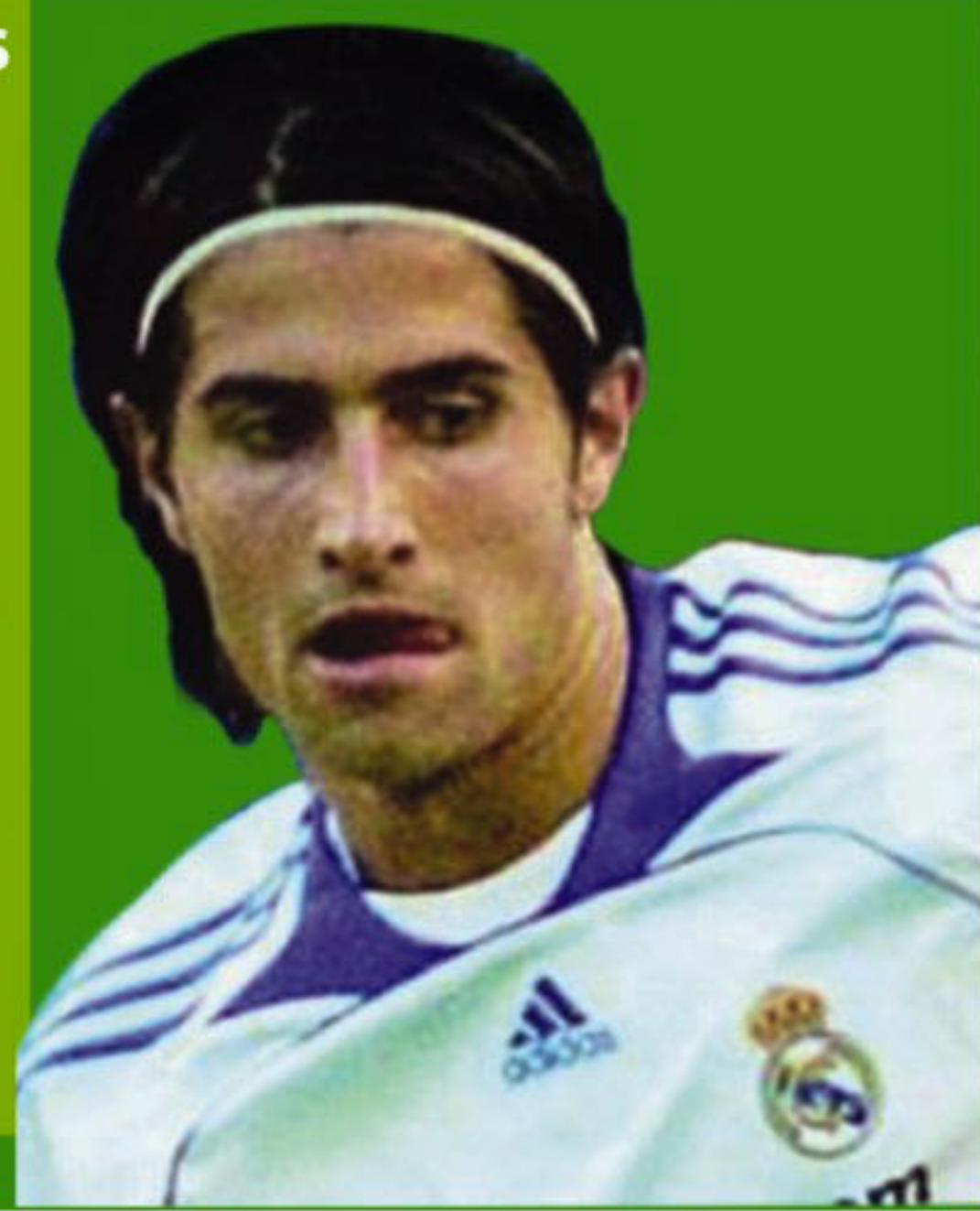


Heart defect ends Ruben's career

Spanish international midfielder Ruben de la Red has called an end to his footballing career because of a heart defect, his club Real Madrid announced on Thursday. De la Red, whose condition was detected after he fainted in a King's Cup match in October 2008, will continue working at the Spanish giants as a coach. "I am starting a very exciting stage in my career," said De la Red, who won Euro 2008 with Spain while playing his club football with Real's La Liga rivals Getafe. De la Red was capped three times



Shakib all set for Mohammedan

Premier transfers from today

Cricket

SPORTS REPORTER

The defending champions are all set to make a splash in their bid to pull out the biggest star from their traditional foes, while the newcomers are also trying to rub shoulders with the big boys in the inter-club players' transfer of the Premier League that begins today. The two-day bourse will begin at 2:00pm at the Bangabandhu National Stadium, and it will end at 8:00pm. The transfers will end on Sunday.

