

Content launching cer



From (L-R) Christina Yap, senior manager of ESPN-Star Sports, Pakistan legend Wasim Akram, Grameenphone head of marketing Rubaba Dowla Matin and Kavin Wong, general manager of NeuStar Asia Pacific attend a press conference at a local hotel yesterday. The press conference was held to announce a deal between ESPN-Star Sports and Grameenphone via NeuStar which would enable Grameenphone users in the country full access to all ESPN-Star Sports content and service applications in their mobile phone.

BCCI, Nimbus at loggerheads

PTI, New Delhi

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

Nimbus's 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.

A blow

FROM PAGE 17
fourth wicket with Golam Mawla (36 not out).

SCORES IN BRIEF

RAJSHAHI: 336 and 230-5 in 85.4 overs (overnight 36-0) (Rafiqul 16, Farhad 42, Rabul 23, Naeem 68, Anisur 47, Delwar 0 n.o., extras 34; Ariful 1-47, Tariqul 2-91, Raisul 1-12).

BARISAL: 366.

Result: Match drawn.

SYLHET: 305 and 177-3 in 67 overs (Imtiaz 36, Rahman 21, Mabud 14, Kapali 62 n.o., Mawla 36 n.o., extras 8; Sharif 1-29, Mosharraf 2-42).

DAHKA: 325 all out in 103.1 overs (overnight 268-7 in 88 overs) (Uttam 87, Rashedul 48, Anwar 28, Shamsur 3, Kamrul 5, Sharifullah 74, Sajid 12, Sharif 8, Mosharraf 23, Sunny 6, Mahbubul 13 not out, extras 24; Hasibul 3-36, Nabil 4-66, Kapali 2-121, Imtiaz 1-17).

Hafeez scripts

FROM PAGE 17
C with New Zealand, England and Kenya. The top two sides from each group will qualify for the Super Eight stage.

SCORES IN BRIEF

PAKISTAN: 273 for 8 in 48 overs (Inzamam 59, Hafeez 61, Akmal 56*, Cummins 2-58, Osiinde 2-41).

CANADA: 196 all out in 46.4 overs (Barnett 28, Mulla 31, Ali 37; Ifthikar 3-23, Hafeez 3-10)

Result: Pakistan win by 77 runs.

Ballack sends

FROM PAGE 20
Robben had given warning of his intent to shoot on sight and he hit the jackpot when he tried his luck again in the 48th minute.

His 30-yard shot was tamely struck low to Helton's left, but the Brazilian keeper misjudged the bounce and let the ball bobble up off his body and into the net.

Porto struggled to recapture their momentum after that, and their eccentric goalkeeper Helton was at fault again when he failed to deal with Lampard's inswinging free-kick, but Ricardo Carvalho headed over.

Chelsea were knocking on the door and they broke it down in the 79th minute.

Drogba nodded Cole's cross to Shevchenko and the Ukrainian steered a header to Ballack, who was granted acres of space 10 yards out and planted a superb volley past Helton to seal Chelsea's revival.

LOCAL SNIPPETS

SPORTS REPORTER

WOMEN'S CHESS

Orient and Kathalbagan won significant matches in the Kai-Altech First Division Cricket League yesterday.

Orient beat fellow Group B challengers Gazi Tank by eleven runs at BKSP while in an early battle to get out of the relegation zone, Kathalbagan pipped Sadharan Bima by three wickets at the Dhamondi Cricket Stadium.

Masumuddin struck 111 off 121 balls as Orient reached 233 in 50 overs. In reply, Gazi Tank fell short by eleven runs with eight balls to spare. Manash took four wickets for 28.

Orient now stay on top of Group B with this win, just ahead of Gazi Tank and Surjo Torun who lost one match each.

At Dhamondi, Kathalbagan bowled out Bima for only 156 runs in 40.3 overs. Chanchal and Arefin took three wickets each. Then Arefin struck 40 and Shahidur scored 29 to give Kathalbagan the win in 47.3 overs.

At the Dhaka University ground, Azad Sporting Club beat Rupali Bank by three wickets.

