



Group of orphaned children pose at a press meet organised to brief on their participation in the Soccer Sixes 2010 Tournament at the conference hall of Bangladesh Football Federation yesterday.

Street children get novel chance

SPORTS REPORTER

Hridoy Hossain, an underprivileged Dhaka child, will have the experience of a lifetime when he, as part of an eight-member football team, will take part in a charity football tournament in Singapore titled Soccer Sixes 2010 Tournament organised by the Singapore Cricket Club on April 9 and 10. The class-one student whose favourite position is midfield dreams of being like Zinedine Zidane one day.

Mosharraf, Akash, Sujon, Swapan, Raju, Ayan and Mahub --his teammates on the tour also harbour similar dreams. And they are all excited that they are getting their first taste of football at an international platform, be it of a charitable nature.

The eight orphans under the banner of Street Children's Partners Bangladesh, an NGO involved in rehabilitating street children, have been selected from a group of under-15s to take part in the six-a-side tournament. A press meet in this connection was arranged at the conference hall of Bangladesh Football Federation (BFF) yesterday to give details of the tournament and the participants.

Mahmuda Akter Fahima, senior education officer of Street Children's Partners Bangladesh, David Lee, chief operating officer of the sponsoring partners Pacific Telecom Limited and Al Musabbir Sadi, the general secretary of BFF, were present at the press meet.

The two-day long charity tournament will be the third of its kind and a total of eight teams from orphanages of eight different countries will participate in the event.

Low turnout in indoor venue

SPORTS REPORTER

The IHF Handball Challenge Trophy just got underway yesterday at the Shurwardi Indoor National Stadium in Mirpur, but it is hard to understand that the six-nation international U-21 tournament was going on inside the air-conditioned indoor stadium.

A few colourful flags were hoisted outside the stadium and the poor turnout on the opening day was evident as spectators hardly knew about the tournament.

Some 600 to 700 spectators including participating teams' players, officials and invited guests were present on the day and the ticket counter man informed that he had sold over 150 tickets worth Tk 10 for the fixture of Bangladesh and Afghanistan.

An official of Bangladesh Handball Federation frustratingly said that there was no electricity outside the stadium and the people could come here to enjoy the game in cool environment with a low-cost of Tk 10.

Chayan

Niloy picked up a second goal two minutes from regulation time after Milon Hossain had made it 4-0 in the 46th minute.

Both teams have nine points each with Ajax, Mariners and Bangladesh Police.

The two big teams of Group B, Sonali Bank and Usha Krira Chakra, face off today at 4:00pm to decide the top position in their group.

Federations demand probe against BOA

SPORTS REPORTER

Having demanded to launch a probe committee to find out the activities of Bangladesh Olympic Association (BOA) during the care-taker government, as many as 16 general secretaries of the national sports federations placed a letter to the state minister for youth and sports Ahad Ali Sarker at the National Sports Council yesterday.

The letter stated that BOA secretary general Kutubuddin Ahmed, who gained the blessing from the four-party alliance, had violated the constitution and grabbed the acting secretary general post of BOA with the direct interference of the then sports minister. The harassment in sports had started from then onwards.

LOCAL SNIPPETS

SPORTS REPORTER

Narayanganj became zonal champions of the 30th Inter-District Cricket Championship with a four-wicket victory against Faridpur yesterday.

The winners scored 164 for six in reply to Faridpur's 162 for nine in stipulated 50 overs.

Nilphamari emerged as zonal champions as they beat Rangpur by four wickets. Ashrafal hit 62 as Rangpur made 176 all out while Nilphamari rode on Imran's 60 to reach 179 for six.

Mahbulul hit 62 and Mohaminul added 52 as Rajshahi scored 246 for seven to become zonal champions with three-wicket victory over Chapainabaganj which made 243 for nine.

Khulna (173-10) moved into the zonal semifinal beating Sathkira (142-10) by 31 runs.

In the day's other match, Brahmanbaria (253-7) beat Chandpur (251-6) by three wickets.

DIVII CRICKET

Manikganj Correspondent:

"Along with the BOA chief executive officer [retired colonel Wali Ullah], they had started to select their favoured persons to the different federations...organisers were forced to resign or terminated in the name of false excuses and at that time no one could protest it due to the insecurity of lives and prestige, though the national sports federations are the main strength of the BOA," read the statement.

