



CAPTAIN AND DEPUTY: Bangladesh skipper Habibur Bashar and recently appointed vice captain Shahriar Nafees (R) speak during a practice session at the Sher-e-Bangla National Stadium in Mirpur on Tuesday.



Did U Know?

The 2006 US Open is the first Grand Slam to introduce instant replay technology and player challenges.



Jose Mourinho
(Chelsea manager)
"It is unbelievable. Makelele is not a footballer, he is a slave."
On Claude Makelele who is being recalled to the French team after his retirement.



Wari, Nadim complete hat-trick

UNB, Dhaka

Nadim Hossain struck the first hat-trick of the hockey season as he guided Wari Club to their third win in as many matches in the Green Delta Insurance Metropolis First Division Hockey beating Combined Sporting Club 4-0 at the Moulana Bhasani National Hockey Stadium yesterday.

Nadim Hossain doubled the winners' margin in the 47th minute after Raju put the old Dhaka outfit ahead early in the first half.

Then Nadeem scored his second in the 60th minute and completed his treble just six minutes later.

In the day's other match, Shishu Kishore Sangha shared points with Farshganj Sporting Club as they drew 1-1 in the next match at the same venue.

Prashanto put Farshganj ahead in the 11th minute while Masud scored the equalizer for Shishu Kishore Sangha in the 50th minute.

Nafees talk of the team

Tigers start training for Champions Trophy

Cricket

SPORTS REPORTER

Bangladesh cricket team's preparations for the upcoming ICC (International Cricket Council) Champions Trophy got underway yesterday at the Sher-e-Bangla National Stadium in Mirpur and newly appointed vice-captain Shahriar Nafees was at the centre of discussions on the first day.

After returning from the tour of Africa, where they had a mixed bag by losing the ODI series against Zimbabwe 3-2 series and then winning 3-0 against Kenya, the Tigers enjoyed a 10-day break before getting back to action.

However, there were three absentees from the 18-member preliminary squad. Ace batsman Mohammad Ashraful is currently in England playing in an amateur

league and newcomer Mehrab Hossain is captaining the Bangladesh Cricket Board (BCB) National Academy team in Pakistan while all-rounder Alok Kapali's was not present due to medical problems.

In absence of coach Dav Whatmore, who will return from Sri Lanka on Thursday after enjoying holidays with his family, fitness trainer Paul Chapman first conducted a screening and fitness test at the Indoor facility and then the team went into the main ground for an hour-long fielding-fitness session under assistant coach Mohammad Salahuddin.

But it was Nafees who came to the spotlight after the BCB surprisingly named him vice-captain on Monday for the second biggest ICC tournament after the World Cup which will take place in India during October-November.

The 20-year-old opener himself was surprised by the board's deci-

sion but said that he was ready to take the challenge.

"Honestly speaking, I was surprised by the appointment and it was pretty unexpected for me. I think it is an early achievement in my career if you consider my age and international experience," said a delighted Nafees, who has so far played six Tests and 25 ODIs after making his international debut in September last year.

"I don't think that there is a big role for the vice-captain in the team because he can only offer his support if needed. I am very much aware of the fact that I have to score runs because it is the first criterion to keep my place in the team. I know that only talent is not good enough that's why I believe in hard-work," he added.

On the other hand, captain Habibur Bashar welcomed his

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ICC cancels its meeting

Cricket

AFP, Bristol

The International Cricket Council (ICC) announced Monday that its emergency board meeting in Dubai on Saturday, called following Pakistan's forfeit of the fourth Test against England, had been cancelled.

The tourists refused to take the field at The Oval a week last Sunday having earlier been penalised five runs for ball-tampering by umpires Darrell Hair and Billy Doctrove -- a decision that created

the first forfeit in 129 years of Test cricket.

Pakistan captain Inzamamul Haq was then charged with ball tampering and bringing the game into disrepute, throwing the future of their tour of England into doubt.

It then emerged that controversial Australian official Hair had offered to quit as an umpire in return for 500,000 dollars, an offer he later withdrew.

Both the issue of Inzamam's case, still to be heard, and Hair's future as an umpire were set to be discussed by the ICC board this weekend at its Dubai headquarters.

But in a statement, ICC presi-

dent Percy Sonn said: "Last week I felt it necessary to call a meeting of the board of directors to brief them on the end to the Test match at The Brit Oval and subsequent events. That meeting was due to take place this coming Saturday.

