

Star SPORT

DHAKA THURSDAY JULY 10, 2008 10:30 AM sports@thedailystar.net

Robben out of Cup tie

Bayern Munich's Dutch midfielder Arjen Robben is injured and will miss his club's first fixture of the upcoming season on August 1. Robben had to be replaced in the 63rd minute of Bayern's friendly game against AC Milan on Tuesday after suffering a knock to his thigh. "I hope it's nothing serious," said Bayern coach Jupp Heynckes. The injury has ruled him out of Monday's first round cup tie. Bayern will also be without Frack Ribery for the game against Eintracht Brunswick after the France international suffered a left ankle problem in training.



UDRS CONTROVERSY Flower finds ICC at fault

AFP, London

England coach Andy Flower on Wednesday accused the International Cricket Council (ICC) of lacking leadership over its failure to issue clear rules about the use of the Umpire Decision Review System (UDRS).

Under existing rules, either side in a series can veto the use of the UDRS to determine lbw decisions, something India has elected to do in its ongoing series against England, who defeated the tourists at Lord's on Monday.

However the lack of the UDRS during the first Test has cast the spotlight on umpiring in the game, with Billy Bowden twice denying Stuart Broad plumb lbw decisions which would have snared Sachin Tendulkar and Suresh Raina.

Although the decisions did not prove costly for England, Flower believes the absence of the UDRS in the remaining three Test matches could fan the flames of controversy.

Asked if he was concerned about the possibility of trouble in the remainder of the

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PUSHING BEYOND LIMIT: Bangladesh midfielder Mamun Miah (L) stretches his legs with the aid of fellow midfielder Shakil Ahmed at the Bangabandhu National Stadium yesterday, ahead of today's WC pre-qualifier against Lebanon. The hosts face the monumental task of overturning a 4-0 deficit in order to qualify for the qualifying round proper.

PHOTO: STAR

RETURN LEG AGAINST LEBANON TODAY

Fight for a lost cause

Football

SPORTS REPORTER

Smarting from a 4-0 defeat in the first-leg in Beirut, hosts Bangladesh will be trying to offer some fight against Lebanon when the hosts take on the visitors in the second-leg of the World Cup pre-qualifying round at the Bangabandhu National Stadium today.

The match gets underway at 6:00pm with state-owned Bangladesh Television telecasting the game live from the venue.

The away defeat against the Western Asian nation has all but shattered Bangladesh's hope of playing in the 20-team qualification round and some players of the home side have already given up hope following the thumping defeat in the first leg.

It was a fact that did not go down well with Bangladesh's Macedonian coach Nikola Ilievski who looked a bit of frustrated with the attitude of his charges and sought the maximum effort from the team in today's match.

"It is going to be a very difficult match for us and I don't expect a big surprise. You may

want to know why? Let me tell you. During Tuesday's training I saw that five players did not have any motivation for tomorrow's [today's] match and I stopped the training and told Zahid (Hossain) to give me five goals tomorrow.

"Why will our team not be able to score one goal more than what Lebanon scored?"

Try maximum and give your best on the field because you will play in familiar conditions and in front of your country people," said Nikola.

"Lebanon is not Brazil, Argentina or Germany and why should we be shy against Lebanon," he urged during a pre-match briefing at the BFF House yesterday.

The Macedonian coach once again slammed the poor physical condition of the Bangladeshi players and believed five players

don't have the ability to play for the full 90 minutes games.

Ilievski also once again cleared the cloud about playing second choice goalkeeper Mamun Khan instead of Biplob Bhattacharjee. "Biplob is good goalkeeper and leader and he is not out of the team."

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TICKET PRICES

Tickets for the game have been set at **Tk 30** for gallery and **Tk 50** for VIP. Tickets will be available at the counters of the BNS from **1:30 pm** and the gates of the stadium will be opened at **4 pm**.

Hosts win again

SPORTS REPORTER

Bangladesh made it two wins out of two in the Sheikh Kamal International Basketball Championship by beating the Malaysia U-18 team by 66-47 points at the Dhanmondi Wooden Floor Basketball Gymnasium yesterday evening.

Hosts Bangladesh, who had a 77-44 win over Bhutan on the opening day, took the game to the Malaysian teens from the very beginning and raced to an 18-6 lead in the first quarter. The margin was widened in the second quarter as the hosts sailed to a 41-18 lead. The Malaysians made a bit of a comeback in the next two quarters as the hosts eased off a bit, but in the end they fell short by 33 points.

Mithun netted 28 points for Bangladesh while Rashed scored 11. Chua scored maximum 12 points for the losing side.

In spite of the defeat one cannot be too critical of the Malaysian teens, considering the fact that they had to play another match in the morning. They lost that match too, by 67-64 points to favourites West Bengal.

West Bengal lead the first half 39-24, but like the latter match, the Malaysians managed to come back into it, yet in the end losing by three points. S Pal netted maximum 19 points while Subhash scored 16 for the winners. King netted 11 and Chua netted 10 for the losing side.

