

NSC to increase training fund

SPORTS REPORTER

The National Sports Council (NSC) will increase its training fund from next year to groom sportsmen across the country, it was confirmed after its yesterday's budget meeting.

NSC chairman and Army Chief General Moeen U Ahmed has directed to increase training fund to 10 per cent from the previous year's three.

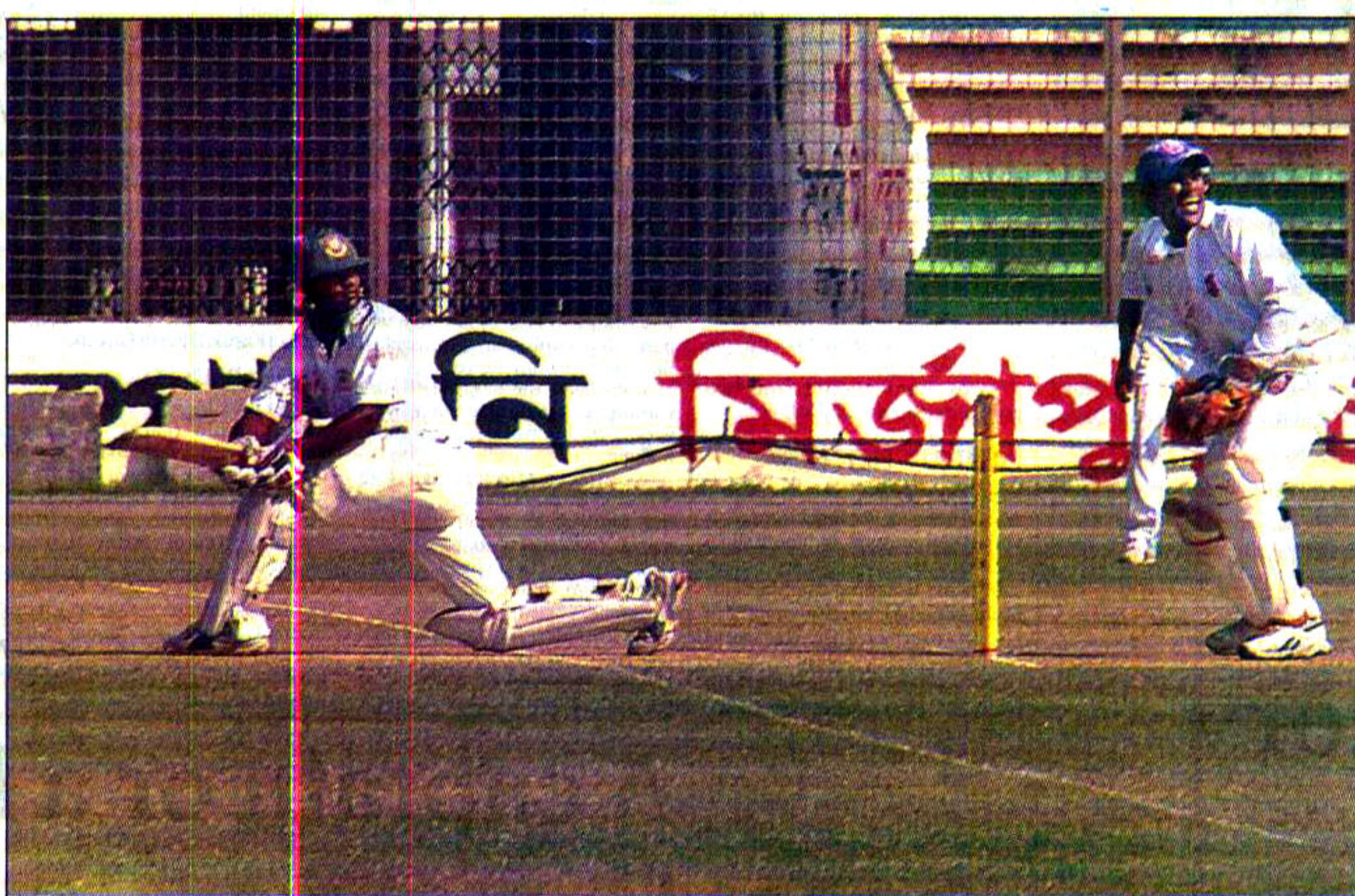
"I have asked them to revise the training fund and increase it to 10 percent. There is no alternative to developing players without training," told General Moeen, who presided over the budget meeting of the NSC executive committee at the NSC.

