

Star SPORT

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Pep voted coach of the year

Barcelona's Pep Guardiola was on Friday elected coach of the year for 2011 by the International Federation of Football History and Statistics (IFFHS). Guardiola, who won the league, the Champions League and the FIFA Club World Cup with Barca last year, previously won the award in 2009. The former Spain midfielder finished above Real Madrid coach Jose Mourinho -- the winner in 2010 -- and Manchester United manager Sir Alex Ferguson in a poll reflecting the opinions of experts from 81 different countries.



'Compromise XI' face Lions today

Cricket

SPORTS REPORTER

The Bangladesh A team that take on England Lions in the first one-day game in Chittagong today is a squad of cricketers that was picked after negotiations, not on merit.

The national selectors led by Akram Khan were forced to make four changes to the team that played against the same opponents in the practice match Friday. Alauddin Babu, Nafis Iqbal, Al-Amin Hossain and Sohrawardi Shuvo will replace Abul Bashar, Avi and Abu Jayed. Bashar and Avi were last minute replacements for the practice match after Gazi Tank refused to release Asif Ahmed and Mominul Haque.

In fact, the selection panel has made as many as six changes for the second and third one-dayers. And Shafiul Islam will be playing the third match in place of Dollar Mahmud.

The selectors held a meeting with the CCDM yesterday but still the three former national captains became the compromised party as they had no option but to give in to the clubs' wishes.

When asked if this is a squad selected according to their wishes, Akram said it wasn't the best possible team.

"This is the first time such a thing has happened to me. The team is not the best possible one. Still, we are trying to make the best of the situation, which is not under our control," he said yesterday.

Akram sounded hapless when faced with

the wrath of the Dhaka clubs. The selectors had asked the BCB cricket operations committee to put together a list of available cricketers but due to the clubs' whim, that hasn't been possible. Having already voiced their unwillingness to let players go on match days, the clubs now are also reluctant to make players available to the national setup on the eve of Premier League games.

There was even doubt whether Alauddin, Nafees, Al-Amin and Shuvo would reach Chittagong in time but BCB cricket operations manager Sabbir Khan confirmed in the evening that the players are on their way.

It was learned that coach Stuart Barnes was going through a terrible time dealing with this uncertainty.

Akram & Co are also said to be concerned about the upcoming tour of the England Under-19s, who play a seven-match one-day series starting on January 20.

SQUAD FOR 1ST ONE-DAYER

Mahmudullah (captain), Rony Talukder, Nafis Iqbal, Imrul Kayes, Johurul Islam, Shuvogoto Hom, Dhiman Ghosh (wicketkeeper), Alauddin Babu, Tasamul Haque, Sohrawardi Shuvo, Al-Amin, Dollar Mahmud, Kamrul Islam.

SQUAD FOR 2ND & 3RD ONE-DAYERS

Mahmudullah (captain), Rony Talukder, Nafis Iqbal, Junaed Siddique, Roqibul Hassan, Shuvogoto Hom, Dhiman Ghosh (wicketkeeper), Nazim Uddin, Enamul Haque, Nazmul Hossain, Sohrawardi Shuvo, Dollar Mahmud, Kazi Kamrul Islam, Shafiul Islam.



Farashganj striker Siyo Zunapio celebrates his winning goal against Brothers Union. PHOTO: STAR

F'ganj stun Brothers

SPORTS REPORTER

Grameenphone Federation Cup 2011

Rahmatganj MFS sprung to the top of Group D in the Grameenphone Federation Cup thanks to a 3-0 win over Wari Club at the Birshreshtha Mostafa Kamal Stadium in Kamalapur yesterday while neighbours Farashganj SC kept in touch with a 1-0 win over fallen giants Brothers Union at the Bangabandhu National Stadium.

Wins for both Old Dhaka outfits mean that those two teams are in pole position, with four points each from two matches, to make it to the knock-out rounds after the first round of matches had produced barren

draws. However, Rahmatganj's 3-0 win puts them above Farashganj on goal difference. Both teams will need only a draw to ensure qualification for the quarterfinals when Rahmatganj take on Brothers while Farashganj play against Wari in the last round of matches on January 11.

At the BSMKS in Kamalapur, Nigerian forward Nche Francis put Rahmatganj ahead in the fifth minute of the match, a solo effort before compatriot Chibui Divine Lucky doubled the lead in the 36th minute. Lucky then sealed the match with his second in the 45th minute to complete the rout.

At the BNS, Syed Naemuddin's Brothers Union started the livelier side as in

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Security team for Pak tour soon

Cricket

SPORTS REPORTER

Bangladesh Cricket Board (BCB) will request the government to send a security team to Pakistan to evaluate the security arrangements ahead of Bangladesh's proposed tour in April.

The decision was taken in yesterday's BCB board of directors' meeting at the Sher-e-Bangla National Stadium in Mirpur.

"We will send a letter to the concerned authority on Sunday with our request to send a security team to Pakistan. The board's security consultant will also accompany the team. We want this visit as early as possible," said Jalal Yunus, BCB's director and media committee chairman after the meeting.

"The board is always positive about the tour but everything will depend on

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3-day break in Premier League

SPORTS REPORTER

The Dhaka Premier Cricket League has been postponed by three days and will continue from January 11.

The fourth round of the competition was scheduled to begin on January 8 but after a meeting between the Cricket Committee of Dhaka Metropolis (CCDM) and the national selectors yesterday, it was decided that the three-day delay had to be enforced as the clubs are reluctant to

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