



## Did U Know?

In 1999, Martina Hingis ended Monica Seles's 33-match unbeaten career run at the Australian Open.



## Steve Harmison

(England fast bowler)  
"We've done without the referral system for more than 100 years of Test cricket and unless someone can show real benefits, I think we can do without them for the next 100."



## STAR Cricket

Australia v New Zealand  
Fifth ODI

Live from 9:15am

## TEN Sports

West Indies v England  
Second Test, Day 1

Live from 8:00pm

## ESPN

Sportscenter India  
Sports News

Live at 8:30pm



## Citycell B. League

Sk Russel v Rahmatganj

Venue: Bangabandhu National Stadium, Dhaka

Time: 4:30pm

## BOA signs MoU with Harrow

SPORTS REPORTER

Bangladesh Olympic Association (BOA) signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) with Harrow Council of UK, under which the Bangladesh athletes will get training and accommodation facilities in England for preparation of the 2012 Olympic Games.

Visiting Councillor Golam Sobhan Chowdhury and BOA's CEO Col (ret) M Wali Ullah signed the MoU on behalf of their respective organisations yesterday at the BOA conference room. BOA secretary general Kutubuddin Ahmed and vice-president Mizanur Rahman Manu were also present.

## LOCAL SNIPPETS

SPORTS REPORTER

The men's singles competition of the Amicus Cup National Badminton Championships in Bogra reached the pre-quarterfinals stage yesterday.

Defending champion Parash and contenders Enayet and Javed were among the players to reach the last 16. In women's singles, Shapla, Tania, Rozina, Sima, Dulaly and Elena won their second round matches.

## WOMEN'S CHESS

Masuda Begum led the table with 4.5 points after the end of the fifth round of the 30th National Women's Chess Championship qualifiers at the federation hall-room. Four

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## DOHS, BKSP win thrillers

Cricket

SPORTS REPORTER

Old DOHS maintained their impressive run in the Premier Cricket League when they snatched a five-run win against Surjo Torun in the second round yesterday while BKSP and Cricket Coaching School (CCS) both recorded their first wins in the competition.

Although spring had started smiling weeks ago, a sudden rain and chill on the final day of winter shortened all three matches.

Like the DOHS-Torun match, BKSP also stole a last-over thriller by one-wicket against Victoria but newcomers CCS cruised to an eight-wicket win over all-losers City Club.

### DOHS-SURJOTORUN

Surjo Torun captain Khaled Mashud asked the opposition to bat in a 37-overs match at the Sher-e-Bangla National Stadium in Mirpur, where fireworks from Imtiaz Hossain led DOHS to 183 for nine in the stipulated overs, enough for their second successive win.

The DOHS opener smashed five boundaries and three sixes in his 63-ball 58 while Mahmudullah Riyad notched a quickfire 35 off 33 balls with four fours.

Rajin Saleh was the pick of the Surjo Torun

attack with his part-time leg-breaks, taking 4-28 while Delwar Hossain topped and tailed to grab three for 37.

Despite a rollicking start, Surjo Torun lost their way towards the end, managing 178-7 for their first defeat. Indian batsman Sandeep Sharma, who hit half-dozen boundaries in his 58 off 88 balls, put on 45 with fellow opener Junaid Siddique (23 off 25 balls) in less than eight overs.

Hannan Sarkar (24 off 23), Rajin (24 off 36) and Anisur Rahman (22 off 25) all got fine starts but Sharma's dismissal after reaching 121-2 in the middle of the 27th over seemed to bring bad luck.

After Sharma holed out to Fazle Rabbi at long-on off Mehrab Hossain's left-arm spin and Rajin was run out, Abul Bashar came back for a fiery second spell to swing the match DOHS's way.

The pacer, adjudged man-of-the-match, sent back Anisur, Delwar Hossain and Mashud in quick succession to put pressure on the Surjo Torun tail, which -- needing 20 from the last two overs -- managed just 15 runs.

### VICTORIA-BKSP

In a 32-overs affair at the Fatullah Stadium, the youngsters of BKSP recovered from early and late collapses to score 173-9 with four deliveries to spare after Victoria had put on 168-9 on board.

It was Tanvir Haider whose heroics salvaged

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Indian batsman Sandeep Sharma punches the ball off the back foot while playing for Surjo Torun in a Premier Division Cricket League match against Old DOHS at the Sher-e-Bangla National Stadium in Mirpur yesterday.

