

Hamman faces FIFA probe

World football governing body FIFA announced Wednesday they have opened a corruption probe into four officials including Qatar's Mohamed Bin Hamman and Trinidadian Jack Warner. They are accused of possible fraud and ethics violations in connection with the forthcoming election for the FIFA presidency on June 1 when Bin Hamman will challenge former ally Joseph Blatter, who is seeking a fourth and final four-year term. Bin Hamman, 61, is currently president of the Asian Football Confederation while Warner, 68, is FIFA vice-president and



Eduard drives Sk Russel

SPORTS REPORTER

Grameenphone Bangladesh League 2010
Russian forward Eduard Sakhnevich struck a brace as Sheikh Russel KC's winning streak in the Grameenphone Bangladesh League continued with an emphatic 3-1 victory over Arambagh KS at Bangabandhu National Stadium yesterday.

The 10th win in 17 matches means Sheikh Russel surpass holders Abahani to grasp the third position by virtue of superior goal difference with 35 points each, four behind leaders Muktiyoddha Sangsad. However, Abahani have played a game less than Sk Russel. Arambagh remain in eighth position with 17 points from as many matches.

Fresh from a 1-0 win over leaders Muktiyoddha Sangsad, Sheikh Russel went into this match brimming with confidence against the mid-table side, who held them to a 1-1 draw in their first meeting, but this time Russian Sakhnevich made the difference striking two goals and feeding the other for Effiong Duke.

On a muddy pitch after the downpour, both sides struggled to control the ball and shared possession equally before Sakhnevich, who darted into the box to avail a through pass from Moro Mohammad, gave Sheikh Russel a 23rd-minute lead.

Five minutes from the break, Arambagh bit back to cancel the lead with an eye-catching strike from Ghanaian Subair Mohammad, who being set up by Guinean midfielder Bangoura Ismael, curled superbly from an acute angle inside the box to level the margin.

Two minutes into the second half, Sakhnevich restored the lead nodding in a Monaem Khan Raju header. The goal improved the Russian's league tally to seven from six matches.

SEE PAGE 17 COL 6



Sheikh Russel KC's Russian forward Eduard Sakhnevich is about to unleash a powerful shot at goal during their Bangladesh League encounter against Arambagh KS at the Bangabandhu National Stadium yesterday.

PHOTO: STAR

AFC PRESIDENT'S CUP

Solace for Abahani

Football

SPORTS REPORTER

Ghanaian striker Awudu Ibrahim struck a hatrick as Bangladesh League champions Abahani posted a consolation 4-1 victory over Don Bosco Sporting Club of Sri Lanka in their last group match of the AFC President's Cup at the National Olympic Stadium in Phnom Penh, Cambodia yesterday.

Apart from the Ibrahim treble, Shakawat Hossain Rony netted the other for the Sky Blues, who finished third in the four-team group with three points while Don Bosco SC finished bottom of the table without securing a single point.

Two consecutive defeats against Neftchi Kochkor-Ata and Phnom Penh Crown FC ensured an early exit for Abahani from the seventh edition of Asia's third-tier club competition, and their fourth consecutive

elimination from the group stages since their first appearance in 2008.

Abahani, who were looking to restore some pride from this match, got off to the worst possible start by conceding a 15th-minute goal from Bandari Liyana of Don Bosco.

However, Abahani reorganised to launch attacks and levelled the margin two minutes later through Shakhawat Hossain Rony to go to the break 1-1.

Abahani dominated the proceedings throughout the second half as Ibrahim slammed three in the 51st, 61st and 81st minutes to give the Sky Blues something to write home about.

In the day's other fixture, Neftchi Kochkor-Ata defeated Phnom Penh Crown FC 1-0 to finish top of the group with maximum nine points. Despite the loss, Crown FC finished runners-up with six points and qualified for the six-team finals.

MSC's Rwandan booter dies

SPORTS REPORTER

Mohammedan Sporting Club's Rwandan midfielder Habuunugisha Ismael breathed his last on Tuesday at a Rwandan hospital, one day after he left Bangladesh following his sickness.

Mohammedan roped in the Rwandan for this season and he played 12 matches of the ongoing Grameenphone Bangladesh League before he fell sick during the match against Chittagong Abahani on April 28 in Cox's Bazar.

He was admitted to a hospital in Dhaka but his condition deteriorated further and was sent back to

SEE PAGE 17 COL 5

BANGABANDHU INT'L TT

Hosts eliminated

SPORTS REPORTER

Bangladesh continued their dismal performance in the Bangabandhu International Invitational Youth Table Tennis Championship when both boys' and girls' teams suffered second successive defeats in their respective matches at the Wooden Floor Gymnasium yesterday.

China and India will play the boys' team final while China will face Thailand in the final of the girls' team event today.

In the boy's event, Bangladesh suffered a straight 3-0 defeat to India to be eliminated from the group stages. Javed lost to Vivek 11-5, 11-7 and 12-10, Ridoy lost to Rajib 11-7, 11-4 and 11-9 while Faisal lost to Arnab 3-1 despite winning the first game. Faisal beat Arnab 11-5 in the first set but lost 11-4, 11-2 and 11-6 in the next three.

