



PHOTO: STAR
Bangladesh striker Zahid Hasan Emily (L) is mobbed by teammates after scoring in their opening SAFF Championship game against Bhutan at the Bangabandhu National Stadium yesterday.

Shantoo happy with performance

SPORTS REPORTER



Striking duo Enamul Haq and Zahid Hasan Emily carried their domestic form to the international level as Bangladesh got off to an emphatic 4-1 win over Bhutan in their Group B opener of the Bangabandhu SAFF Championship at the Bangabandhu National Stadium yesterday.

Abahani striker Enamul struck a brace, his Sky Blues partner Pranotosh Kumar and Mohammedan striker Zahid Hasan Emily struck one goal apiece to give Bangladesh their biggest win against Bhutan, a nation that never beat Bangladesh in all their previous meetings.

After the termination of Brazilian coach Edson Silva Dido, all attention was on new coach Shahidur Rahman Shantoo and the former Bangladesh goalkeeper passed his first exam with distinction, but the Bangladesh coach believes he has still a long way to go.

"I had been waiting for this moment since taking charge. The boys listened to my words and the result has come, but we still have to go a long way with two matches in hand," said Bangladesh coach Shahidur Rahman Shantoo at the post-match briefing.

"I am happy with the performance the boys showed and also happy to see both strikers go to the destination," said Shantoo after the match.

"We worked with them separately after each practice session," Shantoo said. "I know, they made some mistakes today. I will sit and talk with them and try to rectify the mistakes in our

next two matches because Sri Lanka and Pakistan are strong opponents."

Explaining the reason behind fielding five defenders against the minnows, Shantoo said his strategy was to attack from the back as the opponents always gave attention on the forwards. I thought left-back Nasir did a fantastic job in the match overlapping his position, he added.

Bangladesh were hardly threatened by Bhutan strikers and sometimes it seemed that the hosts got tired.

Bhutan coach Koji Kyotoku said Bangladesh deserved the victory.

"The game was very tough and difficult and Bangladesh played attacking football and won the game."

"Our boys were nervous from the beginning as Bangladesh launched a lot of attacks and we could not catch them throughout the game," said Koji.

Koji also said that their hopes almost have dimmed as they would have to play against tough opponents Sri Lanka and Pakistan.

TEAMS

BANGLADESH: Aminul Haq, Nasiruddin, Rajani Kanta Barman, Ariful Islam, Wali Faisal, Atiqur Rahman Mishu, Mamunul Islam (Arman Aziz), Pranotosh Kumar (Zahed Parvez Chowdhury), Mehdi Hasan Ujjal (Shadedul Islam), Enamul Haq and Zahid Hasan Emily.

BHUTAN: Leki, Pema, Kinley Warigchuk, Sangay Khandu, Tandin Tshering (Chencho), Passang Tshering, Kinley Dorji (Dawa Gyeltshen), Chimi Dorji, Karun Gurung, Nawang Dendup, Sonam Tenzin.

Yellow cards: Karun Gurung (Bhutan)

Abahani fall to Aftab

SPORTS REPORTER



Mohammedan fans were yesterday rejoicing as if they had won the title, after they dismissed the challenge of archrivals Abahani to keep intact their unbeaten record in the Premier Division Cricket League.

The highly anticipated clash turned into a mismatch at the Sher-e-Bangla National Stadium in Mirpur as Aftab Ahmed came up with his best during a classy unbeaten 107-run knock to script Mohammedan's six wicket victory after holders

Abahani's senseless batting on a good batting track.

With the victory, the Motijheel outfit widened the gap by four points with their nearest rivals Abahani, who suffered their second consecutive defeat after a 29-run loss against Biman, to take a big step forward on way to put an end to an eight-year title drought.

There was no special efforts from the Pakistani recruits, rather it was ICL-returnee Aftab who stole the show in the low-scoring affair by playing some eye-catching shots all over the park during his maiden hundred in the league as Mohammedan overhauled Abahani's paltry total of 191 with 16.4 overs to spare.

"I can't remember when I last made a century because most of the occasions I got out by 60 to 70 runs, so I am really happy that I got the hundred this time and in a very crucial game and it's special in many ways and you can guess why," said a smiling Aftab, who reportedly received ill treatment from the Dhanmondi tent official during players' transfer.

