

## BCB going backwards?

### Premier Division League has no sponsor

**Cricket**

SPORTS REPORTER

Is Bangladesh cricket backtracking? On the playing field this might not be the case, but the Bangladesh Cricket Board (BCB) as the governing body of the country's most demanding sports is certainly showing signs of cracking off the field.

Two months ago BCB president Ali Asghar came under scrutiny following media reports that he had struck a 'secret' deal with Aston Moore, a Malaysia-based public relation agent, for the future sponsorship rights. In the domestic front the National League, country's lone first-class competition, suffered a major financial blow due to the lack of professionalism from Asghar's newly appointed marketing committee chairman Ahmed Iqbal Hasan.

And on Saturday it was confirmed that the Premier Division League, a prestigious domestic competition involving Dhaka clubs, was starting on December 12 without even a sponsor.

But unfortunately the all-powerful board president was least bothered to even set a discussion with his elected executive committee, let alone clearing the clouds hanging over his own head.

Not only that Asghar exercised his supreme authority given in the new constitution while accepting the resignation of his joint-secretary Rezauddin Al Mamun from the executive body.

Asghar, a lawmaker of ruling Bangladesh Nationalist Party, even threatened to accept any further resignation without hesitation in an interview with a Bengali daily recently.

It was learnt that his general secretary Mahbubul Anam made several attempts to convene an extraordinary board meeting, but

Asghar decided against it citing his more demanding political and business commitments.

Asghar was also least bothered to form the sixteen standing committees within thirteen days from the first Annual General Meeting (AGM), which is a clear violation of the constitution as the first AGM was held on October 21.

Besides, his appointment of Ahmed Iqbal as chairman of the Marketing Committee replacing a long-serving Aziz Al Kaiser Titoo, disappointed everybody.

"It is frustrating and I must say it is a disaster to start the most excited cricket competition without any sponsor. Marketing Committee chairman informed me only on last Tuesday that he failed to catch a sponsor for the competition," said Khondokar Jamiluddin, chairman of the Cricket Committee of Dhaka Metropolitan (CCDM).

## Awaiting a different V-Day

SPORTS REPORTER from Karachi

Four aeronautical engineers of Bangladesh Air Force now undergoing training in Karachi have planned to celebrate the Victory Day in a different way.

"We are not in a position to return home at the moment but we expect to celebrate our Victory Day with a lap of honour with the SAFF trophy on December 17," said Selim, Shahadat, Sohail and Shahjalal while watching Bangladesh's match against Bhutan on Thursday.

Studying at the Karachi School of Aeronautics, the four were very excited after their home team's 3-0 victory against Bhutan.

"We believe our boys will go all the way to the final and make the 34th Victory Day a memorable one for a deprived section like us in Karachi because the local high commission never invites us to

SEE PAGE 13 COL 1

## Early Argentine-Dutch clash

### Easy draw for Brazil, hosts



AFP, Leipzig

An exciting clash between Argentina and the Netherlands looks set to be the high spot of the first round of the 2006 World Cup while holders Brazil will do battle with Australia and Japan.

The draw for the first round in the eastern city of Leipzig on Friday placed the Dutch and two-time World Cup winners Argentina in what looks to be the tournament's "Group of Death".

Group C also includes Serbia and Montenegro, who have the power to unsettle the big two, and African debutants Ivory Coast who can call on players who play a leading role at European clubs.

Dutch coach Marco van Basten said he was looking forward to the clash with the South Americans in Frankfurt on June 21.

"Argentina are one of the big footballing countries with a great history and many of their players are in the European leagues," he said.

Five-time world champions Brazil will expect to qualify from Group F, but coach Carlos Alberto Parreira said he was taking nothing for granted against Croatia, Japan and the Australia, who are now coached by the experienced Dutchman Guus Hiddink.

"Technically, you could say that it is an easy group for Brazil but it is nothing of the sort," said Parreira. "We need to be very wary. These are experienced teams. Japan have improved a lot under Zico."

"Croatia were very impressive in qualifying, while Australia knocked out Uruguay with two good games." Hiddink said he was hoping to create shocks to rival those created by his South Korea team which reached the semifinals in 2002.

"We are happy to have qualified

but we are not here to make up the numbers and want to spring a surprise," Hiddink said.

Japan coach Zico said he would put aside his emotions when he faced Brazil, the nation he starred for as a player.

"For us, it is easier to encounter Brazil in the first round. It is better than meeting them after winning through to the second round," he said.

Luiz Felipe Scolari, the Brazilian who coached his home nation to victory in 2002 and is now in charge of Portugal, said he would guard against over-confidence in Group D which features Mexico, Iran and Angola.

