

Nat'l games for Special Olympics from today

SPORTS REPORTER

The 5th National Games of the Special Olympics will begin today at the BKSP in Savar.

The competition will be launched at the Army Stadium.

The event is a conclusion of the two-year long regional talent hunt programme arranged by Grameenphone, who are also organising this event in partnership with Special Olympics Bangladesh for the intellectually-challenged athletes.

This was announced at a press briefing held at a local hotel yesterday.

As many as 400 athletes from seven divisions of the country will participate under specially-trained coaches.

Players selected from the regional talent hunt will participate in the National Games to win their berth to Special Olympics 2011 going to be held in Athens.

Ashraf ud Dowla, founder chairman of Special Olympics Bangladesh and Syed Tahmeed Azizul Huq, head of market communications of Grameenphone, were present at the press briefing.

New tournament named SA Club Championship

SPORTS REPORTER

The South Asian Football Federation (SAFF) has decided to hold the first-ever Club Championship two months before staging the SAFF Championship next year.

The regional body, however, has decided to hold the Championship, the first of its kind, in September and the SAFF Championship in December.

The decision was taken at a meeting on the sidelines of the FIFA seminar on Member Associations' Professionalism in Dubai on October 17 and 18, informed BFF general secretary Al Mufabbir Sadi. All presidents of the SAFF members except the All India Football Federation president attended the seminar and were present at the SAFF meeting chaired by its president Kazi Salahuddin.

Though the meeting could not decide on the venue for the club tournament, it confirmed that the SAFF Championship would take place in between December 1 to 15 in India.

Inter survive

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minutes in the San Siro.

Tottenham fans had barely had time to climb to the upper tier's of the cavernous stadium when Javier Zanetti gave Inter a second-minute lead and worse quickly followed for the visitors.

Eto'o made it 2-0 from the penalty spot after keeper Heurelho Gomes was sent off for bringing down Jonathan Biabiany before Dejan Stankovic netted a third after 14 minutes.

When Eto'o struck again before halftime Tottenham were in tatters but Welsh winger Bale produced three exquisite left-foot strikes in the second period, the last two in the 90th and 91st minutes, as the visitors were left to rue their terrible start.

England striker Wayne Rooney's confirmation that he wants to quit Manchester United created a subdued atmosphere at Old Trafford where United laboured to finish off Bursaspor.

Rooney was out through injury but at least Nani provided some cheer for manager Alex Ferguson on his 2,000th match as a manager -- his seventh-minute solo goal worthy of former dazzler Cristiano Ronaldo before his switch to Real Madrid.

Such is the Rooney cloud hanging over United that Nani's goal failed to get a mention in Ferguson's post-match news conference.



China's Linlin Deng performs her routine on the balance beam in the women's team final at the 42nd Artistic Gymnastics World Championships in Rotterdam on Wednesday.

Kohli relishes the ton

Cricket

PTI, Visakhapatnam

Virat Kohli, who starred in India's five-wicket win on Wednesday, said he was under pressure to perform and the 118 against Australia would certainly give him a lot of confidence.

But the Delhi batsman feels this knock would still not guarantee him a place as the competition for the number three slot is quite tough.

"Honestly, I was struggling to get runs. I had not scored in last six-seven matches. I was under pressure. I was not hitting in the gaps. It was very satisfying and it gives you a lot of confidence when you score chasing under pressure," Kohli said about his third one-day century, which incidentally his best so far.

"I will not say my place is cemented. I have to keep performing well in few more chases. I have to be consistent," Kohli added.

Kohli hit a 121-ball 118 to help India register the win over Australia and take a 1-0 lead before the third and final one-dayer in Margao, Goa.

"It [the win] is a good sign, it shows we



India's Virat Kohli leaves the ground after scoring 118 runs during the second ODI against Australia at Dr Y S Rajasekhara Reddy ACA-VDCA Cricket Stadium in Visakhapatnam on Wednesday.

have a good bench strength. In fact, the competition to get into the side helps in developing the hunger and you score more runs," he said.

Asked whether he had matured as a batsman post his knock against the world number one, the Aussies, Kohli said, "I think, you try to learn a lot at international level.

