

Hammam meets with PM

UNB, Dhaka

Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina Friday reaffirmed her government's commitment to provide all supports and cooperation in developing football and other sports in the region, including Bangladesh.

The assurance came when a 15-member delegation of Asian Football Confederation (AFC), led by its Chairman Mohammed Bin Hammam, met the Prime Minister at her official residence Jamuna on Friday afternoon.

Hasina said the government has been putting in its maximum efforts for development of all sectors, including sports, since assuming office last year.

The AFC delegation assured the Prime Minister of providing all necessary cooperation to Bangladesh in developing the country's sports sector.

The AFC chairman thanked Sheikh Hasina for her contributions to the development of Asian Football Confederation and thus expediting development of Asian football.

They also hoped that sports and culture in Bangladesh as well as in the region will achieve international standard in near future under the leadership of Sheikh Hasina.

Wishing an all-out success of the ongoing Bangabandhu SAFF Championship, the Bangladesh premier said such international tournament is very important as it plays a vital role in strengthening relationship with different countries and nations.

AFC Vice-President Manil Fernando, South Asian Football Federation (SAFF) and Bangladesh Football Federation (BFF) President Kazi Salauddin, Sports Secretary Mahub Ahmed, Press Secretary to the Prime Minister Abul Kalam Azad, sports organizer Salman F Rahman and BFF Vice-President Badal Roy were, among others, present at the meeting.



Winners of the 14th Standard Chartered Golf Tournament pose with chief guest Major General Mohammad Shamim Chowdhury and Standard Chartered Bank Chief Executive Officer Jim McCabe at the Bhatary Golf and Country Club in Chittagong yesterday.

India ask SA to play two Tests

Cricket

CRICINFO, undated

Widespread fears over the future of Test cricket have been partly assuaged by the news that the BCCI has asked South Africa to play two Tests in India during their tour early next year, dropping two one-day internationals from the schedule to make space for the five-day matches.

India's change of mind - the tour was just going to comprise seven ODIs before being cut to five - came about after they ascended to the ICC's No. 1 ranking in Tests for the first time. Cricket South Africa chief executive Gerald Majola confirmed the request and said they were now trying to make space for the Tests, which would lengthen the tour by a week.

"They [India] have requested we play two Tests and three ODIs and we are still considering it," Majola said. "We still have to consult with the South African Cricketers' Association, the team management, our playing regulations and fixtures committees, as well as the board. It would extend the tour by another week, but we would like to accommodate them and I don't foresee a problem with it."

The dramatic about-turn came only four days after Majola was forced to issue a statement saying the Tests in India had merely been postponed, after a storm of criticism in South

Africa that the No. 1 and 2 sides in the premier version of the game would not meet in that format.

It is believed CSA is calling on the sponsors of their Twenty20 domestic competition - the Standard Bank Pro20 - to agree to a postponement of their semi-finals and final by a week in order to accommodate the Tests in India and ensure the country's top players are back for the knockout stages of the Pro20.

The first round of Standard Bank Pro20 semi-finals are due to start on February 24, with the second round beginning on March 3 and the final on March 12. Those dates would all need to be shifted back by at least a week now, meaning the last two rounds of the four-day SuperSport Series would have to be moved into April.

The two teams that advance to the Standard Bank Pro20 final land themselves a lucrative place in the Champions League Twenty20, so the franchises are understandably eager for their best players to be available.

India's newly-acquired position atop the Test rankings was under threat because they were only scheduled to play two Tests in the next 11 months, which explains its sudden interest in playing more Tests. Cricket South Africa has invariably tried to ensure they don't land on the wrong side of the BCCI, so it is likely India will get its wish and Test cricket will have a stellar showdown to look forward to.

Sakeef wins StanChart golf title

STAFF CORRESPONDENT, Cig

Sakeef Salam with 37 points became the winner of the 14th Standard Chartered Golf Tournament at the panoramic Bhatary Golf and Country Club (BGCC) here in Chittagong yesterday.

Lieutenant Colonel (ret'd) Ehsan Ullah and Major Md Shafiqur Rahman, each with 34 points, became the Runner UP and 2nd Runner Up.

109 golfers participated in the tournament including 6 lady and 9 junior golfers from home and abroad.

Election Commissioner Brigadier General (ret'd) Shakhawat Hossain was the Senior Winner with 24 points and Hafiza Sultana Shathi the Ladies Winner with 35 points.

General Officer Commanding (GOC) of 24 Infantry Division and Area Commander, Chittagong Major General Mohammad Shamim Chowdhury, also the Senior Vice-President of Bhatary Golf and Country Club attended the prize giving ceremony as the chief guest to distribute prizes among the winners in the afternoon.