"However, having had the chance to contact the directors and seeing they have an understanding of the situation I have decided this course of action is not necessary so I have decided to cancel the meeting.

"I sent each director a note last Friday and will telephone each of them over the next couple of days

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SL, Maldives to host SAFF 2007

SPORTS REPORTER

Sri Lanka and the Maldives will jointly host the next South Asian Football Federation (SAFF) Championship in October 2007.

The opening ceremony will be held in the Maldives capital Male while the final and closing ceremony in Sri Lankan capital Colombo.

The decision was taken at a meeting of the SAFF executive committee in Colombo on August 25 with its President Ganesh Thapa of Nepal in the chair. AFC Secretary General Dato Peter Velappan and Vice-President Manilal Fernando attended the meeting on special invitation.

The meeting also decided to hold SAFF Club Football Championship every alternate year from 2007 with the participation of top clubs of the eight member countries.

As per other decisions of the meeting, SAFF Under-17 Women's Football Championship will be held in India on February next year and SAFF age group football (Under-12, 14 and 16) are to be introduced soon.

The SAFF general congress will be held in Male next March and a permanent SAFF office to be set up in New Delhi subject to a written consent from All-India Football Federation (AIFF).

Academy 1st one-dayer washed out

SPORTS REPORTER

The first one-day match between the visiting Bangladesh Cricket Board (BCB) National Cricket Academy and Pakistan National Cricket Academy was called off due to heavy rain at Sheikhupura yesterday.

The match will now be held today. The next two matches will be held in Sialkot.

Sylhet upset DU

Referee assaulted by Moni

Football

STAFF CORRESPONDENT, Sylhet

Sylhet managed to qualify to the semifinals of the Jubok Phone National Football Championship after an ill-tempered and ugly 1-1 stalemate with Dhaka University at the Sylhet Stadium yesterday.

In a game that was dominated by fouls, several yellow cards were dished out. The match was also stopped on two occasions as the players from both sides were involved in several altercations, only being halted by police intervention. In all, six players were shown the yellow from either side.

Referee Tayab Hasan Shamsuzzaman was slapped by Dhaka University captain and Bangladesh international Saifur Rahman Moni in the 55th minute after Shahanur Rahman Jony was shown the yellow by Tayab.

Moni and his teammates gestured at the spectators after the

final whistle and were pelted with water bottles when they were leaving the ground.

Sylhet needed a draw only while the match was a do-or-die battle for the University side. In the end, the match had more fouls than passes it seemed, as Dhaka University committed fouls one after the other.

Dhaka University created little chances with one going Monir's way as he headed from a corner kick and struck the crossbar in the 30th minute.

Sylhet went ahead early in the second-half as Ripon entered into the danger area, dodged two defenders and the goalkeeper Titoo to make it 1-0 for the hosts in the 51st minute.

Substitute Shakil forced the University's equalizer in the 67th minute as he pounced on Manwar's corner.

Sylhet 'keeper Sohel was adjudged the man-of-the-match.

"There's no doubt that DU (Dhaka University) is comparatively a better team than us. They had the scope to win the match but

things went wrong for them at their own fault. Such a hard match was to be played with a cool head and not committing fouls," said Sylhet and national captain Arif Khan Joy after the match.

However Joy admitted, "We also could not play well. Fouls dominated the game while the referring was also a little odd."

Sylhet tops the group table with four points from two matches while Dhaka University and Comilla head home as they failed to win a single match in the final round. Sylhet will face Narayanganj in the second semifinal on September 1.

The first semifinal will be held between Dhaka and Noakhali at the same ground on August 31.

TEAMS

Sylhet: Sohel, Ariful, Deen, Pradip, Munna, Monir, Joy, Rahel, Ripon, Robin, Kanchan.

Dhaka University: Titoo, Faisal, Amit, Rony, Mamun, Parvez, Monwar, Saiful, Jony, Moni, Firoze.



Dhaka University's substitute striker Shakil heads to score his teams' equaliser against hosts Sylhet in the Jubok Phone National Football Championship final round match at the Sylhet Stadium yesterday.



Sri Lanka Olympic Committee president and chairman of South Asian Olympic Council Hemasiri Fernando (R) hands over the Games flag to Bangladesh Olympic Association (BOA) secretary general Kutubuddin Ahmed during the closing ceremony of the 10th SA Games in Colombo at the Sugathadasa Stadium on Monday.

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