

Star SPORT

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Nadal's jibe at Federer

World No. 2 Rafael Nadal took a dig at rival Roger Federer on Sunday, insinuating that Federer doesn't care about the needs of fellow tennis players. The Spaniard was asked Sunday whether Federer may have made such a statement because he doesn't like to see the sport criticised in public. "No, I totally disagree," Nadal said. "For him, it's good to say nothing. Everything positive. 'It's all well and good for me, I look like a gentleman,' and the rest can burn themselves."

---INTERNET



Muktis, BJMC in semis

SPORTS REPORTER

Star-studded Muktijoddha Sangsad and Team BJMC moved into the semifinals of the Grameenphone Federation Cup after defeating their respective rivals in the quarterfinals at the Bangabandhu National Stadium yesterday. Muktijoddha Sangsad had to toil hard to tame Farashganj SC, who went down 5-3 in a tiebreaker after both regulation and extra-time had ended in a 1-1 draw. It was plain sailing for Team BJMC however, as they easily thrashed Rahmatganj MFS 3-1 in the first quarterfinal with Nigerian hitman Ajagun Abdul Rasheed scoring twice. Muktijoddha Sangad and Team BJMC will now face each other again in the semifinals on Friday, although both originated from Group A. The much-vaulted All-Reds made the game tough for themselves with a shocking display of missed chances that took the game into extra-time and a shoot-out. Muktijoddha were thankful that they had the rub of the green after Farashganj put their first shot over the bar. Muktis' more illustrious players held

their nerve as Biddut, Shakil, Lima, Mithun and Sunday all converted. After a barren first period, Muktijoddha had gone ahead early in the second half courtesy of a spectacular diving header from striker Mithun who captalised after Farashganj goalkeeper Sultan Ahmed had punched a Zahid Hasan Emily cross away. The goal signalled the opening of the floodgates, but Muktijoddha failed to walk through with some glaring misses; Nigerian Sunday Chizoba particularly culpable. Emily too undid a lot of his good work after managing to hit only the post from a good position. The misses would prove costly as Farashganj levelled six minutes from time. Pashban Mollah had troubled the Mukti backline with his driving runs down the left flank and one finally paid dividend when he fed Congolese striker Siyo Zunapio for the equaliser. Muktijoddha could still have won it late, but the man Sunday hit the crossbar again in injury time. But his misery was still not complete. After Brazilian Lima had a 112th minute goal ruled out, Sunday was again provided with the opportunity to make amends but

SEE PAGE 17 COL 2



An airborne Muktijoddha striker Mithun Chowdhury (L) gets past Farashganj keeper Sultan Ahmed to head in the first goal during their quarterfinal clash of the Federation Cup at the Bangabandhu National Stadium yesterday.

PHOTO: STAR

Dhanmondi derby at BNS

SPORTS REPORTER

Holdings Abahani will be hoping to reproduce their performance of the last edition's final when they face Sheikh Jamal Dhanmondi Club in the quarterfinal of the Grameenphone Federation Cup at the Bangabandhu National Stadium today. Abahani came out from two goals down to beat Sheikh Jamal 5-3 in the pulsating final last season. However, it's a different ball game this time as Sheikh Jamal lost much of their strength with exodus of star players while Abahani have a formidable side after roping in five Sheikh Jamal players. Despite being favourites on papers in their respective groups, both sides were stunned in the group-stage matches with Abahani losing to minnows Feni Soccer Club and Sheikh Jamal being beaten by Sheikh Russel KC. "I am expecting an entertaining match. Last match was a wake-up call but this is a new game, new players and new venue and everything will depend on how the players react on the pitch," said

SEE PAGE 17 COL 1

Imrul clinches it for A

Cricket

SPORTS REPORTER

An excellent Imrul Kayes century in the fourth one-day game clinched Bangladesh A the five-match series over England Lions at the Sylhet Divisional Stadium yesterday. The six-wicket victory for the home side was done and dusted with 26 balls to spare as they reached 211-4 in 45.2 overs, after the visitors were bowled out for 208 runs in 49.4 overs in the first match held at the venue after it was renovated. A fair crowd turned out, braving the cold weather. The chase was thoroughly constructed by the left-handed opener, who has returned among the runs after a wretched time since mid-2011. His 131-ball innings on the day had nine boundaries and three sixes but more importantly, he put together a string of important partnerships to carry the side. The start was always going to be vital in a chase that just touches past the 200-mark, but Imrul and Nasiruddin Faruque didn't disappoint. The pair added 72 for the first wicket before the other left-hander, Faruque, fell for 21. But by that time, Imrul had reached his half-century off 65 balls. A quick 36-run stand followed with Jahurul Islam Omi before Naem Islam weighed in with 40 off 48 balls with the help of five boundaries. The Naem-Imrul pair added 67 for the third wicket.



PHOTO: BCB

Imrul Kayes takes a bow as he heads back to dressing room after winning Bangladesh A's fourth one-day against England Lions at the Sylhet Divisional Stadium yesterday.