Standard Chartered Bank Chief Executive Officer (CEO) Jim McCabe also spoke at the ceremony on behalf of the sponsoring bank.

The other winners were Nine Hole Winner Lt Col Md Abdul Majid (20 points), Nine Hole Runner UP Major Farukh Ahmed Khan (16 points), Junior Winner Muhtadee Nabi Chowdhury (13 points), Best Front Nine Syed Sakhatwar Rahman (16 points), Best Back Nine Md Monowarul Islam (19 points), Longest Drive Yassar Rahman (Hole No 0, 280 yards) and Nearest to Pin Major (ret'd) Zahurul Ahsan (Hole No. 0).

Earlier, Bhatary Golf and Country Club Vice-President (Admin and Finance) and Commandant of Bangladesh Military Academy Brigadier General AMM Wazed Thakur inaugurated the tournament amid much enthusiasm and fanfare in the morning.

BGCC Chief Executive Officer Lt Col Md Tozammel Haque and BGCC Tournament Committee Vice-Chairman Mahmood Hossain were also present.

NZ dominate

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good enough. Tim Southee claimed the initial breakthrough when Salman Butt left a gaping gap between bat and pad to lose his middle stump, after which O'Brien took over. And how.

O'Brien sussed out quickly that Faisal Iqbal was a sitting target because of his awkward feet movement and aimed one at his throat, forcing an ugly fend to the slip cordon. He tied up Yusuf with his disciplined lines and lengths before hurling one short of a length outside off stump. Yusuf thought it would be the ideal chance to break the shackles but was done in by the extra bounce and edged it to second slip.

It was the recurring theme of a bizarre morning. O'Brien tied up edgy batsmen with his discipline before delivering the knock-out blow with some thing extra. Misbah got a gem early in his innings: The ball held its line outside off and Misbah couldn't help edging it behind.

Fortunately for Pakistan, though, Farhat couldn't have chosen a better moment to resuscitate his career. It would be churlish to dismiss Farhat's effort as streaky, though there were several play and misses and a couple of curious slogs which would have raised blood-pressure levels in the dressing room, but that's how he seems to play. There were spurts where Farhat seemed to lose concentration and went for pressure-relieving big hits and there were phases where

he looked to be in control or something resembling it at least.

SCOREBOARD

Scoreboard at close on the first day of the third Test between New Zealand and Pakistan at McLean Park in Napier on Friday. PAKISTAN: First innings Farhat not out 117 Butt b Southee 9 Iqbal c Guptill b O'Brien 6 Yusuf c McIntosh b O'Brien 0 U Akmal c Guptill b O'Brien 0 Misbahul c McCullum b O'Brien 0 KAKmal c Guptill b Martin 22 Aamer c McCullum b Tuffey 23 Gul c McCullum b Tuffey 24 Asif c McCullum b Tuffey 0 Kaneria c McCullum b Tuffey 16 Extras: (lb-2, nb-4) 6 Total: (All out in 64.3 overs) 223 Fall of wickets: 1-14, 2-39, 3-43, 4-51, 5-51, 6-90, 7-159, 8-194, 9-194.

Bowler O M R W Martin 9 0 37 1 Southee 17 4 62 1 O'Brien 15 5 35 4 Tuffey 15.3 4 52 4 Vettori 8 0 35 0 NEW ZEALAND: First innings McIntosh not out 31 Watling not out 13 Extras: (nb-3) 3 Total: (For no loss in 19 overs) 47 To bat: Guptill, Flynn, Taylor, Vettori, McCullum, Southee, Tuffey, O'Brien, Martin.

Bowler O M R W Aamer 7 3 8 0 Asif 5 1 11 0 Gul 5 0 20 0 Kaneria 2 1 8 0

Fans frustrated

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bluntly. "It is our real standard. Unless our domestic football standard rise, we will continue to struggle at this level!"

Shakib Al Hasan, Bangladesh national cricket team's stand-in skipper came to watch the match and cheer on the football team. He was disappointed like the rest, and he said Bangladesh did not look like winning the match and failed to show too much urgency even after they went down by a goal.

Another familiar face amongst the crowd who wished to remain anonymous, put his frustration right at the Football Federation. "I think the BFF is to blame for this. Bangladesh should not have sacked their coach just a few days ahead of such a crucial tournament. Who will take the responsibility now?"

He however did not want to put any blame on the new coach.

Five more

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the first meeting of the SAFF with its president Kazi Salahuddin in chair. SAFF secretary Alberto Colaco placed the proposal and the final decision will be taken in the next meeting to be held in Sri Lanka during the AFC Challenge Cup finals in February next.

AFC president Mohamed Bin Hammam was also present at the meeting while representatives from eight nations attended the meeting.

Hammam also promised to provide all assistance to increase the standard of South Asian football.

