

KABADDI WORLD CUP Bangladesh drub Thailand

SPORTS REPORTER

Bangladesh handed a thumping 55-25 defeat on Thailand in their opening match of the second Kabaddi World Cup at Panvel, near Mumbai yesterday, according to internet reports.

Bangladesh are drawn with Japan and Afghanistan in Pool C in the 16-team event hosted by defending champions India.

The Bangladesh Kabaddi Federation, however, could not confirm the news as they have yet to get in contact with the team officials since their departure on January 22.

The three-day event, organised by Karnala Sports Academy under the auspices of the Amateur Kabaddi Federation of India, will offer the title winners a prize money of Rupees 2.5 lakh.

With Pakistan's presence in some doubt due to visa problems, only Iran and, to some extent, South Asian games and Asian games bronze medallist Bangladesh look capable of giving the home team a tough fight.

The Indian government has decided not to issue visa to the Pakistan team reportedly because some of the players are from the armed forces, according to PTI.

The President of the International Kabaddi Federation and the Amateur Kabaddi Federation of India Janardan Singh Gehlot said that the Indian government did not issue the visa to the Pakistan team as some players were from the armed forces.

Gehlot described it as a 'great loss to the championship'.

"I don't understand why only

SEE PAGE 18 COL 1



PHOTO: AFP

Indian batsman Dinesh Karthik hoists a boundary over the mid-wicket region as West Indies wicketkeeper Denesh Ramdin looks on during the second ODI at the Barabati Stadium in Cuttack on Wednesday.

Powell restricts India

Cricket

AFP, Cuttack

which India won by 14 runs, lasted together for just 15 deliveries.

Gambhir had made two when he was caught down the leg-side by wicketkeeper Denesh Ramdin off left-arm seamer Ian Bradshaw.

Ganguly, who hit 98 in Nagpur on his return to one-day cricket after 16 months, made 13 when he patted a catch to short midwicket in Powell's first over.

Tendulkar failed to get off the mark in his world record 376th one-day appearance, offering a tame catch to mid-on in Powell's next over.

Davidi had hit four boundaries in when he was bowled by a slower ball from Powell to make India 46-4.

Powell had taken just eight wickets in his previous 12 one-dayers, including a best of 3-33 against Pakistan in Multan in December.

India made two changes in their team, bringing in all-rounder Joginder Sharma and off-spinner

Ramesh Powar in place of Suresh Raina and Shanthakumaran Sreesanth.

Devon Smith replaced the injured Lara for the West Indies.

SCOREBOARD

Scoreboard of the India innings in the second one-day international against the West Indies at the Barabati Stadium in Cuttack on Wednesday:

INDIA

Gambhir c Ramdin b Bradshaw 2

Ganguly c Morton b Powell 13

Davidi b Powell 22

Tendulkar c Bradshaw b Powell 0

Karthik c Bradshaw 63

Dhoni c b Smith 6

Sharma b Powell 1

Harbhajan b Bravo 6

Agarkar run out 40

Power b Bravo 5

Zaheer Khan not out 7

Extras: (lb-3, nb-1, w-20) 24

Total: (All out in 48.2 overs) 189

Fall of wickets: 1-4, 2-35, 3-35, 4-46,

5-66, 6-69, 7-90, 8-152, 9-163.

Bowler O M R W

Bradshaw 10 1 38 2

Taylor 10 1 38 0

Powell 10 2 27 4

Smith 9 1 34 1

Bravo 8.2 1 36 2

Gayle 1 0 13 0

Toss: India

Umpires: Billy Bowden (NZL) and

Amiresh Saheba (IND)

Mashud to miss Zimbabwe tour

SPORTS REPORTER

Khaled Mashud looks all set to miss the coming Zimbabwe trip as the long-serving wicketkeeper has yet to make full recover from injury he had received during the ongoing Premier Cricket League.

The Bangladesh Cricket Board (BCB) will announce the 15-member squad today for next month's four-match series against the southern African nation.

Faruque Ahmed-led selection panel met yesterday to decide the squad before submitting the list to the board.

It was learnt that Mashud virtually has no chance to make the squad as it will take more time for him to be in shape for standing behind the stumps although he is fit for batting.

The former national skipper also missed the Tigers' last four one-day internationals at home, two each against Zimbabwe and Scotland, when the selectors brought Mushfiqur Rahim to test him for the demanding job.

Three more changes from the previous squad are expected including a fresh inclusion as the selectors are considering a third opening batsman ahead of the World Cup.

Leisure officials arrive at last

SPORTS REPORTER

Bangladesh Football Federation's worries over getting a sponsor for the inaugural Professional Football League could be over soon as officials of its marketing agent arrived in Dhaka yesterday.

The Leisure Sports Management of India, which roped in sponsors for the BFF in the past including the National Football League, is in charge of finding a sponsor for the B. League, scheduled to kick off in the middle of the next month.

The officials of Leisure were long due in Dhaka but could not make it earlier due to visa problems but it was learned that its MD SS Dasgupta and marketing official Niranjan Dhar both landed in the capital last night.

The BFF has been sweating over the sponsor crisis and the high-ups even hinted further delay in the start of the league. The governing body of football in the country is expecting over Tk one crore for the 12-team event.

