



Did U Know?

When the rain comes at Wimbledon, the translucent cover is pulled out. It was first introduced onto the Centre Court in 1998, and weighs 1 ton - wet and dry.



Chris Gayle
(West Indies cricket captain)
"Shiv is a very experienced player. We know how tremendous he is. He had not been getting among the runs. To step up at this point in time, you have to give credit to him." On Shivnarine Chanderpaul.



TEN Sports
West Indies v Sri Lanka
First ODI
Live from 8:00pm

ZEE Sports
UEFA Cup Quarterfinal
Getafe v Bayern
Live from 12:30am (Friday)

ESPN
Sportscentre India
Sports News
Live at 8:30pm

Lancer Cup tees off today

SPORTS REPORTER

The 25th Lancer Cup Golf Tournament, sponsored by Rang Group, will begin today at the Kurmitola Golf Club.

Bangladesh Navy Chief Vice Admiral Sarwar Jahan Nizam will tee-off the prestigious meet as chief guest at 3pm.

He will also attend tomorrow's closing ceremony and distribute prizes.

Toshihiko Hattori, Corporate General Manager of Mitsubishi Motors Corporation, Japan will be present as special guest.

Tibet & Olympic torch relay are different issues

PTI, New Delhi

Indian Davis Cup captain Leander Paes, who has been invited for the Olympic torch relay, said he has not yet made up his mind in this regard but feels boycotting the event for political reasons was not right.

Paes, who would be participating in his fifth Olympics in Beijing, said the protests over China's handling of the Tibet issue should not have targeted the relay, which stands for peace and harmony.

"Olympics is very dear to my heart and I have been invited to carry the torch. Whether I accept it or not, you would know soon," Paes told reporters ahead of the Davis Cup tie against Japan starting Friday.

When asked whether the disruptions along the relay's international route by Tibetan and human rights activists were justified, Paes said the Games should not have been embroiled in the controversies.

"We have to recognise that there is a difference between the Olympic movement and the Tibetan movement... Mixing them is not correct. The Games are most important," he said.

"When my father (Vece Paes) collected his medal in Munich

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Ton-up Mehrab saves Academy

SPORTS REPORTER

Grameenphone Academy Cup
Mehrab Hossain slammed a hundred as GP-BCB National Cricket Academy survived a new ball scare to put up a decent total on the first day of the second four-day match against visiting South Africa Academy team yesterday.

Recovering from 48-3, the home team, which is one-up with an innings and 68 runs win from the first game at Jessore, finished the day on 295-8 after deciding to bat first at the Bishrestha Shahid Flight Lieutenant Matiar Rahman Stadium in Khulna.

NCA lost their first wicket in the second over of the day when opener Jahurul Islam was caught by Dane Vilas off pacer CJ de Villiers for a seven-ball duck and left-arm paceman Neil Wagner sent last match's centurion Imrul Kayes and skipper Nasiruddin Faruque back to the pavilion to take the upper hand.

Nayeem Islam, who also made a hundred in the first match, joined Mehrab to repair the early damage by adding 93 runs for the fourth wicket.

19-year-old right-arm pacerman Shadley van Schalkwyk took the wicket of Nayeem, who scored 32 off 89 balls with the help of

three boundaries.

Mehrab however got good support from Shamsur Rahman, who struck 58 off 135 balls that featured six fours and two sixes before he was bowled by de Villiers, to share 80-run in the fifth wicket stand.

Left-handed Mehrab scored 102 from 177 balls and his innings contained 15 boundaries before he offered a simple return catch to off-spinner Richard das Neves who also picked up the wicket of Test wicketkeeper Mushfiqur Rahim.

The right-hander Mushfiqur, who made a blazing half-century in the first game, was dismissed for three while Suhrawardi Shuvo played a vital hand, contributing 27 off 53 deliveries.

Wagner was South Africa Academy's most successful bowler with 3 for 64 while de Villiers took two wickets for 37 runs.

