



Did U Know?

A referee at a friendly match in Brazil drew a revolver and shot dead a player who disputed a penalty decision. The referee escaped in horseback.



Mahendra Singh Dhoni

(India cricket captain)
"It is a pleasure watching him (Sachin Tendulkar) score runs. It is definitely a good sign for our side. If the top order provides a good start, then the rest of the batsmen can play their natural game."
After the second ODI against New Zealand which was abandoned due to rain on Friday.



Neo Cricket
New Zealand v India
Third ODI
Live from 7:00am
TEN Sports
South Africa v Australia
Second Test, Day Three
Live from 2:00pm
West Indies v England
Fifth Test, Day Three
Live from 8:00pm
STAR Sports
Primera Liga
Sevilla v Almeria
Live from 11:55pm

Imran sniffs 'foreign element' in Lahore attack

AFP, Islamabad

Former Pakistan captain Imran Khan believes a "foreign element" could be involved in this week's attack on the Sri Lankan cricket team, according to an interview published Saturday.
"It could be India, Afghanistan, the Tamil Tigers," Khan was quoted as saying in an interview published online by The Times of London.
"The motive is to damage the state of Pakistan and end cricket here. The shocking thing is that there was so little security for the players," Khan said.

Khan said that he now feared that Pakistan would be treated as a pariah by the rest of the world and that it was already being described as a "failed state" and a breeding ground for terrorists.
"This attack was guaranteed front-page news everywhere in the world," Khan said.

"The perpetrators wanted to portray Pakistan as a chaotic state in the Dark Ages. Yesterday, the stock market took a nosedive. Pakistan is a resilient country but we have gone from crisis to crisis."
Khan's belief that foreigners may be involved in the cricket attack echoes Pakistan's interior minister Rehman Malik, who told reporters Friday that, "I cannot rule out (involvement of a) foreign hand in the incident."
Khan said that almost all the terrorism taking place in Pakistan since 2004, when its army was sent into the tribal areas, had been suicide attacks.

He said that last year there were over 100 suicide attacks "but they have a pattern. They are always in retaliation."
He said that this week's

Abahani overcome Torun Shafiul fires Partex

Cricket
SPORTS REPORTER

Abahani overcame a hurdle in their attempt to retain the Premier Division Cricket League title when they handed a six-wicket defeat to Surjo Torun at the Fatullah Cricket Stadium yesterday.

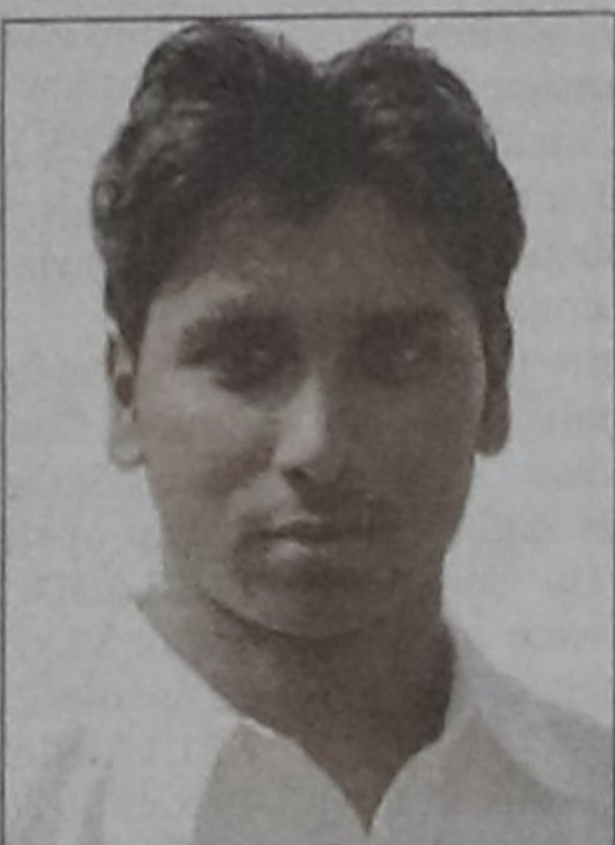
After Mashrafe Bin Mortaza's three wickets haul, Indian Venugopal took the charge with a run-a-ball 66 as Abahani secured a comfortable victory against Surjo Torun who upset Biman in the previous round.

