

The Spanish Football Federation (RFEF) on Tuesday fined Barcelona star Lionel Messi after the Argentine world player of the year showed off a tee-shirt bearing a birthday message to his mother. Media reports said the fine was believed to be between 2000 and 3000 euros which the RFEF deemed Messi should pay for ripping off his shirt after scoring at the weekend against Racing Santander and showing a tee-shirt emblazoned with the words "Happy Birthday Mum". The Federation stipulates that no such



SPORT

DHAKA THURSDAY JANUARY 27, 2011, E-MAIL: sports@thedailystar.net

Silver coin to be unveiled Jan 30

SPORTS REPORTER

A commemorative silver coin will be issued by the Bangladesh Bank to mark the ICC Cricket World Cup 2011 to be co-hosted by Bangladesh, India and Sri Lanka.

The central bank is going to release the coin minted from Germany valued at Tk 10 to mark the mega event.

One side of the coin will have the logo of the ICC Cricket World Cup and on the other side will be a picture of the trophy.

The coin will be officially unveiled on January 30 in a function where Finance Minister and chairman of the organising committee Abul Maal Abdul Muhith will be present as a chief guest.

This coin will be available at all Bangladesh Bank branches as well as the schedule banks before the February 17 opening ceremony which will be take place at the Bangabandhu National Stadium.

And one can buy this coin SEE PAGE 17 COL 1

Castrol ropes in Shakib

SPORTS REPORTER

Shakib Al Hasan, the cricket captain of Bangladesh, became a brand ambassador of Castrol, one of the world's leading lubricant companies, for a three-year tenure.

Shakib will work as a spokesperson for Castrol in its various activities related to cricket in the country.

This partnership puts Shakib in an elite class with cricketers such as Sachin Tendulkar who is an ambassador of the brand in India.

Both Shakib and the company have expressed their delight at this partnership and said they would be looking forward to striving in their respective fields as they have always done.

Castrol have been supporting sports for a century, starting with motorsport, and later spreading on to more popular sports such as football and cricket.



Bangladesh batsmen Mohammad Ashraful (C) and Tamim Iqbal (R) have a quick chat while awaiting their turn to bat in the nets as Mahmudullah Riyad (L) walks back to his bowling mark. The Tigers' training camp for the World Cup got underway yesterday at the Academy Ground.

PHOTO: STAR

Tiring traffic

Tigers' WC camp on

SPORTS REPORTER

The preparations for the World Cup began yesterday but the zest seemed to be missing among the Tigers, the sort that was as routine as net practice during a similar camp ahead of the New Zealand series only a few months ago.

The ones like Abdur Razzak and Shafiqul Islam looked to be lumbering into the Cricket Academy ground yesterday, while Nazmul Hossain appeared pensive.

It might be a case of nerves ahead of such a big event or the aftermath of the Premier League but if looked at a little more intimately, Tamim Iqbal's answer probably sums up the mood.

"Everyone is just tired of the traffic," said Tamim. There is certainly a lot of truth in that: members of the national cricket team took part in a ceremony at Sheraton Hotel at around noon. They then had to rush back to Mirpur to take part in training.

"You have to remember that all of us just played ten matches in the Premier League so fatigue is pretty much expected. But everyone did their work, whether it was batting or bowling," explained the new vice-captain, who suffered a slight injury on his right hand while trying to take catches with one hand at the fag end of practice.

The enthusiasm was obvious during that August-September camp after the Tigers had suffered losses to the Netherlands and Ireland last summer.

"Before the New Zealand series, we were fresh, unlike this time, so we need some time for recovery. It will be a little like this for the first two or three days and then once we get into

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ICC CRICKET WORLD CUP TALK

'Great day for me'

As a replacement for Tapash Baisya, Forhad Reza flew off to the West Indies to be part of the Bangladesh World Cup squad in 2007. Here he talks about his brief stay with The Daily Star Sport.

Daily Star Sport (DSS): How did it feel when you heard that you would play the 2007 World Cup?

Forhad Reza (FR): At first I was not in the World Cup squad. When Tapash (Baisya) got injured, I was brought into the team as his replacement.

I just returned from a tour with the A team, and was told that anyone from Dollar (Mahmud), Nazmul (Hossain) and me will be replacing Tapash.

I was in good form at that time, which I think was the reason I was picked. It was a great day for me.

DSS: How different was the atmosphere from other tournaments?

FR: World Cup is always different from any other tournament. All the big teams competing for one glory, always brings excitement. The atmosphere was great; we



FORHAD REZA

had a very good World Cup. DSS: Was there any frustrating part in the campaign?

FR: I wasn't frustrated, but definitely felt bad because I was not playing any matches. But then again, the team was doing well and that's what mattered most to me.

DSS: Recall your sweetest memory.

FR: To be a part of the World Cup will always be a memory, but I don't have any sweet memory in particular.

DSS: What is your expectation of the 2011 World Cup?

FR: Bangladesh is co-hosting the World Cup, and our advantage will be that we will play in home conditions. I think we are a big team now like other nations.

