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DHAKA TUESDAY MAY 27, 2008, E-MAIL: sports@theluckystar.net

Tigers teams to be named today

SPORTS REPORTER

The Bangladesh Cricket Board (BCB) will announce a 14-member team today for next month's triangular one-day series involving India and Pakistan.

The selection panel, led by Rafiqul Alam, will also declare teams for the Asia Cup to be held in Pakistan and Bangladesh A team for the coming tours of Ireland and England.

For the tri-nation tournament, which will kick off with the match between Pakistan and hosts Bangladesh in Mirpur, the national selectors were in difficulties to find the replacement for all-rounder Shakib Al Hasan, who is unavailable for his HSC examinations.

The selectors have been talking against changes in the last few days despite the Tigers' disappointing performance in their last assignment in Pakistan during a five-match one-day series and a Twenty20 match.

Their headache seems to be finding a similar replacement of Shakib and opener cum left-arm spinner Mehrab Hossain is the likely candidate to get the place as the selectors might not be ready to bring another fresh face in the fold in Nayeem Islam.

On the other hand, wicket-keeper Mushfiqur Rahim has become a strong contender to get back his one-day place following his tremendous batting form, which saw him finish as the top scorer of the recently concluded Premier League.

It is also expected that the selectors will announce a 15-member team for the Asia Cup.

For the second string Bangladesh A team, the panel mostly considers those who are in the pipeline for the national side. That is why a number of out-of-favour players like Alok Kapali and the impressive performers of the Under-19 and Academy teams may crowd the squad.

The Tigers' full-fledged training camp for the tri-series will start tomorrow at Mirpur.



Bangladesh coach Abu Yusuf (2nd from L) addressing a press briefing as BFF vice-president Badal Roy (L), national captain Aminul and vice-captain Biplob (R) look on at the BFF Bhaban yesterday.

Rajasthan take top spot

CRICINFO, undated



The Mumbai Indians lost their third successive nail-biter to leave their semi-final hopes hanging by a thread in the Indian Premier League. With 43 needed from the final three overs for the Rajasthan Royals to protect their 100 per cent home record, youngsters Niraj Patel and Ravindra Jadeja kept their nerve -- while several more experienced Mumbai players lost theirs -- to win it off the final ball at the Sawai Man Singh Stadium in Jaipur Monday.

The result means Delhi Daredevils become the third team to make it to the semifinals and if the Chennai Super Kings win their match against Deccan Chargers on Tuesday, Mumbai will be out of contention.

When Shane Watson was dismissed with 69 runs still needed off 48 balls and no big-name batsmen to come on a pitch not conducive to stroke-making, Mumbai were in

command. The Mumbai bowlers maintained a tight line-and-length and runs came mainly in singles. With Niraj and Jadeja hardly threatening, the equation became a difficult 43 off the final three.

A streaky inside-edge for four and a misdirected yorker which deflected off the pads to the fine-leg boundary left Rajasthan needing 34 off the last two. Jadeja then clubbed Rohan Raje over cover for six off the first ball and a couple of twos followed in the over. Raje's final delivery should also have gone only for a couple, but shoddy work at the bowler's end -- one among Mumbai's several elemental fielding errors -- gave away a crucial, extra run.

Mumbai struggled to find momentum from the start, and the opening pair of Jayasuriya and Sachin Tendulkar were stifled by the new-ball bowlers to such an extent that only 29 runs, and two boundaries, came in the powerplay. Yusuf Pathan, bowling flat and quick, and Siddharth Trivedi also kept Mumbai in check before Shane Watson came into the picture.

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Did U Know?

At the Wimbledon Tennis Championships, a total of 687 matches take place throughout the tournament.



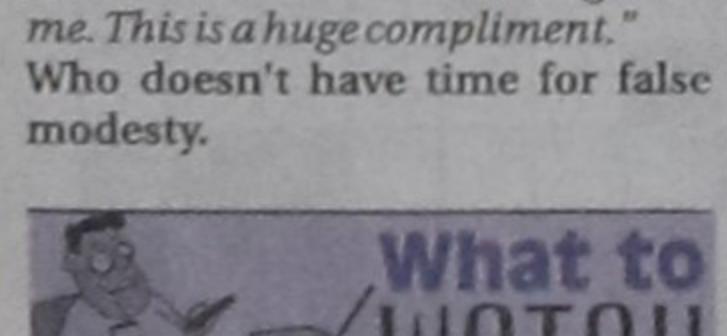
Defending B. League champions Abahani registered 16 footballers including Mohammed Sujan yesterday for the coming season.

Abahani manager Satyajit Das Rupu handed over the registration forms to B. League officials in presence of the footballers last night at the BFF Bhaban.