The tournament committee has yet to be formed after it was dissolved last Thursday in a bid to fill in gaps following a few resignations. Chairman Abdur Rahim and co-chairman Sirajul Islam Bachchu, the two BFF vice-presidents given the responsibility of forming the committee, are expected to submit the committee to the federation's executive committee meeting on Saturday for approval.

All the previous members of the committee are likely to be stay in addition of the new faces, sources said.

Abahani eye 6 out of 6

Umpiring irks CCDM boss too

SPORTS REPORTER



Leaders Abahani will get back their regular skipper Khaled Mashud when they take on pointless Brothers Union in the sixth round game of the Kai-Altech Premier Cricket League at the Fatullah Cricket Stadium today.

The former national skipper missed the last three games due to an injury on his left hand and will return only as a batsman, according to Abahani officials.

The Dhanmondi-based club, the only unbeaten side in the league so far, will also introduce Sri Lankan import Sujith Fernando in the game. The left-handed top-order batsman cum right-arm slow bowler has played for Sri Lanka.

Abahani will rest Pakistani batsman Imran Abbas in a bid to have a look at the Lankan player ahead of their mega clash against second-placed Mohammedan.

While Abahani, fresh from a 34-run victory against DOHS, look forward to maintain their all-win record, defending champions DOHS will desperately try to get back to the winning track after two

consecutive defeats when they meet City Club at BKSP.

The day's other match between Biman and Kalabagan will take place at the Mirpur Sher-e-Bangla National Stadium.

Even after completion of thirty matches (five rounds) in the coveted domestic competition, questions are still raised about the quality of umpiring. Many, however, are confused whether it was 'biased' or 'below standard' umpiring.

"I am confused whether the umpires are biased or incapable but no doubt the board should seriously look into the matter when we are playing at the highest level of the game," observed a national cricketer.

Khondokar Jamiluddin, chairman of Cricket Committee of Dhaka Metropolis (CCDM), also admitted that they have already got verbal objections about poor umpiring in number of games.

"We already got verbal protests from some clubs and also learned that poor umpiring has been evident. We will watch one or two more rounds before thinking about foreign umpires," said Jamil.

He also blasted the umpires' committee for their non-cooperation.

"I am really helpless about the issue as the umpires' committee has so far been non-cooperative with us. I don't understand why they considered country's two best umpires for a less important match in the previous round instead appointing them for the crucial match between DOHS and Abahani," he questioned.

Star cricketers Khaled Mahmud and Mashrafee-bin-Mortuza have already been fined for over reaction in that match but the umpires have escaped punishment despite poor shows.

"I can assure you that we will not compromise about the issue," Jamil said.

POINTS TABLE

Teams	M	W	L	Pts
Abahani	5	5	0	10
Sonargaon	5	4	1	8
Mohammedan	5	4	1	8
Old DOHS	5	3	2	6
Victoria	5	3	2	6
Biman	5	2	3	4
Pegasus	5	2	3	4
Kalabagan	5	2	3	4
City Club	5	2	3	4
Partex	5	2	3	4
Indira Road	5	1	4	2
Brothers	5	0	5	0

SHARPOVA GRINDS OUT ANOTHER WIN

Clijsters outlasts Hingis

Australian Open

The Grand Slam of Asia/Pacific

AFP, Melbourne

Kim Clijsters ended the Australian Open dreams of Martina Hingis Wednesday to set up a semifinal showdown with Maria Sharapova at the end of the season.

"I wasn't really seeing the ball too well but all you can do is fight and work for every point and that's what I did," said the Belgian, who is getting married and settling down at the end of the season.

"I will have to be sharper tomorrow. Maria fights a lot and is an incredible athlete. Hopefully, I won't make 62 unforced errors again."

Clijsters was once known as "Aussie Kim" when she dated local hero Lleyton Hewitt while Hingis has made the final here six times and the Melbourne Park crowd retains a soft spot for both players.

They were both warmly received

Wednesday and Clijsters paid tribute to Hingis, who returned to tennis at the Open last year after a three-year injury layoff.

"It's great to see her out here again. She's a good friend and she has a lot of tennis left in her yet."

Sharapova came through a tough clash with 12th seed Anna Chakvetadze 7-6 (7/5), 7-5, but it was an unconvincing performance against a dogged opponent who refused to be dominated in her first Grand Slam quarterfinal.

The 19-year-old top seed, who has just reclaimed the world number one ranking, admitted it was scratchy but said she was smarter than Chakvetadze.

"I thought I was a little bit up and

SEE PAGE 18 COL 4



Russian top seed Maria Sharapova follows through on a serve during her quarterfinal clash against fellow countrywoman Anna Chakvetadze at the Australian Open in Melbourne on Wednesday.

Nicole Vaidisova

(Czech tennis star)

"I was definitely a big fan of hers, admired the way she played. I don't think I'll be going out there scared. But of course I have a lot of respect for what she's done."

On her semifinal clash against Serena Williams, her idol.



Premier Division Cricket League
Old DOHS v City Club
Venue: BKSP
Brothers Union v Abahani
Venue: Fatullah Cricket Stadium
Biman v Kalabagan
Venue: Dhanmondi Cricket Stadium

DAY'S EVENT