

RELOCATION OF PAK WORLD CUP MATCHES

Bangladesh get 2 qtrs

Cricket

SPORTS REPORTER

Bangladesh Cricket Board (BCB) was pleased to see two quarterfinals of the ICC World Cup 2011 come its way after the tournament's organising committee relocated Pakistan's fourteen matches in Mumbai yesterday.

India will host the final and one semifinal while Sri Lanka will stage the other semifinal. The other two quarterfinals will be hosted by the two co-hosts.

Bangladesh will stage eight matches at two grounds as well as the opening ceremony on February 18, 2011. India will host 29 of the 49 matches across eight venues and Sri Lanka will host 12 in three venues.

"We [the board] are happy that we got two quarterfinals but it is true that we expected a semifinal. Sri Lanka wanted to hold the opening ceremony, giving us the semifinal but we kept the opening ceremony and were given the quarterfinals," revealed BCB media committee chairman Jalal Yunus.

"Now that the number of matches are confirmed we are definitely looking forward to working hard and wasting no time," said Yunus.

The BCB will decide on three venues for the eight matches with one kept as alternate before the International Cricket Council (ICC) hold their inspection of the venues.

Sher-e-Bangla National Stadium, Fatullah Stadium, Bangabandhu National Stadium and Chittagong Divisional Stadium are the ICC approved Test venues so we would decide on the three venues for the World Cup before ICC

comes for their inspection," added Yunus.

BCB has less than two years now to be prepared for the opening ceremony as well as the matches but Yunus sounded confident of being ready.

"I think two years is enough time and I think it's best if we don't waste time and start working towards it," said Yunus.

Cricinfo adds: The World Cup's organising committee also decided to shift the tournament secretariat from Lahore to Mumbai. BCCI's chief administrative officer Ratnakar Shetty was appointed the event's managing director in place of Pakistani banker Salman Butt. The organising committee, headed by ICC vice-president Sharad Pawar, will include an operations and planning group comprising the Bangladesh Cricket Board senior vice-president Mahbubul Anam, Indian board secretary N Srinivasan, Sri Lanka's Duleep Mendis and Shetty. Haroon Lorgat, the ICC's chief executive, said IS Bindra, the special adviser to the ICC, would be a key person in the management of the World Cup.

He swept aside questions on whether Pakistan would boycott the World Cup in protest at being denied hosting rights, saying "we will cross the bridge when we come to it." The ICC had to decide on the redistribution of Pakistan's 14 matches after it removed the country from the list of hosts because the "uncertain political situation" would have made it difficult to "deliver a safe, secure and successful event" in Pakistan.

Lorgat said the security concerns of the various ICC members and the players would be addressed with the formation of a special committee headed by Shashank Manohar, the BCCI

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PHOTO: STAR

Myanmar striker Yaza Win Thein (L) gets the better of Bangladesh midfielder Wali Faisal during their AFC Challenge Cup Group-A qualifying clash at the Bangabandhu National Stadium yesterday. Myanmar came from behind to score a 2-1 win over the hosts.

PCL gets foreign flair

Jeehan, Chamara sign on

DWAIPAYAN BARUA, Chittagong

Preparation for the country's first-ever Twenty20 tournament, "Habib Group-Port City Cricket League (PCL), to start on Saturday next at Chittagong's MAAziz Stadium, is now at its finishing stage.

The eight participating teams and organisers are equally caught up in an enthusiastic mood to set up everything. Besides the stadium arena were a festive look too. The draw held yesterday afternoon to decide the teams' grouping surprised many as Group A appears stronger with the three popular clubs Chittagong Mohammadian Sporting (MSC), Chittagong Abahani and Chittagong Brothers Union being pitted together along with Top Sports Club of Noakhali DSA.

Group B consists of Ispahani Sports Club, Dada Warriors (a team of MEB Group), Dhaka Sports (Laxmipur) and the Pirates of

Chittagong (team of shipping company Continental Group). Divisional Commissioner and President of Chittagong Divisional Krira Sangstha

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GROUPINGS

A GROUP		B GROUP	
1	MUHAMMEDAN SC	1	DADA WARRIORS
2	CTG ABAHANI LTD	2	PIRATES OF CHITTAGONG
3	BROTHERS UNION	3	ISPANAHNI SC
4	TOP SPORTS	4	DHAKA TIGERS

