

Bhupathi, Dutta get engaged

Indian tennis star Mahesh Bhupathi on Sunday announced his engagement with Bollywood actress Lara Dutta on social networking site twitter. Bhupathi had walked out of his six-year old marriage with model Shweta Jaishankar in July this year. "So Lara Dutta and me got engaged in NY [New York] last week. It's official now," Bhupathi, who is in Chennai for a Davis Cup play-off tie against Brazil, wrote on his twitter page. Bhupathi and Shweta had said they were separated for over two years and had "irreconcilable differences" and were only serving each other a loveless existence.



Mushfiqur doing fine

SPORTS REPORTER

Mushfiqur Rahim is fast on the mend from a shoulder injury he suffered during training on Friday.

National team physio Michael Henry confirmed yesterday that scans on his right shoulder have revealed nothing alarming, but the wicketkeeper would be asked to rest.

"We did a scan on him and it showed some inflammation in his shoulder, something that is expected when someone has taken a fall like that. There is also a partial tear on his rotator cuff," said Henry.

"He has clinically showed a lot of improvement over the last two days and the course of action now would be to rest a lot and not rush matters," he added.

The injured player however did some work at the Sher-e-Bangla National Stadium gym and said he felt no pain in the shoulder.

Henry admitted there is no guarantee but he remained hopeful that Mushfiqur would be taking full part in the Tigers' five-match one-day series against New Zealand that begins on October 5.

Councilor Gold Cup football

STAFF CORRESPONDENT, Rajshahi

Ward No. 13 football team of Rajshahi City Corporation beat Ward No. 16 2-0 in the 2nd Councilor Gold Cup football tournament at the District Stadium on Sunday.

Riad and Shimar scored the two goals while Tuhin was adjudged as the man of the match.

In another match of the day, Ward No. 22 defeated Ward No. 17 4-0 at the same venue.

Rumman was adjudged man of the match as he scored two goals while Lojik and Rajesh scored one each for No. 22.

The Councilor Gold Cup Football tournament has created enthusiasm among football lovers of the city and they have turned up in huge number to watch the matches.



HATTRICK HERO: Manchester United's Dimitar Berbatov (R) is about to execute a spectacular back volley for his second goal against Liverpool during their English Premier League match at Old Trafford yesterday. PHOTO: REUTERS

Berbatov alone too much for Liverpool

AFP, London



Dimitar Berbatov scored a hattrick as Manchester United overcame a Liverpool fightback to win 3-2 in a classic Premier League battle at Old Trafford on Sunday.

Berbatov rose high to nod home an 84th-minute header to seal maximum points for United, who had seen Liverpool recover from two goals down thanks to a second-half brace from skipper Steven Gerrard.

The win saw Sir Alex Ferguson's side go level on points with second-placed Arsenal, and one point behind leaders Chelsea, who play Blackpool later on Sunday.

All the pre-match attention had been on the return of Wayne Rooney but it was in-form Bulgarian striker Berbatov who stole the show with a virtuoso display that left Liverpool shattered.

Berbatov put United 1-0 ahead on 42 minutes after being left in acres of space by marker Fernando Torres when Ryan Giggs swung in a corner.

The Bulgarian then doubled United's lead on 59 minutes with a sublime effort, using one touch to control a Nani cross before sending an overhead kick crashing in off the underside of the Liverpool bar.

Ferguson later hailed the performance of Berbatov, who is enjoying his best run of form

for United since his transfer from Tottenham in 2008 in a deal worth 30.75 million pounds (\$36.86 million euros).

"There was a lot of criticism of him last season from the media, and it happens when we buy a player for a lot of money and he's not scoring a hat-trick every game," Ferguson told Sky Sports.

"This season he's started off in the right fashion, his pre-season training was very good, the pre-season tour was good and he's carried that on.

"But there's never been any doubt about the quality of the man. And we saw that again today."

However, for the second league match running, United's defensive frailties were exposed once more as Ferguson's men saw a two-goal lead evaporate.

Centre-back Jonny Evans blatantly brought down Torres in the box to allow Gerrard to convert a spot-kick on 64 minutes.

Then, six minutes later, United's defence were at fault again for Liverpool's equaliser.

Referee Howard Webb booked John O'Shea for a tackle on Torres that left Gerrard with a free-kick from the edge of the area.

Gerrard's shot was accurate and hit with power but went straight through a hole in the United wall left by Darren Fletcher, to the disgust of United's beaten keeper Edwin van der Sar.

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Because it's the first time for Chhoton



Football

SPORTS REPORTER

Bangladesh Football Federation (BFF) has been blamed routinely for everything attached to football in Bangladesh, and yesterday, they did themselves no favour by taking yet another whimsical decision.

It was announced yesterday, after being quizzed by reporters, that the head coach of the women's under-19 football team, Golam Rabanni Chhoton, would be taking part in a training workshop in Sri Lanka, rather than leading his team out against Jordan in the first game of the AFC U-19 Women's Football Championship qualifiers today.

