

## NATIONAL CLUB CUP Four teams in zonal finals

SPORTS REPORTER

Barisal club Nazrul Pathagar and Boyra Tarun Sangha of Khulna moved into the zonal final after defeating their respective opponents in the National Club Cup tournament yesterday.

Nazrul Pathagar reached 116-6 in 37.2 overs after Sher-e-Bangla Juba Sangsad were bowled out for 113 in 45.1 overs at the Patuakhali Stadium while away in Jhenidah, Boyra Tarun Sangha of Khulna (110-5) defeated Ganomukhi (109 all out) by five wickets.

Away in Rajshahi, local club Mukti Sangha (108-2) earned an eight-wicket win over Chaukaniath Jubok Club of Naogaon (107 all out) to also move into the region's final.

So did clubs from Rangpur and Narayanganj.

Local club Oikya Sammilani Krira Sangstha (117-3) beat Dinajpur's Eidgah Sporting Club (114 all out) by seven wickets and Shamsujjoha Smriti XI of Narayanganj (192-9) beat Dashara Palli of Manikganj (97 all out) by 95 runs.



## Did U Know?

Usain Bolt became the first man in history to set world records in all three events (100m, 200m and 100x4 metres relay) at a single Olympics. He achieved these in the 2008 Beijing Olympic Games.



## What to Watch

**TEN Sports**  
Australia v Pakistan  
Fifth ODI  
Live from 5:00pm

**SET Max**  
Indian Premier League  
Kings XI Punjab v Kolkata Knight Riders  
Live from 4:30pm

Bangalore Royal Challengers v Mumbai Indians  
Live from 8:30pm

**ESPN**  
English Premier League  
Liverpool v Newcastle United  
Live from 6:25pm

Sunderland v Everton  
Live from 8:55pm

**STAR Sports**  
Primera Liga  
Real Betis v Atletico Madrid  
Live from 2:00am (Monday)



**Razvan Lucescu**  
(Romania soccer coach)  
"It's a great honour, I'm very proud, one month ago I never dreamt of becoming the national coach."  
After being named as the new coach of the national team on Wednesday.



**Panna Ghosh**  
led from the front with an unbeaten half-century as Ansar and VDP thrashed Indira Road Krira Chakra by 103 runs in the Women's Club Cup tournament at the City Club ground yesterday.

With the outcome, Ansar became Group B champions and take on BKSP in the second semifinal at the City Club ground tomorrow. Arch-rivals Abahani and Mohammedan meet in the first semifinal at the Gulshan Youth Club ground on the same day.

Ansar decided to bat first after the match was reduced to 20-overs-a-side and put up 144 for six in the stipulated 20 overs thanks to a 57-ball 55 by Panna who smashed four boundaries.



Fireworks light up the sky over the MA Aziz Stadium in Chittagong yesterday to mark the opening ceremony of the glamorous Twenty20 tournament in the country. The event titled Habib Group Port-city Cricket League (PCL) features eight teams and will run till May 10.

## MA Aziz buzzes again

NUR UDDIN ALAMGIR,  
Chittagong



Thousands of cricket lovers thronged at Chittagong's MA Aziz Stadium yesterday after a four-year hiatus as the organisers of the much awaited 'Habib Group Port city Cricket League (PCL)' shook off the cobwebs in style.

After the last ODI against visiting Zimbabwe on January 26, 2005, the MA Aziz Stadium was allocated for football, starving the cricket fans of action since the Chittagong Divisional Stadium is located far from the town proper.

With the game scheduled to start at 2.30pm, the viewers started gathering at the match venue an hour and a half before that.

The organisers inaugurated the league through a remarkable colourful ceremony that included music, dance and drums. Dancers and singers performed traditional routines and numbers including a tribal special while eminent singer Tapan Chowdhury with the local Hoimanti Mal enthralled the audiences singing on a mobile boat (swampan).

Around ten thousand cricket fans present could find the sound of cricket again at the stadium in a performance that kept the elements at bay. Hundreds of balloons were blown up by a strong wind

from the stadium before releasing them to formally inaugurate the occasion.

And the first cricket match under the flood-light of the stadium was celebrated with a display of fire-works (Atash-baji) at the end of the match which also entertained the viewers much.

Satellite Television Channel ATN Bangla telecasted the match live.

