



Stars blitz

SPORTS REPORTER

If a galaxy comes down to earth, people are bound to be bewildered.

And more than 25,000 spectators were enthralled by the gala show when the stars of 'Dhaliwood' joined footballers of past and present at the Bangabandhu National Stadium yesterday for a noble cause; to raise fund for the country's flood victims.

Even though a trademark Aslam header, a typical Sabir through pass, dazzling skill out on the flank by Wasim, a fierce Chunnu freekick or a regulation miss by Farhad in front of goal failed to stir the huge crowd during a 50-minute goalless draw, presence of the silver screen heroes and heroines turned out to be a memorable event if not a blockbuster.

Even the slightest possession of ball or a regulation catch by the goalkeeper of the 'cinema star' team was cheered passionately by the roaring fans, reminding the football lovers that they had not even seen a crowd this big in this season's recently concluded professional football league.

For players like Badal Roy, Salam Murschedi, Kaiser Hamid, Babloo, Jewel Rana (wearing the sky-blue shirt of Abahani for the first time), Biplob or Joy who have graced this great sporting venue and were used to fervent support, the partiality towards the film stars may have been painful.

But they would all return home happy knowing that the joint effort would put a substantial amount of money to the Chief

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PHOTOS: ANISUR RAHMAN

ALL FOR A NOBLE CAUSE: (Clockwise) Silver screen heartthrobs Ferdous and Mousumi waves to cheering crowd, present and past star footballers of Abahani parade on their familiar den, country's film doyen Razzak (R) shares a light moment with former national winger Chunnu and Salam Murschedi led the all-star Mohammedan team ahead of their exhibition match against bitter rivals Abahani at the Bangabandhu National Stadium yesterday. The show was arranged to raise fund for the flood victims of the country.

Good start for Academy

SPORTS REPORTER

Wicketkeeper batsman Dhiman Gosh slammed an unbeaten century as the visiting BCB National Cricket Academy (NCA) made a flying start in the Crocodile Cup three-day match against Tasmania at the University ground yesterday.

The right-hander hit exactly hundred in 116 balls and Rokibul Hasan contributed 158-ball 67 as NCA declared their innings on 305-7 in 94 overs after deciding to bat first.

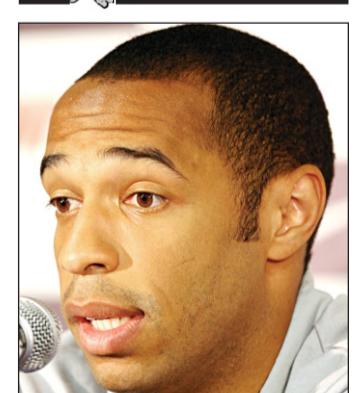
Imrul Kayes was the other notable scorer with 48 off 101 balls while Nayeem Islam added 21 off 81 balls.

At the end of the first day's play, Tasmania scored five runs without any damage.



Did U Know?

The first Special Olympics Asia Pacific Cricket Tournament was held from December 1-6, 2004 in Ahmedabad, India. 21 teams from 20 states in India and one from Pakistan participated in the meet.



What to WATCH

TEN Sports
US Open Tennis
Day Eight
Live from 9:00 pm
ESPN

Sportcenter India
Sports News
Live from 8:30 pm

AB Bank feels lucky

SPORTS REPORTER

 It was even hard to believe for the company itself that such a small amount of money

enabled them to be a proud sponsor of Bangladesh national cricket team for the coming ICC Twenty20 World Championship to be held in South Africa.

"I must say that luck favoured us because we didn't think that we could manage the team sponsorship with this amount of money," Sajedur Siraj, vice-chairman of AB Bank, made this simple statement yesterday.

The private bank arranged a press conference at a local hotel after more than two weeks since being confirmed as team sponsors by the Bangladesh Cricket Board (BCB).

But it was not at all a happy meeting both for them and the BCB officials as the questions mainly centered on the poor amount of money.

AB Bank, who also bought the ticket selling right for international matches at home during the period of May 2007 to May 2009, got the right as a highest bidder with the amount of Taka ten lakhs twenty thousand which raised many eyebrows.

In recent times the board's poor marketing policy has been a much talked about issue especially after the way they devalued the brand name of 'Bangladesh cricket' by selling the clothing rights to a local company for only Tk 2 lakhs.

Many were surprised when vice chairman of marketing and commercial committee Selim Bhuiyan told in reply to a question during the press conference that they requested the sponsor company to

consider the matter if Bangladesh managed to reach the second round.

"We made this request and you can also request them," he replied when asked about whether they have mentioned anything in the contract about the additional money if the team qualified to the second round.

"Actually time was a big factor for our ad-hoc committee" Bhuiyan defended.

AB Bank's President and Managing Director Kaiser A Chowdhury however said that they would consider bonus for second round matches.

"We are here to promote Bangladesh Cricket. We are very much hopeful that Bangladesh will progress to the second round of the Twenty20 World Cup. In that case we will sit again with the BCB officials and definitely consider about giving a bonus," he said.

England's plight was made worse by the sight of Ravi Bopara leaving the field with a suspected broken thumb after dropping a caught and bowled chance.

They had started the game without their fellow all-rounder Andrew Flintoff, out with a recurrence of his left ankle injury.

India began to cut loose in the sixth over with Tendulkar striking four fours in five balls off Flintoff's replacement Jon Lewis, opening the attack in place of Broad, who'd taken four for 51 on Thursday.

Medium-pacer Collingwood almost struck with his sixth ball.

