

BCB condoles death of Nazimuddin

SPORTS REPORTER

Members of the Bangladesh Cricket Board (BCB) condole the passing away of Mr. Nazimuddin, groundsman of Sher-e-Bangla National Stadium in Mirpur.

Nazimuddin, 40, died at the early hours of yesterday died of liver-related complications at a hospital in Dhaka.

The BCB expresses deepest sympathy to the bereaved family of the deceased.

BCB grounds and facilities committee chairman Shafiqur Rahman Munna and other officials and staff paid their last respect to Nazimuddin at the Sher-e-Bangla National Stadium before his body was taken to his home district in Jamalpur for burial.

LOCAL SNIPPETS

SPORTS REPORTER

Ansar & VDP take on Viquarunnisa Noon School will play the opening encounter of the girls' twenty20 cricket tournament to be inaugurated at the Azampur Girls' School and College ground today.

Chittagong Grammar School, Sunbeams, MDC Model Institute and Azampur Girls' School and College are the four other participating teams.

Two matches will be played each day at 9am and 1.30pm with the final being played on March 12.

GIRLS' MINI-HANDBALL Suhnydale defended their crown with a convincing 17-3 victory over Scholastica in the final of the KFC-Pizza Hut girls' mini handball tournament at the Dhanmondi Women's Sports Complex yesterday.

Arora smashed in eight goals and Ramisa chipped in with three more. Aishwariya, who was later adjudged the player of the tournament, netted two out of the three goals for Scholastica.

In the top-sided match, the winners enjoyed a 7-1 first-half lead.

Both sides entered the final with big semifinals wins. Sunnydale crushed Maple Leaf International 5-0 in the first while Scholastica outclassed Ispahani Girl's School 8-1 in the other semifinal.

Later, in the third-place deciding match, Maple Leaf beat Ispahani Girls' School 8-2.

Transcom Foods Limited executive director Akku Chowdhury distributed prizes among the winners as chief guest. Bangladesh Handball Federation general secretary Asaduzzaman Kohinor, tournament committee chairman BM Shoaib and secretary Sajahuddin Ahmed were also present on the occasion.

GAIBANDHA CRICKET Our Correspondent: Gorsthanpara Krira Chakra trounced Abahani by four wickets in the Naheed Cotton First Division League at the local stadium.

Batting first, Abahani were bundled out for 110 runs in 39.4 overs to which Gorsthanpara replied with 111-4 in 31.5 overs.

In today's match, Braveheart Sporting Club face Jhankar Krira Chakra.

BUET VOLLEYBALL Sher-e-Bangla became champions beating Suharwardi in the BUET inter-hall volleyball competition final at the university ground on Tuesday.

Vice-chancellor Dr AMM Shafiqul handed trophies to the winners and runners-up.

NATIONAL HANDBALL The final round of the Exim Bank 18th National Men's Handball Championship begins today at the Outer Stadium.

Five matches will be held on the opening day with Rajshahi playing Kushtia in the opening match at 3 pm. ATN Bangla will telecast the opening match live. They will also telecast the semifinals and final.

Nine district teams, Bangladesh Rifles, Bangladesh Police and Bangladesh Ansar split into four groups will participate in the final phase.

Both the semi-final matches with group champions will be held on Mar 12 while the final and third-place decision matches on Mar 13 at the same venue.

GROUPINGS Group A: BDR, Faridpur and Natore. Group B: Police, Jessore and Chittagong. Group C: Ansar, Chittagong Metropolitan and Chapainawabganj. Group D: Dhaka, Kushtia and Rajshahi.

Sophia Gardens turning Swalec

CRICINFO, undated

Glamorgan have announced that they will be renaming Sophia Gardens the Swalec Stadium after agreeing a 1.5 million pound ten-year sponsorship deal.

"This is of enormous importance to Glamorgan Cricket Club," said chairman Paul Russell. "It is now an iconic stadium and everything we've planned has turned out. It is on time, on budget and looks stunning."

The 9.5 million dollar redevelopment will increase the capacity from 5,500 to 15,643.



