

Niaz best among Bangladeshis

SPORTS REPORTER

Bangladeshi Grandmasters Niaz Murshed and Ziaur Rahman ended on even grounds in the Kolkata Open Grandmaster Chess Tournament that concluded at the Gorky Sadan yesterday.

Both finished on six points after ten rounds but Niaz was placed 17th and Zia 26th by virtue of tie-breaking points.

Armenia's GM Tigran Petrosian became champion with eight points while GM Sergey Tiviakov finished runner-up with 7.5 points.

Among Bangladeshi contestants, out of total 80 players including 20 GMs, International Master Enamul Hossain Rajib (5.5 points) clinched 33rd place while IM Abdullah Al Rakib, FM Mehdi Hasan Parag and FM Abu Sufian Shakil (all five points) finished 42nd, 45th and 48th respectively. Debaraj Chatterjee was 78th with three points.

Nimbus rouses BCCI into action

PTI, New Delhi

Barely a year after signing a telecast deal with the Cricket Board for a whopping 612 million dollars, Nimbus on Monday issued a notice to the BCCI threatening to pull out of the deal.

Nimbus' decision to withdraw from the deal, covering matches in India till 2010 March, comes after the Government issued on an Ordinance making it mandatory for private broadcasters to share with Prasar Bharti the live feed of sports events of national importance.

The sudden development prompted the BCCI to go into an emergency meeting at Board President Sharad Pawar's official residence here to discuss the issue.

"We have received a notice from Nimbus threatening to pull out of the deal," a top BCCI official told PTI.

Woolmer glad

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get fed up with this. This is another misconception. Look at India, Australia, England and South Africa.

"The new ball does a bit and opening bowlers are meant to take wickets. Imran Nazir and Hafeez, or maybe Kamran Akmal or Shahid Afridi, the four can destroy an attack."

Woolmer said the mood in the camp was upbeat and the team were looking forward to making an impressive start in the tournament.

"Smile in adversity. Smile when you are doing well. But always smile, smile as you realise that you are lucky to represent you country in a great tournament that comes not every other day but after every four years.

"The theme is to enjoy ourselves. To work hard, play hard. The mood is excellent and hopefully we have a good start and we carry that through."

Rijkaard loses

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getting too easy," Rijkaard admitted. "But we have paid the penalty and now we the chance to put it right.

"It is a dream for any sportsman to play in the kind of fantastic atmosphere there will be here tomorrow. It is a great opportunity to show what we are worth."

Barca's captain, the centre-back Carlos Puyol, echoed Rijkaard's bullish tone but admitted it would require a near "perfect" performance to keep the defence of their Champions League crown alive.

"We are ready, we're excited and hopeful of getting a good result," Puyol said. "It is going to be a test against a side with an excellent defence which is also strong on the counter-attack."

"We know we are going to have to play an almost perfect game but that is what we are going to try and do. We have got a huge desire to carry on and stay in the competition. We want to win for a second year running and we are confident of putting on a good show."

"We have got to attack and the earlier we score the better," Puyol added. "But we can't go gung ho and forget about defending. We have to play a complete game, stay patient and keep our concentration."

Blatter backs

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FIFA had warned that if Poland does not comply it risked the suspension of the federation and all Polish players, clubs and officials from international competitions, plus a ban on Poland organising international matches.

Poland is bidding to jointly host, with Ukraine, the 2012 European Championships.

Italy is also in the running to host Euro 2012 along with joint-bidders Hungary and Croatia.

The winning bid is expected to be announced by a meeting of UEFA's executive committee next month in Cardiff, Wales.



Farzana Hossain Annie (L) and Mahmuda Haque Moly ponder their next moves in a second round match of the 28th National Women's Chess Championship at the federation hallroom yesterday.

LOCAL SNIPPETS

SPORTS REPORTER

Zahid's five-wicket burst gave Islami Adarsha High School a 59-run win over Kalshi Islamia High School in a low-scoring affair of the Standard Chartered School Cricket competition at the Kalindi ground yesterday.