In the semifinals, China recorded a hard-

SEE PAGE 17 COL 5



Bangladesh's Ridoy hits a return during his loss to India's Rajib in the Bangabandhu International Invitational Youth Table Tennis Championship at the Wooden Floor Gymnasium yesterday.

PHOTO: STAR

Dilshan won't go back to Pakistan

AFP, Cardiff

Sri Lanka captain Tillakaratne Dilshan said Wednesday he would not play cricket in Pakistan again after an invitation for his side to return to the troubled nation, two years after they were attacked there, was rejected.

Dilshan was on the Sri Lanka team bus shot at by militants in Lahore in March 2009 during an attack which killed eight people and injured seven members of the tour party.

Asked if he would ever go back to Pakistan with Sri Lanka, Dilshan -- leading the team in the first Test against England that starts here on Thursday -- told reporters: "I don't think so. It was a bad experience for me as a cricketer in Pakistan."

"As a player, I don't want to go through the same experience in the future."

"My personal view, I don't want to go back to play cricket there."

The Pakistan Cricket Board announced at the weekend they had invited Sri Lanka to play three Tests, five one-day internationals and one Twenty20 game in a series proposed for October.

However, the invitation

SEE PAGE 17 COL 5

Mumbai knock Kolkata out

AFP, Mumbai

Harbhajan Singh cracked a last-over six as Mumbai Indians posted a four-wicket victory over Kolkata Knight Riders in the Indian Premier League on Wednesday.

Mumbai needed seven runs in the final over to achieve a 148-run target, but New Zealander James Franklin took a single of the first ball off Bangladesh spinner Shakib Al Hasan before Harbhajan smashed the next for a six. Franklin made an unbeaten 29 off 25 balls, while Harbhajan contributed a five-ball 11 not out.

Mumbai will now clash with Royal Challengers Bangalore on Friday, the winners of their match meeting Chennai Super Kings in the final. Kolkata bowed out of the Twenty20 tournament.

Mumbai were strongly placed following an 81-run stand for the opening wicket between Australian Aiden Blizard (51) and skipper Sachin Tendulkar (36) before losing their way.

Munaf Patel earlier played a key role in restricting Kolkata despite an impressive 70 not out by Netherlands' Ryan ten Doeschate as he took two wickets in his opening two overs, including that of South African Jacques Kallis.

Kolkata were struggling at 20-4 in the opening six overs after being put in to bat before ten Doeschate led the recovery with a 60-run stand for the fifth wicket with Yusuf Pathan (26).

Ten Doeschate, who cracked three sixes and six fours in his 49-ball knock, then added 41 for the sixth wicket with Shakib (26) to help his team post a competitive total.

SCORES IN BRIEF

KOLKATA KNIGHT RIDERS: 147 for 7 in 20 overs (Pathan 26, ten Doeschate 70 not out, Shakib 26; Patel 3-27)

MUMBAI INDIANS: 148 for 6 in 19.2 overs (Blizard 51, Tendulkar 36, Franklin 29 not out; Shakib 2-24)