Brothers Union officials earlier claimed they have signed Sujan, the national defender who has been out of the scene for one year due to serious injury.

Sujan has returned to play this season but his actions have been limited to friendly matches, not in any competition.

Shah Rukh Khan
(Bollywood megastar and owner of Kolkata franchise in the IPL)
"My team told me that they have yet to meet a better human being than me. This is a huge compliment."
Who doesn't have time for false modesty.



SET MAX
Indian Premier League
Deccan Chargers v Chennai Super Kings
Live from 8:30 pm

STAR Sports
French Open
First Round
Live from 3:00 pm

ESPN
Sportscenter India
Sports News
Live at 8:30 pm

Abahani rope in 16

SPORTS REPORTER



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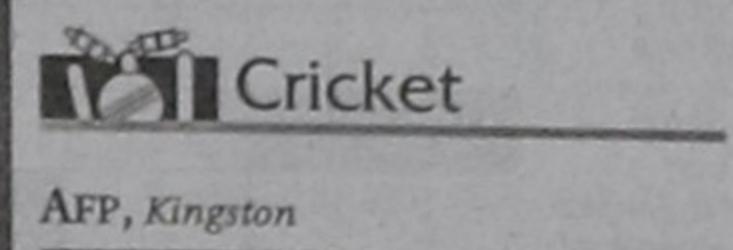
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Windies stare at defeat

Cricket



Stuart Clark and Brett Lee shared five wickets to bowl Australia into a match-winning position in the opening Test against West Indies on Monday.

At the lunch interval, West Indies, chasing 287 to win, reached 117 for six in their second innings with Denesh Ramdin not out on 22 and Darren Sammy not out on 13 in a morning period extended by half-hour to compensate for time lost for bad light the previous evening.

In their opening spells, Clark removed Ramaresh Sarwan, Devon Smith, and Dwayne Bravo, and Lee sent back Runako Morton and Shivnarine Chanderpaul to send West Indies reeling to 82 for six on the fifth and final day of the Test at Sabina Park.

Clark has been the pick of the Australia bowlers with four wickets for 22 runs from 17 overs, and Lee has provided spirited support with two

Also, they will know who are going to be their teammates."

Among the 16, Rahmatgani defender Shobh Hossain Soni and Brothers' midfielder Mamun Islam Mamun are the only new faces. The sky-blues will add their old players Obaidur and Mintu to the list and want to have 22 local players.

Awudu Ibrahim and Samad Yousfi of Ghana are the two foreign players who have been registered for Abahani's AFC President's Cup campaign in late June in Malaysia.

Abahani's contract with all the 16 players run till May 2008.

The contracted 16: Biplob, Tarek, Siraj, Nazrul, Sujan, Pradeep, Sony, Waly, Joy, Zahed Parvez, Abul, Pranotosh, Mamun, Ujjal, Tipu and Emily.

SEE PAGE 16 OVERS.

Clark gave Australia a welcome start when he removed Sarwan and Smith in the first half-hour of the morning to leave the home team 60 for three.

Sarwan was caught at extra cover for 12 in the third over of the morning from Clark to a fine catch from Andrew Symonds.

The West Indies captain was squared-up and was essaying a flick at a full-length delivery and the ball flew from the leading edge high to the left of Symonds, who stretched himself, and contorted his body to allow him to palm the ball up before he quickly turned and clutched the ball with both hands.

Clark's dismissal of Smith was more straightforward. The left-handed opener was adjudged lbw for 28 in the seventh over of the morning, when he offered no shot to remove Chanderpaul.

The Australia strike weapon however, had the last laugh, when he held a return catch to remove Chanderpaul for 11.

Clark piled on the pressure, when he removed Dwayne Bravo for a duck caught by the short mid-on fielder deliberately positioned for the batsman's penchant to play uppishly through the leg-side.

Lee came close to removing Runako Morton, when the batsman was nearly bowled on one, after he inside-edged a delivery

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and almost played it into the stumps before he had the presence of mind to kick it away.

But there was no saving Morton, when he drove at a full-length delivery from Lee, missed, and was adjudged lbw for 4 for Lee for four.

Lee was in the middle of an inspired spell, and had Chanderpaul dropped on five, when the left-hander edged a well-pitched delivery straight into the lap of first slip fielder Simon Katich, and next ball, he had an appeal for an lbw verdict turned down.

But Lee was on the receiving end, when Chanderpaul uncoiled and responded with a crunching pull through mid-wicket for four.

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BHF names 24 for AHF Cup

SPORTS REPORTER

Bangladesh Hockey Federation (BHF) yesterday announced a 24-member preliminary squad for the 3rd Men's AHF Cup Hockey tournament to be held in Singapore on June 14-22.

