

'Disability is a diversity, not a deficiency'

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Include persons with disabilities in sports and entertainment was the call of the day as the Dhaka Divisional Sports Competition was held at the Physical Education College premises on Shat Masjid Road at Mohammadpur in the city yesterday.

The programme was arranged by the National Association of Sports for the Persons with Disability (NASPD), a non-government organisation, in association with ActionAid Bangladesh.

Speakers at the function urged the government to take this responsibility.

A total of 675 persons with disabilities took part in the programme which was divided into four groups according to the categories of disability they have.

"Persons with Disabilities (PWDs) have the right to take part in sports as per the UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities, and they should be provided with the scope to take part in sports," said National Forum of Organisations Working with the Disabled president Khandakar Zahurul Alam.

"Sports and entertainment are necessary for the PWDs as it creates a sense of belongingness to the society and helps develop the existing state of various impairments among the PWDs," he added.

He urged the Ministry of Youth and Sports to allocate funds for arranging sports programmes and competitions for the disabled through which they find a path of inclusion in the mainstream society.

Arranging sports meets for the PWDs will also help create a mass awareness regarding the rights of the PWDs, he added.

Speaking as the chief guest Shipping Minister Shahjahan

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POWER OF HUMAN SPIRIT: A physically challenged girl took every odd in her stride as she smartly runs towards the finish line during a daylong Dhaka Divisional Sports Competition organised by the National Association of Sports for the Persons with Disability at the Physical Education College in Mohammadpur yesterday.

PHOTO: ANISUR RAHMAN

Axe falls on Zunaed

Selectors shortlist tri-series squad

Cricket

SPORTS REPORTER

The axe fell on opener Zunaed Siddiqui for poor form when Bangladesh Cricket Board (BCB) shortened the squad to 18-members yesterday for the upcoming tri-nation tournament also involving India and Sri Lanka.

Left-arm spinner Enamul Haque, Mehrab Hossain, pace bowlers Dollar Mahmud and Mahbubul Alam were the other notable players to be excluded from the list, which was cut down from the 26-member preliminary squad.

There had been doubt over the fitness of some key players including captain Mashrafe Bin Mortaza, who passed the first fitness test in the practice game at Mirpur on Saturday, but all remained in the short-list and chief selector Rafiqul Alam expressed his optimism over their inclusion in the final team.

Interestingly, the squad has been shortened for only two days, as the final team will be announced tomorrow.

The tournament will kick off with the match between hosts Bangladesh and Sri Lanka on January 4 at the Sher-e-Bangla National Stadium in Mirpur.

"Actually we have got positive results in terms of medical reports for our injured players like Mashrafe (Bin Mortaza), Tamim Iqbal and Aftab Ahmed but we want to be hundred per cent sure about their cricketing fitness that's why we are taking time," explained chief selector Rafiqul Alam.

Inform opener Imrul Kayes, the highest run-getter in the recently concluded Premier Division Cricket League, stayed on along with Tamim Iqbal, who has been out of action for over one and a half month due to injury he had during last match against Zimbabwe at Chittagong, and ICL-returnee Shahriar Nafees.

"Zunaed is a very good batsman and he has the potential but unfortunately he has been going through a bad patch. But we hope he will be back soon. We have also dropped some other players like Enamul and Mehrab as we have to think about different combinations against the top-ranked sides we are going to face in the tri-series," said Rafiqul defending their position.

Two other ICL-returnees Aftab Ahmed and Alok Kapali also continued to exist in the side but wicketkeeper Dhiman Ghosh failed to make it as Mushfiqur Rahim is fully fit to stand behind the stumps.

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BCB tough on boycott threat

Cricket

SPORTS REPORTER

Bangladesh Cricket Board (BCB) has called an emergency board meeting tomorrow to discuss over the crisis of the upcoming National Cricket League, which is scheduled to start from January 1 next year.

The game's governing body however made it clear in a statement yesterday that they are going to take a tough stance against the players who refrain from taking part in the country's lone first-class competition.