Fixture

SL.	DATE	TEAM	TIME
1	02.05.09	MUHAMMEDAN SC	VS TOP SPORTS
2	03.05.09	DADA WARRIOR	VS DHAKA TIGERS
3	04.05.09	CTG ABAHANI LTD	VS BROTHERS UNION
4	05.05.09	PIRATES OF CTG	VS ISPANAHNI SC
5	06.05.09	MUHAMMEDAN SC	VS BROTHERS UNION
6	07.05.09	DADA WARRIOR	VS TOP SPORTS
7	08.05.09	ABAHANI LTD	VS DHAKA TIGERS
8	09.05.09	PIRATES OF CTG	VS ISPANAHNI SC
9	10.05.09	A GROUP CHAMPION (X)	VS B GROUP RUNNERS UP (Y)
		B GROUP CHAMPION (Y)	VS A GROUP RUNNERS UP (X)
		FINAL	VS
		WINNING TEAM OF "X"	WINNING TEAM OF "Y"

Note: Semifinal & Final time will be declared later.

Under-19s' late revival

SPORTS REPORTER

Taibur Rahman and Noor Hossain Munna salvaged Bangladesh Under-19's ship somewhat on the second day of their four-day match against Sri Lanka Under-19s at the Birsreshtha Shahid Matir Rahman Stadium in Khulna yesterday.

Both batsmen remained unbeaten at the end of the day with Bangladesh on 229 for seven. The home side are trailing by 51 runs after the Lankans were bowled out for 280 in their first innings.

Taibur and Munna came together when Bangladesh were struggling at 138 for seven after Sameera Weerasinghe and Chathura Peries took two wickets each to jolt the home side early on.

Taibur was patient with his 54 coming off 162 balls with the help of four boundaries but Munna was the more adventurous one, having scored 49 off 94 balls with six boundaries.

Before the pair emerged on the rescue operation, it was

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Super-sub breaks local hearts

SPORTS REPORTER

Myanmar midfielder Pai Soe came off the bench to score a late brace to break Bangladesh hearts in their crucial AFC Challenge Cup qualifier at the Bangabandhu National Stadium yesterday.

Both batsmen remained unbeaten at the end of the day with Bangladesh on 229 for seven. The home side are trailing by 51 runs after the Lankans were bowled out for 280 in their first innings.

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mercurial custodian Aminul's brilliant effort under the bar was not good enough for the home side to stop the rampaging Myanmar who regrouped in the second half to mesmerise Dido's boys who struggled to replicate their first match performance against Cambodia.

Everything however is not finished for the hosts as the margin of defeat kept their hopes alive to make their place in the eight-team final round. But Dido's charges have no other choice than to win their final game against Macau to ensure their place in the final round as a best runners-up team by toppling the Maldives.

If there was a question of luck that it definitely was on Bangladesh's side but Myanmar showed why they are featured far better in the ranking against Bangladesh by

producing quality football under the lights.

It was none other than Aminul who rescued his side in the few seconds from the start of the game as the seasoned goalkeeper saved the penalty from Myo Min Tun which came in Myanmar's

way after young defender Mamun Miah wrongly tackled Yaza Win Thein, who terrorised the home team most with his aggressive running with the ball.

Then early in the second half Myanmar frustrated by a woodwork as Yaza Win Thein's powerful left-footer hit back from the inside of the second bar but the favourites Myanmar made sure of the win by playing better football.

Bangladesh team showed a lack of pace from the very beginning of the game and were totally disorganized. And they looked totally helpless after the breather following Myanmar's series of attacks, especially they had no answers against Yaza Win Thein, captain Myo Min Tun and substitute Pai Soe.

The constant pressure

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Nat'l Club Cup from today

SPORTS REPORTER

Noakhali's Top Sports Club take on Shishir Park of Bandarban today in the opening match of the National Club Cup cricket tournament at the Nohakali Shaheed Bhulbhuli Stadium.

Thirty-seven teams will take part in the knockout competition to be hosted in Patuakhali, Jhenidah, Mymensingh, Rajshahi, Noakhali, Rangpur and Faridpur.

"This is an initiative to bolster club cricket throughout Bangladesh. The league champion teams of the districts are participating. We have even included last season's league champions from districts that have not started their local league competition

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Pathan powers Rajasthan

AGENCIES, Centurion

Yusuf Pathan hammered an unbroken 30-ball 62 as Graeme Smith anchored the Rajasthan Royals chase with an unbeaten 44 to romp to a five-wicket win over the Delhi Daredevils in the Indian Premier League (IPL) in Pretoria on Tuesday.

