

Iskander passes away
SPORTS REPORTER

Former cricketer and noted sports organiser Iskander Khan Majlish passed away on Sunday morning following a cardiac arrest. He was 65. A capable all-rounder, Iskander played club cricket for Eleven Stars and Shantinagar. He represented Dhaka district in the National Championship. After retiring as a player he became an organiser and had performed the role of manager of Dhaka district and divisional cricket teams. He was also the manager of the national football team on its tour of Saudi Arabia in 1990. Bangladesh Cricket Board, Bangladesh Football Federation and Cricketers Welfare Association of Bangladesh have condoled the death of Iskander.

Sheltech, BJMC

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stoppage time. BJMC already qualified for the final by winning two of their matches. The final will be held on January 27 at the same venue.



A BITTER GOODBYE: Li Na waves to the crowd after her loss to Kim Clijsters in their Australian Open fourth round match in Melbourne yesterday.

Kim dashes Asia's hope
Nadal, Federer move closer

AP, Melbourne



Down four match points and hobbling on her injured left ankle, defending champion Kim Clijsters somehow rallied for a dramatic 4-6, 7-6 (6), 6-4 win over Li Na at the Australian Open on Sunday. Clijsters was in pain from the ankle she twisted in the seventh game. Li was just a bundle of nerves. The French Open champion failed to serve out the fourth-round match at 5-4 in the second set, but then led 6-2 in the tiebreaker. Again Clijsters refused to yield. "I said in my mind, keep fighting," Clijsters said. "You never know what happens on the other side of the court." Rafael Nadal and Roger Federer stayed on course for a semifinal meeting in matches either side of Clijsters' win at Rod Laver Arena. Federer ended the run of Australian teenager Bernard Tomic 6-4, 6-2, 6-2, while Nadal won in straight sets too, beating fellow Spaniard Feliciano Lopez 6-4, 6-4, 6-2. Top-seeded Caroline Wozniacki ended the day's play with a 6-0, 7-5

win over Jelena Jankovic and will next play Clijsters. Li's best chance to win the match -- and gain revenge for her three-set loss to Clijsters in last year's final -- came on her fourth match point. Clijsters played a poor drop shot, giving her opponent the chance to put the ball into the open court. Instead, Li tentatively hit the ball almost straight back to Clijsters, who sent up a perfect lob that dropped just inside the baseline. Clijsters won six straight points to take the tiebreaker and the first four games of the deciding set. Clijsters then overcame a wobble of her own, losing her serve at 5-2 in the third set, before finally closing out the fourth-round match on her second match point. Li broke down in tears at the end of her post-match news conference. Clijsters was hurt in the first set while serving at 3-all and 30-all. As she hit a forehand, her left foot got stuck on the surface and the ankle twisted awkwardly. She got up to finish the point but then immediately called for the trainer and had the injury strapped. Clijsters' movement was clearly slowed when she resumed but, playing in her last Australian Open

before quitting tennis at the end of the season, she said she didn't want to bow out in Melbourne with a retirement. The injury seemed to affect Li just as much. The 29-year-old, who won last year's French Open to become the first player from China to win a Grand Slam singles title, looked increasingly stressed as the match progressed. After 2 hours, 23 minutes, she netted a backhand to put Clijsters through to the quarterfinals. The Belgian said she was hopeful her ankle would hold up after ice treatment. Federer hasn't lost to a teenager since 2006 and that run continued Sunday as he disappointed the home crowd with a comprehensive win over the 19-year-old Tomic. Tomic had beaten seeded players Fernando Verdasco and Alexandr Dolgoplov in earlier rounds, but Federer was a step-up in class. The 16-time Grand Slam champion broke six times as he set up a quarterfinal against 11th-seeded Argentine Juan Martin del Potro. Nadal plays Tomas Berdych next, hoping to avoid a third straight quarterfinal loss in Melbourne. Defending the title in 2010, the Span-

iard retired with a knee injury against Andy Murray. A year ago, he was hampered by a hamstring problem in a straight-sets loss to David Ferrer. Berdych beat Nicolas Almagro of Spain 4-6, 7-6 (5), 7-6 (3), 7-6 (2). Former US Open champion Del Potro easily defeated Philipp Kohlschreiber of Germany 6-4, 6-2, 6-1. Berdych was booed by the crowd at Hisense Arena after he refused to shake hands with Almagro. The sixth-seeded Czech was upset that Almagro had hit the ball straight at him while he was at the net during the fourth set. Wozniacki advanced with a chance of keeping her top ranking by beating former No. 1-ranked Jankovic. Victoria Azarenka was the first player to reach the quarterfinals when she beat Iveta Benesova 6-2, 6-2. The third-seeded Belarusian is yet to drop a set at the tournament and will next meet eighth-seeded Agnieszka Radwanska. With the win, 22-year-old Azarenka stayed in the hunt for the No. 1 ranking. Petra Kvitova and Maria Sharapova can also claim the top spot from Wozniacki.

