



Did U Know?

Garnier World in Garden Square pampered 22,500 patrons during Australian Open 2006, providing 8,900 mini facials, 6,800 hairstyles and 6,800 massages.



Bob Woolmer
(Pakistan cricket coach)
"He's a top quality bowler. He's still young in Test cricket and has got a long way to mature but he's very close to the top of his trade already. With fine tuning and greater fitness levels he'll be a real force in the future of Pakistan cricket."
About fast bowler Mohammad Asif.

What to WATCH

ESPN
Australia v England
10th ODI, CB Series
Live at 09:13 am
STAR Sports
Pakistan v South Africa
Twenty20 International
Live at 6:28 pm

BFF's Sylhet crisis not over

SPORTS REPORTER

The Bangladesh Football Federation (BFF) was hoping against hope that one team from Sylhet will play in the B. League to rescue the federation from the recent crisis following the withdrawal of Sylhet District Sports Association (DSA) from the coming Professional Football League.

An emergency meeting of the B. League tournament committee yesterday was adjourned till Saturday for further development, told league committee member and BFF general secretary Anwarul Hoque Helal.

"We have come to know that the players' association in Sylhet is interested to field a team in spite of the short time. They have the fund and manpower to go for it," told Helal.

Although it would be almost impossible for a new outfit to meet all the demands of the professional set-up, Sylhet DSA's preparation for participating in the Professional

Ansar, Bhola register wins

SPORTS REPORTER

Ansar and VDP and Bhola posted big wins in the first-ever Women's Cricket Championship yesterday.

At their home ground, Ansar posted 197-7 in the stipulated 30 overs with Sunupru Marma hitting 77 off 79 balls. Shahnaz and Khadiza added 33 and 24 each.

In reply, Chittagong could only muster 67-7. Khadiza and Tithi took two wickets each for the armed forces side.

Bhola bowled out Rangamati for only 49 runs on way to a smashing ten-wicket win at the Kalabagan ground with Panna picking up four wickets. Shoheli took three without conceding a run.

At the Nabin Sangha ground, Jahangirnagar University's score was bolstered by Fatema who scored 66 runs, as they totalled 174-8. Rajshahi managed only 127-8 in their chase as the university side won by 47 runs.

Shahjada savages Sonargaon

SPORTS REPORTER

Fast bowler Mohammad Shahjada blew Sonargaon to bits as his devastating six-wicket haul propelled Abahani to an eight-wicket victory in the Kai-Altech Premier League at the Fatullah Stadium yesterday.

Under cloudy skies, the Round 8 battle of two title-contenders turned into a top-sided affair by the first hour as the Rajshahi paceman bowled Abahani to a four-point lead at the top of the table.

Kalabagan won an exciting encounter against Young Pegasus by two wickets at the Dhanmondi Cricket Stadium while Partex lifted them from the relegation zone with a 37-run win over Indira Road.

ABAHANI v SONARGAON
When Al Shahriar hit two boundaries off Ziaur Rahman's opening over in the curtailed 42-overs a-side match, Abahani skipper Khaled Mashud looked visibly tense as this was a crucial top-of-the-table battle.

Shahjada, who had to play second fiddle to his more illustrious teammate Mashrafe-bin-Mortuza all along, then transformed his skipper's face picking up opener Ejaz Ahmed for a duck and then removing Sonargaon's Sri Lankan import Saman Jayantha for the same score. Elias Sunny was promoted up the order to blunt the swing but he edged to Sujith Fernando as Shahjada ran amok.

At one point, Sonargaon were seven down for as low as 12 runs. Six of them were out for ducks with only Dhiman Ghosh scoring highest with 17 runs as Sonargaon only totalled 69 runs, their lowest in the season.

The hardworking Rajshahi lad took full advantage of the movement that came off the pitch and little swing that was present. He bowled two maiden-wicket overs in his six-over spell, which cost him just nine runs.

