

LOCAL SNIPPETS

Jessore, N'ganj reach last four

SPORTS REPORTER

A 78th minute strike by Bely Khatun gave Jessore a lone goal win over Narayanganj in one of the two KFC Women's Football Super League fixtures at the Birshreshtha Mostafa Kamal Stadium in Kamalapur yesterday.

However, despite the defeat Narayanganj moved into the semifinals, along with Jessore, from Group B as runners-up.

Sathkira and Ansars & VDP completed the last-four quorum from the other group.

Meanwhile, Thakurgaon bowed out of the championship will flying colours defeating Kishoregonj 3-0 in an inconsequential match of the day.

DIVIKABADDI

Sonali Bank Recreation Club and Manikganj Unnayan Samity warmed up well ahead of their Saturday's title-deciding clash when they won their respective games in the First Division Kabaddi League at the Kabaddi Stadium yesterday.

The bankers ambled past Arbachin KC by 55-35 points while Manikganj gave Institute of Kabaddi a real lesson with a 36-9 thrashing.

MINHAZ'S 2ND IM NORM

National champion Minhaz Uddin won his second IM (International Master) norm in the Verges International Open Grand Masters chess tournament held in the Indian state of Andhra Pradesh.

Minhaz, who needs another norm to become an IM, produced an inspiring performance in the meet where he floored two GMs and a high-profile Indian IM, according to a message received here last night. He finished 17th in the standings with 7.5 points after 11 rounds, one point behind eventual winner Indian GM Avijit Gupta. Bangladesh's first GM Niaz Murshed also finished on 7.5 points.



Holding the coveted Karbonn SAFF Championship Trophy at Delhi's India Gate are (L-R) Chimi Dorji of Bhutan, Sujal Shrestha of Nepal, Rohana Ruwanthilaka of Sri Lanka, Ariful Islam of Bangladesh, Climax Lawrence of India, Naveed Ahmed of Pakistan and Hassan Adham of Maldives.

PHOTO: COURTESY

DELHI BELLY

SPORTS REPORTER from Delhi

Goalkeeper Biplob Bhattacharjee is the lone player of the Bangladesh squad with the experience of playing all six tournaments of the SAFF Championship so far and he is eagerly waiting for his seventh appearance.

After Biplob, captain Mohammad Sujan, striker Zahid Hasan Emily and winger Abdul Baten Komol are the most senior players in the squad in terms of taking part in the SAFF Championship. The seventh edition of the regional football tournament will be the fourth tournament for them.

LOST IN TRANSLATION

Except Bangladesh, the captains and the coaches of all participating nations are more or less fluent in English. It showed in the official press conference at Green Tree Hilton Hotel where Bangladesh took very little time to finish making their point.

It was seen that Maldives appointed an interpreter for their captain Ali Ashfaq at the press conference but Bangladesh did not take such an initiative. Coach Nikola Ilievski, who can speak only passable English mostly avoided journalists for the convenient excuse that he would not speak about his charges. It caused more than a few sniggers

from the other competitors but worse was to come in the form of captain Sujan whose inability to complete a proper sentence could have been easily avoided had the team management appointed an interpreter.

BAD HOST?

Bangladesh manager Arif Khan Joy alleged that the hosts are not giving proper treatment of Bangladesh as they waited for a long time at the airport following their arrival in New Delhi.

He also alleged that no officials of the All Indian Football Federation or South Asian Football Federation were present to receive the Bangladesh team at airport. The Bangladesh team were also given an uneven field on the first day for practice and were denied the chance to practice at the main venue yesterday before their opening match against Pakistan.

UNHAPPY COACH

Coach Nikola Ilievski is not happy with the accommodation of the squad as all participating squads have been kept in an isolated location on the outskirts of New Delhi.

"There is no park or market around here and the players have nothing to do rather than eating, sleeping and practicing. It will bore all the players," said Nikola.

India seek improvement

Second ODI against WI today



After narrowly escaping defeat in the series opener, India would look to guard against complacency and hope for an improved showing from their batsmen when they take on the West Indies in the second one-dayer on Friday.

The opening match of the five-match series in Cuttack two days ago saw an inexperienced Indian bowling restrict the Caribbean side for a paltry 211 for nine.

But chasing the modest total, India's much-fancied batting line-up faltered and if not for comeback man Rohit Sharma's 99-ball 72, the home team could have been down 0-1 in the series.