SCORES IN BRIEF

BCB NCA: First innings 295 for eight in 90 overs (Zahurul 0, Kayes 23, Nasiruddin 16, Nayeem 32, Mehrab 102, Shamsur 58, Mushfiqur 3, Shuvo 27 not out, extras; Wagner 3-64, de Villiers 2-37, Schalkwyk 1-21, Neves 2-42).



Liverpool's Dutch forward Ryan Babel (L) shrugs off Arsenal's Spanish midfielder Cesc Fabregas to score the fourth goal during their Champions League quarterfinal encounter at Anfield on Tuesday.

PHOTO: AFP

When bits fell to pieces

Cricket

OSMAN SAMI UDDIN

Bangladesh are not this bad. Surely they can't be. But they are still poor enough so that when they do have a bad day, it becomes, like today (Tuesday), an awful one. Mohammad Ashraful looks even younger than he is, and as the oldest member of his squad is not yet 26, it's perhaps not surprising that he appeared quite overwhelmed by night's end.

Ashraful rightly wants this squad to stick together over the next two to three years so they develop as a unit, but the same perhaps cannot be said about the final XI that turned out here. Continuity is an admirable aim in cricket selection, but picking the same XI as the one that played

and won the series against Ireland was unwise.

The rationale behind this side and the one that played Ireland is based on that curse of modern-day cricket: the multi-dimensional player. Like salesman who no longer sell but provide solutions, no longer are wicketkeepers just wicketkeepers. They now bat, preferably in cavalier fashion. Bowlers need to bat too, so that they can someday aspire to the giddy heights of that vital No.8 slot. And if they can't field, they can't play.

But, as Pakistan will no doubt vouch, a wicketkeeper who can just hold on to catches, is pretty useful too. Pakistan's Mansoor Amjad and India's Irfan Pathan, to name just two, are men who have almost sacrificed their primary bowling skill at the altar of multi-dimensionality. Bowlers who can

take wickets, as Bangladesh hopefully learned from today, are priceless regardless of whether or not they can hold a bat or a catch.

Bangladesh played essentially with just two specialist bowlers in Mashrafe Bin Mortaza and Abdur Razzak. The rest bowl some, bat a bit but can't do enough possibly with either. They used three bowlers as their fifth option, their ten overs leaking 106 runs.

How they could have done with another Mortaza, who provided some real zest through his ten overs, on a pitch that wasn't as cruel to seam as first appearances had suggested. Instead Shahadat Hossain, who scared South Africa in a Test very recently, and who looks the real deal, sat out, as he did in the clean sweep against Ireland because he can't bat or field. Syed

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PLAYING THE NATURAL GAME: Bangladesh captain Mohammad Ashraful ends his 19-ball stay with a hoick across the line as Pakistan seamer Rao Iftikhar watches the balls fly in the first one-day international at the Gaddafi Stadium in Lahore on Tuesday night.

PHOTO: AFP

Sultan 51% happy

Football

SPORTS REPORTER

After a long time Bangladesh Football Federation (BFF) president SA Sultan looked a little short of confidence, which is totally uncharacteristic of the man every one knows.

After five years at the hot seat of football, the outgoing BFF chief met the media just 18 days before the election for what he called a 'self-explanation' of his deeds.

"No one is perfect and I am no exception. I have had success and failure as the BFF president but as I go, I feel I should leave a guideline for the future," Sultan told reporters at the BFF Bhaban yesterday.

Whether Sultan will compete in the April 28 polls still remained an enigma. He has repeatedly said he personally has no wish to contest and his family is also reluctant.

He, however, might go for it if he feels 'he is needed' for the job.

"I have said I do not wish to contest. But its also true I have never said I won't contest," remarked the BFF boss avoiding a real answer when he was asked whether it was his outgoing meeting or start of the campaign for the



SA SULTAN

new election.

It was surprising to see Sultan alone at the briefing but he informed he had invited Anwarul Haque Helal, who resigned as general secretary, and the acting general secretary Manzoor Hossain Malu.

