



Did U Know?

Handball made its debut as an Olympic sport in the 1972 Munich Games.



Younis Khan
(Pakistan batsman)
"I don't run after money. To me, playing for my country is a bigger honour."
After rejecting a lucrative offer from the Indian Cricket League.

BCB forms committee to probe past deals



SPORTS REPORTER

Bangladesh Cricket Board (BCB) has formed a five-member committee to review all commercial contracts, major purchases and tenders and expenses on development projects undertaken from January 2000 to July 29, 2007.

The decision was taken at the third executive committee meeting of the ad-hoc committee on Thursday in the wake of whisperings on different financial deals since the Bangladesh cricket got product value.

Abdul Momen, chairman of finance committee, heads the committee with Monowar Anis Khan, chairperson of audit committee, as vice-chairman and lawyer Ashraf Islam, banker Salim RF Hossain and RM Hasan as members.

The committee has been given an initial time frame of three months within which it would conduct the review and report to the board.

The period for the review would give the committee a chance to examine the most important TV

deals that had been signed during separate tenures of the board.

The BCB is now the most affluent sport body in the country and there has been doubt over transparency in financial activities of the board. Like the other sectors, the caretaker Government made the change in the board in a move to bring accountability and transparency.

It was learnt that this proposal was first voiced by a board member in the second meeting, where he demanded review for only the activities of the last board, but one of his colleagues raised questions about the duration.

There were also demands of scrutinising controversies over the MRF deal in 1988 and the sponsorship for the 1999 World Cup team.

"Yes, we have been given a parameter because we have to do the work within a timeframe. The most important thing is that you have to start work from a certain period of time. Otherwise it would be a never-ending job. What you must consider is whether this timeframe would allow us to review all the major issues or not," explained Abdul Momen while talking with the Daily Star over telephone.

"But after that we will definitely go back if needed," he added.

Momen, however, said that his committee would do their best to clear everything in this regard.

"It's a huge responsibility for us and I can assure everybody that all will get fair treatment. We have yet to set our strategy but what's encouraging for my committee is that we can take further help to do the job properly," he informed.

The Ali Asghar-led committee members, both advisory and elected, repeated complained about financial irregularities during its previous committee, especially the TV deal with the ESPNStar Sport. On the other hand, there was no exception about the last TV deal made with Nimbus Sport under their very committee.

So, everybody will look forward to see the outcome of the committee formed by the ad-hoc committee led by Chief of General Staff Maj Gen Sina Ibn Jamali.



Indian President Pratibha Patil (L) greets Cambodian footballer during the inauguration of the ONGC Nehru Cup football tournament in New Delhi yesterday. AFP PHOTO

Bablu's boys leave for KL today

SPORTS REPORTER

With the senior team playing in the Nehru Cup, the second-string Bangladesh national team under coach Hasanuzzaman Babloo will leave Dhaka today for Kuala Lumpur to participate in the Merdeka Cup.

The team will fly to Bangkok by a GMG flight en route to the Malaysian capital.

Returning to the prestigious tournament after 24 years, Bangladesh will face Indonesia, Singapore and Zimbabwe in the group stage.

Rajib draws again

SPORTS REPORTER

International Master Enamul Hossain Rajib drew his fifth round game against MR Venkatesh, an Indian IM, in the 17th Abu Dhabi Chess Festival yesterday.

At the end of the round, Rajib has so far mustered 5 points. He now faces FIDE Master Toufighi Homayoon of Iran in the 6th round.

Grand Master Amin Bassem of Egypt preserved his top position with 5 points from as many games.

LOCAL SNIPPETS

SPORTS REPORTER

A 16-member Dhaka XI squad, led by Imtiaz Ahmed Nakib, fly off to United Kingdom today.

The team, made up of former players, will play an exhibition match each against London Tigers and Sonali Otis Club of London at the Kingsbury Stadium in London on August 20 and 21 respectively.

