

Reds smell a rat

Mukti v BU today

SPORTS REPORTER

Trouble-torn Muktiyoddha Sangsad Kira Chakra promised to give a fitting reply when they take on defending champions Brothers Union in a crucial Premier Football League match today at 5 pm at the Bangabandhu National Stadium.

After a four-match ban on the Bangladesh midfielder Hasan Al Mamun and one match suspension on Nigerian striker Ernest Jeremiah, the Reds arranged a press conference yesterday to explain the situation.

Without mentioning names Muktiyoddha coach Shaiful Islam Manik said that some big clubs were conspiring against them but they were ready to face the challenge on the field rather than carry out their threatened boycott of the league.

"Both Ramkirshna Gosh and Tayab Hasan are undoubtedly two of the best referees in the country but I think even they have been influenced by some quarters. Also we have video evidence to prove how these officials took some controversial decisions in our last match," informed Manik.

Later, the footage involving two incidents during their match against Mohammedan, which they lost by solitary goal, was screened in the briefing.

Manik, however, said that Hasan Al Mamun, who also attended the briefing, regretted his unruly behaviour against Gosh but believed the punishment, meted out against him and Jeremiah was unfair.

While Manik was blazing away off the field, his Brothers' counterpart Wajed Gazi chose to be concerned about his boys' on-field performances, in particular Russian striker Edwards for his lacklustre displays.

"It is really frustrating watching

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Did U Know?

Australia's triumph over Bangladesh is the first ever ten wickets victory margin recorded at Old Trafford.



Ricky Ponting
(Australia cricket captain)
"It is great to have him back in the side -- he is a world-class performer in one-day cricket."

On Andrew Symonds.

What to WATCH

ESPN
FIFA Confederation Cup
Mexico vs Argentina
Second Semifinal
Repeat at 9:30 am
Sportscentre
Live at 8:30 pm
STAR Sports
Wimbledon Championships
Round of 16
Live at 5:00 pm

DAY'S EVENT

Premier Football League
Brothers Union vs Muktiyoddha (5:00 pm)
Venue: Bangabandhu National Stadium



PHOTO: AP

Bangladesh opener Javed Omar is all set to have a go at a delivery on way to scoring a fighting 81 against England during their NatWest Series one-day international at Headingley on Sunday.

ODI rule changes go on trial from July 30

Cricket

AFP, Leeds

The International Cricket Council (ICC) announced it would be introducing major rule changes into one-day international matches on a 10-month trial basis starting on July 30.

The major alterations, which were approved Saturday at a meeting of the global governing body's chief executives' committee (CEC) at the ICC's headquarters at London's Lord's Cricket Ground, involve an extension of the current 15 overs fielding restrictions and the introduction of replacement players.

Under the new rules there will be an increase from 15 to 20 overs of restrictions where teams are only allowed two players outside the 30-yard 'circle'.

Unlike the present system, where the fielding restrictions are only in place for the first 15 overs, the new set-up means they will apply for the first 10 overs of every innings plus two additional blocks of five overs which must be selected by the fielding captain.

The CEC decided that the additional 'close-catcher' field restrictions, where two stationary players must be within the 15-yard 'inner circle', should only apply for the first 10 overs.

The CEC also approved the introduction of soccer-style replacements which will permit sides to

replace a player at any stage of a match.

The replaced player will be ruled out of the rest of the match while the replacement will be entitled to assume any remaining batting or bowling duties. Both players will receive a cap.

Currently substitutes in all forms of cricket are generally only permitted to field.

These two innovations may be trialled during the NatWest Challenge between England and Australia starting on July 7 at Headingley.

However, the England and Wales Cricket Board and Cricket Australia will both need to give their consent before the new rules can be introduced in the three-game series.

The changes will be reviewed by the ICC's cricket committee, chaired by former India batsman Sunil Gavaskar - which made the initial recommendations at its 2006 meeting.

As well as the one-day changes, a proposal to undertake a technology trial during the Super Series in Australia in October was also approved.

This will allow on-field umpires to consult with the TV umpire on any aspect of any decision with the final decision remaining with the on-field umpire.

The only exceptions to this will be line decisions, which will be dealt with by the TV umpire in the same manner as at present, and clean

catches, where the existing process will also be retained.

Meanwhile the ICC also announced the establishment of an expert panel to work with the game's lawmakers, the Marylebone Cricket Club (MCC), and manufacturers to review the rules governing cricket bats.

