

## Under-15s go down in semis

SPORTS REPORTER

Bangladesh Under-15 cricket team's campaign ended when they Pakistan beat them by six wickets in the semifinal at the Clico International Under-15 Cricket Championship at La Sagesse Park in Grenada on Thursday.

The winners will face West Indies in the final tomorrow after the hosts made it to the final crushing Malaysia by eight wickets on the same day.

Bangladesh lost a golden opportunity to enter the finals of the competition after they were bowled out for 126 in 47.5 overs. Only Didar played a top knock, scoring 66.

The Pakistan Under-15 side team centered their target in 31.4 overs for the loss of four wickets with opener Mohammad Babar contributing 64 and Mohammad

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## Zia stays atop

SPORTS REPORTER

Grandmaster Ziaur Rahman defeated Debaraj Chatterjee in the 11th round of the 34th National Chess Championship yesterday to stay atop the points table.

Zia, who played with white pieces, won after 35 moves to extend his collection to nine points after 10 games.

International Master Enamul Hossain Rajib was second with eight points while FIDE Masters Abu Sufian Shakil and Minhajuddin Ahmed jointly at third place with 7.5 points.

In other 11 round matches, Shakil stunned GM Reefat Bin Sattar, Rajib beat FM Mahfuzur Rahman Emon, Sagar drew with fourth-placed GM Abdullah Al Rakib, FM Mohammed Javed defeated FM Abdul Malek, and Monir Hossain shared points with Sohail Chowdhury.



## Did U Know?

The first chessboard with alternating light and dark squares appeared in Europe in 1090.



## What to WATCH

- SET Max**  
 Indian Premier League  
 Deccan Chargers v Royal Challengers Bangalore  
 Live from 3:30pm  
 Kings XI Punjab v Kolkata Knight Riders  
 Live from 7:30pm
- ESPN**  
 English Premier League  
 Man United v West Ham  
 Live from 5:40pm  
 Reading v Tottenham  
 Live from 10:00pm
- STAR Sports**  
 English Premier League  
 Fulham v Birmingham  
 Live from 7:55pm  
 Bolton v Sunderlands  
 Live from 10:00pm
- Primera Liga**  
 Atletico Madrid v De Huelva  
 Live from 12:30am (Sunday)  
 Real Zaragoza v Deportivo  
 Live from 2:00am (Sunday)



## TALK TURKEY



**Sir Alex Ferguson**  
 (Manchester United manager)  
 "He is one of the great players, he came through the ranks at the club and I am so pleased for him."  
 On Paul Scholes.

## It's just a rumour!

Football

SPORTS REPORTER

The employees of the Bangladesh Football Federation (BFF) spent a very panicky May Day due to a rumour that the newly elected executive committee has asked all the staff to resign.

The fear gripped the long-serving workers till yesterday but



BFF president Kazi Salahuddin (R) and senior vice-president Abdus Salam Murshedi talking with ailing former footballer Ching Hiang Maung Mari at Square Hospital yesterday.

BFF president Kazi Salahuddin killed the rumour saying that he or his committee has done no such thing.

"It's pure misunderstanding. I want to know the particulars of the whole staff, so I have given a directive that all the employees submit their brief bio-data," Salahuddin told the Daily Star last night.

"I have to know who is good for what and where I can place them during my tenure to get the maxi-

mum. Some of the staff may even get promotion. In fact, I am not aware of the qualifications of the members of the BFF staff.

"I have also told that those who are not interested to work with this committee can resign.

"People must have misunderstood this move," added the former national footballer, who was elected president on Monday.

It was learned that vice-president Manzoor Hossain Malu conveyed the message to the workforce of football's governing body in the country on Wednesday in presence of the president.

The message was misinterpreted and everyone was frightened thinking that their jobs were at stake. When the staff wanted confirmation, they came to know about the fact from the officials.

Salahuddin even called a staff and said that his message was misunderstood. "I'm not here to sack someone," Salahuddin was quoted by the staff.