"This is another fantastic spell of bowling that I have witnessed," said skipper Mashud after the match.

"After Mashrafe's spell (against Mohammedan last week), I think this is one of the best I have seen."

Shahjada's sincerity was rewarded on the day when he bowled inswingers and outswingers at will on a true wicket, according to Mashud. Soharwardi Shuvo took two wickets while Talha Jubair and Ziaur took one apiece.

Kuntal Chandra and Naem Islam completed the formalities of notching up the target in 16.4 overs.

PEGASUS v KALABAGAN
It was the tale of two captains as first Lal Mohon took the Kalabagan attack apart smashing four sixes and nine boundaries in his whirlwind 85 as Young Pegasus posted a comfortable 295 for eight in 45 overs after the match began an hour late due to dense fog.

Opener Rabiul Karim struck a patient 55 while all-rounder Sharifullah hit 64 off 58 balls.

Kalabagan always maintained the required run-rate but lost both openers within the tenth over on way to reach 296-8. But Lal Mohon's counterpart Nahidul Haq

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Court probing Malik ban

Cricket

AFP, Lahore

Pakistan's supreme court wants an explanation from cricket authorities about a life ban on former captain Salim Malik for his alleged involvement in match-fixing, an official said Thursday.

The court is hearing an appeal by 43-year-old Malik, who now lives a secluded life in Lahore, against the ban imposed by the Pakistan Cricket Board (PCB) in May 2000. Lower courts have rejected the case.

"The PCB should explain on what grounds Malik was banned for

any office and from involvement in any cricket-related activity.

The Qayyum inquiry also fined current Pakistan captain Inzamamul Haq, Pakistan's assistant coach Mushtaq Ahmed, and now retired quartet of Wasim Akram, Waqar Younis, Saeed Anwar and Akram Raza.

Malik's name also featured in an Indian match-fixing inquiry which led to life bans on former Indian captain Mohammad Azharuddin and Ajay Sharma, and he was mentioned by late South African captain Hansie Cronje in another probe.

In October India pardoned Azharuddin.

"I have been fighting this case

since I was banned from holding

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Abahani fast bowler Mohammad Shahjada (L) celebrates his sixth scalps with teammate Talha Jubair as his blistering spell crushed Sonargaon in the Kai-Altech Premier League encounter at the Fatullah Stadium yesterday.

PHOTO: ANISUR RAHMAN

Tigers safely in Harare

TIGERCRIKET.COM, undated

The Bangladesh cricket team reached Harare safely at afternoon local time yesterday for the four-match Croco Motors Series.

The Tigers landed in Harare following stopovers in Doha and Johannesburg. They are staying at the Rainbow Towers Hotel which is about a 10-minute drive to the Harare Sports Club, venue for all the matches of the series.

The only worry for the series organisers is the weather it seems with Harare reportedly experiencing persistent rain over the last few days.

Zimbabwe have named a 22-men training squad with opening batsman Terrence Duffin, who had missed the last three series due to a torn wrist tendon, coming back.

The four games are on February 4, 6, 9 and 10. The Tigers are expected to return home on February 11.

England facing disaster

AFP, Sydney

Embattled England received another injury setback on Thursday, losing fast bowler James Anderson for the rest of the tri-series ahead of their do-or-die clash against Australia.

The tourists, who must win here on Friday to have any realistic chance of making the finals, will also be without captain Michael Vaughan, while Australian skipper Ricky Ponting will undergo a late fitness test.

Australia, already through to the finals after six wins from six matches, will also hand a one-day debut to lightning quick Shaun Tait.

England's Anderson was flown home after suffering a recurrence of a long-standing back problem, with officials keen to make sure he is available for next month's World Cup.

"Whilst he is pain-free at the moment, based on specialist advice with a view to him being fully fit for the entire World Cup, he has been advised as a very precautionary approach to be rested for the rest of the series," an England spokesman said.

