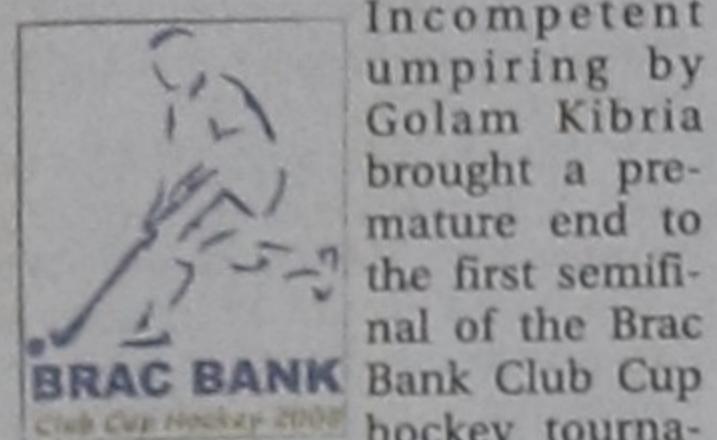


## Fighting mars semi

SPORTS REPORTER



Incompetent umpiring by Golam Kibria brought a premature end to the first semifinal of the Brac Bank Club Cup hockey tournament yesterday.

Kibria, who failed to control the players of archrivals Abahani and Mohammedan throughout the proceedings, blew the final whistle with less than two minutes left and the teams locked 1-1.

Favourites Abahani took a 1-0 first-half lead through Rocky from the first penalty corner of a lacklustre match at the Maulana Bhasani National Hockey Stadium while the young and energetic Mohammedan equalised in the 68th minute.

According to bylaws, the match will restart at 3pm for the remaining one and half minutes (official time) and go into the tiebreakers if the result remains a draw.

Abahani stick wielders protested vehemently and threatened both the umpires as the match was stopped for about 20 minutes.

When everyone was feeling that the match could be started, Kibria blew the final whistle much to the surprise of all.

"I felt my life was at risk. So I refused to continue the game. Had it started, both teams would chase me," said Kibria before rushing to the tent.

The tournament committee took the decision last night and cautioned the players involved in the incidents.

The second semifinal between Usha Krira Chakra and Sonali bank will begin at 4pm.

Defending champions Mohammedan's equaliser was credited to Al Masum but it appeared that a long free-hit by Mohammedan's Pintu from the right side went in off Abahani defender Shamsuddin Tuhin's stick.

But Kibria, who appeared to walk toward fellow umpire Latif Rahman to have a talk, suddenly signalled a goal.

Abahani stick wielders protested vehemently and threatened both the umpires as the match was stopped for about 20 minutes.

When everyone was feeling that the match could be started, Kibria blew the final whistle much to the surprise of all.

"I felt my life was at risk. So I refused to continue the game. Had it started, both teams would chase me," said Kibria before rushing to the tent.

Mohammedan captain Ariful Haque Prince kicked him in the back while the black and whites were protesting a decision in the first half and he again pushed Kibria after the break. After twice failing to show the nerve to penalise the Mohammedan skipper, Kibria was third time brave when he only showed a green card to caution the striker.

Abahani players also pushed him for getting decisions their way to interrupt play often. Referee Latif Rahman later claimed Abahani wanted Kibria removed from the pitch and let the third umpire stand for him.

"We returned to play after officially lodging our protest to the tournament committee secretary (Ehtesham Sultan) but the umpire ended the match. We told the tournament committee to see video footage to confirm whether it was a goal or not," said Abahani coach Mahbub Harun.



YOU ARE NOT THE BOSS: A combo picture shows (L) Mohammedan captain Ariful Haque Prince (in the circle) is kicking umpire Golam Kibria in an ugly protest against a ruling while (R) Abahani's Russel Mahmud Jimmy threatens to slap the same hapless umpire during the two heavyweights' semifinal clash of the Brac Bank Club Cup hockey tournament at the Maulana Bhasani National Hockey Stadium yesterday. Kibria eventually left the field, with two minutes remaining in the clock, in fear of more harassment as almost all his decisions during the ill-tempered match were greeted with animosity.