Bangladesh are in Group A of the Asia Cup qualifiers along with Chinese Taipei, Uzbekistan, Brunei Darussalam and hosts Singapore while the Group B comprises with Hong Kong, Sri Lanka, Oman and Thailand.

Bangladesh will launch their campaign against Brunei Darussalam in one of the three opening day's matches on June 14 and then meet Chinese Taipei on June 15, hosts Singapore on June 18 and Uzbekistan on June 19.

SQUAD

Zahid Hossain, Mehrab Hossain Kiran, Mahbubullah Chowdhury Shakil, Mamunur Rahman Chayan, Issa Miah, Asaduzzaman Chandan, Moshirul Rahman Biplob, Ferdous Goldar Shamsuddin Tuhin, Tapash Barman, Mahbub Ehsan Rana, Musa Miah, Khondokar Hasan Ahmed, Shahidullah Titu, Mosharraf Hossain Kuti, Shahidul Islam, Sheikh Nannu, Russell Mahmud Jimmy, Zahidul Islam Rajan, Rimon Kumar Ghosh, Iqbal Nader Prince, Zahid Bin Talib Shuvo, Krishna Kumar and Maksud Alam Habul.

There was, however, not much explanation for giving Aminul the armband, which he had originally lost for missing one year (2007) through injury.

"Both the goalkeepers have been playing for the national team for over a decade. Aminul is first choice at the moment so he would be the right one to lead. We also feel that their combination has a role to play in and off the field," said Badal Roy, Bangladesh Football Federation vice-president and chairman of the National Team Management Committee yesterday.

And their nerves weren't helped when the in-form Kevin Pietersen, going for a needless second, was run out for 42 by Iain O'Brien's throw from fine leg to wicketkeeper Brendon McCullum.

That left England on 248 for four, 46 runs adrift.

And with 30 runs wanted, pace bowler O'Brien dropped a gentle catch and bowled chance offered by Ian Bell on nine.

Bell, who finished on 21 not out, and Paul Collingwood, unbeaten on 24, guided England home off the last ball before tea.

England captain Michael Vaughan reflected: "We looked dead and buried yesterday. This morning's first session was crucial."

"To win by six wickets on that type of pitch is a very special victory... but we're only 1-0 up. New Zealand are a very difficult team to beat."

This victory saw England set a new record for the highest fourth innings winning total scored in an Old Trafford Test, breaking the mark of 231 for three they posted against the West Indies here four years ago.

Middlesex left-hander Strauss, who top-scored with 60 in England's meagre first innings 202, faced 186 balls with 12 fours.

This was the 31-year-old's 12th hundred in his 48th Test, his first having come on his debut against New Zealand at Lord's four years ago.

But that England had a chance

Mission regaining title

SPORTS REPORTER

Bangladesh will leave Dhaka today in a bid to regain the SAFF Football Championship title with just two recognisable strikers.

One of the penalty area specialists being the only debutant in the 20-member squad that was announced yesterday, all suspect whether the current crop of the national team would be able to match their predecessors from 2003 when Bangladesh triumphed the regional football extravaganza at home.

Expectedly, recalled veterans Joy and Nazrul made the squad to add experience while youngsters Maruf and Robin made way for Komol and Abul who missed the AFC Challenge Cup earlier this month.

Coach Abu Yusuf, however, believes that his array of multi-purpose players would be able to fill in the void.

"Those days are gone when a striker would have waited for the ball. So our priority is to have players who can work with or without the ball. We have players in the midfield who started their career as forwards. So this would not be a problem," said Yusuf at a press conference at

the BFF Bhaban yesterday.

Bangladesh's first stoppage en route to Sri Lanka is Bangkok where they will play preparation matches on May 28 and 30 against the second string national side and a club.

They will depart for Colombo on May 30 and open the SAFF campaign against Bhutan on June 4, followed by matches against Afghanistan and hosts Sri Lanka on June 6 and 8.

"It is a plus-point that we are playing Bhutan in the first match. Although we respect all the oppositions, Bhutan are probably the weakest. It would give us a chance to find the right combination," said Yusuf.

Bangladesh drew with Afghanistan in the Challenge Cup but the coach thinks that he would need 70 percent of his team's strength on the pitch to beat them and ensure the semifinals.

"Sri Lanka would be our main opponents in the group but they are not unbeatable," Yusuf opined about the hosts, who recently thrashed Pakistan 7-1 in the Challenge Cup.

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"In fact, I have been with the team for only a few days and felt that they are not playing at a level where I want to see the national team. The coach knows better and I hope once we are in Sri Lanka, things will get better," the former national striker said.