



Did U Know?

James Lillywhite, who was the captain of England in the inaugural Test, eventually went on to become the first cricketer turned umpire.



Rahul Dravid
(India cricket captain)
"Veeru (Virender Sehwag) is a very good player and I'm happy he's part of my team -- a key member. He's back into form just when we need him before a very critical match."
After the batsman scored a century against Bermuda on

What to WATCH

BTV & SET Max
ICC World Cup 2007
Scotland v Netherlands
Live at 7:30 pm
New Zealand v Canada
Live at 7:30 pm

LOCAL SNIPPETS

SPORTS REPORTER

Abahani will organise a commemorative meeting and a milad mahfil following daylong Qurankhwani at their club tent tomorrow to pay tribute to cricketers Manzarul Islam Rana and Sajjadul Hassan Setu who were killed in an road accident in Khulna on last Friday.

National all-rounder Rana was a current Abahani player while opening batsman Setu played for the giants a couple of seasons back.

INDEPENDENCE CUP

The Independence Cup Cricket begins today after a 15-year break to mark the celebration of the 36th Independence Day. Local giants Mohammedan will take on new powerhouse Sonargaon Cricketers in the opening match of the three-team league, also involving Victoria, at the Dhanmondi Cricket Stadium.

The Cricket Committee of Dhaka Metropolis (CCDM) wanted to organise the meet with the top four Premiership teams clubs like Abahani, Biman and DOHS turned down the invitation citing shortage of players.

On completion of the league, top two teams will play the final on March 26. The champions and runners-up will receive Tk 2 lakh and Tk 1.5 lakh respectively.

DIV I CRICKET

An unbeaten 52 by Chayan inspired Young Pegasus B to record a five-wicket win against Lalmatia Club in a curtailed match of the Kai-Altech First Division Cricket League yesterday.

The inserted Lalmatia managed 168-9 in their quota of 37 overs at the City Club ground after the match was reduced due to inclement weather. In reply, Pegasus B cruised to 169-5 in 33.2 overs.

The match between Orient SC and CCS at BKSP has been rescheduled for today also due to weather conditions while Kathalbagan GCC defended a modest 199 on way to a 16-run victory over Prantik KC (183) at the Dhaka University ground.

NAT'L CHESS QUALIFIERS

None of the nine leaders of the previous round could secure a win in the fifth round of the 33rd National Chess qualifiers. Three FIDE Masters -- Abu Sufian Shakil, Khondokar Aminul Islam and Taibur Rahman -- shared the lead with 4.5 points while 14 players followed the pack at second place on four points. Aminul and Taibur, who were among the joint leaders, drew in the fifth round to allow Shakil join them from behind with a victory against Abdul Maleq.

Autopsy inconclusive Bob may have been murdered!

AFP, Kingston



as police in Jamaica confirmed they were treating the death as suspicious.

The suggestion is the latest twist in a shocking series of events that have doomed the team's appearance at the tournament, where they were bundled out by part-timers Ireland the day before Woolmer died.

"The post-mortem into the death of Woolmer was inconclusive," said Mark Shields, the deputy chief commissioner of the Jamaican police force.

"But having met with the pathologists and other medical personnel, there is sufficient information to continue a full investigation into the circumstances of Woolmer's death,

which is now being treated as suspicious," he said.

"The International Cricket Council (ICC), the World Cup officials and all other relevant bodies have been informed of the investigation."

Pakistan Cricket Board spokesman Pervaz Mir said investigators were looking at the possibility of foul play.

"The police suspect that Woolmer may have been murdered," Mirtold AFP.

He denied that the World Cup team had been ordered to stay in Jamaica until the investigation was completed and added that various rumours over the cause of the death had upset players.

Woolmer, 58, died in hospital on Sunday after being found unconscious in his hotel room in Kingston.

"We really need to know what is behind it. I think they have to get to the bottom," former Pakistan captain and legendary all-rounder Imran Khan told AFP after the latest news.

"This just adds to the whole tragedy and especially for Bob's

family," he said. "I still assume he died of natural causes because he was a diabetic and that is closely associated with heart attacks."

Another former Pakistan skipper, Rameez Raja, said he hoped any suspicions would be quickly laid to rest.

