

Star SPORT

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Only ladder can stop Zlatan

Pep Guardiola is wary of the aerial threat of Zlatan Ibrahimovic when Barcelona play out their Champions League quarterfinal second leg at Camp Nou on Tuesday night. "We need a ladder to stop a player like Zlatan Ibrahimovic because he's so tall," Guardiola said at a press conference. "If it's a high ball we know it's for Ibrahimovic because of his height. We will try therefore to keep him away from the box."

-SOCCERNET



Muktijuddha's Nigerian midfielder Chibuyke Devine (R) fires in a left-footer past Sheikh Jamal custodian Piru for his side's first goal in a crucial Bangladesh Premier League match at the Bangabandhu National Stadium yesterday. The Reds won the match 2-0.

PHOTO: STAR

Muktis fell Jamal and go top

SPORTS REPORTER



Muktijoddha Sangsada moved to the top of the table in the Grameenphone Bangladesh Premier League after handing a 2-0 defeat to defending champions Sheikh Jamal Dhanmondi Club at the Bangabandhu National Stadium yesterday.

Nigerian duo Chibuyke Devine and Sunday Chijuba struck one goal each in the first half. Muktijoddha Sangsada now have 20 points from nine matches, three points more than second placed Abahani who however, have played two matches less than last season's runners-up.

Defending champions Sheikh Jamal, on the other hand, slipped one spot to fourth place by virtue of goal difference. Sheikh Jamal have 10 points from nine matches.

Kestor Akon was the only international player included in a Sheikh Jamal opening lineup missing Brazilian midfielder Everton and two other Nigerian recruits. They struggled to keep the rhythm they showed in their 3-2 triumph over Sheikh Russel in the previous match and conceded two goals in the first half.

Coach Abu Yousuf brought changes in the second half sending on Everton and Samnick

Yoko to control the midfield and the move yielded three good scoring chances which went begging. Sheikh Jamal were left to walk away with their fifth defeat in nine matches.

"We just gifted two goals to our opponents and we should have won the match the way we played in the second half despite going two goals down but it seemed to me that the foreign players are not interested in giving their full efforts though I don't know the reason behind their reluctant attitude," said Sheikh Jamal coach Abu Yousuf.

Sheikh Jamal should have taken the lead as early as the fifth minute but left-back Atiqur Rahman Meshu failed to connect a Kestor Akon right-flick cross on the edge of the six-yard box.

It was a wake-up call for Muktijoddha, coming into the game following a goalless draw against Team BJMC in the previous match and the Freedom Fighters' side availed their first chance to go ahead in the eighth minute.

Sheikh Jamal defenders had enough time to clear a throw-in inside the area but failed to do so, and the ball went to an unmarked Devine who fired home from close range. Later, Sheikh Jamal goalkeeper Piaruzzaman, playing in

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Inter-district cricket

SPORTS REPORTER

Moulavibazar sunk Sunamganj by a whopping 200 runs while the Chapainawabganj-Natore match ended in a tie in two of the nine games played in the 32nd Inter-District Cricket Championship yesterday.

At their home ground, Moulavibazar amassed 290 runs in 49.3 overs with Rahul scoring 72 and Rasel making 49. Sunamganj were then promptly bowled out for 90 runs in 28.2 overs.

Away at the Shaheed Chandu Stadium in Bogra, Natore was bowled out for the same score as Chapainawabganj scored 167 all out, to end the game in a tie.

In the other matches, Rangamati beat Khagrachari by seven wickets in Noakhali, Brahmanbaria crushed Noakhali by eight wickets in Chittagong and Manikganj beat home side Sariatpur by

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Mahela salvages Lanka



AFP, Colombo

Skipper Mahela Jayawardene cracked his second century in consecutive matches to pull Sri Lanka out of trouble in the second and final Test against England in Colombo on Tuesday.

Jayawardene followed his match-

2 million complete?

CRICINFO

When Sri Lanka moved to 38, with a square cut by Mahela Jayawardene, it brought up the two millionth run in Test cricket ever since the journey began in 1877. Not everyone, though, will agree.

All Test statistics, and this was a problem when the 2000th Test was celebrated at Lord's last year, included the Australia versus World XI match at Sydney in 2005. Many feel that it should not be included in records because it wasn't between two Full Member teams. They have a point, too.

winning 180 in the first Test in Galle with a classy 105 after seamer James Anderson had reduced the hosts to 30 for three within the first hour at P. Sara Oval.



PHOTO: AFP

Mahela Jayawardene salutes the P Sara Oval Stadium crowd after scoring a century, his second successive ton against England, on the first day of the second Test in Colombo yesterday.

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Thilan Samaraweera (54) added 124 for the fourth wicket with his captain as Sri Lanka recovered to post 238 for six by stumps on the opening day in a remarkable re-run of the Galle Test.

