



PHOTO: STAR

Indian players waded in glory after lifting the IHF Challenge Trophy with a 39-33 goal win against bitter rivals Pakistan in the final at the National Indoor Stadium in Mirpur yesterday.

## IHF U-21 TROPHY India lift title

SPORTS REPORTER

India clinched the IHF Handball Challenge (U-21) Trophy defeating arch-rivals Pakistan 39-33 in the final at the Suhrawardi National Indoor Stadium in Mirpur yesterday.

India, who defeated Pakistan by a massive margin of 40-27 goals in the group-phase match, faced a stiff challenge from the perennial rivals on the day, going to the break on 22-21.

However, Pakistan could not overcome the technically-sound Indians and went down in the second half as well as in the final match.

Samsher Singh, who was adjudged the best player in the tournament, scored 11 goals while Sushant Mishra smashed in eight for India while Muhammad Zubair and Mubeen Ashraf scored eight goals each for Pakistan.

Indian coach Suresh Kumar categorically said that it was a revenge of their defeat to Pakistan in the South Asian Games handball final.

"It is always something to beat Pakistan and we are quite happy to be champions by defeating Pakistan," said Kumar, who pointed out that the team combination and understanding between the players was the key to their success in the tournament where they emerged as unbeaten champions.

His counterpart Tahir Hamid blamed his team's inexperience for their defeat.

He also said that the players failed to carry on their

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## Come & support us, urge Dynamites

SPORTS REPORTER

Dhaka Dynamites hope the capital city crowds will give them home advantage when they launch their National Cricket League T20s campaign against Barisal Blazers at the Sher-e-Bangla National Stadium in Mirpur tomorrow.

Beximco Group, owners of the franchise, held an official press conference at a local hotel yesterday. Managing director of Beximco Pharma Nazmul Hasan asked the Dhakaites to support their side in full force.

"We wanted to give something back to the people of Dhaka when we decided to buy the Dynamites. Actually we went for the Dhaka franchise because I live in this city. And I would expect the Dhaka dwellers to fully support our team since all the matches will be played here.

Just see how the people of Chennai support the Super Kings in the IPL," urged Nazmul who also added that his company had always been on the side of the cricketers, employing them and giving successful teams in the Corporate League tournaments.

"I was also swayed by the Icon Players that were allocated for Dhaka. [Mahmudullah] Riyad, [Jahurul Islam] Omi, [Mahbubul Alam] Robin and Mohammad Ashraful were attractive to us," added Nazmul.

Ashraful will lead the Dhaka Dynamites while Riyad will be his deputy. The ace batsman said he has a good enough team to go for the champions' trophy but reminded everyone of the unpredictable nature of the format.

"We have a balanced team with Shamsur Rahman, Mohammad Rafique, Nur Hossain Munna and we have chacha [Khaled Mahmud]

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PHOTO: STAR

Dhaka Dynamites captain Mohammad Ashraful (2nd from R) displays the jersey of his team during an official launching ceremony at the Sheraton Hotel yesterday. On his right is Shayan F Rahman, director of Beximco Group.

## NCL T20s KICKS OFF TODAY

# Akhtar-powered Cyclones take on Rangers

SPORTS REPORTER

The opening evening of the National Cricket League T20s will see the finalists of the tournament's first-class version take on each other at the Sher-e-Bangla National Stadium today. Rajshahi and Chittagong battled out in the final last month with the Khaled Mashud-led side coming up trumps in a high-scoring draw a month ago.

New nicknames, a slight change of personnel in both line-ups and additional firepower from abroad would add even more spice to the contest to be played out in Mirpur this evening from 7.45pm.

Chittagong pair Tamim

Iqbal and Aftab Ahmed and their foreign imports Shoaib Akhter and Khuram Manzoor would be the biggest attraction for the crowd at the premier cricket venue.



PHOTO: STAR

Rajshahi Rangers skipper Khaled Mashud (C) is all smiles as he attends a press briefing along with Citycell's Taslim Ahmed (R) and captain Saifur Rahman, the managing director of Net World, at Sonargaon Hotel yesterday.