Imrul then reached his century off 123 balls while skipper Alok Kapali and he were putting the final touches to the victory. The left-hander from Meherpur was adjudged the man-of-the-match and stands a good chance of winning the player-of-the-series award as he is the highest scorer in the series so far with 163 runs in two games after scoring 53 in the first game in Chittagong. Earlier, Joseph Root's 81 had the potential to take the visitors' score past the 250-mark, but once he fell in the 40th over, the final thrust wasn't there. Yorkshireman Root hammered seven fours and a six during his 124-ball knock that held the innings together. He added 84 for the fourth wicket with Jonny Bairstow. After both fell after one another, Jos Buttler slammed two fours and sixes each in his 38-ball 41. For the home side, Forhad Reza took three wickets while three other batsmen fell to run-outs. The last match of the series will be held at the same venue on January 18. **BRIEF SCORES** ENGLAND LIONS: 208 all out in 49.4 overs (Root 81, Buttler 41, Bairstow 35; Forhad 3-29, Kapali 1-16, Mosharraf 1-30). BANGLADESH A: 211-4 in 45.2 overs (Imrul 110 not out, Naem 40, Faruque 21; Buck 2-38, Briggs 1-30). Result: Bangladesh A won by six wickets and clinch the 5-match series 3-1.

Shooters keep missing target

SPORTS REPORTER

Bangladeshi shooters continued their dismal performance in the 12th Asian Shooting Championship when MN Towfiq Khan Chandan, Ramjan Ali and Armin Asha were eliminated from the qualifications in Doha, Qatar yesterday. Chandan missed the shot by a whisker as he finished 10th amongst 50 competitors with a score of 590, where top eight shooters made it to the finals. Japan's Midori Yajima won the gold medal with an aggregate score of 694.3 points (593 qualification score) while Korea's Han Jinseop (693.8 points) and

SEE PAGE 17 COL 3

ERRATUM

In yesterday's sports page, it was reported that Enamul Haque Moni would be the first Bangladeshi umpire to stand in a Test match. In fact, Akhtaruddin and Mahbubur Rahman have also stood in Tests, but what makes Moni unique is that he will be the first neutral umpire from the country.

Bangladesh Open golf starts today

SPORTS REPORTER

The American Express Bangladesh Open Professional Golf Championship begins at the Kurmitola Golf Club today with 81 professional golfers, mostly from Bangladesh and India taking part. The 4-day meet, which sets off the PGTI (Professional Golfers' Tour of India) season, is being staged in Bangladesh for the fourth time in a row and third time being sponsored by City Bank Limited. But the most importantly, this time the event will be catered to a wide audience as it will be broadcasted by international sports channel Ten Sports, informed the organisers at a press conference in the city yesterday. The field at the Bangladesh Open 2012 will feature some of the top professional golfers from India and Bangladesh. The Bangladeshi challenge will be led by Siddikur Rahman, one Asian tour winner and four-time winner of PGTI and Zamal Hossain Mollah (2009 champion). A total of 28 professional golfers from Bangladesh will take part in the event.

SEE PAGE 17 COL 8



PHOTO: COURTESY

City Bank managing director K Mahmood Sattar (3rd from R) hands over the cheque for the American Express Bangladesh Open Golf Championship to the organisers during a press briefing in the city yesterday.

U-18 cricket

SPORTS REPORTER

All three remaining matches in the Young Tigers U-18 National Cricket competition ended in draws yesterday. At the Shaheed Kamruzzaman Stadium in Rajshahi, Khulna ended their second innings on 310 for eight after they trailed by 122 in the first dig against Chittagong. Sohan and Shahib struck half-centuries for Khulna. A 98 from Nabin and Akbar's unbeaten 59 took Rangpur to safety against Dhaka at the Shaheed Chandu Stadium in Bogra while at Shamsul Huda Stadium in Jessore, Sylhet ended the day on 106-6 as they chased 151 in the second innings.



Mushfiqur Rahim (3rd from L), captain of Duronto Rajshahi in the Bangladesh Premier League, poses with franchise officials and under-privileged children during the logo unveiling ceremony yesterday at the Sher-e-Bangla National Stadium in Mirpur.

PHOTO: STAR

LOCAL snippets

Chess checked

SPORTS REPORTER

A section of chess players yesterday put the Bangladesh Chess Federation office under lock and key, demand the removal of the ad-hoc committee general secretary Mokaddesh Hossain and joint secretary Masudur Rahman Mallick. Some 15 to 20 chess players turned up at the federation office, chanting the slogan 'the lock will be opened when the five Grandmasters return.' The chess players earlier protested the appointments of Mokaddesh Hossain and Masudur Rahman Mallick when the National Sports Council dissolved the previous committee to appoint an ad-hoc committee in September 10, 2009. Leading players excluding GM Niaz Murshed and Ziaur Rahman kept away

from taking part in tournaments organised by the BCF, but except GM Enamul Hossain Razeed and GM Abdullah Al Rakib other players returned to the fray.

They alleged that Mokaddesh has been running the federation violating the constitution as he introduced Premier Division League and he himself took part in the 2nd Division Chess League.

National Hockey

Faridpur and BKSP won their respective matches of the Trust Bank-ViyellaTex 28th National Hockey Championship at the Maulana Bhasani Hockey Stadium yesterday. Faridpur defeated Bangladesh Army by 3-2 goals in an entertaining match with Hasan Zubayer scoring twice and Mamunur Rahman scoring the other for the winners. Krishna Kumar and Sirajul Islam scored one apiece for the losing side.

SEE PAGE 17 COL 4