NATIONAL

Virus affects Gillespie

REUTERS, Bridgetown

New Zealand pace bowler Mark Gillespie has picked up a virus which has numbed his bowling right arm and could threaten his chances of playing in the World Cup opening games starting next week.

The problem, which New Zealand officials called acute brachial neuritis, was the result of a throat virus. Gillespie suffered before leaving for the Caribbean last week.

"We don't know much more about it," captain Stephen Fleming told reporters after their surprise two-wicket warm-up defeat by Bangladesh on Tuesday in Bridgetown. "He's seeing a specialist on Friday so we'll discover more then."

Gillespie's bowling arm became numb during the day-long flight to the West Indies. It means he will almost certainly miss Friday's final warm-up against Sri Lanka.

New Zealand face England in their group C opener on March 16 in St Lucia and also play Kenya (March 20) and Canada (22) in the opening stage.

The Surjo Torun men crushed Shahbagh Badminton Club 5-0 while the women trounced Ahoban Badminton Club 3-0.

No sledging, no cricket

AFP, Bridgetown

before being run out, Sri Lanka won the match on the Duckworth-Lewis method and Pollock was last seen scratching his head in bemusement in the pavilion after his side had misunderstood the rain rules.

They were eliminated from the tournament and Pollock quit as skipper.

"There have been different experiences in the middle with a bit of a chat-up but nothing or special comes to mind," said an unconvinced Sangakkara later.

"My honest opinion about sledging is that it doesn't belong on the cricket field. It is not the way the game should be played. But there are instances when you are faced with verbal challenges, there are times when you have to put your foot down."

"When the challenge is taken up, things can get ugly. But I would never practise that or use it as a tactic."

Sledging has always been part of the game; the difference now is that highly-sensitive stump microphones pick up every word.

Mark Boucher, the South African wicketkeeper, is also not averse to the odd psychological ploy. He famously goaded former Zimbabwean Pollock made 25

"keeper Tatenda Taibu who had played and missed a succession of balls.

"What's your average Tatenda? Nine or 10, maybe 9.5, so we'll go for 10," said Boucher. "You might want to get out now. I'll even walk you to the pavilion."

Despite the Australians' reputation for being the kings of the sledgers, Shane Warne pleads: 'not guilty.' He reckons it's the Kiwis.

"Whether they just reserve it for us because of the geographical rivalry I don't know, but sometimes it feels like being in an aviary full of twittering birds," he said in his autobiography.

Maicon's whipped cross was headed into the middle of the area by Stankovic at the back post but Raul Alboon hooked clear to deny Crespo a near-range attempt.

On the stroke of half-time, Villa was denied a scoring chance from a Morientes cross by a neat backheeled clearance by Colombian defender Ivan Cordoba.

Valencia's Villa saw a header deflected away by Olivier Dacourt at the start of the second period, and Cesar was also in action to save an Emiliano Moretti header.

Inter failed, however, to pull back any goals to leave Valencia booking their ticket into the last eight.

"We are not 100 per cent sure what the problem is," said the United boss.

"We have sent him for a scan to try and find out but he will not be fit for tomorrow."

Ferguson also revealed midfielder Darren Fletcher, who was initially sidelined for a fortnight after picking up an ankle knock in the FA Cup win at Reading last week, would now miss virtually the remainder of the season after the Scot's scan results were worse than initially feared.

"Darren has damaged his ankle ligaments," said Ferguson.

"He had a lot of swelling and we had to wait for it to go down before we could do the scan."

Referee: Abdul Hannan.

Zahid rescues MSC

FROM PAGE 17

keeper made the save of the day on the brink of the hour when he dived full length to hold the ball after Emeka stabbed a left-footer after Divine's spadework at right.

Emeka then set up Paul but the stand-in captain's effort from close was weak and Piru did not flinch.

He pressure told in the 71st minute when midfielder Asad, who came onto the pitch five minutes earlier, helped Zahid break the deadlock with a right-flank corner. Zahid, ignored by the rival defenders, started on the edge of the penalty area and leapt above the Arambagh backline to nod a superb header into the roof of the net.

