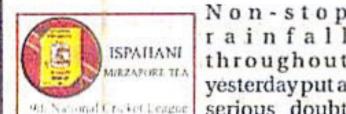


## Rain threatens NCL start

MOHAMMAD ISAM



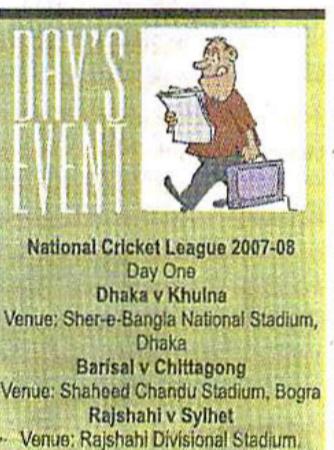
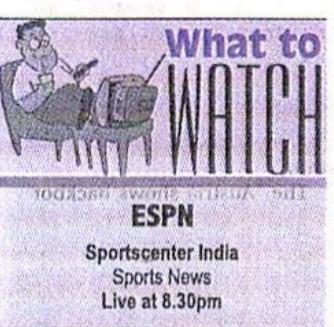
Did U Know?

New Zealander Jeff Wilson, who played four ODIs as a 19-year-old allrounder of considerable promise, turned his attention to rugby where he became an All Black legend with 44 tries in 60 appearances.



**Craig McMillan**  
(Former New Zealand batsman)  
"I feel that the past season has been one of the best of my cricket career and I am happy to be retiring on a really positive note."

While announcing his retirement from international cricket.



**Tennis meet  
from Oct 23**

UNB, Dhaka

The Acme Baby Zinc Tennis competition, jointly organised by Bangladesh Table Tennis Federation and Jafar Imam Tennis Complex, will begin on in Rajshahi on October 23.

Six events -- men's singles, men's doubles, boys' singles (16 yrs & below), girls' singles (16 yrs & below), boys' singles (14 yrs & below) and mini tennis group -- will be held during the five-day competition.

Entry fee of Tk 50 for junior events and Tk 100 for senior events will have to be submitted to the match referee on October 20 at the Ramna National Tennis Complex in Dhaka and October 21 at Jafar Imam Tennis Complex at Rajshahi.

**Kabaddi, Billiard  
for Asian  
indoors**

UNB, Dhaka

Bangladesh will only take part in kabaddi and billiard in the second Asian Indoor Games being held in Macao from October 26.

The kabaddi team comprises of 12 players and two officials while the billiard team of two players and one official.

Billiard team will leave for Macao on October 25 while the Kabaddi team will be off, two days later.

Bangladesh Olympic Association (BOA) acting secretary general Kutubuddin Ahmed will meet the teams before their departure on October 22.

is wet and had its pitches covered on the eve of the opening day.

Match umpires Nadir Shah and Shawkatur Rahman, who spent all afternoon at the Mirpur venue, were optimistic of some play today even though the conditions looked bleak.

"The ground has good drainage and is actually set on sand. Some sunshine and no rain from tonight (Thursday), could give us a scheduled start," said Shah.

"It will take 45 minutes for the entire 150 yards to dry up because of the quality of the ground. And with the pitch covered, there won't be a problem if the weather improves."

The match will see the current national captain Mohammad Ashraful leading defending champions Dhaka against his predecessor Habibul Bashar, who has a formidable Khulna side at his disposal.

Ashraful, who made a glorious 263 against Chittagong last season, has the upper hand in terms of first-class experience ahead of Bashar, who did not play a single

NCL match last year.

Away at Rajshahi, the home side took part in light practice late in the afternoon and captain Khaled Mashud, who is expected to bat at number six, informed that the pitch was slightly damp.

"It looked good but with so much rain and very little sunshine, the wicket was slightly cold. Actually it was well-covered all day because of the inclement weather," said Mashud, who will lead the nearly men of last season, against a revamped Sylhet outfit, led by batsman Rajin Saleh.

He also mentioned that a final eleven was not selected because of weather issues and they would like to see how the pitch would turn up in the morning or before play starts.

Sylhet did not impress last season and have a golden opportunity to stun Rajshahi but it will be a huge ask for a side that have regularly looked to draw these four-day matches.

Barisal, which do not have a home venue in their division, have been allotted Bogra as their home

ground for their first round match against high-fliers Chittagong.

The northern town is nothing different than its neighbouring Rajshahi as rain has forced the 'home' side to practice indoors. Barisal, forever the basement side in first-class cricket, have a better side and are looking to make their way up on the table in this ninth edition.