Faisal Hossain, Uttam Sarker, Marshall Ayub would provide apt support to the likes of Manzoor, Tamim and Aftab in the batting department.

Chittagong also boast a strong bowling attack with left-arm spinners Saqlain Sajib and Enamul Haque leading the way while Nasir Hossain and Mohammad Sharifullah providing stability to the side.

Cyclones of Chittagong coach Mohammad Salahuddin said that he had a strong batting and bowling attack but expected the format's unpredictability.

"The team is balanced with experienced bowlers and batsmen but whoever does

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## Gala show to set off T20s

SPORTS REPORTER

Organisers are set to put up a remarkable display when the National Cricket League T20s open at the Sher-e-Bangla National Stadium today.

The opening ceremony is set to begin an hour or two ahead of the scheduled 7.45pm start of the tournament's first match between Rajshahi Rangers and Cyclones of Chittagong and according to the tournament's marketing force ATN Records, it will be quite a unique one.

"We will have a laser show, fireworks and I can tell you that LRB will perform as well as a female artist," said ATN Records' sports adviser Arman Islam.

"We are still working on the

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## Shoaib: A storm rider

TNN, undated

It is not known whether Sania Mirza or the now-happily-divorced Ayesha Siddiqui are aware that as a child growing up in the early '80s in the dusty bylanes of Sialkot, Shoaib Malik's sole passion was to fly kites. Perhaps it was here that he realised a kite always rises against and not with the wind.

Opposition, discord, two-timing and turbulence are nothing new for those adept at surfing the irrefutable waves of Pakistan cricket -- a world mired in flagrant double cross, prone to imploding under its own stresses. Shoaib, former Pakistan skipper, man of many roles, victim and instigator of many a smoke-and-mirror game, has risen to being its Everyman.

As an international batsman of some repute, he is the antithesis of every past Pakistani great. Shoaib is not mercurial in his strokeplay nor given to being a man of violent passions on the field of play. The keenest eye has to strain hard to spot any glimpse of beauty or grace in his batting, yet his quiet effectiveness brooks no arguments. His off-breaks, often subject to scrutiny and hauled up for their illegality, are

flattish and workmanlike, but quite perfect for modern cricket's restrictive needs.

This was where he began, with the ball, in a one-day debut in Sharjah against the West Indies in 1999. Throughout -- even now as he resolutely serves a legal notice to the Pakistan Cricket Board for having banned him from international play for a year -- Shoaib has been adept at working his way up. His strength, this flexibility, has also been his weakness: there are enough performances of character, yet few standout moments in a decade-long career.

Shoaib's biggest backer was his father, Malik Faqueer Hussain, or Malik Salim as Shoaib refers to him, a shopkeeper of modest means who sold local footwear. He used to drop Malik junior to the playgrounds on the bicycle and people would say, "Baap beta pagal hain (both father and son are mad)." Shoaib started off, like millions of budding Pakistani cricketers, with tape ball cricket. Then, in 1993, he attended Imran Khan's Pepsi coaching clinic in Sialkot and his life turned around. From there it went like a dream -- from the trials for the Under-15 World Cup in Lahore to the series

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## Bangalore move to second

CRICINFO, undated

Royal Challengers Bangalore were inspired by their bowlers and a delightful half-century from Rahul Dravid in their seven-wicket win over Kolkata Knight Riders which propelled the hosts to second place in the points table. Bangalore's successful chase combined Dravid's conventional touch with Robin Uthappa's ruthless flourish to seal a morale-boosting victory and leave Kolkata struggling in the bottom three.

### SCORES IN BRIEF

Kolkata Knight Riders: 160 for 9 in 20 overs (McCullum 45, Gayle 34, Ganguly 33; Vinay Kumar 3 for 23, Kallis 2 for 31)

Royal Challengers Bangalore: 164 for 3 in 17.1 overs (Uthappa 52 not out, Dravid 52; Dinda 2 for 15)

Result: Royal Challengers Bangalore won by 7 wickets

## MSC may sack Emeka

SPORTS REPORTER

Mohammedan Sporting Club may take a tough verdict on Nigerian midfielder Emeka Christian to release him before the end of the ongoing Bangladesh League.