Islami only scored 128 in 22 overs as Moineuddin of Islami Adarsha took four wickets but Zahid's superb bowling was enough to skittle Kalshi Islamia for only 69 in 14.4 overs.

In other matches, Dhaka Modern Pre-Cadet High School, National Bangla High School, Mirpur Udayan School and Mirpur Sidhanta High School won their respective matches.

GAIBANDHA SCHOOL CRICKET

Mohimaganj High School earned a 61-run victory over Chandipur High School in the school cricket competition at the local stadium.

Islamia High School take on Sundarganj Government High School today.

JFA CUP

Hafizul's goal at the hour-mark gave Sirajganj a 1-0 victory over Khulna in the final round of JFA Cup under-15 Football Championship at the Bangladesh Army Stadium.

In the other match of the day, Humayun Kabir struck two goals while Al Mamun and Shahid struck one each as Kishoreganj beat Chittagong 4-2.

Sohel and Imamul Islam scored a goal each for Chittagong.

NATIONAL WOMEN'S CHESS

International Woman Master Rani Hamid, Shamima Akhtar and Sharmin Sultana are leading the pack in the Aromatic 28th National Women's Chess Championship at the federation hallroom.

Rani defeated Mehnaz Ahmed, Liza beat Nazrana Ahmed while Shirin defeated Hamida Rahman to end the day on two points each.

BATA SCHOOLS HANDBALL

Scholastica had two wins on the day as both their boys and girls handball teams won in the Bata 16th School Handball competition at the Dhanmondi Women's Complex.

Early in the morning, the boys beat Rahmatullah Model High School 18-2 while the girls trounced Rifles School 6-2.

SunnyDale girls' side crushed Dhanmondi Tutorial 9-0 while BIS annihilated Ahmed Bawani Academy 16-1 in the boys' draw.

PLAYPEN ANNUAL SPORTS

The annual sports competition of Playpen was held at Gulshan Youth Club on February 27.

Principal of Playpen Sabera Parveen Harun was present as the chief guest. Coordinators, teachers, office personnel and students were present in this colourful event held with a lot of enthusiasm.

Gul concern

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pair Shoaib Akhtar and Mohammad Asif were lost to injury.

"We have asked for assurances from the county there will be acceptable workloads for Umar as he is a valuable player for us," Saleem Altaf, PCB director cricket operations.

"We don't want to prevent Gul from a good contract but we have to safeguard his future as well," he added.

Gul has only recently recovered from a shin problem after being sent back from the tour of South Africa.

First one-dayer

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our potential then there is every possibility of winning the series," said the dashing batsman.

"It should be a cracking game of cricket. We are looking forward to the match. They (Bangladesh A) matched us for the most part of the four-day series and I think that they will do even better in the one-day series. Obviously we would love to win that but that won't be easy, surely," reckoned England A coach Peter Moores while talking with TigerCricket.com.

The home team finalised their playing eleven which is Tushar Imran (captain), Junaed Siddique, Mehrab Hossain, Jahirul Islam, Nazimuddin, Nadif Chowdhury, Forhad Reza, Manzarul Islam, Sahagir Hossain, Nazmul Hossain, Mohammad Shahjada.

The touring side have picked a twelve-man side. Apart from Adil Rashid, the leg-spinner, all the other players who were in the starting eleven of the second four-day match have been included. James Curtly and Alex Gidman are the fresh inclusions.

Bangladesh A

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will also play the second Test, beginning on March 25, and first one-dayer on March 31.

The last two limited-overs games will take place at the P Sara Stadium in Colombo on April 2 and 4.

The Bangladesh team will leave Colombo on April 5.

