



Abahani batsman Imrul Kayes pulls one down to square-leg during his 64-run knock against Gazi Tank in their T20 Premier League match at the Sher-e-Bangla National Stadium in Mirpur yesterday.

Gazi, Mohammedan keep winning

SPORTS REPORTER



Title-contenders Gazi Tank made light work of giants Abahani Limited under lights at the Sher-e-Bangla National Stadium to move into the semifinals of the Twenty20 Premier League yesterday.

Set to chase a below-par target of 110, Gazi Tank, after a few early hiccups, got over the line with seven wickets in hand and 5 balls to spare, thanks to a sensible knock of 58 runs from Shahriar Nafees and an equally important knock of 32 not out from Nayeem Islam.

Nafees started the innings in his usual aggressive style hitting a six over square leg. His opening partner, the dashing Nazim Uddin, lasted only for seven runs before being caught by Sahagir Hossain off the bowling of Shuvashish Roy. The next victim was Mithun as he went after a wide delivery from Muktar only to nick it to the wicketkeeper after scoring just 2.

Gazi Tank looked in trouble at that point with two wickets down and the score on 27. Abahani, without the services

of two of their best players in Mashrafe and Shakib, brought on the spinners to put more pressure on the batsman.

And the pressure paid off as the next four overs yielded only 10 runs and the precious wicket of Alok Kapali. Kapali, hero of the first game against CCS, looked out of sorts against the spin and was dropped once early. But Kapali failed to take advantage of the chance, as he holed out to the wily spin of Mohammad Rafiq for just 6 runs. That was the beginning though of an unbroken partnership of 72 runs between Shahriar and Nayeem that guided Gazi Tank to this crucial victory. Shahriar's knock was blended with aggression and cautiousness in which he hit four boundaries and three massive sixes.

Earlier, having won the toss Abahani looked in for a massive score when their two openers gave them a flying start scoring 77 runs in the first ten overs. Opener of the national team Imrul Kayes was particularly in a belligerent mood as he hurled the Gazi Tank pacers all around the ground, hitting six sixes and two boundaries in his 64-run knock from just 49 balls. But the introduction of spin saw their

batting struggle badly and wickets started to tumble like nine-pins. Abahani managed to score only 33 runs in their last ten overs losing eight wickets in the process to set a target of 110 for Gazi Tank. Abdur Razzak and Sohrawardy Shuvo had a return of three wickets each while skipper Alok Kapali chipped in with two wickets.

In the earlier match at the same venue, newcomers Khelaghar produced a massive upset as they defeated Biman by four runs in the D/L method. Biman were nine down for 84 in 18 overs, in reply to Khelaghar's 95, before rain interrupted play.

Mohammedan continued their impressive run with their third successive victory in three matches, this time beating Partex Sporting by 7 wickets at the Fatullah Stadium. Delwar Hossain produced a devastating spell of 5 for 10 as Mohammedan reduced Partex to 85 runs in 19.3 overs. Mohammedan batsman, wasted only 12.4 overs to overhaul the target, losing 3 wickets in the process.

In a rain-curtailed match at the same venue, Kalabagan defeated Old DOHS by 23 runs. Batting first Kalabagan scored 79

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BTB
Citycell Federation Cup Football
First Semifinal
Mohammedan v Feni Soccer Club
Live from 6:00pm

STAR Cricket
Champions League T20
Cobras v Victoria
Live from 5:30pm

Royal Challengers v Delhi Dare Devils
Live from 9:30pm

ESPN
English Premier League
Sunderland v Liverpool
Live at 8:55pm

STAR Sports
English Premier League
Aston Villa v Chelsea
Live at 6:40pm

Man United v Bolton
Live at 8:55pm

SuperSport3
Primera Liga
Real Madrid v Valladolid
Live from 1:00am (Sunday)

Valencia v Barcelona
Live from 3:00am (Sunday)

Ram upstages Ali

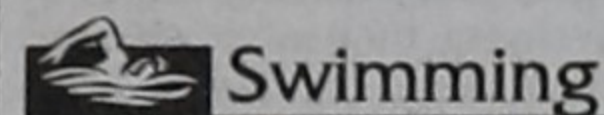
SPORTS REPORTER

Bangladesh's Biplob Ram put on impressive performance against compatriot Rustom Ali to take the boys' singles title of the Prime Bank ATF under-14 Tennis Tournament 3-6, 6-3, 6-3 in a rain-interrupted final at the National Tennis Complex on Friday. Biplob was one set down, but had staged a comeback in the second set and was leading 5-3 when rain halted play for the day and pushed it to a Friday finish.

Taking to court on the morning, Biplob wasted little time to take the second set 6-3. He continued in the same vein in the third set and won it by the same scoreline 6-3 to finish an exciting final.

This was a sweet revenge for Ram who, on Thursday, lost in the doubles' final against Rustom's team in straight sets. Victories in the singles and doubles finals gave Bangladesh their first ever championship win at an ATF under-14 tournament.

6 more records in Day Two



SPORTS REPORTER

Six more records were set on the second day of the 25th National Age Group Swimming Championship at the National Swimming Complex in Mirpur yesterday.

