

BD-SL U-19 SERIES 2nd match today

SPORTS REPORTER

Bangladesh will look to stretch their lead in the five-match limited-overs series against visiting Sri Lanka when the two Under-19 sides face in the second match today at the Shaheed Chandu Stadium in Bogra.

Bangladesh, fresh from a come-from-behind 3-2 series win in Pakistan, lead 1-0 following their 13-run win in the first match against the Lankans on Wednesday.

The next three matches are scheduled for December 15, 18 and 20 also at the same venue.

Victory Day sports

SPORTS REPORTER

Four services teams confirmed the semifinals berths of the Victory Day Top-Five volleyball yesterday.

Bangladesh Army, who defeated Water Development Board 3-0 at the Dhaka Volleyball Stadium, will take on Bangladesh Rifles in tomorrow's second semifinal.

The first semi will be played between Bangladesh Air Force and Bangladesh Navy, who beat BDR 3-1.

BASKETBALL

Bangladesh Army booked a semifinal berth in the Total Victory Day basketball tournament outplaying BKSP 97-41 in the first semifinal at the Shaheed Suhrawardy Indoor National Stadium in Mirpur.

Bangladesh Navy were pitted against Josephites in the other semifinal.

TENNIS

UNB adds: The Prestige Bangla Victory Day tennis competition will begin today at the Ramna National Tennis Complex. Fourteen clubs will partake in seven events.

DC XI lift T20 title

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Munshiganj

DC XI clinched the Twenty20 cricket title defeating Munshiganj Press Club by 14 runs in the final at the local stadium here yesterday.

In reply to DC XI's 106 for six after electing to bat, the local Press Club reached 92 for the loss of six wickets.

Deputy Commissioner Monir Uddin distributed prizes after the final.

Ganguly rues missed tons

PTI, New Delhi

Batting lower down the order has denied him several centuries, says former India captain Sourav Ganguly, who feels VVS Laxman too has "suffered" in terms of scoring hundreds because of batting at numbers six.

"I have batted lower down the order for a lot of time and Rahul (Dravid) used to bat at number three and Sachin (Tendulkar) came at four. As a result, I had to bat at five or sometimes six and I missed quite a few hundreds because we did not have wicketkeeper-batsmen like Mahendra Singh Dhoni and Dinesh Kaarthik earlier," Ganguly told CNN-IBN.

"These guys support people batting at five or six. Bute me and (VVS) Laxman suffered in terms of getting hundreds," he added.

Tigers arrive

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Hotel, their address for the next ten days, past breathtaking greenery, lovely single-storey houses and livestock grazing the valleys on both sides of the road like you find in picture books. Adding to the atmosphere was the absence of a siren blowing police or security escort which just would not have fitted with the level of tranquility around.

There was just enough time for the players to get their luggage organised and get into training gear before they headed to Seddon Park which is a 10-minute walk from the hotel. On the way complete strangers came and said hello, inquired about who they were and wished them success.

There was an hour's session at the lush carpet-like turf of Seddon Park under fitness trainer Shane McDermott where the picket fences and green mounds are a throwback to the classical cricket ambience of the past. The players did some stretching and exercises and had a short football game to get rid of the jet lag. Tomorrow serious practice starts with nets scheduled at the same venue in the morning.

The Bangladesh team will play two practice matches against Northern Districts at Seddon Park on December 16 and 18 before returning to the ground on December 23 for a Twenty20 international against the Black Caps in aid of the Cyclone Sidr victims. The practice matches are due to start at 1pm and that's not a surprise as the sun usually sets around 8pm at this time of the year.



PHOTO: INTERNET
Australia captain Rickey Ponting (R) and his New Zealand counterpart Daniel Vettori pose with the Chappell-Hadlee Trophy ahead of the three-match ODI series with the first game at Adelaide today.

Pace troubled 'em: Anil

Cricket

AFP, Bangalore

India captain Anil Kumble revealed Wednesday it was his pace rather than spin that brought his team on the verge of an unlikely win against Pakistan in the third and final Test here before settling for a draw.

"It is good to finish with a five-wicket haul. I never realised that after 25 years I have to bowl medium-pace to get five wickets in Bangalore. My family and friends were there and it was great," he said.

Veteran leg-spinner Kumble took 5-60 with clever variations before Pakistan finished at 162-7 in bad light chasing an improbable 374-run target off 48 overs to salvage a draw on the fifth and final day.

India clinched the series 1-0 after winning the opening Test in New Delhi by six wickets and drawing the next two. It was their first Test series victory at home against Pakistan since 1980.

"It (bowling medium-pace) was planned before I went out. I decided it in the morning. There was no spin or bounce in the pitch and the only way to get batsmen out was through balls that kept low," said Kumble.

"You had to bowl a bit quicker so that the batsmen didn't have enough time to adjust. Maybe I should have done it in the first innings also."

Kumble defended his decision to bat an hour after the funf-break before declaring the second innings closed.

"Sourav is in the form of his life and I hope he carries it on and continues to score in Australia."

Ganguly was named man of the match for scoring 239 and 91. He was also adjudged man of the series. Yuvraj scored a career-best 169 in the first innings.

Pakistan captain Shoaib Malik said the turning point of the series was his team's below-par batting performance in the opening match in New Delhi, where they could not cross the 300-mark.

"We lost the series by playing badly on the third morning at Delhi. Had we scored more runs in the second innings things would have been different," said Malik, who missed the last two Tests due to an ankle injury.

The Pakistani skipper was all praise for Misbahul Haq and Kamran Akmal, who helped their team avoid the follow-on in the last two Tests. Misbah scored two centuries and Akmal one.

"Misbah and Akmal were outstanding in the series," he said.

"We lost two bowlers (Zaheer Khan and Munaf Patel) and two batsmen (Sachin Tendulkar and Mahendra Singh Dhoni) just before the game and I think Sourav and Yuvraj played brilliantly to take us to safety," he said.

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