In the second match of the day, Maldives scored a 105-72 point victory over minnows Bhutan. The Bhutanese, who were enjoying partisan support from the locals, made a brisk start to the game but fell behind soon after. The first quarter ended 23-21 in favour of Maldives after which they stepped up the pace and widened the margin in the next three quarters, eventually taking the game by a 33-point margin. This was the only score of over 100 so far in the tournament.

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Boycott no India fan

AFP, London

Geoffrey Boycott has said India's defeat by England in the first Test at Lord's marked the "beginning of the end" of their time as the world's number one Test team.

England, who won the first Test by 196 runs, will replace India at the top of the ICC's Test Championship table if they win the ongoing four-match series by a margin of at least two Tests.

And former South Africa fast bowler Allan Donald believes Andrew Strauss's side "deserve" to be at the summit of Test cricket.

The second Test starts at Trent Bridge on Friday and Boycott, writing in the London Daily Telegraph, said the tourists' bowling was

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Bangladesh captain Shakib Al Hasan (L) and vice-captain Tamim Iqbal share a joke as they check their bags into the flight to Zimbabwe at the Hazrat Shahjalal International Airport yesterday morning. The Tigers left for Zimbabwe yesterday to play a Test and five ODIs over the next month.

PHOTO: STAR

Zurkhaneh Sports from today

SPORTS REPORTER

The 3rd Asian Zurkhaneh Sports and Koshti Pehlevani Championship gets underway tomorrow at the newly-built Wooden Floor Stadium.

Twelve countries hosts Bangladesh, Iran, Iraq, Uzbekistan, Azerbaijan, South Korea, Tajikistan, Afghanistan, Malaysia, Thailand, Indonesia and Philippines -- will take part in the three-day meet with home minister Sahara Khatun inaugurating the Koshti Pehlevani, which is not a Olympic event.

"Some 150 participants have already reached the capital to take part in the championship and representatives of 13 more countries will also come here to attend the Zurkhaneh World Congress," said Bangladesh Amateur Wrestling Federation president and shipping minister Shahjahan Khan at a press conference at the Bangabandhu National Stadium yesterday.

The competitors will fight for four categories 60kg-70kg, 70kg-80kg, 80kg-90kg, 90+kg, informed Seyed Amir Hosseini, general secretary of International Zurkhaneh Sports Federation (IZSF), adding that they have chosen the Dhaka venue as Bangladesh have shown their interest to host the championship.

IZSF president Mohsen Mehrizadeh hoped that the Zurkhaneh Sports which has six types of events will be developed in Bangladesh in future and expects a successful ending of the championship.

Expecting Zurkhaneh sports to be included into Olympics, Mehrizadeh informed that they have a plan to hold the junior championship and World Cup every four years in the future.

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Zimbabwe-bound Tigers upbeat

Cricket

SPORTS REPORTER

The Bangladesh cricket team left Dhaka yesterday for Zimbabwe with the hope of continuing their recent supremacy over the hosts.

Prior to their departure captain Shakib Al Hasan and his deputy Tamim Iqbal told reporters at the Hazrat Shahjalal International Airport that they were looking forward to playing their best cricket during the tour where the Tigers will play one Test and five one-day internationals.

"Right at the moment we are looking forward to the warm-up match to acclimatize with the conditions. The boys are very confident of playing good cricket in the tour, regardless of the fact that we are going to play Test cricket after fourteen months break," said confident Shakib.

Bangladesh will open their campaign with a three-day warm-up match at Harare starting from July 30.

"I don't think there is any pressure on the team. I firmly believe that we will be able to continue our success against Zimbabwe if we can play our best cricket on the tour," said Tamim.

Left-handed batsman Shariar Nafees, who particularly enjoys playing against Zimbabwe, believes that Bangladesh are favourites despite the fact that the Zimbabwe have home advantage.

"I'm confident and hopeful that we will be able to continue our recent good record against Zimbabwe if we can play our best cricket. I think the lone warm-up match is very important for us," said Nafees.

If there is anything for the Tigers to be concerned about, it is their inexperienced pace bowling. Everybody will be looking forward to seeing how the young pace bowlers seize the day in the absence of Mashrafe Bin Mortaza and Shahadat Hossain.

Young pacer Shafiqul Islam however was confident about his first trip to Zimbabwe.

"We worked hard for the last two months, and I'm hopeful that we will get the result of that hard work on tour," said a confident Shafiqul.

The first Test will start on August 4 at Harare where the first three one-day internationals will also take place on August 12, 14 and 16. The teams will then travel to Bulawayo to play the last two one-day internationals on August 19 and 21.



Players watch as the ball goes down the Malaysian basket for another Bangladesh point during their match at the Dhanmondi Basketball Gymnasium yesterday.

PHOTO: STAR