On last Sunday first-class cricketers under the banner of the Cricketers' Welfare Association of Bangladesh (CWAB) have threatened to boycott the upcoming National Cricket League if Bangladesh Cricket Board does not increase their match fees as well as reinstate the previous format of country's lone first-class cricket.

"Under the current circumstances Bangladesh Cricket Board requests every selected player to report to their respective divisional venues by December 30. However any player not abiding by the instruction will be regarded as a hindrance to the development of Bangladesh cricket," the statement said.

"All of a sudden and just before the start of the league the cricketers at the instigation of a

vested quarters have threatened to boycott the league which the board believe an attempt to make an obstruction of the current development of the game in the country," it's added.

CWAB general secretary Debobroto Paul said yesterday that the players are united to stick to their earlier decision and they hoped that board high-ups will officially talk to them to solve the crisis.

"We are waiting for BCB's invitation to talk over the crisis. We however got surprised the way some board officials gave a wrong impression about us. We tried several times through official letters to sit with them but they were always reluctant. The players are united and they will not play the league until the demand is fulfilled," said Paul.

BCB's tournament committee chairman Gazi Ashraf Hossain however said that there was no scope to sit with the players regarding the issue and he also dismissed the allegation that they were reluctant to talk with the CWAB representatives.

"I think board clearly expressed it's stance regarding the issue and there is no scope to say more. And at this moment there is no scope to talk with anybody. It's very simple that someone can't threaten to boycott a tournament only five days before the start of the competition," said Gazi Ashraf.

"Our door is always open but we are not ready to accept any illogical demands," he added.

Abahani's six in a row

SPORTS REPORTER

Sheriff Din Mohammedan converted a penalty corner to give Dhaka Abahani a 1-0 win over Chittagong Abahani in the Bangladesh League match at MA Aziz Stadium yesterday.

The sixth straight win meant the Sky Blues extended their unbeaten run in the professional football league to 17 matches, dating back to December 1, 2008 when they lost 2-0 to Brothers Union in the second edition of domestic football's supreme league.

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Cash reward for natants

SPORTS REPORTER

General Secretary of Bangladesh Swimming Federation Mahbubur Rahman Shaheen has promised monetary rewards for local swimmers who would grab any medal in the swimming events of the upcoming SA Games. The gold medal winners would get Tk 50,000 each, silver medal winners would get Tk 10,000

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Football draw held

SPORTS REPORTER



February 9 next year.

Group B features defending champions Pakistan, four-time champions India, last year's runners-up Sri Lanka and Afghanistan. A simple draw ceremony of the eight-team Under-23 football event was held at a city hotel yesterday where representatives from hosts Bangladesh, Maldives, Bhutan and Afghanistan were present.

Bangladesh and Pakistan were kept in the first pot as hosts and defending champions while six other teams were kept in three different pots (India and Maldives in second pot, Sri Lanka and Nepal in third pot and Bhutan and Afghanistan in fourth pot) considering their standing in the latest FIFA rankings. The teams were later they split in

Group A and B through lottery.

The 1999 champions Bangladesh, who were eliminated from the group stage in last SA Games in Colombo in 2006, will start their campaign by taking on Nepal on January 30 at Bangabandhu National Stadium though the meet will get underway on January 29 with the match between holders Pakistan and Sri Lanka at MA Aziz Stadium in Chittagong.

All matches of Group B will be held at MA

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BANGLADESH'S FIXTURE

FIXTURE OF MEN'S TEAM

January 30: Bangladesh vs Nepal

February 1: Bangladesh vs Bhutan

February 3: Bangladesh vs Maldives

FIXTURE OF WOMEN'S TEAM

January 29: Bangladesh vs Nepal

January 31: Bangladesh vs Sri Lanka

February 2: Bangladesh vs Pakistan

February 6: Bangladesh vs India



Russel Arnold

(Former Sri Lanka cricketer)

"Generally when you find bushes of grass on a pitch it is clearly evident it would behave uneven."