State Minister for Youth and Sports Ministry Ahad Ali Sarker inaugurated the league while State Minister for Foreign Affairs Hasan Mahmud, Bangladesh Cricket Board Chairman Lt Gen Sina Ibne Jamali and high officials of Chittagong District Administration attended the ceremony among others.

## Practice match drawn in Ctg

SPORTS REPORTER

The two-day practice match between Sri Lanka Cricket (SLC) Development team and the GP-BCB National Cricket Academy side ended in a draw at the Chittagong Divisional Stadium yesterday.

The tourists reached 32 for one in their second innings after Academy were bowled out for just 175 runs in the first innings. Earlier, the visitors made 370 in their first innings on the second day.

Paceman Thisara Perera captured five wickets for just 35 runs while the home side's paltry collection was propped p by a forceful half-century from Suvagata Hom, who made 52 off 80 balls with the

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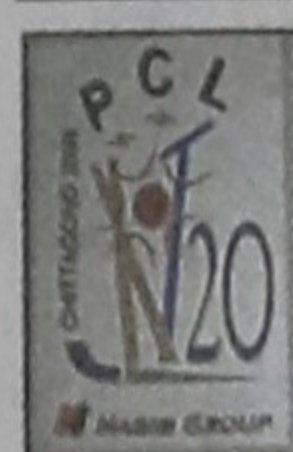


TURNING THE MATCH ON ITS HEAD: India and Rajasthan Royals' big-hitting batsman Yusuf Pathan flays one down the leg side during his blistering knock of 24 of 14 balls. His pyrotechnics saw the Royals, who were at one stage reeling at 3-3, pull off a thrilling three-wicket win over Deccan Chargers during an IPL Twenty20 match at St Georges Park in Port Elizabeth yesterday.

PHOTO: AFP

## Sadat turns up heat

SHAHIDUL ISLAM, Chittagong



Top Sports of Noakhali pushed Chittagong Mohammedan Sporting Club to the backseat in the opening match of the country's first-ever Twenty20 tournament as the Port-city Cricket League (PCL) 2009 got off to a boisterous start at the MA Aziz Stadium yesterday.

Top Sports, batting first, raced to 158 for the loss of four wickets in the allotted 20 overs and then bowled their more colourful opponents out for 125 in 18.3 overs for an easy 33-run victory.

The defeat meant Mohammedan would now need to come back strongly against Chittagong Brothers Union tomorrow and Abahani on May 7 in their last two league matches to remain in the title race.

None of the around 10,000-strong crowd however would argue with the fact that Top Sports were by far the better team, thanks to superb batting display by opener Nazmus Sadat and three fine bowling spells by Elias Sunny and Sri Lankan recruits S Lokuarachchi and KWeeraratna.

The big Top Sports total was built around Sadat's, who

boasts a price tag of 60,000 taka, 91 not out off 57 balls and Mahmudullah Riyad's run-a-ball 30 on a perfect batting wicket.

In reply, the local Mohammedans never looked easy except the first over of

which came 14 runs and were eventually bunched out for 125 with nine balls to spare. Their Pakistani player Qaiser Abbas played his part with a fine knock of 53 from 34 balls with six fours and two sixes, but he received little support from

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PHOTO: STAR

Top Sports' left-handed opener Nazmus Sadat pulls one over mid-wicket during his superb 91 against Chittagong Mohammedan Sporting Club during the inaugural PCL Twenty20 match at the MA Aziz Stadium in Chittagong yesterday.

## Jakati spins Chennai to win

AFP, Johannesburg



Left-arm slow bowler Shadap Jakati spun the Chennai Super Kings back into contention in the Indian Premier League with an 18-run win over the Delhi Daredevils at the Wanderers Stadium Saturday.

David Warner (51) and Dinesh Karthik (52) took Delhi within sight of overhauling a disappointing Chennai total of 163 all out on the best batting pitch of the tournament so far.

Warner was making his IPL debut because regular Delhi captain Virender Sehwag needed four stitches in his left hand after trying to take a catch in his team's win against the Deccan Chargers Thursday.

But both men fell to Jakati and Delhi limped

to 145 for eight. Jakati took four for 24.

The win lifted Chennai, last year's beaten finalists, from seventh to fifth on the log.

Chennai seemed set for a big total when they hurried to 112 for two in the 13th over with Matthew Hayden (30), Suresh Raina (32) and Subramanian Badrinath (45) all scoring comfortably at better than a run a ball on a true, hard pitch.