The meeting approved a total of Tk 48.31-crore budget for the 2007-08 fiscal year where the training budget would be raised to Tk 8.9 crore from 2.6 crore.

Of the total budget, the government will allocate Tk 25.51 crore and the NSC will provide Tk 22.80 crore from its own resources.

"We are going to allocate funds at Upazila levels for the first time," Gen Moeen said adding that it

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A NEAR MISS: Barisal batsman Gazi Salahuddin hits one of his thirteen boundaries on the opening day of his side's four-day National League match against Chittagong at the Chittagong Divisional Stadium yesterday. The portly right-hander missed what could have been his second first-class century for six runs.

Ctg, Rajshahi in control

SPORTS REPORTER



Khulna predictably struggled against Chittagong on the first day of their seventh round National Cricket League match at the Chittagong Divisional Stadium yesterday.

The hosts belted their way to 322-8 in the mandatory 90 overs of play with Gazi Salahuddin, Mahbubul Karim and captain Ehsanul Haq all hitting half-centuries.

In Bogra, Barisal fell in the face of fine swing bowling from Rajshahi paceman Alamgir Kabir, who took five wickets.

The visitors were 39-1 in reply to Barisal's paltry 182 all out.

Sylhet's big-hitter Ejaz Ahmed struck a robust 54 but his side still struggled to 223-7 against Dhaka at the Fatullah Cricket Stadium.

CHITTAGONG-KHULNA

It was pure bad luck when Salahuddin fell leg-before to part-timer Nahidul Haque for 94, with the score on 219. The free-scoring Chittagong opener struck thirteen

boundaries in his 184-ball knock that spanned almost four hours.

He added 67 for the first wicket with Nafis Iqbal and then added 121 with Mahbubul Karim for the second. Karim slammed eleven boundaries on his way to 61.

A mini-collapse followed Karim's dismissal when Nazimuddin and Salahuddin fell within two overs but captain Ehsanul Haq batted with his typical solidity, staying not out on 56. He has tail-ender Yasin Arafat for company when he comes out to bat today.

For the league leaders, Ziaur Rahman, Robiul Islam and Murad Khan took two wickets each to make sure Khulna had some solace in the form of three bonus points. Chittagong have four points, having crossed the 300-mark.

RAJSHAHI-BARISAL

Rajshahi must have sensed rival Khulna's misery of losing so many big names, as they launched themselves on Barisal at the Shaheed Chandu Stadium.

Alamgir bowled both Hannan Sarkar and Shahriar Nafees in the space of eleven balls during his first spell. He returned to do the same to top-scorer Imran Ahmed, who

scored 43, in the 32nd over and then had Kamrul Islam and Talha Jubair in his last spell of the innings.

The 26-year-old paceman, who played three Tests for Bangladesh, ended with impressive figures of 5-52 from his 22 overs.

Saqain Sajib, who created three run-outs and took a catch, also helped Rajshahi's cause.

But it was not all plain sailing for the visitors who lost opener Rafiqul Islam at the tag end of the day. Jahurul, on 20, will come out to bat with last round's star Farhad Hossain when the match resumes today.

Rajshahi have four bonus points while Barisal have one.

DHAKA-SYLHET

Sharif removed Imtiaz Ahmed and Sadique Rahman at the end of 12 overs, after Dhaka were asked to bowl first by Sylhet captain Rajin Saleh.

Sylhet were 108-4 when they lost opener Golam Rahman 43. Six overs and four runs later, Rajin was caught by Dhaka captain Al Shahriar off Mohammad Rafique.