Result: Mumbai won by 4 wickets

Man-of-the-match: Munaf Patel

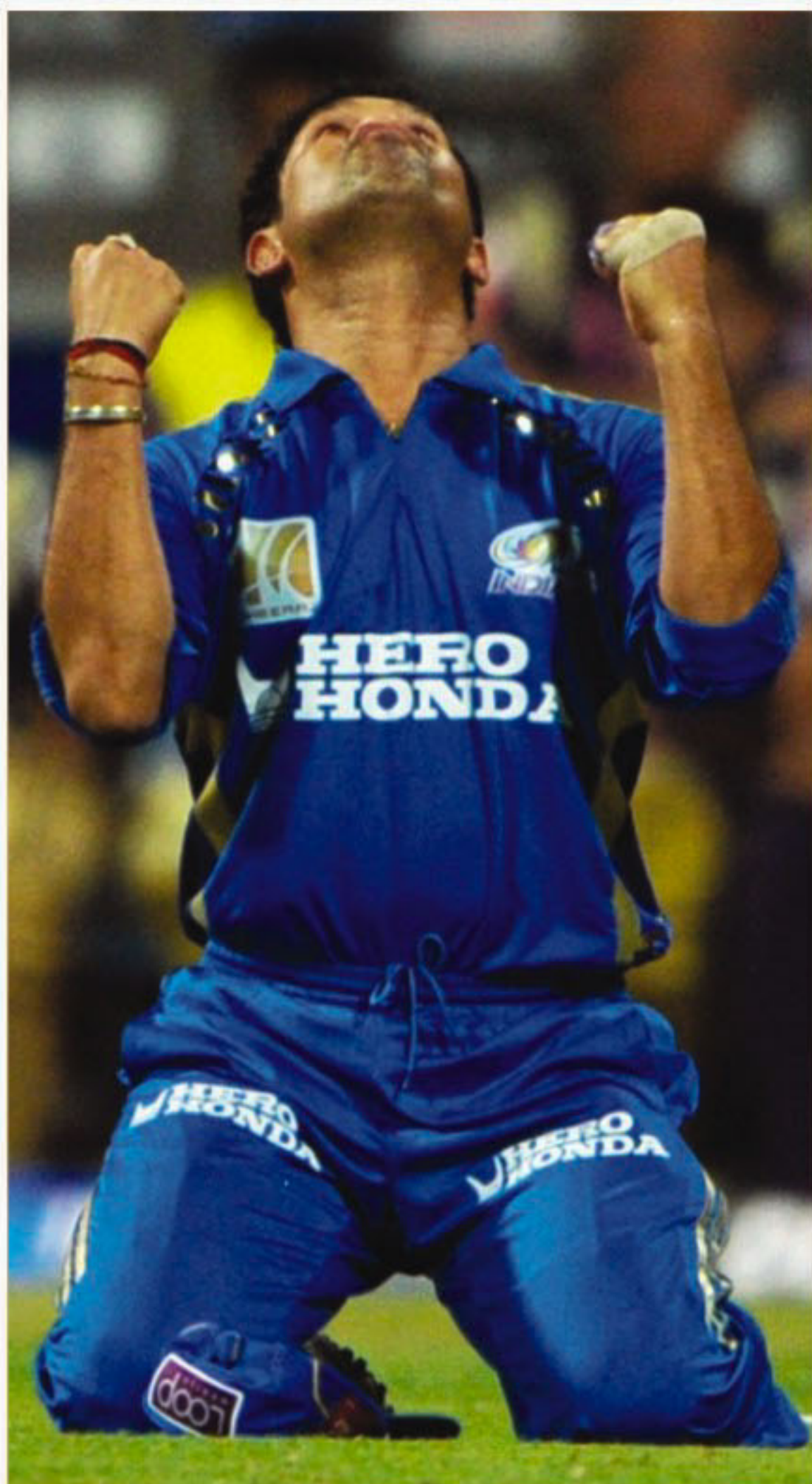


PHOTO: AFP

Mumbai Indians captain Sachin Tendulkar exults after taking a catch to dismiss Kolkata Knight Riders batsman Jacques Kallis during their IPL Eliminator at the Wankhede Stadium in Mumbai yesterday.

Daryl, Asoka demoted

Cricket

CRICINFO, Dubai

Kumar Dharmasena and Richard Kettleborough have been promoted to the Elite Panel of ICC Umpires, replacing Daryl Harper and Asoka de Silva. Dharmasena and Kettleborough, who had been serving on the International Panel of ICC Umpires, were chosen by the ICC Umpires Selection Panel as part of their annual review and selection process.

Harper and de Silva, both of whom have controversial umpiring histories and, it would seem, particular troubles with the Decision Review System, have come in for some criticism over their decisions in recent times, in the light of which their demotions are hardly surprising.

Harper was one of the umpires to officiate on England's trip to the Caribbean during the trialling stages of the DRS in early 2009 and soon ran into strife. His problems came to a head during England's South Africa tour the following winter when, as third umpire, he failed to turn up the volume on his television set and thus incorrectly ruled Graeme Smith not out.

The embarrassing error led Andy Flower, the England coach, to make an official complaint to Roshan Mahanama, the ICC match referee, and a couple of months later Harper was left out of the World Twenty20 in West Indies, reportedly for "general performance reasons".

De Silva's most recent, and controversial, gaffe came during the World Cup in India

when he gave Ireland's Gary Wilson out despite replays showing the batsman had offered a shot to a delivery that replays clearly indicated had hit him outside the line. The decision came in for some intense criticism, particularly from Ireland captain Will Porterfield, and it was decided that de Silva would not officiate in a couple of key group games that he was originally marked for. At the time, he was the only umpire among the 18 deployed whose success percentage in reviewed decisions was less than 50% during the tournament.

As it is the prerogative of the relevant home boards to nominate replacements on the international panel, de Silva could well move to fill the vacancy left by Dharmasena's promotion as the decision would rest with Sri Lanka Cricket. Harper's situation is a touch more uncertain. His existing contract expires in July and as it will be the England and Wales Cricket Board, rather than Cricket Australia, nominating a replacement for Kettleborough, Harper could well be out of a job.

At 38, Kettleborough is now the youngest umpire on the Elite panel. The Yorkshireman played 33 first-class matches from 1994 to 1999 for Middlesex and Yorkshire before he was included in the ECB panel of umpires in 2006. He made his international umpiring debut in the Twenty20 between England and Australia at Old Trafford in 2009 and to date has umpired in two Tests, 16 ODIs and two international Twenty20s. Like Dharmasena, Kettleborough was also in the panel of 18 umpires for the World Cup earlier this year.

The 40-year-old Dharmasena made his

SEE PAGE 17 COL 8

Doa mahfil for Sadi held

SPORTS REPORTER

A doa mahfil and commemorative meeting in memory of deceased sports journalist and general secretary of Bangladesh Football Federation Al Musabbir Sadi was held at the Bangladesh Sports Journalists Association (BSJA) office yesterday.

Members of the journalist community, family members, friends, and well wishers attended the meeting arranged by BSJA.

Sadi, who died of cancer in the early hours of May 20, was an executive committee member of the association.