Barisal players did their work indoors near the ground but were lucky enough to have fielding drills, although on a wet out-field.

Newly appointed manager Aminul Haq said that players enjoyed the session and were in good spirits and there were no injuries.

Their opponents Chittagong only arrived on Thursday afternoon and had little time to look at the conditions. The visitors, led by Ehsanul Haque, will look at international stars Aftab Ahmed and Tamim Iqbal to provide impetus although some say that the port city's main strength lies in the captain's bat and the off-spin of Sabir Khan.

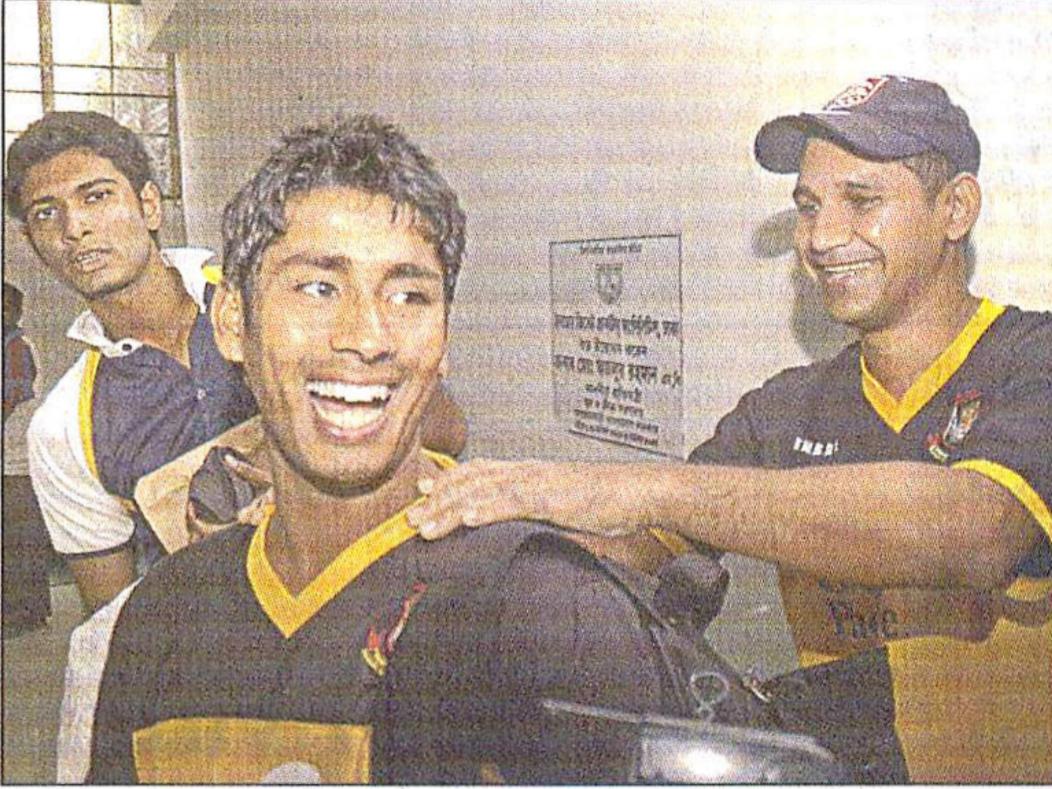


PHOTO: STAR  
Khulna captain Habibul Bashar (R) jokes with his Dhaka counterpart Mohammad Ashraful after practice at the indoor facilities of the Sher-e-Bangla National Stadium in Mirpur yesterday.

## SA ride on twin tons

Cricket

AFP, Lahore

AB de Villiers and Herschelle Gibbs smashed centuries to help South Africa beat Pakistan by 45 runs in the first day-night international at the Gaddafi Stadium here on Thursday.

De Villiers notched a brisk unbeaten 95-ball 103, while Gibbs scored 102 to propel the tourists to 294-5 in 50 overs before paceman Makhaya Ntini restricted Pakistan to 249 in 46.3 overs.

The victory gives South Africa a 1-0 lead in the five-match series. The second match will be played here on Saturday.

Mohammad Yousuf top-scored for Pakistan with 53 and Shahid Afridi hit a rapid 26-ball 47 with five boundaries and two sixes. But it was not enough after Ntini grabbed 4-69 to derail the run chase.