Maldives steamroll SL

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a harmless grounder got under his hands in the 64th minute.

Ten minutes later, it was again Sri Lanka goalkeeper Sadihshkumar, who conceded the third goal astonishingly as Ashfaq shrugging off his marker lashed an angular shot from the left and found the net to make it 3-1.

Ashfaq then was brought down inside the box by substitute defender Badara and the Indian referee awarded the penalty with Fazeel converting the spot kick in the 85th minute. Ali Assad put the icing on the cake with header from a Umari cross to seal the fate of the match one minute from time.

Maldives coach Urbanyi Istvan was obviously ecstatic

about the result, even though he did not expect such a big win. He attributed this result to team effort. "Obviously, we didn't think we might score as many as we did, but we always looked for goals. We won the match by dint of sheer team effort. We converted the chances we made, whereas Sri Lanka couldn't", said the Hungarian. He didn't seem concerned about who comes as opponents in the final.

The losing trainer Sumith Walpola congratulated Maldives for winning the match and said that Ashfaq Ali was the difference-maker in this match citing the Maldives striker as the best in South Asian football.

TEAMS MALDIVES: Umair Mohamed,

Fazeel Ibrahim (Mohamed Sifan), Arif Mohamed, Ashfaq Ali (Rashed Ahmed), Jameel Mohamed, Ahmed Thoriq (Ali Assad), Gasim Shamseer, Abdul Ghani Akram, Naseer Mukhtar, Mohamed Imran and Ibrahim Sobah Mohamed.

SRI LANKA: KCK Lankesara (MNM Izzadeen), Y Sadihshkumar, Chatura M Weerasinghe, Sanjaya Pradeep Kumara (Warakagoda/Bandara), Kasun Jayasuriya, EB Channa, S Sanjeev, Dumudu W Hettiarachchi, WRD Ruwanthilaka, Chathura Gunarathne and M Asmeer. Yellow cards: Weerasinghe (Sri Lanka). Referee: Srinivasan Suresh (India)

Bordeaux welcome Lyon

AFP, Paris



French league leaders Bordeaux welcome Lyon to the Stade Chaban-Delmas on Sunday knowing that victory would take them eight points clear of their title rivals at the top of the table.

Both clubs have qualified for the last 16 of the Champions League, but Bordeaux's league form is much better and with the winter break approaching they have a prime opportunity to deal their foes a timely psychological blow.

The reigning champions recovered from a first home defeat in over two years against Valenciennes to record back-to-back wins at Nancy and at home to Paris Saint-Germain, but Lyon have just one win in their last seven league matches.

Lyon, the dominant side of the decade who won seven straight titles between 2002 and 2008, warmed up for the clash with a 4-0 Champions League win over Hungarian side Debrecen in mid-week, but coach Claude Puel rejected suggestions his team were in need of a lift.

"It's not a question of relief or of being reassured or I don't know what," said the former Lille manager.

"The previous matches are out of our system and we're concentrating on the games ahead. Now, with Bordeaux, we change the register and the competition. We'll have to

recover well for the match on Sunday."

Laurent Blanc was able to field a second-string XI for Bordeaux's final Champions League assignment, a 1-0 win at Israeli outfit Maccabi Haifa.

The first-team stars are expected to return on Sunday, with midfielder Yoann Gourcu set to play despite having missed training on Wednesday with toothache.

Lyon will likely be without their France international winger Sidney Govou, who was forced off with an injury in the 29th minute of their victory at home to Debrecen on Wednesday.

Govou hurt himself in the build-up to Bafetimbi Gomis's 25th-minute opener and was replaced by Bosnian starlet Miralem Pjanic, who stands by to deputise.

Goalkeeper Hugo Lloris required stitches after a clash of heads with Debrecen's French striker Adamo Coulibaly but his injuries are not thought

FIXTURES

Saturday (1800GMT unless otherwise stated) Le Mans v Valenciennes, Lens v Nice, Marseille v Boulogne, Nancy v Rennes, Lorient v Auxerre (2000GMT)

Sunday (1600GMT unless otherwise stated) Monaco v Lille, Paris Saint-Germain v Saint-Etienne, Sochaux v Grenoble, Toulouse v Montpellier, Lyon v Bordeaux (2000GMT)

serious enough to jeopardise his participation against Bordeaux.

Marseille will look to bounce back from their own Champions League exit at the hands of Real Madrid, 3-1 winners at the Stade Velodrome on Tuesday, when they host Boulogne on Saturday.

Top scorer and captain Mamadou Niang was forced out of the match against Real with a shoulder injury and could be out for up to six weeks.

Marseille coach Didier Deschamps hinted on Thursday that the Senegalese forward's absence could prompt him to enter the January transfer market.

