

KABADDI WORLD CUP

# Bangladesh in last 8

SPORTS REPORTER

Bangladesh emerged group champions to set a quarterfinal clash against Nepal in the second World Cup Kabaddi in India yesterday.

South Asian Games and Asiad bronze medallists Bangladesh routed Thailand 55-25 and Afghanistan 71-36 on Wednesday and followed up the opening day's victories with a 69-28 defeat of Italy yesterday morning at the Karnala Sports Academy in Panvel near Mumbai.

All the quarterfinal clashes were due last night. In the other last eight games, hosts and defending champions India were facing Malaysia, Iran were pitted against Thailand while Sri Lanka were up against Japan.

The semifinals and the final will be held today.

Amateurish

# Russel boss

SPORTS REPORTER

Even before start of the Professional Football League, Sheikh Russel Krira Chakra president's unprofessional remark came as sheer surprise.

Sheikh Russel boss Nurul Alam Chowdhury yesterday admitted yesterday that coaches of his club had to consult the club president before finalising the final line-up of the team ahead of a game.

It means the club will be reluctant to give the coach freedom in the coming B. League.

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What to WATCH

ESPN

Australia v England  
7th ODI, CB Series  
Live at 09:13 am  
Pakistan v South Africa  
3rd Test, Day 1  
Live at 2:30 pm

STAR Sports

Australian Open  
Women's Doubles Final/Mixed  
Doubles Semifinal  
Live at 10:00 am  
Tommy Haas v Fernando Gonzalez  
Men's Singles Semifinal  
Live at 2:30 pm

DAY'S EVENT



Premier Division Cricket League

Mohammedan v Indira Road  
Venue: BKSP  
Victoria v Partex  
Venue: Dhanmondi Cricket Stadium  
Sonargaon v Young Pegasus  
Venue: Fatullah Cricket Stadium

Experience preferred

# Tamim new face in Tigers' Zim tour



Cricket

SPORTS REPORTER

There might have been debate on whether wicketkeeper Khaled Mashud's injury made the selectors' job easier to prolong his absence from the national team but chief selector Faruque Ahmed categorically told that the team would miss his experience during the four-match one-day series against Zimbabwe next month.

Habibul Bashar's men will fly to Zimbabwe on January 31 to play the matches on February 4, 6, 9 and 10 as part of World Cup preparation.

Although the long-serving stumper missed the list due to a thumb injury, the selectors, however, looked to experience ahead of the coming World Cup when they announced the 15-member squad yesterday at a press conference at the Mirpur Sher-e-Bangla National Stadium.

Left-handed opener Tamim Iqbal was the only fresh inclusion in the team as a third opener while seamer all-rounder Mohammad Sharif was recalled after five years in place of Forhad Reza while Tapash Baisya was brought back to the fold to replace left-arm pacer Syed Rasel.

And interestingly, Tushar Imran, always in and out of the national team, was also chosen for the trip as the selectors considered his experience ahead of young Nadif Chowdhury, who was in the team for the two-match home series

SQUAD

Habibul Bashar, Shahriar Nafees, Aftab Ahmed, Mohammad Rafique, Mashrafe bin Mortuza, Tushar Imran, Mohammad Ashraful, Sakib Al Hasan, Mehrob Hossain, Shahadat Hossain, Mushfiqur Rahim (wk), Mohammad Sharif, Tapash Baisya, Abdur Razzak and Tamim Iqbal.

against Scotland but has yet to make international debut.

There had been a lot of discussions over the fate of former Bangladesh skipper Mashud, especially after the selectors sidelined him for last four one-day internationals but ultimately nothing went in his favour as the veteran keeper failed to recover from injury he received during a Premier Cricket League match.

Faruque, however, heaped praises on Mashud and considered his absence as a loss.

"There is no doubt that he is the number one wicketkeeper. That's why it's unfortunate that he will be missed. Mushfiqur Rahim has already played a few matches and we hope he can show his ability," said Faruque.

The former national skipper also explained why they kept faith on experience.

"Definitely the World Cup was in our mind when we picked up the

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Abahani surge ahead

# Nafees, Mehrob hit 132 each

SPORTS REPORTER

Abahani extended their solo lead by four points as they dismantled Brothers Union by eight wickets in the sixth round match of the Kai-Altech Premier League at the Fatullah Stadium yesterday.

Paceman Talha Jubair made the mark on his first match for the Dhanmondi side this season, picking up five wickets as Brothers Union were bowled out for only 168 runs in 47 overs. Abahani went past the total in 42.2 overs, losing only two wickets.

Brothers now languish at the bottom of the table having lost all six of their matches while Abahani reiterated their strong claim for the title with this clinical performance.

In the days other match, it was a welcome return amongst the runs for Shahriar Nafees as City Club rode on his sparkling 132 to post 275 but the defending champions had their own national opener to

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Gibbs ban upheld

# AFF, Paris

South African Herschelle Gibbs will miss one Test match, one ODI and a Twenty20 international after the International Cricket Council (ICC) rejected his appeal Thursday against a ban imposed by ICC match referee Chris Broad.

It means Gibbs will not be eligible for his side's third Test against Pakistan starting in Cape Town on Friday and will also miss the first of the ODIs of the five-match series between the two sides that follows.

Gibbs was initially accused of "racially offensive" comments during the first Test against Pakistan.

On Thursday he was found guilty of a Level 3 offence under the ICC code of conduct which prohibits using "any language or gestures

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PHOTO: STAR

SMILES APLENTY: All-rounder Mohammad Sharif can't stop smiling at his club team Sonargaon's tent yesterday after being recalled to the national team after five years for the tour to Zimbabwe.

'Never say never'

#



Cricket

BISHWAJIT ROY

He was advised by well-wishers to try his luck abroad, definitely in other professions, during his painful nine-month lay-off from cricket.

But Mohammad Sharif also got support from many including the Bangladesh Cricket Board (BCB) to keep the hope in his heart to make an amazing comeback in the national team.

It was exactly five years back the

seamer all-rounder had played his last international game against Pakistan in Dhaka before being recalled for the coming Zimbabwe tour.

"It's impossible to express my emotion today because it was not at all easy for me to get back my place in the national team after five years.

Many even advised me to go aboard and choose a different profession when there were doubts whether I would ever recover from multiple groin injuries," responded the young all-rounder in an instant reaction.

"But I never gave up the hope. I

must thank the board which sent me to India twice and to Australia for surgeries and then helped a lot in my rehabilitation," said Sharif, who also recalls Australian surgeon David Young for giving him the confidence about his return to international fold.

The five-feet six-inches tall all-rounder's rise was outstanding but suddenly the lights went out after playing eight Tests and as many one-dayers when it was detected that he needed surgery to recover from groin pain.

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PHOTO: STAR

Farashganj (L) and Sheikh Russel footballers display their new jerseys for the B. League during a presentation ceremony at the BFF Bhahan yesterday.