

Star SPORT

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Bavarian shoes for Ronaldo

Cristiano Ronaldo reportedly had three pairs of soccer shoes stolen before Real Madrid's Champions League game against Bayern Munich. The new ones he'll get as compensation will make him fit right into the Oktoberfest this year. German radio station Bayern 1 says it will donate a pair of Bavarian folk shoes to Ronaldo after the Portugal winger and teammates Mesut Ozil and Karim Benzema reportedly had shoes and shirts stolen from the dressing room at Allianz Arena. Bayern won the first leg of the semifinal 2-1.



Bangladesh damaged as much as Pakistan



SAKEB SUBHAN

Bangladesh's tour of Pakistan has been postponed by at least four weeks at the eleventh (twelfth may be more appropriate) hour. The High Court questioned the legality of the Bangladesh Cricket Board's (BCB) decision to send the national team to a strife-torn country where international teams have not visited since the March 2009 militant attack on the Sri Lankan team bus in Lahore.

This brings up the very real possibility that the tour will not go ahead at all. It must be understood and appreciated that Bangladesh is not averse to touring Pakistan as far as the country or its cricketing tradition goes. As a young cricketing nation, strong cricketing ties with older nations are the lifeblood of growth, and it is such a tie that was being fostered with Pakistan before this episode. But due to factors outside



A stone-faced AHM Mustafa Kamal at the BCB office yesterday.

cricket's sphere of influence Pakistan is not a safe country to tour at present. It is unfortunate that cricket-crazy Pakistanis will not be able to see their nation finally emerge from cricketing isolation, but that is through no fault of Bangladesh's

cricketers whose security will be at risk if the tour goes ahead. The plain truth is that this situation was engineered by the ambitions of one man.

BCB president Mustafa Kamal has been on a mission to curry favour with the Pakistan Cricket Board (PCB) to secure an International Cricket Council (ICC) vice-presidency nomination. This dangling of the carrot of a tour to Pakistan has been gross ingratitude for the support the PCB provided during Bangladesh's bid to become a Test nation, and paints the board in a terrible light. The travesty of the whole situation is that it could so easily have been avoided.

The tour to Pakistan should not have been on the table in the first place. A board chief not ruled by other interests would have gently and politely declined the offer to tour, and the matter would have been put to rest there. But it has become increasingly evident

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TIMELINE OF A DOOMED DEAL

December 17, 2011: After months of negotiations with PCB, the newly appointed Zaka Ashraf endorses Kamal as their choice for the ICC vice-presidency. On the same day, Kamal announces the Tigers' tour to Pakistan in April 2012; says a security team will ascertain in January whether the troubled country is safe to visit.

December 21, 2011: BCB confirms Kamal as their choice as well.

February 1, 2012: After a meeting in Dubai, the ICC's executive board recommends redefining the role of its president, reducing its powers and creating a new position of chairman.

March 3-5, 2012: After a two-month delay, the security team headed by Kamal is "satisfied" with arrangements. "After seeing all the security arrangements all of us agree and are satisfied that the security infrastructure is in place," Kamal said at a press conference in Lahore.

March 7, 2012: ICC introduces special dispensation to be made only in exceptional circumstances to ensure that bilateral series take place even if the ruling body has determined it unsafe to appoint its officials for such series. This would allow "non-neutral match officials", a departure from the ICC's Standard Playing Conditions.

March 12, 2012: Kamal declares that Bangladesh will not tour if the ICC does not send match officials, in light of the special dispensation introduced by the governing body.

March 19, 2012: PCB chairman Zaka Ashraf threatens to cut-off bilateral relations with BCB after Kamal's latest stance. "Ultimately, it's

Bangladesh's loss if they don't send their team," he said.

April 15, 2012: ICC announces that BCB and PCB have agreed on the tour to Pakistan, outlining two matches for April 29 and 30 in Lahore, much to the shock of many in the BCB itself.

April 16, 2012: The ICC's Executive Board confirms a constitutional amendment that will alter the role of its president and create a new post of a non-voting board chairman. The amendment will convert the ICC presidency into a rotational one-year term from 2014 at which time the post of vice-president will cease to exist.



