

Star SPORT

DHAKA TUESDAY MARCH 6, 2012, E-MAIL: sports@thedailystar.net

Pique faces further ban

Barcelona defender Gerard Pique's one-game ban for being sent off against Sporting Gijon in the Spanish league could be extended after accusing the referee of targeting him. The Spain international was dismissed in the 3-1 win on Saturday, and later claimed referee Carlos Velasco Carballo's decision was premeditated because he had had criticized the official at halftime. Victoriano Sanchez Arminio, who heads Spain's referees committee, calls Pique's words "unfortunate and serious" and says his organization will present a case to the Spanish football federation's disciplinary



Blatter due here today

SPORTS REPORTER

FIFA president Sepp Blatter arrives in Dhaka today on a two-day visit as part of his trip to South Asia which also includes visits to India and Nepal. This will be the second visit to Bangladesh for the current boss of world football's governing body and the third overall for a FIFA president.

The FIFA boss, accompanied by eight other FIFA officials, will fly in a chartered flight at around 12.35pm. He will meet the Bangladesh Football Federation president Kazi Salahuddin at the BFF House and hold a meeting with the BFF Executive Committee in the afternoon before inaugurating a photo exhibition by Bangladesh Sports Press Association at the BFF House premises. Blatter will later inaugurate the Astroturf installed under the FIFA Goal Project 2 adjacent to the BFF House, and also inaugurate the launch of the BFF's Sylhet

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Much to gain from Blatter trip



SPORTS REPORTER

FIFA president Sepp Blatter will arrive in Dhaka today for his second trip to Bangladesh after a successful initial visit prior to the World Cup in 2006. But while Blatter's whistle-stop 21-hour long tour might have been arranged in haste, the president of football's governing body will bring with him glad tidings for Bangladeshi football.

Officially, the main mission of the FIFA supremo's tour to Bangladesh will be to launch the artificial pitch at the Balur Math adjacent to the BFF headquarters. The turf was acquired under the second phase of FIFA's famed Goal Project and will see fruition after being caught up in controversy over its use for a good number of years.

But Blatter will also be announcing FIFA's wholehearted support and backing to the first full-fledged football academy in Bangladesh, the Sylhet BKSP, which is set to become opera-



SEPP BLATTER

tional from the middle of the year. And in this the Bangladesh Football Federation (BFF) president Kazi Salahuddin has managed to pull off quite the coup in convincing Blatter to extend FIFA's support, much as the association is currently doing across India under a number of projects.

Under the terms of the agreement which has not been fully spelled out yet, FIFA will provide full support to the academy for a period of two years. FIFA will appoint a scouting team who is set

to arrive on April 1 and also provide four coaches, one head coach, and one overall technical director for the academy which is expected to be fully functional from July. By that time the advance scouting team will have identified players under both the U16 and U18 batches and set the ball rolling on Bangladesh's first ever dedicated football academy.

This is excellent news for a country where football lags behind as a distant second sport after cricket, but where the interest in the beautiful game is manifold. In truth, with a population of 160 million people, most of whom maintain a more than passing interest in the game, football should be thriving.

But the reality is far bleaker and Blatter's tidings will serve to raise the game a few rungs from the doldrums within which it currently reigns.

It is often said that India is FIFA's next biggest destination; certainly the increase in projects all over our neighbour can be directly linked to their increased presence in regional tournaments. It is hoped that

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'Kamal drops Tamim' BCB announces 14-man squad

SPORTS REPORTER



The Bangladesh Cricket Board (BCB) yesterday named a 14-member Bangladesh team for the forthcoming Asia Cup, leaving out Tamim Iqbal.

Chief selector Akram Khan said last night that BCB chief AHM Mustafa Kamal cut Tamim from the national team.

"Tamim Iqbal was dropped by [BCB president] Mustafa Kamal. He was in the team that we submitted," said the former national captain. The left-handed opener was given a clean bill of health on Sunday, having recovered from a groin injury he suffered during the Bangladesh Premier League (BPL).

TEAM

Imrul Kayes, Nazimuddin, Jahurul Islam, Mushfiqur Rahim, Shakib Al Hasan, Mahmudullah Riyad, Nasir Hossain, Mashrafe Bin Mortaza, Abdur Razzak, Elias Sunny, Nazmul Hossain, Shafiul Islam, Shahadat Hossain, Anamul Haque.

Standby: Tamim Iqbal, Shuvagata Hom, Farhad Reza, Enamul Haque, Mominul Haque, Abul Hasan Raju.

