Rating chess

SPORTS REPORTER

FM Minhazuddin Ahmed Sagor kept his winning streak in the Prime Bank 12th International Rating Chess Tournament at the close of the fifth round at the Bangladesh Chess Federation hall room yesterday.

Minhaz beat Oten in the fifth round to earn maximum five points while FM Khandokar Aminul Islam, FM Mohammad Javed, Abdullah Al Saif and Sharif Hossain were in the fourth position with 4.5 points.

In the fifth round matches, Saif beat Arman Monir, Aminul drew with Javed, Sohel drew with Siam while Sharif got walkover against Mehdi Hasan.

Police sports OUR CORRESPONDENT,

Manikganj The annual sports competi-

tion of the Manikganj district police was held at the local police lines ground yesterday. Abu Wahed became champion in male group and Tania

Akter became champion female group. Deputy Inspector General of

Police of Dhaka Range, Md. Mokhlesur Rahman distributed prizes among the winners.

Police Superintendent, Sheikh Muhammad Maruf Hasan presided over the prize distribution function where Deputy Commissioner, GM Saleh Uddin and Civil Surgeon Dr.Siddheswar Mazumdar were the special guests.

Around 200 male and female members took part in the 24 events of the competition.

Inter district volleyball

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Pabna

Vaijan Smrity Volleyball League an inter district volleyball tournament kicked off in Pabna town hall premises on Tuesday.

In the opening game Chandai Volleyball Team beat Kairabari Aloron Shangha by 3-1 sets.

Sultan Ahmed, managing director of Crystal Group also the tournament sponsor inaugurated the meet as chief guest. Secretary of Pabna DSA, Abu Ishhaque Shamim was present among others on the occasion.

12 teams are participating in the event organized by District Sports Association (DSA), Pabna.

HOCKEY WORLD CUP SEMIFINALS TODAY

Rivals ready to roll

AFP, New Delhi

Injury-stricken England hope to build on their amazing resurgence in field hockey when they take on defending champions Germany in the World Cup semifinal on Thursday.

Hot favourites Australia take on a shaky Netherlands in the other semifinal the same night, looking to reach their third successive Cup final after a power-packed display in preliminary matches.

England proved their spectacular European Cup win last year ahead of the sport's powerhouses Germany, the Netherlands and Spain was not a flash in the pan as they finished second in group B behind Australia.

Jason Lee's men won four of their five matches, including a stunning 3-2 win over Australia, despite losing striker Matt Daly before the tournament and penalty corner specialist Richard Mantell later due to injuries.

"It's a revival we have worked hard for," said Lee as England prepared for their first World Cup semifinal since 1986. "But this is the real thing and we can't afford to slip-up."

Their rivals Germany, seeking an unprecedented hat-trick of titles to add to the Beijing Olympic gold medal, will hope to avenge the 5-3 defeat at England's hands in the European final.

The Germans, with just three players who helped win the last World Cup at home in Monchengladbach, are the only unbeaten team in the current tournament with three wins and two draws.

"There have been a few hits and misses, but it is creditable for this young team to make the semifinals," said German coach Markus Weise. Australia, coached by the legendary Ric Charlesworth, overcame the shock defeat to England in their first match to win their next four, including a World Cup record score of 12-0 against South Africa.

The Kookaburras charge has been led by penalty corner ace Luke Doerner, whose six goals so far puts him on top of the leading scor-

ers' list alongside Dutchman Taeke Taekema. Jamie Dwyer, the International Hockey Federation's player of the year for 2009, and fellow-striker Glenn Turner have shown their mettle up front with five goals apiece.

Australia came into the tournament by winning the elite six-nation Champions Trophy at home in Melbourne in December by beating Germany in the final 5-3 after trailing 1-3 at half-time.

"I am not looking too far ahead," said Charlesworth, who played in Australia's only World Cup winning squad in 1986. "The Dutch are never easy to beat, but I am glad the boys are shaping up well."

Australia, who have scored more goals -- 23 -- in the league than any other team, defeated the Dutch 4-1 the last time the two sides met in a World Cup semifinal in Malaysia in 2002.

The Netherlands, who won the last of their three World Cup titles in 1998, almost missed the semifinals after losing their last league match to South Korea 2-1 on Tuesday.

If the Asian champions had netted one more goal, they would have levelled the Dutch on goal difference and advanced to the knock-out rounds by virtue of winning their league encounter.