I hope Bangladesh will perform well in the World Cup.

Abahani-BU clash today

SPORTS REPORTER

After a day break, the sixth round of the Bangladesh League rolls into the field through a mouth-watering clash between hat-trick title-holders Abahani and Brothers Union at the Birsreshtha Mostafa Kamal Stadium in Kamalapur today.

Both sides have served up a number of classics in the past, and their rivalry is sometimes seen as second only to that of Mohammedan and Abahani. The Sky Blues, however, have come out on top in most of these battles, winning four out of the six games the sides have played since the launch of the professional league in 2006.

However, this time Brothers boosted by their Brazilian, Cameroonian, Ghanaian and Nigerian recruits have already proved their worth by playing the

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Mash hopes to beat it

SPORTS REPORTER

Mashrafe Bin Mortaza joined the Tigers in training yesterday, the first day of camp ahead of the World Cup. At the Academy ground, the players seemed a bit relaxed probably because they were together again after a long time but the Narail Express, trying to recover from his knee injury, was among the fast bowlers who worked separately with the pace bowling coach Ian Pont.

Mashrafe started bowling by taking 2-3 steps, correcting his line and length and it didn't take him long before he was bowling off almost his full run-up.

It could be read from Mashrafe's face that he was trying to be extra cautious and showing some signs of niggles. Whenever Mashrafe was running in to bowl, it seemed he was going to get injured now. The follow-through also gave the impression that he was having problems.

When asked about the paceman's progress, Pont said, "He practiced today with an 18m run-up which is not his full run-up. He bowled 30 balls and looks pretty good minding his injury. So he looks on track for his rehabilitation."

"I hope this doesn't sound strange, but I would rather hope Mashrafe doesn't get a

chance to play in some way because that means someone is injured and we want to keep everybody injury-free with the current squad," said the Englishman.

But Mashrafe completely blew away this notion. "As days are passing, I am feeling better. I bowled five overs today without any problem. So far the intensity is good and I am not facing any problems in my bowling follow-through."

"I think I will be fit before the timeline given by the physio, which is the first week of February. I hope I'll recover soon and start bowling in full run-up," he said.

Pont added that Rubel Hossain's injury was also negligible. "Rubel is our fastest bowler and every fast bowlers always carry small niggles, but that's not a major problem at all. Shafiqul, Nazmul and Rubel are really good bowlers and I hope the country backs them," he added.

Mashrafe too felt the same way about his fellow fast men, saying, "Shafiqul (Islam), Nazmul (Hossain) and Rubel (Hossain) are all proven bowlers and experienced. They are playing for a long time. They can carry out the task very well."

At the current moment Mashrafe might feel everything is against him, except the motivation that he is receiving from the fans.

"I think having the people's support is the

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Bhullar leads as locals trail

SPORTS REPORTER

Bangladeshi golfers had a disappointing day in the opening round of the American Express Bangladesh Open Professional Golf Championship as they trailed their Indian counterparts yesterday.

The Bangladesh quartet of Siddikur Rahman, Mohammad Sayum, Milon Ahmed and Mohammad Zakiruzzaman ended the day tied for the seventh position at one under par in the curtain raising event of the PGTI season at the Kurmitola Golf Club yesterday.

Gaganjeet Bhullar, the winner of the Gujarat Challenge trophy a week ago, took a one shot lead over compatriots Raju Ali Mollah and Keshav Kapoor, with a classic four under par.

Raju and Keshav were tied for the second spot with first round scores of 3 under par, followed by Suleman Ali, Shamim Khan, and Yusuf Ali, also from India, who were sharing the fourth position at two under par 70.

Defending champion Siddikur made four birdies and three bogeys in his round while Zamal Hossain Mollah, the 2009 Bangladesh Open champion, was way back in joint-23rd position with a score of one over par.

Bhullar, multiple winner on the Asian Tour, made a lone birdie in his first nine (10th to 18th) and added four more in his second nine before dropping his only bogey of the day on the eighth. The burly six-footer, who hails from Kapurthala of Punjab, sank a monstrous birdie putt on the first and also drove to the green with a 3-wood to set up a birdie on the par-four fifth hole.

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Indian tennis superstar Sania Mirza (L) and her husband, Pakistani cricketer Shoaib Malik (R) have a word during the former's practice session at the Ramna Tennis Complex in Dhaka yesterday.

PHOTO: STAR

Mirza not taking it easy

SPORTS REPORTER

After arriving in Dhaka on Tuesday to accompany her husband, Indian tennis sensation Sania Mirza had a two-hour practice yesterday at the National Tennis Complex in Ramna.

The 24-year old tennis player is preparing herself for the Thailand Federation Cup as well as enjoying the time with her Pakistani husband Shoaib Malik, who is currently playing for Mohammedan SC in the Premier Cricket League in Dhaka.

The 2005 WTA winner, Sania, practiced with Bangladesh's Amol Roy and Ranjan Ram for nearly two hours with her husband Malik watching his wife from the sidelines.

Sania has been going through a bad-patch following a wrist injury and recently returned to the court but was eliminated from the first round of the

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