Manik's decision to inject more experience in shape of Sento and Asad gave Mohammedan's young custodian Himesh for once, the Arambagh fans beat the drums constantly to cheer

their boys and silence the near 5,000 opposition fans. Still, they could have gone 2-0 down but for Piru's timely interception of a dangerous Sento cross in the dying moment.

The second week starts on Friday with Khulna Abahani visiting their Chittagong wing while riverside club Farashganj begin their operation against Brothers.

Yellow cards: Belal (Mohammedan)

TEAMS

Mohammedan: Himesh, Arif, Odafe, Biplob, Zahid, Divine, Emeka, Mithu (Asad), Belal, Nakib (Sento) and Paul.

Arambagh: Piru, Ramjan, Biketi, Akram, Sharif, Monu, Malay, Zuku, Domenic (Morshead), Badambuze and Tabith (Ritu).

Referee: Abdul Hannan.

Fire scare at team hotel

AFP, Port of Spain

Pakistan and South African players were involved in what is believed to be a fire scare and had to file out of their Hilton hotel here early Wednesday as they were having breakfast.

Irish and Canadian players however were not among those who had to leave the premises, having already left for practice. Four fire engines were at the scene but no official comment was immediately available.

Pakistan paceman Mohammad Sami told AFP he had seen a lot of smoke when evacuating the hotel.

"I was on the sixth floor when a security man came to my room and asked me to vacate the hotel," he said.

"I saw a lot of smoke coming out from the corridor so I ran down."

Pakistan captain Inzamamul Haq was unfazed by the evacuation, saying he had been told that the team had had to leave the hotel "as a precautionary measure".

Around 150 people were evacuated from the hotel and moved away to a safer location.

Prior pushes

FROM PAGE 17
41 by Farhad Reza from just 26 deliveries propelled them to add 82 runs in the final ten overs.

The second match will be held at the Sher-e-Bangla Mirpur Stadium in Dhaka on Saturday.

SCORES IN BRIEF

BANGLADESH A: 261-8 in 50 overs (Mehrab 25, Junaid 0, Nazim 108, Tushar 16, Jahurul 10, Sahagir 8, Nadif 28, Farhad 41 no., Manzurul 5, Nazmul 8, extras 12, Broad 2-45, Gidman 1-27, Yardi 1-40, Loudon 2-50).

ENGLAND A: 263-5 in 47 overs (Carberry 17, Jefferson 68, Compton 31, Prior 84 no., Gidman 1, Yardi 25, Davies 27 no., extras 10, Mehrab 3-57, Manzurul 2-41).

Result: England A won by five wickets.

Tikolo wants

FROM PAGE 20
"Obviously, we have another friendly game on Thursday, and we will try and give the guys who did not have a go a chance then to try and finalise our first 11."

"We bowled well at the start of their innings, but we let them get too many runs in the latter stages. I thought also that we batted well, but lost some batsmen in the middle, otherwise it would have been a different result."

Kenya face the Netherlands in their second warm-up match on Thursday at the Trelawny Multi-Purpose Complex here. The Africans contest Group C of the World Cup alongside England, New Zealand, and Canada in St. Lucia.

Maul

FROM PAGE 20

Julio Cesar was forced into action in the Inter goal in the 12th minute, clearing a long diagonal 20-yard shot by Baraja.

Inter, with fiery Swede Ibrahimovic partnered up front by Argentinian veteran Hernan Crespo, came closest to an opener with a quarter of an hour to play in the cracking first-half.

Maicon's whipped cross was headed into the middle of the area by Stankovic at the back post but Raul Alboon hooked clear to deny Crespo a near-range attempt.

"Sometimes, when you are in a nice surrounding, you can get a little bit caught up and be too relaxed -- so this is a good wakener. It puts the pressure back on us but, if anything, we are better under pressure than having any favouritism tag or being talked about as potential winners. At least this wasn't a pool match," said improved their chances after all.

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