While making his point about the unsafe Feroz Shah Kotla pitch.



Bangladesh League
Rahmatganj v Mohammedan
Venue: Kamalapur Stadium
Time: 3:45pm



STAR Cricket

Australia v Pakistan

First Test, Day Five

Live from 6:30am

TEN Sports

South Africa v England

Second Test, Day Five

Live from 3:00pm

ESPN

Sportscenter India

Sports News

Live at 9:30pm

English Premiership

Man United v Wigan

Live at 1:55am (Thursday)

STAR Sports

English Premiership

Portsmouth v Arsenal

Live at 1:40am (Thursday)



PHOTO: INTERNET

Pakistan pacer Mohammad Aamer (R) made history at the MCG on the fourth day of the first Test against Australia when he became the youngest fast bowler to take five wickets in an innings.

Take notice of Aamer

Cricket

CRICINFO, undated

Mohammad Aamer doesn't seem to lack much, not smarts, not pace and certainly not confidence. He fairly bounced into the press box after the fourth day's play, his first five-wicket haul in the kitty, and immediately engaged in some lively, witty banter with journalists. And why not?

He's been Pakistan's most dangerous bowler in this Test. He's bowled quicker than he has bowled before; in particular on the third afternoon when he unleashed a spell of such visceral intensity, it lit up the entire day.

This morning he carried on, though in making an old ball talk from round the wicket, he provided another dimension altogether. The dismissals of Michael Clarke and Brad Haddin, had the stamp of Wasim Akram on them: old ball coming in with the angle, straightening and leaving the batsmen. Haddin had barely kept out the previous ball, which had homed in on his pads. The MCG has seen such deliveries before, on more august occasions.

How many left-armers have been as adept and dangerous at this angle of attack so early in their careers? Some go through entire careers without being able to do so. Shane Watson is as well-placed as any to speak about Aamer, having taken him on in the game's most riveting battle, and he is convinced that little is missing from Aamer's game. "He's an extremely good bowler," Watson said. "It's amazing that he's only 17 because the pace that he bowls, the skill that he has, he's able to get the ball to move both ways. He's got a slower ball, a good bouncer and he keeps charging in too. He bowled a lot of overs and especially yesterday evening he bowled a very good spell of fast bowling and this morning, I'm glad he pulled up stumps when he did."

Watson should have been Aamer's sixth wicket, but he was grassed at point on 99. Not that Aamer was unhappy with a five-wicket haul, for the impression he has made has been greater than the number of wickets he has taken so far. "It's a great feeling," he

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Pakistan not giving in

Watson makes it his own Test

Cricket

CRICINFO, undated

Pakistan stubbornly refused to concede the first Test in the face of a would-be world record run chase, but a steady trickle of wickets ensured the Australians maintained the upper hand entering the final day at the MCG.

Set an improbable victory target of 422, the tourists headed to stumps on the fourth day of the Boxing Day first Test in relatively good health at 3 for 170 following an entertaining day that witnessed Shane Watson register a nerve-jangling maiden Test century and Mohammad Aamer become the youngest fast bowler in

history to claim a five-wicket haul.

Pakistan's cause appeared hopeless when Doug Bollinger rapped Imran Farhat on the pads in the seventh over, an appeal that was originally turned down by Rudi Koertzen, the on-field umpire, but overturned by the video official. Brief periods of revival were later punctuated by Mitchell Johnson's dismissal of Salman Butt and Nathan Hauritz's removal of Faisal Iqbal, but Mohammad Yousuf and the impressive Umar Akmal survived through to stumps, still requiring a further 252 for victory on the final day.

Australia had an opportunity to seize complete control in the final half hour of play with the introduction of Simon Katich, the occasional wrist spinner, into the attack. Katich had

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PHOTO: INTERNET

AT LONG LAST: Australia opener Shane Watson salutes the MCG crowd after scoring his maiden hundred on the fourth day of the first Test against Pakistan yesterday.