"You try to learn from the mistakes. You tend to fail sometimes. This is part and parcel of the game... You do the basics right and train hard, it pay back."

"I didn't perform well in last two series. I could not convert my scores into big knocks. There was a struggle for a place," he added.

Kohli also thanked Yuvraj Singh who extended a fine support in building the Indian innings with a 137-run third wicket stand.

"I think, someone like him at other end helps you. He has so much experience. It takes a lot of pressure off you. I had that advantage. It was a good partnership and it set the pace for us to capitalise in the end," he said.

This was a third straight win for India in the coastal city and Kohli said, "I am really happy if it happened and I could contribute in that."

"The mood in the dressing room was very good especially after beating them 2-0 in the Tests. It got us a lot of confidence."

WORLD GYMNASTICS Russia win team title

AFP, Rotterdam

Russia won the women's team title for the first time at the World Gymnastics Championships here on Wednesday.

The six-woman team took the gold ahead of defending champions the United States with Olympic champions China having to settle for bronze after a fiercely fought final in which less than 0.616 points separated the top three.

Russia had made a strong start by leading China and the United States after their first rotation, the vault, but looked to have lost the title after a disastrous second rotation on the uneven bars.

Div II football

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Manikganj

Bhorer Sathi Club defeated Soukhin Sporting Club by 1-0 goal in the opening match of the Second Division Football League at the Shaheed Miraz-Tapan Stadium here Thursday.

Momin scored the all-important goal in the 8th minute.

Earlier, deputy commissioner of Manikganj Munsh Shahabuddin Ahmed formally inaugurated the 24-team meet.

Bangladesh Jail Div I champs

SPORTS REPORTER

Bangladesh Jail became First Division Kabaddi League champions after their 44-28 win over Manikganj at the Kabaddi Stadium yesterday.

The winners led the first half 20-5.

Secretary of Civil Aviation and Tourism Shafiq Alam Mehedi, present as the chief guest, gave away prizes to the winners.

Dhoni hails batters

Cricket

PTI, Visakhapatnam

India captain Mahendra Singh Dhoni praised the batting department for scripting a five-wicket win over Australia in the second ODI, which also helped the hosts take an unassailable 1-0 lead in the three-match series.

"Yuvraj [Singh] and [Virat] Kohli got us back in the game and (Suresh) Raina supported Kohli well in the end. We wanted to see how much dew was around, I thought the spinners would get more turn but it turned out to be much flatter.

"[Cameron] White took the attack apart, but with Suresh Raina at the crease with one Powerplay to go I knew we had a chance. And Yuvraj, it was very important for him to get runs," Dhoni said after the match.

Kohli smashed a career-best 118, while Raina's 71 not out and Yuvraj's 58 also played crucial role.

"Kohli has been often criticised for giving away good starts and he batted perfectly today. We'll look to win the third game as well. We have eight to 10 games before the World Cup and we want to achieve more than just winning the games," he added.

Dhoni's opposite number Michael Clarke also credited the Indian batsmen for making the difference.

"Cameron White's innings was unbelievable, I thought 290 was enough but India chased well. We'll try to rebuild. We are disappointed with the result. We'll try to do better in the first 15 overs in the second game," he said.

However, he was happy with the efforts of his bowlers and said, "John Hastings did a fantastic job, [Mitchell] Starc has a bright future for Australia."

Meanwhile, Man of the Match Kohli said he was struggling with cramps during the winning effort. "I was struggling with cramps in my 70s and 80s. I just wanted to drag the game as much as I could to put my team in a winning position. [Murali] Vijay suggested that I just time the ball than hit it too hard. He helped calm me down."

All we need

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soon fell and while the win was comfortable, it could have been a much more impressive.

The fourth ODI is probably the most glaring example of a Powerplay gone wrong: the Tigers were cruising with Shakib and Mahmudullah, a score of 250 locked within a comfortable grasp.

The pair had been together since the 28th over but even in the 42nd, there was still no Powerplay in sight. Had it been taken at the right time, (when Shakib had energy and was maddling almost every shot) Bangladesh would have gone over 241 easily. Eventually taken in the now traditional

46th over, it yielded a pathetic 15 runs, cost four wickets and the team didn't even manage to bat the full 50 overs.