Tendulkar, on 33, pushed forward in defence at a good length delivery which took the outside edge. But wicketkeeper Matt Prior, standing up to the stumps,

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India pile up 324

Cricket

AFP, Leeds

Yuvraj Singh was one of four Indian batsmen who made fifty as India piled up 324 for six against England in the fifth one-day international at Headingley here on Sunday.

The left-hander struck 72 off 57 balls with two sixes and 10 fours after England captain Paul Collingwood won the toss and

LATEST

England were 121 for 4 in 20 overs after the rain break. Their target is 311 from 45 overs after a 20-minute shower in the middle of the hosts' innings in Headingley last night.

Sourav Ganguly took two key wickets of Matt Prior (46) and Ian Bell (44). Ajit Agarkar and Zaheer Khan took the other two wickets.

England captain Paul Collingwood was unbeaten on 13 and Owais Shah was batting on 5.

felded.

Sachin Tendulkar (71) and Sourav Ganguly (59) got India - 3-1 down in the seven-match series - off to a fine start with a first wicket partnership of 116 in 118 balls.

Gautam Gambhir, in for left-arm pace bowler Rudra Pratap Singh as India strengthened their batting, made 51 and helped Yuvraj add 94 for the third wicket.

Fast bowler Stuart Broad, man-of-the-match in England's three-wicket win at Old Trafford on Thursday, where he compiled career-best figures with bat and ball, conceded 84 runs in 10 overs.

Dinesh Karthik was two not out and Zaheer Khan, who struck the last ball of the innings from Broad to the boundary, four not out.

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Bangladesh play SL today

SPORTS REPORTER

Bangladesh will look for revenge when they take on Sri Lanka in the 7th Asia Cup hockey today at the Radhakrishnan Stadium in Chennai.

The last time the two sides met, Bangladesh went down to Sri Lanka in Kandy in the third-place play-off in last year's 10th SA Games.

Hosts Sri Lanka, who had lost the group match to Bangladesh, won bronze medal.

Bangladesh had also clashed with the Lankans in the South Indian city back in 1995 when hockey was introduced to the then SA Games. The match ended in a draw but Bangladesh eventually clinched bronze.

Bangladesh, playing without top five stars, got off to a flying start in the ongoing tournament with a 13-0 thrashing of Thailand but crashed 6-0 to China, the Asiad silver medallists.

Sri Lanka suffered a 2-0 defeat to India in their last match.

Tendulkar epic soon

PTI, Manchester

Sachin Tendulkar has been appointed ambassador for the Manchester United Opus in India and the publishers are planning a similar epic about the Indian batting great.

Tendulkar, who was the guest of honour at the Premier League match between Manchester United and Sunderland, has been named Indian ambassador for the voluminous hardback epic about the club -- and he revealed that the publishers, Kraken, are planning a similar book on Tendulkar.

"This started little more than a year ago," Tendulkar was quoted as saying by a Press Association report.

"They're really doing their homework. It's wonderful to be part of this and I'm looking forward to it," said Tendulkar who watched Alex Ferguson's team beat Sunderland at Old Trafford on Saturday.

Tendulkar has gone without a century in the one-day series so far but the Indian run-machine said more than personal milestone, his priority was now to help India make a comeback in the series.

"I feel I have been batting well and since we left Indian shores I might almost have had five hundreds by now. Nobody wants to miss hundreds but sometimes it happens. It doesn't matter if I score a hundred or get out on 99 as long as the team wins. That's what matters to me the most," he said.

He said the ongoing ODI series has been a seesaw affair even though the hosts managed to have an upper hand.

"If you look at the third and fourth one-dayers, both were evenly poised. At one stage, especially the last one-dayer, we were almost 90 per cent there. Stuart Broad and Ravi Bopara batted quite sensibly and all credit to them."

Tigers go down fighting

Nazimuddin flays Pakistan

Cricket

SPORTS REPORTER

Nazimuddin toyed with the Pakistani attack but his spectacular 81 could not ensure a win as Bangladesh went down by 30 runs in their second match of the fourth

fielding restrictions, barring the loss of Tamim Iqbal (1), was all Bangladesh; and all Nazimuddin!

The over after Tamim's fall, Asif

was struck for three fours in a row by

with a couple of fours and two sixes: one landed on the adjacent tennis court and the second one flew into the car park. The second big hit brought on his half-century off just 25 balls.

Aftab Ahmed fell two balls later for seven, missing a Shahid Afridi

quicker delivery. But Aftab's dismis-

sal or even Mohammad Ashraf's (7) run-out did not dis-

courage Nazimuddin. He went on

his merry way with lofting another over long-on off leg-spinner Afridi, who was the most successful bowler with 2-26 off his four overs.

Kapali helped out Nazimuddin

but fell after hitting a six off Afridi.

But Nazimuddin was not done

hitting sixes. He carted two more --

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When asked if he was a natural when it came to leadership, Dhoni said, "That's for you guys to decide. But I am a natural. I like to do things my way and I take my own decisions in whatever I do." However, Dhoni, the first India player from the state of Jharkhand, said he never even expected to make the grade as a player, let alone being the captain.

"It's different being an aggressive batsman and an aggressive captain. Of course, that instinct will be there but you need to balance both," he said. "A lot depends on how the team responds to your leadership."

Dhoni said he has gained experience serving as deputy to Rahul Dravid in England. "His (Dravid's) ability to stay calm and cool under pressure ... As a captain you got to be in control even when things are not going your way. It helps if you keep your nerves in a tense situation and avoid doing things in a rush."

In the absence of Dravid, Sachin Tendulkar and Sourav Ganguly, Dhoni would be leading a team with experienced players such as

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Ad



Star Indian batsman Sachin Tendulkar executes his trademark off-drive during the fifth one-day international against England at Headingley yesterday.