

# Star SPORT

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## Car crash kills backheel sensation

Emirati footballer Theyab Awana, who became an internet sensation this summer after scoring a back-heeled penalty, has been killed in a car crash, the country's football federation confirmed on Monday. Awana died after being involved in an accident when travelling back from training in Al Ain to Abu Dhabi on Sunday, where he had been preparing for a World Cup qualifier against South Korea on October 11. The 21-year-old midfielder hit the headlines for scoring a controversial 78th-minute penalty in the United Arab Emirates' 7-2 international friendly win over Lebanon in July.

— AFP



Mominul Haque of BCB Green drives it straight during the first day of the practice four-dayer against BCB Red at the Sher-e-Bangla National Stadium in Mirpur yesterday.

PHOTO: STAR

## Naeem shows the way

Cricket

SPORTS REPORTER

Naeem Islam brought to notice his staying power on the opening day of the practice four-dayer between BCB Red and BCB Green yesterday.

The 24-year-old batted out virtually the entire day, remaining unbeaten on 95 runs. BCB Green were 254 for six at stumps after Shahriar Nafees had opted to bat first on a largely slow surface at the Sher-e-Bangla National Stadium in Mirpur, where only Naeem and Mominul Haque thrived, sharing a 126-run sixth wicket stand.

But the toss was Nafees' only positive as he fell to Shafiqul Islam off the day's first ball, edging a good away-going delivery to his opposite number Mushfiqur Rahim. In the fifth over, Junaed Siddiqui gave the Bogra paceman his second wicket when the left-hander gave Nasir Hossain a catch at third slip and in the next over, Sahagir Hossain too gave a catch behind the wicket, edging to Imrul Kayes at second slip off Rubel Hossain.

Alok Kapali helped Naeem keep wickets intact till the lunch session after which the Sylhet batsman fell to his own trap. During his 66-ball stay, Kapali struck four well-timed boundaries but when facing the left-arm spinners, he stayed back. Eventually, he

was trapped leg-before just after lunch but not to one of the front-liners as Nazmul Hossain Apu had him plumb in front for 29.

Rokibul Hasan couldn't make an impact and it was down to Mominul, a late replacement who was hauled in from the GP-BCB National Cricket Academy after Nur Hossain Munna injured his hand during warm-up.

The left-hander's boundary-laden 72 off 89 balls brought life to the day's play, hitting eight fours and three sixes, one of them a huge hit over wide long-off as he reached his half-century off just 60 balls.

Naeem continued to hold anchor, hitting boundaries from time to time but keeping the ball along the ground at most times. While some might say it was a negative approach to play out so many dot balls, it is still pleasing to the eye given the lack of such patient men in the middle.

A Test place is not a guarantee for the right-hander who held fort at No 4 yesterday, but his innings provided an option for the selection committee who are always keen on middle-order batsmen.

Naeem couldn't reach his century on the day as Mominul fell in the final half-hour to pacer Rubel and Elias Sunny held fort for the remaining overs, unbeaten on five.

### BRIEF SCORES

BCB GREEN: First innings 254-6 in 90 overs (Naeem 95 not out, Mominul 72; Shafiqul 2-33, Rubel 2-50).

## Women's handball

SPORTS REPORTER

The Exim Bank 22nd National Women's Handball Championship will start tomorrow at the Handball Stadium and Shaheed Surawardi Indoor Stadium with 27 teams taking part in the event.

The participating teams have been divided into eight groups, and each of the eight group champions will qualify for the quarterfinal stage. Both semifinals will take place on September 30 while the final and third-place deciding match will be played on October 1.

Nineteen matches will take place on the opening day. Groupings are as follows:

Group A: Bangladesh Ansar, Narayanganj, Manikganj. Group B: BJMC, Narsingdhi and Tangail. Group C: Dhaka, Faridpur and Gaibandha. Group D: Dhaka University, Madaripur and Kishorganj. Group E: Jessore, Joypurhat.

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## PRACTICE MATCHES HELD

# Ilievski unhappy with national booters

Football

SPORTS REPORTER

The Bangabandhu National Stadium assumed a festive mood yesterday at the presence of some 76 footballers from the national side, U-22, U-21 and U-19 sides as they played three short-duration practice matches under the watchful eye of national coach Nikola Ilievski.

While most of the players appreciated the concept of such games and seemingly enjoyed the day out, coach Ilievski was not satisfied with the performance of the national team, who went down 2-1 down against the U-19 team.

The Macedonian coach was however happy with the performance of the U-19 team, which have been training under him since August ahead of their AFC U-19 Qualifiers at home in October, but was worried about the performance of goalkeeper Rafi. However, the Macedonian believes

such problems can be overcome if enough practice matches are held.

"The U-19 team have a good chance of qualifying for the second round but they will have to have more opportunity of playing practice matches before the competition," said Ilievski after the practice matches yesterday.

Bangladesh have been drawn in Group A along with Iraq, Saudi Arab, Oman, Nepal and Maldives and the top two teams from each of the seven groups will advance to the 16-team final round while the best third finishers from East and West zones will also join.