"All of us in Portugal have to work to avoid the euphoria we experienced four years ago after the draw for the 2002 World Cup, which ended up in a nightmare. We don't want Portugal to live through that again," Scolari said.

Portugal crashed out in the first round in 2002 after failing to negotiate a group which included the United States, Poland and South Korea.

The tournament will kick off in Munich on June 9 when host nation Germany take on rank outsiders Costa Rica.

The Germans, beaten finalists in 2002, were handed a kind draw, with Poland and Ecuador completing their Group A.

England believe they have their strongest squad since they landed the trophy in 1966, and a Group B draw of Paraguay, Trinidad and Tobago and Sweden produced smiles from England coach Sven-Goran Eriksson.

"It is not an easy group but it could have been much worse," he said.

Should England win their group and progress through their last 16 match, they face a possible clash with Argentina or the Netherlands in the quarterfinals.

Three-time winners Italy will be wary of the challenge posed by Ghana, the United States and dark



WHO'S NEXT: Top German model Heidi Klum picks a name while FIFA head of communications Markus Sieglers looks on during the final draw ceremony of the 2006 Football World Cup in Leipzig on Friday.

horses the Czech Republic in Group E.

US coach Bruce Arena said: "It looks one of the toughest groups particularly with Italy and the Czechs."

"They are two of Europe's best teams but that is why you come to the World Cup in the first place."

France, the winners on home soil in 1998 but eliminated in the first phase of a disastrous 2002 campaign, were grouped with South Korea, African debutants Togo and Switzerland in Group G.

Perennial World Cup under-achievers Spain face a potentially tricky task against fast-improving Ukraine, current African champions

Tunisia and Saudi Arabia in Group H.

Spain coach Luis Aragones said his team were on collision course with Brazil in the quarterfinals if both won their first-round groups and then progressed through the last 16.

"The possible line-ups for the last 16 and the quarterfinals are worrying," Aragones said.

The 64 matches take place in 12 German cities with the final in Berlin on July 9.

## India ride on Sachin ton

**Cricket**

AFP, Mumbai

Sachin Tendulkar shattered the world record for Test centuries as India made a strong start in the second Test against Sri Lanka here on Saturday.

Tendulkar, 32, notched up his 35th ton to take India to 245-3 on the opening day at the Ferozeshah Kotla ground after the home side chose to bat.

The little master pumped his fist and raised his bat and helmet after nudging a delivery from seamer Chaminda Vaas to reach the three-figure mark and get past compatriot Sunil Gavaskar in the list of centuries.

Tendulkar, who remained

unbeaten on exactly 100 when bad light stopped play, was congratulated by his partner and former captain Sourav Ganguly, who was not out on the draw on close.

The master batsman broke the long-standing record in exactly the same number of Tests (125) as Gavaskar and received a standing ovation from the crowd.

Tendulkar began cautiously but opened up as the innings progressed, once hitting spin wizard Muttiah Muralitharan for three consecutive fours through the off-side.

He hit a total of 13 boundaries and also a huge six off leg-spinner Malinga Bandara over the long-on fence during his 177-ball knock and was involved in an important 112-run unbroken stand for the fourth wicket with Ganguly.

Sri Lanka, who are looking for their first Test win on Indian soil, failed to capitalise on the psychological advantage of bowling out India for 167 in the drawn first Test in Chennai.

With Tendulkar stroking beautifully, Ganguly also batted purposefully in his bid to retain a place in the Test side after being ignored for recent one-dayers.

Left-handed Ganguly struggled early on and was lucky to escape on 11 when wicketkeeper Kumar Sangakkara missed an easy stumping chance off Muralitharan.

Tendulkar was also involved in a 77-run stand for the third wicket with Vangipurappu Laxman who played a strokeful 117-ball knock in which he hit 12 boundaries.

Laxman looked set for a big

SEE PAGE 13 COL 2

## India blank Bhutan

SPORTS REPORTER from Karachi

Three headed goals gave India a semifinal berth when the two-time winners blanked Bhutan 3-0 in yesterday's first Group B match of the SAFF Championship at the People's Sports Complex Stadium here yesterday.

India, who edged Nepal 2-1 in their first match, dominated the whole show against the minnows but had to wait until 44th minute to go ahead.

It was captain Baichung Bhutia, who missed an 89th minute penalty against Nepal, found the target when he shrugged off his marker to nod home a headed-pass by Manju.

But the star Indian striker was fortunate to see his weak effort

SEE PAGE 13 COL 5

## Century-making machine

**Cricket**

AFP, New Delhi

India's Sachin Tendulkar, who smashed a world record 35th Test century against Sri Lanka in the second Test Saturday, looks set to overtake the Indian before both greater heights.

