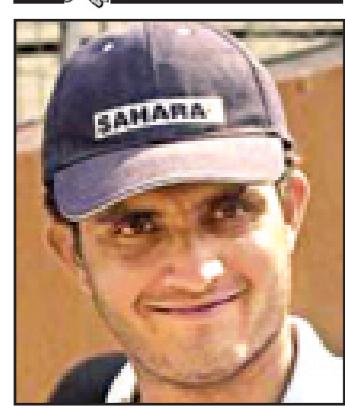




Did U Know?

Portugal's Costinha and Ghana's Gyan Asamoah both had the worst individual disciplinary record with 4 yellow cards and one red card each in the FIFA 2006 World Cup in Germany.



Sourav Ganguly

(India batsman)
"Performance increases confidence which is the key... With my performance in South Africa recently, I hope to carry it on in the forthcoming ties too."

On the performances in his comeback series in South Africa.



What to WATCH

ESPN
Sportcenter India
Live at 9:30 pm
FA Cup
Newcastle United v Birmingham City
Live at 1:55 am (Thursday)
STAR Sports
Australian Open
Men's/Women's Second Rd
Live at 6:00 am



Premier Division Cricket League
Sonargaon v City Club
Venue: Fatullah Cricket Stadium
Victoria v Brothers Union
Venue: BKSP
Mohammedan v Biman
Venue: Mirpur Sher-e-Bangla National Stadium

Reds kick off training

SPORTS REPORTER

Professional Football League title aspirants Muktiyoddha Sangsads began their training yesterday at the Police Lines ground in Uttara.

Muktiyoddha, who failed to win any major title in the previous seasons under two coaches -- Shafiqul Islam Manik and George Kottan of Austria -- have put together a stronger team for the inaugural B. League.

The Reds not only managed to hold most of their old players like Aminul, Hassan Al Mamun, Rajani, Arman Mia, Kanchan and Moni but also landed big names like Alfaz, Matiur Munna, Parvez Babu and Arman Aziz, which will provide new

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Rabiul ton goes awry

DOHS, Abahani keep winning

SPORTS REPORTER

KAI ALTECH ALUMINIUM
Rabiul Karim came from nowhere to stand tall at the Dhanmondi Cricket Stadium with a superb hundred but it was not good enough for newcomers Young Pegasus to halt Abahani's winning streak in the Kai-Altech Premier Cricket League yesterday.

Despite the right-hander's 104, title aspirants Abahani posted to a comfortable 71-run victory when they restricted the youthful side to 204-6 after piling up 275-9 in the stipulated 50 overs at their home ground.

Another giants and defending champions Old DOHS, however, survived an Indira Road scare at BKSP with a scrappy 10-run win to maintain their all-win record in the third round and it was none other than proven fighter Khaled Mahmud who was the hero with an unbeaten 82 and two wickets to his credit.

In the day's other match, a blistering 91 not out by Shahbaz Butt steered Kalabagan Krira Chakra to an easy six-wicket victory against Partex Sporting Club at the Fatullah Cricket Stadium.

ABAHANI-PEGASUS

The team effort by Pegasus' Premiership rookies has already impressed the crowd but the way opener Rabiul batted in reply to a mammoth total, was really valiant.

The Rajshahi lad played with confidence on way to the third hundred in the league after Victoria's Hasanuzzaman and DOHS's Tamim Iqbal while wickets fell at the other end. Rabiul, who was almost undone by a bouncer from Mashrafee-bin Mortaza, embarrassed the Abahani opening bowler in the seventh over when he smashed four consecutive boundaries off the Tigers paceman.

Having started the expensive over with a straight-drive, he flicked and edged the ball through to the fence before an exquisite cover-drive. His 120-ball essay was studded with four fours.

Pegasus looked out of contention when they were reduced to 62-4 but Rabiul had an ally in Saif Mahmud to bounce back as the two shared 102 runs for the fifth wicket.

Saif was unbeaten on 62 off 99 balls with four hits to the fence.

First-change seamer Mohammad Shahjada was the pick of Abahani bowlers with 3-31.

Abahani who were without three

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key players -- Khaled Mashud, Manzarul Rana and Nazmus Sadat -- due to injury, rode on team effort with stand-in captain Tushar Imran top-scoring a chancy 73-ball 56 after opting to bat first, thanks to some poor umpiring.

Pegasus were exuberant in fielding but unfortunately, they dropped some vital catches including two off Tushar.

The other valuable knocks came from opener Zahirul Islam (49 off 40 balls), Nazimuddin (38 off 54 balls), Naeem Islam (40 off 40 balls) and Mashrafee (44 off 40 balls).

