday's qualifiers.

Third-placed Ecuador drew 2-2 in Peru, helped by an astonishing late miss from Peruvian substitute Andres Mendoza, while Paraguay stayed fourth with a 2-1 win at home to Chile.

Argentina stayed top of the 10-nation group with a hard-fought 1-0 win over a defensive, 10-man Colombia in Buenos Aires and world champions Brazil drew 1-1 in Uruguay with the help of a controversial equaliser from Emerson.

The top four teams in the 10-nation group go straight to Germany and Argentina, leaders with 28 points, and Brazil, second with 24, are all but mathematically qualified.

Ecuador, with 20, are also very handily placed while Paraguay (19) have opened up a three-point gap between themselves and fifth-placed Uruguay.

The other five teams now appear to be fighting for fifth spot which earns a two-leg playoff against the Oceania region winners and the chance of another place.

Only three points separate Uruguay (16) from bottom-placed Bolivia (13), Colombia, Peru, Chile and Venezuela.

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Jose Cardozo, who took his tally in the competition to seven.

Defender Luis Fuentes pulled one back for Chile.

Argentina struggled to break down a well-marshalled Colombia defence, Hernan Crespo finally making the breakthrough in the 65th minute as he swept home Luciano Galletti's low cross.

The visitors had midfielder Fabian Vargas sent off in the 41st minute as he picked up two yellow cards in eight minutes, both for hacking down Javier Saviola.

Instead of making life easier for Argentina, the dismissal merely mad the visitors defend even more doggedly.

Uruguay and Brazil produced a stirring match in Montevideo, Diego Forlan putting the hosts in front in the 49th minute and Emerson levelling in the 68th amid claims of offside.

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## STANDINGS

		South American 2006 World Cup qualifying table after Wednesday's matches (played, won, drawn, lost, goals for, goals against, points):
Argentina	13	8
Brazil	13	6
Ecuador	13	6
Paraguay	13	5
Uruguay	13	4
Colombia	13	3
Peru	13	3
Chile	13	3
Venezuela	13	4
Bolivia	13	4