



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 Qurankhwanai at their club tent tomorrow to pay tribute to cricketers Manzurul Islam Rana and Sajidul 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 Mohammad 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 1 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.

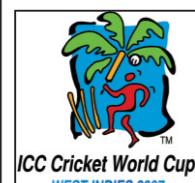
NAT'L CHESS QUALIFIERS

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



Pakistan cricket coach Bob Woolmer may have been murdered at the World Cup, a team official said Tuesday, 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 Pervaiz Mir said investigators were looking at the possibility of foul play.

"The police suspect that Woolmer may have been murdered," Mir told 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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'Not my last WC'

AFP, Port of Spain

Sri Lanka off-spinner Muttiah Muralidaran is in no mood to give batsmen a breather, saying he would like to play in the next World Cup in the sub-continent.

"How do you know it's my last World Cup?" asked Muralidaran, who has been troubling batsmen for more than a decade with his ability to turn the ball prodigiously on any surface.

Add to it his accuracy, bounce and 'doosra', a delivery which spins away from the right-handers instead of coming into them like a conventional off-break, and the batsmen's plight can only be imagined.

"I might play the next World Cup because I'm 34 at the moment. In four years, I'll be 38 and spinners can go on till the age of 40. It all depends on how fit I am," said Muralidaran.

"I'd love to play the next World Cup, because it's on home soil and that means a pretty good chance for us. The last time we played (in the sub-continent), we won't."

The Sri Lankan spinner was a key member of Arjuna Ranatunga's squad which claimed the 1996 World Cup after beating Mark Taylor's Australians in the final at Lahore.

The Cup returns to the sub-continent in 2011, with India, Pakistan, Sri Lanka and Bangladesh as joint-hosts.

Muralidaran has been tipped to become the first bowler to grab 1,000 Test wickets after the retirement of Australian leg-spin legend Shane Warne, but said he had not set his sights on the landmark.

"I am still going up the ladder. The last year was my best because I took 96 wickets in 11 or 12 Tests, but it (1,000 wickets) is very difficult because I have to get another 300 wickets," said the spinner.

"It will take at least another four-five years and I need to play at least 40-45 Tests. At the moment, I am thinking only about this World Cup and taking it match by match."

Muralidaran is behind only

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NZ to go for change

AFP, Gros Islet



New Zealand are set to ring the changes for their final World Cup group match a gainst Canada here Thursday 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 hamstring 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 Jeets (Patel) 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



Rokibul Hasan scripted his name in the record book by hitting a triple 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

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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.

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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
Ctg MSC	3	1	1	1	2	2	4
MSC	3	1	1	1	2	2	4
Muktijoddha	3	1	1	1	1	1	4
Khulna AKC	3	1	0	2	2	3	3
Ctg Abahani	3	1	0	2	2	5	3
Abahani	2	0	2	0	0	0	2
Rahmatganj	3	0	1	2	0	4	1