DOHS-INDIRA

Former national skipper Mahmud rescued the inserted DOHS from big trouble when the man-of-the-match shared a 70-run partnership with Dollar Mahmud for the eighth wicket. DOHS finished the curtailed 48-over quota on a modest 209-9 from a precarious 98-7.

The veteran right-hander clobbered seven boundaries during his 103-ball knock while Dollar added 25 from 45 balls.

Abdur Razzak, who later played a vital role with his left-arm spin, was the other notable scorer with a run-a-ball 31 that featured three

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Flintoff leads from front

Cricket

AFP, Hobart

All-rounder Andrew Flintoff lifted a jittery England to a drought-breaking three-wicket win over New Zealand in the triangular series one-day international here Tuesday.

England had to work hard to beat New Zealand's modest total of 205 and secure their first victory since arriving in Australia in early November.

Man of the match Flintoff hit 72 not out off 75 balls as England reached the required 206 runs with one ball to spare at Bellerive Oval.

England captain Michael Vaughan, who suffered from hamstring tightness during the match

and is in doubt for Friday's game with Australia in Brisbane, said it was a relief to finally taste victory.

"It was an important day for us all, I knew we had to come out here and play a good game and I knew that we had to win today (on Tuesday), just for the whole momentum of the tour," said Vaughan, who batted with a runner.

"We've had a tough tour, we haven't won any games."

"It's a huge game for us, we've got the season up and running, and we must take the momentum from this game into a big game against the Aussies on Friday."

But it wasn't easy for England. When Ian Bell fell for 45, England was 138-5 and the game was in the balance. But Flintoff and Paul Nixon (15) put on 60 to guide their side to

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within eight runs to win before the latter was run out.

With 17 balls to go, victory seemed a formality, but New Zealand clawed their way back, leaving England chasing four runs in the last over.

Eventually, Flintoff picked up the winning run with a straight drive down the ground off part-time seamer Craig McMillan.

McMillan was needed as injury-plagued Kiwi fast bowler Shane Bond was off the field with back soreness during the latter stages of the England innings.

Flintoff, who also bowled impressively, batted with more restraint than usual and survived some anxious moments as the victory loomed.



PHOTO: STAR

Muktijoddha Sangsads players perform running drills during their first training session at the Uttara Police Lines ground yesterday ahead of the B. League.

Gibbs banned for abuse

Cricket

AFP, Centurion

South African batsman Herschelle Gibbs was Monday banned for two Test matches for remarks about Pakistan supporters which were picked up by a stump microphone

during the first Test at Centurion Park.

South African captain Graeme Smith said he couldn't condone the comments by Gibbs but said the team was angry about the incidents which led to the player's outburst.

Speaking before International Cricket Council (ICC) match referee Chris Broad made his finding, Smith accused Pakistan supporters of racial abuse.

Gibbs was found guilty by Broad after being charged by ICC chief executive Malcolm Speed of a Level 3 offence for using "language or gestures that offends, insults, humiliates, intimidates, threatens, disparages or vilifies another person on the basis of that person's race, religion, colour, descent or national or ethnic origin."

In addition to Speed's intervention, the Pakistan Cricket Board lodged an official complaint with Broad through their team management.

Gibbs, who was photographed leaving the South African dressing room following the hearing with two beers in his hands, faces a separate Cricket South Africa hearing Tuesday for contravening a clause in the body's code of conduct relating to verbal abuse or conduct "on the basis of race, religion, colour,

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Nadir Shah honoured

SPORTS REPORTER

Cricket umpire Nadir Shah told yesterday that it was an honour for him to become the first Bangladeshi to be picked in International Cricket Council's neutral umpires' panel.

The former cricketer, who has so far conducted seven one-day internationals -- all at home -- since his debut in the Bangladesh-Kenya series in March 2006, has been selected as one of the umpires for the six-nation ICC World Cup Cricket League Division One.

The pre-World Cup tournament for the ICC associate members will be held in Nairobi from January 30-February 7. Canada, Holland, Bermuda, Scotland, Ireland and

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BCB DISCIPLINARY ACTION

Ash, Mashud fined Aftab cautioned

SPORTS REPORTER

Bangladesh Cricket Board (BCB) took disciplinary actions against three national cricketers for breaching the code of conduct.

The action was taken against former national skipper Khaled Mashud, Mohammad Ashraful and Aftab Ahmed after disciplinary hearings held on Monday where

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WE REGRET

In an article titled 'Rule bent for Asif' that appeared in the Star Sport on Sunday, we mistakenly used the word 'unlawful' in a paragraph that read: The managerial post has been tainted with controversy ever since Latif was sacked as manager apparently for addressing some unlawful activities of all-powerful Bangladesh coach Dav Whatmore during Bangladesh's tour of England in 2005. We regret the error. --Sport Editor

Ad

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