



Did U Know?

Badminton was introduced into USA in the 1890s and became popular only in the 1930s.



Fabio Capello

(England manager)
"Cristiano Ronaldo is a player with great speed, very good, very dangerous, very technical. He has an extremely high level, but it is Lionel Messi that is brilliant."



NEO Cricket
Sri Lanka v India
Twenty20 Int'l (DIN)
Live from 7:30pm

STAR Cricket
Australia v New Zealand
Fourth ODI
Live from 9:15am

ESPN
Sportscentre India
Sports News
Live at 8:30pm



Citycell B. League
Multijodha v Ctg Mohammedan
Venue: Bangabandhu National Stadium
Time: 4:30pm

Arambagh finish at 9th place

SPORTS REPORTER

Arambagh ended their Citycell B. League campaign yesterday on a winning note when they took revenge of their first-leg defeat to Chittagong Abahani.

The Dhaka outfit, who crashed 4-0 to Chittagong Abahani in the first half of the second professional league in the port city, won the first match of the league's penultimate round 1-0 at the Bangabandhu National Stadium.

Guinean import Mohammed Lamin Soumah

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School tennis title ESS's

SPORTS REPORTER

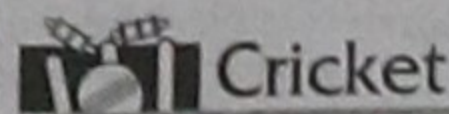
European Standard School (ESS) clinched the team title in the 1st Brac Bank Inter-school Junior tennis tournament which concluded at the National Tennis Complex in Ramna yesterday.

Scholastica and Sea Breeze finished runners-up in the team event, Biam Model School's Faiyaz Bin Alam emerged boys' champion and Fabiha of Scholastica lifted the girls' title.

Bangladesh Tennis Federation (BTF) in association with sponsors Brac Bank organised the three-day 'fun tennis' event where 250 students from 11 schools took part.

BTF president AMM Nasir Uddin distributed prizes as chief guest. BTF and Brac Bank officials were also present.

IPL in Dhaka, stunt or reality?



SPORTS REPORTER

Kolkata Knight Riders may play two of their Indian Premier League (IPL) Twenty20 matches in Bangladesh, disclosed Indian newspapers yesterday quoting one of the owners of the franchise.

"We are thinking of taking the matches to Bangladesh as well. We are getting so much of love from the people from Bangladesh. We are getting so much support from them," The Hindu wrote in its Monday's edition quoting Knight Riders' co-owner and Bollywood superstar Juhi Chawla.

Bangladesh cricket Board (BCB) media spokesman however said that they are yet to get any official proposal in this regard but expressed their interest to hold the matches.

"We heard this news from different unofficial sources but we are yet to get any official proposal. Initially we heard that the Kolkata Knight Riders wanted to play a build-up match here but now they are talking about playing matches of the tournament proper. Definitely the board will respond positively if (we) gets any official proposal," said BCB's media com-

mittee chairman Jalal Yunus yesterday.

But with no floodlights facilities available at the Sher-e-Bangla National Stadium in Mirpur, the idea of holding IPL matches in Dhaka might not see the lights despite all the adrenaline flowing around across the border.

Buoyed at the euphoria in Bangladesh after the country's leading paceman Mashrafe Bin Mortaza was bought by the Knight Riders at the recent auction in Goa, Juhi Chawla also told The Hindu that two of the seven home matches of the Sourav Ganguly-led side could be held in Bangladesh.

"It's a new thought that came up after the auction," she said. The Knight Riders roped in the 'Narail Express' for a whopping 6,00,000 dollars after a dramatic war in the auction against Kings XI Punjab.

"It could be exciting for the team and our fan base, which has now extended beyond West Bengal. If it works out and seems feasible to do, then we will do it," she said.

The leading Indian newspaper also stated that it might be an apparent pressure tactic aimed at the Cricket Association Bengal (CAB) against which the Knight Riders owners have been engaged in a battle of attrition over financial issues.

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Windies leave Marshall out

BBC ONLINE, Kingston

West Indies have dropped batsman Xavier Marshall from their squad for the second Test against England.

England were beaten by an innings and 23 runs in the first Test in Jamaica.

Marshall was dismissed for a two-ball duck with Ryan Hinds and Lendl Simmons both recalled to the squad the second Test, starting on Friday in Antigua.

Opening batsman Dale Richards and off-spinner Amit Jaggernauth, both of whom did not play in Jamaica, have also been left out of the squad.

SQUAD

Chris Gayle (captain), Denesh Ramdin, Devon Smith, Lendl Simmons, Ramnaresh Sarwan, Ryan Hinds, Shivnarine Chanderpaul, Brendan Nash, Jerome Taylor, Suleiman Benn, Daren Powell, Fidel Edwards, Lionel Baker.