ITINERARY

March 19-22: First Test (four-day) at Colombo

March 25-28: Second Test (four-day) at Colombo

March 31: First One-day at Colombo

April 2: Second One-day at Colombo

April 4: Third One-day at Colombo

Lanka

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native Scotland, took two wickets as did opening bowler John Blain.

Sri Lanka play New Zealand in their final warm-up match on Friday while Scotland will face Bangladesh on Thursday.

Mahela Jayawardene's team then move on to Trinidad for their first round Group B matches where they will take on India, Bangladesh and Bermuda while Scotland play in Group A at St Kitts with champions Australia, South Africa and the Netherlands.

SCORES IN BRIEF

WEST INDIES: 268 for six in 50 overs (Samuels 100 retired out, Gayle 75, Sarwan 27, D Smith 22 not out, T Odoyo 2-30, Varaiya 2-53).

KENYA: 247 for seven in 50 overs (C Obuya 54, R Shah 41, S Tikolo 34, T Odoyo 24, Mishra 22; Powell 2-23, Collumore 2-42, Pollard 2-56).

Result: West Indies won by 21 runs.

Curbishley

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"Nothing has changed regarding our long-term plans and he still has my full support – 100 percent."

"We showed excellent spirit yesterday and we will continue our fight to survive."

Magnusson also thanked the club's "fantastic" supporters.

"I want to pay tribute to our fans who have been fantastic. They were one of the main reasons I bought the club and I know it has not been easy to support us in recent weeks."

"They all have my heartfelt thanks."

BKSP, Mariners coast along

SPORTS REPORTER

Fifties from Nadir Hossain and Mahmudul Hasan and a brilliant bowling display gave BKSP a 76-run win over Dhaka Wanderers in the Kai-Altech First Division Cricket League at the Dhanmondi Cricket Stadium yesterday.

Opting to bat first on a flat track, BKSP racked up 271-9 in 50 overs and then bowled out Wanderers for 195 in 47.4 overs.

Nadir (65) and Mahmudul (60) top-scored for the promoted side but when they bowled two tight spells dismissed Wanderers. Left-arm spinner Raihan Anas and seamer Golam Kibria took three wickets each as BKSP won their fourth consecutive match.

Dhanmondi Club beat Dhaka Mariners Youngs Club by seven wickets at BKSP with Rony Talukdar slamming 96 off 86 balls during their 243-run chase at BKSP.

Opting to bat first, Mariners scored 242-7 in 50 overs with Golam Fayyaz missing his second century in the league as he was out for 91. Dhanmondi made light work as they won in only 40.5 overs, losing only three wickets.

At the Dhaka University ground, a four-wicket haul from Miraj gave Eskaton Sabuj Sangha a solid 59-run victory over Bangladesh Boys.

Ctg's maiden

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while Mosharraf Hossain accompanied him at 12.

BRIEF SCORES

KHULNA: First innings 289 and second innings 196 all out in 69.4 overs (overnight 19-1) (Shafuil 13 28, Imrul 1, Nahidul 22, Fahim 13, Monirul 17, Jamal 80 not out, Sajjadul 1, Salim 0, Humayun 20, Murad 8, Mahmduzzaman 0, extras 6; Saju 5-58, Sunny 2-35, Sabbir 2-81).

CHITTAGONG: First innings 354 and second innings 132-6 in 28.3 overs (Salahuddin 12, Nafis 32, Sunny 6, Dhiman 44, Ehsanul 11, Faisal 1, Nadim 9 not out, Palash 12 not out, extras 0, Mahmduzzaman 1-21, Murad 1-29, Shafuil 2-10, Humayun 1-51, Nahidul 1-20).

Result: Chittagong won by four wickets

RAJSHAH: First innings 336 and second innings 36-0 in 10 overs (Rafiqul 16 not out, Farhad 7 not out, extras 13).