Despite all that, Bangladesh kept winning matches (albeit in close finishes) and white-washed the Kiwis 4-0. But with a massive tournament coming up, it is important that the team think-tank takes the Powerplay issue seriously.

For the first time in history, Bangladesh are going into a World Cup with a team that truly deserves to be competing with the best in the world, a team that really can compete with the best in the world. All we need is a little power.

--Sameed Quasem

BD in Group A qualifiers

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on March 23 and the winners of play-off on March 25.

The hosts will be announced later, according to the AFC website.

However, the website did not disclose how many teams will progress to the next round as well as the names of the hosts.

In another move, Bangladesh have to face Kuwait in the pre-qualifying round of the 2012 Olympic Games. Bangladesh will face Kuwait on February 23 next year in the Gulf state while their home match is scheduled for March 9.

GROUP A: Myanmar, Palestine, Bangladesh and winners of play-off between Philippines and Mongolia

GROUP B: Turkmenistan, India, Pakistan and winners of play-off between Chinese Taipei and Laos

GROUP C: Tajikistan, Maldives, Kyrgyzstan and winners of play-off between Cambodia and Macau

GROUP D: DPR Korea, Nepal, Sri Lanka and winners of play-off between Bhutan and Afghanistan.



Players of Bangladesh Jail receive the First Division Kabaddi League trophy at the Kabaddi Stadium yesterday.

Batting frailties remain

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management must work hard on batting before the World Cup because it will not be easy to win matches against top oppositions with this performance. Former skipper Habibul Bashar also echoed Faruque's sentiment.

"Definitely there were less flaws in the series and that's why we won it by 4-0 margin. But I must say that the bowlers helped the team to secure this historic success. I think the batting should get much better if we want to continue doing well against big teams," opined Faruque.

"You can't always win matches scoring less than 250 runs. In the slow and low pitches it was not easy to play cut and pull shots but still I believe 250 was possible in every match. Except Shakib, nobody was consistent and

most importantly the top-order failed to capitalise on the starts," he added.

He also suggested that it would be unwise to write off players like Mohammad Ashraf, Aftab Ahmed and Alok Kapali when middle-order has been struggling.

"It always puts pressure on the team after the way Rokibul batted in the middle. I am not against a slow start but one should not get out after making 15 odd runs facing 40-50 balls.

"The team management must think about Rokibul before the World Cup," said Faruque.

Bashar also thought that the team had to make some adjustments before the World Cup. "The batting was not satisfactory in the series. Actually Shakib's extraordinary performance played a big

role. I'm against any major changes in the team when the boys are winning the matches, but in my opinion some adjustments are needed in batting line-up. People should be open-minded when it comes to making changes," advised Bashar.

"The middle-order really looked vulnerable if you put aside the performance of Shakib and the lower-order also looked to be out of sorts. So we must focus on these areas. Batsmen didn't look off-form but they failed to make big scores. It's not good to see one batsman getting out after making 20 runs," he added.

Both the former captains believed that the batsmen could take the opportunity to improve during the National Cricket League's one-day competition that begins tomorrow.

Baki to carry

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Games, will carry the Green and Red on the concluding day while weightlifter Fahima Akter Moyna will be on standby for Ashraf.

The decisions were taken on Wednesday at a meeting between chef de mission of the Bangladesh contingent and general secretaries of the participating federations at the Bangladesh Olympic Association office.

Besides, shooter Sharmin Akhter Ratna and golfer Dulal Hossain will be Bangladesh's torch-bearers and they leave here for China on November 8 and take part in the programme on November 10.

Brothers blank Mohammedan

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where their Sudanese striker James Moga struck tournament's second hat-trick.

The Reds, with four points from two games, now need a draw on Sunday to move into the last four along with Brothers.

Mohammedan, with one point, on the other hand must beat Feni on Sunday by a big margin and expect a Brothers victory to fancy their chances to pip Muktiyoddha to the post on goal difference.

Back in the day's second match, Brothers, boosted by their four foreign recruits including two Brazilians, put up another spirited show hot on the heels of their 3-1 win against Feni.