It was also learned that Salahuddin has already requested AFC vice-president and FIFA development officer Manuil Fernando, who was in Dhaka to supervise the BFF election, to reduce fees of a special FIFA course on management for a few of the staff.

"It's true we panicked at the start. But the committee actually wants to know our present status. So we have been told to give some information in writing, that is designation, qualification, how long we have been working for the post and a few more particulars,"

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## Booters off to Bishkek

SPORTS REPORTER

The national football team left Dhaka for Kyrgyzstan capital Bishkek yesterday morning to take part in the AFC Challenge Cup qualifiers.

The 11th hour withdrawal of Laos means only three teams will compete for one qualification spot for the 8-team finals to be held in the south Indian city Hyderabad from July 10-August 10.

There is no change in the kick-off date and Bangladesh play their South Asian opponents Afghanistan in the opening match on May 5 at the Bishkek Central Stadium.

Hosts Kyrgyzstan, who recently lost to Oman 2-0 in a friendly international, will lock horns against Afghanistan two days later and meet Bangladesh in the final group game on May 9.

This is the first time the

Bangladesh Football Federation (BFF) has taken the decision to send the coach as the leader of the squad as national coach Abu Yusuf was named manager. The 21-member side also includes assistant coach Golem Rabbani Chhoton and a physician.

Hassan Al Mamun will captain the side, which flew by a Gulf Air flight and will have stopovers at Bahrain and Istanbul on way to the central Asian nation, where they were scheduled to land early morning today.

Meanwhile, Kyrgyzstan coach Nematjan Zakirov announced a 23-member squad for the Challenge Cup qualifiers.

Zakirov, whose side blanked Bangladesh 3-0 in their only previous meet in the Nehru Cup in India last year, was satisfied with his team's show against Oman despite a defeat.

"The team have performed well

and I would like them to continue their good show in the qualifiers," he told the star-af.com.

The list includes 11 players from Kyrgyz Cup holders Abdysh-Ata while 10 players found their way into the team from league champions and AFC President's Cup winners Dordoi-Dynamo.

**SQUADS**  
**BANGLADESH:** Goalkeepers: Aminul Haq, Bipal Bhattacharya; defenders: Hassan Al Mamun (captain), Ariful Islam, Wali Faisal, Rajani Kanta Barman, Atiqur Rahman Mishu, Mofazzel Hossain Saikat, Arup Kumar Baidya; midfielders: Arman Aziz, Enamul Haq Sharif, Zahed Parvez, Faisal Mahmud, Matuf Ahmed, Mamunul Islam Mamun; forwards: Mehdi Hasan Ujjal, Mohammad Robin and Zahid Hasan Emily.  
**KYRGYZSTAN:** Goalkeepers: Maksim Agapov, Vladislav Volkov;

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Coach Abu Yusuf (second from left) and the national footballers wait at the departure lounge of Zia International Airport yesterday for their trip to Kyrgyzstan for the AFC Challenge Cup qualifiers.

## Marsh pilots Punjab



CRICINFO, undated

There were plenty of star batsmen on show but the two best innings of an absorbing encounter came from two youngsters. Shaun Marsh's unbeaten 84 on his IPL debut, carrying Kings XI Punjab to a comfortable seven-wicket win -- their third on the trot -- and fourth place in the points table, followed Rohit Sharma's 76, which lifted the Deccan Chargers to a respectable 164.

Each side also saw cameos from more experienced hands; VVS Laxman provided the early aggression for Deccan with a typically fluid 48 off 34 balls, while Mahela

Jayawardene shrugged off his indifferent form to date with an assured unbeaten 45 to shepherd Marsh -- the son of the former Australian opener Geoff Marsh -- as they ran down the target with ease.

Sent in to bat, Deccan raced to 50 for 1 after six overs on the back of Laxman's efforts, and seemed on course for a huge total. However, the game's complexion changed when legspinner Piyush Chawla intelligently varied his trajectory and pace in a two-over spell to remove Herschelle Gibbs and Laxman. Gibbs, on his IPL debut, fell as he clubbed a short one straight to midwicket while Laxman was too early into a drive to lob one to Yuvraj at covers to leave Deccan at 67 for 3 after nine overs.