Lot of ifs & buts at top

Cricket

AFP, New Delhi

With Pakistan shedding their notorious unpredictability and Australia coming to terms with a tricky transition, Test cricket hierarchy in the next couple of months might look more like a banana republic... ripe for a coup. The International Cricket Council (ICC) dangles an annual 175,000 dollars carrot for whichever team tops Test rankings on the April 1 cut-off date and table-toppers England were justified in believing they could be cashing the cheque in a few months. They still lead the race by a healthy margin but being thumped by an ambitious Pakistan team inside three days of their first Test this year, skipper Andrew Strauss and his teammates can no longer take it for granted. If England may be lined up for an April Fool's Day surprise, the situation is even worse for the team they inherited the number one ranking from. India, beaten 4-0 by England last year, are staring at their second successive overseas whitewash against an Australian team determined to claw their way back to the top. The inconsistencies at the top is good news for South Africa, who now sniff a slim chance to gatecrash England's party. At present, England top the official rankings with 125 points, followed by India (118), South Africa (117), Australia (103), Pakistan (99) and Sri Lanka (98). England's rise to the top was a reward for a blemish-free 2011 when Strauss's men did not lose a single Test. But the side were given a rude awakening

in Dubai earlier this week where Pakistan, one of the most improved teams last year with just one loss and six wins, spanked them in three days to go 1-0 up in the three-match series. "This England team have not won in the subcontinent. They even played badly in the World Cup last year, which was held in India, Bangladesh and Sri Lanka," former England opener Geoffrey Boycott wrote in a column in the Telegraph newspaper. "Until they start playing well in the subcontinent they can't call themselves the best team in the world and definitely can't be judged against some of the other great England sides," Boycott added. Former Pakistan skipper Javed Miandad was also quick to pour scorn over the ICC system. "I don't believe much in rankings because it doesn't give a clear picture of the team's overall performance in the world," Miandad was quoted as saying by Cricinfo. "England are now the number one team because they had the home advantage and never lost in their backyard." There was similar disputing of India's rise to the top despite their woeful record outside the subcontinent. However, England can still guarantee themselves the hefty ICC cheque by winning at least one of the remaining two Tests against Pakistan or drawing both. But if Pakistan beat England by a 2-0 margin or more, South Africa could pocket the cheque, provided they can blank New Zealand in the away Test series in March. England now have two Tests to redeem themselves or it would be more instability at the top, which may be good for the game but certainly not for Strauss and his men.

NSC tightens purse strings

SPORTS REPORTER

AFP, Johannesburg

Unlike before the 2010 South Asian Games at home, Bangladesh athletes will probably have to do without long-term training facilities ahead of the next SA Games to be held in India as the National Sports Council (NSC) expressed their inability to provide funds for adequate preparation for the next edition of the showpiece event. Captain AB de Villiers and predecessor Graeme Smith (125 each) struck tons as South Africa made 312 for 4, but a century from Kumar Sangakkara (102) led the tourists to 314-8 at the Wanderers and a second win within three days. Sri Lanka appeared to be cruising until Sangakkara became the fourth wicket to fall with 275 runs on the board and a late South Africa rally saw them grab two wickets within three balls during the final over. It left the tourists needing five runs from two balls to succeed and Senanayake hit Robin Peterson for a six to snatch victory in a thrilling climax to the two-month tour. Sangakkara struck 10 fours in a maiden ODI ton against South Africa and there were also valuable contributions from Lahiru Thirimanne (69), Upul Tharanga (46) and skipper Tillakaratne Dilshan (41). De Villiers and Smith excelled as South Africa recovered from a sluggish early run rate having being

Sri Lanka narrow gap

Cricket

AFP, Johannesburg

sent in to bat by Dilshan in a match delayed for one hour by rain early in the Sri Lankan innings. De Villiers finished unbeaten after facing 98 deliveries while Smith received a standing ovation from the sell-out 30,000 crowd after being caught by Dinesh Chandimal at mid-wicket off the bowling of Lasith Malinga. While the Proteas skipper confirmed his position as one of the best stroke players in the world today with 10 fours and four sixes, Smith could not contain his joy as he walked off after a timely first ODI ton in three years. There was a media and public outcry against him just a week ago after innings of six, 28 and two in the first three matches of the series before he stopped the rot with a brisk 68 in Kimberley two days ago. Smith embroidered his innings with nine fours and four sixes off 143 balls during a 203-minute stand and the sun-drenched crowd revelled in his change of fortune. South Africa lost opener Alviro Petersen (6) with only 10 runs on the board and were 70-2 when Faf du Plessis (24) departed before De Villiers and Smith took charge. The Proteas stood at 133-2 after 30 overs and a run rate of 4.43 needed improvement on a good batting track, which the captains past and present duly did with 44 runs coming during a power play soon after.