"It is very unfortunate that the death is being treated as suspicious. It adds another twist to the tale, which is more unfortunate," said Raja, who is working as a commentator at the tournament.

"Let's hope for the sake of cricket that the matter is solved and they put to rest any suspicion quickly."

The Pakistan team was expected to leave for home on Thursday after their final group game against Zimbabwe on Wednesday.

The ICC confirmed the match would go ahead after talks with Pakistan's team management.

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NZ to go for change

AFP, Gros Islet



after booking their place in the Super Eights with a thumping 148-run win over Kenya.

Victory gave the Black Caps two wins -- a record that can only be equalled in Group C by either England or Kenya who play each other on Saturday for the second qualifying spot.

And that means New Zealand can rest the likes of fast bowler Shane Bond safe in the knowledge that nothing is riding on Thursday's match against the North Americans other than their professional pride.

Ross Taylor is also likely to miss out after sustaining a hamstringing injury while making a top score of 85

in New Zealand.

"We've got a luxury now and we've just got to make sure tactically we get it right with the assessment of each wicket," said skipper Stephen Fleming after seeing paceman Michael Mason take his chance with two wickets for 29 runs from nine overs as Kenya were bowled out for 183 with four balls to spare.

"I'm really excited to qualify at this stage. To be there amongst it and taking points through (New Zealand are certain to carry two points with them for beating a fellow qualifier having defeated England by six wickets first time out) is exactly how we planned it."

"The main thing is not to get too carried away. We're ticking along quite nicely and I guess we are looking forward to making improvements all the way through."

"If that's the case then we will come pretty close (to winning the World Cup)," said Fleming whose side had 'minnow trouble' in a warm-up defeat by Bangladesh.

Looking ahead to the Canada match, Fleming added: "There will be changes. I don't think Shane will play. Daryl Tuffey will come in for a game, (batsman) Peter Fulton will come in and in Jeets (Vatel) will be close."

"It's a great opportunity we've afforded ourselves by qualifying now to make sure all our guys are in good nick."

Canada lost to Kenya by seven wickets but did bat out their overs in a 51-run defeat by England on Sunday.

Taylor showed a welcome return to form after only managing a golden duck against England. But there were concerns for his fitness, given a history of cramping, as he sustained a right calf injury that saw him play the final stages of his innings with a runner.

However, Taylor said of his injury: "It's a bit sore at the moment. Hopefully, on Thursday we'll have a bit more of an idea

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Record-breaking Rokibul

SPORTS REPORTER



century for Sylhet in the drawn Ispahani Mirzapore Tea 8th National Cricket League match against Sylhet at the Fatullah Cricket Stadium yesterday.

The 20-year old right-hander, who hails from Jamalpur, became the first Bangladeshi batsman to reach the 300-run mark in first-class cricket and his 313-run marathon innings also saw his side achieving a record-breaking 712-7, the highest ever first-class total in the country, in the concluding match of the four-day competition.

Tariquzzaman Munir was the only batsman to have scored three hundred runs in domestic cricket for

Barisal in a national championship match against Dhaka University in the 80s.

Rokibul eclipsed Mohammad Ashraful's 263 for Dhaka against Chittagong at the Chittagong Divisional Stadium in November last year.

This season's first-class competition ended with records tumbling one after another as the earlier highest innings total of 622 by Chittagong against Barisal was also surpassed.

Both the captains accepted a

NCL FINAL TABLE						
Teams	M	W	D	T/A	L	Pts
Dhaka	10	3	6	0	1	42
Rajshahi	10	4	5	1	0	40
Chittagong	10	1	8	0	1	30
Barisal	10	1	7	0	2	28
Sylhet	10	2	6	0	2	22
Khulna	10	0	4	1	4	14

draw on the final day when Barisal, overnight 481-6, reached 712-7.

Rokibul, who resumed the day on 186, occupied the crease for a total eleven hours and struck 33 boundaries in 609 balls.

"I am really happy as I knew that it was the first triple hundred in our first-class history," said the excited youngster.

Number eight batsman Arif Hossain smashed a 162-ball 115 that featured fifteen fours and a six during a 238-run seventh wicket stand with Rokibul.

