



PHOTO: AMRAN HOSSAIN

STOP THE EVIL: A few hundred fans hoist two banners -- one of which reads "stop match fixing, save football" and the other "don't want to spend on fixed-matches" at the Bangabandhu National Stadium yesterday. The banners were on display during the Bangladesh League match between Mohammedan and Sheikh Russel at the Big Bowl. The unholy practice of fixing matches in domestic leagues is the worst kept secret for years. And impact of the evil act saw football fans hardly turn up to the ground nowadays.

Hosts stumble

Hockey
SPORTS REPORTER

Hosts and defending champions Bangladesh went down to a shocking 5-7 defeat at the hands of Chinese Taipei in their clash of the Robi Asian Games Qualifiers at the Maulana Bhasani Hockey Stadium yesterday.

Bangladesh started with a bang, springing to a 2-0 lead within seven minutes through two field goals, first one from Kamruzzaman Rana and the second from Krishna Kumar. Rasel Mahmud Jimmy was in thick of the action for the hosts, as he turned provider in the first two goals and later created more chances only to find forwards falter.

But after falling behind 2-0, Taipei staged a fightback to put two back. They exerted their control over the match as the game wore on through superior gameplan and better stamina and finished the first half 4-3.

The second half was as intriguing as the first and the hosts, despite their best efforts, could not match the skill and stamina of Taipei who eventually took the game 7-5. Chayan bagged a hat-trick for Bangladesh in a losing cause, taking his tally to eight goals from two matches. However, Taipei skipper Yi was adjudged man of the match for his three goals in the game.

The tactics of the coach was baffling as well, as he tried with the less experienced keeper in Monwar Hossain, only to be replaced by the senior one Zahid Hassan after two goals were conceded.

This defeat comes as a big setback for the highest ranked team in the tournament in their mission to qualify as champions in the tournament

while Chinese Taipei proved their title credentials with this win after their 4-1 win over Singapore on the previous day. This was Bangladesh's first defeat against a team ranked some 23 places below in their three meetings so far, the previous two were convincing victories for Bangladesh.

Bangladesh coach Gerhard Peter Rach termed it as a bad day on the field and expected that they would win the rest of the matches to qualify for the Asian Games.

"We probably underesti-

mated them after going 2-0 up. And the young keeper (Rasel) did not make our job any easier conceding two goals and letting them back into the game. We also lacked in terms of gameplan and basic skills. We missed a lot of good chances and our defenders did not move well at all," said the German tactician.

"One positive thing from the game was that the boys never gave up and kept fighting till the end. It was a lesson for us and hopefully we have learned something from this match not

to repeat them in next matches. I'm sure we would qualify for the Asian Games."

Meanwhile, Singapore bounced back from their morale-shattering defeat against Taipei the previous day with a 3-1 win over neighbours Hong Kong. The winners lead the first half 1-0. However, Sri Lanka's misery continued as they once again went down narrowly by 4-5 against Oman. Taipei now lead the points table with seven points from three

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Chinese Taipei forward Huang Yu (L) makes an abortive attempt to beat Bangladesh custodian Zahid Hossain (C) during their Asian Games Qualifiers at the Maulana Bhasani National Hockey Stadium yesterday. But the scoreline at the background clearly suggests who were dictating terms.

Pakistan knock SA out

CRICINFO, St Lucia

South Africa were knocked out of the World Twenty20 by living up to their reputation of coming up short in crunch matches with an inexplicably limp batting display after a Charl Langeveldt masterclass in end-innings bowling had kept Pakistan to a gettable total.

The bedrock of the defending champions' first victory in the Super Eights were Saeed Ajmal's doosras and a sparkling Umar Akmal cameo, but Pakistan will also thank the redoubtable South African top-order for idling early in the chase.

Pakistan, defending a modest 148-7, restricted the Proteas to 137-7, for their first win in Super Eights after defeats against England and New Zealand. The win leave Pakistan with an outside chance of progressing to the semifinals.

Like in the first-round game against India, South Africa left the onslaught for too late. On a track which didn't have too many demons, they were just three fours and three twos in the first ten overs from a line-up boasting some of the world's finest hitters. AB de Villiers responded

to the climbing asking-rate with some belated power-hitting, but once he fell attempting an audacious scoop, Pakistan's bowlers choked the runs again and South Africa went down by 11 runs.