India's inexperienced pace trio of R Vinay Kumar (1/27), Varun Aaron (2/47) and Umesh Yadav (2/33) not only excelled with the ball in Cuttack but also showed amazing calmness while batting to set up the thrilling one-wicket victory for the hosts.

Needing 11 runs off 23 balls under tense situation, the last wicket pair of Aaron and Yadav kept their calm and saw India home with seven balls to spare.

And the Indian think tank obviously will not want a repeat of the Cuttack episode, especially on a run-belter at the Dr YS Rajasekhara Reddy ACA-VDCA Cricket Stadium, where the hosts have an all-win record in the three matches they played.

India's stand-in captain Virender Sehwag, who is leading the side in place of regular skipper Mahendra Singh Dhoni, has already cautioned the batsmen after the Cuttack match, saying there should not be any excuse for poor show.

"There is no excuse for anybody not scoring runs," he said about India's batting collapse in the first ODI. We have to back our batting. We have some exciting youngsters playing for last three four years," Sehwag said.

And the trio would once

But Dhoni, who has been rested for the series keeping in mind the upcoming tour of Australia, will be sorely missed by the spectators here.

Hosting a match after more than two years, the venue remains a testimony of Dhoni's rise to stardom as it is this ground where he scored his maiden ODI century, a blistering 148 off 123 balls against Pakistan in 2005.

But in the absence of senior players like Dhoni, Yuvraj Singh and Sachin Tendulkar, the cricket-crazy crowd of the port city would be looking towards Sehwag to produce a gem of an innings on Friday.

Sehwag, who was bowled by an incoming Kumar Roach delivery in Cuttack, would also be keen to improve his batting record as captain.

Wicketkeeper Parthiv Patel also would be eyeing to make amends for his poor show in Cuttack and cash on yet another oppotunity with both bat and gloves in place of Dhoni.

Among other Indian top-order batsmen, Gautam Gambhir, Virat Kohli and Suresh Raina, who all disappointed in Cuttack, will be desperate to avoid yet another collapse by returning among runs.

Apart from Rohit Sharma, all-rounder Ravindra Jadeja was the other Indian batsmen to provide some resistance in the first ODI with a gritty 62-ball 38, and he would be hoping to convert his starts into big scores.

The inexperienced Indian bowlers, on the other hand, impressed all and sundry with their performance in Cuttack.

The three-pronged pace attack of Vinay Kumar, Yadav and Aaron stood up and grabbed their chances with both hands so far in the absence of seniors like Zaheer Khan and Praveen Kumar, who are out with injuries.

And the trio would once

again look to strangle the West Indies batsmen with a tidy performance.

On the spin department front, R Ashwin, who bowled tightly in the first ODI, would like to continue his dream form.

Ashwin will share the responsibility of spin attack with Jadeja and part-timers Raina and Rohit as India are all set to field an unchanged side in search of a 2-0 lead.

West Indies too have problems galore in their batting department which they need to sort out immediately to stand in with any chance of upsetting the home team in the ODI series after the 2-0 loss in the Test rubber.

In the first ODI, all the West Indies top-order batsmen got starts but except Darren Bravo, no one could capitalise on them.

Bravo, who scored a 74-ball 60 in the first match, will be the batting mainstay for the Caribbean side, which is full of all-rounders.

TEAMS

INDIA (from): Virender Sehwag (captain), Parthiv Patel, Gautam Gambhir, Virat Kohli, Rohit Sharma, Suresh Raina, Ravindra Jadeja, R Ashwin, R Vinay Kumar, Varun Aaron, Umesh Yadav, Ajinkya Rahane, Manoj Tiwary, Abhimanyu Mithun and Rahul Sharma.

WEST INDIES (from): Darren Sammy (captain), Lendl Simmons, Adrian Barath, Marlon Samuels, Darren Bravo, Danza Hyatt, Kieron Pollard, Denesh Ramdin, Andre Russell, Kumar Roach, Anthony Martin, Jason Mohammed, Sunil Narine, Kieran Powell and Ravi Rampaul.

False start

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champion tamed swirling winds at the Hong Kong Golf Club to sink six birdies and was joined at the top of the leaderboard by big-hitting Spaniard Alvaro Quirios and England's David Horsey.

Will booters flatter to deceive?