Raina and Badrinath were dismissed in the 13th and 15th overs respectively, bringing the Chennai side's big hitters, Albie Morkel and captain Mahendra Singh Dhoni, together.

Instead of a burst of scoring in the closing overs, left-arm fast bowlers Dirk Nannes and Ashish Nehra ploughed through the middle and lower order batting.

Morkel fell to Nehra for six and Dhoni to

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## A Royal turnaround

AFP, Port Elizabeth



Rajasthan Royals staged a dramatic fightback to upset table-toppers Deccan Chargers by three wickets in their Indian Premier League match here on Saturday.

Defending a competitive 141-5, Deccan looked set for victory when they reduced Rajasthan to 3-3 in the second over but some sloppy efforts in the field saw the defending champions steal a sensational win with two balls to spare.

It was only the second defeat for Deccan from six matches while Rajasthan registered their third win from seven outings to throw open the tournament.

Charismatic all-rounder Yusuf Pathan, tactically brought down to number eight in the batting order, once again did the trick, hitting 24 from 14 balls with two fours and two sixes.

Pathan, named man-of-the-match, came in with Rajasthan needing 49 from 35 balls but reduced the asking rate to a mere 11 from 12 balls.

Abhishek Raut, who remained unbeaten on a 23-ball 36, and Lee Carseldine (39) were the

other contributors with the bat.

Tirumalsetti Suman earlier top-scored for Deccan with an unbeaten 41 after captain Adam Gilchrist gave the side a blazing start, scoring a 41-ball 39 with five fours and two sixes.

Suman paced his 30-ball innings intelligently and also shared a rollicking stand of 59 runs off 49 balls for the fourth wicket with Rohit Sharma (38) to rescue the side from a shaky 58-3.

Sharma's knock was laced with two fours and two sixes while Suman hit one six and two boundaries.

Debutant paceman Shane Harwood of Australia took a wicket off his very first ball and also scalped another at the death to finish with impressive figures of 2-25.

### SCORES IN BRIEF

DECCAN CHARGERS: 141-5 in 20 overs (Suman 41 not out, Gilchrist 39, Sharma 38; Harwood 2-25).

RAJASTHAN ROYALS: 142-7 in 19.4 overs (Carseldine 39, Raut 36 not out, Pathan 24; RP Singh 2-18, Rao 2-23).

Result: Rajasthan Royals won by three wickets. Man-of-the-match: Yusuf Pathan.

## Yousuf quits ICL?

Cricket

CRICINFO, undated

Mohammad Yousuf has claimed that he has "resigned" from the ICL after he decided last month that his priority was to play for Pakistan. The move potentially paves the way for Yousuf's comeback to the national side, as the PCB recently announced it was willing to talk to players who leave the ICL before the end of May and consider their cases for an international return on an individual basis.

"I spoke to Younis [Khan] about a month and a half ago and I resigned from the ICL after that," Yousuf told Cricinfo. "We both talked about how the country comes first and playing for them is the priority so I decided. I am available whenever the country needs me."

Reports had been swirling around Pakistan since the end of March that Yousuf and a group of other players were considering quitting the ICL after the March-April edition of the league was suspended. ICL players including Yousuf and Abdul Razzaq sought out Younis last month to try and find a way back into the national set-up, after fearing that the ICL -- or at least their future participation in it after the deterioration

in Indo-Pak ties -- might present a tenuous prospect.

It is believed that Younis made no recommendations or promises, only telling the players that the priority should be to play for Pakistan, whatever that involves. "Younis was of the view that as they hadn't come to him before they signed up for the ICL, he doesn't understand why they came to him when they wanted to leave it," a source present at the meetings told Cricinfo. "He also pointed out that he cannot guarantee selection as that is a decision in which other parties, and not just the captain, are also involved." After some consideration and communication with Pir Aftab Shah Jilani, Pakistan's sports minister, Yousuf resigned from the league, though no official public statement had been made, either by any of the players, or the ICL, until now.

There appears, however, to be some confusion over the exact nature of Yousuf's actions. Though Yousuf said his contract with the league was now "finished" the ICL maintains that he is still on contract, though he has been released to play for Pakistan. "Yousuf's ICL contract has not been terminated," Roland Landers, the ICL spokesperson, told Cricinfo. "We have given him a temporary release so that he can play for his country."

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