It will be churlish to blame the lower-order, after the top three, each of whom have nearly a decade's worth of international experience, consumed 43 balls for their 38 runs. Herschelle Gibbs who has been hit-or-miss for a long time now, potted around before slugging a short ball to midwicket. Graeme Smith's ordinary tournament ended with a tame miscue to mid-on, and questions about the tempo of Jacques Kallis' batting will resurface after he poked 22 at just more than a run-a-ball before holing out to long-on.

In contrast to the listless batting, South Africa's bowlers were immaculate at the start to keep Pakistan's traditionally fragile batting to 19 for 3, the worst performance in the first six overs in this competition. Exhibit A in the gallery of poor shots was from Salman Butt, who pulled a short and wide that he was better off looking to cut. Then the man picked to strengthen the batting, Khalid Latif, chipped to wide mid-on before Mohammad Hafeez's

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MSC overcome Sk Russel

SPORTS REPORTER


Mohammedan Sporting Club came from behind to defeat Sheikh Russel 2-1 in their away match of the Bangladesh League at the Bangabandhu National Stadium yesterday.

Rajon Miah gave Sheikh Russel an early lead before Nigerian striker Alamu Bukola Olaleken cancelled it. Then Zahid Hasan Emily struck the decider in the keenly-contested game in front of some 2,000 spectators as Sheikh Russel kept all gates of the Big Bowl open in a bid to bring the spectators back.

The 17th victory in 21 outings meant the Black and Whites all but confirmed to finish second in the 13-team table with 55 points, still six points behind leaders Abahani and both of them have three matches in hand.

On the other hand, Sheikh Russel's hopes of topping Mohammedan to finish second was almost dashed and were trailing Mohammedan by eight points with 47 points from 21 matches.

Before the start of the game Mohammedan lost their number one goalkeeper Aminul Haque, who sustained a muscle cramp in the pre-match warm-up and were forced to send on MN Shakil, who initially made a few fumbles, but in the end it did not mean much for the Dhanmondi-based outfit heavily.

However, it was Sheikh Russel, who went ahead in the ninth minute when Samir snatched a ball from defender Ariful Haque to run down the left flank to whip in a cross for unmarked Rajon Miah, who just tapped the ball home giving goalkeeper Shakil no chance.

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TIGERS' 3-DAY MATCH Jahurul slams hundred

Cricket
SPORTS REPORTER

Jahurul Islam slammed a hundred as Bangladesh made a bold reply on the second day of the three-day match against Surrey at the Kennington Oval yesterday.

Resuming the day on 12 for naught, Tigers scored 372-6 at stumps with Jahurul hitting a superb 158. He hit 19 boundaries and two sixes before becoming the third batsman out at 310.

Surrey XI had declared their innings on the previous day at 318 for seven riding on Matt Spriegel's unbeaten hundred.

Former Bangladesh skipper Mohammad Ashraful also returned amongst runs in the longer-version as the right-hander hit 89 during his 141-ball essay that saw eight boundaries. Ashraful, who scored a duck in the second group game against Australia in the ICC Twenty20 World Cup in West Indies after a scintillating half-century against Pakistan, was bowled by right-arm paceman Thomas Jewell.

Wicketkeeper Mushfiqur Rahim also scored a fine 52 and Mahmudullah Riyad chipped in with 27.

Captain Shakib Al Hasan was batting on 5 when the stumps were drawn for the day after right-arm paceman Peter Dunn had Naeem Islam clean bowled for his third wicket on first-class debut. Bangladesh lost their first wicket in the morning session when left-hander Imrul Kayes was bowled by pacer Laurie Evans

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Hosts lose a humdinger

SPORTS REPORTER

GP-BCB Academy lost the first T20 match against visiting South Africa Academy by four wickets in a humdinger that saw a staggering 343 runs scored in 39.2 overs at BKSP yesterday.

Anamul Haque and Sabbir Rahman hit half centuries as the home side put up a fighting 170-7 in their share of 20 overs.

Anamul struck his fifty off 22 balls that contained six fours and three sixes while Sabbir smashed three sixes and a boundary in his 34-ball 50. Nasir Hossain was the other notable scorer with run-a-ball 34.