"I don't rule it out, but buying someone who would give us something extra, particularly in attack, is expensive and I don't think it would be possible," said Deschamps.

Second-placed Montpellier, who spent the last five seasons in Ligue 2, could close to within a point of Bordeaux at the head of the standings if they win at Toulouse on Sunday afternoon.

Bottom side Grenoble, who picked up their first win of the season at home to Toulouse last weekend, visit Sochaux, while PSG hope to have Turkish striker Mevlut Erding back from a knee problem for the visit of Saint-Etienne.

Fifth-placed Auxerre, meanwhile, are hoping to have last season's top scorer Irenescu Jelen fit for the trip to Lorient on Saturday, after the Polish marksman returned to training following a bicep injury.

Doctors blamed for death of Wasim's wife

Cricket

AFP, Islamabad

Doctors blamed for the death of Pakistan cricket legend Wasim Akram's wife have been suspended and had their practice licences cancelled, the health ministry announced Thursday.

Huma Akram, 42, died due to multiple organ failure in India on October 25 this year after she was airlifted to Chennai when her condition worsened in a hospital in Pakistan's eastern city Lahore.

Prime Minister Yousuf Raza Gilani had ordered an inquiry after former Pakistan cricket captain Wasim complained that poor medical facilities and negligence in Pakistan led to his wife's death.

"The licences of 17 doctors were been

cancelled over negligence in the treatment of Wasim's wife Huma," the ministry announced in a statement after a meeting of the National Assembly standing committee on health.

Wasim told the committee the hospital charged 16.8 million rupees (200,000 dollars) for treatment and other charges to airlift the patient. Federal Health Minister Ijaz Jakhriani told reporters the investigation revealed Huma's death was due to the negligence of the doctors.

Wasim vowed to continue his fight to improve poor medical facilities which he believed contributed to his wife's death.

"I do not want any revenge because my wife cannot return," Wasim told AFP. "I want to launch a campaign against poor medical facilities and negligence so that such tragic deaths do not occur in future."

Wasim, who played 104 Tests and 356 one-day internationals for Pakistan, said he will announce the details soon.



Nick Fry

(Formula One star) "The reality of life is that we have to up our game, because our competitors have upped their game. Cricket has gone from something that was as dull as ditchwater to something that is competition for life."

On how F1 is being challenged by cricket.



TEN Sports

New Zealand v Pakistan Third Test, Day 2 Live from 6:00am

SuperSport2

India v Sri Lanka Second T20 Int'l Live from 7:00pm

ESPN

English Premier League Stoke City v Wigan Live from 7:40pm Chelsea v Everton Live from 10:00pm Man United v Aston Villa Live from 12:30am (Sunday)

STAR Sports

English Premier League Tottenham v Wolves Live from 10:00pm

SuperSport7

English Premier League Hull City v Blackburn Live from 10:00pm

SuperSport3

Primera Liga Barcelona v Espanyol Live from 2:00am (Sunday) Valencia v Real Madrid Live from 4:00am (Sunday)



Did U Know?

Barcelona's Hristo Stoichkov was banned for six months in 1990 for stamping on the referee's foot after being sent off in a Cup tie against Real Madrid.

Premier Super League Abahani v Biman Venue: Sher-e-Bangla National Cricket Stadium Mohammediar v Victoria Venue: Fatullah Cricket Stadium

বাংলাদেশ তৈল, গ্যাস ও খনিজ সম্পদ করপোরেশন (পেট্রোবাংলা) সেরা বিভাগ ৩, কাওরান বাজার বাণিজ্যিক এলাকা ঢাকা-১২১৫ সূত্র নং ২৪.১১.২২(অংশ)/১৯৮৭ তারিখ: ১০/১২/২০০৯ "গ্যাস জাতীয় সম্পদ" এর অপচয় রোধ করে জাতীয় দায়িত্ব পালন করুন মিনিবাস ও মাইক্রোবাস ভাড়ার জন্য পুনঃ দরপত্র বিজ্ঞপ্তি বাংলাদেশ তৈল, গ্যাস ও খনিজ সম্পদ করপোরেশন (পেট্রোবাংলা) এর কর্মকর্তা ও কর্মচারীদেরকে সকল কার্যবিন্দে অফিসে আনা এবং অফিস হতে ফেরত নেয়ার জন্য নিম্নবর্ণিত রুটে ০৪ (চার)টি মিনিবাস ও ০১ (এক)টি মাইক্রোবাস দৈনিক ভাড়া ভিজিট ০৩ (তিন) বছরের জন্য সরবরাহ করার নিমিত্তে প্রকৃত মিনিবাস/মাইক্রোবাস মালিকদের নিকট হতে সীলমোহরকৃত বামে দরপত্র আহ্বান করা যাচ্ছে।