Akram's outburst was the boiling over of emotions having already overseen such unnecessary influences by the president from the moment he took over after the World Cup last year. He had bravely fought against the technical committee which has been coolly dismantled but this could be the last straw.

The extraordinary meddling by Kamal is no surprise as the national team selection has been wrapped in red-tape ever since he took over. Quite literally, the approval and declaration depends on several hands and not just the might of the chief selector's pen which has been the case in previous regimes.

It has long been believed that the sole influence of the selection panel, made up of no fewer than three former national captains, is just a rule of thumb; it is rather the Bangladesh Cricket Board president who holds the ultimate privilege to give the final green signal, after it is okayed by the board's cricket operations committee. As usual, the entire tedious process was repeated for this squad which had to be trimmed to fourteen members with six standby players including Tamim.

Another glaring exclusion from the squad was the identities of the captain and vice-captain, and this is thought to be a result of incumbent skipper Mushfiqur Rahim's outburst following the BPL semifinals mix-up.

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Asia Cup tickets go on sale today



SPORTS REPORTER

Tickets for the upcoming Asia Cup will be on sale from today in different branches of City Bank around the country.

Eastern Gallery tickets will be sold for Tk 200 while the North Gallery ones will be up for Tk 400. At the other end of the scale, Grandstand tickets will be sold for Tk 4,000.

All this was revealed at a press conference at the Sher-e-Bangla National Stadium where BCB directors Jalal Yunus and Dewan Shafiul Arefin and City Bank's additional managing director Sohel RK Hossain were present.

TICKET RATES

Location	Rate (Tk)
Eastern Gallery	200
North Gallery	400
South Gallery	400
Shahid Jewel Stand	600
Shahid Mushtaq Stand	600
International Galleries	1,500

Nine branches in the capital and 21 in the districts will sell 13,881 tickets (out of 25,435) for each match day.

Each person will be eligible to buy two tickets per game.

The rest of the tickets (for players, clubs, divisional sports associations, district sports associations and board members and officers) will be available at the Mirpur branch of the bank.

Div II football

SPORTS REPORTER

Bashabo Trun Sangha and Shadhinata Krira Sangsad played out a 1-1 draw in the Destiny Group 2nd Division Football League at the Birshreshtha Shaheed Mostafa Kamal Stadium in Kamalapur yesterday.

Mohammad Ali gave Shadhinata KS a fourth-minute lead but Shahadat Hossain cancelled it in the 21st minute to split the points.



PHOTO: ANISUR RAHMAN

The lush green Astroturf is being laid at the Balur Math adjacent to the Bangladesh Football Federation headquarters in Motijheel yesterday. FIFA president Sepp Blatter will officially inaugurate its launching during his one-day trip to Dhaka today.

Ex-cricketers get united

SPORTS REPORTER

Former players under the banner "Cricketers of Bangladesh" will hold a press conference on Thursday to explain their position regarding the amendments made to the Bangladesh Cricket Board's constitutions.

This was decided during a meeting held at the Dhaka Club where former national captains including Gazi Ashraf Hossain, Faruque Ahmed, Naimur Rahman and Khaled Mahmud as well as former player Shakil Kasem were present.

According to the proposed amendment that was approved at the board's extraordinary general meeting held on March 1, it was ensured that there will be no cricketer-councillor, fifteen of whom exist in the present constitution, while the forum also dismissed the existence of CWAB (Cricketers' Welfare Association of Bangladesh).

The former cricketers believe that this will limit their involvement in the overall development of the game.

SECOND FINAL AGAINST SRI LANKA

Aussies want it today



AFP, Adelaide

Australia are determined to close out the one-day tri-series finals against Sri Lanka, all-rounder David Hussey said on Monday.

The top-ranked Australians take a one-nil lead into Tuesday's pivotal match in Adelaide in the best-of-three match finals after a too close for comfort victory in Sunday's opening game in Brisbane.

Australia beat Sri Lanka by just 15 runs despite setting the World Cup finalists 322 to chase for victory and leaving skipper Michael Clarke concerned about his team's ability to close out ODI matches.

Hussey, who took four for 43 with his off-spin in Sri Lanka's innings, said the Australians were desperate to kill off the finals series in consecutive matches.

"This is a chance to win a series -- not all of us have actually won a series in Australia in one-day international cricket," Hussey told reporters.

"So it's very important we actually close out the series in a professional manner."