PHOTOS: STAR

## Hopes run high

Gen Moeen lays foundation stone of NCA



SPORTS REPORTER

The foundation stone of the much-desired Grameenphone-Bangladesh Cricket Board (BCB) National Cricket Academy (NCA) was laid yesterday with a promise that all initiative would be taken to make the Sher-e-Bangla National Stadium a pure sporting arena.

National Sports Council (NSC) chairman and Chief of Army Staff General Moeen U Ahmed assured after laying the foundation stone for the academy building that the shops around the stadium would be removed gradually to give the stadium a sporting atmosphere.

"You will be happy to know that the NSC has given the Sher-e-Bangla National Cricket Stadium to Bangladesh Cricket Board for 15 years. We have also decided to close down all the shops around the stadium. Also, the vacant spaces around this venue will be handed over to the BCB," he said in his brief speech.

It came as a refreshing announcement from Moeen as there has been a lot of talk about the commercial usage of the stadium, always looking indecent to see the shops around the venues.

He thanked BCB and Grameenphone officials for coming forward to develop the country's cricket with this academy and also said that he was looking forward to see the stadium a pure sporting arena.

ward to see the construction of the academy building be completed by April 2009.

"I would like to thank Grameenphone for coming forward wholeheartedly and spending Tk 60 million on the academy and I am sure the rest of the amount needed will come from the BCB and other sponsors interested in seeing this academy get finished on time," said Moeen.

SEE PAGE 18 COL 6



National Sports Council chairman and Chief of Army Staff General Moeen U Ahmed (L) and Bangladesh Cricket Board president Maj Gen Sina Ibn Jamali (R) offer munajat while Grameenphone chief executive Andres Jensen looks on during the foundation stone laying function at the Sher-e-Bangla National Stadium in Mirpur yesterday.

## Rajshahi lights for tri-series

STAFF CORRESPONDENT, Rajshahi

Four hundred flood light bulbs of Rajshahi Divisional Stadium are being taken to Mirpur Sher-e-Bangla National Stadium in Dhaka for holding the day-night tri-series in June.

The decision was taken in order to prepare the Mirpur venue eligible for the international cricket match in a low cost of about Tk 2 crore. For holding international cricket matches, there must be 2200 lax lights (light unit) from the floodlight towers, but the Mirpur venue now has only 800 lax lights, as it was prepared as a football stadium.

The present floodlights of Mirpur Stadium are eligible for holding football matches, not for cricket. This is why, floodlight bulbs of Rajshahi will be taken to Mirpur for a short period of time, said Badruddin Ahmed, deputy director, National Cricket Council of Rajshahi.

"This would save around Tk 10 crore for fresh purchase of floodlights," he said.

Activities for taking the bulbs have already started as concerned officials visited the spots and figured out methods of transferring the bulbs, he informed adding that the bulbs would be reinstalled at Rajshahi at end of the international matches.

It was learned that NEO Sports, television rights holders of any international match held in Bangladesh, have asked for the lights since India have pressed to play under lights.

Earlier Bangladesh Cricket Board sought permission of National Cricket Council for the shifting of bulbs and the plan was approved last week.

The floodlight shifting works will be ended with June 1. The tri-nation one-day series among India, Pakistan and Bangladesh is scheduled to be held between June 8 and 15.

## Boots call to vote for Amin

SPORTS REPORTER

A group of former and current footballers called the councillors to vote for Maj Gen (retd) Amin Ahmed Chowdhury at this month's election of the Bangladesh Football Federation (BFF).

Speaking at a press conference at the NSC conference room yesterday, former national footballer Dewan Shamsul Arefin Tutul said Amin was the better candidate considering the 'reality' of the country.

Amin will compete former national captain Kazi Salahuddin in the April 28 polls for the president post.