Barrister Hasan MS Azim, the petitioners' lawyer, briefs the reporter after getting stay order on Bangladesh's Pakistan tour yesterday.

April 19, 2012: BCB informs PCB that the April 29-30 series is postponed after the Bangladesh High Court rules in favour of a four-month ban on the Tigers touring Pakistan.

AHF CUP HOCKEY Bangladesh win again

SPORTS REPORTER

Bangladesh moved to the semifinal of the 4th AHF (Asian Hockey Federation) Cup beating Singapore 4-1 in their second group match in Bangkok, Thailand yesterday. The defending champions, who got off to a positive start with a 4-2 win over Chinese Taipei on Tuesday, toyed with the Singapore side to win the match convincingly.

Penalty corner specialist Mamunur Rahman Chayan converted a penalty corner in the 26th minute to open the scoring as Bangladesh went into the breather 1-0. Chayan doubled the lead in the 43rd minute from another penalty corner before Shuvo and skipper Russel Mahmud Jimmy scored two more goals to take a 4-0 lead. Singapore scored a consolation goal in the last minute of the match.

Bangladesh will take on hosts Thailand in their last group match today.

Siddikur's decent start

SPORTS REPORTER

World Number three Lee Westwood of England got off to a flier with a 7-under 65 in his defence of the CIMB Niaga Indonesian Masters title as Bangladesh's Siddikur Rahman managed a one-under on Thursday.

The Englishman opened up a two-shot lead over highly rated Arnon Vongvanij of Thailand, who returned with a 67 at the 750,000-dollar Asian Tour event at the majestic Royale Jakarta Golf Club.

Veteran Boonchu Ruangit of Thailand, former Asian Tour number one Jyoti Randhawa of India, Shiv Kapur, Lee Sung of Korea, Zaw Moe of Myanmar and Sam Cyr of the United States were tied in third place on matching 68s.

A rejuvenated Westwood who took a week's break

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SUPER LEAGUE CRICKET Club officials call on BCB president

SPORTS REPORTER

The warring club officials met Bangladesh Cricket Board (BCB) president AHM Mustafa Kamal yesterday to discuss the crisis about resumption of the Dhaka Premier Division Cricket Super League.

"Five out of six super league clubs' officials met the president and placed their demands and expressed their grievances over some issues. The president assured them that he would look into all the issues," said BCB's media committee chairman Jalal Yunus.

"The president is hopeful that the league will resume after the National Cricket League," informed BCB's media manager Rabeed Imam.

The league was suspended since March 28 following controversy over Victoria's Pakistani batsman Mohammad Yousuf's legality of registration.

Earlier, an emergency BCB meeting had called to break the deadlock and asked the league to be started on April 10, but play has yet to roll on to the field.

Ex-cricketer shot dead in Pretoria

AFP, Johannesburg

South Africa-born former Worcestershire and Namibia batsman Louis Vorster was shot dead as he left a petrol station near Pretoria, a police spokesman said Wednesday.

The 45-year-old businessman was driving out of the garage when his path was blocked by another car and a gunman opened fire, fatally wounding Vorster before snatching a package from his vehicle.

"It is a very sad day for southern Africa cricket," said acting chief executive Jacques Faul in a statement on the Cricket South Africa website.

"Louis did a great deal for cricket both in South Africa and Namibia, where he played for and coached the national team."

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Ratna to shoot in Olympics

SPORTS REPORTER



Sharmin Akter Ratna will be representing Bangladesh in the London Olympics this year after she was nominated for a wild card by the International Olympic Committee yesterday.

The International Shooting Sport Federation (ISSF) approved Ratna's nomination for the wild card through a letter to the National Shooting Federation yesterday. The Commonwealth Shooting Championship and SA Games gold medalist Ratna will be competing in the 10m Air Rifle event.

The 22-year old lady from Magura won the 10m Air Rifle gold in the 2010 South Asian Games in Dhaka with a record mark of 499.4 points. Later that year, she won gold in the same event in the Commonwealth Shooting Championships held in New Delhi.