But Taekema's penalty corner expertise and the guile of brilliant midfielder Teun de Nooijer give the Dutch hope against one of the most formidable sides in the game.

First-class Rajshahi

FROM PAGE 17

pointed out teamwork and the large number of performers in his side. Two Rajshahi batsman are among the top three highest scorers while Saqlain Sajib is the top wicket-taker

"Look at my team. Obviously there is (Jahurul Islam) Omi who is the top-scorer but there are others too. We have Farhad Hossain in the top three and we also have Saqlain Sajib, the top wicket-taker.

"(Sohrawardi) Shuvo didn't play many of the matches but he also performed so well. We also have Nasir (Hossain) and (Anisur Rahman) Sanchay who made important runs, added Mashud.

Jahurul Islam made sure he ended his run-filled season with another century, his fourth in this year's National Cricket League, as his 117 steered Rajshahi's second innings to safety.

He struck 17 boundaries in his 306-ball essay and celebrated his century style.

Shuvo smacked 68 and Farhad made 55 before Nasir

remained unbeaten on 78 off

96 balls with seven boundaries and a six. Dhiman Ghosh also slammed 54 to make it a frustrating end for Chittagong.

For the port city, Faisal Hossain celebrated his man of-the-tournament award with a three-wicket haul. **BRIEF SCORES**

RAJSHAHI: First innings 372 and 413-5 dec (Zahurul 117, Shuvo 68, Farhad 55, Nasir 78*, Dhiman 54*; Faisal 3-140,

Kamrul 1-48). **CHITTAGONG:** First innings 301 all out. Result: Match Drawn.

Man-of-the-match: Sohrawardi Shuvo. Man-of-the-tournament: Faisal Hossain.

Ali visits Giants

AFP, Scottsdale

Muhammad Ali, the former world heavyweight boxing champion, visited the clubhouse of the San Francisco Giants on Tuesday as the team continued its Major League Baseball pre-season training.

7th death anniversary of Rumi today

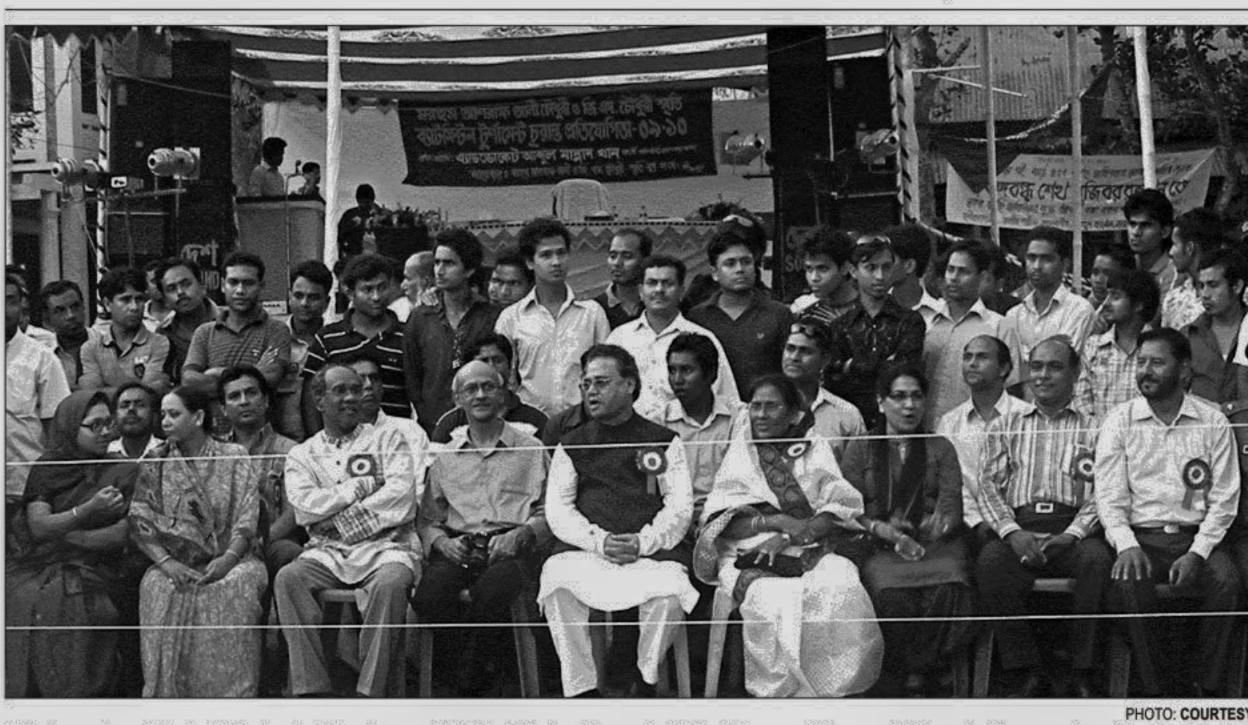
SPORTS REPORTER

The seventh death anniversary of Masud Ahmed Rumi, a valiant freedom fighter and renowned sports journalist, will be observed today.