"Helal refused to come. Malu was supposed to be here but I could not contact him today. In fact, as chief executives, they would have been able to give more facts to you. That's why I wanted them."

"Still, in an organisation like this, the president has to take all responsibilities," said Sultan who claimed success in organising a number of tournaments in five years as well as winning goal projects of FIFA, reintroducing school football and youth training and hosting AFC's inaugural Challenge Cup.

He, however, admitted that for the past couple of years, football was hardly on the pitch, frustrating players as well as fans.

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U-15 squad for WI named

SPORTS REPORTER

Bangladesh Cricket Board (BCB) announced a 14-member team yesterday to take part in the Clico International Under-15 Challenge competitions in the West Indies.

Iktedar Nazeef Ahmed, youngest brother of national opener Shahriar Nafees, has been named captain and Liton Kumar Das was made his deputy for the eight-team tournament to be held from April 19 to May 4.

The participating teams are West Indies, Pakistan, Kenya, Zimbabwe, Ireland, Holland, Bangladesh and the International Cricket Council (ICC) Americas team, comprising players from Bermuda, Canada, Cayman Islands and The Bahamas.

Matches will be played in Trinidad and Tobago, Grenada, Guyana, Barbados and St Kitts, and will be the first of its kind since the Costcutter Under-15 championships that was won by the West Indies in England in 2000.

The tournament will start with a knockout phase from April 19 to 24 and the league competition runs from April 26 to May 4.

Bangladesh Under-15 side is scheduled to leave Dhaka on April 15.

SQUAD

Iktedar Nazeef Ahmed (captain), Liton Kumar Das (vice-captain), Ratnak Shaha, Anisur Rahman, Mehedi Hasan, Ahmedul Kabir, Khaza Khairuddin, Rakim Ahmed, Shihabuddin Ahmed, Shahriar Islam, Didar Hossain, Nasum Ahmed, Jasimuddin and Asif Hasan.

Kalabagan relegated

SPORTS REPORTER

Kalabagan Krira Chakra were relegated from the Premier League yesterday after meekly surrendering to Young Pegasus by four wickets in a playoff match at the Sher-e-Bangla National Stadium in Mirpur.

Young Pegasus's win meant the winner of their match against Sonargaon on April 11 would stay afloat in the top league while the loser would join Kalabagan in next season's First Division.

Opting to bat first, Kalabagan failed to make any impression with the bat for the second match in a row, being routed out for 128 in 42.1 overs. Young Pegasus almost made a mess of their chase but restored themselves to score 130-6, with six overs to spare.

Captain Jubair Ahmed, who bowls medium-pace, took five wickets including those of big hitters Nazmul Sadat (20) and Shahbaz Butt (0) as the very 'young' Young Pegasus side bowled with discipline. He ended with figures of 5-27 from 10 overs.

Paceman Mamun Hossain took two while Mukhtar Ali, Nazmul Islam and Sabbir Rahman took one apiece. Only Kalabagan's Indian recruit Brig Chandra Dey was unbeaten on 36 off 71 balls with the help of three boundaries.

Rokibul Hasan took three wickets

Liverpool win a thriller

REUTERS, Liverpool



Liverpool beat Arsenal 4-2 in a classic Champions League battle at Anfield on Tuesday to clinch their quarterfinal tie 5-3 on aggregate and reach the semifinals for the third time in four seasons.

Their opponents at the end of the month will again be Chelsea who they defeated at the same stage in 2005 and last season.

In a match that will rank as one of the best played in European competition, Liverpool came back from the dead after Arsenal appeared to have clinched the tie on away goals with only six minutes to play.

But Liverpool's indefatigable belief in themselves on European nights at Anfield saw them turn the tie with Steven Gerrard smashing home an 85th minute penalty and substitute Ryan Babel wrapping up a memorable win with a stoppage time goal.

Arsenal who were superb for the opening half hour playing football worthy of European champions, took the lead through Abou Diaby after 13 minutes.