Enter Rohit, who had burst into the limelight with a fighting fifty against South Africa in the ICC

World Twenty20 last year. As wickets fell around him and only Shahid Afridi touching double figures, Rohit took the fight to the bowlers. He started slowly, as the Punjab's bowlers keeping things tight.

It wasn't till the 15th over that he opened out, taking Chawla for 12 runs, including a four and a big six, to spoil the legspinner's figures. The next over was from Gagandeep Singh, playing his first IPL match; he fired in a couple of great yorkers but Rohit hit him for two powerful boundaries off the last two balls. His fifty came with a heave over midwicket off VVR Singh and the runs continued to flow as he took Gagandeep for three consecutive fours in the 19th. A six off Irfan in the final over rounded off his exploits, having scored his last 57 runs off 22 balls.

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Abahani's hattrick-hero Rony (R) celebrates his third goal against Bangladesh Sporting with a teammate during their Premier Hockey League match at the Maulana Bhasani National Hockey Stadium yesterday.

## Shamsur's 82\* salvages NCA

SPORTS REPORTER

Shamsur Rahman staved off the disciplined Pakistan Cricket Academy bowling attack to ensure GP-BCB National Cricket Academy (NCA) were still batting after the end of the first day in the second four-day match at the Rajshahi Divisional Stadium yesterday.

Put into bat, NCA scored 260-9 in 76 overs before the umpires decided it was too dark to continue the day's play. Shamsur, a right-handed batsman, struck 82 off 169 balls and was unbeaten alongside number eleven Sajidul Islam, who was yet to open his account.

After the Pakistani pace quartet dominated proceedings before and after the lunch interval, Shamsur came into bat with his side in a spot of bother at 86-4. He added 76 for the sixth wicket with Nadif Chowdhury, who scored 29 off 48 balls. Later, he shepherded the NCA lower-order to make sure his side would bat into the second day of the four-day match. Shamsur slammed nine boundaries in his 215-minute knock.

Earlier, only Nayeem Islam among the top-order batsmen batted with aplomb as he scored a rapid 40-ball 40 with nine boundaries.

For the visitors, fast bowler Anwar Ali and leg-spinner Yasir Shah took three wickets each.

**SCORES IN BRIEF**  
 NCA: First innings 260-9 in 76 overs (Shamsur 82\*, Nayeem 40, Anwar 3-57, Yasir 3-38).

## LOCAL SNIPPETS

SPORTS REPORTER

Defending champions Bangladesh Ansar led the NCC Bank 32nd National Cycling Championships medal table with seven gold after the second day's competition at the Paltan Maidan yesterday.

Bangladesh Rifles followed the leaders with three gold while Chittagong DSA and Bangladesh Jail won two and one gold medals respectively.

Earlier, Bangladesh Cycling Federation president Sheikh Enayetullah inaugurated the three-day meet on Thursday.

Today is the concluding day of the championships where 80 cyclists are participating in 23 events.

**PREMIER VOLLEYBALL**  
 Bangladesh Police thumped Water Development Board in straight sets in the Premier Division Volleyball League at the Volleyball Stadium yesterday.

The police force won 25-20, 25-12, 25-22.

In the Second Division League, Bangladesh Jail Directorate thrashed Jubo Sangha in straight sets while Nagar Samaj Kalyan beat Nabadoy Sangha in 3-1 sets.

**DIVII CRICKET**  
 Nabin Sangha and Rajshahi Al Rashid Club prevailed to win by one wicket against Dhanmondi Cricket Academy (DCA) and Kalabagan Cricket Academy (KCA) in their respective Second Division matches.

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## WOMEN'S ASIA CUP

# Bangladesh suffer huge loss

Cricket

SPORTS REPORTER

A crushing 182-run defeat at the hands of India gave Bangladesh women's cricket team their first real taste of international cricket in their opening Asia Cup match at Welegedara Stadium in Kurunegala yesterday.

Although not an official one-day international, it was Bangladesh's debut against any Test-playing nation in women's cricket.

