

Oruma calls it quits
Former Nigerian international Wilson Oruma has announced his retirement from football at the age of 33, his French club Guincamp announced on Friday. Oruma made his breakthrough on the international scene when he played for the Nigerian side that won the under-17 world title in 1993 and three years later he was part of the Nigerian side that won the Olympic title in Atlanta. He played for much of his career in France turning out for Lens, Nancy, Nimes, Sochaux, Marseille and Guincamp with whom he won the French Cup last year. Oruma also plied his trade in Turkey, Switzerland and Greece.



SPORT

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(R) The proud Bangladesh cricket team sings the national anthem after they won gold in the 16th Asian Games in Guangzhou yesterday. (L) Nazmul Hossain celebrates the wicket of Afghanistan batsman Mohammad Shahzad during the final at the Guangong International Cricket Stadium. PHOTOS: AGENCIES

Bangladesh's golden sunrise

SPORTS REPORTER
Bangladesh's 16th Asian Games campaign in Guangzhou provided a perfect picture of the country's sports; where cricket is the heartbeat and the rest struggle. In sixteen disciplines, the country's athletes won a sum total of three medals, two of which came from cricket. The women's kabaddi team clinched the bronze medal but the national sport has lost its sheen quite a long time ago. And in most of the other sports, Bangladesh have looked completely lost. While chess holds an outside chance at the continental level, shooting, swimming, taekwondo and golf have only achieved in the regional level, or in other words, the SA Games. Like this year's SA Games where cricket won gold, Mohammad Ashraf's men brought a rare smile to the sports fraternity through their achievement. Though the men's competition was anything but world-class, the gold was still there to be won. In the women's competition too, Bangladesh destroyed all comers before freezing to Pakistan in the final, but still

confirming a silver medal. Mohammad Ashraf's boys brushed aside a strong Sri Lankan side in the semi-finals but in yesterday's final, Afghanistan fought them manfully. Bangladesh remained in a tight spot in the final overs of their 119-run chase. With 19 runs still required from the last two overs, an Afghan triumph looked increasingly likely. Ashraf himself admitted he had given up hope towards the end. "I was feeling a bit low but then Sabbir came and did the job for us," he said. "There was a bit of pressure because Afghanistan are a very good side and this was a major final." But luckily, Naeem Islam and Sabbir Rahman hardly panicked, adding an undefeated 44-run sixth wicket stand to steer Bangladesh to the five-wicket victory. "I had a good talk with Naeem [Islam] before the 19th over and we went for it," said Sabbir, a leg-spinning all-rounder who averages 40 with the bat in first-class cricket. "Luckily, it came good. There was no pressure on me, but I am sure my teammates in the dressing room were tense," added the 19-year old who has the makings of becoming Bangladesh's first legspinner at the top level. Coming in at number seven, he smashed three sixes in his 18-ball 33 while



Sabbir Rahman (L), one of the heroes of the triumph, is the toast of his teammates celebration after the five-wicket win over Afghanistan. Naeem Islam (R) smashes the only six of his unbeaten 34 as Afghan wicketkeeper Mohammad Shahzad looks on. Naeem top-scored with 34 off 41 balls with the help of three boundaries and a six. The valiant Afghans were however appreciated by their more illustrious opponents with coach Sarwar Imran praising the new cricketing nation.



"We are celebrating, but I hope Afghanistan will celebrate too because they deserve the silver medal," Sarwar told AFP. "They are a very good side and I am sure they will become a top team in the near future. Their rise has been remarkable." Afghanistan captain Mohammad Nabi said it was a miracle that cricket had prospered in his war-ravaged nation. "The war has been going on for three

decades, but we have been playing cricket there for the last 10 years despite the lack of proper facilities or grounds," he said. "It is the passion for the game that keeps us going and cricket has caught on back home. More people are playing the game or following it on radio and TV." Afghanistan's Pakistani coach Rashid Latif said he was happy the team had reached the final and promised a better showing in future events. "The aim is to be a Test nation soon and play against the best," said the former Pakistan wicketkeeper. "I want to bring youngsters into the game so the sport continues to grow in Afghanistan." Latif said he had prepared his team for the final by narrating how India beat the all-conquering West Indies in the 1983 World Cup against all odds. "The Indians were not as fit as their rivals, nor was their skill superior to the West Indies, yet on that day they played better and won," said Latif.

SCORES IN BRIEF
AFGHANISTAN: 118 for 8 in 20 overs (Sadeq 20, Mangal 14, Asghar 38 not out, Nabi 11, Shabir 25; Shahadat 2-32, Naeem 2-8, Ashraf 2-3)
BANGLADESH: 119 for 5 in 19.3 overs (Mithun 22, Naeem 34 not out, Ashraf 10, Sabbir 33 not out; Sadeq 2-27)
Result: Bangladesh won by five wickets.