Air Force Chief Air Marshal Shah Mohammed Ziaur Rahman hands over the prize to a winner of the Summit Cup Golf Tournament (Pro-Am) at the Kurmitola Golf Club on Friday. The two-day meet attracted some 387 professional and amateur golfers.

Treble no shock: Fleemo

CRICKET

REUTERS, Hamilton

England pace bowler Ryan Sidebottom's hatrick against New Zealand on the fourth day of the first Test on Saturday was no surprise to former New Zealand captain Stephen Fleming.

Fleming, Sidebottom's first victim and county captain at Nottinghamshire, said and had seen the amount of work the left-hander had put into his game during his six years in the Test wilderness.

"He is deserving of that," Fleming told reporters. "He has worked incredibly hard and I have known for some time the qualities he possesses."

"He has shown that consistently for some time, so our dressing room is not surprised."

"In a way it's spectacular to see a hatrick as well. It has breathed some life into the game that was meandering along."

Sidebottom had been on a split hatrick at the start of New

Zealand's second innings after taking the final two wickets of the first on successive balls, though he was unaware of it.

"Oh right, I didn't know that," the 30-year-old said when asked about whether he was aware of his first hatrick opportunity.

"I was just concentrating on hitting the right areas."

"I've not taken a hatrick at any level -- been on a hatrick two or three times in my career but never got one before ... I suppose I'll remember it for as long as I'm alive."

"Getting one in a Test match is even more special (but) it hasn't really sunk in yet."

The hatrick was the first by an England player in a Test since Matthew Hoggard against West Indies in April 2004.

Sidebottom, who was generating reverse-swing early in the innings, had Fleming caught behind point by a diving Alastair Cook for 66 on the final ball of his ninth over.

He then had Mathew Sinclair brilliantly caught by a diving Cook for two on the first ball of his next over, before he trapped Jacob Oram

in front for a duck to complete the hatrick.

New Zealand captain Daniel Vettori ensured he did not take four wickets in four balls.

"I got the ball to reverse and didn't really swing in the first five overs (and) the guys caught really well," said Sidebottom.

It was the first hatrick by a Test bowler since Irfan Pathan took three wickets on the last three balls of the first over of the match against Pakistan in Karachi in January 2006.

There have been just 37 hatricks in the long history of Test cricket. Sidebottom's was the 11th by an England player.

New Zealand slumped from 99 for one to 119 for seven after Sidebottom also had Jamie How caught for 39 and Monty Panesar had Brendon McCullum caught by Andrew Strauss for a duck and got Ross Taylor to spoon a return catch back to him for six.

The hosts finished the day on 147 for eight, an overall lead of 269 with two wickets remaining.

Sidebottom finished the day with figures of five for 37, his best so far in his Test career.

Sidebottom

FROM PAGE 17 alive I suppose. I've never had a hatrick before.

"To get it in a Test match is more special. I don't quite know what to say to be honest."

Fleming, who had been leading the New Zealand run charge and became Sidebottom's first victim when on 66, saw a positive spin-off.

"It's breathed some life into a game that was meandering along," Fleming said.

"While you'd love to be in a position where you could dictate a little bit more, it's probably the best thing that could have happened -- it's given us the best chance of winning."

He said a total of around 280 would offer opportunities for New Zealand spinners Daniel Vettori and Jeetan Patel and that it would be a "tough ask" to get a result.

"It is going to be difficult. We have still got to get two wickets," he added.

Dhiman's dream

FROM PAGE 17 Herschelle Gibbs, and brilliantly stumped Jean-Paul Duminy.

Dhiman, who plays for Chittagong in the National Cricket League, made 40 dismissals in the first-class competition and struck two fifties in the one-day competition.

Marion Jones reports to jail

AFP, Fort Worth

Former Olympic champion Marion Jones sentenced in January to six months prison for lying about her drug use, Friday reported to a Texas jail. US Bureau of Prisons spokeswoman Traci Billingsley said.

"Yes, that's confirmed," Billingsley said, saying the 32-year-old athlete reported shortly before noon to the Federal Medical Center-Carswell, a correctional facility in Fort Worth.