Liverpool fought back with a header from Sami Hyypia on the

half hour and a stunning shot on the turn from Fernando Torres in the 69th minute to take a 2-1 lead on the night and 3-2 on aggregate.

A breakaway by substitute Theo Walcott which saw him skate past four Liverpool players six minutes from time set up Emmanuel Adebayor to make the score 2-2 -- 3-3 on aggregate and Arsenal ahead on away goals.

Liverpool got a lifeline a minute later when Arsenal defender Kolo Toure tugged Babel's arm to concede a penalty and Gerrard, who had not had the best of games, scored to put Liverpool 3-2 ahead.

Babel sealed the win with his stoppage time goal to finally ease the tension at Anfield which was almost unbearable throughout an absorbing, enthralling encounter.

Liverpool manager Rafael Benitez praised his side's strength of character as they twice faced expulsion from the competition before pulling through against an Arsenal side they were meeting for the third time in seven days.

"This will go down as a great European night," he told reporters.

"Arsenal played well in the first half and then there were six goals and we won, so our supporters will be happy."

Arsenal manager Arsene Wenger blamed Swedish referee Peter Frojdeldt for awarding

Liverpool the penalty and his own defence for some naive play.

"We have a feeling of disappointment and injustice. At the moment it is difficult because the whole dressing room is down," Wenger said.

"The game is over for us. It was down to a dodgy decision, I believe, from the referee. Over the two games it was difficult to swallow. It was a double disappointment because all the big decisions went against us."

Arsenal made a blistering start, putting Liverpool under pressure from the kickoff with Alexandr Hleb and Cesc Fabregas taking control of the midfield.

Benitez appeared to have got his team selection wrong by playing Gerrard wide out on the left.

The strike partnership of Torres and Peter Crouch also failed to click at first and it was not until Gerrard moved into a more familiar central position after 25 minutes that Liverpool began to come back into the game.

By then the visitors, who had to score to have any chance of advancing following last week's 1-1 draw at the Emirates in the first leg, were a goal ahead and looking unassailable.

Hleb set Diaby up to score with a powerful angled drive from the

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Lanka's WC starts here

First ODI against Windies today

Cricket

AFP, Port of Spain

Sri Lanka will use the three-match one-day international series against West Indies which opens here on Thursday to kick-start their preparations for the 2011 World Cup.

Sri Lanka have made sweeping changes to the squad which drew the preceding two-Test series 1-1 with their hosts, and seven new players have been included to boost their stocks.

"There are a lot of youngsters, and what we are trying to do is develop a team for the next World Cup," Sri Lanka captain Mahela Jayawardene said.

"We are going to try a few guys, some exciting youngsters. We want to be competitive against West Indies and see where we are in terms of our preparation for the World Cup."

"It's going to be a very good series because West Indies are a very good one-day unit as well."

Joining the squad for the ODI series are openers Upul Tharanga and Chamara Kapugedera, batsmen Ajantha Mendis, Mahela Udawatte, and Jehan Mubarak, all-rounder Kaushalya Weeraratne, and leg-spinner Malinga Bandara.

They have replaced Michael Vandort, Malinda Warnapura, Thilan Samaraweera, Prasanna Jayawardene, Muttiah Muralidaran, Ishara Amerasinge, and Chanaka Welegedara.

"Test cricket and ODI cricket are totally different, and you need to

totally focus yourself on the ODIs differently," Jayawardene said.

"We've got new guys coming into the set-up. Our challenge is to try and blend quickly as possible, get them going and play some good cricket. We're looking forward to it."

Sri Lanka will jointly host the 2011 World Cup with India, Pakistan, and Bangladesh, and

Jayawardene disclosed that his side is again setting itself the goal of reaching the Final as they did in the 2007 version in the Caribbean where they lost to three-time defending champions Australia.

"Cricket is going to go on, and players will come and go," he said. "We just need to make sure we have

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WEST INDIES SMILE: Daren Powell (L) laughs while coach John Dyson gives instructions during training at the Queens' Park Oval in Port of Spain on Tuesday.

PHOTO: AFP