Chhoton left Dhaka early on Sunday for Sri Lanka to take part in the week-long seminar on women's football. His participation has been

fixed three weeks ago but BFF did not make any changes and let him go on the eve of the tournament. Is the coach better off sitting in a seminar all day or oversee his team in a match?

And if you thought the decision was odd, the clarification that came from a BFF official would make you laugh.

"We let him go because he never participated in a seminar abroad. It is a rare opportunity for him to boost his coaching career in women's football," said BFF women's football committee chairman Sirajul Islam Bachchu during the official press conference of the participating teams at the BFF House.

It was expected that Chhoton, who was in charge from late July considering his experience with the women's national team in the SA Games, would guide against mighty India, Iran and Jordan, but the BFF officials believed his departure would not affect the team.

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Shakib returns happy



Cricket

SPORTS REPORTER

County cricket's Division Two may not have given the world's No. 1 all-rounder the jitters, but it was the isolation from friends and family for almost two months in West Midlands England that unnerved Shakib Al Hasan. But upon his return to Dhaka yesterday, he said it was not as bad as he first thought.

"I knew it would not be easy to get acquainted in such unfamiliar surroundings, but it wasn't that bad either," said Shakib.

He arrived in Worcester hastily from

Glasgow on July 20 and had got into the swing of things as a county match was lined up on the next day. Getting to know the teammates must have taken place in the middle as the 23-year-old made his debut.

But thankfully, during the course of his stay in England, Shakib made many friends.

"Everyone helped me out, be it the player at the club or the expatriates," he said. It also helps to make friends faster when one is successful and from the first day of his stint with Worcestershire, Shakib carried out his duties quite well.

In his debut game, against Derbyshire, he made a quickfire 90 and later picked up three wickets in the drawn game.

After a blip at Northamptonshire,

Shakib made his first major impact with the ball with a five-wicket haul against Gloucestershire. In the next four-day game, Shakib took a six-for against Surrey and then on Eid Day in the United Kingdom, the left-arm spinner made headlines with figures of 7-32 against Middlesex that produced an improbable win for his team.

"It was on the day of Eid and I took seven wickets. It definitely was a great feeling," said the soft-spoken Shakib.

While his bat did little service, Shakib's left-arm spin was key to Worcestershire's promotion to the Division One of the county championship. Spinners from the sub-continent have always been a major

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Bangladesh captain Mashrafe Bin Mortaza is in conversation with bowling coach Ian Pont (L) at the Sher-e-Bangla National Stadium in Mirpur yesterday. PHOTO: STAR

Div I football

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Manikganj

Manikganj City Club drew 1-1 with Dashara Nabajagan Sangsad in the Hafizul Islam Khan Uttu Smriti First Division Football League at the Shaheed Miraz-Tapan Stadium here yesterday.

Saddam took Dashara ahead in the eighth minute but Abul equalised in the 79th minute.

The draw raised MCC to fourteen points from six matches while Dashara signed off the league with 12 points from eight matches.

SPORTS POLL

TODAY'S QUESTION

Can Shahriar Nafees cement a place in the national team?

Visit the sports page of www.thedailystar.net to cast vote

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ESPN

England v Pakistan Fourth ODI Live from 6:00pm

STAR Cricket Champions League T20 Victoria Bushrangers v Wayamba Elevens Live from 9:20pm

ZEE Sports Primera Liga Deportivo v Getafe Live from 1:00am (Tuesday)



Bangladesh under-19 women's team captain Mainu Marma (C) and coach Mahmud Alam Babu (R) intently listen to what manager Jesmin Ara Liti has to say to the media at a briefing at the Bangladesh Football Federation House yesterday. The Bangladesh team take on Jordan in one of two matches on the opening day of the AFC Women's Under-19 Qualifiers today.

Hosts take on Jordan

AFC U-19 women's qualifiers start today



Football

SPORTS REPORTER

Bangladesh will take on Jordan in their first match in Group B of the AFC U-19 Women's Football Championship Qualifiers at the Birshreshtha Mostafa Kamal Stadium today after India and Iran kick off the qualifying campaign at the same venue in Kamalapur earlier in the day.

The hosts, unlike their opponents, did not play any practice match for this campaign. Instead they had one and a half months of practice. Whatever the outcome will be, the hosts are willing to produce a good show in the event. With that end, they have been practising with ten of their players from the national side, five of whom will be representing the under-19 side.

The team's captain, Mainu Marma is one of those five who knows there is not much to lose for

them, though has set a target for them to achieve.

"Our target is to play well, to play according to our practice, and to get at least a point from each match," said Mainu.

Though Bangladesh's national women's side have played their Indian counterparts before, losing their last encounter 7-0 earlier this year, the young women have never met before. Their knowledge about the opponents amounts only to watching videotapes of those teams.

But the captain and team officials feel that the young women have improved in terms of skill and technique in recent time and that will enable them to put up a much better showing, not only against the neighbours but also against the two Middle Eastern teams.

Bangladesh's opponents in the opening day are Jordan who have targeted winning all three games to qualify for the next round. Having taken up the game just five years ago, Jordanian

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