



Did U Know?

Ferenc Szisz from Romania, driving a Renault, won the first Formula One Grand Prix held at Le Mans, France in 1906.



David Morgan

(ICC president)
"Our number-one priority is that cricket in Pakistan must not be allowed to suffer unduly and I believe this agreement is the best possible outcome for the game."

Assuring that international cricket will return to Pakistan as soon as it is 'safe' and 'secure' for the game to be played there.



ESPN
Sportscentre India
Sports News
Live at 9:30pm

2nd PCL in Sharjah

SPORTS REPORTER

The 2nd Port City League (PCL) Twenty20 Cricket will be held in the United Arab Emirates city of Sharjah, in March next year with satellite television ATN Bangla telecasting all matches live from the venue, said officials yesterday.

The announcement came after a contract signing ceremony between the PCL authority and ATN Bangla at the Samarai Convention Centre yesterday evening.

Explaining the reason behind shifting the venue of the PCL from Chittagong to Sharjah, the speakers said all the major cricket grounds of the country would be busy for the domestic cricket as well as remain under renovation ahead of the 2011 ICC World Cup at home.

PCL Chairman AJM Nasiruddin and ATN Bangla Chairman Dr Mahfuzur Rahman signed the deal on behalf of their respective organisations. ATN Bangla will provide Tk one crore to the PCL authority for the telecast right.

The port city of Chittagong held the first ever Twenty20

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Hypnotist to KKR's rescue

ANI, Islamabad

After having helped the Pakistan cricket team win the ICC World T20 Championship, famous psychotherapist and hypnotist Maqbool 'Max' Babri has expressed his interest in holding training sessions for the troubled Indian Premier League (IPL) team, the Kolkata Knight Riders (KKR) to change its fortunes.

Babri has written a letter to KKR owner Shahrukh Khan and the team's former captain Sourav Ganguly's brother, Snehashish Ganguly, expressing his desire to be KKR's 'mental' coach and 'thought manager' for the third season of the IPL.

"I will very much like to be a part of your team as a thought manager and mind coach. People think I am a magician."

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Shuktara eye Super Cup

Football

SPORTS REPORTER

Shuktara Jubo Sangsad have pinned their hopes on Narayanjan's booters as the newcomers signed up 18 players yesterday, one day before the last date of the month-long players' registration for the professional football league, the B. League.

All the players except striker Saifur Rahman Khokon are dwellers of Narayanjan, a place from whether star booters like Monem Munna, Ashrafuddin Chunnun, Samrat Hossain Emily, Golam Gaus, Zakir Hossain spread lights in national level. And current defenders like Mohammad Sujan, Nazrul Islam, Abdullah Parvez and Abul Hossain are no less remarkable players.

"Our main motivation is that all the players of the squad are from Narayanjan and they know each other closely," said captain Rezaul Karim Liton. "Besides, 13 players of the squad have the experience of playing in the top level football, so it will help us lot."

In the absence of coach Riaz Biswas, captain

Liton, who coached the side on their way to become champions in the Club Cup, talked to the reporters and informed them about their target in the season-curtain raising tournament, Federation Cup, as well as the third B. League.

"We are thinking of qualifying for the Super Cup, let alone being relegated from the top-flight. We are also hoping to play the quarterfinals in the Federation Cup as we have been training for almost three months now," said the former Brothers Union playmaker.

The captain believes that his side's major strength is the midfield, consisting of himself, Rintu, Dalim, Hanif Proddhan and the striking duo of Saiful Islam Khokon and Mehdi Hasan Apu, who last season played for Brothers Union.

Muktar Hossain, general secretary of the club, said that they would prefer to go with the local collection in the Federation Cup, but would add three foreign players -- a stopper, a midfielder and a striker -- in the professional football league.

Hossain thought that the charm of the footballers had already disappeared, but the

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Real Madrid forward Raul (R) runs off to celebrate his goal in the opening day of the Spanish Primera Liga season against Deportivo on Saturday. Real's team of superstars were intermittently brilliant as they saw off a stiff Depor challenge 3-2.

PHOTO: AFP

NZ go down fighting

Cricket

AFP, Colombo

Sri Lanka clinched second spot behind South Africa in the official rankings as they swept aside New Zealand by 96 runs in the final Test on Sunday to sweep the series 2-0.

Left-arm spinner Rangana Herath claimed five wickets as the Kiwis, set an improbable victory target of 494 runs, were bowled out for 397 in their second innings just before tea on the fifth day.