Concerns have been expressed that some leading players' bats exceed the permitted width of four-and-a-quarter inches and that, following a banned practice in baseball, some bats have been injected with cork in a bid to increase their power.

Law Six, the rule relating to bats, currently states that "the blade of the bat shall be made solely of wood."

In particular, the CEC considered the specific case of the controversial Kookaburra bat used by several international players, including Australia captain Ricky Ponting.

These have a thin film of graphite running down the back in a bid to strengthen the blade.

The CEC did not make a definitive judgement but agreed that the bats should be allowed pending a final decision from MCC on their legality in relation to current regulations.

B'DESH V ENG SCOREBOARD

Scoreboard of the triangular NatWest Series one-day international between Bangladesh and England at Headingley in Leeds on Sunday:

BANGLADESH					
Omar b Flintoff	81				
Nafees c Trescottick b S Jones	11				
Imran b Flintoff	32				
Ashraf c Trescottick b Flintoff	0				
Bashar run out	10				
Aftab b Giles	15				
Mashud not out	42				
Mortuza b Flintoff	1				
Rafique not out	2				
Extras: (lb-1, w-11, nb-2)	14				
Total: (For 7 wickets in 50 overs)	208				
Fall of wickets: 1-22, 2-92, 3-92, 4-112, 5-138, 6-183, 7-189					
Did not bat: Manzarul, Nazmul					
Bowler					
O	M	R	W		
Gough	9	0	59	0	
S Jones	9	0	44	1	
Tremlett	7	0	26	0	
Flintoff	9	1	29	4	
Collingwood	6	0	21	0	
Giles	10	0	28	1	

ENGLAND					
Trescottick c Mashud b Manzarul	43				
Strauss b Manzarul	98				
Flintoff lbw b Rafique	22				
Solanki lbw b Rafique	8				
Pietersen c Rafique b Manzarul	23				
Collingwood not out	8				
G Jones not out	0				
Extras: (lb-4, w-3)	7				
Total: (For 5 wickets in 38.5 overs)	209				
Fall of wickets: 1-99, 2-134, 3-151, 4-182, 5-208					
Did not bat: Giles, Gough, Tremlett, S Jones					
Bowler					
O	M	R	W		
Nazmul	7	1	43	0	
Mortuza	9	0	48	0	
Manzarul	9.5	0	57	3	

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Shahriar the left solution

Cricket

AL-AMIN from Leeds

A nightmare visited Bangladesh exactly a week after their dream come true win against Australia when they crashed to a ten-wicket defeat against the world champions at Old Trafford on Saturday.

Eight wickets fell for 26 runs with the last five perishing for the just two runs being added to the total and that too after a third-wicket stand of 90 runs between Shahriar Nafees and Mohammad Ashraf.

The collapse was as surprising as Bangladesh's five-wicket triumph against the same side at Cardiff on June 18.

People, however, said that the only highlight for Bangladesh at Old Trafford was Ashraf's 58. Ashraf is certainly the man in form and has been the topic of discussion for what he has done in his last three innings.

But young left-hander Shahriar Nafees deserved a little bit of attention for his fluent 47 in only his second ODI appearance. His flawless 57-ball knock featured six sweetly-timed hits across the rope.

But more importantly he never looked uncomfortable in his second game after a nervous debut against England at Trent Bridge where he scored just 10.

"When I came out to bat with Javed (Omar) bhai it was not an ideal condition because the sky was cloudy and the two opening bowlers bowled very well.

"Since I have been not among the runs I tried to play cautiously and grew in confidence hitting the ball very well," said Shahriar after the match at Old Trafford.

"I did not play my natural game. It was not even required because we were getting five runs in every over. With Ashraf batting at the other end and we were rotating the strike freely we were looking for a big total," said 19-year-old.

"I tried to occupy the crease as long as possible because I knew the longer I stay the more I would learn. But I felt very bad when I got out at a very important stage of the game," recalled Shahriar, who was bowled by Andrew Symonds.

He might have got out for 11 in his third game against England at Headingley on Sunday, but the

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RANGAMATI SOCCER Sapchhari champs

OUR CORRESPONDENT

Sapchhari Ribeng Club won the Zila Parishad Junior (Under-14) Gold Cup Football Tournament when they defeated Sadar Upazila 5-3 in the tiebreaker after both sides were locked 1-1 in normal time at the local stadium here yesterday.

Sapchhari custodian Sonamoni Chakma was later named man-of-the-match while Jewel Chakma of Kaptai upazila collected the man-of-the-tournament award.