In the last over of the opening day he turned left-arm seamer Chaminda Vaas to square-leg for a single to complete his century and break compatriot Sunil Gavaskar's record of 34 Test hundreds.

West Indies' Brian Lara is Tendulkar's closest competitor with 31 Test centuries and looks unlikely to overtake the Indian before both quit the game.

Tendulkar was destined to attain greatness ever since he made his Test debut aged 16 in Pakistan. He did not score a century but made his mark with his confidence and courage.

He battled against the formidable Pakistani pace duo of Wasim Akram and Waqar Younis as if he was playing in his 10th Test series, not the first.

Tendulkar did not take long to gain international fame. His hundred in England in 1990 and in Australia the following year reminded bowlers he would be a force to reckon with in years to



PHOTO: AFP

DAD, I DID IT: Batting maestro Sachin Tendulkar looks up to the heavens on reaching his world record-breaking 35th century on the first day of the Delhi Test on Saturday.

come. Big scoring virtually became a habit for Tendulkar, who went from strength to strength with each Test series. He made seven Test hundreds before he was 21.

The man known for his breath-taking strokeplay for more than a decade appears to have shed much of his flamboyance of late but remains as solid as ever.

He captured the nation's attention even before he had played a first-class match when he was involved in a world-record stand of 664 with Vinod Kambli in a domestic schools match in 1987-88.

SEE PAGE 13 COL 1

## 'It's for my father'

AFP, New Delhi

Star Indian batsman Sachin Tendulkar on Saturday dedicated his world-record 35th Test century to his late father, saying the knock was "very emotional".

"I dedicate this century to my father. My first hundred is the most memorable one but this one has been very emotional," said Tendulkar, who lost his father during the 1999 World Cup in England.

Tendulkar, who passed compatriot Sunil Gavaskar's record of 34

SEE PAGE 13 COL 5

## Flintoff fells Pakistan

**Cricket**

AFP, Lahore

All-rounder Andrew Flintoff smashed an unbeaten half-century and then took three wickets to inspire England to a comfortable 42-run win over Pakistan in the opening one-day match on Saturday.

Flintoff, who finished with 3-73, was ably supported by debutante paceman Liam Plunkett (3-51) as the tourists dismissed Pakistan for 285 in 46.5 overs after scoring an impressive 327-4.

Andrew Strauss also played his part in the win with a return-to-form 94.

Pakistan had half-centuries from Salman Butt, Younis Khan, Mohammad Yousuf and Shoaib Malik but none could go on to help their team chase the third highest one-day target.

Butt (67) and Younis (60) added a brisk 117 off just 106 balls for the second wicket to raise Pakistan's hopes but a late collapse saw Pakistan losing five wickets in the

space of 23 runs off just 18 balls.

Flintoff, who conceded 41 off his first four overs, took a simple catch off Steve Harmison to dismiss Butt and then induced Younis to play straight into the hands of Collingwood at point.

Butt hit eight fours and a six in his 65-ball knock, while Younis's 56-ball innings contained six boundaries and a six.

Collingwood then got England the prized scalp of in-form Inzamam-ul-Haq who was caught behind for 13 to leave a capacity 25,000 crowd stunned.

Yousuf and Malik added 83 runs for the fifth wicket but the required run-rate went up with every over.

Yousuf miscued a drive off Plunkett and was caught by the keeper after scoring a 63-ball 60 which included five boundaries. In his next over Plunkett dismissed Malik for 50, and AbdulRazaq for 13.

Earlier, England owed their highest one-day score in Pakistan to a solid 94 from Andrew Strauss and a brisk 72 by Flintoff.

Strauss, who managed just 44 runs in the two Tests against Pakistan, hit six boundaries and

was involved in three innings-building partnerships.

He added added 51 for the second wicket with opener Matthew Prior (45) after England lost captain Marcus Trescothick for 13.

Strauss then lifted England's total with a third-wicket stand of 91 off just 77 balls with Kevin Petersen who scored 56 in just 39 balls.

Petersen hoisted leg-spinner Kaneria for two consecutive sixes and hit seven boundaries before he was stumped by Kamran Akmal off Shoaib Malik.

Flintoff took over and helped Strauss add 52 for the fourth wicket as both men dominated the bowlers.

Strauss fell within six runs of his third one-day century when he pulled a short delivery off Kaneria straight to Salman Butt at deep mid-wicket.