Everton, Bentil and Cameroon forward Bitcha Richard were dominant that they kept the Mohammedan defenders busy throughout the game.

However, Mohammedan launched the first attack in the game when right-back Arafat Ronny whipped in a cross for Anwar Hossain but the unmarked striker failed to connect. That was one of the two real scoring chances for the Black and Whites against a more dominant Brothers, who

opened the scoring in the 22nd minute.

Everton let loose a low shot that slipped through the grips of Mohammedan custodian Titumir Chowdhury. It was however the only blemish of an otherwise outstanding performance from Titumir, who thwarted at least five beefy attempts.

Mohammedan were reduced to ten men when their Nigerian defender Emeka Lucky picked up his second yellow card on the stroke of breather.

Brothers returned with more vigour after the break and were deprived of a penalty when referee Abdul Hannan Miron seemingly overlooked a tackle from behind on their striker Richard in the forbidden zone in the 52nd minute. Three minutes later Richards did find the back of the net but ruled out due to foul.

Mohammedan could have equalised the margin in the 80th minute but substitute Shariful Islam drove miles off the target from the eight-yard box.

Bentil sealed the fate of the match a minute before final whistle when he rounded off Titumir after being nicely set

up by Everton.

In the day's first match, Muktiyoddha Sangsad, after playing a goalless draw against Mohammedan, came out of their pale self to demolish a hapless Feni.

Muktiyoddha took just nine minutes to open the account when Moga swooped on a fatal backpass from Feni's defender Shipon to pounce it home.

Three minutes later, Moga brilliantly chipped an Alamgir Kabir's throughpass over the head of advancing goalkeeper Piaruzzaman before completing his hat-trick in the 77th minutes with a simple tap.

TEAMS

MOHAMMEDAN: Titumir Chowdhury, Arafat Ali Ronny, Hasan Al Mamun, Zahidul Islam, Enamul Haq Sharif, Anwar Hossain, Emeka Christian (Shohel), Kabir Hossain, M Ramjan, Shafiqul Islam Bipul (Shariful Islam) and Emeka Lucky.

BROTHERS UNION: Tofazzal Hossain Apu (Tara Khan), Yousuf Ali Khan, Ashrafal Karim, Nahidul Islam, Kabir Richard (Tanmoy Hossain Toru), Faisal Mahmud, Enock Bentil, Danilo Santos and Sabuj Das.

CROSSWORD By Eugene Sheffer

ACROSS

1 Angry bunch

4 Emanation

8 Ginormous

12 Atmosphere

13 Family-biz

14 Cupid's alias

15 Listen to what you just recorded

17 Now, on a memo

18 Christmas refrain

19 Europe's boot

20 How "alas" is said

22 Trig function

24 Sample of beefcake

25 Withdraw

29 Corroded

30 Shoe-repair supply

31 Compete

32 Mastered perfectly

DOWN

1 Chart

2 Lubricate

3 Fresh

4 West-minster, e.g.

5 Eurasia's —

6 Sinbad's bird

7 Request

8 Passionate, as an argument

9 — Major

10 Target

11 Catch

16 Egg part

19 Cartoonist's needs

20 Roe provider

21 Car

22 Charlie Brown's sister

23 On the rocks

25 Greetings the villain

26 Go beyond the limits

27 Drunkard, maybe

28 Night light

30 Con game

33 Like "it"

34 Harvest

36 Stashes

37 Approximately

38 Out of bounds

39 Busy with

40 Trudge along

42 Corn holder

43 Sapporo sash

44 Exist

45 Still

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CRYPTOQUIP

AJ VA PJW WJ IKW V AMKKZLPI
WLETKW, L AEQLRRGKZ JP
WDK ZVADRJVQZ WDK GLPK
"TKKM JXX WDK IVA."

Yesterday's Cryptoquip: WHEN A CHICKEN FARMER NEEDS TO URGE FOLKS TO TAKE ACTION, I WOULD ASSUME HE EGGS THEM ON.
Today's Cryptoquip Clue: A equals S

GP Federation Cup
Soccer Club v Muktiyoddha
Time: 3:00pm
Mohammedan v Brothers Union
Time: 5:30pm
Venue: Kamalapur Stadium