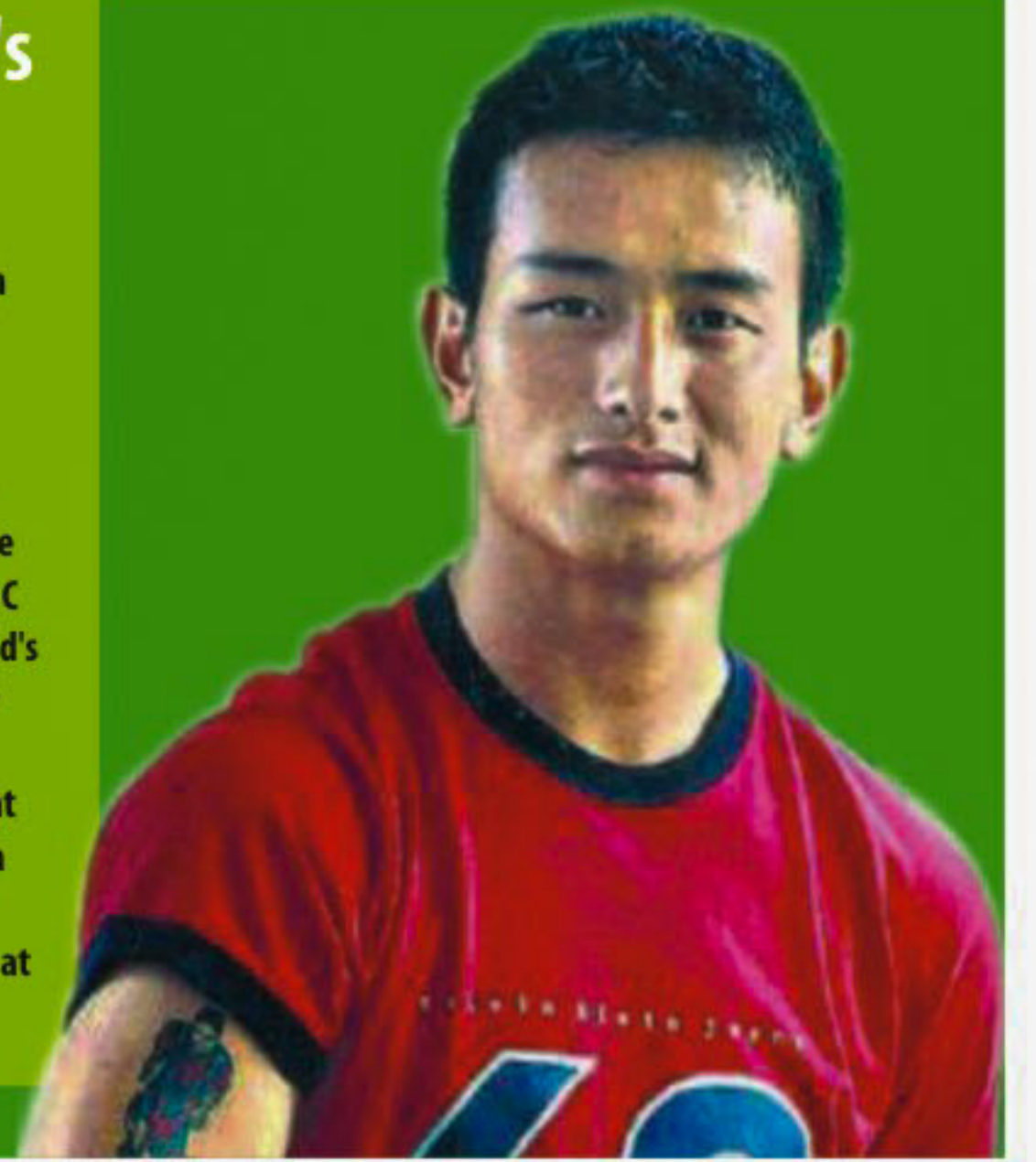


SPORT

DHAKA FRIDAY JANUARY 14, 2011, E-MAIL: sports@thedailystar.net

'Bhulia football's Tendulkar'

Indian football captain Baichung Bhutia is worthy of comparison with cricketing icon Sachin Tendulkar, according to the country's English football coach Bob Houghton. Bhutia is currently sidelined with a calf injury but Houghton, whose side meet Bahrain in their second Group C match on Friday, said the 34-year-old's mere presence was a huge boost for his squad. "Baichung and Sachin -- I'm sure that comparison goes over the heads of a lot of people here who don't know about cricket," explained Houghton at a pre-match press conference on



Abahani record 2nd win

SPORTS REPORTER

Holders Abahani returned to winning ways in the Bangladesh League when the defending champions came from behind to beat Chittagong Mohammedan 2-1 at Cox's Bazar Stadium yesterday.