PHOTO: STAR

## England aim to level Antigua Test starts today

Cricket

AFP, North Sound

England seek to draw level in a Test series that they were favoured to win when they face West Indies in the second Test, starting on Friday at the Vivian Richards Cricket Ground.

England were upset in the opening Test at Kingston, where they were bowled out for 51 in their second innings and crashed to an innings and 23-run defeat inside four days to hand West Indies a 1-0 lead in the four-Test series.

The visitors face a crucial challenge in the match. Another defeat for England would give West Indies an unassailable lead in the series and end their nine-year spell of Test series defeats against them.

But there are reasons for England to be hopeful about a reversal from their sensational demolition last Saturday at Sabina Park.

Barring back-to-back wins over Bangladesh, West Indies have not won consecutive matches in the last 10 years.

England should also recall that West Indies also outplayed South Africa in Port Elizabeth two Decembers ago, and they still lost a four-Test series 2-1.

The visitors also remember that the last time they crumbled in a Test in the Caribbean, when Michael Atherton's side were bowled out for 46 at Port of Spain, their predecessors rebounded with a 208-run victory in Barbados which was highlighted by hundreds in each innings from Alec

Stewart.

"If there were massive divisions in the side, I would be worried, but I do not think they are," England captain Andrew Strauss said.

"I think there were some quality performances in the first Test, so it's not all doom and gloom, but given what happened, we need to get

over it.

"We will need to re-formulate some of the plans in terms of how we play the West Indies' bowling, and also some of our plans for their batsmen as well."

"So there is plenty of work for us to do, but we have got to remain calm and hopeful. We

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England cricketer Kevin Pietersen boxes during a practice session on Wednesday ahead of their second Test match against the West Indies starting in St John's today.

PHOTO: AFP

## Super Cup from March 3

SPORTS REPORTER

Bangladesh Football Federation (BFF) has decided to start its mega event Super Cup on February 3 instead.

The BFF high-ups finalised the decision in an informal meeting yesterday.

It was learned that Edson 'Dido' Silva, the national team's Brazilian coach, wants his squad in camp as soon as possible for preparation of the AFC Challenge Cup.

Also, the BFF think-tank considered Pakistan cricket team's tour of Bangladesh next month, which could distract the crowd from the Tk

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## Sri Lanka in final

SPORTS REPORTER

Sri Lanka scored a emphatic victory over Pakistan when they beat them by 115 runs in the GrameenPhone Tri-Nation Women's Cricket Tournament yesterday at the Shaheed Flight Lieutenant Motiur Rahman Stadium in Khulna.

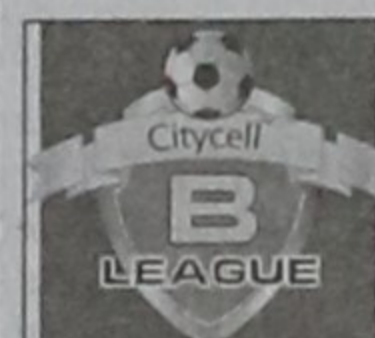
The winners, who have now won all their games, are through to the final on February 12 in Dhaka while Pakistan must secure a win against Bangladesh on Saturday to confirm their place.

The match was curtailed to a 34 over-a-side contest and Pakistan were all smiles after winning the toss and putting the opposition in. Their decision paid off rich dividends as Sri Lanka found themselves in

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## Brothers' 9th victory

SPORTS REPORTER



Goals in the second half ensured the fourth place for Brothers Union in the Citycell B. League when the giants from Gopibagh blanked Farashganj 2-0 yesterday.

Wasim Iqbal's side also kept their slim hopes for a third place finish alive with their ninth victory in 19 games, climbing to 34 points, just one behind Sheikh Russel who have two matches in hand.

After a first-half deadlock at the Bangabandhu National Stadium, Atiqur Rahman Mishu fired in a long-range volley in the 49th minute while Zahid Hossain sealed the victory with a solo effort five minutes from time.

Farashganj also confirmed the sixth place as they remained on 26 points, four adrift of Chittagong Mohammedan with one round to go in the competition.

Both sides fought equally in the first half but the riversiders came close to score after 15 minutes. But captain Kabir Hossain's shot from a goalmouth melee came off the Brothers crosspiece.