Bangladesh Olympic Association had appealed for two wild card entries in shooting, both in women's 10m Air Rifles event. Wild cards are given to those countries who fail to qualify directly for the mega extravaganza. Bangladesh have also appealed for one wild card each for gymnastic, archery, taekwondo and swimming.

Meanwhile, Ratna along with three other shooters -- Sadiya Sultana, Sharmin Akter and Tripti Datta -- coach Shoaibuzzaman and BOA director general Waliullah left for London for a training camp at the Bisley International

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NAT'L SCHOOL FOOTBALL Divisional round starts from today

SPORTS REPORTER

The knock-out round of the National School Football Tournament's Dhaka Division matches will be staged in two different venues from today. Organisers at a press conference at the BFF House relayed the information yesterday.

The Gazipur Stadium will stage the knock-out matches between eight teams today. The final will be held tomorrow at the same venue. Eight other teams will vie for a place at the Manikganj stadium today and the final of that venue will be held tomorrow. The two zonal champions will move to the final round where they will compete against other divisional champions.

Each of the matches will be of 60-minute durations and if undecided in normal time, will roll into tie-breakers.

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Pakistan astonished



AFP, Karachi

Pakistan cricket authorities Thursday voiced astonishment at what they called an "extremely disturbing" development after a court in Dhaka ordered Bangladesh to postpone their tour over security fears.

The Tigers were set to play a 50-over game and a Twenty20 international on April 29 and 30 in Lahore, the first international cricket matches in Pakistan for three years.

But the High Court in Dhaka ordered the team to delay the visit by at least four weeks while Bangladesh cricket authorities explained why the tour should go ahead despite security worries.

International cricket has been suspended in Pakistan since militants launched a deadly attack on the Sri Lankan team bus during the third Test in Lahore in March 2009.

The Pakistan Cricket Board (PCB) released a strongly-worded statement voicing their fury at the postponement of the Bangladesh tour.

"It is astonishing to note that a matter lacking any legal issue has been dragged in the court by petitioners who appear to have vested interest and want to jeopardise Pakistan-Bangladesh cricketing relations," the statement said.

"It is extremely disturbing to note for the PCB and Pakistan cricket fans and world

cricketing nations that such an adverse order has been passed to block a bilateral cricket series."

Pakistan had hoped the tour would encourage other foreign teams to visit and ultimately pave the way to a full resumption of home international series.

Former Pakistan coach Mohsin Khan said he thought the postponement was strange. "During this whole period I thought there was uncertainty but this postponement will definitely hurt Pakistan's sincere efforts to revive cricket in Pakistan," Khan told AFP.

PCB chief operating officer Subhan Ahmed agreed the postponement would damage Pakistan's attempts to revive home internationals and leave a gap in the team's calendar.

"We do not have any alternate plans because teams are busy in international cricket," said Ahmed, who was still hoping Bangladesh can tour after the court case.

PCB chairman Zaka Ashraf also deplored the postponement.

"It's shocking for us," Ashraf said in Islamabad. "This is unexpected because a lot of preparations have been made and courts usually don't come in cricketing matters."

Former Pakistan captain Asif Iqbal blamed the Bangladesh Cricket Board (BCB).

"[The] Bangladesh Board has made a joke of Pakistan cricket," said Iqbal. "[The] PCB should take them to the task because they are responsible."