Smarting from a 1-0 loss to Farashganj SC in the previous game, the Sky Blues faced a fierce battle from Chittagong Mohammedan before the hosts took the lead in the 69th minute through a strike from Farhad.

However, Abahani hit back six minutes later when Ghanaian Twaunu Frank levelled the margin, scoring his second goal in the league.

Shakwat Hossain Rony confirmed Abahani's second victory in four matches in the 86th minute and the visitors left the field with heads held high.

Nothing to cheer about

PTI, New Delhi

How do cheer girls promote the cause of cricket? Why are players auctioned like "gladiators" in IPL system of cricket?

These were some of the questions that members of the Parliamentary Standing Committee (PSC) on Finance posed to top BCCI officials, including its president Shashank Manohar, Secretary N Srinivasan and IPL Commissioner Chirayu Amin during a hearing on financial transactions related to the conduct of IPL.

While the BCCI top brass claimed that IPL would help the cause of cricket and attract more talent, it was at loss to explain the role of cheer girls, sources told PTI.

It is learnt that the BCCI officials put the onus of introducing the concept on sacked IPL chief Lalit Modi.

SPORTS POLL WEEKLY QUESTION

Who will win the Premier Cricket League derby on Sunday?

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

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Bangladesh captain Shakib Al Hasan tucks his face into his jacket to stave off the freezing weather during his club Mohammedan's Premier League match against Kalabagan at the Sher-e-Bangla National Stadium yesterday. The mercury dropped to 8.2 degrees Celcius in the city yesterday.

PHOTO: ANISUR RAHMAN

Biggies roll on in chill

SPORTS REPORTER



Popular outfits Abahani and Mohammedan braved the chilly weather to win their respective ninth round matches of the Premier Cricket League at different venues yesterday.

The foggy weather enforced curtailed-overs affairs in all three matches and it was Shamsur Rahman who hogged the spotlight on the day by hitting a hundred to guide Mohammedan to a 33-run victory over Kalabagan at the Sher-e-Bangla National Stadium in Mirpur.

National opener Imrul Kayes also shone hitting a stroke-filled half-century at the Fatullah Cricket Stadium as Abahani overcame the Biman hurdle with a narrow six-run win while Victoria registered their fourth victory with a 71-run success against Prime Doleshwar at BKSP.

With the outcome Abahani retained the top position with 16 points while defending champions Mohammedan followed them one point behind. Biman put their Super League qualification at risk as they remained on ten points.

MOHAMMEDAN-KALABAGAN
In a 35-overs-a-side match, Shamsur

took the charge after his team had lost three quick wickets. And the right-hander got good support from Shakib Al Hasan (32 off 29 balls) and Faisal Hossain (52 off 44 balls) as Mohammedan piled up a daunting 259 runs for six wickets.

Shamsur smote nine boundaries and four sixes during his 86-ball 100 and justifiably pointed his bat towards the selectors' room as he failed to make the 23-member World Cup squad.

Later the batsman also expressed his frustration at the omission.

In reply, Nazmus Sadat and Nasiruddin gave Kalabagan a flying start, but they lost wickets at regular intervals before being bowled out for 226 runs in 33.5 overs. As many as seven batsmen reached double digits but none could carry on.

Left-arm spinner Shakib was the peak of the bowlers taking four wickets for 32 runs while Azhar Mahmud and Nur Hossain captured three wickets each.

ABAHANI-BIMAN
Chasing a 204-run winning target, Pakistani Jeesan Asif threatened Abahani but veteran left-arm spinner Mohammad Rafique made sure no upset took place.