On the occasion, Bangladesh Sports Journalist Association will organise a milad mahfil as well as a discussion regarding him.

Rumi, also a former president of BSJA, died on March 11 in 2003 following a heart attack at the age of 55. A symbol of most sincere and honest professional in sports journalism, Rumi joined Bangladesh Sangbad Sangstha (BSS) as a senior sports reporter in 1997 and continued there till his death.

now defunct Dainik Bangla for 20 years from 1977. A brilliant student, Rumi was born in Naogaon town on January 1 1948 and passed the matriculation examination in 1964 with distinction as being one of the first batch examinees of Government Laboratory School, Dhaka.



Chief guest and State Minister for Housing and Public Works Advocate Abdul Mannan Khan and (C) and other guests enjoy the final of the Ashraf Ali Chowdhury and GS Chowdhury Memorial Badminton Tournament at the Joypara College ground last Friday. In the final of the eight-team meet, Jolashoy Krira Sangha Banaghata beat Kazirchar Shotobihanga Sporting Club.

Bayern scrape

FROM PAGE 20

Ribery, largely anonymous until the hour mark, squared the ball for Mark van Bommel to fire unerringly into the corner from 20 yards for 2-1, to put the aggregate scores at 3-3.

Four minutes later though and Fiorentina were ahead again.

The dangerous Jovetic began a run from deep, played a one-two with Gilardino before shrugging off the ineffectual Van Buyten and slipping the ball expertly under Butt for a superb solo goal.

Robben matched the skill after 66 minutes. As brilliant as he had been in the first leg, the Dutchman cut in from the right and let fly from 25 yards, arrowing the ball into the top corner for 3-2 and 4-4 on

aggregate. The Viola tried to react but it was Bayern who looked the more likely to score and used their experience to close the game out.

Juve, Liverpool seek salvation

"The Europa League is a great competition and to go all the way would be a great boost for the whole club," said Nicola Legrottaglie, who is expected to deputise for Chiellini in Turin.

Liverpool's stuttering campaign received a further blow when they went down 1-0 at relegation-threatened Wigan on Monday, denying them the opportunity to steal a march on their rivals for fourth place and a Champions

Rafael Benitez's men on Thursday visit Lille, who have lost just one of their last 16 home games in European competition and who are the top scorers in the French top flight.

"Lille are a good team," said Benitez. "People maybe don't know too much about them but we've spoken with people in Valencia, because they played one another, and we

"They are good at home. Maybe in the last two (league)

their level because I think they're maybe thinking about the Europa League -- and that makes them even more dangerous."

Benfica have rekindled memories of their 1960s heyday by storming to the top of the Portuguese top division this season and they welcome Marseille to the Estadio da Luz.

Marseille are three points off the top in Ligue 1 and midfielder Benoit Cheyrou says his Argentine team-mate Lucho Gonzalez, who joined from Porto last summer, has given them plenty of warning about Jorge Jesus's exciting side.

"He's told us loads of great things about this team," said Cheyrou.

"Since the start of the season he's been telling us that they're the best team in the Portuguese championship with forwards like (Angel) Di Maria, (Javier) Saviola, (Pablo)

Aimar, but also the Brazilian internationals behind them." Marseille have been

captain Mamadou Niang should be fit to play after the Senegalese striker bruised his foot in the 1-1 draw with Lorient on Sunday. Werder Bremen, last sea-

son's losing finalists, travel to a Valencia side who scraped past Belgian outfit FC Bruges only thanks to an extra-time brace from midfielder Pablo Hernandez in the last round.

Greek league leaders Panathinaikos, who shocked Roma in the round of 32, host Standard Liege, while Russian champions Rubin Kazan take on German counterparts Wolfsburg fresh from a Russian Super Cup win over CSKA Moscow on Sunday.