But then it was the turn of Ejaz to add some fire into the batting. He

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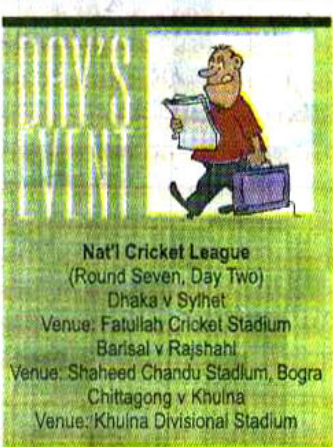
Did U Know?

Saudi Arabia striker Sami Al-Jaber is the youngest player to have played 100 international games. Al-Jaber was 25 years, four months and 16 days old when he picked up his 100th Saudi Arabia cap against Norway on May 27, 1998.



Kumar Sangakkara

(Sri Lanka batsman)
"My theory is that a batsman should get 20 hundreds in a career to be regarded as good. Get 30 and you are a bit better than good." While refusing to count himself among the greats.



Sultan thinks of an AGM

SPORTS REPORTER

Having ignored the necessity of talking with country's football organisers and ex-players to form district and divisional football associations (DFAs) for long, Bangladesh Football Federation (BFF) president SA Sultan yesterday took a U-turn.

"We might call an EGM or an

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U-19 cricketers make it 2 all

SPORTS REPORTER

Sohrawardi Shuvo led from the front as the touring Bangladesh Under-19 cricket team levelled the one-day series against Pakistan Under-19s with a 13-run victory in the fourth game at Quaid-e-Azam Park in Karachi yesterday.

Left-arm spinner Shuvo grabbed five wickets for 38 runs after Marshal Ayub's 88 to script the victory to make tomorrow's final encounter at the NBP Ground in Karachi a real finale.

Promising pacer Dollar Mahmud also made valuable contribution with four scalps as the home side were bowled out for 220 in reply to the visitors' 233 for 6 in stipulated 50 overs.

Another new ball bowler Rubel Hossain took the other wicket for 47 runs.

Earlier, Mahmudul Hassan scored 44 runs while Mithun Ali remained not out on 33 to give the tourists a respectable total.

It was a brilliant fightback by the junior Tigers as they made it 2-2 after going down by 144 runs and 79 runs in the first two matches. Bangladesh Under-19s revived their hopes by winning the third game by 24 runs.

3 seniors get 6 months



SPORTS REPORTER

Keeping last one year's performance in mind, Bangladesh Cricket Board (BCB) revealed a 22-member contracted players' list yesterday.

The number has increased by a single player from last year's list as new comers Mahmudul Hassan Riyad and Zunaed Siddiqui have been given rookie contracts but pace-man Tapash Baisya failed to keep his place.

But the time reduction of some of the senior players was most significant in the new list as Mohammad Rafique, Khaled Mashud, Javed Omar, Shahriar Nafees and Rajin Saleh have been offered six-month contracts from December 1 to May 30 next year instead of a one-year deal.

On the other hand, Shahadat Hossain, Abdur Razaq, Syed Rassel, Shakib Al Hasan and Mushfiqur Rahim were promoted to enjoy the maximum one-year contract along

with captain Mohammad Ashraful and his deputy Mashrafe Bin Mortaza, Habibul Bashar and Aftab Ahmed from December 1 to till November 30 next year.

BCB's cricket operations committee headed by former national captain Gazi Ashraf Hossain Lipu took the decisions after being recommended by the Rafiqul Alam-led selection committee and it was learned that as an immediate past skipper, Bashar survived to keep his one-year deal despite his poor showing.

Dashing left-handed opener Tamim Iqbal advanced to the six-year contract from his rookie status while Tushar Imran, Forhad Reza, Mehrab Hossain, Enamul Haque and Nazmul Hossain remained in the six-month frame.

BCB reduced the timeframe of some senior players only to give a message that one can only ensure a maximum contract through their performance but the time reduction of the players will not weigh down their salary as the gradation was decided on the basis of the

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BCB announces NZ fixture

SPORTS REPORTER

Bangladesh Cricket Board (BCB) released the revised itinerary of the Tigers' tour to New Zealand in December and January.