Australia were at full stretch to contain some late lusty Sri Lankan hitting after

Mahela Jayawardene's men had clawed back from 144 for six in the 31st over after looking headed for a big loss.

Nuwan Kulasekara slammed 73 from 43 balls and Upul Tharanga hit 60 from 67 to get Sri Lanka within sight of a remarkable victory before last man Lasith Malinga was dismissed with four balls left.

Hussey said Australia's bowlers failed to deliver on their plans.

"The conditions were a bit greasy and it was very hard to stand up for the fast bowlers," he said.

"But if we can just execute our skills... I think we will go along way to winning the game."

"I thought we played three-quarters of the perfect game last night and hopefully there is a perfect game just around the corner."

Explosive opening batsman David Warner faces a pre-match fitness test for Australia ahead of Tuesday's second final.

Warner is in doubt with a sore groin injured during his man-of-the-match 163 from 157 balls which prevented him from fielding in Sri Lanka's innings.

Should Warner not play vice-captain Shane Watson is in line for a possible return to the opening position and Peter Forrest could

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Cox's City beat Ctg Abahani

SPORTS REPORTER

Cox's City FC posted their second victory in the Premier Bank Bangladesh Championship League when they handed a 2-1 defeat to Chittagong Abahani at the Birshreshtha Shaheed Mostafa Kamal Stadium in Kamalapur yesterday.

Saifuddin put Cox's City ahead in the 40th minute before Karim ensured the victory in the 86th minute. Faissal reduced the margin for Abahani two minutes before full time.

The victory took Cox's City to second position in the seven-team table with nine points from six matches, two points behind leaders Wari Club.

Chittagong Abahani were at fifth place with six points from as many matches.



Asia Cup-2012

Tickets for all the games are available at the following City Bank branches



Branches in Dhaka:

Branch	District	Address
Imamganj*	Dhaka	44-45/2, Roy Ishwar Chandra Shil Bahadur Street Imamganj, Dhaka
B.B. Avenue*	Dhaka	12, B.B. Avenue, Dhaka-1000
New Market**	Dhaka	House# 5, Road# 2, Novera Square, Dhanmondi R/A, Dhaka-1205
Dhanmondi*	Dhaka	Road # 27(Old), 32(New), House# 312, Suvasu Zenim Plaza (2 nd floor), Dhanmondi R/A, Dhaka-1205
Kawran Bazar*	Dhaka	8, Panthapath (UTC), Kawran Bazar, Dhaka-1215
Mouchak**	Dhaka	80/A, Siddeswari Circular Road, Malibagh, Dhaka-1217
Pallabi***	Dhaka	Spring Rahmat-E-Tuba Complex, 1 st Floor, Plot # 132 Road # 02, Block- A, Section-12, Mirpur, Dhaka- 1216
Uttara*	Dhaka	House-8, Sector-7, Uttara Model Town, Rabindra Sarani Dhaka-1230
Banani**	Dhaka	House-28, Road-11, Block-F, Banani, Dhaka

* Tickets available from 6-8 March, 2012

** Tickets available from 6-10 March, 2012

*** Tickets available from 6-22 March, 2012. Closed on 17 March.



Branches outside Dhaka:

Branch	District	Address
Savar SME Center	Dhaka	A-111, Ward-2, Bazar Road, Savar, Dhaka
Narayanganj	Narayanganj	Islam Market (1 st floor), 72, Bangabandhu Road, Narayanganj
Gazipur SME Center	Gazipur	Kalameshar, Board Bazar, Gazipur
Bandarilla	Chittagong	2461, South Halishohore, Bandarilla Chittagong
Probartak	Chittagong	1486/1672, O.R. Nizam Road, Al-Noor Badrun Center (1 st Floor), Probartak More, Chittagong
Khulna	Khulna	7, Sir Iqbal Road, Khulna-9100
Zinda Bazar	Sylhet	Kaniz Plaza Bhabon, Zinda Bazar, Sylhet-3100
Barisal	Barisal	19, Sadar Road, Barisal-8200
Rajshahi	Rajshahi	125, Natore Road, Shaheb Bazar, Ghoramara Rajshahi-6100
Rangpur	Rangpur	Station Road, Rangpur-5400
Comilla	Comilla	Monohorpur, Kandirpar, Comilla-3500
Mymensingh	Mymensingh	20, Choto Bazar, Mymensingh-2200

N.B. Tickets available from 6-8 March, 2012 at branches outside Dhaka.

BCB Ticket Selling Partner