"Now we demand to form a probe committee to find out the fact and take the steps on the basis of the probe committee report as well as we demand the removal of Col Wali Ullah as soon as possible," the letter read. "The Annual General Meeting of BOA should be called in line with the constitution and the

councillor list should be updated to reform the existing BOA executive committee."

After getting the letter, sports minister Ahad Ali Sarker said that he has yet to read the letter and look into the matter.

He, however, said that those who came to him today had never come to him earlier in his 16-months in office and said that the people involved with the BOA would know more about the situation.

Girls School Football

SPORTS REPORTER

Viquarunnisa Noon School & College, Azimpur Girl's School & College, Sir John Wilson School and Agargaon Adarsha High School won their respective matches in the Citycell Dhaka Metropolitan School (Girl's) Football Championship yesterday.

Viquarunnisa defeated Dolairpur High School 1-0 with Miriam scoring the all-important goal in the 14th minute while Azimpur School beat Agrani School & College 1-0 with Hena striking the match winner in the 28th minute at Azimpur Girl's School & College ground.

A fourth-minute strike from Sharmin Akhter helped Agargaon Adarsha High School defeat Scholastica 1-0 at the Sultana Kamal Women's Sports Complex ground, which also saw Sir John Wilson School beat Rajdhani High School 1-0 with Samiha separating both the sides in the seventh minute.

However, the match between Dhanmondi Qumrunnisa Govt High School and Mohammadpur Preparatory HS Girl's High School ended in a goalless draw.

Hosts off

FROM PAGE 17 home, but they would try to put their best in their next matches.

Meanwhile, India arrived here yesterday afternoon, subsequently missed the opening ceremony, which was opened by state minister for youth and sports Ahad Ali Sarker.

Later the students from Siddheshwari Girl's school and college performed a display.

Sania-Shoaib wedding might

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If you remember, many catastrophic events took place on the 26th -- tsunami on December 26, the Mumbai floods took place on July 26, the Mumbai terrorist attacks on November 26, the Bhuj earthquake on January 26, etc. If Sania doesn't do anything about her name, then she will get into trouble frequently. The same thing applies to her marriage."

Astrologer Bejan Daruwalla says he is not at all 'excited' by the 'match'. "By the grace of Ganesh, the marriage will definitely happen within six months. But six months later, troubles will start again. Both of them are a very tough and difficult combination. I don't want to say about the future of the marriage because both of them are looking forward to a dream. But things look very difficult to me."

SIDDHUIS TEL PAK LAWYER TO STOP THE MARRIAGE

The Pakistani lawyer of Ayesha has been asked by his client to institute criminal proceedings against Shoaib and stop the imminent marriage.

Speaking at a news conference in Lahore, barrister Farooq Hasan said he had detailed conversations on phone with Ayesha and her father who authorised him to proceed against Shoaib on at

least three counts. The lawyer said it was obvious that Shoaib was cheating on Ayesha.

"I will seek the registration of a criminal case against Shoaib for defrauding and cheating an Indian girl," Hasan said. "I will seek registration of yet another case against him under the Hudood Ordinance, which carries a maximum sentence of life imprisonment for the accused. Thirdly, I will force Shoaib to concede his first marriage with Ayesha and divorce her in accordance with Muslim family law before contracting his second marriage," he said.

COUPLE INVITED TO GILGIT-BALTIKISTAN FOR HONEYMOON

Shoaib and Sania have been invited to Gilgit-Baltistan for their honeymoon by Pakistan occupied Kashmir's Chief Minister Mehdi Shah.

Shah said both would be given official protocol in Gilgit if they decide to visit the region after their marriage, the Daily Times reports.

SHOAIB'S LAWYER HOPES HE WILL GET HIS PP BACK

Shoaib's Delhi-based lawyer Ramesh Gupta on Tuesday said a representation has been submitted to the commissioner of police in Hyderabad and is hopeful that the

Pakistani cricketer, facing charges of cheating a woman who claims to be his wife, will get his passport back soon.

"Shoaib's passport is lying with the police and the commissioner told us that it has not been seized but they just need it for verification. Shoaib is any way here till his [April 15] marriage and we hope they would probably keep a photocopy and return the passport," Gupta said.

Shoaib's brother-in-law Imran Malik, who was present there, said he was here to make arrangements for the April 15 marriage, maintaining Shoaib's alleged 'nikah' with Ayesha was invalid. Asked how could Shoaib sign a 'nikahnama', invalid or not, without having seen the girl, Imran said, "Had Shoaib not made the blunder, this situation would not have arisen." Imran flew in the capital on Tuesday to meet with his lawyer to draw up the future course of action.