Dashing opener Tamim Iqbal played his first game but only made 13 runs before offering a catch at mid-off to Shakib off Pakistan paceman Abdul Razzaq while his opening partner Mohammad Ashraful could have made it in the end but the problem remains for the former

Bangladesh skipper. Ashraful, who smashed five boundaries and an over boundary in his 26-ball 35, threw away his wicket by playing across the line against a good length delivery from left-arm spinner Shakib to see his stumps dismantled.

Aftab however showed character as the right-hander built up his innings first by milking the singles and then going for the kill. The Chittagonian, who had four fifties in the earlier nine games, struck 15 boundaries and two over boundaries and he completed his hundred in grand style by whacking pacer Rabiul Islam Shibli over the square leg rope in an over where he also hit three boundaries.

Earlier the job was half done by the spinners after captain Khaled Mashud won the much-needed toss to invite their opponents to bat first. Almost all of Abahani's top order batsmen got the start but could not convert it into a big one to put up a challenging total on the board.

Pakistani pacer Rana Navedul Hasan provided the first breakthrough by removing Imrul Kayes (15), who hit a big six over midwicket against the same bowler in the very first over. Mashud then had a brilliant stumping after missing an easy caught behind chance to send Rony Talukdar back to the pavilion.

Nadif Chowdhury (32) and Nasir Hossain (4) threw away their wickets in the crucial stage while Abul Razzaq might have made the difference but he was bowled by left-arm spinner Saqlain Sajib, who took revenge after conceding 17 runs in an over.

The turning point was however the dismissal of Shakib who played brilliantly to settle down the Abahani innings before he fell victim of a run out for 25. Shakib went

SEE PAGE 18 COL 4



PHOTO: STAR
Mohammedan batsman Aftab Ahmed winds up to hoist one over long-off during his sparkling century against arch-rivals Abahani in their Premier Division Cricket League at the Sher-e-Bangla National Stadium yesterday.

Biman, K'bagan in super league

SPORTS REPORTER



Kalabagan and Biman have booked their places in the super league stage of the Ispahani Tea Premier Division Cricket as they booted out Surjo Torun and Khelaghar in their respective marches yesterday.

The two teams stand joint third on fourteen points from their ten matches with one round still to go. Surjo Torun have six points while Khelaghar have four, and both are out of contention for super league berth.

At Fatullah, Kalabagan rode on a brilliant 92-run knock from Mohammad Zahid to beat Surjo Torun by 56 runs. Zahid defied an amazing bowling display

from Surjo Torun pacer Sanjamul Islam help his side amass 212 runs in 49.3 overs. Zahid, batting at number three held things at one end as Sanjamul tore through the batting order taking six wickets in his 10 overs conceding 31 runs. Zahid's 92-run innings consisted of three sixes and six boundaries, and was complemented by Jubair Ahmed's 37 and Rasel Al Mamun's 27.

Surjo Torun started their reply in rollicking style as their openers scored at ten-runs an over for the first eight overs. Openers Imtiaz Hossain and Zunaed Siddiqui were most severe on national team's pacer Shahadat Hossain as they plundered forty runs from his three overs. Imtiaz Hossain (38) was the first to fall with the score on 86 after 8.5 overs, and that started the rot. Zunaed and the next one in left for the same score. Only

Hannan Sarker (24) and Sanjamul Islam (20) stayed there for some time in the middle, but could not evade yet another hapless collapse that saw Surjo Torun bundled out for 154 in 28.3 overs.

It was a similar story in BKSP too, where Biman got a 64-run win over Khelaghar. Biman built their innings around a 121-run opening stand between openers Elias Sunny (75) and Zahurul Islam (57) to post 217 runs before being all out in 46 overs. Khelaghar pacer Monowar Hossain was the best on show with figures of 4 for 39 in his 10 overs. In their innings, Khelaghar lost their first three batsmen to the pace of Shafiqul Islam as they trotted to 36 in 9 overs.

Ashraf Ali (24) and Ashraful Nabi (41) put on some resistance, but not enough as they skittled out for 153 in 43.1 overs.

MSC allege wrong treatment for Tamim

SPORTS REPORTER

Mohammedan cricket officials on Friday brought a serious allegation against national team physiotherapist Michael Henry as they claimed that left-handed opener Tamim Iqbal got wrong treatment after he had suffered injury on the top of his hand during last one-day match against Zimbabwe at Chittagong last month.