Sri Lanka had to overcome spirited batting by Kiwi captain Daniel Vettori and heavy rain during the lunch break that delayed resumption by 35

minutes to build on their 202-run win in the first Test at Galle.

Vettori hit 140, his fourth Test century, to lead a stirring fightback by the lower order after the top batsmen had failed to put up any resistance.

The left-hander frustrated the Sri Lankans for more than four hours in which he faced 189 deliveries and hit 16 boundaries, before he was last man to be dismissed.

Vettori scored 272 runs and claimed 10 wickets in the series, and in the process became only the eighth batsman in the world to achieve the double of 3,000 runs and 300 wickets.

Vettori put on 124 for the seventh wicket with Jacob Oram (56) and 69 for the ninth

with Iain O'Brien, who kept his captain company at the crease for an hour and 18 minutes while making a paltry 12.

The hosts, who were joint second in the rankings with India, needed to win both Tests to claim the number two spot on their own. India are now third while Ashes losers Australia take fourth place.

The success leaves Kumar Sangakkara with four wins in five matches as Sri Lanka's captain since taking over from Mahela Jayawardene in the preceding home series against Pakistan.

New Zealand, who began the last day gasping for survival at 182-6, lost just one wicket in the morning session

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New Zealand captain Daniel Vettori sweeps during his valiant yet futile knock of 140 on the fifth and final day of the second Test against Sri Lanka at the Sinhalese Sports Club ground in Colombo yesterday. Sri Lanka won the match by 96 runs and the series 2-0.

PHOTO: AFP

Clamour grows to axe Ponting

Cricket

ANI, Melbourne

Australia needs a street fighter like Simon Katich to trigger a revival, after calls for sacking of Ricky Ponting in the wake of the Ashes loss under the Tasmanian's captaincy for the second time in four years.

Australian cricket has lost the ruthless cutting edge cultivated by Steve Waugh that made them one of the most feared teams, according to former players.

Former Test wicketkeeper Steve Rixon said Ponting is a magnificent batsman, but he will never be regarded as a great captain, and added that Australia have lost their killer instinct under him.

Ponting became the first Australian captain

in 119 years to lose consecutive series on English soil, The Daily Telegraph reported.

Rixon says the take-no-prisoners psyche cultivated by Waugh has been eroded.

"I don't relate to the brand of cricket we are playing under Ricky. We aren't playing the sort of cricket that has made us ruthless and a team that no one really likes to play," Rixon said.

"Teams aren't capitulating under pressure like they used to. We seem to have a more timid nature... and that could certainly have a bearing on a tight series like the one in England."

"We're struggling against sides we should be beating. England is renowned for capitulating under pressure, but we never got ruthless or flexed our muscle," he said.

"If we're going to look at change, I'd be looking at Simon Katich. Simon is a tenacious leader. I worked with him at NSW and I know

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GMs urge free and fair election

SPORTS REPORTER

All leading chess players including three Grand Masters of the country yesterday urged the government to hold a free and fair election instead of forming an ad-hoc committee of the Bangladesh Chess Federation, whose four-year tenure expires on September 5.

Under the banner of 'the Association of Chess Players' Bangladesh' they submitted a memorandum to the youth and sports ministry yesterday, a day after the completion of the 9th United Insurance GM Chess tournament in the capital.

Three GMs Reefat Bin Sattar, Abdullah al Rakib and Enamul Hossain Razib and eight FIDE masters Tayebur Rahman, Nasir Ahmed, Khandoker Aminul Islam, Abu Sifian Shakil, Mehedi Hasan Parag, Minhazuddin Ahmed Sagor, Mahfuzur Rahman Emon and Md. Javed were among 26 players, who signed the paper.

GM Ziaur Rahman, who is now out of the country, did not sign the paper, but his name was on the list.

The memo said the tenure of the existing committee is

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Bolt kicks off Real season

AFP, Madrid

Jamaican sprint king Usain Bolt is becoming a fan of Spanish football after watching Real Madrid's season-opening win over Deportivo La Coruna on Saturday night - but adds Manchester United remain the team for him.

"I support Manchester United in the English League. I am now a fan of Real Madrid. (Ruud) van Nistelrooy has always been one of my favourites," said Bolt afterwards as he met reporters at the Bernabeu stadium, an arena which clearly impressed him.