LATIF BACKS SHOAIB

Rashid Latif said on Tuesday Shoaib used to borrow his laptop to chat with a girl and showed him pictures of her. Rashid also said that the Ayesha he has seen on TV is not the girl he saw in pictures.

(Sources: Indo-Asian News Service, Daily News and Analysis, ANI, PTI)

Police case against Sania

IANS, Hyderabad

Tennis star Sania Mirza could face more trouble before her April 15 marriage with embattled Pakistani cricketer Shoaib Malik as an advocate has filed a police complaint that her marriage would amount to treason.

Srinivas Rao Tuesday lodged a complaint with Banjara Hills police station and demanded that all awards and rewards given to her by the government of India be taken back.

"She earned crores of rupees while playing tennis as an Indian player. Now her act of marrying a Pakistani amounts to sedition," said Rao, an advocate in Andhra Pradesh High Court.

"She received all awards and rewards from the tax payers' money. If she goes ahead with her marriage to a Pakistani, the government should take back whatever was presented to her," he said and pointed out that the government presented her cash prizes and house sites.

'Tiger a big fat liar'

AFP, New York

Tiger Woods "is a big fat liar" who slept with a porn actress 10 days after the birth of his child, the woman, who claims a relationship with the golf megastar, said Monday.

Joslyn James, real name Veronica Siwik-Daniels, held a press conference with celebrity lawyer Gloria Allred at her side immediately after Woods's own press conference at his return to competition at the US Masters in Augusta, Georgia.

"We believe he has not been rehabilitated," Allred told reporters and photographers at the event. "We are disappointed, we waited for the apologies to the mistresses, to the women. He didn't say to whom he lied."

James, 39, was more blunt. "He is a big fat liar. He is not honest. After the birth of his daughter he was with me 10 days later," she said.

At his press conference Woods evaded the question when asked details of how he kept secret his cheating on wife Elin, who will not be joining him at Augusta.

"You're living a life where you are lying all the time," Woods explained. "I wasn't having any fun. Now I have stopped all that and it's fun again."

He added: "I hurt so many people close to me. I lied to myself. It's pretty brutal. I take full responsibility for what I have done."

Chennai knock

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Tendulkar decided to retire. After looking in control of the match till then, Mumbai imploded, losing a wicket in each of the next six overs. Mumbai had lunched to 92 for 7 and even the return of Tendulkar couldn't extend their winning run.

SCORES IN BRIEF  
Chennai Super Kings: 165 for 4 in 20 overs (Hayden 35, Dhoni 31, Badrinath 30 not out; Pollard 2 for 27)

Mumbai Indians: 141 for 9 in 20 overs (Tendulkar 45, Harbhajan ; Ashwin 2 for 22, Thushara 2 for 16)

Result: Chennai Super Kings won by 24 runs

Man-of-the-match: Suresh Raina

Woods admits to lies & deception

AFP, Augusta

Tiger Woods took his first steps down the road to redemption on Monday at the Masters, answering questions from reporters and playing his first public round of golf in nearly five months.

Tending a layoff in the wake of a sex scandal that tore apart his life and shut down his career, golf's number one player humbled himself over missing his son's first birthday and denied ever taking performance-enhancing drugs.

For the first time in a very long while, Woods said he simply went out Monday and played golf and had fun doing so, giving him renewed vigour to end his five-month competitive drought in Thursday's first round of the Masters.

"I'm looking forward to the first tee and teeing off. I haven't looked forward to that first shot in a long time," Woods said.

Woods laughed with playing partner Fred Couples and joked with spectators that were generally supportive during a practice round early Monday, as the star clearly enjoyed his return after hiding a secret sex life for years.

"You're living a life where you are lying all the time," Woods explained. "I wasn't having any fun. Now I have stopped all that and it's fun again."

But the 14-time major champion said his dream of breaking the all-time record 18 majors won by Jack Nicklaus paled in comparison when he remembered how much he had hurt his family.

"The fact I won golf tournaments is irrelevant," Woods said of his success while leading a double life. "Winning golf tournaments is unimportant compared to all the damage I've done."

But that doesn't mean Woods is any less committed to trying to win a fifth Masters crown this weekend.

"Nothing has changed," Woods said. "I'm going to try to go out there and win this week."

"The fact I haven't played at all is a bit disconcerting."

