

'Title hopes over'

Arsenal manager Arsene Wenger admitted on Sunday that the Gunners' hopes of snatching the Premier League title were virtually over after the 1-0 defeat at Manchester City. Defeat left Arsenal 12 points adrift of leaders City and Wenger conceded it would be tough to win the title from such a long way behind.

"It will be difficult to close the gap on City now, but we will try," said Wenger.

"This was a game we couldn't afford to lose. It's difficult to take but we



'Drop cost dearly'

MOHAMMAD ISAM

Through the drudgery of the third day's play at the Sher-e-Bangla National Stadium, a few home truths resurfaced for the Tigers.

In a year that only sees five Test matches, it is hard to compose the perfect piece and there hasn't been one for them. Lack of bowling discipline from two pacers, dropped chances by some and the phantom stamping are the lost pieces of Test cricket's jigsaw puzzle that frustrated Bangladesh yesterday.

The game sprung to life in the first hour though it was in an embarrassing note. The skipper Mushfiqur Rahim blew a golden opportunity to remove the day's hero, Taufeeq Umar, when the left-hander was on 56. The Shakib Al Hasan delivery slipped down the leg-side as Taufeeq skipped down the track. In his excitement to appeal for the caught-behind, Mushfiqur completely forgot to stump the batsman who was only just returning to the crease.

Right after lunch, Nazimuddin dropped a sitter at gully off Robiul Islam's first ball. The batsman was, once again, Taufeeq, this time on 66. A while after tea, Younis Khan was dropped by Shahadat Hossain at deep mid-wicket, the paceman diving forward

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PHOTO: ANISUR RAHMAN

A SOLID REPLY: Pakistan opener Taufeeq Umar (L) raises his bat after reaching his century during the third day of the second Test against Bangladesh at the Sher-e-Bangla National Stadium in Mirpur yesterday. Taufeeq went on to score 130 which was instrumental in putting Pakistan in a position of strength at 292-3 at stumps.

WOMEN FOOTBALL
MSC set off
on Rangpur
tour

SPORTS REPORTER

Mohammedan Women's Football team will travel to eight districts of Rangpur to play eight friendly matches against the respective district women's football teams.

"In a quest of celebrating the 40th Victory Day of Bangladesh as well as creating the opportunities for women footballers and encouraging them at district level, we have decided to play friendly matches against all districts of Rangpur Division," said Qamrun Nahar Dana, chief of Mohammedan's women's wing, at a press conference yesterday.

A 20-member squad accompanied by technical director cum coach Josimuddin Ahmed Josy will leave Dhaka for Rangpur

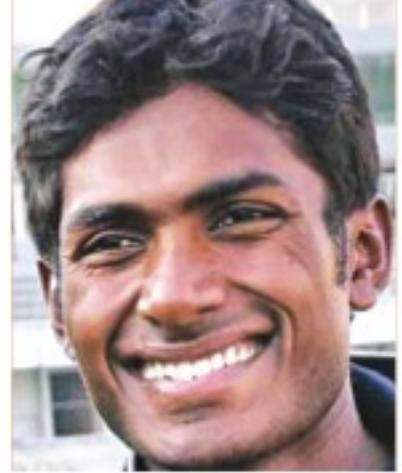
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Tons sink Dhaka Metro

SPORTS REPORTER

The first-class season of Jahurul Islam and Junaed Siddiqui sprang to life yesterday when the Rajshahi pair struck big hundreds against Dhaka Metropolis during their second phase game of the National Cricket League.

Rajshahi ended the second day on 355 for two, a 154-run lead already in the first innings.



JAHURUL...167 n.o



JUNAED...161

SCORES IN BRIEF

DHAKA METRO: First innings 201 all out.

RAJSHAHI: First innings 355-2 in 119 overs

(Jahurul 167 not out, Junaed 161; Taskin 1-36, Sunny 1-62).

KHULNA: First innings 301-9 dec in 76.1 overs

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The day was quite frustrating for the Dhaka

Metro bowlers, who had to wait till quite late in the day for the only wicket, that of the left-hander who made 161 off 322 balls. Jahurul was unbeaten on 167 off 381 balls and he will come out with Hamidul Islam to bat on the third day with possibly one eye on the year's highest score in the NCL.

The Khulna-Sylhet tie at the Zohur Ahmed Chowdhury Stadium in Chittagong was more of a balanced encounter. Sylhet are still 58 runs adrift of Khulna's 301-9 declared, though they only have two wickets in hand.

Rajin Saleh and Golam Mabud struck half-centuries but the rest only had starts.

Dollar Mahmud took three wickets while Al-Amin Hossain and Murad Khan picked up two each.

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