With the seventh win, the Dhanmondi outfit secured the top spot by rattling up 14 points but Biman follows them with 12 points having played one match less. Biman have a good chance to share the lead as they meet BKSP in the eighth round match tomorrow but Surjo Torun slip to the second position with 12 points from eight matches.

Away at BKSP, Shafiul Alam slammed a hundred as Partex registered a six-wicket win against Cricket Coaching School (CCS). Partex

improved their tally to six points with the third victory while CCS remained on six points from same number of outings.

ABAHANI-SURJO TORUN
Nazmul Hossain gave the early breakthrough by removing Indian Sandeep Sharma for four runs after Surjo Torun decided to bat first but an 83-run second wicket partnership between Zunaed Siddiqui



SHAFIUL...104

and Hannan Sarker consolidated their position.

Nasir Hossain broke the partnership when he clean bowled Hannan for 45 runs

but it was Mashrafe who claimed two quick wickets by sending back national-partners Zunaed and Rajin Saleh to the pavilion as Surjo Torun were reduced to 138 for five.

Surjo Torun finally managed 201 before being bundled out in 49.4 overs.

In reply, Tamim Iqbal and Rony Talukdar made a solid start before the former fell victim of run out for nine runs to put an end to the opening stand for 31 runs. Imran Ahmed then joined Rony to add 64-run in the second wicket to steady the ship. Imran scored 33 off 66 balls with three fours.

It was however Venugopal who made the chase easy for the holders as the former Indian batsman hit three fours and four sixes while Sahagir Hossain contributed an unbeaten 32 off 53 balls.

PARTEX-CCS

Uttam Sarker missed a deserved hundred as the opener was dismissed in the nervous nineties but his effort helped CCS to put up a decent total of 212 for nine after being sent into bat first.

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Abahani's young opener Rony Talukdar works the ball on the on-side during his solid knock of 52 against Surjo Torun in a Premier League match at the Fatullah Cricket Stadium yesterday.

Div I Cricket Doleshwar outclass Orient

SPORTS REPORTER

Prime Doleshwar defeated Orient SC by three wickets in the day's lone match of the First Division Cricket League at the Dhaka University Ground yesterday.

Winning the toss, Orient opted to bat first but lost two quick wickets as former national pacer Hasibul Hossain got opener Rashedur Rahman caught behind in the 2nd over. Orient never really got into a run scoring momentum as they lost nine wickets with just 86 runs on the board.

A late order revival by Raihanuddin Arafat and Tazul Islam helped Orient reach a respectable target of 161 in 45 overs. Raihanuddin scored 40 off 48 balls, which included two boundaries and a six, while No.11 Tazul contributed a patient 28 off 52 balls.

Hasibul, who has played 32 ODI's and 5 Tests for the Tigers, picked up four wickets for 15 runs in his six overs.

Winners Prime Doleshwar rode on opening batsman Asif Iqbal's 56 and middle order

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MSC want title

SPORTS REPORTER



Mohammedan coach Maruful Haq has vowed to put up a fine performance and wow the club faithful as the popular Old Town outfit look set to approach the money-spinning Super Cup with lofty targets.

"We are the oldest club in the country and we will look to keep up our tradition of winning. The B. League was really competitive [where they finished second] and we will build on that by making a new plan and following it accordingly," said Haq.

"The Super Cup has created a sensation in the country due to its prize money," he added.

The tactically astute coach however bemoaned the grouping system, saying that he felt the odds were not in the Black and Whites' favours when the draw was done.

"In my opinion, our group is very strong. Both groups are very different in nature," he said.

Club captain Arman Aziz reiterated his coach's goals but specifically said that his goal was to emerge as champions.