"We will see a different Rubin now," said Rubin coach Kurban Berdyev.

grapes 30 Pismire to be afraid to lose." 31 Dazzles 32 Luau

In Thursday's other firstleg ties, Sporting Lisbon travel to Atletico Madrid, while Hamburg confront

PARACHUTE CHESS

Shakil takes solo lead

SPORTS REPORTER

FM Abu Sufian Shakil took solo lead in the points table at the close of the third round in the Parachute Advanced International Chess Tournament at the Conference room of Uni Resort in Cox's Bazar yesterday.

Shakil beat WFM Tanima

Parveen to earn 2.5 points. Four -- FM Syed Mahfuzur Rahman Emon, Shamima Akter Liza, Indian WIM Kiran Manisha Mohanty and Russian Minina Veronika -shared the second position with two points each.

In the day's other round, Liza drew with Indian Dhyani Dave, Emon lost to Veronika, Kiran drew with FM Peter Long of Malaysia and FM Mohammed Abdul Malek beat Saif Uddin Lavlu.

Gerrard escapes FA action

AFP, Liverpool

Rafael Benitez defended his Liverpool captain Steven Gerrard on Wednesday after it was confirmed the midfielder would escape official censure for an alleged V-sign at a referee.

Television pictures appeared to show England international Gerrard gesturing angrily towards referee Andre Marriner after he was booked during a 1-0 Premier League defeat away to Wigan on Monday.

That loss at the DW Stadium dented Liverpool's hopes of qualifying for next season's Champions League but the prospect of it being made worse by disciplinary action against Gerrard disappeared on Wednesday.

England's governing Football Association indicated Marriner had seen the 'incident' at the time but did not deem it worthy of further punishment. In those circumstances, the

FA cannot take retrospective action.

A bolt from

FROM PAGE 17 player, but failed to beat goalkeeper Sujan Chowdhury who snatched the ball from his feet.

Two minutes later, Farashganj came close to levelling the margin, but national striker Touhidul Alam Sabuz astonishingly sent the ball over the crossbar from inside the box.

In the day's other match, Sheikh Russel KC were held to a goalless draw against Feni Soccer Club at the Shaheed Salam Stadium in Feni.

It was fine opportunity for Sheikh Russel to join Mohammedan in the point table after the Black and Whites were also held to a 1-1 draw with hosts Beanibazar SC, but they had to be content with one point to maintain the third place in the 13-team point table with 24 points from 11 outings.

It was more than a draw for Feni Soccer Club, who for the first time snatched a point from a Dhaka Club on home ground as they had earlier gone down in all three home matches against Abahani, Arambagh KS and Farashganj SC.

Feni Soccer now have 13 points from 10 outings.

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Pakistan in utter chaos

FROM PAGE 17

Afridi had committed a "shameful act... which has brought the game and country into disrepute" and his conduct will be monitored, the PCB said.

Two other players --Kamran Akmal and Umar Akmal -- were also fined and put on similar probation. The PCB said in conclu-

sion that the radical disciplinary action would go down as a historic day for the sport in Pakistan. "The recommendations of the Committee will go a long

way to arrest the continuing

decline in Pakistan cricket

and improve the state of cricket in Pakistan," it said. Speaking to the Cricinfo website, the PCB's legal advisor Taffazul Rizvi explained the ramifications

for Khan and Yousuf. "They will not be part of any Pakistan team in any format from here on," he said, adding that the PCB had stopped short of imposing a so-called life ban.

"A life ban means they cannot play domestic cricket or any other similar cricket, but we are not stopping them from that. They can play domestic cricket or county cricket here and abroad."

Khan, 32, abandoned the captaincy after losing a oneday series to New Zealand in

Abu Dhabi last year. Yousuf replaced Khan as captain for the tour of Australia, but has faced harsh criticism for failing to keep the team in

check. Former cricket greats were divided over the decision, with some saying it further tarnished Pakistan's global reputation at a time when many teams are staying away from the nation because of

But ex-skipper Zaheer



YOUNUS KHAN

attacks by Islamist militants.

we delivering to the world by taking such decisions at a time when nobody is agreeing to come to Pakistan to play cricket?" former captain Inzamamul Haq told Cricinfo.

wicketkeeper Rashid Latif also told the website he

thought the players had been treated unfairly. "This is not the way to

improve things in Pakistan cricket," he said.