A club will be able to register a maximum of three players from the 22-member national pool and Mohammedan Sporting Club are all set to rope in the world's No 1 all-rounder Shakib Al Hasan from bitter rivals Abahani in their attempt to retain the title in the 50-over competition.

The Motijheel outfit also retained the services of dashing opener Tamim Iqbal, who missed almost the entire season last time due to injury, and seasoned campaigner Faisal Hossain to fill up the quota. Top-order batsman Nazimuddin, pacer Tareq Aziz Khan, left-arm spinner Enamul Haque and promising leg-spinner Noor Hossain are also likely to join Mohammedan for this season.

Last year's runners-up Bangladesh Biman are going to make a balanced squad as they all but confirmed the services of pacer Shafiqul Islam, middle-order batsman Jahurul Islam and wicketkeeper-batsman Mushfiqur Rahim to complete the pool quota. Abhishek Mitra, in-form Tushar Imran, Musharraf Rubel and Elias Sunny are all set to continue their stint with the national flag carrier with pacer Dollar Mahmud set to join them.

Abahani, in their attempt to regain the title, reportedly confirmed all-rounder

Mahmudullah Riyad to fill the vacuum left by the departure of Shakib and also kept the inspirational Mashrafe Bin Mortaza and opener Imrul Kayes.

Marshal Ayub, Anamul Haque Bijoy, Saqlain Sajib, Mahbubul Alam Robin and Tapash Baishya may join the Dhanmondi-based outfit, but they are going to miss vital players like all-rounder Nasir Hossain, who is all set to join Gazi Tank, Arafat Sunny and Nadif Chowdhury.

Former national skipper Mohammad Ashraf, who has been struggling to get a team this season after Mohammedan decided not to retain him following his dismal showing last season, is likely to join Cricket Coaching School (CCS).

Mohammedan are also going to release Aftab Ahmed, who is heading towards Old DOHS Sporting Club.

Rokibul Hasan and Shahadat Hossain are all set to play for Kalabagan, who finished

SEE PAGE 18 COL 4



Barisal batsman Hannan Sarkar clips one off his legs during his match-winning 58 against Rajshahi in the National Cricket League one-day tournament at the Sher-e-Bangla National Stadium in Mirpur yesterday.

PHOTO: STAFF

SL clinch series

Cricket

AFP, Sydney

Sri Lanka claimed their first-ever series success in Australia with a win against Ricky Ponting's team in the rain-marred second one-day international at the Sydney Cricket Ground on Friday.

The Sri Lankans won by 29 runs under the Duckworth-Lewis method after several rain interruptions and followed their stunning one-wicket victory in the opening match in Melbourne on Wednesday.

Sri Lanka condemned Australia to a

seventh straight international defeat in all forms of the game by scoring 213 for three off 41.4 overs and then bowling the home side out for 210 off 37.4 overs.

Opening batsman Upul Tharanga was named man-of-the-match for his unbeaten top-score of 86 while veteran spinner Muttiah Muralidaran claimed two wickets to take his career ODI tally to 517 wickets.

Ponting's team have one more chance to break their demoralising run of losses before this month's Ashes Test series against England in the final match of the ODI series against Sri Lanka in Brisbane on Sunday.

Tharanga showed steely powers of

concentration to regroup after a lengthy rain delay to remain unbeaten in his 112-ball knock in Sri Lanka's innings after winning the toss.

A 90-minute downpour reduced the match to 45 overs per side, but a much heavier shower later ended Sri Lanka's innings prematurely.

Angelo Mathews, the hero of Sri Lanka's astonishing one-wicket victory over Australia in Melbourne, remained 17 not out off 11 balls.