SQUAD

Imtiaz Ahmed Nakib (captain), Iqbal Hossain, Golam Ghaus, Alamgir Hasan, Masud Rana, Nizam Mazumder, Abdul Qyum, Rezaul Karim, Belal Ahmed, Rezauddin, Mizanur Rahman Don, Shujit Kumar, Lutful Azam, Dulal Saha, Kaiser Hamid (coach), Abu Hasan Chowdhury (manager).

DIV 3 FOOTBALL

Jurain Janata Club take on Euro Famous Club in the opening match of the Third Division Football League at the Bir Sreshtha Shaheed Sepoy Mohammad Mustafa Stadium in Kamalapur today.

Played under the Dhaka Metropolitan Football League Committee, twenty-two teams, split into two groups, will take part in the competition. Five teams from each group will qualify for the Super League from where the top four will be promoted to the second division.

Outer Stadium, near the RAJUK building, will be the other venue for the league matches.

DIVISIONAL KARATE

The second Samsung Divisional Karate competition begin today at the National Sports Council gymnasium.

Karate Federation president and Home Secretary Abdul Karim will distribute the prizes as the chief guest during the daylong meet, sponsored by Electra International Ltd.

Bangladesh face Syria

Nehru Cup begins



SPORTS REPORTER

Bangladesh will kick off their Nehru Cup campaign today when they take on favourites Syria at the Ambedkar Stadium in New Delhi in the second match of the tournament.

Zee Sports will telecast the match live from 7.30pm Bangladesh time.

The event got under way yesterday in the Indian capital with hosts India facing rank-outsiders Cambodia after President Pratibha Patil declared the five-team meet open.

Bangladesh have never beaten Syria -- the highest ranked team in the tournament -- but both their previous meetings in the 80s resulted in close shaves.

Syria, currently placed 113 in FIFA rankings, won 1-0 when they first met Bangladesh in Kuwait in the Asian Nations Cup in 1980.

The two sides were face to face again four years later in Indonesia in the Asian Cup qualifiers with the Syrians winning 2-1.

However, the two teams headed

separate directions since then. While the Syrians have reached just behind the top Asian nations, Bangladesh have hardly impressed outside south Asian regional tournaments.

Bangladesh, under Indian coach Syed Nayeemuddin, have a new look team that would be the base of the SAFF Championship to be held this December.

Nayeemuddin, expected to exploit his familiar conditions to boost the team's performance on Indian soil, has picked four new faces in the squad after retirement of a few players and injury to number one goalkeeper Aminul and centre-back Sujjan.

Senior striker Alfaz Ahmed, however, returned from international retirement to boost the squad, led for the first time by central defender Nazrul Islam.

Bangladesh, who reached New Delhi on Thursday, trained yesterday at the Zanki Devi Memorial College ground for a couple of hours and all the players were in sound condition, according to a message received in Dhaka.

Meanwhile, Syria were the first foreign team to arrive and got more time to get accustomed to the condi-

tions. They brought a relatively young side under coach Fajer Ibrahim, who has been in charge for the last two years.

They had to leave six key players back home with four preparing for this month's Beijing Olympics qualifier against Bahrain while two other Syrians were not released by their clubs in Kuwait and Jordan.

The Syrian team also has several under-23 players who participated in the Doha Asian Games last year.

Meanwhile, Nayeemuddin told Indian media on arrival that he has to live up to the reputation of being an Indian coach in a neighbouring country.

It was under Nayeem that India lifted the 2005 SAFF Championship beating Bangladesh in the final in Pakistan but this time the Dronacharya Award winner faces a much tougher challenge.

Agencies add: "I have always believed in playing to win and this won't be any different," the 60-year-old coach said.

SEE PAGE 18 COL 1

A better workout



CRICINFO, undated

When asked at the toss which of his "stars" were being rested for the Glasgow one-day, India's captain Rahul Dravid joked: "Everyone's a star in this team. We can't leave them all out." All the same, the luminous ones that sat out -- Sachin Tendulkar, Sourav Ganguly and Zaheer Khan -- weren't missed much, with their understudies shining bright in a seven-wicket win.

The lesser lights will be expected to sparkle in Northampton as well, when India take on England Lions in a one-day warm-up on Saturday.