Midfielder Liton's curling shots from setpieces kept the Farashganj backline under constant threat and one from the left flank gave Shakil a good opportunity, only to see his powerful header going straight to goalkeeper Al Amin in the 27th minute.

Just before the short whistle, Zia made a similar save at the Oranges goal when Farashganj's Nigerian defender glanced a header on a corner by Ugandan Dominic.

Four minutes after resumption, Al Amin misread what looked like an ordinary volley by Mishu to concede the lead. The Brothers fullback drove the ball with his left-foot from 30 yards and a bounce in front of Al Amin sent the goalkeeper the wrong way and he had no chance to stop the ball going into his right hand post.

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## 'NZ tour will be tough'

### India to name ODI, T20 squad today

Cricket

AFP, Mumbai

India's batting superstar Sachin Tendulkar on Thursday said it would be a challenge for the inexperienced Indian side to cope with the conditions during the upcoming tour of New Zealand.

"We have a fairly new team and the challenge is definitely there," he told reporters here. "Playing in New Zealand, where the conditions are going to be tough, is a completely different experience."

The Indians are set to leave for New Zealand on February 20 to play three Tests, five one-day internationals and two Twenty20 matches.

Tendulkar, 35, has toured the country on six previous occasions but it will be a first for most of the other members of the squad, led by the young Mahendra Singh Dhoni.

The Indian squad for the one-dayers and Twenty20 internationals will be named on Friday.

"In places like Wellington, from one end-a bowler comes at 135kph with the breeze behind him, and then suddenly you are facing someone else who is very slow and there is no wind," Tendulkar said.

"With the wind behind the bowler it affects the batsman as he can't keep his eyes open for long. So it becomes tough as one needs to change the bat swing, balance and the rest of the things."

"It is going to be a learning experience for the first-timers. But we have a good balance of experience and youth and the seniors and coaches will guide the newcomers."

India were beaten 2-0 in the Tests and 5-2 in the one-day series when they last toured New Zealand in 2002-03.

Tendulkar, who opted out of the inaugural

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Argentina's hot property Lionel Messi (R) is about to fire in a grounder with his pet left foot for his side's second goal against France during a friendly football match at the Velodrome Stadium in Marseille on Wednesday.

PHOTO: AFP

## Messi steals the show

Football

AFP, Marseille

Diego Maradona milked the adulation of the home fans beforehand but it was Lionel Messi who stole the show, capping a virtuoso performance with a goal as Argentina beat France 2-0 at Marseille's Stade Velodrome on Wednesday.

Having reminisced earlier in the week about how he almost joined Marseille from Napoli in 1989, Maradona was given a rapturous reception from the French fans, who were far less cordial towards their own handler Raymond Domenech, architect of their first-round exit at Euro 2008.

And the majority of the sellout 60,000 crowd will have recognised that the French were deservedly beaten as the 'albiceleste' won with an opener four minutes before half-time from Jonas Gutierrez and then a Messi special eight minutes before the end.

"My lads played really well," Maradona told French television as he commiserated with Domenech.

"I am really happy with their performance. 'The record is now very positive,' he beamed, having seen off Scotland in his debut as coach in November.

"I think this group are (playing) at a very high level. After 20 minutes they found their feet, getting a good grip on possession which enabled us to develop our game."

Domenech, told TF1 television that the

French would learn from their experience.

"It was a good match. The players will have picked up some experience and that's what counts for us along with qualification for the World Cup.

"We lacked a little conviction and effectiveness up front but I think this team has a fine future ahead of it," Domenech insisted, while noting the need to "iron out a few imperfections."

Despite the presence of Messi, who Maradona rates as the best player in the world, it was France who began brightly, his Barcelona colleague Thierry Henry firing high over the bar after Nicolas Anelka had failed to connect properly with a teasing Franck Ribery cross in the tenth minute.

At the other end Messi showed his dribbling abilities with a mazy burst into the box - but William Gallas got back in the nick of time to block his low effort.

Les Bleus were still in the early ascendancy as Argentine shot-stopper Juan Pablo Carrizo rushed out smartly to close down the advancing Anelka before parrying a Henry snapshot on the half-hour. He then smothered a half-hit shot on the turn from the industrious Ribery.

Messi tried to lift the South Americans with another probing run which ended with Gallas dragging him down to earn a caution.

The French had had the lion's share of the chances but Gutierrez broke the deadlock four minutes before the interval, sweeping in right-footed through the hands of Steve Mandanda

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