Sri Lanka's openers put on 98 runs for the first wicket before Tillakaratne Dilshan was trapped lbw as he attempted to slog-sweep off-spinner Nathan

SEE PAGE 18 COL 2

Rafsan anchors U-17s

Cricket

SPORTS REPORTER

Half-centuries from Rafsan and Liton took the Bangladesh under-17s to a strong position against Cricket Association of Bengal (CAB) under-17s at the end of the second day of their three-day game at the Comilla Stadium yesterday.

Opener Rafsan was at the crease for a remarkable 330 minutes in a rare display of patience among age-level players.

He made 70 off 271 balls, while Liton struck 80 with ten boundaries as the hosts declared their first innings at 262 for seven.

Abhimanyu picked up two wickets for the visitors.

Later, the CAB openers Avishek and Shuvam played out the final eleven overs of the day scoring just 14 runs.

Easy wins for Partex, Rupali

Cricket

Partex rode on Niaz Morshed's all-round display as they strolled to an eight-wicket victory over Kathalbagan in the First Division Cricket League at the Dhaka University ground yesterday.

Niaz picked up three wickets first as Kathalbagan were bowled out for 164 runs in 50 overs. Then, Niaz's bat did the talking as Partex blazed to 168-2 from just 26.1 overs.

Rupali Bank too had an easy outing, as they beat Indira Road by eight wickets at the Dhanmondi Cricket Stadium.

Batting first, Zakir Hossain's four-wicket haul helped dismiss Indira for 157 in 43 overs. The bankers took 28.2 overs to reach their target, losing two wickets.

Pappu and Al-Amin smashed half-centuries in Rupali's chase.

School chess

Cricket

SPORTS REPORTER

The 12th Standard Chartered Bank School Chess Tournament got underway at the NSC Tower yesterday with some 209 students taking part.

As many as 106 are participating in a group of Class VI to X level. 72 boys in KG to V group level and 31 participants taking part in girls' group.

Istiaque ruled out that there was any sentimental issues involved and claimed that only performance in three trials have been taken into consideration while forming the team.

He however said Sadia would travel with the shooting squad and take part in individual event though her performance in the Games would only be considered for her progress in world ranking, not for medal.

A total of 14 shooters will take part in nine events in the Asian Games, scheduled for November 12 to

SEE PAGE 18 COL 7

Barisal edge a thriller

2nd phase from Nov 8

Cricket

SPORTS REPORTER

Khulna were blown away by Dhaka's pace attack yesterday at the Sher-e-Bangla National Stadium in Mirpur but the southwestern division still managed to squeeze into the next phase of the National Cricket League one-day tournament.

They joined Dhaka, Barisal and Rajshahi in the competition's second round, which begins on November 8. The four teams will play each other once and the top two will play out a final on November 14.

Apart from Dhaka's easy win, Barisal and Chittagong also notched up wins but the latter's victory was pointless in the end as they lost out to Khulna in the head-to-head

system for qualification. RAJSHAHI-BARISAL An 84-run sixth wicket partnership between Anisur Rahman and Zubair Ahmed propped up Rajshahi's total to 220-9 from 50 overs, after they had slipped to 86 for five in the 28th over.

As Zubair anchored the innings with his steady 46, Anisur struck a brisk 56-ball 61 with the help of five fours and six.

But their effort was

thwarted by solid half-centuries from Fazle Rabbi and Hannan Sarkar, who also won the man-of-the-match award in the three-wicket victory.

Rabbi gave Barisal an excellent start with his 54-ball 50 but it was Hannan's steady 58 that anchored the innings. After his dismissal in the 46th over, Arafat Salahuddin held it together with an unbeaten 31 off 33 balls to give Barisal their fourth win off the final ball of the match in an exciting finish.

DHAKA-KHULNA Dhaka paceman Mahbubul Alam Robin wrecked the top-order, to eventually bowl Khulna out for 170 runs in 47.5 overs at the Shaheed Chandu Stadium in Bogra.

Robin took five wickets for 27 runs from 6.5 overs with Sharif helping him with two wickets.

