

BOSE
Better sound through research

It's time to expect more from home theater.

Graphics Information Systems Ltd. 8811140

LIPRO
Presents
HIMOINSA
DIESEL GENERATORS
FROM SPAIN

8 KVA - 2500 KVA
Lipro Energy Ltd.
Cell: 8817147, 8817918, 8818082



Focus is on friendship

China on Tuesday said US athletes should focus on building friendships at the Beijing Games, in a curt response to US President George Bush's call for them to be "ambassadors of liberty".

"We hope and believe that all athletes, including American athletes, attending the Beijing Olympics, will make efforts to promote friendship among the peoples of the world," foreign ministry spokesman Liu Jianchao said.

He gave no other comment on the matter.

Liu had been asked by reporters to respond to Bush's comments Monday urging US athletes headed to the Games to represent American respect for freedom and human rights.

"In Beijing, you will convey our nation's most cherished values. As ambassadors of liberty, you will represent America's love for freedom and our regard for human rights and human dignity," Bush said.

"You'll represent that to other athletes, and to the people of China."



Did U Know?

During the opening ceremony of the Olympic Games, the procession of athletes is always led by the Greek team, followed by all the other teams in alphabetical order (in the language of the hosting country), except for the last team which is always the team of the hosting country.

What to WATCH

TEN Sports
Sri Lanka v India
First Test, Day One
Live from 10:45am

TALK TURKEY



Jose Mourinho
(Inter Milan's new coach)
"Arrigo Sacchi, like me, was never a top player. I have a great dentist, even though I have never had toothache."
Replying to Carlo Ancelotti's comments saying that you do not have to be a player to be a good manager.

Rampura's fine start

Rampura KC recorded a thrilling 3-2 win against Surjoesna SC in their opening match of the 2nd phase of the Dhaka City Corporation Pioneer Football League at the Bir Shreshtha Shaheed Mostafa Kamal Stadium in Kamalapur yesterday.

A brace from Sourav and one goal from Khaled secured three points for Rampura, who led the first half 2-1, in the Group C match. Pavel scored either side of the break for the losers.

The other match between Maghbaraz KC and Mugdapara SKKS ended in a goalless draw.



Brothers coach Wasim (No. 14) leads the players in a jogging session during yesterday's practice at the club ground in Gopibagh.

TEAM FOCUS: BROTHERS UNION Wasim's new challenge



AL MUSABBIR SADI

Great footballers always do not make a great coach. Some have proved this notion wrong and Khandoker Wasim Iqbal wants to be one of them when the Federation Cup finals begin next month.

The winger who dominated the domestic football scene in the 80s in the colours of Brothers Union with his deft dodges, speed, lethal crosses and often stunning goals, has now taken up the new challenge to prepare the same team -- also the defending Federation Cup champions -- for the coming season.

Wasim, arguably the best right-winger the country has ever produced, believes that there is no limit to learning.

"I have seen the seniors trying to do something new even in the latter stage of their careers and have taken lessons from them. I

believe there are many areas to work on as a coach and my experience as a player would help the new generation," Wasim told The Daily Star yesterday.

Wasim, who played for Brothers from 1979 to 1992 excepting spending two years -- 1989 and 1990 -- at Abahani, has taken over the Oranges with a little background of coaching -- he has trained 8-12 year-olds for the club -- but believes this is not a barrier.

"I trained basics to the kids but my job here is different. Here I have to build stamina and combine between matured players. The main factor for a coach is to teach them how to take care of different situations in a match, read the opponents and prepare the strategy. I feel I know these areas well," said the 46-year-old admitting that he might have never had won a league trophy unless making the move to Abahani.

"We have got a good team considering local collection and we have enough backup players for each position. It would make the players very competitive to win a

place in the eleven. Still I would have loved to have more in the striking zone.

"If my opponents collect better finishers from abroad, we also have to do so. In the recent past, I have seen foreign strikers making the difference.

"With the squad I have trained for the last 12 days, I feel we can go far and Brothers will not leave any stones unturned in a bid to reach the final and I am trying my best to prepare them. We would need a bit of luck though," he added.