The brutal innings from Pathan, sedate but no less important knock by Smith and another typically inspired tactical tweak from Shane Warne combined to script, perhaps the most amazing turnaround of this tournament.

Delhi Daredevils' first defeat of IPL also owed itself to some miserly bowling from a revived Munaf Patel and some sloppy fielding of their own.

Spin continued to play a major influence, as Amit Mishra rattled Rajasthan with a three-wicket burst to leave them reeling at 64 for 5 and needing 80 off nine overs. But Smith's assurance and Pathan's ability left Delhi shell-shocked; they held the cards for much of the innings but ended up with the joker.

A target of 144 was tricky given this was the IPL's first game here but Rajasthan would have backed themselves after a laudable performance with the ball. However, they made a meal of it thanks to a shoddy display by their re-jigged top and middle orders.

Rajasthan had already been pegged back by the time spin was introduced. Rob Quiney was pushed up to open but didn't last long, trapped in front by Ashish Nehra in the fourth over. Next to go was the impatient Swapnil Asnodkar, run out attempting an impossible run, and Paul Valthathy -- included to beef up Rajasthan's misfiring batting line-up -- who holed out at long-off off Mishra. At 34 for 3, Rajasthan were reeling and the ploy of pushing up the greenhorns seemed to have backfired.

Worse was to follow after the tactical break: Mishra struck back with two wickets in the 11th over, deceiving both Ravindra Jadeja and Shane Warne, who had promoted himself ahead of Pathan. 64 for 5 and an embarrassment seemed on the cards.

But Warne usually has a method to his apparent madness. In the middle for Rajasthan

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Yusuf Pathan of Rajasthan Royals sets himself up for a meaty blow on way to scoring a match-winning 62 not out off 30 balls against Delhi Daredevils in the IPL at SuperSport Park in Centurion yesterday.

Mohammedan, Abahani thrive

SPORTS REPORTER

Abahani and Mohammedan Sporting Club tried to better each other in notching up huge wins in the Women's Club Cup competition yesterday.

Mohammedan took three minutes short of an hour to destroy Indira Road Krira Chakra by ten wickets while Abahani took only 25.4 overs to bowl out Khulna Women's Cricket Association to win by 177 runs.

At the City Club ground, Indira Road batted first but crashed out for just 30 runs from 19.1 overs with extras becoming the highest contributor with 17 runs. Eti took four wickets while Salma picked up three. The Motijheel giants took just five overs to knock off

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OCA president arrives today

SPORTS REPORTER

President of the Olympic Council of Asia (OCA) Sheikh Ahmed Al Fahad Al Sabah arrives in the capital today on a brief unofficial visit.

During his four-hour stay in Dhaka, the OCA boss will pay a courtesy call on Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina.

He will also meet Bangladesh Olympic Association (BOA) president and Army Chief General Moeen U Ahmed to present him the OCA "Award of Merit".

The award will be given to General Moeen for his valuable contribution in development of sports in the country.

'Anyone can be captain'

CRICINFO, undated

Ray Jennings, the Bangalore Royal Challengers coach, says he has yet to decide who will captain the embattled franchise once Kevin Pietersen departs for England after Wednesday's match against Kolkata. Jennings' comments come as a major surprise, given Bangalore had previously nominated South African Jacques Kallis to take over from Pietersen when the England batsman returns for the Test series against West Indies.

"It is still open," Jennings said. "I need to sit down and discuss with the management what we need to do."

After four successive defeats, Bangalore are a team in distress. Kallis, their original captain-in-waiting, has managed 101 runs from four matches with the bat, and just a solitary wicket with the ball. The South African all-rounder

could well be suffering from battling fatigue after hard-fought home-and-away series against Australia immediately before the IPL, and Jennings now appears to be hedging his bets on the captaincy issue in the event Kallis loses his place in the Bangalore starting XI.

"If Jacques plays, obviously he might be captain," Jennings said. "But if he doesn't play we have other guys like [Mark] Boucher, [Anil] Kumble and even [Rahul] Dravid (when he comes back) who are capable of leading the team. Obviously, after Pietersen we have to look at the performance of the side and then see who is the best guy to lead the side."

After finishing seventh in 2008, Bangalore got off to a bright start in the IPL's second season, inflicting a 75-run defeat on the defending champions, Rajasthan Royals (whose 58 is the lowest score of the tournament till date). But