SEE PAGE 18 COL 2

India in driving seat

Cricket

Tailender Harbhajan Singh struck a career-best 69 before India picked up two early wickets to put New Zealand under pressure on the second day of the first Test on Friday.

Harbhajan slammed three sixes and five fours in his 97-ball knock to steer India's first innings to 487 after the hosts had been reduced to 412-8 on a deteriorating wicket at the Sardar Patel Stadium in Ahmedabad.

At stumps, New Zealand were 69-2, trailing the Indians by 418 runs with eight wickets in hand. Brendon McCullum (38) and Ross Taylor (18) were the not-out batsmen.

"I am pleased that I could contribute with the bat," said Harbhajan. "Their bowlers bowled their hearts out, especially Daniel (Vettori) and (Jeetan) Patel, as the wicket had nothing much to offer."

"It was difficult to judge the flight and length of Dan's balls. He kept things tight at one end. But we have got enough runs on the board. We just need to ensure that we bowl according to our plans and get the wickets."

Paceman Zaheer Khan gave India an early breakthrough when he had opener Tim McIntosh (0) caught behind in the third over while left-arm spinner Pragyan Ojha pegged back the off-stump of BJ Watling to reduce the Kiwis to 27-2.

But McCullum, opening the innings for the first time in Tests, held on steadily, hitting seven fours during his two-

hour stay at the wicket.

Earlier, left-arm spinner Vettori finished with the best figures of 4-118, sending back Mahendra Singh Dhoni (10), Khan (one) and Harbhajan after taking the wicket of Virender Sehwag (173) on

New Zealand had fought back

SEE PAGE 18 COL 6



India's Harbhajan Singh takes a run during his career-best 69 against New Zealand on the second day of the first Test at the Sardar Patel Gujarat Stadium in Ahmedabad yesterday.

PHOTO: AFP

What to WATCH

- NEO Cricket**
India v New Zealand
First Test, Day 3
Live from 10:00am
- TEN Action**
Serie A
Bologna v Lecce
Live from 11:00pm
Primera Liga
Real Sociedad v Racing
Live from 1:00am (Sunday)
- STAR Sports**
English Premiership
Fulham v Aston Villa
Live from 8:55pm
- ESPN**
English Premiership
Bolton v Tottenham
Live from 6:40pm
Man United v Wolves
Live from 8:55pm

Sharmin returns to squad

Cricket

SPORTS REPORTER



Shooter Sharmin Akhter, a 2004 SA Games gold medallist, has returned to the national fold after a long time while another prospect Sadia Sultana was dropped from the 10m air-rifle team event for this month's 16th Asian Games in China.

Sharmin came to the limelight after winning the individual 10m air-rifle gold in Islamabad SA Games in 2004 but was a shadow of herself in the next Games in Colombo two years later. It has been a downward spiral for her career since, so much so that she failed to secure place in the SA Games squad at home and also missed the Commonwealth Shooting Championships and Commonwealth Games earlier this year.

But, the former BKSP student found her feet in the trials for selection of the Asian Games where she finished behind leader Sharmin Akhter Ratna and Tripti Dutta for a third place finish.

"Tripti has been given room to fight along with Sharmin and Ratna in team's 10m air-rifle event as she scored one more than Sadia," said

Bangladesh Shooting Federation's general secretary Istiaque Ahmed yesterday.

After the pair of Ratna (394 scores) and Sadia (390 scores) failed to win any medals in the 10m air-rifle event of the Commonwealth Games in India last month, the shooting federation officials had said that Sadia suffers from nerves on big occasions but had to include her in the pair event after Tripti was disallowed for the event.

Sadia (495.1) however showed signs of progress in the individual event finishing sixth where she put her more renowned teammate Sharmin Akhter Ranta (494.7) behind in the eight-shooter final.

Istiaque ruled out that there was any sentimental issues involved and claimed that only performance in three trials have been taken into consideration while forming the team.

He however said Sadia would travel with the shooting squad and take part in individual event though her performance in the Games would only be considered for her progress in world ranking, not for medal.

A total of 14 shooters will take part in nine events in the Asian Games, scheduled for November 12 to

SEE PAGE 18 COL 7

SPORTS POLL
TODAY'S QUESTION
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