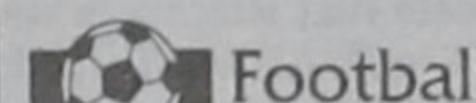
"We don't have any question about Salahuddin's honesty. But he has failed to prove his ability as an organiser as he had to resign as BFF vice-president," said Salahuddin's one-time national team colleague Golam Sarwar Tipu.

"The men who were responsible for his resignation, we believe, are with him now. So his candidature is questionable," stated Tipu.

Runman Wali Bin Sabir said that they stood behind Salahuddin at the start but had to leave him.

"The committee that destroyed football in the past years is with him now. How can Salahuddin revive the

## Salahuddin cleared



SPORTS REPORTER

Kazi Salahuddin and his fellow national footballers Ashrafuldin Ahmed Chunnu and Golam Rabbani Helal were cleared yesterday as candidates for the April 28 election of the Bangladesh Football Federation (BFF).

The complaints brought by BFF councillor Shamsul Haque Chowdhury that the three footballers had not filled up their nomination papers properly and tried to hide their conviction under the criminal offence, were dismissed by the election commission last night following a hearing.

Chief election commissioner Mesbahuddin Ahmed said that the matter had been settled earlier. "If it was delayed, why the election commission accept the com-

plaints and served notice to the three BFF councillors?" he questioned.

"How can one complain about one's nomination before its submission?" he added.

Salahuddin, who looked a bit depressed, refused to make any comments. "I never thought I would have to make comments on this."

Salahuddin had told The Daily Star two years back that the 17 days he and Chunnu were incarcerated in the Jessore jail, was still the most painful experience in his life.

It was the same incident that saw their Abahani colleagues Helal and Kazi Anwar also being imprisoned after the then military-ruler found the four players guilty in a one-day trial under the Marshal Law violence following a match against Mohammedan in 1982.

SEE PAGE 18 COL 1



Kazi Salahuddin (C) along with his lawyer Barrister Tania Amir (R) and the other two defendants Golam Rabbani Helal (L) and Ashrafuldin Ahmed Chunnu (2nd L) enter the BFF Bhaban to attend a hearing yesterday.

## PCA clinch Academy Cup

SPORTS REPORTER

Sensible batting from Nasir Hossain and Mushfiqur Rahim was not good enough for GP-BCB National Cricket Academy (NCA) to turn the table on Pakistan Cricket Academy (PCA) in the Academy Cup final at the Sher-e-Bangla National Stadium yesterday.

The home side's hopes of pulling off a surprise in the final after losing both the league matches were dashed when Nasir Hossain was run out while attempting to take a risky single and Tigers wicketkeeper Mushfiq was dismissed in the next over.

The local Academy side lost their last four wickets for two runs to suffer a 39-run defeat, as they were bundled out for 237 runs in 46.3 overs in reply to Pakistan Academy's 276 which was built around Khurram Manzoor's hundred.

PCA made a bad start in reply to the fighting total when Imrul Kayes was trapped by Anwar Ali in the first over but Shamsur Rahman and Farhad Hossain repaired the early damage by sharing 57 runs for the second wicket before a mini-

collapse saw them reach 124-5.

Mushfiq joined in-form Nasir Hossain and Mushfiqur Rahim was not good enough for GP-BCB National Cricket Academy (NCA) to turn the table on Pakistan Cricket Academy (PCA) in the Academy Cup final at the Sher-e-Bangla National Stadium yesterday.

Speaking at a press conference at the NSC conference room yesterday, former national footballer Dewan Shamsul Arefin Tutul said Amin was the better candidate considering the 'reality' of the country.

Amin will compete former national captain Kazi Salahuddin in the April 28 polls for the president post.

"We don't have any question about Salahuddin's honesty. But he has failed to prove his ability as an organiser as he had to resign as BFF vice-president," said Salahuddin's one-time national team colleague Golam Sarwar Tipu.

"The men who were responsible for his resignation, we believe, are with him now. So his candidature is questionable," stated Tipu.