The Indians didn't have to break too much sweat in the Scottish challenge but that in turn has more of a workout here. Darren Maddy and Luke Wright have a mighty reputation in Twenty20 cricket while Ian Bell and Ravi Bopara get a chance to size up the Indians before the one-day series.

With Owais Shah and Vikram Solanki also in the starting line-up, England's line-up has more than a passing resemblance to the Twenty20 squad that has been selected for the inaugural World

Championship in September. Consequently there will be a mixture of players such as Paul Nixon and Tim Bresnan who have points to prove after being overlooked, and the likes of Jeremy Snape and James Kirtley, who will be flushed with confidence after receiving their international call-ups.

India turned in a lukewarm bowling performance on Thursday, finding it tough to adjust to the chilly Glasgow winds, but they will be punished for similar waywardness here. Rohit Sharma, the talented young batsman from Mumbai, missed out at Glasgow but is almost certain to get his first chance here. Expect enthusiasm, athletic out-cricketer and aggressive batting.

The Indians played five bowlers against Scotland but they're strangely rigid about their part-time options. A few overs from non-specialist bowlers, especially in practice games, would be a good place to start. There are several options they can explore, one of the most intriguing being the idea of Dinesh Karthik keeping wicket and Mahendra Singh Dhoni rolling his arm over.

Dhoni is one of the most enthusiastic bowlers in the nets and, as he showed in a brisk three-over spell against Sri Lanka A at Leicester, he's

always ready to bound in and deliver with energy. He can get it through at a decent pace, which is more than handy at the one-day level, and it would provide India another option in the future. He doesn't have the control of a front-line bowler but can occasionally surprise with the wicket-taking ball.

Yuvraj Singh is another man who should be bowling far more -- the manner in which he foxed the Sri Lanka A batsmen at Leicester shouldn't be lost on anyone -- and Sharma is capable of a couple of overs of handy offspin. Unless they try out these options in practice games, India will never know who to turn to when in trouble. As the Sri Lankans have shown over the years, part-time spin in the middle overs can be a match-winning option.

India's field positions need fine-tuning as well. But already India are looking far more agile than they were in Tests. Piyush Chawla is a bubbly presence in the infield and he, along with Karthik and Yuvraj need to carry the rest along. Munaf Patel, working his way back to

SEE PAGE 18 COL 5

Warne up for battle



AFP, London

Shane Warne may have seen plenty of highs in a career that has seen him become Test cricket's leading wicket-taker but that in turn diminishes the excitement he feels at captaining Hampshire at Lord's on Saturday when they face Durham in the final of the Friends Provident Trophy.

Warne, 37, has revitalised the fortunes of south coast county Hampshire since becoming captain in 2004.

And for all that he has taken 708 Test wickets, captaining a team means a great deal to leg-spin legend Warne.

The bold, inspiring way in which he has led Hampshire has led some to wonder what might have been had not Warne's colourful off-life prevented him from becoming Australia captain.

"I've never played in a domestic final, so walking out as captain will be a proud moment," leg-spinner Warne said.

He also told the BBC: "I've captained my state Victoria a few times in Shield games, but never in a final because of international duty."

Warne's often tricky relationship with then Australia coach John Buchanan wasn't made any easier when two years ago he missed Hampshire's win in the final against Warwickshire.

"I was doing the really important job of being 12th man for Australia at Essex", Warne recalled.

Hampshire have won all four of their appearances in various domestic finals since becoming the last of the then 17 first-class counties to make it to a Lord's showpiece occasion back in 1988.

By contrast, this will be Durham's first Lord's final. They too have a gifted Australian in their ranks in

batsman Michael Di Venuto and veteran Hampshire and ex-England off-spinner Shaun Udal said: "Michael Di Venuto and Phil Mustard have got them off to fliers in one-day cricket this season."

Hampshire have been given permission to play the England Test pair of batsman Kevin Pietersen and fast bowler Chris Tremlett on Saturday. However, Udal was in no doubt about the identity of Hampshire's key player.

"Warne's our talisman and he always seems to rise to the big occasion. The thing that sets him apart from other overseas players is

his passion and commitment for Hampshire."