BFF rejects

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whose contract has expired prior to the end of a registration period may be registered outside that registration period. Associations are authorised to register such professionals provided due consideration is given to the sporting integrity of the relevant competition. "The meeting believes if any clubs are given permission to sign new foreign players outside the registration period, other clubs will be deprived of equal opportunities. "The meeting also believes that this rule may be misused in the future and keeping these things in mind the meeting rejected their appeal," said BFF acting general secretary Abu Nayem Shohag, adding that a few other clubs also verbally expressed their objection to the appeal. The foreign players' registration window was opened on October 1 and closed on December 15 with Mohammedan and Sheikh Russel signing up the maximum seven players for their respective sides. In another move, the BFF disciplinary committee suspended BJMC manager Arif Khan Joy for one match.

SCOREBOARD

SOUTH AFRICA
Smith c Chandimal b Malinga 125
Peterson c Mathew b Malinga 6
Du Plessis c Mathew b Senanayake 24
De Villiers not out 125
A Morkel run out (Dilshan/Perera) 18
Duminy not out 5
Extras: (lb-2, w-7) 9
Total: (For 4 wickets in 50 overs) 312
Did not bat: Ingram, Parnell, Peterson, Morkel, Tsotsobe
Fall of wickets: 1-10, 2-70, 3-256, 4-269

Bowler

	O	M	R	W
Kulasekara	10	1	46	0
Malinga	10	0	79	2
Mathews	3	1	16	0
Perera	7	0	64	0
Senanayake	9	0	50	1
Dilshan	2	0	12	0
Herath	9	0	43	0

SRI LANKA
Tharanga c Duminy b Tsotsobe 46
Dilshan c De Villiers b Tsotsobe 41
Sangakkara c Peterson b Duminy 102
Chandimal c De Villiers b Parnell 20
Thirimanne c A Morkel b Peterson 69
Mathews c Peterson b Parnell 6
Perera c Du Plessis b Duminy 2
Kulasekara b Peterson 0
Herath not out 1
Senanayake not out 6
Extras: (lb-12, w-8, nb-1) 21
Total: (For 8 wickets in 49.5 overs) 314
Did not bat: Malinga
Fall of wickets: 1-72, 2-119, 3-175, 4-275, 5-294, 6-307, 7-307, 8-308

Bowler

	O	M	R	W
M Morkel	9.1	0	49	0
Tsotsobe	7	0	54	2
Duminy	6.5	0	44	2
Parnell	10	0	51	2
A Morkel	10	0	66	0
Peterson	6.5	0	38	2

Result: Sri Lanka won by two wickets and South Africa won the 5-ODI series 3-2.
Man-of-the-match: Kumar Sangakkara.
Man-of-the-series: AB de Villiers.
Toss: Sri Lanka.
Umpires: Marais Erasmus and Nigel Long.

Clarke wants

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The skipper feels that facing India at Adelaide will be the "toughest." Clarke didn't forget to mention in his column that Australia have not beaten India at this particular venue after the 1999-00 series.

Up against whitewash

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The pressure is also on Virender Sehwag, who will lead India, still ranked number two in the world, in Dhoni's enforced absence. Sehwag has not lost a Test in his three matches at the helm but he is another senior batsman out of form and needs a typical buccaneering knock to galvanise his team. "Ultimately, I have always believed that a captain is

only as good as his team," opening batsman Gautam Gambhir said. "MS [Dhoni] has done a great job, but it is the entire team that has not performed and that needs to take the blame." Little has gone right for India -- thrashed by 122 runs in Melbourne and by an innings and 68 runs in Sydney, both inside four days, before an abysmal innings and 37-run defeat inside three days in Perth. Australia's bowlers have dominated, with swing bowler Ben Hilfenhaus taking 23 wickets in the series at 16 apiece and Peter Siddle 17 wickets at under 20. While India's decorated batsmen have yet to score a century in the three Tests, Australia have scored four, including skipper Michael Clarke's 329 not out. "As Michael Clarke said after the game [in Perth], celebrate your win, but at the end of the day we want to try and beat the second team in the world four-nil," opening batsman David Warner said. "That's a massive thing for us. Our goal is to become number one again [in the world] by the next Ashes in 2013. If we can keep working towards that, our goals will be achieved." Adelaide is regarded as a batting wicket and spinner Nathan Lyon is expected to come into Australia's team after being left out on the pace-friendly WACA pitch in Perth.