Woods evaded the question when asked details of how he kept secret his cheating on wife Elin, who will not be attending the Masters.

"I hurt so many people close to me. I lied to myself," Woods said. "It's pretty brutal. I take full

responsibility for what I have done." That included missing son Charlie's first birthday to complete 45 days of treatment for a condition he would not specify, reportedly sex addiction.

"I missed my son's first birthday. That hurts a lot. I can't go back to where I was," Woods said. "That was very bad, that day. That was something I regret and probably will for the rest of my life."

Woods said he is not addicted to any medication and has never taken human growth hormone or any other illegal drugs, a reference to his role as a possible witness in an inquiry to a Canadian doctor linked to possible doping.

And he thanked his fans for an "incredible



American star golfer Tiger Woods speaks at a press conference prior to the 2010 Masters Tournament at Augusta National Golf Club on Monday.

reception" on Monday, admitting having failed to appreciate their support in the past as he looked to bounce back from the scandal.

"So many kids have looked up to me, and so many fans have supported me over the years and I just want to say thank you to them," he said.

"Especially going through all of this, over the past few months, it really put things into perspective for me, and into how much I have appreciated or actually underappreciated the fans in the game of golf."

Roger ready for clay

Tennis

AFP, Key Biscayne

Only hours after his upset loss at the Sony Ericsson Open last week, Roger Federer was back at practice, hitting across the street on the Ritz Carlton's courts.

They're clay. The men's tour switches to clay this week, and Federer has already started preparing to defend the French Open title he won last year to complete a career Grand Slam. He no longer approaches with trepidation the surface that for so long tripped him up, and in the wake of a so-so showing last month on US hard courts, he's ready for a switch.

"It helps to move on to a different surface," Federer said. "I'm looking forward to the clay court season."

Ranked No. 1, as he has been for most of the past six years, Federer won his 16th Grand Slam title at the Australian Open in January. He withdrew from Dubai in February because of a lung infection, then lost in March at Indian Wells and Key Biscayne, both Masters 1000 events.

Marcos Baghdatis beat him in a third-set tiebreaker in the third round at Indian Wells after Federer held three match points. Thomas Berdych beat him in a third-set tiebreaker in the fourth round at Key Biscayne last week after Federer held one match point.

"Maybe the sickness did take it out of me more than I thought," Federer said. "I could have done much better."

Federer's record in Masters 1000 tournaments -- one level below the majors -- has been mixed for several years. Since the beginning of 2007, he has won seven of the 13 Grand Slam events (54 per cent) but only four of 28 Masters 1000 tournaments (14 per cent).

That shows his priorities. Federer has entered clay-court events this spring in Rome, Estoril and Madrid, but everyone knows he's pointing primarily toward Paris, where the French Open begins May 24.

Despite unimpressive results over the past month, Federer is expected to be a title contender at Roland Garros. Nemesis Rafael Nadal will be the favourite, but he has slipped a notch while battling knee problems that sidelined him for more than two months last year.

NCL T20s

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Thereafter, there will be a lottery again to decide the second round of picking and in the way necessary rounds of drawing lots will complete the affair.

Each team has to pick minimum 14 local players (including the Icon Players) from the players' pool. They can also register the free players (the unpicked players of the players' pool) later on by written application, but after formation of the teams, no player (including Icon Players) will be allowed to change teams.

The champions will receive Tk 70 lakh while the runners-up team will get Tk 35 lakh while individual performances will also be heavily gifted.

The franchises have also been instructed to keep a five-member team management committee that includes the coach, assistant coach, manager, assistant manager and physiotherapist. BCB has also given a list of 22 coaches for the franchises to choose from.

Shamsur Rahman, Tushar Imran, Nadif Chowdhury, Marshall Ayub, Elias Sunny, Syed Rassel, Nasir Hossain, Mohammad Rafique, Enamul Haque and Arafat Sunny are the Grade A players while another 38 cricketers, including former Bangladesh captain Khaled Mashud were placed in Grade B.

Thirty-five players are in Grade C and another 35 were included in Grade D.

The six-team competition will begin on April 11 and the final will be held on April 20.

CROSSWORD By Eugene Sheffer

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Saturday's Cryptoquip: SINCE MY DAD HAS VISITED LIBYA'S CAPITAL THREE TIMES, I'D SAY HE'S BEEN TO TRIPOLI TRIPLY.  
Today's Cryptoquip Clue: W equals I