"I am getting a feeling that the board has taken these decisions to save themselves after the recent poor perfor-

Abbas said discipline issues



"What sort of message are

Former captain and

had got out of control and

"The decision is beneficial even if we lose in the Twenty20 World Cup. The

See you on the other side, Mano

take the rigours and the incessant grind of physical training that went with the job. But not for a moment did he let anyone know of the discomfort he felt on the field because of his condition. He took all the jibes about his casual laidback attitude, with that infectious chuckle and and his incredible ability to laugh at himself.

It was such a matter of pride for me personally, when Mano borrowed my wind cheater and left in the middle of a cricket match, walked across the road and sat for an interview, and the next thing we knew, Mano was a banker! Here too was another side to Mano, that took all of us by surprise. Banking suited him to a T, but not for once, nor for a moment did he let his alter ego get the better of him. He was still the same self-effacing, unassuming Mano in natty jacket and tie, as he was in his whites.

It is a matter of regret, that as life goes on, one loses track of time and the mind and body seem unable to traverse the distance that our

worldly pursuits create in keeping up with the memories that he has taken with him. He was a soul who saw good in everybody, gave unmitigated joy to everyone around him, was the life

I will not demean his passing by just mentioning that oft repeated line, that he will be missed. No, he must not be missed.

It is just a transient phase that awaits us all. To catch up on the good times with Mano again is just a small matter of crossing that humped bridge that time has put in our way. All I can say, dear friend, confidante, my partner in the many things we did together, you have led a full life, achieved

At another place, in another time, my dear departed friend, we are all destined to meet again. (The author is a freelance writer and a former

MSC demand Beanibazar's ejection

FROM PAGE 17

The appeals were placed at a press conference yesterday at the club premises following Tuesday's incident in Sylhet where seven players were allegedly injured after the spectators

Beanibazar. "In a bid to keep Mohammedan away from the title race, the Mohammedan players were attacked in a preplanned way though our officials repeatedly conveyed their concern over the security before the match and we are demand-

ing to scrap Beanibazar from

adding that they would con-

Salam also claimed that the high officials of DSA and the club and spectators attacked the Mohammedan players as they went for a protest against the referee's decision on Beanibazar's offside goal in stoppage time that helped the Stadium.

Mohammedan football team manager Amirul Islam Babu said that they from the beginning had opposed to play

amid insufficient security, absence of doctors and ambu-

players also placed a memorandum to the Bangladesh Football Federation (BFF) president demanding a punitive punishthem.

carrying bandages on their different parts of their body at

The league committee will discuss the issue today.

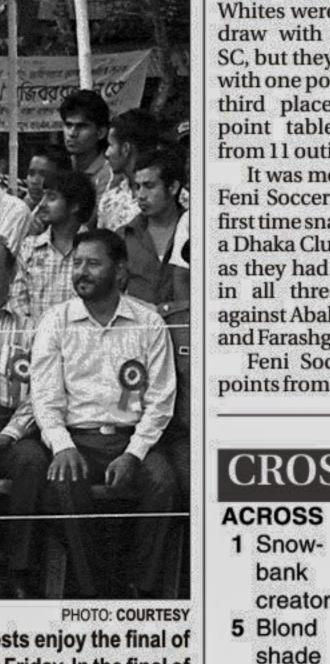
League berth.

have reports from the scouts. games they haven't been at boosted by the news that Anderlecht.

"It's not the team that used

33 Unthink-

Earlier, he worked with the



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Today's Cryptoquip Clue: X equals O

mances and controversies."



MOHAMMAD YOUSUF

something had to be done.

move has a lesson for budding players. They will always have in mind that if senior players can be punished, then they too are no exceptions," he said.

past. For Mano, it was perhaps time to move on, into a world where he will no doubt be more at home, at peace with himself, at ease with the

of every party.

more than most of us, sleep well.

cricketer)

also threatened a boycott of the professional football league if the authority concerned could not take measures in the next 48

attacked on them at the end of their drawn match against hosts the Bangladesh League in line with facilities and event control under the bylaws," said Mohammedan's football committee chairman MA Salam sider boycotting the league if the games governing body does not take the initiative in the next 48

hosts get a 1-1 draw at the Sylhet

lance and on uneven ground, but the match referee ignored their demands to start the game on time. Mohammedan's 16 national

ment to those who attacked It was seen that goalkeeper MN Shakil, Zahid Hossain, Zahid Hasan Emily, Wali Faisal, Abdul Baten Komol, Mamunul Islam and Nasir Hossain were

the press conference.

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CRYPTOQUIP

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LIGHT WILL PASS THROUGH MOST THIN FLOOR MATTRESSES? FUTONS' PHOTONS.