Cobus Pienaar claimed three wickets conceding 34 runs. In reply, South Africa Academy reached the target with 173 for six in 19.2 overs.

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LOCAL SNIPPETS

SPORTS REPORTER

Dhumketu Club, The Gregarious Club and Europa Youth Club won their respective matches in the Premier Bank First Division Basketball League at the Dhanmondi Basketball Gymnasium yesterday.

Dhumketu recorded an emphatic 92-61 win over The Gregs after dominating the show 47-27 in the first half.

Gregarious handed a 90-50 points defeat on Mohammadpur Basketball Club after leading the first half by 50-20 points.

Europa Youth also followed the footsteps of Dhumketu and Gregarious as they thrashed Josephites by 93-49. The winners led the first half by 30-26 points.

NAT'L BADMINTON FROM JUNE 1

The 30th National Badminton Championship will be held at the newly-built Wooden Floor Gymnasium from June 1.

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PRESIDENT CUP QUALIFIERS Abahani eye finals

Football
SPORTS REPORTER

Abahani Limited is all set to host the Asian Football Confederation (AFC) President's Cup Qualifiers from Wednesday at the Bangabandhu National Stadium, a year after they staged the same qualifying competition.

Kyrgyzstan's Dordoi Bishkek, Nepal's New Road Team, Chinese Taipei's Hasus NTCPE will participate in the Group A qualifiers along with hosts Abahani.

A total of 11 clubs, split into three groups, will play the qualifiers and three group champions and the best runners-up will advance into the knockout basis four-team finals to be held in September, at a venue yet to be decided.

The AFC has designed the tournament to give a boost to the clubs of the emerging nations of the continent who starve for international exposure and it will be the sixth edition of the meet. The AFC have given \$60,000 to the host club to organize the qualifiers. Besides, the champions and runners-up of the finals will be awarded \$50,000 and \$25,000 respectively along with trophies.

Top favourite Dordoi Bishkek, five-time finalist, have already arrived in the capital yesterday morning while two others teams -- New Road Team and Hasus NTCPE -- were scheduled to arrive yesterday night.

"The AFC has awarded Abahani the second time to host the Group matches of the AFC

President's Cup and it is a great honour for Abahani as well as the country," said Abahani director in charge Kazi Shahed Ahmed at a press conference at the Abahani's board-room yesterday.

"We have already had a coordination meeting with the Bangladesh Football Federation and distributed the duties and we hope we will be able to make the qualifiers a success like in the previous edition," said Ahmed.

Ahmed informed that they have taken the permission from the concerned authority to hold one of day's two matches under the floodlight and got the assurance of full support from them.

Recalling the performance of the previous edition, Abahani's director in charge said that while they could not qualify for the finals, Abahani's performance was not so disappointing because they failed just by virtue of goal difference.

Abahani, for whom this will be the third appearance in the continent's third-tier club competition, had exited from the previous

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FIXTURES

May 12	Dordoi Bishkek vs Hasus NTCPE at 4:00pm
	Abahani vs New Road Team at 7:00pm
May 14	New Road Team vs Dordoi Bishkek at 4:00pm
	Abahani vs Hasus NTCPE at 7:00pm
May 16	Hasus NTCPE vs New Road Team at 4:00pm
	Abahani vs Dordoi Bishkek at 7:00pm



Abahani's director-in-charge Kazi Shahed Ahmed (C) makes a point while addressing a press conference in connection with the coming AFC President's Cup at the club's Dhanmondi tent yesterday.

PHOTO: STAR
What to WATCH

BTV, ESPN & SuperSport2
ICC World Twenty20 SUPER EIGHTS
India v Sri Lanka
Live from 11:00pm
Australia v West Indies
Live from 3:00am (Wednesday)

DAY'S EVENT

Bangladesh League
Farashganj v Feni Soccer Club
Time: 3:45pm
Venue: Kamalapur Stadium
GP-BCB Academy v South Africa Academy
Second Twenty20
Time: 9:30am
Venue: BKSP
Tri-Nation Tournament
West Indies A v South Africa A
One-Day Match
Time: 9:15am
Venue: Sher-e-Bangla National Cricket Stadium, Mirpur