Mohammad Ashraful's men will fly to New Zealand on December 12 to play three one-day internationals and two Tests besides a couple of build-up games.

New Zealand Cricket (NZC) has revised the fixture at the request of BCB to arrange limited-over practice games instead of the three-day warm-up games as the Tigers will play the one-day series first.

Bangladesh will launch their campaign with a one-day warm-up match against Northern Districts on December 16 and on December 18 before playing the last practice match on December 21 against Auckland.

Bangladesh team, in their second visit to the Southern Hemisphere country after their maiden trip in 2001, will also play a

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SA to arrive on Feb 14

SPORTS REPORTER

South Africa will arrive in Dhaka on February 14 next year to play two Tests and three one-day series against the Tigers.

Bangladesh Cricket Board (BCB) yesterday disclosed the itinerary, which also includes a three-day warm-up match before the Test series and a one-day practice match before the three-match one-day series.

It will be the South Africans' second visit after their first trip in 2003.

Three men were in temporary charge since then after South Africa's Graham Ford, who coaches English county team Kent, turned down an offer from the BCB.

Former all-rounder Ravi Shastri managed the team for the tour of Bangladesh in May and Chandu Borde, 73, took over during the visit to Ireland and England from July to September.

Former Mumbai first-class cricketer Lalchand Rajput then took charge for the inaugural Twenty20 World Cup in South Africa in September, which India won, and continued for the home one-dayers against Australia and Pakistan.

Rajput will officially be assistant coach in Australia but will resume the responsibility of head coach.

The task force, headed by Brigadier Najib Hassan, to investigate the corruption of National Sports Council (NSC) is expected to hand over its report to Sports Adviser Tapan Chowdhury today.

The caretaker Government formed the task force on March 5 this year to probe the corruption of the NSC during the tenure of BNP-led government.

It was learned that the task force, having interviewed hundreds of persons -- in and out of the NSC -- including former State Minister for Sports and ex-NSC chairman Fazlur Rahman at Dhaka Central Jail -- has completed three huge volumes of report.

Sources said the task force has found out about 80-crore taka corruption inside the organisation inclusive of Tk 50-crore alone in shop allotment.

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BEATEN ALL ENDS UP: England wicketkeeper-batsman Matt Prior is completely deceived by a Muttiah Muralidaran (unseen) 'doosra' on the final day of the first Test at the Asgiriya Stadium in Kandy yesterday.

England fall to Murali

Sri Lanka take 1-nil lead



AFP, Kandy

Muttiah Muralidaran bowled two magical deliveries when it mattered most to hand Sri Lanka an 88-run win over a fighting England in the first Test here on Wednesday.

The off-spinner, who became Test cricket's most successful bowler in the first innings, got out Matt Prior and Ian Bell in the space of three deliveries with the second new ball to end England's spirited challenge.

The tourists, needing to bat out the final day for a draw after being set an improbable victory target of 350, were bowled out for 261 in the last hour of the match at the Asgiriya stadium.

Sri Lanka took a 1-0 lead in the three-match series going into the second Test, which opens at the Sinhalese Sports Club in Colombo on Sunday.

England, who resumed the final day at 9-1 in their second knock, slumped to 90-5 in the morning session before Bell (74) launched a heroic rescue attempt in the company of the lower order batsmen.

He put on 49 for the sixth wicket with debutant Ravi Bopara (34) and a defiant 109 for the seventh with wicketkeeper Prior (63) that threatened to frustrate Sri Lanka's victory bid.

Muralidaran, kept wicketless for 31 overs, struck in his second over with the new ball when he floated a straight one to Prior, who missed the line and was bowled.

Two balls later in a new over, Muralidaran bowled Bell to effectively seal his side's victory. Bell's knock followed his 83 in the first innings.

Muralidaran claimed a third wicket when he earned a lucky leg-before decision against Ryan Sidebottom from Pakistani umpire Asad Rauf with television replays showing a clear edge from the bat.