Bangladesh fall again

SPORTS REPORTER



Eshani Kaushalya slammed an unbeaten half-century as Sri Lanka handed a 76-run defeat to Bangladesh to brighten their chance to play the final of the tri-nation women's cricket tournament at the Shaheed Chandu Stadium in Bogra yesterday.

It was the second successive loss of the hosts after their seven-wicket defeat in the first game against Pakistan at the same venue and poor batting caused the heavy defeats both the occasions.

In front of a cheering crowd, Sri Lanka made a bril-

liant start after deciding to bat first when Dedunu Silva and Chamari Polgampola shared 62 runs in the opening stand.

With the departure of de Silva for a 46-ball 30, the visitors' innings saw a sudden hiccup as they were reduced to 107 for five but number seven batsman Kaushalya took the charge as Sri Lanka put up a decent total of 211-9 in their share of 50 overs.

During her unbeaten 43-ball 60 the right-hander smote seven fours and a six while Polgampola added 31 off 79 deliveries that featured three boundaries.

Kaushalya got good support from two tail-enders Dilani Manodara (20) and Sriyani Weerakkody (18 not out) while the local bowlers

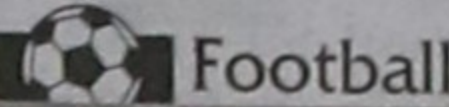
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PHOTO: COURTESY
The Bangladesh women team congregate in celebration after capturing a Sri Lanka wicket during their tri-nation tournament at the Shaheed Chandu Stadium in Bogra yesterday.

Super Cup in March

3 international meets this year



SPORTS REPORTER

Bangladesh Football Federation (BFF) finally declared its domestic calendar yesterday, confirming that the mega event -- Super Cup -- will be held next month.

Although the official release would be published today, BFF president Kazi Salahuddin revealed that the federation is looking forward to hold an international tournament at the end of this year.

There would be more international events, in May, as two AFC competitions for national team and club are coming to Dhaka.

"As the qualifiers of the AFC Challenge Cup and the AFC President's Cup have been scheduled for May, we thought it would be wise to organise the Super Cup in March," Salahuddin told reporters at the BFF Bhaban yesterday.

The federation has yet to set any format for the proposed Tk 2-crore event's inaugural edition where the top eight teams of the ongoing B. League will compete. The winners will take Tk one crore as prize money.

The BFF, which at one stage had opted to start the national camp in March and bar the country's top players from representing their clubs in the Super Cup, has also moved away from the decision -- which could have been fatal.

No tournament of such a magnitude can be successful or lure the sponsors in absence of the big names.

The national camp for the AFC Challenge Cup preparation will get underway after the Super Cup under national head coach Edson 'Dido' Silva of Brazil, informed the BFF chief.

"The new season will be October 09-September 10 but we are giving this partial calendar (for the ongoing and coming seasons) because we have set our minds on events till December this year," he said.

The next tournament of the ongoing season would be a National Club Championship, which will replace the National Football League. The new competition will involve clubs from the districts.

"All the big events are now Dhaka-based but we need the districts to produce players. That is why we need an attractive tournament for them. This would be the big stage for the amateurs."

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PHOTO: STAR
Partex's wicketkeeper-batsman Mushfiqur Rahman (R) trudges back to the pavilion after being dismissed in their Premier League match against BKSP at the Sher-e-Bangla National Stadium yesterday.

Chelsea sack Scolari

AFP, London

Chelsea have sacked manager Luiz Felipe Scolari after falling behind in the English Premier League title race, the club announced here Monday.

The Blues are trailing leaders Manchester United by seven points and a statement issued by the London club said: "Unfortunately, the results and performances of the team appeared to be deteriorating at a key time in the season."

The Brazilian, in his first season at the club owned by Russian billionaire Roman Abramovich, was sacked with immediate effect.

Chelsea's statement added: "The search for a new manager had already started and we hope to have someone in place as soon as possible."

Assistant manager Ray Wilkins, a former Chelsea captain, will take charge of Chelsea on a temporary basis.

Scolari's sacking came after Chelsea were booed off the pitch by their own fans at Stamford Bridge following a goalless draw with top-flight new boys Hull on Saturday.

Hockey players boycott SAG camp

SPORTS REPORTER

National hockey players yesterday boycotted their preparation camp for the coming South Asian Games (SAG) in demand of better accommodation and food.

Players complained that the standard of food and accommodation at the Bangladesh Hockey Federation is poor and they cannot continue in this environment.

The stick-wielders also played football and cricket instead of their regulation

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FIFA Elite Refs course ends

SPORTS REPORTER

The FIFA Elite Referee's course concluded at the BFF Bhaban yesterday with 34 local referees including seven women participating in the 5-day event.

Muhsin Arif of Sri Lanka, a FIFA referees development officer, and FIFA referees instructor Masud Enayet of Iran conducted the course and expressed their satisfaction about standard of local referees.

"There are many talented referees in Bangladesh, who will do better in the international scene if they get more exposure. They need more training and have to conduct more matches. They also need to train hard, especially short run and endurance trainings," said Arif on the concluding day.