The opening day of the three-day meet also saw seven new records with the swimmers from Bangladesh Ansar setting five of them and the swimmers from the same organisation dominated the pool the day to create five new records out of six.

Jewel Ahmed from Ansar, who set records in 200m individual medley and 400m freestyle on the opening day, created records in 400m individual medley (5:11.18 minutes) and 200m butterfly (2:21.28 minutes) in the boy's 15-17 group while his rival Palash Chowdhury from BKSP made record in the 200m

freestyle (2:10.71 minutes) in the same group.

Ansar's Babita Khatun, who set record in 400m individual medley on Thursday, created another record in the 200m backstroke (3:01.91 minutes) in the girl's 18-20 group while his junior teammate Nazma Khatun set record in 200m freestyle (2:36.99 minutes) in the girl's 11-12 group. Nazma on Thursday set a record in the 100m butterfly event.

Bangladesh Ansar won 17 golds out of 34 decided on the second day to topple BKSP to stay at the top of the medal table with 34 golds, 24 silvers and 18 bronzes.

BKSP were in the second position with 32 golds, 31 silvers and 25 bronzes, followed by Manjur Smrity Swimming Club, Alamgir Swimming Club, Kishoreganj DSA and Jhenaidha DSA, who won one gold apiece.

BD Under-19 dominate first day

STAFF CORRESPONDENT, Ctg

The young Tigers were on top in the rain affected first day of the 4-day Test match as they restricted the visiting England Under-19 team to 124 for the loss of five wickets in 68 overs.

Winning the toss England skipper Azeem Rafiq chose to bat first at the Chittagong Divisional Stadium.

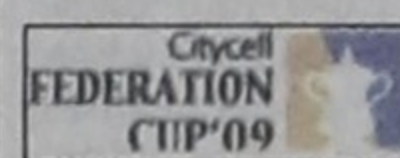
The visitors had a good start and put on 64 runs for the opening partnership before opener Joe Root was caught behind for 21 in the 32nd over. His partner Chris Dent who topscored with a seditate 45 off 111 balls followed quickly, bowled after adding only 8 more to the total. Ben Stocks, James Goodman and Charlie Roebuck also departed contributing 11, 8 and 2 runs respectively as the tourists were restricted to 97 for 5 in the 58th over.

Skipper Azeem Rafiq and Paul Best looked steady to take the score to 124 without further loss of wickets before the

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MSC look for 14th final

SPORTS REPORTER



Mohammedan SC will look to shake off their shaky performance in the quarterfinals and try to secure a spot in the final of the Citycell Federation Cup through a win against newcomers Feni Soccer Club in the first semifinal at the Bangabandhu National Stadium today.

Mohammedan struck 19 goals in three group matches to storm into the knockout phase, but faced a tough challenge against Shuktara Jubo Sangsad of Narayanganj in the quarterfinal clash and finally advanced via the shootout to set up a semifinal clash against a side they routed 4-0 in the group phase.

Mohammedan coach Maruful Haq preferred to take the Saturday match as a fresh one rather than recall the success of their tournament opener.

"We played against them five weeks ago and they (Feni Soccer) certainly improved a lot this time, so we don't want to be complacent and will try to play our own game," said coach Maruf yesterday.

The coach also believed the shaky performance they put against Shuktara Club would not affect the players, who all admitted that that day against the Narayanganj outfit was a bad day for them.

Maruf, who guided the popular Black and Whites to the last season's Federation Cup triumph, may feel content thinking of in-form

striking duo Alamu Bukola Olaleken and Zahid Hasan Emili, who has hit the back of the net in all four matches and top the goal list with seven strikes.

Nevertheless, the officials and the fans of the Motihheel-based outfit will once again rely on Emili to send Mohammedan into the final of the Federation Cup for the 14th time.

"After having got goals in the previous all four matches, I am confident and hopeful that I will get the back of the net and it is my duty to play a role in winning the match," said Emili adding that they could not play as expected against Shuktara because of the uneven pitch and a long gap between the last group match and the quarterfinal.

Even Feni Soccer coach Jahidur Rahman Milon also echoed Emili notion and put Mohammedan ahead in the semifinal clash.

"Mohammedan are a better side than us, but we are more organised this time though we went down 4-0 against them in the first match and I am confident the boys will show fighting spirit against them," said the former Mohammedan goalkeeper.

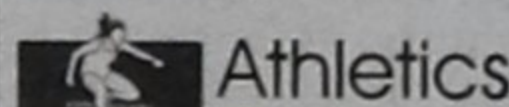
The Feni coach was however much worried over his depleted backline as his right-back Monu and left-back Jahid will miss the semifinal due to suspension.

Accepting the weakness of the backline, Feni coach said he would go with a defensive and counter attack strategy and try to take the semifinal to a shootout.



Marek Hamsik
(Slovakia soccer captain)
"I feel terrible joy, it's hard to describe. We are incredibly happy."
After qualifying for the 2010 World Cup finals in South Africa on Wednesday.