Wasim admitted the time for preparing players, who have not played much competitive football in one year, is not enough.

"It's a problem for all the coaches and I would consider my players' fitness level above average. If any injuries do not bother us, we will be defending the cup with all our strength and talent. I am taking this tournament very seriously although the main target would be 'B League'."

Commenting on the extinct species of wingers in modern day

Derbyshire in driving seat

SPORTS REPORTER

Derbyshire threatened to post an imposing lead against Bangladesh A in their first-class match when the home side reached 65 for two in their second innings at the County ground in Derby half an hour into the final session of second day's play yesterday.

Derby's overall lead was 173 with one day remaining of the three-day match after the visitors, overnight 46-2, were bundled out for 190 (59.5 overs) in their first innings in the face of a hostile spell from local medium pacer Kevin Dean who grabbed 6-46 from 19 overs.

Derby, who declared their first innings on 298 for six with Australian batsman Chris Rogers scoring a sparkling 101 off 143 balls, lost openers Borington (10) and Smith (3) cheaply in the second before Needham (32 batting) and John Sadler (13 batting), who scored 50 in the first innings, repaired the damage.

The second-string Bangladesh side never recovered from a poor start despite wicketkeeper Mushfiqur Rahim's 50 off 84 deliveries that featured seven hits to the fence. Captain Zunaid Siddique contributed 24, Shakib Al Hassan 33 and Dollar Mahmud 24 in an otherwise sorry batting card.

Tendulkar now number 14

PTI, Dubai

Sachin Tendulkar slipped a rung to 14th but continued to be the highest ranked Indian in the ICC Test rankings for batsmen while his skipper Anil Kumble was the best-placed Indian bowler in the latest list.

Among the other Indians in the batting chart, former skipper Rahul Dravid and opener Virender Sehwag remained steady at 15th and 18th respectively.

However, Sourav Ganguly was down a spot to 20th.

In the bowling list, the next best placed Indian after Kumble is Zaheer Khan at the 14th, which he shares with controversial Pakistan pacer Mohammad Asif further down the list, off-spinner Harbhajan Singh climbed a rung to 17th.

Meanwhile, Ashwell Prince and AB de Villiers have stormed into the top 20 among batsmen after outstanding performances against England in the second Test, which ended on Monday.

Prince has climbed eight places to 13th spot in the rankings and now has 12th-placed Graeme Smith firmly in his sights while de Villiers has jumped six places to 19th position.

The batting list is still headed by

Nat'l women's kabaddi on

UNB, Dhaka

The zonal round of the Spectra Group National Women's Kabaddi Championship began yesterday at four separate venues across the country.

At Jessore, Narail beat Bagerhat 73-42 while the hosts defeated Sathkira 63-51.

Home side Faridpur outplayed Rajbari 30-14 and Shariatpur edged past Madaripur 32-30.

At Jhenaidah, the hosts crushed Meherpur 50-7 while Magura edged Kushtia 36-32.

At Jamalpur, Kishoreganj defeated Tangail 43-35 while Jamalpur outclassed Sherpur 40-21.

First Test from today

Mendis may stand in India's way

Cricket
REUTERS, Colombo

Ajantha Mendis loomed large as the biggest obstacle to India's chances of claiming a first series win in Sri Lanka for 15 years.

The 23-year-old unorthodox spinner will be making his Test debut at the Sinhalese Cricket Club, where the hosts have won seven of the last ten Tests, when the opening match of a three-Test series starts on Wednesday.

Mendis, Sri Lanka's outstanding performer in the recent Asia Cup, will partner world record holder Muttiah Muralidaran and will bowl a perplexing mix of off breaks, leg breaks, googlies and top spinners.

Despite the threat posed by Mendis, former India captain Rahul Dravid warned his teammates they cannot forget that Sri Lanka have other match-winners.

"It will be a big mistake to focus just on Mendis," Dravid told reporters on Monday.

"They have got a couple of other guys (Muralidaran and Chaminda Vaas) who have got 1,000 wickets between them."

Dravid also admitted that Sri Lanka at home posed a formidable challenge.

"They have got the right balance in these conditions and they are always a big threat at home," he said.