Enayet was excited about participation of the young referees. "If more young men joins this sector, you'd get

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Partex win a thriller



SPORTS REPORTER

Partex Sporting Club secured an exciting one-wicket victory over BKSP in the Premier Division Cricket League at the Sher-e-Bangla National Stadium in Mirpur yesterday.

It was the only match on the second day that produced excitement after a thrilling first day as Surjo Torun got off winning start with a 28-run victory over Victoria and Old DOHS posted to a five-wicket victory against City Club in the low-scoring match thanks to a five-wicket haul by Abul Hasan.

National opener Zunaed Siddiqui of Surjo Torun Club has been fined taka five thousand by the match referee Akhter Ahmad for showing dissent after being given out.

The second round will start after a day's break with Abahani meet Gazi Tank at Mirpur, Biman face Young Pegasus at BKSP and Mohammedan take on Partex at Fatullah.

PARTEX-BKSP

In reply to a winning target of 218, Partex controlled the chase following their good top order batting before they got a jolt in the final stage as Nazmul Hossain and Mohammad Azim fell

victim of run outs in the penultimate over leaving the last pair to score three runs from eight balls.

Man of the match Rezaul Haque then got good support last man Dipazzal Dey who survived three balls and smashed a boundary as Partex scored 221 runs for nine in 49.3 overs.

Rezaul was unbeaten on 44 off 58 balls that featured five boundaries.

Mominul Haque captured three wickets for 31 runs.

Earlier BKSP thrived on Tanveer Haider's 67 to score 217 for six in 50 overs.

Opener Saikat Ali (40) and Zaid Hossain (47) were the other notable scorers.

SURJO TORUN-VICTORIA

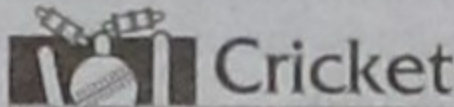
Indian Sandeep Sharma and out-of-favour opener Hannan Sarker made half centuries as Surjo Torun scored 196 runs before being bundled out in 49.5 overs.

Opener Sharma showed patience during his 103-ball 53 that contained five boundaries while Hannan contributed 52 off 76 balls with the help of two fours and a six.

In reply, Victoria lost wickets at regular interval and number eight batsman Arafat Salahuddin salvaged the blushes as the right-hander scored 42 off 60 deliveries that clob

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SACHIN BACK HOME Indo-Lankan T20I today



AGENCIES, Colombo

Sachin Tendulkar has returned early from India's tour of Sri Lanka, and will miss the Twenty20 international on Tuesday.

Tendulkar left on Sunday night since he was not part of the Twenty20 squad, team manager Prakash Dixit confirmed.

Tendulkar had a torrid time in the first three games of the tour. Opening the batting, he had scores of 5, 6 and 7, and fell leg-before in all three games. He was rested for the final two ODIs after India won

the first three games to seal the series. The five-match contest finished 4-1 in India's favour.

Tendulkar has not been a regular member of the India's teams for the 20-over format. His only Twenty20 international, in December 2006, was on the tour of South Africa, and in 2007 he had opted out of the ICC World Twenty20 along with fellow seniors Rahul Dravid and Sourav Ganguly. The team, led by present captain Mahendra Singh Dhoni, went on to win the tournament in South Africa.

Meanwhile, on a high after demolishing Sri Lanka 4-1 in the ODI series, champions

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SL returning to Pakistan next week

AFP, Karachi

Sri Lanka will return to Pakistan next week to play two Tests as part of their split tour, the Pakistan Cricket Board (PCB) announced on Monday.

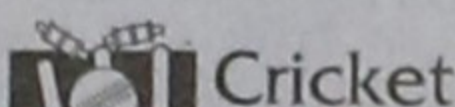
The Islanders won a three-match one-day series 2-1 on the first leg of their tour last month.

Sri Lanka replaced India, whose government refused permission for the team to tour over heightened political tension as a result of the attacks on Mumbai, which New Delhi has blamed on militants based in Pakistan.

Sri Lanka will arrive in Karachi on February 14 and play a two-day side match in Karachi on February 17 and 18, the PCB announced.

They play the first Test here from February 21, while the second Test starts in Lahore from March 1.

Sehwag India's player of year



AFP, New Delhi

India's cricket chiefs Monday named swash-buckling opener Virender Sehwag the country's player-of-the-year for 2007-2008.

Sehwag, 30, will receive the Polly Umrigar award, named after a former India captain, at a function organised by the Board of Control for Cricket in India (BCCI) in Mumbai on February 18.

Sehwag dominated Indian batting since his return to the Test side on the 2007-08 tour of Australia after being overlooked for the away series against Bangladesh and England and the home matches against Pakistan.

In 2008, the opening batsman scored 1,462 runs in 14 Tests at an average of 56.23, including a blistering triple-century against South Africa in Chennai.

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VIRENDER SEHWAG