"We want to start the Super Cup from where we left off in the B. League. We have overcome our injury problems and if we play our natural game I

am sure we will win the cup," he said.

Mohammedan are strengthening their side by borrowing players from both Muktiyoddha and Arambagh with Bidyut, Tajul and Himel joining their ranks from the

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Mohammedan coach Maruful Haq (L) attends a media briefing with his captain Arman Aziz (C) and manager Amirul Islam Babu at the BFF Bhawan yesterday.

Strauss puts Eng in charge

Cricket

AFP, Port Of Spain

Andrew Strauss batted the entire day to reach his third hundred of the series, and lead another solid England batting performance in the fifth and final Test against West Indies on Friday.

The England captain was undefeated on 139 - his 17th Test hundred - and shared century partnerships with Owais Shah and Paul Collingwood to guide England to a respectable 258 for two when stumps were drawn on the opening day at Queen's Park Oval.

Strauss won the toss and chose to bat on another hard, true Caribbean pitch under

sunny skies, and used the conditions to fashion another hundred to follow scores of 169, 14, 142, and 38 in his four previous innings.

"It's been a nice little purple patch for me," said Strauss. "When you are in form you've got to cash in. Thankfully I was able to do that today."

"I feel I am concentrating well and playing the balls on their merit. Long may it continue."

The left-hander added 107 for the second wicket with Shah before his Middlesex teammate was forced to retire hurt on 29 with severe cramps in his left-hand.

Strauss reached his milestone from 186 balls, when he drove West Indies captain Chris Gayle, plying his uncomplicated off-spin, through cover for a single about 20 minutes after tea.

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England skipper Andrew Strauss hits a bowler's back drive during his unbeaten knock of 139 on the opening day of the fifth and final Test against the West Indies at Queen's Park Oval in Port of Spain on Friday.

LOCAL SNIPPETS

SPORTS REPORTER

Water Development Board defeated Wari Club 3-1 (25-19, 21-25, 25-21 and 28-26) and Titas Club blanked Fire Service 3-0 (25-14, 25-18, 25-19) in the premier league matches of the National Bank Premier and First Division Volleyball League at the Dhaka Volleyball Stadium yesterday.

In the first division matches, Bhai Bhai Sangha beat Uttara Sporting Club 3-0 (25-14, 25-16, 25-17) and Azad SC handed defeat to Nabajagoroni Sangha 3-2 (25-18, 20-25, 19-25, 25-21 and 15-17).

GIRLS' HANDBALL

South Breeze School emerged champions in the KFC Pizza Hut 5th Girls Mini Handball Tournament beating Scholastica School by 6-4 goals at the Dhanmondi Women's Sports Complex.

In the third-place match, Sunnyside finished third beating Dhanmondi Tutorial also by a 6-4 margin at the same venue.

EXIM Bank chairman Nurul Islam Mujumder was the chief guest at the final and distributed prizes among the winners.

DIV III FOOTBALL

Dhaka Juniors SC held a 1-1 draw with Swadhinata KC in the Citycell Metropolis 3rd Division Football League at the Bir Shreshtha Shaheed Sepoy Mohammad Mostafa Stadium at Kamalapur.

In another match, Tongi KC also played to a 1-1 draw with City United Club at the same venue.

U-13 FOOTBALL

The final round of U-13 development football festival got underway in Mymensingh.

In the opening day's matches, Narayanganj crushed Jhalakathi 5-1, Tangail blanked Chapainawabganj 3-0, Chittagong defeated Chuadanga 3-1, Jhalakathi beat Bogra 2-1, Chuadanga edged past Tangail 1-0 and Sathkira beat Bogra 2-0.

The eight teams festival will conclude on March 9.

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BCF shocked at Shuvro's demise

SPORTS REPORTER

Bangladesh Chess Federation (BCF) expressed deep shock over the untimely death of talented player Shuvro Ghosh and prayed for the salvation of his departed soul.

Shuvro died last Thursday in Khulna at the age of 22.