Sri Lanka had slumped to 15-3 in the first four overs of the match at Galle, before Jayawardene and Samaraweera rescued the hosts by putting on a half-century partnership.

A sell-out crowd of 5,000, mostly travelling English fans, applauded warmly when Jayawardene reached his 31st Test century with a single off left-arm spinner Samit Patel after tea.

The 34-year-old struck 11 fours and a six in his eighth hundred against England before he was trapped leg-before by off-spinner Graeme Swann with a sharp, turning delivery.

England, whose 75-run defeat at Galle followed a 3-0 rout by Pakistan in the United Arab Emirates earlier in the year, need a win to level the series and retain their number one ranking.

Andrew Strauss' men will slip to second spot behind South Africa if they lose or draw the match.

Jayawardene lost Samaraweera just before tea, leg-before to seamer Tim

Cloud removed over league?

SPORTS REPORTER



The four-member committee formed to resolve the Dhaka Premier Cricket League crisis has reached a conclusion by appeasing the three clubs, it was learned.

A source has confirmed that Bangladesh Cricket Board (BCB) vice-president Mahbulul Anam will send his recommendations to president AHM Mustafa Kamal, currently in Chennai to watch the Indian Premier League, which will then be made public and the league will restart by April 6.

Mahbulul led a body which comprised of directors Gazi Ashraf Hossain, Dewan Shaiful Arefin Tutul and Siraj Uddin Md Alamgir after the BCB chief himself could not ease the matter during Sunday's board meeting.

The Cricket Committee of Dhaka Metropolis had forwarded the issue, where the giants Abahani and Mohammedan Sporting Club questioned the clearance of Victoria Sporting Club's Pakistani recruit Mohammad Yousuf, to Kamal after CCDM suspended the league despite the match

referee decision during the Victoria-Abahani game in which two points were awarded to Victoria after the Dhanmondi-based club refused to continue playing their Super League game on March 28.

The league has been suspended ever since and it has been a week now, making the other clubs quite frustrated.

Old DOHS Club, which is run these days by Prime Bank, have already sent a letter to the CCDM chairman in which they have asked for Tk 50,000 per day if the league goes past the April 6 scheduled date.

"During the league, we have to spend approximately Tk 50,000 everyday as expenses. So we have asked the authorities to give us that amount if they extend the league after April 6," said team manager Saiful Islam Bhuyian.

The club is also fiddling with the idea of sending another letter in which they are to threaten a boycott of the league if it doesn't start in 48 hours. "We thought about it and may go ahead with it in the next day or two if the situation doesn't change," he said.

But Saiful is hopeful that a solution has

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LOCAL snippets

SPORTS REPORTER

Agrani Bank dropped points in the Premier Bank Bangladesh Championship League when they were held to a goalless draw by Beanibazar at the Cox's Bazar Stadium yesterday.

After two successive victories, Agrani Bank were forced to play out their second draw in eight matches but it was enough to take them top of the seven-team points table with 11 points along with Wari Club, who have played a match less than Agrani Bank. Beanibazar raised their points tally to ten from eight matches to stay in joint third place.

Div-II Football

Bashabo Tarun Sangha recorded a 3-1 win over Bangladesh Police AC in the Destiny Group 2nd Division Football League at the Birshreshtha Shaheed Mostafa Kamal Stadium in Kamalapur yesterday.

Asif Hossain struck a brace while Selim Reja netted the other for Bashabo. Al Mamun pulled one goal back for Police AC.

Tribal Hockey

Dinajpur and Bandarban moved into the final of the S Alam Group-First Security Islami Bank 2nd Tribal Hockey Tournament beating their respective rivals in the semifinals at the Maulana Bhasani Hockey Stadium yesterday.

Dinajpur defeated Rangamati 1-0 with Mona Sareng striking the match-winner in the 54th minute while Bandarban also defeated Khagrachari by an

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Mumbai Indians's new captain Harbhajan Singh inspects the Chepauk pitch while his predecessor little master Sachin Tendulkar (L) smiles in Chennai on Tuesday. The cash-rich Indian Premier League starts here today.

PHOTO: INTERNET

Sachin quits IPL captaincy

AFP, New Delhi

Sachin Tendulkar on Tuesday stepped down as Mumbai Indians skipper on the eve of the Indian Premier League (IPL), saying he needed a "break from the responsibility of captaincy".

The batting superstar, who led Mumbai in all of the previous four editions of the IPL, will be replaced by off-spinner Harbhajan Singh as captain in the Twenty20 tournament that starts on Wednesday.

"The Mumbai Indians is more than a team. It is like a family to me. At this point of time, I feel I need a break from the responsibility of captaincy," Tendulkar, who turns 39 this month, said in a statement.

Tendulkar, who smashed an unprecedented 100th international century during the Asia Cup in Dhaka last month, said the new captain would have his "wholehearted support".

"After due consideration, I discussed my intention to hand over the captaincy of the team to Harbhajan Singh," he said.

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