Jones, who has been stripped of the three gold and two bronze medals she won at the 2000 Sydney Olympics, was sentenced to six months in jail and two years of probation for lying to federal investigators about her use of performance-enhancing drugs and about a check-fraud scheme that involved her former partner - Tim Montgomery.

Jones had been told she had until March 11 to begin her sentence.

In sentencing Jones, US District Court Judge Kenneth Karas said the athlete had not made "a momentary lapse in judgment, a one-time mistake, but instead a repetition in an attempt to break the law," adding "nobody is above the legal obligation to tell the truth."

In court, Jones had asked the judge to spare her jail time for the sake of her two young sons.

Badda stun Victoria

SPORTS REPORTER

Badda Jagarani upset title contender Victoria Sporting Club 1-0 in their first Super Six encounter of the Metropolitan Senior Division Football at the Bangabandhu National Stadium yesterday.

Alamgir Kabir scored the match-winner in the 74th minute.

After the day's match, Badda improved their position in the table securing 22 points from 13 matches while Victoria remained on 25 from the same number of encounters.

The day's lone relegation league match between Arambagh and Mohakhali ended in a one-all draw at the Bir Shreshtha Shaheed Sepoy Mohammad Mostafa Stadium in Kamalapur.

Mona put Mohakhali ahead in the 5th minute only for Syed to restore parity for Arambagh in the 61st minute.

Sunrise will play Jatrabari in a Super Six match at the Kamalapur venue while Wari Club face City Club in a relegation league match at the Big Bowl today.

Arthur's cause for concern

CRICINFO, undated

Mickey Arthur, the South Africa coach, says he is "worried" about the addition of Paddy Upton to India's home series against South Africa, since the mental-conditioning specialist possesses inside knowledge on his key players.

Arthur hoped Kirsten, the retired South Africa opener and the team's former batting consultant, would do well as India's new coach "except against South Africa," but suggested that he was not so sure about Upton.

"I am worried about Paddy Upton," Arthur told Cricinfo. "I hope that he will respect the confidentiality of his relationship with the players, which is similar to a doctor-patient relationship because he has worked on the mental approach of most of our top six."

Kirsten took over as India coach on March 1 and recommended Upton to the Board of Control for Cricket in India (BCCI), which is finalising the paperwork for a full-time contract.

Upton, closely associated with Kirsten's academy in Cape Town, has worked with most of the current South Africa players, including Graeme Smith and Jacques Kallis. He was also South Africa's biokineticist and fitness trainer in the mid-to-late 1990s, and a fitness trainer with the team from 1994 to 1998.

Mehrab steers

FROM PAGE 17 BRIEF SCORES

VICTORIA: 162 all out in 42.4 overs (Farhad 49, Riyad 27; Kamrul 3-22, Munir 2-15). OLD DOHS: 165-4 in 33.5 overs (Mehrab 85*, Mahub 22; Jaffar 2-29). Result: Old DOHS won by six wickets.

BIMAN: 148 all out in 41.3 overs (Javed 36, Hasan 33*; Mukhter 3-20, Jubair 3-25). YOUNG PEGASUS: 134 all out in 35.2 overs (Sabbir 53; Robin 3-34, Kapali 3-32). Result: Biman won by 14 runs.

KALABAGAN: 205 all out in 48.4 overs (Sadat 57, Nahidul 34; Azim 3-37). SONARGAON: 182 all out in 47.3 overs (Saif 43, Fahadullah 34; Murad 4-36). Result: Kalabagan won by 23 runs.

It's ICL time again

CRICKET

CRICINFO, undated

With the International Cricket Council-backed Indian Premier League (IPL) tournament scheduled to kick off in April, the Indian Cricket League (ICL) has plenty at stake as its second edition kicks off in Panchkula today.

The organisers have ensured it's a grander affair than its inaugural version. The winning team stands to pocket 25 million rupees (625,000 dollars approximately), an increase of 5 million rupees from last year. There are two new teams, among which is an all Pakistani outfit, the Lahore Badshahs, and many new international stars, among whom the star attraction is undoubtedly Shane Bond. The tournament will be held in three locations instead of one -- Panchkula, Hyderabad and Gurgaon.