The right-hander smashed four

boundaries and as many sixes during his explosive 50-ball 72 but it was not good enough for Biman who finished their 33-over quota at 197 for nine.

Tapash Baishya, Abul Hasan, Saqlain Sajib and Rafique picked up two wickets each.

Earlier Imrul and Anamul Haque made a good start for Abahani after being put in to bat in trying conditions as the pair added 49 runs in 8.5 overs for the opening stand.

Imrul had struggled initially in the competition but got back his rhythm at the right time. The left-hander clobbered six boundaries and two over boundaries during his 79-ball 78 while Anamul contributed 21 off 25 balls that featured three fours.

Marshal Ayub was the other notable scorer with 31.

Left-arm spinner Mosharrar Hossain grabbed three wickets conceding 47 runs.

VICTORIA-DOLESHWAR
In the 25-overs-a-side match due to delayed start following dense fog in the morning, Victoria posted 166 for six.

Mominul Haque top scored 48 off 37 balls that contained three boundaries.

In reply, Doleshwar were bowled out for 95 runs in 22 overs.

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ICC CRICKET WORLD CUP TALK

'Unlucky to miss out on 2007'

Known as the nearly man of Bangladesh cricket, Tushar Imran played only the 2003 World Cup and was close to selection for the 2007 edition. He speaks to The Daily Star of his experience in South Africa.

Daily Star Sport (DSS): How did it feel when you heard that you would play the 2003 World Cup (WC)?

Tushar Imran (TI): I was lucky to be a part of the World Cup squad in 2003. Definitely I felt good, as it was a dream come true for me.

DSS: Were you confident during the camp?

TI: Yes I was confident at the camp because I had performed well in the ODI's prior to the World Cup. The domestic league matches also helped me as I performed well with the bat.

DSS: How was the team atmosphere in South Africa?

TI: The atmosphere was not so good as we lost our opening match to Canada. We all expected to win against Canada and continue the tournament with the winning flow, but after the loss the whole scenario changed.

It was Eid the next day but we could not enjoy. We had a short team meeting on the



TUSHAR IMRAN

morning of Eid and that was really it for the whole day. We all stayed in our rooms and kept thinking about the defeat.

DSS: How would you rate your performance in the World Cup?

TI: I batted well against Kenya, scoring 48 runs. If I stayed a bit longer at the crease and scored some more runs,

maybe we could have won. Unfortunately we lost against Kenya as well. Overall it was not such a good tournament for the whole team.

DSS: Did you feel bad to miss out of the 2007 World Cup?

TI: I would say I was very unlucky not to be a part of the 2007 campaign. I was a part of the away series to Zimbabwe. There I played only one match and I was sent to bat at No 7. I didn't score much and I didn't play in any other match.

The World Cup squad was announced two days after we came back from Zimbabwe

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Nischintapur's dream comes true

Football

SPORTS REPORTER

97 days, 16 matches, hundreds of kilometers on dust-beaten roads and a never-say-die attitude was what it took Nischintapur Registered Primary School to stand out amongst 57,000 other schools and emerge as champions of the inaugural Bangabandhu Gold Cup Primary School Football tournament yesterday.

Nischintapur School, situated on the cusp of the Indian border under the Jaintiapur Upazila of the Sylhet Division, defeated Isdair Govt. Primary School of Narayanganj 4-2 in a shootout after regulation and extra-time had produced a 1-1

draw at a Bangabandhu National Stadium, teeming with the enthusiasm and festivity of thousands of screaming youngsters.

Defying the chilly weather, thousands of students and teachers from primary schools in and around the capital turned up at a new-look BNS under the instruction of the education ministry waving colourful flags and spreading confetti.

In a mark of how much of a buzz the tournament has created in a regional level, the venue was packed to the rafters even before the game kicked-off leaving hundreds of students unluckily stranded outside the venue with teachers struggling to maintain queues or establish order.

The presence of numerous inhabitants from the far-off Jaintiapur, who traveled to

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PHOTOS: STAR

RIGHT: Schoolgirls entertain the crowd with a colourful choreographic display before the final of the Bangabandhu Gold Cup Primary School Football Tournament while (TOP) players of Nischintapur Registered Primary School celebrate with the trophy at the Bangabandhu National Stadium yesterday.