"But we have come here with a good team as well and if we play to our potential, I think it will be a good Test series."

SEE PAGE 18 COL 2



THINKING OF THE RECORD? India's batting maestro Sachin Tendulkar arrives for a practice session at the Sinhalese Sports Club Ground in Colombo yesterday. With 11,782 runs, Tendulkar is just 172 runs away from becoming world's leading Test run-getter.

BKSP champs in swimming

UNB, Dhaka

Bangladesh Krira Shikha Protishthan (BKSP) emerged champions in the Keya 24th National Age Group Swimming Championships securing 45 gold, 35 silver and 14 bronze medals on conclusion of the three-day meet at the National Swimming Complex in Mirpur yesterday.

Bangladesh Ansar became runners-up with a haul of 36-25-23 while Alamgir Swimming Club of Rajshahi finished a distant sixth 6-5-14.

BKSP swimmer Anik Islam was the best swimmer with 11 individual gold medals including three

new national marks, one on each day of the competition.

Nikli Swimming Club of Kishoreganj were named the most disciplined team.

Anik, competing in 18-20 years age-group, set his third record clinching gold in 50m freestyle clocking 35.70s, better the old mark of 26.18s. He also clinched the 400m freestyle and 200m individual medley on the day.

Earlier, Anik won eight gold medals on the first two days with new records in 400m IM and 100m butterfly.

Muslima Khatoon of Alamgir Swimming Club set up the final day's

other new national record in 200m backstroke (15-17 years) in 3:02.93s. The old record was 3:06.32s.

A total of seven new national marks were set in 96 events out of which 30 were held yesterday.

Deputy Chief of Bangladesh Navy Rear Admiral Mustafizur Rahman was the chief guest at the closing function and distributed prizes.

Senior executive director of sponsors Keya Cosmetics Alhaj Akkas Ali Pathan and DG of BKSP Brig Gen Shawkat Hossain were present as special guests apart from Bangladesh Swimming Federation officials.



Members of the BKSP team are jubilant after winning the 24th National Age-Group Swimming Competition at the National Swimming Complex in Mirpur yesterday.

CHAMPIONS TROPHY Host decision tomorrow

AFP, Karachi

The International Cricket Council will decide Thursday whether Pakistan can host the Champions Trophy in September amid security fears in the country.

A teleconference of the ICC executive board "will take place on Thursday to take a decision on Champions Trophy," an ICC spokesman told AFP on Tuesday.

The year's biggest one-day tournament features the top eight Test nations -- Australia, South Africa, England, India, Pakistan, Sri Lanka, New Zealand and the West Indies. It is scheduled to be held in Pakistan September 11-28.

But Australia, England and New Zealand have raised concerns about security in Pakistan, which is battling militants in tribal areas where Washington has said Al-Qaeda and Taliban militants have created sanctuaries.

The ICC held a meeting on Sunday at its Dubai headquarters to inform the teams of the security

SEE PAGE 18 COL 5

BFF eyes renewing deal with Nokia

Football
SPORTS REPORTER

Bangladesh Football Federation (BFF) is looking forward to restore a sponsorship deal with Nokia regarding the national football team.

The cellular phone manufacturer giant from Finland was involved as Bangladesh football team sponsors for two tours, the AFC Challenge Cup qualifiers and the fifth SAFF Championship earlier this year, for a rather insignificant amount -- reported Tk 14 lakh -- although the federation had never officially revealed details of the contract.

Nokia provided training gear for the national team but BFF president Kazi Salahuddin told yesterday that he is eyeing a much bigger pact which could well include a youth development programme.

"I have had a meeting with

Nokia's CEO Prem Chand and talked about sponsorships. Although everything is in the initial stage, we feel positive about renewing our relationship," Salahuddin said.

BFF's development committee chairman Kazi Nabil Ahmed has been given responsibility to prepare a proposal for submission to Nokia, informed the BFF boss.

"They are interested in youth development so we need a detailed programme. The national team sponsorship could involve salary of a technical director, cost of running the camp throughout the year and other logistic supports," he hinted.