Fast bowler Lasith Malinga yanked Matthew Hoggard to signal Sri Lanka's thrilling victory in front of 7,000 spectators, including at least 3,000 travelling English supporters.

The seamers did the early damage as veteran left-armers Chaminda Vaas, playing his 100th Test, claimed the first three wickets of the innings and Dilhara Fernando chipped in with two.

Vaas, who dismissed opener Alastair Cook on Tuesday evening, put England on the back foot by removing captain Michael Vaughan in the morning's fourth over.

Vaughan groped for 25 balls to score five when he failed to take his bat out of harm's way and edged the out-swinger to wicket-keeper Prasanna Jayawardene.

In his next over, Vaas bowled nightwatchman James Anderson for 11 as England slipped to 27-3.

Kevin Pietersen showed no discomfort from a broken finger in

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Kirsten finally aboard



AFP, New Delhi

Former South Africa batsman Gary Kirsten has signed a two-year deal to coach India, a top cricket board official said Wednesday.

"Kirsten has signed the contract, he will take over the new assignment on March one next year," board secretary Niranjan Shah told AFP.

The deal was sealed after all the issues relating to Kirsten's appointment were sorted out Tuesday, paving the way for the former opener to occupy the hot-seat, vacant since the exit of Australian Greg Chappell in April last year.

Shah said Kirsten will meet the players in Bangalore, venue for India's third and final Test against Pakistan on December 8-12.

"Kirsten will be spending a couple of days with the Indian team in Bangalore during the third Test against Pakistan," he said.

"He will be with the Indian team

in Australia as a consultant for a couple of weeks before taking over full-time in March when India host South Africa."

India are to leave for Australia on December 17 to play four Tests and a limited-over tri-series, with Sri Lanka as the third team.

Kirsten, 40, told the cricinfo.com website that he would be honoured to take charge of the Indian team.

"It is a huge honour and I'm looking forward to the challenge with as much enthusiasm as any challenge I've ever faced. I know how big the job is and I know it won't be easy, but it's also something I really want to do, and do well," he said.

Kirsten, who quit international cricket in 2004 after scoring 7,289 runs in 101 Tests, also said he was excited about the prospect of India facing his home country in his first match as coach.

"That's exciting. I really don't think it will feel strange or odd. I will be doing everything I can to help India win. But Australia comes first and everybody's energy must be focused on producing success

on what is the hardest tour in cricket," he said.

Kirsten's appointment caps off months of speculation over who would be handed over the high-profile job following Chappell's exit in the wake of India's shock first-round exit from the World Cup in the Caribbean.

Three men were in temporary charge since then after South Africa's Graham Ford, who coaches English county team Kent, turned down an offer from the BCB.

Former all-rounder Ravi Shastri managed the team for the tour of Bangladesh in May and Chandu Borde, 73, took over during the visit to Ireland and England from July to September.

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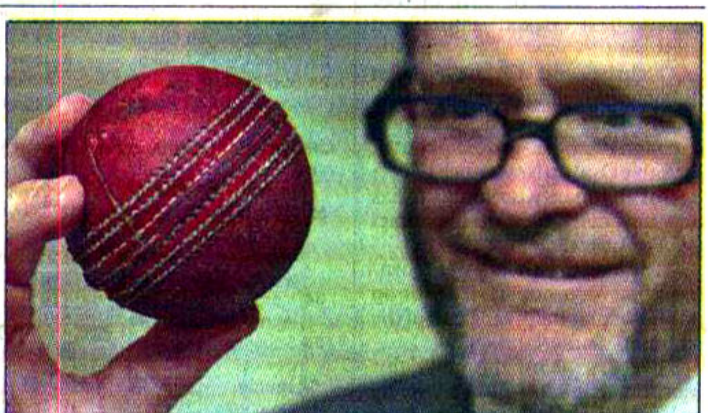


PHOTO: AFP

LOST AND FOUND: Cricket Australia's Peter Young on Wednesday shows the famous ball that Australian batsman Adam Gilchrist hit for his 100th Test six, a world record, at the Bellerive Oval in Hobart last month.

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