Noreh Chakma, the captain of the winning team, received the gold cup and Tk. 13,000 cash prize. On the other hand, Sadar Upazila collected Tk. 7,000.

Jiotirindra Bodhipriya Larma alias Santu Larma, the chairman of the CHT Regional Council, handed over prizes as the chief guest.

Former India star cricketer Solkar passes away

AFP, New Delhi

Former India cricketer Eknath Solkar, who was known for his outstanding close-in fielding, died in Mumbai after a cardiac arrest on Sunday, his family announced.

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Abahani prevail in goal-feast

SPORTS REPORTER



After four scoreless games in a row, the Premier Football League experienced a goal glut with Abahani recording a 5-3 win over bottom team Dipali Juba Sangha at the Bangabandhu National Stadium on Sunday.

Farhad and Ibrahim struck twice and Ujjal added the other as Abahani returned to winning ways following two draws and a defeat in the previous three rounds.

Abahani's third win overall took them to 11 points, three adrift of leaders Mohammedan but the Sky Blues are now fifth in the table at the end of the sixth round. Dipali, who hit back against the struggling giants with goals from Farid, Jalal and Rubel, are still pointless having lost all six fixtures to date.

There were only a couple of hundred fans present in the Abahani gallery, a reminder of the frustration being felt by the Sky Blue loyalists with the club's recent poor form. But undaunted by the apathy Abahani got off to a magnificent start scoring twice before the match was even two minutes old.

Ghanaian forward Ibrahim found the net 40 seconds after the kick-off when he flicked home a low drive by Zahid on a corner by Ujjal from the left. In the very next minute, Ibrahim and Farhad exchanged a series of passes on the left side before Farhad finished the move with a

placing shot after Ibrahim's low drive had rebounded off rival goalkeeper Titu.

The Premier League newcomers

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PHOTO: STAR

Shahin of Dipali Juba Sangha (R) tries to stop Abahani's Ghanaian forward Ibrahim, who struck twice, during their Premier Bank Premier Football League encounter at the Bangabandhu National Stadium on Sunday.

All-rounder Adriano

AFP, Nuremberg



Brazil marksman Adriano turned in a scintillating two-goal display to send the five-time World Cup winners into the final of the Confederations Cup with a 3-2 win over hosts Germany here on Saturday.

The Inter Milan striker set up all of Brazil's goals, winning a penalty for Ronaldinho to convert, and scoring two himself after Germany had twice equalised through Lukas Podolski and a Michael Ballack penalty.

It was the third time Brazil have reached the final and they will hope to repeat their win from 1997 in the Frankfurt final in four days' time.

Argentina or Mexico will be their opponents with the two facing off on Sunday in the other semi-final.

Brazil coach Carlos Alberto Parreira paid tribute to his players' resistance against a German side which gave it all.

"My players were tired, but this was a mental game far more than a technical game," Parreira said. "They showed a lot of confidence and a lot of courage and that is why I am proud of my team."

"It is not easy to beat Germany here, on their home ground, in what was a World Cup final for them."

For Germany it was a disappointing end to the tournament but manager Jurgen Klinsmann could be proud of their progress with this only

their second defeat in his 12 months in charge.

"You have to swallow defeats in football," said Klinsmann. "But we take a lot out of the tournament and hopefully things go better in the World Cup."

The hosts now have a consolation third-place play-off in Leipzig against the loser from the other semi-final.

With the match just seven minutes old, an overenthusiastic male fan ran on to the pitch waving a black and white flag and tried to hand it over to the surprised Brazilian midfielder Emerson.

A host of stewards escorted the youth off the pitch but football's governing body FIFA will be concerned as this latest pitch invasion in this tournament.

Both sides looked dangerous from set-pieces and it was the

source of the first goal.

In the 21st minute Adriano let rip with a ferocious 35 yard free-kick with his trusty left foot and with a slight deflection off the wall German goalkeeper Jens Lehmann was left with no chance.

It was the 250th goal in the Confederations Cup and the 251st came just 60 seconds later.

Sebastian Deisler swung in a corner and Podolski headed past Dida with the Brazil backline all at sea.

Just before the interval both teams ploughed forward and a hectic period saw two controversial penalties awarded.

Robert Huth tussled with Adriano and the referee strangely pointed to the penalty spot with Ronaldinho converting with aplomb in the 43rd minute.

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PHOTO: AFP

JOY LANDING! Brazil striker Adriano is over the moon after scoring the opening goal against Germany at Nuremberg on Saturday.

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