BARISAL: First innings 366 all out in 125.4 overs (overnight 173-2) (Imran 113, Hannan 37, Rakibul 24, Nayeem 12, Raisul 28, Salahuddin 21, Ali Arman 29, Ariful 71, Shaheen 4, Tariqul 0, Sajjadul 0 not out, extras 21; Mushfigur 1-59, Sumon 6-81, Mahbub 1-36, Naeem 2-56).

SLHET: First innings 305 all out in 97.3 overs (overnight 293-6) (Imtiaz 74, Rahman 39, Saif 10, Kapali 41, Mawla 47, Mabud 5, Rezaul 54, Arman 21, Hasibul 0, Shirhan 1, Nabil 2 not out, extras 11; Mahbubul 2-57, Sharif 5-100, Mosharraf 1-44, Sharifullah 1-40, Sunny 1-61).

DHAKA: 268-7 in 88 overs (Uttam 87, Rashedul 48, Anwar 28, Shamsur 3, Kamrul 5, Sharifullah 57 not out, Sajjad 12, Sharif 8, Mosharraf 12 not out, extras 14; Hasibul 2-14, Nabil 3-53, Kapali 1-99, Imtiaz 1-17).

Hall saves SA blushes

AFP, Port of Spain



World Cup warm-up match here on Monday.

South Africa needed a gutsy half-century from all-rounder Andrew Hall to reach a face-saving 192 after being reduced to a pathetic 91-8 by seamers Trent Johnston and Dave Langford-Smith.

Australia-born Johnston finished with 4-40 and Langford-Smith with 3-30.

South Africa had the bowlers to defend their modest total as they dismissed Ireland for 157, with Charl Langeveldt grabbing four wickets and Hall three to help their team win with more than five overs to spare.

Ireland gave a scare or two to South Africa as they were strongly placed at 139-4 at one stage before losing their lastsixwickets for 18 runs.

Middle-order batsman Andre Botha top-scored for Ireland with 40, while Kevin O'Brien contributed 33. The pair put on 54 for the fifth wicket. Opener William Porterfield was

England sink Bermuda

AFP, Amos Vale



here on Monday.

Bermuda, chasing 287 for victory, were bowled out for 45 inside 23 overs.

Pace bowler Jon Lewis, who took three wickets for no runs in 14 balls, finished with figures of three for seven in four overs while Andrew Flintoff took two for three.

David Hemp (11), who plays English county cricket for Glamorgan, was the only Bermuda batsman to make it into double figures.

But giant left-arm spinner Dwayne 'Sluggo' Leverock, a member of the Bermuda police, ensured England didn't have things all their own way by taking two for 32 from 10 overs.

"It was good to get out in the middle," said England captain Michael Vaughan. "I felt most players got something out of it," added the opening batsman, who said his hamstring problem hadn't been an issue.

"It felt fine. I would have liked more time in the middle and the plan was always to field for the first 10 overs of their innings."

the other notable scorer with 37.

"I am proud of the guys. They put up a brilliant effort and hopefully they carry on like this in the coming games," said Irish skipper Johnston.

"We did not have the firepower to get the last two wickets and this gave us some good lessons to bowl the death overs better. Hall has opened the batting for South Africa and he is a perfect number nine to be in a side."

Ireland may have lost the match but gave a morale-boosting performance against a stronger outfit ahead of the mega one-day event, starting at Jamaica on March 13 with a match between Pakistan and the West Indies.

"We got ourselves in a bit of trouble, but I knew we could do it with a big partnership. I'd have preferred it to come from top of the order," said South African coach Mickey Arthur.

"We got to be slow in the tournament because we did not have a proper bat-out in the past two weeks. But I hope we peak at the right time."

Little went right for South Africa after winning the toss in their opening practice game as they lost eight wickets for 91 runs against the disciplined pace duo of Langford-Smith and Johnston.

Langford-Smith rocked the top order with three early wickets, while

Johnston kept pressure on the middle order.

Hall spared South Africa the batting blushes with a responsible 67 not out under pressure, hitting one six and six fours in his 98-ball knock.