With the outcome, Barisal secured four points by virtue of their first-innings lead to finish the table with 28 points. Barisal finished fourth while Sylhet bagged 22 points for the fifth position.

Dhaka had already clinched the

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Barisal batsman Rokibul Hasan can't hide his emotions after reaching a triple hundred against Sylhet in Ispahani Mirzapore Tea 8th National Cricket League at the Fatullah Stadium yesterday.



PHOTO: AFP

Sri Lanka opener Sanath Jayasuriya pulls the ball during the Group B World Cup match against Bangladesh at the Queen's Park Oval in Port of Spain yesterday.

Bangladesh A in dire straits

SPORTS REPORTER

Bangladesh A were on the brink of defeat in the first four-day Test against Sri Lanka A by close of third day's play at the Colts Cricket Club Ground in Colombo yesterday.

The visitors' top order showed some resistance in their second innings but it was not good enough to strengthen their position as they were reduced to 110-3 while chasing an improbable winning target of 517.

When captain Tushar Imran (9) and nightwatchman Nazmul Hossain (0) will return to the crease this morning, the overnight will be under the burden of being 406 runs behind.

Having wrapped up the Bangladesh A first innings for 163, the home team ignored the option to force a follow-on and put on a massive target for the opposition by racing to 132-4 in their second innings before the declaration.

Currently out-of-favour national wicketkeeper Khaled Mashud failed to rise to the occasion with the bat when the second string Tigers resumed the day on 123-6. Overnight six, he was dismissed

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BCB seeks India tour



AFP, Dhaka

Bangladesh authorities said Wednesday a comprehensive victory over India could pave the way for the national team's first Test tour to its mighty cricketing neighbour.

Bangladesh, perennial minnows in the cricket world, made a glorious start at the World Cup with a five-wicket win over India in their opening match on Saturday.

"This victory has brightened our chances for a full-fledged tour of India in the near future," Bangladesh Cricket Board chief executive officer Mahmudur Rahman told AFP.

"Certainly our case has been strengthened with this win and India will now look at it with importance," he said, adding the victory also reflected the country's growing cricket potential.

India was the opponent when Bangladesh played its debut Test match at home soon after the coun-

Russel on top



SPORTS REPORTER

Touati Younes scored one and set the other goal for Luffar Rahman Nayan to shoot Sheikh Russel Kriha Chakra to the top of the B. League table after the third week with a 2-0 win over Rahmatganj yesterday.

The Moroccan, who looked rather off-colour in the goalless first half before a handful of crowds at

B. LEAGUE TABLE							
Teams	M	W	D	L	GF	GA	Pts
Russel	3	2	1	0	5	2	7
Brothers	2	1	1	0	3	0	4
Arambagh	3	1	1	1	2	1	4
Farashganj	2	1	1	0	1	0	4
CSG MSC	3	1	1	1	2	2	4
MSC	3	1	1	1	2	2	4
Muktijoddha	3	1	1	1	1	4	4
Khulna AKC	3	1	0	2	2	3	3
Ctg Abahani	3	1	0	2	2	3	3
Abahani	2	0	2	0	0	2	2
Rahmatganj	3	0	1	2	0	4	1

the Bangabandhu National Stadium, came alive after the break and missed a great chance before putting Russel ahead from a penalty in the 72nd minute. The league's top scorer with three goals, Younes then showed top-class skill to create the second goal for Nayan just seven minutes later.

Russel stretched their collection to seven points after three games, overtaking previous leaders Brothers Union who have four

points from a couple of matches. Rahmatganj stay bottom of the table with just one point.

In an evenly poised first half, Russel got the better chances but Tanvir, set for a free run by Younes, kicked wide of the lone keeper under pressure from a challenging defender on the half hour. Four minutes from the breather, Nayan found Amin Rana with a right-flank cross but the unmarked former

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PHOTO: STAR

Rahmatganj captain Sony (L) tries to stop a run by Russel's Moroccan midfielder Ighir Mohamed during their B. League match at the Bangabandhu National Stadium yesterday.

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TODAY'S MATCHES

Team	Time	Venue
Scotland v Netherlands	7:30 pm	St Kitts & Nevis
New Zealand v Canada	7:30 pm	St Lucia