Durham suffered a major blow when England fast bowler Stephen Harmison, only recently returned from a hernia, was ruled out of the final on Thursday with a back problem.

It was a bitter pill for the 28-year-old Durham-born quick to have to swallow. "Having played for the county through the lean years, I was looking forward to making my mark in Durham's first ever final --

SEE PAGE 18 COL 5



SHANE WARNE

SEE PAGE 18 COL 5

What to WATCH

ESPN
English Premier League
Portsmouth v Bolton Wanderers
Live from 5:40 pm
Tottenham Hotspur v Derby County
Live from 7:55 pm
STAR Sports
English Premier League
Reading v Everton
Live from 7:55 pm
Newcastle United v Aston Villa
Live from 10:10 pm

Ohidul hits hat-trick

STAFF CORRESPONDENT, Sylhet

Ohidul Islam struck a hat-trick as Mohammedan Sporting Club pipped Tilaghar Club 4-3 in the First Division Football League held at the Sylhet Stadium yesterday.

The young striker took advantage of poor defending as he struck in the fourth, seventh and 50th minute of the match. Zahir was the other scorer for the black and white.

Tilaghar Club's Imrose, Manna and Chanchal netted on the 7th, 48th and 72nd minutes of the match.

Tilaghar captain Chanchal was shown the red card in the second-half.

Kenya sneak past SL A

AFP, Nairobi

A brilliant 62 from opener Morris Ouma coupled with a patient innings of 24 from captain Thomas Odoyo handed Kenya a thrilling two-wicket win over Sri Lanka A in their tri-series match at the Nairobi Gymkhana on Thursday.

Medium pacer Peter Ongondo had earlier restricted the Sri Lankans to 194 when he took five wickets to bundle out the tourists in 48 overs.

Ongondo picked up the first three wickets in his opening spell and later returned to take two more after Sri Lanka had been sent in to bat after losing the toss.

But it was the outstanding performance of Ouma which laid the base for Kenya's victory. He put on 87 runs for the third wicket with Tanmay Mishra after the hosts lost

SEE PAGE 18 COL 5

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Gambhir leads easy win



CRICINFO, undated

Rahul Dravid's decision to test out his one-day bowling options was justified as all three fast bowlers got among the wickets.

A good day was then capped with half-centuries by both the openers as India eased to a seven-wicket win over Scotland at a sold-out Clydesdale Cricket Ground.

Guided by an 82-run partnership between veteran Gavin Hamilton (44) and Neil McCallum (41), Scotland recovered from four early blows to reach 203, but a rain-revised target of 209 proved far too easy for India, who improved their one-day record to 6-1 after that horrible run at the World Cup. This was not one of the more convincing wins of the season for India, but with runs and wickets from their fringe players, such as Gautam Gambhir

who made an unbeaten 85, it is a gentle feeler for a year that still holds 20 ODIs.

With Paul Hoffmann, in his last game, and John Blain giving no room to free the arms, Robin Uthappa and Gambhir had to rein in their naturally flamboyant ways.

Uthappa, who has not played an ODI since the World Cup, was away with a four to fine leg but struggled to work the ball into the gaps despite taking guard over a foot outside his crease. There were more than seven overs between India's first and second boundaries but Uthappa finally found his footwork, and his confidence showed in bludgeoned drives and one spanking six in an opening stand of 104.

An inswinger from Craig Wright beat Uthappa's defence on 55 and Dinesh Karthik came and went for 14 but Gambhir, whose only opportunities in England have come in the four games, pressed on. It was not pretty, he felt his way through the

early overs before driving his first four through the covers in the tenth. There were repeated wafts outside off stump in between firm drives through midwicket and mid-off as Gambhir did his part to whittle away at the target.

His half-century was raised from 76 balls and he continued in the same grafting manner, though there was a pleasing straight six to raise the 50 stand with Yuvraj Singh, who injected some oomph into the chase with a 28-ball 38. Dravid, no stranger to these parts having represented Scotland in the county circuit, drew cheers from the crowd in an unbeaten ten-run knock as India crossed the finish line in the 40th over.

India's pace bowlers were far from threatening but they did

SEE PAGE 18 COL 1

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