He received valuable support from Robin Peterson, who contributed 29 in an 85-run stand for the ninth wicket.

Skipper Graeme Smith, AB de Villiers and Ashwell Prince failed to reach double-figures, while Herschelle Gibbs (21) could not capitalise on the start.

South Africa are in Group A with defending champions Australia, Scotland and the Netherlands, while Ireland are in Group D with the West Indies, Pakistan and Zimbabwe. The top two sides from each group will advance to the next round.

SCORES IN BRIEF

SOUTH AFRICA: 192 all out in 50 overs (Hall 67, Peterson 29 not out, Boucher 14; Johnston 4/40, Langford-Smith 3/30)

IRELAND: 157 all out in 44 overs (Porterfield 37, Botha 40, O'Brien 33; Hall 3/26, Langeveldt 4/31)

Result: South Africa won by 35 runs.

England won by 241 runs.

practice as possible.

They soon lost openers Ed Joyce (seven) and Vaughan (18), to Kevin Hurdle (two for 58).

After Bell went for 46, Leverock and Minors struck.

Collingwood was caught behind for seven and Pietersen was stumped for 43.

Leverock, who as a teenager represented Bermuda in the 110 metres hurdles at the CARIFTA or junior Caribbean games, took two for 11 in his first five overs alone.

Flintoff wastefully holed out against Borden on 24. But Dalrymple, as he'd done before, repaired the damage with a 66-ball fifty featuring just two fours and then struck two successive sixes off Borden.

Bermuda's warm-up campaign continues against Zimbabwe here Thursday while, 24 hours later, England face world champions Australia in St Vincent's final warm-up fixture before the tournament proper starts on March 13.

SCORES IN BRIEF

ENGLAND: 286 for 8 in 50 overs (Dalrymple 76; Borden 3-71)

BERMUDA: 45 all out in 22.2 overs (Lewis 3-7, Flintoff 2-3)

Result: England won by 241 runs.

1999: The shift emerges

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in the match. On the same day, South Africa destroyed Sri Lanka by 89 runs but the result could have been much different had it not been, again, for Klusener to intervene with the bat. South Africa were dead and buried but Klusener, this time at number nine, crashed 52 and then took three wickets to make sure

South Africa did an all-African for the day. Fieldsman of the century Jonty Rhodes took a blinder against England a few days later and South Africa's World Cup was running in the right direction.

Sourav Ganguly and Rahul Dravid ran amok against the Lankans at Taunton. They broke the record for individual highest score (183 not out by Ganguly), highest partnership (318) as well as team score (373-6 by India). India had it going for them at that time with Tendulkar coming back and slamming a century against Kenya in an earlier match.

Group B sprung into action when Pakistan and New Zealand took turns to beat Australia in successive matches. The gamble to put Abdul Razzaq in at number three was brilliant as his sedate 60 gave Australia 276 to win. The game was

over when Shoaib Akhtar cleaned up skipper Steve Waugh's wicket.

Things were looking bleak for the men from down under as they had to beat Bangladesh and West Indies in their next matches if they wanted to stay in England. They did just that after Steve Waugh mouthed one of his several blunt remarks: "We just have to win the next seven matches to win the World Cup."

Vaughn's men made it to the second phase of the tournament through a controversial win against West Indies. Pakistan joined Australia and New Zealand while from the other group, hosts England became the first host nation to fail to make it to the second round. From Group A, India, South Africa and surprise package Zimbabwe were through. Defending champions Sri Lanka fell from grace with their early exit.

Meanwhile on May 24, nine days into the World Cup, the two minnows Bangladesh and Scotland faced each other in Edinburgh. When the match was over, coach Gordon Greenidge said a quiet thank you to his back-from-dead batsman Minhazul Abedin after the experienced batsman brought Bangladesh



Play Pen students sprint during the school's annual sports at the Gulshan Youth Club ground yesterday.

PHOTO: COURTESY