Meanwhile, with only four days to go for the start of the domestic season with the Citycell Federation Cup qualifiers, the clubs have all but agreed to play outside Dhaka.

"They have not refused to play (the qualifiers) outside the capital but naturally, they would like to have some logistic support, which we are prepared to provide."

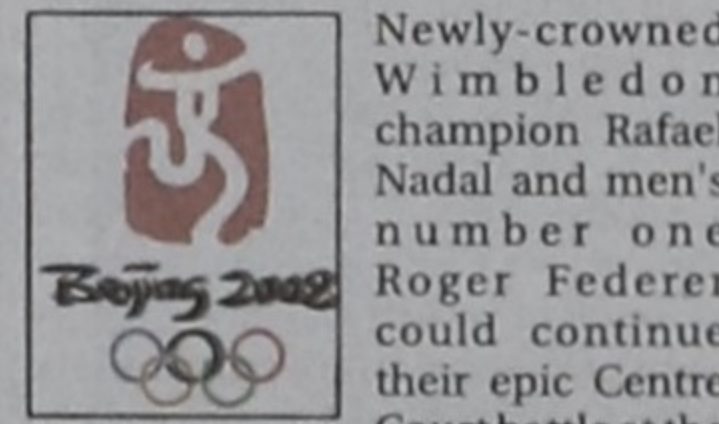
SEE PAGE 18 COL 1



An Olympic-theme sculpture decorates a street of Beijing. The photo was taken yesterday.

Stars out in force

INTERNET, undated



Newly-crowned Wimbledon champion Rafael Nadal and men's number one Roger Federer could continue their epic Centre Court battle at the Olympics, while some of the biggest names in football and basketball are also heading to Beijing for the summer Games. Federer's birthday is on the opening day of the Games, and the top-ranked tennis player hopes to be bearing the Swiss flag when the athletes march in at the opening ceremony.

Spain's Nadal is now seeking a first men's treble of French Open, Wimbledon and Olympic gold in one year, a feat only ever achieved by former women's champion Steffi Graf.

Switzerland and Ana Ivanovic of Serbia will lead the strongest field ever to enter the Olympic tennis event since tennis returned as a full medal sport in Seoul in 1988.

All five of the top men will compete in Beijing, and seven of the top 10 women.

"To be at the Olympics, it's one of the greatest things for an athlete," said 12-time Grand Slam champion Federer, who was upset at the 2004 Athens Games by Thomas Berdych.

Federer will be in his third Olympics, having also participated in Sydney, while second-ranked Nadal also plans to be at his first Games.

"It is a great experience and I will try my best. I have big expectations," said the Spaniard, who unlike Federer will definitely move into the athletes' village.

In basketball, Kobe Bryant and LeBron James are among NBA stars gunning for glory in basketball. In

football, Brazil have chosen new AC Milan signing Ronaldinho and Real Madrid striker Robinho in a strong squad, while Barcelona's Lionel Messi is in the Argentina squad.

Swimming has thrown up another star in Michael Phelps, who won six gold medals in Athens and will be bidding to beat Mark Spitz's 36-year-old record of seven gold medals at a single Games. He is now only four golds short of the US record of 10, and another four medals will take him pass the overall US record of 12.

The focus in athletics is on the sprinters where new world record holder Usain Bolt, world champion Tyson Gay and former world record-holder Asafa Powell could come together in the 100 metres, although Bolt may stick to just the 200 metres.

China also have the own athletics superstar in Liu Xiang, winner of

Stanford side announced

CRICINFO, undated

A 32-member Stanford Superstars Twenty20 squad has been announced for the 20 million dollars winner-takes-all match against England on November 1.

The squad includes Chris Gayle, Shivnaree Chandepaul, Ramnareh Sarwan and Dwayne Bravo, as well as notable performers from the Stanford Twenty20 domestic tournament.

"This is a squad of the best performers in the two editions of the Stanford 20/20 tournament we've had so far and the best players in the region," Viv Richards, the chairman of the seven-member selection committee, said. "It was a difficult task to select the top 32 but our selection panel believes that these players will provide us with the firepower and all the other resources to prevail over England in what is the richest prize in team sport history."

SEE PAGE 18 COL 5