The U-19 team have already played five practice matches against the U-21 side and Sheikh Jamal Dhanmondi Club and are expected to play a few more matches against the U-22 team and the national team.

From the onset, the U-19 side fought fiercely against the national team before eking out a creditable 2-1 win. The national side even saw two of their influ-

ential players -- Sujan and Mamunul Islam limp out with minor injuries.

Forward Sajib of the youth team was remarkable for his movement and stunned the national team after sending a spectacular side-volley home from outside the danger zone and later broke the off-side trap double the margin.

Shakawat Hossain reduced the margin for the national team just before the final whistle.

The second eleven of the national team later played out a goalless draw against U-22 side while the second eleven of U-19 team suffered a 3-1 defeat against the U-21 side.

Such practice matches among the four teams will be held again on Thursday.

Ilievski was also seemingly upset with the fitness of the national players,

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PHOTO: STAR

Action from a practice match between Bangladesh U-19 and Bangladesh A at the Bangabandhu National Stadium yesterday.

## BANGLADESH-WEST INDIES SERIES

# Title rights Walton's

Cricket

SPORTS REPORTER

Tigers' upcoming home series against the West Indies will be called the "Walton Series".

It marks the first time that the popular local brand has been associated with Bangladesh cricket, earning the title sponsorship as well as some other package rights from Riz Events.

The West Indies will arrive in Dhaka on October 4 to play a T20 International, three one-day internationals and two Tests against the Tigers in Mirpur and Chittagong.

The acting chief executive officer (CEO) of the Bangladesh Cricket Board (BCB) Nizam Uddin Chowdhury announced that the BCB received 1.95 lakh US dollars from the sponsorship rights at a press conference at the Sher-e-Bangla National Stadium in Mirpur yesterday.

"Two companies (the other being Ad Touch) participated in the bidding and Riz Events earned the rights as the



PHOTO: STAR

RB Group director Mizanur Rahman (2nd from R) speaks during a press conference at the Sher-e-Bangla National Stadium in Mirpur yesterday.

highest bidder. We got less money than targeted as the floor price was 2.65 lakh US dollars," said Nizam adding that the prize money of 59,000 US dollars was also included in the total amount.

"It's nice to see Walton coming forward to be associated with cricket and we hope they will continue their support in future," he added.

"We believe that cricket can play a

great role in creating a positive image of the country. We are really happy that we could able to be involved in cricket for the first time. We will try our best to continue our ties with the Bangladesh Cricket Board," promised Mizanur Rahman, director of the sponsor company.

Humayun Kabir, also director of the sponsor company, and managing director of Riz Events Rizwan Bin Faruque also spoke at the function.

## WOMEN'S FOOTBALL

# Abahani's pull-out raises questions

SPORTS REPORTER

The first Women's Football League involving eight clubs gets underway from tomorrow at Bangabandhu National Stadium.

Sheikh Jamal Dhanmondi Club will take on Dipali Jubo Sangho in the opening match as eight teams split into two groups will compete in the round-robin league matches and top two teams will advance into the semifinals, slotted for October 12 and 13. The final will take place on September 14.

However, even before the ball gets rolling, the inaugural edition of the league has been mired in controversy due to the pool system, which has allegedly forced Abahani to pull out of the inaugural league.

"We have faced a lot of hurdles before reaching this stage as the league was planned to commence in early 2010," said Sirajul Islam Bachchu, chairman of the BFF women's football committee, at a press conference yesterday.

The committee selected 31 players for the pool allowing each of the clubs to rope in

six players from the pool. However the bone of contention is that the pool considered performance in the SA Games held early 2010, while disregarding the national team's later engagements in the Olympic Qualifiers earlier this year as well as the SAFF Women's Football Championship held in latter 2010.

There is whisper in the air that the committee prepared the list to give advantage to a specific club which forced Abahani to pull out of the league due to a shortage of quality players.

"It would not have been justified if we considered the last two engagements of the national team since we wanted to keep quality players in the pool.

"Besides, it is not true that we are giving advantage to Sheikh Jamal Dhanmondi Club. If we had that sort of intention, we could have taken more advantage as my own team Wari Club is playing in the league," said Bachchu.

"I heard that Abahani could not collect back-up players even though they initially

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## JFA Cup U-15 football final today

SPORTS REPORTER

The final match of the JFA Cup U-15 Football Tournament will be held between Dhaka Metropolis School XI and Tangail at the Bangabandhu National Stadium today. The 80-minute match will start at 3:30 pm.

The final round of the tournament

Tangail qualified for the final by beating Chapai Nababganj 1-0 in the semifinal while Dhaka Metropolis School XI defeated BKSP 3-2 in the other semi.

State Minister for Youth and Sports Ahad Ali Sarker, MP will be present as chief guest while Secretary of Youth and Sports Mahub Ahmed will be present as special guest. BFF President Kazi Md. Salahuddin will also be present there.