The 30-year-old paceman destroyed the top order in a fiery burst, removing Imran Nazir (16), Younis Khan (12) and Mohammad Hafeez (six) to reduce the home team to 37-3.

Ntini had Nazir caught at short cover in his second over, then forced an edge off Younis in the third before accounting for Hafeez, caught hooking, in his fourth.

Younis hit two boundaries to complete 4,000 runs in limited

overs cricket.

Shoaib Malik hit Ntini for three boundaries in his fifth over before the paceman struck back, dismissing the Pakistan captain off a misjudged flick for 18.

Yousuf and Misbah-ul Haq (20)

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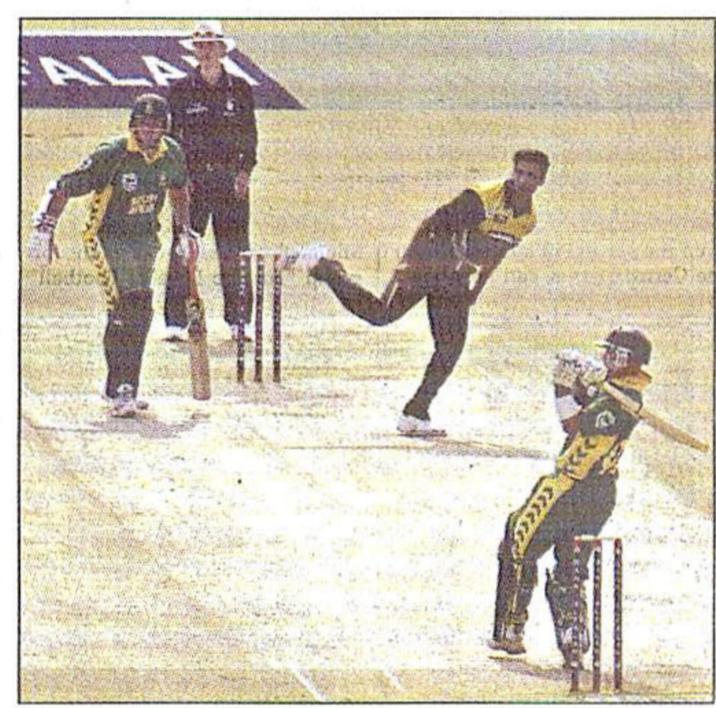


PHOTO: AFP  
South African opener Herschelle Gibbs pulls through midwicket on his 102 in the first one-day International against Pakistan at the Gaddafi Stadium in Lahore on Thursday.

## BCCI alert for racism

AGENCIES, undated

The Board of Control for Cricket in India has said that it will take measures to prevent bad crowd behaviour during the Twenty20 international between India and Australia at the Brabourne Stadium on Saturday.

"The BCCI has appointed chief administrative officer Professor Ratnakar Shetty to deal with the crowd-control issue and it will be done in consultation with the Mumbai police," BCCI vice-president Lalit Modi was quoted as saying in PTI. "We can only persuade the crowd to control themselves but cannot make any arrests. All we can do is to eject people from the ground."

Another BCCI vice-president Rajeev Shukla said that police personnel would be posted in various enclosures to prevent poor behaviour.

These measures follow the issue of Andrew Symonds being subjected to racial abuse once again during the seventh ODI at the Wankhede Stadium in Mumbai. An Australian photographer captured on camera certain spectators in the North Stand enacting monkey chants, a complaint that had been first made during the fifth one-day at Vizag last week.

BBC adds: Four Indian cricket fans have been charged for allegedly racially abusing Australian cricketer Andrew Symonds by making monkey gestures, police say.

The four fans were evicted from a one-day international match in Mumbai (Bombay) on Wednesday.

Symonds is the only mixed race player in the Australian side, having made his international debut in 1998.

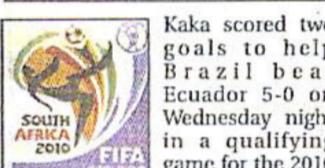
Cricket officials say that photographs of fans making offensive gestures towards Symonds as he came in to bat have been handed over to police.

Police say that the four fans, including a woman, have been charged with harassment and have now been released on bail to appear in court at a later date.

The BBC's Sanjoy Majumder in Delhi says that the gestures were made even as an anti-racism message flashed on a big screen.

## ARGENTINA TOP GROUP Five star Brazil

INTERNET, undated



Kaka scored two goals to help Brazil beat Ecuador 5-0 on Wednesday night in a qualifying game for the 2010 World Cup in South Africa.