The MSC football committee sat in a two-hour meeting yesterday to discuss the matter after their Nigerian trio Emeka, Alamu Bukola Olalekan and Dami Emmanuel lodged a complaint against Mohammedan to the Bangladesh Football Federation regarding their unpaid wages for four to five months.

"We are not satisfied with their performance and we may release Emeka, keeping Bukola and Dami in the team," football committee chairman MA Salam said. "However the final decision will be taken after discussing the matter with MSC ad-hoc committee convenor and member secretary in the next three to four days," he added.

Salam also hinted that they would persist with Emeka if coach Maruful Haq suggests them to keep him.

He also hoped that Bukola and Dami might be seen in the match against Arambagh on April 13.

Meanwhile, the Nigerian trio opted to keep themselves out of the ongoing Bangladesh League and sat out two successive matches as they watched the games from the stands, though they have continued their training under the supervision of Maruful.

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## WC tickets in demand

SPORTS REPORTER

Over four hundred football fans have applied to the Bangladesh Football Federation (BFF) to get the tickets to watch the FIFA World Cup in South Africa to be held in June-July.

BFF were allotted some 250 tickets for the group stage matches by FIFA, who have further allotted 50 tickets for the semifinals (40 tickets) and the final (10 tickets) and the BFF had earlier asked to the aspirants to apply for the tickets.

BFF executive Abu Nayeem Shohag informed that many have applied for more than

one ticket and they have been toiling hard to meet the demands from the aspirants.

2009-10  
11 April - 20 April, 2010


Date	Time	Match	Venue
11 April 2010	7:45 PM	Rajshahi Rangers vs Cyclones of Chittagong	SBNS
12 April 2010	9:30 AM	Cyclones of Chittagong vs Sultans of Sylhet	SBNS
	2:20 PM	Dhaka Dynamites vs Barisal Blazers	SBNS
	10:30 AM	Rajshahi Rangers vs Kings of Khulna	BKSP 2
13 April 2010	9:30 AM	Rajshahi Rangers vs Barisal Blazers	SBNS
	2:20 PM	Cyclones of Chittagong vs Kings of Khulna	SBNS
	10:30 AM	Sultans of Sylhet vs Dhaka Dynamites	BKSP 2
15 April 2010	1:00 PM	Rajshahi Rangers vs Sultans of Sylhet	SBNS
	5:20 PM	Dhaka Dynamites vs Kings of Khulna	SBNS
	10:30 AM	Cyclones of Chittagong vs Barisal Blazers	BKSP 2
16 April 2010	1:00 PM	Cyclones of Chittagong vs Dhaka Dynamites	SBNS
	5:20 PM	Sultans of Sylhet vs Barisal Blazers	SBNS
17 April 2010	9:30 AM	Sultans of Sylhet vs Kings of Khulna	SBNS
	2:20 PM	Rajshahi Rangers vs Dhaka Dynamites	SBNS
18-Apr-10	2:20 PM	Barisal Blazers vs Kings of Khulna	SBNS
19 April 2010	1:00 PM	1st Semi Final	SBNS
	5:20 PM	2nd Semi Final	SBNS
20 April 2010	TBC	FINAL	SBNS

**DAY'S EVENT**

Bangladesh League  
Ctg Abahani v Brothers Union  
Time: 3:30pm  
Venue: MA Aziz Stadium, Chittagong

Abahani v MuktiJodha  
Time: 5:00pm  
Venue: Bangabandhu National Stadium  
NCL T20s

Rajshahi v Chittagong  
Time: 7:45pm  
Venue: Sher-e-Bangla National Stadium

Now, Bangladesh will feel the heat of  
**"Padma Paar'er Cricket"**  
Come & cheer with Rajshahi Rangers.

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