MSC spending

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a few days. Besides, Mohammedan has also sought the permission of BKSP authority for three of its players -- Sarwar, Khurshed and Rocky. "Our budget for the players is more than Tk one crore. Out of this amount, Tk 60 lakhs is likely to be spent for the 15 local players while Tk 40 lakhs will be spent for recruiting foreign players," said the former national striker. Mohammedan's director-in-charge Lokman Hossain Bhuiyan also ensured that they are going to form a strong side this season and they have already sought the help of former Pakistan players like Shahbaz Ahmed for the recruitment of quality Pakistani players.

BPL won't

FROM PAGE 16

said that since they have already changed their stance once, they wouldn't be doing it again. "We haven't officially received any letters but I have heard about their issue. We would like to keep their status intact as icon players so there won't be any changes in the ruling which we took yesterday," said Alamgir. "I know it is a burden for the franchisees but we have to consider the local perspective," he added. Barisal Burners have added Shane Harwood of Australia and Phil Mustard of England as their two remaining foreign players. Meanwhile, the BPL are close to acquiring a title sponsor as Destiny Group is in talks with them, a source said. Destiny Group had earlier been the title sponsor during the NCL T20s held in April 2010.

Faridpur, Army

FROM PAGE 16

Milon Hossain scored the decisive goal from a penalty corner in the seventh minute of the match. The final will be held between the two teams at 3pm tomorrow where Finance Minister AMA Muhith will be present as chief guest.

Lions trounce

FROM PAGE 16

Nasir Hossain all took one each. Taylor later said that he was happy that the team has come back to winning ways after the 3-2 loss in the one-dayers. "It is good to come back with a win in the T20 and hopefully we can come back with a win tomorrow [Monday]," he said. "All round it has been a tough tour but we have all learned a lot. We are a young team with many talented players," added Taylor.

BRIEF SCORES

ENGLAND LIONS: 143-6 in 20 overs (Roy 40, Vince 32, Taylor 28; Mosharrarf-27).
BANGLADESH A: 111 all out in 20 overs (Jahurul 37, Imrul 23, Alauddin 17 not out; Buck 3-16, Briggs 2-16).
Result: England Lions won by 32 runs.

CROSSWORD By Eugene Sheffer

ACROSS

- Heights (Abbr.)
- Madam's counterpart
- Droops
- Trust
- Hint
- Bribe
- Unusual
- Small barrel
- The hot wings caused his downfall
- Maximum
- Winter precip
- First man
- Table tennis tools
- Ottoman ruler
- Indeed
- Existed
- VIP
- Lima's land
- Humor writer
- Bombek
- High nest
- Deli meat
- Have debts

41 Advertisement

42 Close associate

47 Top-notch problem

48 DNA, on "CSI"

49 Burn something

7 Arouse anew

8 Write sloppily

9 Winged

10 Mentor

11 Gets a glimpse of

13 Aid and —

19 Buffalo

1 Noah's boat

2 Island memento

3 Pampering, for short

1 Himalayan region

5 Unforeseen problem

6 Former transp. agency

7 Arouse anew

8 Write sloppily

9 Winged

10 Mentor

11 Gets a glimpse of

13 Aid and —

19 Buffalo

1 Noah's boat

2 Island memento

3 Pampering, for short

22 "Hold the —"

23 Finnish bath

25 Vows

26 Basin accessory

27 Hindu wrap

29 Expression

31 Take to court

33 Scanty

34 Cheated at hide-and-seek

36 Dumb-struck

37 Health resorts

38 Lotion additive

39 Moon goddess

40 Valhalla bigwig

43 "Got a Secret"

44 —

45 M

46 Indispensable

Solution time: 24 mins.

I	R	A	N	U	T	A	H	S	A	M
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CRYPTOQUIP

R P E Z A L Z P C S G E I K I E U C
B O E S G C E F O E L Z W C G C E Y
R P B L C E K L W Y E A U Z B U E F C
T C B T Y C L U E G Z ? E Y Y - S G E A I .

Saturday's Cryptoquip: NEW CABLE CHANNEL BROADCASTING VARIOUS SHOWS THAT ARE ALL ABOUT SEWING GARMENTS: HEM-TV.
Today's Cryptoquip Clue: T equals P