"I was very nervous on the pitch, for the first time in my life, I had never been there before... the crowd was overwhelming. I could play football, cricket or basketball. If I

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JIS champs

SPORTS REPORTER

Jatrabari Institute of Soccer (JIS) emerged unbeaten champions in the 12th Jadukar Samad juvenile football tournament with a 2-0 win over Gandaria Power Sun Club in the final at the Bangabandhu National Stadium yesterday.

Rajon and Tipu struck one goal apiece for the winners.

State Minister for Youth and Sports Ahad Ali Sarker distributed prizes among the winners while Mahbubuzzaman, advisor of Orient Club, and Jahangir Alam, director of Matador Group, were present as special guests.

Smooth start for Real

AFP, Madrid



Cristiano Ronaldo, the world's most expensive player, scored a dream debut goal as Real Madrid's new generation of expensive 'Galacticos' defeated Deportivo La Coruna 3-2 in Saturday's Spanish league curtain-raiser.

Real spent over 250 million euros in the summer with Ronaldo accounting for 94 million euros of that, and the Portuguese star got off to a great start converting a first half penalty for his first competitive goal in the famous white shirt.

The cameras were out in force for Ronaldo and Kaka, the past two Ballon d'Or winners, but it was a player that cost Real nothing, captain and youth product Raul, who stole the first half headlines.

Raul, the club's all-time leading scorer, netted the first goal of the new season with a simple tap-in on 26 minutes and won Ronaldo's penalty on 35 minutes after Depor had equalised.

Real twice went ahead only to be pegged back at 1-1 and 2-2 through Riki (30min) and Juan Carlos Valeron (46).

French midfielder Lass Diarra was the unlikely hero firing in on the hour mark to ensure new coach Manuel Pellegrini and his Galacticos got off to a winning start.

"I am happy because it was very important to win the first game and we did," explained Pellegrini.

"Being just a goal ahead can cause panic because your opponents can equalise with just one chance. It was a tough game."

As Real's new superstars took to the field, there was a special guest appearance as Jamaican sprint king Usain Bolt dribbled a ball to wild applause.

It was Bolt's first time on the Bernabeu pitch and there were seven other debutants for Real with Ronaldo, Kaka and Karim Benzema forming an attacking force alongside Real veteran Raul.

Xabi Alonso, a 30-million-euro summer arrival from Liverpool, made his bow alongside Diarra in midfield while his old Liverpool team-mate Alvaro Arbeloa began at right back.

With Pepe suspended, Argentine Ezequiel

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Flushing Meadows abuzz again

AFP, New York



Reigning US Open champions Roger Federer and Serena Williams will begin defending their titles today as an opening-day match list released Saturday also had Venus Williams and Andy Roddick at night.

The year's final Grand Slam tournament commences on the Flushing Meadows hardcourts today with former world number one Kim Clijsters of Belgium facing Ukraine's Viktoriya Kutuzova in the first match at Arthur Ashe Stadium.

Clijsters is making her first US Open appearance since winning the 2005 women's title, her only Grand Slam crown. She returned to the court earlier this month after a layoff of more than two years to start a family.

Federer, who has won the past five US Open men's titles and has not lost at the US Open since the fourth round in 2003, begins his quest for six in a row against 18-year-old American Devin Britton in the second match at Ashe.

"Doesn't matter who you play, where you play. If you think the guy is not going to make a

game that's absurd," Federer said. "That's how tennis is. You have to be very careful. I have to make sure I put in a good performance."

Federer recalled being shocked at 17 when he faced Andre Agassi in his hometown of Basel, so he can relate to Britton's situation.

"You try to enjoy it, put in a good fight," Federer said. "Best-of-five-set match is maybe something Britton has never played before, but a good thing in tennis is you always have a chance."

US fifth seed Andy Roddick's advice for Britton was to find ways to help cope with a signature moment on the big stage.

"There's nothing like going out on that court and playing," Roddick said. "I would him to be sure to have a look around when he walks out on the court, take it all in before you go start warmup so you don't catch yourself looking around too much when you start."

Serena Williams, who won her 11th career Slam title last month at Wimbledon, begins her quest for a fourth US Open title in the following match against American Alexa Glatch.

The main court's night session starts with US third seed Venus Williams meeting Russia's Vera Dushevina followed by men's fifth seed

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Sporting the famous Barcelona shirts, the players of Jatrabari Institute of Soccer celebrate their triumph against Gandaria Power Sun Club in the Jadukar Samad juvenile football tournament final at the Bangabandhu National Stadium yesterday. Jatrabari won the match 2-0.

PHOTO: STAR