Vagner Love, Ronaldinho and Elano also scored for Brazil, which opened qualifying Sunday with a 0-0 tie away at Colombia.

Ecuador lost their first home opener against Venezuela last week.

Colombia played out their second goalless draw in three days, away to Bolivia, and Chile and Paraguay won at home to kick-start their campaigns in Wednesday's other South American games.

Brazil beat neighbours Peru 2-0 in Santiago and Paraguay battled to a 1-0 win over Uruguay in Asuncion.

Argentina, 2-0 winners in Venezuela on Tuesday, were left as



PHOTO: INTERNET  
Brazil star Kaka (L) shoots the ball past an Ecuador player during their World Cup 2010 qualifying match at the Maracana on Wednesday.

## Nazrul not ready

Booters may fly on Oct 24

Football

SPORTS REPORTER

Nazrul Islam was not ready to consider playing Bangladesh's second leg match of the 2010 World Cup qualifiers against Tajikistan despite persuasion by the team management.

The key national central defender, who had officially informed the Bangladesh Football Federation (BFF) of his unavailability for the October 28 match in Dushanbe, was urged by Indian coach Syed Nayemuddin to return to the camp on Wednesday.

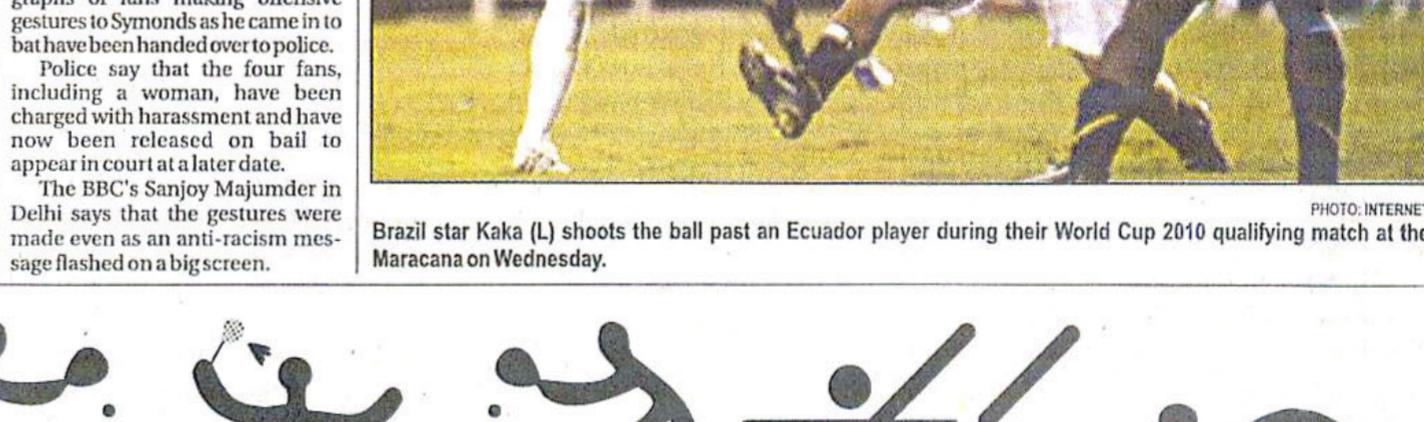
"Yes, I had a telephone conversation with the coach and he invited me to join the national camp at BKSP. He said that if I had any problem with him, I should have talked with him instead of going to the media," told Nazrul to The Daily Star last night.

Bangladesh, who held Tajikistan to a 1-1 draw at home on October 8, need to win or draw at least 2-2 to enter the Asian qualifiers. Although Nazrul sighted personal reasons for quitting from the national team, it seems that his cold relationship with the coach, who reportedly has not been in talking terms with the veteran defender, has resulted in this.

"The coach requested me to go back and play, but I don't feel that comfortable. After the last two days' incidents and media reports, I feel I would rather avoid this match. If the federation calls me later for any assignment, I will definitely join. So it's not the end of the road for me," added the Abahani defender, who was the fulcrum of the club's success in the inaugural professional football league.

In reply to a question why he had mentioned 'personal reasons' in the letter to the BFF for stepping out, Nazrul said: It's true. My wife is sick and I have been looking after her."

National team manager Amitul



32 gold 15 silver 24 bronze

We believed in their potential and the results are phenomenal.  
Congratulations Bangladesh Team for doing wonders in the Special Olympics 2007.



Special Olympics

Bangladesh



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