Sumita blazes a trail



SPORTS REPORTER

Sumita Rani kept up her hope of clinching the SA Games' 100m hurdles title when the hurdler set a national record in the daylong 10th National Summer Athletics Competition at the Bangabandhu National Stadium yesterday.

Sumita took 13.80 seconds to finish the distance, eclipsing her previous record of 14 seconds. Silver medalist Nasima Akter of Bangladesh Ansar and VDP finished far behind to take 17.30 seconds while her teammate Sumi Khatun timed 19.60 seconds to grab the bronze medal.

The Bangladesh Athletic Federation is dreaming of a women's 100m hurdles and men's long-jump gold medals from the next year's SA Games and the game governing body arranged the one-day meet to assess the performance of the athletes, who have been preparing for the regional extravaganza, as well as the athletes across the country.

Hurdler Sumita was however disappointed with the treatment she received from the federation as well the Bangladesh Olympic Association during her thigh injury and she was determined to respond through winning the gold medal from the SA Games.

"Neither the federation nor BOA looked after me while I was suffering from the thigh injury and I cured from the injury with my own cost and it hurt me much," said Sumita after rewriting the national record.

"Once I thought of quitting the track, but I have returned to prove myself and I will only laugh after the SA Games," said Sumita, who grabbed silver medal in the 2006 SA Games in Colombo.

The hurdler also sought the financial assistance as well as high performance training in China. Meanwhile, five athletes Nazmun Nahar Beauty, Jasmine Akter, Al Amin, Afzal Hossain Surya and Emran Bhuiya have been training in Malaysia as a part of their preparation for the SA Games to be held in Bangladesh from January 29 to February 9.

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Sumita Rani crosses the bars on way to winning the 100m hurdles with a new national record of 13.80 seconds in the 10th National Summer Athletics Competition at the Bangabandhu National Stadium yesterday.

PHOTO: STAR



Mohammedan players stretch during their practice session at the club ground yesterday. They will meet Feni Soccer Club in the Citycell Federation Cup first semifinal today at the Bangabandhu National Stadium.

PHOTO: BANGLARCHOKH.COM

Dravid axe surprises Ganguly

PTI, Kolkata

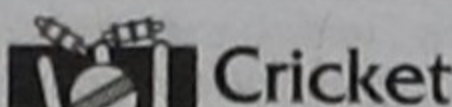
Former India captain Sourav Ganguly on Friday expressed surprise over Rahul Dravid's exclusion from Team India for the upcoming One-day series against Australia this month.

"I don't know whether this is experimentation or what. Don't think the selectors will experiment in a series against Australia," he said when asked to comment on the squad picked for the first two ODIs of a seven-match series.

"But I am a little surprised at the decision (of dropping Dravid). But it's a decision by the selectors and they know what is better for the side," said Ganguly, himself a victim of selectors' decisions on several occasions.

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Younus decision likely soon



CRICINFO, undated

Little clarity has emerged from two key meetings within the Pakistan Cricket Board centering around the future of Younus Khan as captain of Pakistan.

Younis met Ijaz Butt, the PCB chairman, on Thursday in Lahore and Butt then presided over a meeting on Friday with the chairman of selectors, Iqbal Qasim, the coach Intikhab Alam, the team manager Yawar Saeed, associate manager Shafiqat Rana, and the team's vice-captain Shahid Afridi. Younus had been invited, but had informed the chairman that he would not be able to make it.

The PCB was unwilling to make any official comment on the conclusions of either meeting, save to say that a final announcement will be made "in the next couple of days." That is likely to be on Monday, after Butt meets the PCB

governing board and discusses the matter with them as well. "We will make an announcement soon," Butt told Cricinfo. "I will not comment on either meeting but will say only that today's meeting was a regular debriefing of the kind we hold after big series and tournaments. We wanted to address issues and concerns arising out of the Champions Trophy. Younus had told me he would not be able to attend so there is nothing in his absence."

At least one board official, closely monitoring the situation - which arose with Younus' resignation at a National Assembly hearing looking into match-fixing allegations earlier this week - is privately confident that Younus will return. "The meeting with the chairman went fairly well yesterday from what I know. Younis told him what he would like and they are fairly just requests, so I expect they will be accepted and he will return," the official told Cricinfo.

Reports in local media on Thursday said that

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Citycell Federation Cup Football
First Semifinal (6:00pm)
Mohammedan v Feni Soccer Club
Venue: Bangabandhu National Stadium

Premier Div T20 Cricket
Biman v Victoria (1:30pm)
Venue: Sher-e-Bangla National Stadium

Gazi Tank v Kalabagan KC (10:30am)
Venue: Fatullah Cricket Stadium

Old DOHS v Cricket Coaching School (10:30am)
Venue: Dhanmondi Cricket Stadium

Abahani v Surjo Torun (5:30pm)
Venue: Sher-e-Bangla National Stadium

Mohammedan v Khelaghar SKS (2:30pm)
Venue: Fatullah Cricket Stadium

Partex v BKSP (2:30pm)
Venue: Dhanmondi Cricket Stadium

Bangladesh U-19 v England U-19 Youth Test, Day 2
Venue: Chittagong Stadium