Flintoff, dropped by Younis Khan off Malik when 31, took full advantage of the lapse, hitting Naved for three boundaries and a six in the 48th over as England added 87 in the last 10 overs.

Flintoff hit five boundaries and

SEE PAGE 13 COL 6

GROUPINGS OF 2006 WORLD CUP							
Group A	Group B	Group C	Group D	Group E	Group F	Group G	Group H
Germany Costa Rica Poland Ecuador	England Paraguay Trinidad and Tobago Sweden	Argentina Ivory Coast Serbia and Montenegro The Netherlands	Mexico Iran Angola Portugal	Italy Ghana USA Czech Republic	Brazil Croatia Australia Japan	France Switzerland South Korea Togo	Spain Ukraine Tunisia Saudi Arabia

(Group games to be played between June 9-23, 2006)

2006 WORLD CUP FIXTURE				
June 9	June 10	June 11	June 12	June 13
Germany v Costa Rica (Munich) Poland v Ecuador (Gelsenkirchen)	England v Paraguay (Frankfurt) Trinidad and Tobago v Sweden (Dortmund) Argentina v Ivory Coast (Hamburg)	Serbia and Montenegro v The Netherlands (Leipzig) Mexico v Iran (Nuremberg) Angola v Portugal (Cologne)	Italy v Ghana (Hanover) USA v Czech Republic (Gelsenkirchen) Australia v Japan (Kaiserslautern)	Brazil v Croatia (Berlin) France v Switzerland (Stuttgart) South Korea v Togo (Frankfurt)
June 14	June 15	June 16	June 17	June 18
Germany v Poland Spain v Ukraine (Leipzig) Tunisia v Saudi Arabia (Munich)	Ecuador v Costa Rica England v Trinidad and Tobago (Nuremberg) Sweden v Paraguay (Berlin)	Argentina v Serbia and Montenegro (Gelsenkirchen) The Netherlands v Ivory Coast (Stuttgart) Mexico v Angola (Hanover)	Portugal v Iran (Frankfurt) Italy v USA (Kaiserslautern) Czech Republic v Ghana (Cologne)	Brazil v Australia (Munich) Japan v Croatia (Nuremberg) France v South Korea (Leipzig)
June 19	June 20	June 21	June 22	June 23
Togo v Switzerland (Dortmund) Spain v Tunisia (Stuttgart) Saudi Arabia v Ukraine (Hamburg)	Ecuador v Germany (Gelsenkirchen) Sweden v England (Cologne) Paraguay v Trinidad and Tobago (Kaiserslautern)	The Netherlands v Argentina (Frankfurt) Ivory Coast v Serbia and Montenegro (Munich) Portugal v Mexico (Gelsenkirchen) Iran v Angola (Leipzig)	Czech Republic v Italy (Hamburg) Ghana v USA (Nuremberg) Japan v Brazil (Dortmund) Croatia v Australia (Stuttgart)	Togo v France (Cologne) Switzerland v South Korea (Hanover) Saudi Arabia v Spain (Kaiserslautern) Ukraine v Tunisia (Berlin)
ROUND OF 16				
June 24	June 25	June 26	June 27	
A: 1st Group A v 2nd Group B (Munich) B: 1st Group C v 2nd Group D (Leipzig)	C: 1st Group B v 2nd Group A (Stuttgart) D: 1st Group D v 2nd Group C (Nuremberg)	E: 1st Group E v 2nd Group F (Kaiserslautern) F: 1st Group G v 2nd Group H (Cologne)	G: 1st Group F v 2nd Group E (Dortmund) H: 1st Group H v 2nd Group G (Hanover)	
QUARTERFINALS				
June 30	July 1			
I: Winner A v Winner B (Berlin)	J: Winner E v Winner F (Hamburg) K: Winner C v Winner D (Gelsenkirchen) L: Winner G v Winner H (Frankfurt)			
SEMIFINALS				
July 4	July 5			
M: Winner I v Winner J (Dortmund)	N: Winner K v Winner L (Munich)			
THIRD-PLACE PLAYOFF				
July 8				
Losers M v Losers N (Stuttgart)				
FINAL				
July 9				
Winner M v Winner N (Berlin)				

**What to WATCH**

**DD Sports**  
India vs Sri Lanka  
Second Test, Day Two  
Live at 10:00 am

**ESPN**  
English Premier Football League  
Man United vs Everton  
Live at 9:55 pm

**SuperSport-3**  
Primera Liga  
Barcelona vs Sevilla  
Live at 1:45 am (Monday)

**DAY'S EVENT**

**U-19 Tri-Series Cricket**  
Bangladesh vs Sri Lanka  
Venue: Fatullah Cricket Stadium