Shuvro, a student of Azam Khan Commerce College in Khulna, became third in the national sub-junior championship in 2004 and fourth in 2003. He participated in the Telegraph International School Chess Championship in 2003 in Kolkata, India.

Johnson rattles SA Injured Smith may miss the series

Cricket

AFP, Durban

Australian fast bowler Mitchell Johnson took two wickets in his first over and forced South African captain Graeme Smith and key batsman Jacques Kallis to retire hurt on a dramatic second day of the second Test at Kingsmead here on Saturday.

South Africa were 138-7 at stumps in reply to Australia's first innings total of 352, still needing 15 runs to save the follow-on with JP Duminy battling bravely on 73 not out and along with him was Dale Steyn batting on 8.

Johnson took two wickets in his first over, then struck Smith with the third ball of his next over to throw the South African innings into disarray after the hosts had fought back earlier in the day, taking the last six Australian wickets for 49 runs, including the last five for four runs in 18 balls.

Smith had a fracture at the base of the little finger on his right hand, an injury likely to keep him out of action for two or three weeks, almost certainly ruling him out of the third and final Test, while making his further participation in the current game doubtful.

Kallis made 22 in a 50-run partnership with Duminy when Johnson, in the first over of his second spell, struck him on the jaw with a lifting delivery.

ery. He was led off the field bleeding.

His replacement, Mark Boucher, was bowled by Johnson off the last ball before tea.

Kallis returned after tea but was out at the same score to

McDonald, who finished the day with 3-25.

Wickets tumbled on Saturday after rain delayed the start of play by half an hour.

Australia collapsed from

SEE PAGE 18 COL 1



SPITTING VENOM: Australia's left-arm paceman Mitchell Johnson (R) celebrates after having South Africa's one-down batsman Hashim Amla (not in picture) trapped leg before in an eventful first over where he also dismissed opener Neil McKenzie on the second day of the second Test at Kingsmead in Durban yesterday.

Kiwis up against Sehwag Third ODI today

Cricket

AFP, Christchurch

New Zealand go into the must-win third one-day cricket international against India here Sunday struggling to find an answer to the Virender Sehwag problem.

Sehwag has ensured India get their innings off to a lightning start with his 77 from 56 balls in the first ODI, which India won by 53 runs, and 54 from 36 in the washed-out second match.

If India win the third game they will take an unbeatable 2-0 lead in the five-match series.

Sehwag suffered a calf strain in the second match, necessitating the use of a runner, but is still expected to play here on Sunday.

But as New Zealand look for ways to stifle his immense influence at the top of the order, batsman Ross Taylor admitted to admiration for the way the Indian opener has plundered the bowling.

"You've got the team aspect and you're wanting to get him out -- and at the same time there's a bit of a 'wow' factor about watching it," Taylor said.

"I'm sure the New Zealand public are pleased at the way he's batted. From a spectacle point of view it's an amazing thing to watch but from a player's point of view, hopefully we don't get to see it."

Sehwag announced himself on his first appearance on tour in the opening Twenty20 match, also in Christchurch, when he smacked three consecutive sixes from the first three balls he faced.

As if Sehwag's skills are not enough, India also have Sachin Tendulkar, Mahendra Singh Dhoni and Suresh Raina who have also produced half centuries in the first two ODIs.

New Zealand have a proud record with ODIs at home, having won six series and the drawn one since they lost to Australia in 2005.

Taylor noted the situation was similar to the previous

series this summer when New Zealand were down against the West Indies but fought back to take the series.

"We're still in with a sniff even though we haven't played as well as we'd have liked in the first couple of games," he said.

New Zealand captain Daniel Vettori was unhappy with the way his bowlers performed in the first match and while there was a slightly better performance in the rain-soaked second match, Sehwag remained a problem.

"There was a slight improvement to the batsmen other than Sehwag," Vettori said.

"We were reasonably disciplined but we've still got to do a lot of work on him."

"To try and stop him we have to be more consistent. We haven't got close enough to the mark."

Vettori will play in the third ODI but is doubtful for the final two matches and possibly the first Test because of the impending birth of his first child.