The Mohammedan officials came down heavily on Henry after the board expressed their disappointment over the participation of Tamim Iqbal in the Premier Division League match against Abahani at the Sher-e-Bangla National Stadium in Mirpur yesterday.

"As per our team physio report Tamim have received wrong treatment as the MRI was done after eighteen days though it was required to be done within three days. He was also advised on a wrong exercise which simply has prolonged his injury. He may have recovered from the injury much earlier if he had the right treatment," said Lutfur Rahman Badal, Mohammedan's cricket committee chairman.

"We got a letter on Thursday

SEE PAGE 18 COL 5



BTv

Bangabandhu SAFF Championship
Maldives v Nepal
Live from 4:00pm
India v Afghanistan
Live from 7:00pm

Neo Cricket & SuperSport2
India v Sri Lanka
Third Test, Day 4
Live from 11:00am

TEN Sports
New Zealand v Pakistan
Second Test, Day 3
Live from 6:00am

STAR Cricket
Australia v West Indies
Second Test, Day 2
Live from 7:00am

ESPN
English Premier League
Portsmouth v Burnley
Live from 7:40pm
West Ham v Man United
Live from 10:00pm
Man City v Chelsea
Live from 12:30am (Sunday)

SuperSport7
English Premier League
Arsenal v Stoke City
Live from 10:00pm
Primera Liga
Real Madrid v Almeria
Live from 2:00am (Sunday)
Deportivo v Barcelona
Live from 4:00am (Sunday)

SPORTS REPORTER



The Bangabandhu sixth SAFF Championship got off to a dramatic start as nine-man Sri Lanka survived a late onslaught to hand a lone-goal defeat to Pakistan in the opening match at the Bangabandhu National Stadium yesterday.

Chathura Gunaratne struck the all-important goal converting a spot kick in the first half to give Sri Lanka the full three points.

Sri Lanka were reduced to nine men, five minutes from time with Dumindu Hettiarachchi and Pradeep Kumara picking up their second yellow cards inside one minute that also awarded a penalty shot to Pakistan.

But they squandered the sitter to deprive themselves of a certain point against Sri Lanka, who had earlier beaten them 7-1 in the AFC Challenge Cup qualifiers in April last.

Sri Lanka, the semifinalists of the last edition, were lucky to win the match against a spirited Pakistan, who also rattled the woodwork once and missed at least a couple of sitters to equalise in the second half.

Boosted with five UK-based players, Pakistan started cautiously with a 4-4-2 though the ball was mostly confined to the midfield. Pakistan gradually gained the

confidence to control the midfield before launching the first attack from the left with captain Muhammad Essa whipping a cross for forward

SEE PAGE 18 COL 2



PHOTO: STAR
Sri Lanka's Chathura Gunaratne celebrates after scoring the only goal of the game through a penalty during their SAFF Championship match against Pakistan at the Bangabandhu National Stadium yesterday.

India pile on the runs

Sehwag misses out on triple ton

Cricket

AFP, Mumbai

Ruthless India left Sri Lanka fighting for survival in the final Test here on Friday after Virender Sehwag missed a world record third triple-century by seven runs.

Sehwag's 293, a robust 100 not out from skipper Mahendra Singh Dhoni and a string of half-centuries by the middle order fired the hosts to their highest ever total of 726-9 declared in reply to Sri Lanka's 393.

The tourists, trailing by 333 runs on the first innings, were 11-0 in their second knock at stumps on the third day on a wearing track at the Brabourne stadium.

Tharanga Paranavitana and Tillakaratne Dilshan survived three overs of spin before close, but Sri Lanka face a daunting task to avoid defeat over the next two days.

India's total surpassed their previous best of 705-7 declared against Australia at the Sydney cricket ground in January, 2004.

Sehwag had moved from his overnight score of 284 to 293 when he tapped a flighted ball from Muttiah Muralidaran

back to the bowler who took the catch on second attempt. A hush descended at the stadium where some 15,000 home fans had packed the

stands anticipating a world record by the swashbuckling opener.

Sehwag returned to a warm

SEE PAGE 18 COL 2



PHOTO: AFP
India captain Mahendra Singh Dhoni watches the ball after hitting it for a six during his unbeaten hundred on the third day of the third and final Test against Sri Lanka at the Brabourne Stadium in Mumbai yesterday.