FRESH BLOOD The ICL has pulled off a huge coup by roping in Bond, who was among the best fast bowlers when fit. It has also signed on Damien Martyn, who will lead the other new team, the Ahmedabad Rockets, and a couple of batsmen with plenty of big-hitting ability, Justin Kemp and Lou Vincent. Besides the four, there are 20 other new overseas players in this year's tournament, including the 37-year-old Adam Parore, who has returned to the game after six years of retirement.

FIRST-EDITION STANDOUTS A few players who were impressive in the first edition of the tournament are back to try and repeat their act. Among those who impressed last year were: IAN HARVEY: The former Australia allrounder emerged as the top scorer of the tournament with 266

runs from seven matches at 44.33, and he also took his team, the Chandigarh Lions, to the summit clash, where they eventually lost to the Chennai Superstars.

MARVAN ATAPATTU: His strike-rate in ODIs is an ordinary 67.72, but Atapattu changed his game to suit the Twenty20 format. He emerged as the second-highest scorer, with 235 runs from six matches at 58.75, at a highly impressive strike-rate of 128.41.

ABDUL RAZZAQ: Razzaq continued from where he left off in international cricket, blasting 13 sixes, the most in the tournament, on his way to being the fifth-highest run-scorer with an aggregate of 181 at a strike-rate of 163.06.

THIRU KUMARAN: Kumaran, the Chennai-based right-arm seamer who made a couple of appearances in India's ODI team in the late 1990s, was the bowler of the tournament, taking 13 wickets from six matches at 11.76. That included a match-winning 6 for 21 against Mumbai Champs.

SHABBI AHMED: Frustrated with the Pakistan board's dithering over his selection and the constant question-marks over his action, Shabbir left it all behind and joined the Chennai Superstars, where he played a big part in their title triumph, claiming 10 wickets at 10.40, while taking the tournament's first hatrick in the final.

TEAMSTOWATCHOUTFOR Defending champions Chennai Superstars are capable of performing a repeat act. They have Harvey to play the lead role with the bat, while Kumaran and Shabbir have shown themselves to be very capable with the ball.

Lahore Badshahs are the only team that comprise players from one country, and this fact alone could give them an edge. The Badshahs are led by Inzamam-ul-Haq, who has shifted base from the

Hyderabad Heroes, and their bowling looks particularly strong, with the likes of Naved-ul-Hasan, Mohammad Sami, Mushtaq Ahmed and Saqlain Mushtaq to choose from. They also have Imran Nazir, the attacking opener, to give their innings a boost at the start. Himanshu Mody, the ICL's business head, told Cricinfo that the Lahore Badshahs will "add a whole new dimension to the league."

Last year's finalist, the Chandigarh Lions, captained by the inspirational Chris Cairns, have been strengthened by arrivals of Matthew Elliott, the former Australian domestic run machine, and Vincent, while Andrew Hall and Daryl Tuffey will lead their bowling.

FORMAT

A total of 34 matches -- including a best-of-three finals -- are in store between March 9 to April 7: the eight teams will play each other once, with the top four teams going through to the semi-finals. The inaugural match will feature a day-night encounter between the Ahmedabad Rockets and the Chandigarh Lions in Panchkula. There will be one match every evening, and two per day on most of the weekends. There will also be two more venues this time -- the Lal Bahadur Shastri Stadium in Hyderabad and the Teri Oval in Gurgaon.

In a move that will keep potential advertisers happy, the Zee network has capitalised on its recent tie-up with the Dubai-based Ten Sports channel, and will simultaneously show the matches on two channels, Zee Sports and Ten Sports, thereby guaranteeing a significant increase in viewership in India.

How this tournament pans out will indicate if the ICL can offer sustained competition to the more glamorous IPL, which will launch its first edition in April.

'Aussies past glory days'

CRICKET

AFP, Sydney

Australia's cricket glory days are over and the team must face up to a tougher future, leading commentators said Saturday after India's euphoric one-day series win over the world champions.

India's 2-0 tri-series finals win over Ricky Ponting's aging team has triggered an inquest into Australia's performance and fears the axis of global cricket supremacy had finally shifted.

Australia are now only fractionally in front of South Africa on the International Cricket Council rankings as the world's leading one-day nation after losing the best-of-three finals.