No lack of confidence Zimbabwe arrive in Dhaka

Cricket
SPORTS REPORTER
The Zimbabwe cricket team arrived in Dhaka yesterday hoping for some competitive cricket against the in-form Tigers during their five-match one-day international series. Despite Bangladesh's recent 4-0 drubbing of New Zealand on home soil, Zimbabwe's leading batsman Hamilton Masakadza believes the Africans have a better side than the Kiwis and would play good cricket in these conditions. "Definitely Bangladesh is a difficult opposition at home but still we are looking for a very competitive series. I think it would be a bit different series than the one against the Kiwis as we have had the experience to play in Bangladesh quite often. And I think we are better prepared than the Kiwis," said Masakadza while talking to reporters at the Hazrat Shahjalal International Airport. He also said that it's an added advantage for their side that a number of players are very experienced to play in this kind of conditions.

"We have been here a few times and we know what the conditions are and how the wickets behave. We are also aware about the dew factor and that's why we are looking forward to the series," opined Masakadza. "Even in the past we played quite competitively and the games were very close on a number of occasions so I can tell you again it will be a very competitive series," he added. Strength wise he also didn't find any difference between the two teams as both rely on the spin bowlers. "I don't think there is too much difference between the teams in terms of strength because both teams depends on their spin bowlers and both teams have a few guys who can strike the ball hard up in the order," observed Masakadza. Masakadza also said that there was no shortage of



Hamilton Masakadza (L) walks out of the Hazrat Shahjalal International Airport yesterday as Zimbabwe arrived in town to play in the five-match one-day series from December 1. PHOTO: STAR

U-17 booters keep winning

SPORTS REPORTER
The Bangladesh U17 football team moved into the second round of 51st Subroto Mukherjee Cup Football tournament when they handed another lone-goal defeat to Arunachal Pradesh in a Group H match in New Delhi yesterday. Fazle Rabbi struck the decider in the 30th minute. Bangladesh, who beat Lagaland in the tournament opener on Thursday, take on Sainik School today.

Div I cricket

SPORTS REPORTER
Uttara Sporting Club, Azad Sporting Club and Sheikh Jamal Dhanmondi Club won their respective matches of the First Division Cricket League yesterday. At the Jahangirnagar University ground, Uttara Sporting (151-4) beat Agrani Bank (150 all out) by six wickets, thanks to Swapan's half-century. In another low-scoring affair, Azad Sporting (138-2) brushed past Dhaka Wanderers (137 all out) by eight wickets at the BKSP.

ICC CRICKET WORLD CUP HISTORY

An upset, and a strike that deprived the world

With Sri Lanka becoming a full member of the International Cricket Council (ICC), the 1983 World Cup had space for only one Associate member. Formerly known as Rhodesia, the newly independent Zimbabwe was the eighth team in the Cup, having won the qualifying tournament involving the Associate members of ICC. And unlike the previous Associate members making their debut in World Cups, they made quite a splash. They announced themselves as dangerous opponents on the opening day of the tournament itself, shocking Australia by 13 runs. It was Zimbabwe's first international match, and one they would remember for the rest of their lives, having toppled such renowned opposition. Australia were a team on the decline, with some of their best players nearing the end. They were good enough though, to defeat the eventual champions India in the group stage. Zimbabwe had a number of experienced players of genuine international standard but, apart from John Traicos who had played for South Africa in three Tests against Australia in 1969/70, nobody had played at that level before. Things were going according to the script as Zimbabwe stuttered to 94 for five, but then captain Duncan Fletcher, who twenty-two years later would torment Australia further as England's coach in the 2005 Ashes, took over with an 84-ball 69, and only one wicket fell thereafter. He was ably supported by allrounders Kevin Curran and Iain Butcher. Fletcher added 70 in fifteen overs with Curran and 75 in twelve overs with Butcher as Zimbabwe reached a respectable 239 at the end of the sixty overs. Things were again going according to the formbook as Australia reached 114 for two, but they were behind the scoring rate and things started going pear-shaped soon. It was again Duncan Fletcher, with his fast-medium bowling, who turned things around. He had dismissed Graeme Wood after the opening

BJMC back with a bang

SPORTS REPORTER
After a three-year gap, the Bangladesh Jute Mills Corporation (BJMC) returned to cycling with a bang winning all four events on the opening day of the NCC Bank 34th Cycling Championship at the Bangabandhu National Stadium yesterday. BJMC was away from cycling for three years since 2006 following the then caretaker government's instruction. But after the new government took over, BJMC restarted their sports activities and some 40 cyclists now work at the organization. BJMC coach Abdul Kuddus expects to regain the championship to reestablish their supremacy after Bangladesh Textile Mills Corporation took advantage of their absence to become champions three times each. Over BJMC have still finished top more than 20 times out of 33 national meets. Kuddus, however, was not satisfied with the arrangement of holding the cycling on the athletic turf, as the cyclists have to work harder to accelerate since the turf has more friction and thus makes them slower than usual.