Runman Wali Bin Sabir said that they stood behind Salahuddin at the start but had to leave him.

"The committee that destroyed football in the past years is with him now. How can Salahuddin revive the

But it was the visiting Academy's captain Latif who put the local bowlers to the sword by smashing two fours and five sixes during his blazing 81 made in 79 balls.

Captain and left-arm spinner Mehrab Hossain captured three wickets for 59 runs in 10 overs.

The two teams will travel to Bogra today to play two-match four-day matches at the Shaheed Chandu Stadium.

EARLIER, RAHEED MAJEED GAVE THE VISITORS A FLYING START AGAINST THE LOCALS.

PAKISTAN CRICKET ACADEMY: 276 for six in 50 overs (Raheed 43, Khurram 107, Shehzad 31, Khalid 81, Asad 2 not out, Naeem 1, Anwar 2, Amir 0 not out, extras 9; Mahbubul 1-58, Shuv 1-42, Dollar 1-53, Mehrab 3-35).

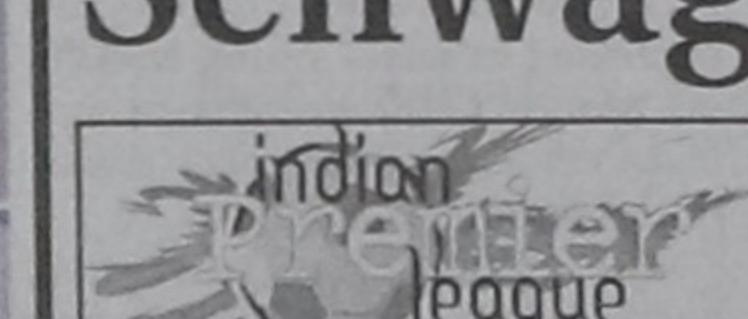
NATIONAL CRICKET ACADEMY: 237 all out in 46.3 overs (Imrul 4, Shamsur 37, Farhad 26, Nadir 7, Mehrab 22, Nasir 52, Mushfiq 56, Dollar 7, Shuv 5, Mahbubul 0, Nazmul 3 not out, extras 18; Anwar 2-44, Amir 1-42, Yasir 2-35, Imad 1-50, Shehzad 3-35).

RESULT: PAKISTAN CRICKET ACADEMY won by 39 runs.

MAN-OF-THE-MATCH: KHURRAM MANZOOR.

MAN-OF-THE-SERIES: KHALID LATIF.

## Sehwag mauls Deccan



TEN Sports

UEFA Cup

Rangers v Fiorentina

Live from 4:40am (Friday)

SET Max

Indian Premier League

Deccan Chargers v Rajasthan Royals

Live from 7:30pm

ESPN

Sportscentre India

Sports News

Live at 8:30pm

STAR Sports

Monte Carlo Tennis Masters

Round of Last 16

Live from 2:00pm



PHOTO: STAR

A WELL GROOMED TEAM: Farzana Shakil's Makeover Salon in Gulshan was agog last evening with a very excited clientele. Prior to their departure for Sri Lanka, the players of the Bangladesh women's cricket team are being treated to hair makeovers of their choice as a complimentary sendoff gift and good wishes from the makeover artist. As the elegantly turned out players left the salon sporting their newly acquired look, one thing was certain: whatever the outcome of the tournament will be, the Bangladeshi girls will turn out to be the most well-groomed team in the tournament.

SEE PAGE 18 COL 1

## Rakib still on top

SPORTS REPORTER

Grand Master Abdullah Rakib won his fourth round board against International Master Enamul Hossain Rajib to maintain solo lead in the 34th National Chess Championship at the federation hallroom yesterday.

Rakib secured four points while Grand Master Ziaur Rahman and FM Minhzuddin Ahmed Sagar followed him with 3.5 points each.

Zia beat Mohammad Abdul Malek and Sagar defeated FM Mohammad Javed.

In the other matches, GM Reefat Bin Sattar beat Sohel Chowdhury,