SPORTS REPORTER from Delhi

Bangladesh were always considered one of favourites in the SAFF Championship since the introduction of the tournament in 1997. But despite the heady accolades, they have established their supremacy only once -- when they hosted the third edition of the meet in 2003.

Ever since then, Bangladesh have flattered to deceive although they have gone close twice, in Goa in 1999 and again in 2005, both times losing to eventual champions India in the final.

India then have predictably raced ahead establishing their supremacy in the region by winning the meet four times out of the six contested so far with Maldives bagging the other trophy in 2008 at home.

This time around all of these three are genuine contenders and with Nepal thrown into the mix for good measure, this promises to be an interesting tournament.

The rise of the hilly nation, under the guidance of British coach Graham Paul Roberts has provided even more competition for Bangladesh who will face a difficult task to negotiate the group stage which includes both them and Maldives.

The island nation are probably favourites from Group B, but they are yet to beat Bangladesh in three SAFF Championship matches.

Metro atop again

SPORTS REPORTER

Dhaka Metropolis trounced Rangpur by nine wickets at the Fatullah Cricket Stadium to reclaim the top position in the National Cricket League yesterday.

Sylhet also brightened their second round hopes with their third win as they beat Barisal by four wickets at the Sylhet Stadium.

RANGPUR-DHAKA METRO

Rangpur started the fourth and final day trailing by 70-odd runs and soon found themselves in trouble when Taskin Ahmed had Tariq Ahmed's wicket in the second over of the morning.

Arafat Sunny then took two more wickets while the rest of the Rangpur batsmen folded quickly, adding exactly 100 more to their overnight score to be bowled out for 193 runs.

Dhaka took just 8.2 overs to reach the victory target of 30, their fifth in six matches.

BARISAL-SYLHET

In the battle for the final position in the second phase, Sylhet strengthened their footing with the four-wicket win.

After Barisal added 52 runs to their overnight 147-7, it set up quite a chase for Sylhet. But Nadif Chowdhury steered them home, hitting six boundaries in his 120-ball 58 not out.

SCORES IN BRIEF

RANGPUR: First innings 354 and second innings 193 all out in 58.4 overs (Dhiman 79; Sunny 6-41) v **DHAKA METRO:** First innings 518 and second innings 30-1 in 8.2 overs (Ashraful 11 not out)

Result: Dhaka Metro won by nine wickets.

BARISAL: First innings 264 and second innings 199 all out in 62.5 overs (Nayeem 77; Enamul 7-64) v **SYLHET:** First innings 281 and second innings 186-6 in 54.2 overs (Nadif 58 not out; Nayeem 2-29)

Result: Sylhet won by four wickets.

Bangladesh favourites

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the World Cup pre-qualifying match but this time Nikola wants to bank on lone striker Emily in his 4-3-3 formation.

"It is a team game and if all of us can give their hundred percent on the pitch and can implement the instructions of the coach, then I believe we can leave the field with a victory," said Emily adding that he would try his best to avail the opportunities he would get in the match.

Abdul Baten Komol will play on Emily's left while uncapped Shah Alamgir Anik, Abdul Malek or Mithun Chowdhury will join as right-winger. Mamunul Islam, Pranotosh Kumar and uncapped Shahedul Alam will play ahead of defenders Sujan, Ariful Islam, Rezaul Karim/Atiqur Rahman Meshi, Mamun Mia/Rezaul Karim.

On the other hand, Pakistan's new Serbian coach Zavisa Milosavljevic said that the tournament would be a good stage for build up future players as the youth-full Pakistan squad could only manage a three-week preparation for the tournament.

"It is right Pakistan were defeated by Bangladesh in World Cup pre-qualifiers but now it is a new opportunity for the boys to prove something against the same opponents," said Zavisa.

Pakistan retain only six players from their World Cup pre-qualifying squad as this new-look side consists mostly of players from the U-23 and U-19 teams.

Not at home

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curator Badiul Alam's work during the last series.

Whether the change of guard has prompted such massive deterioration of the wickets is hard to say but the bottom line is, the large crowd that showed up for the first ODI didn't get to see good cricket, a phenomenon that depends a lot on the pitch. Definitely there is thrill in the low-scoring game but the need is not for a feather-bed but a wicket that provides ample pace for shot-making as well something for bowlers of all kinds.

Since the home batsmen need that much assistance, it is necessary for the wicket to be part of the home advantage that everyone talks about.