Newcomers Bangladesh were never in the hunt as they chased 251 but were bowled out cheaply for 68 runs in 30.2 overs. Earlier, powerhouse India took the game quite seriously as they posted a competitive 250-3 in their stipulated 50 overs after they had won the toss and elected to bat first.

Nevertheless, opening bowler Shamima Akhtar gave Bangladesh a dream start, clean bowling India's opening batswoman Karu Jain for eight in the eighth over. Jaya Sharma, the other opener, shared a 31-run stand with Thirush Kamini but their partnership ended when Kamini, who scored seven off 30 balls, was caught by Rumana Ahmed off the bowling of Chamley Khatun.

Captain Mithali Raj then joined Sharma as the two resurrected India's innings through their 110-run stand for the third wicket. Right-arm off-spinner Tithy Sarkar took a catch off her own bowling to remove Sharma for 72 in the 38th over. Sharma, a left-hander, hit eight fours in 118 balls.

Right-handed Raj then took the Bangladesh attack apart, scoring an unbeaten century. She added 92 for the unbroken fourth wicket with veteran Purnima Rau, who

scored 27 off 35 balls with a single boundary.

Raj struck fifteen boundaries and a six in her 92-ball whirlwind knock of 109. Shamima, Chamley and Tithy took a wicket each but captain Salma Khatun was the most economical bowler, giving away just 30 runs in 10 overs.

But it was extras that became Bangladesh bowlers' bane as they conceded 23 wides and ended up giving away 27 runs in that department.

A target of 251 was always going to be an uphill task for Bangladesh, but what may have been an even more daunting prospect was to face Jhulan Goswami, who is currently one of the fastest bowlers in the women's circuit.

In her second over she removed Shukhtara for two, in her fourth,

Panna Ghosh, also for two and in her fifth, Shathira Jakir Jessy for 12 and Rumana Ahmed for a duck -- all four bowled.

Pujare Seema, who took five wickets in all, took two wickets in an over and wrapped up the proceedings in the 31st over. She took the wicket of wicketkeeper-batswoman Irin Sulatana, who topped scored for Bangladesh with 19 off 50 balls. She struck two boundaries.

Bangladesh face Pakistan in the same venue today.

## SCORES IN BRIEF

**INDIA:** 250-3 in 50 overs (Raj 109\*, Sharma 72; Chamley 1-23).  
**BANGLADESH:** 68 all out in 30.3 overs (Sultana 19, Jessy 12, Seema 5-17, Goswami 4-18).  
 Result: India won by 182 runs.



India captain Mithali Raj sweeps on her way to a century against Bangladesh women's team in the opening Asia Cup match at Welegedara Stadium in Kurunegala yesterday.

## Rajasthan win big



CRICINFO, undated

An irrepressible Rajasthan Royals side got their fourth successive win of the tournament and nudged past Delhi to second place in the points table with a 45-run win over a listless Kolkata Knight Riders. All the King's men might be Kolkata's advertising tagline, referring to team owner Shah Rukh Khan, but here it was a more apt description of Shane Warne and his team. His decision to bat first -- allowing his bowlers respite from the Jaipur heat -- was justified by attacking half-centuries from debutant Swapnil Asnodkar and Yusuf Pathan, and disciplined bowling by the Rajasthan quicks.

Kolkata felt the absence of Brendon McCullum and Ricky Ponting, who left for the upcoming

Test series in the West Indies, as they slumped to their third defeat in a row. In the only other match in which they chased, Kolkata needed 111 to win, a far less daunting target than the 197 they were set to chase on Thursday.

Rajasthan's preferred method has been to chase a target, but this time Warne changed the tactic, and Asnodkar, who opened the innings

with Graeme Smith, got into his stride immediately. He cut, drove and slogged for his 60, playing cautiously against Ishant Sharma and Umar Gul -- who eventually had him caught trying to pull -- and targeting the wayward Ashok Dinda and Ajit Agarkar. He hit Agarkar for three successive fouls and reached his fifty off 29 balls.

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