

# SPORT

DHAKA MONDAY JANUARY 3, 2011, E-MAIL: sports@thedailystar.net

## A 'high priced' possession indeed!

Oli Ahad alias Ador, a second year student of Dhaka College, was one of the lucky few yesterday to get hold of the World Cup tickets. He stood in queue from 2:00am the night before in front of the City Bank's Dhanmondi Road 2 branch. Braving the police's baton charge, he was one of the firsts to buy the tickets, but then it was clear why he took such a 'valiant' stance. Out of the four he bought, he sold two tickets for Tk 1500 each to an individual who later forced Ador, excited to talk to the awaiting cameras, to go away from the scene.

- STAR SPORT DESK



**BATTLE FOR A DREAM TICKET:** (clockwise from L) A sea of ticket-seekers wait in vain at the Karwan Bazar Branch of City Bank; a policeman dangerously pushes a man with the barrel of his shot gun; a smiling lady proudly holds her voucher of a World Cup ticket in Chittagong; in Dhaka two lucky winners are seen with their prized piece of paper; but the lady winner had to show a lot of guts and courage in her pursuit to get hold of it.

PHOTOS: STAR

## A match with a difference

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Mymensingh

A friendly cricket match, among farmers of the remote Char Puliamari, took place at a paddy field after the harvest in the region was complete.

Organised by Channel i director and news editor Shykh Siraj, the Farmers World Cup was between a symbolic 'Bangladesh and Australia' teams with the home team coming up trumps by 52 runs.

The enthusiasm, in the cold winter breeze, was a sight to behold, a large of women also turning up to see their favourite sport.

Farmers aged between 50 and 80 years practiced under a coach for a few days prior to the game as they were to play cricket for the first time in their lives.

Man-of-the-match Nurul Amin received a goat as his trophy while the rest received medals and a cheque each.

## BAF bow out with win

SPORTS REPORTER

Bangladesh Air Force finished their Dhaka Bank Victory Hockey Tournament on a winning note after thrashing Barnak Samaj 7-0 in their last group match at Maulana Bhasani Hockey Stadium yesterday.

Their first victory in four matches, however, could not lift them to the last four and they had to be content to finish third in the group.

In the day's other match, Bangladesh Police and Dinajpur played out a goalless draw.

# 'I won't give up on a ticket'

MOHAMMAD ISAM



World Cup ticket sales got off to a violent, chaotic and frustratingly slow start yesterday after most of the ticket outlets saw endlessly long lines due to the slow process.

The sale will continue today but given the demand, it will be hard for the majority to get hold of the elusive piece of paper. Many though are not prepared to give up hope.

Among those who braved the cold and the chilly winds since last night, some like Sajjad Hossain were lucky enough.

A second year honours student of Northern University, the young man had excitement and relief written all over his face after he became the first person to buy the World Cup tickets from City Bank's Dhanmondi branch where he had stood since the afternoon of December 31.

"I am very, very happy. It was very difficult but we have been queuing up since December 31. We were a large group and we always watch Bangladesh's matches

here," said a beaming Sajjad moments after he received his voucher, against which he will collect the tickets from the Sher-e-Bangla National Stadium early next month.

"I have been surviving on tea and biscuits basically. The police and the bank officials were quite helpful, especially when some outsiders tried to push us out," he added, confirming that he's a member of the Bangladesh cricket team's supporters group 'Doura, Bagh Ailo' (Run, the Tigers are coming).

"Our family members came to encourage us. We didn't move a bit from the queue, it was some experience."

Sajjad got a huge ovation when he stormed out of the building with the voucher in hand, but across the country, such scenes were few and far between.

The initial problem is the huge number of people queuing up with groups of troublemakers hampering the order. At the Dhanmondi Road 2 branch of City Bank, two people including Kaler Kantha photographer Mir Farid was injured when the police tried to push away a large group

who tried to break the queue and surround the entrance.

Police had earlier gone for similar action in front of the Mirpur branch of the same bank as well as in Bangabandhu Avenue.

A few cars and a bus were damaged in the Mipur-1 area after rumours were spread among the people who had lined up. During the ensuing baton charge of the police, Daily Sun's sports reporter Minhaz Uddin Khan was hurt.