Dan, Dean resist hosts



AFP, Brisbane

Daniel Vettori and Dean Brownlie restored Thursday New Zealand's first innings after a clatter of wickets on the rain-shortened opening day of the first Test against Australia at the Gabba.

When rain forced an early finish after tea, the eighth-ranked Black Caps, chasing their first victory in Australia for 26 years, were 176 for five after winning the toss.

Former skipper Vettori was on 45 off 66 balls and Brownlie, dropped twice on three, unbeaten on 32 off 89 deliveries.

Australian captain Michael Clarke fumbled Brownlie at first slip in a straightforward chance off Peter Siddle and two balls later David Warner got his fingertips to a cut shot at point off Mitchell Starc.

Brownlie continued to live a charmed life and Starc found an inside edge only for the ball to just miss off-stump and roll down to the boundary.

The pair put on an unbeaten 80 runs for the sixth wicket to rescue their team from a shaky opening.

The Kiwis were faltering at 96 for five shortly after lunch when Jesse Ryder on six lazily sliced Starc straight to Warner at point for the pace debutant's second wicket.

Only last weekend Ryder clubbed 16 sixes to equal a first-class record for most sixes in his explosive century in a Test warm-up game against Australia A.

"We wanted to be patient and stick to our plans and knew they would be playing their shots so if we could stay patient then the

SCOREBOARD					
NEW ZEALAND: First innings					
McCullum c Warner b Starc					34
Guptill c Haddin b Siddle					13
Williamson c Khawaja b Lyon					19
Taylor b Pattinson					14
Ryder c Warner b Starc					6
Brownlie not out					32
Vettori not out					45
Extras: (b-9, w-3, nb-1)					13
Total: (For 5 wks in 51 overs)					176
To bat: Young, Bracewell, Martin, Southee					
Fall of wickets: 1-44, 2-56, 3-78, 4-93, 5-96					
Bowler	O	M	R	W	
Pattinson	11	1	50	1	
Siddle	15	5	29	1	
Starc	13	0	52	2	
Lyon	10	0	31	1	
Hussey	2	0	5	0	
AUSTRALIA: Warner, Hughes, Khawaja, Ponting, Clarke, Hussey, Haddin, Siddle, Pattinson, Starc, Lyon.					

CROSSWORD By Eugene Sheffer

ACROSS	33 Larry's buddy	DOWN	19 Answer an invite
1 Pompous sort	34 Moo goo	1 Matter-horn et al.	20 Diving bird
4 High-five, e.g.	35 Hen pan	2 Member-ship	23 Workout site
8 Stephen King's mad dog	36 Ph. bk. info	3 Missile shelter	24 Vintage car
12 Main-lander's memento	37 Solidify	4 Beetle Bailey's base	25 Heady quaff
13 Hardly a teetotaler	38 Shoe material	5 Tripoli's country	26 Hearty laugh (Var.)
14 On	45 Canal zone	6 From square one	27 Cover
15 Crony	46 Dryer collection	7 Skunk	28 Peculiar
16 The third man?	47 Clay, now	8 Societal level	29 Ottoman governor
17 Rescue	48 On in years	9 Beehive State	31 Nudged handle
18 Lena Horne classic	49 Beige	10 Jupiter's alias	32 Sword
21 Masseur's workplace	50 Creed	11 Abbr. on older phones	34 Tri-umphed
22 Prompt	51 Optimistic		35 Dilapi-dated
23 Boat contents	52 Profound		36 Indigent
26 Tibetan critter	53 Appomat-tox also-ran		37 Literary category
27 High-arc shot			38 Bosc or Bartlett
30 Puppy's squeal			39 Jason's ship
31 Make marginalia			40 Father's Day gifts
32 Stash			41 Grown-up nits
			42 Greet
			43 Addition-ally
			44 Frost

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48						49				50		
51						52				53		

CRYPTOQUIP

U K K I U G B M F L Y E U K O L X I Y H K A
Q W H O W E L Y C F U H K D G C T L B T G L
A L D D B A L D W L Y U K X
O L G L M Y U D L : U G G W U G B F L E L .

Yesterday's Cryptoquip: FAMED MOVIE ACTOR WHO LOVES DRINKING THINGS LIKE COFFEE, TEA AND BEER: BREWS WILLIS.

Today's Cryptoquip Clue: G equals L