And with the retirement of wicketkeeper-batsman Adam Gilchrist, after last year's departure of bowling greats Shane Warne and Glenn McGrath, there is a sense the era of Australian domination is over.

One commentator noted that Australia, with an average age of 33, were confronted and affronted by a younger version of themselves in Mahendra Singh Dhoni's confident Indian team.

"If Ricky Ponting had ever wondered what tomorrow would look like, now he knows. It is staring Australian cricket, and its leader, in the face. The era of domination that it seemed might never end is over. The future has arrived," The Age's Tim Lanes said.

"Australia will continue to have the measure of most. The days are gone, though, of endless, predictable crushings of mismatched opponents," he added.

The Sydney Morning Herald's Peter Roebuck said India's economic boom has released a new sort of cricketer -- tough, independent,

materialistic and confident.

"Suddenly, India seemed to represent the future, Australia the past. Australia were confronted and affronted by a younger version of themselves."

"Australia have always had a strong and democratic cricketing culture. India used to depend on players steeped in the ethics and traditions of the game. Not any more."

Much has been made in the local media about the fall-out from the Australian team's racism charge against controversial Indian spinner Harbhajan Singh for abusing Andrew Symonds during the second Sydney Test in January.

Harbhajan was banned for three matches but the suspension was later overturned following an appeal hearing.

The relations between the two sides deteriorated as senior Australian batsman Matthew Hayden called Harbhajan an "obnoxious weed" on radio during the subsequent one-day series.

Roebuck said Australia were distracted by the row and also by the lucrative IPL, which starts next month, blaming Ponting for the loss of focus.

"Australia played like a team weighed down by worry. It was a long season full of incidents and speculation about IPL (Indian Premier League) and (whether to) tour Pakistan," Roebuck wrote.

"Whatever the right and wrongs of the Sydney Test, the Australians lost their equanimity and never recovered."

"The Australians allowed Harbhajan to get under their skin. It was a mistake, and the captain was responsible. Ponting had a poor summer. His form dipped and he allowed his side to become overheated."

The Australian newspaper also

attacked Symonds, urging him to curb his "big mouth."

"Symonds' big mouth either on the field or in print has been a significant cause of grief and embarrassment for Australian cricket in recent months," it said.

"It would be a great relief to everyone if he let his at times spectacular batting and fielding do the talking."

Pompey send

FROM PAGE 17 Ferguson's team lacked real threat up-front, but an injury to substitute Louis Saha in the pre-match warm-up left the United boss with few alternatives as his team struggled to worry their opponents in the second-half.

Pompey continued to hold firm, though, and they survived a real scare on 57 minutes when Nani's corner created three goalscoring opportunities for United.

Defender Nemanja Vidic's bullet header from Nani's cross was well-saved by James, but the loose ball fell to Tevez in the sixyard box. The Argentinean couldn't free himself to shoot on goal, though, and his half-hearted effort was blocked.

The loose ball fell to Ronaldo on the edge of the penalty area, but the Portuguese winger couldn't add to his 30 goals already this term as he shot wide from the edge of the area.

United's misses ultimately came back to haunt them on 78 minutes.

Anderson lost possession and Kuzczak, on as a substitute for the injured Van der Sar, hauled down Baros before being deservedly sent off.

Rio Ferdinand had to go in goal for United and he had no chance as Muntari's cool spot-kick left Ferguson's Treble dream in tatters and put Pompey within touching distance of their first FA Cup Final since 1939.

CROSSWORD By Eugene Sheffer

Crossword puzzle grid with clues for Across and Down words. Includes a solution time of 21 minutes.

Cryptoquip puzzle grid with letters and numbers. Includes the text: ZYCP H RIUCAYCAJ NXPXYCR, YXR RBYJJQXPV, FJCR YXR, VAHFIEHXJP JIENXE, XPBQIFC H BHUC HPF VJZP?, Yesterday's Cryptoquip: IF OUR FOURTH PRESIDENT HAD ALSO BEEN A PHYSICIAN, HE'D PROBABLY PRACTICE MADISON MEDICINE. Today's Cryptoquip Clue: R equals S.