But once order was restored, the slow system, especially the internet servers, was the most annoying part. Even in the most disciplined of outlets, it took one group (5-6 people) more than half an hour on an average to receive the voucher.

"The system is very slow. And once the servers show up dead, we cannot get our desired tickets.

"I got a ticket of the eastern gallery but the person who came after me, he couldn't because the server was blocked. People have been standing here for such a long time but they are still hanging around without a ticket," said Asheque

Hossain, a private university student.

The delay continued till late in the evening, ensuring a lot of people still remained outside the branches for another try tomorrow. "I will keep on trying. I know that getting a ticket today [Sunday] is almost impossible but I can't go back without one," said Rubel Ali, outside the Karwan Bazar branch, one of the few relatively calm ticket booths.

Our Rajshahi correspondent adds that people from Dhaka, Dinajpur and other nearby districts also showed up in Rajshahi for tickets.

Moniruzzaman, a Mirpur resident, took a bus northwards after he saw more than 3,000 people in front of him. "I stood at the queue at around 1:00pm on Saturday and saw there were 3,000 people in front of me. So I decided to go to Rajshahi. Here I only saw 300 people in the line," he said.

Our Barisal correspondent reports that heavy rush for the World Cup tickets at local City Bank branch hampered regular banking and traffic, but the rush was still nothing like Dhaka for the ticket buyers.

## ICC CRICKET WORLD CUP HISTORY

### 'I didn't have time for Wasim'

The man's half-century pulled Bangladesh out of a rut and into the 1999 World Cup. Akram Khan, the former national captain, spoke to The Daily Star about the ICC Trophy days and the two World Cups he subsequently took part in.



AKRAM KHAN

Daily Star Sport (DSS): You have a prominent part in bringing Bangladesh to international cricket through your on-field performance...

Akram Khan (AK): When we started our cricket careers, we all had a team goal that was to win the ICC Trophy and play the World Cup. We did not have individual goals back then.

It was a huge setback in 1994 when we couldn't win despite taking such a good team to Kenya. A lot of us lost hope. But we kept the dream and achieved it in 1997 in Malaysia. To me achieving the ICC Trophy was the sweetest memory in my career, because this success opened our opportunities towards entering world cricket.

After 1997, cricket became the No 1 sport in Bangladesh.

DSS: How much was the excitement before going to the 1999 World Cup?

AK: I can't express in words really. This generation cannot understand that excitement. We only had one dream play the World Cup. We thought that was to be all and end all. DSS: Your sweetest memory...

AK: Defeating Pakistan, most definitely. A lot of people talk about this win of ours, but those of us in the field know that we had to play our best cricket to win that day.

Before the lunch break, none of us thought we could achieve the victory.



PHOTO: STAR

Abahani striker Alfaz Ahmed (L) fires a low shot past a sliding Chittagong Abahani defender during their Bangladesh League match at the Birshreshtha Mostafa Kamal Stadium in Kamalapur yesterday.

## Abahani beat Ctg namesake

SPORTS REPORTER



A first-half strike from Ntim Twum Frank gave holders Abahani their first win in the Bangladesh League when they handed a lone-goal defeat to their Chittagong namesakes in their second match at Birshreshtha Mostafa Kamal Stadium in Kamalapur yesterday.

The Ghanaian midfielder struck the decider in the 45th minute in a dull, one-sided affair in front of a few hundred spectators under floodlights.

Hattrick titleholders Abahani were not as impressive as they were against newcomers Sheikh Jamal Dhanmondi Club last week where they played a goalless draw, and Abahani coach Ali Akbar blamed the opponents for their defensive mood throughout the game.

"The opponents played with a compact defense with 10 players on the backline and it is always tough to find space in such situations. But our side created more opportunities and we should have won the game with at least a five to six margin," said Abahani's Iranian coach Ali Akbar, who however admitted that his side did not play good and the finishing was poor.

Chittagong Abahani, who gave their earlier opponents Mohammedan Sporting Club a run for their money before suffering a lone-goal defeat Tuesday last, never looked they had any thrust to snatch points from their mighty opponents as they could not even muster a shot on target through the game.

The Dhanmondi-based outfit, Abahani, also looked to

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**SPORTS POLL**  
WEEKLY QUESTION  
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