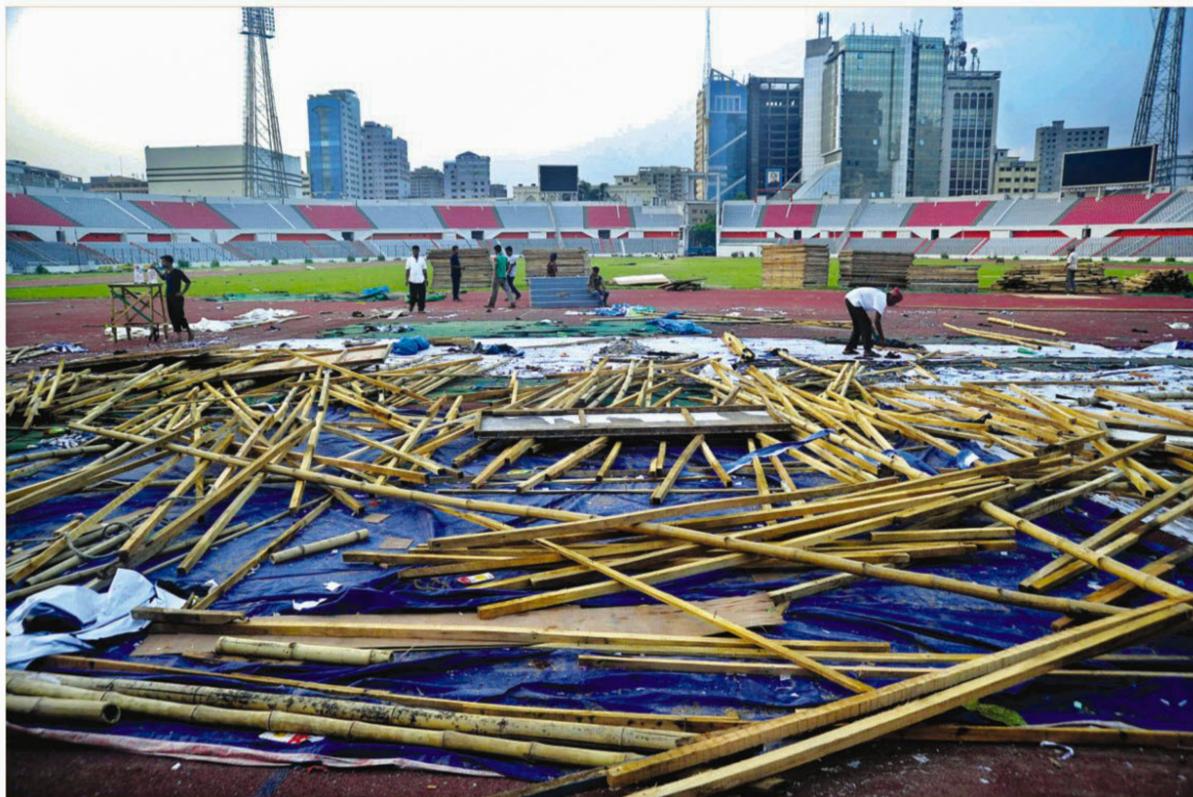


PHOTO: ANISUR RAHMAN

BY PRODUCT OF A CELEBRATION: Bangabandhu National Stadium holds the ruins of Wednesday's grand reception. The carefully-maintained football pitch has been dug in numerous places and will require hard work to be brought back to shape. The expensive athletic track is full of debris with bamboos and nails scattered all over. The groundstaff, without any magnetic device, are sweating to take the nails off the track.

LOCAL snippets

SPORTS REPORTER

The Bangladesh Roller Skating Federation has selected seven skaters for a trial for the 3rd Asian Beach Games to be held in China in June 2012. The seven skaters Sumon Hossain, Abul Kalam Azad, Shahidur Rahman, Ashraf Alam, Mukul Shikder, Boboi Wekhom, Asif Iqbal have been called for the trial at the Bangabandhu National Stadium premises today.

Div-II Football

Bangladesh Police A.C defeated East End Club by 2-0 in the Destiny Group Dhaka Metropolis 2nd Division League match at the Birshreshtha Shaheed Mostafa Kamal Stadium in Kamalpur yesterday. Wasim Iqbal and Kabirul Islam scored the two goals for Police.

Championship League Football

Cox City FC defeated strugglers Chittagong Abahani 2-1 in their Premier Bank Bangladesh Championship match at the Cox's Bazar Stadium yesterday. Mohammad Masud opened the scoring for Cox City in the 29th minute but Mohammad Ripon equalised six minutes later. However, Saifuddin scored for the hosts in the 75th minute to ensure all three points.

Sarda, Sathi pair win

Sharmin Alam Sarda and Shathi Sarker pair clinched the women's doubles title of the Samsung National Tennis Competition beating the Ishita Afroz and Ayesha Sultana pair in 6-2, 6-1 sets at the National Tennis Complex in Ramna yesterday.

In the men's singles, top seed Amol Roy and Dipu Lal moved into the final with victories over their

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