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Mohammedan upbeat

Football

SPORTS REPORTER

Although Mohammedan Sporting Club high-ups claimed that they had instructed their 'football management committee' to build a youthful team for the coming Professional Football League, the frustration of finally gathering a number of mediocre players was visible in their faces.

The committee introduced their team for the B. League to the officials yesterday at the club tent where the old stars - former club and national players Kaiser Hamid, Rumman Wali Sabbir, Sayeed Hossain Kanan who were also present - looked brighter.

The committee itself is also high-profile, being comprised of coach Shafiqul Islam Manik, his assistants Saiful Bari Titu and Mohammed Panir, Imtiaz Sultan Jony and Jashimuddin Joshi.

Among the 23 players who will wear the famous black and white strips this year, there was only one player - Imtiaz Ahmed Nakib - who could immediately be recognised.

But the former national striker has left his good days so far behind that he could not find a regular place in the starting eleven for the past few

years.

Midfielder Asad had stints at the national side while Belal - famous for his long throw-ins for Muktiyodha - is the only notable recruitment for coach Manik, who has lost the core of the side that won the National Football League for him in the previous season.

The reason Mohammedan, arguably the most popular club in the country, could not build a formidable side is that teams like Abahani and Muktiyodha started marketing long ago but club general secretary Lokman Hossain Bhuiyan stated that to have a young team was their plan.

He also mentioned that six footballers from their youth training programme will stay with the camp but would not be registered for the B. League.

The advantages, apart from the huge fan base, the black and whites would enjoy is to have started their camp much earlier than others and to complete their foreign quota already.

They have retained Nigerians Peter Odaf, Francis and Divine from last season and included two namesakes, goalkeeper Paul and striker Paul Nwakuchu who played for Muktiyodha last season.

SQUAD

Goalkeepers: Himel, Paul; **defenders:** Arafat Rony, Kamal, Biplab, Peter (Mohammedan), Ripon, Ariful (Youngmen's), Belal (Muktiyodha), Najir (Badda); **midfielders:** Asad, Sentu, Zahid, Divine (Mohammedan), Mithu (Rahmatganj), Sharif (Sheikh Russel); **forwards:** Nakib, Francis (Mohammedan), Masud Alam (Wanderers), Walid (Farashganj), Wahidul (Agrani Bank), Rony (Muktiyodha), Paul Nwakuchu (Muktiyodha).



Ulsan Hyundai Mipo Dockyard FC players take part in a training session at the Bangabandhu National Stadium yesterday ahead of their friendly match against Bangladesh Under-23 side today.

PHOTO: STAR

Friendly match today

Football

SPORTS REPORTER

Bangladesh's Under-23 football team will play their last preparation match today ahead of their Olympic pre-qualifiers against Hong Kong when they take on visiting Ulsan Hyundai Mipo Dockyard FC of Korea.

The exhibition match, which kicks off at the Bangabandhu National Stadium at 5pm, will be telecast live by Bangladesh

Television.

Abu Yusuf's boys will host Hong Kong on February 7 while the away game is slated for February 14.

For the Koreans, who play in the N-League, the match is also part of preparation for the coming season.

Coach Yusuf said yesterday that he will use the opportunity to fine tune the side for their 'big match'.

"The game against Hong Kong is important so we will try to implement all the things we want to do in the qualifiers in this match. It will also help me get my final eleven," told Yusuf.

"They are on a pre-season preparation tour, which makes certain how serious they are. They must be a good team but I believe that my players will not lose before the match starts. Although everything about football looks dull here, I am not hopeless and I want to prove that we can play good football," said the former national footballer whose side drew with Mohammedan 2-2 a few days ago.

The Koreans, who won a game and drew another in Indonesia on way to Dhaka, will play their final preparation games in China.



Mohammedan players and officials are all smiles at their tent during a presentation ceremony of the team for the first-ever professional football league yesterday.

PHOTO: STAR