

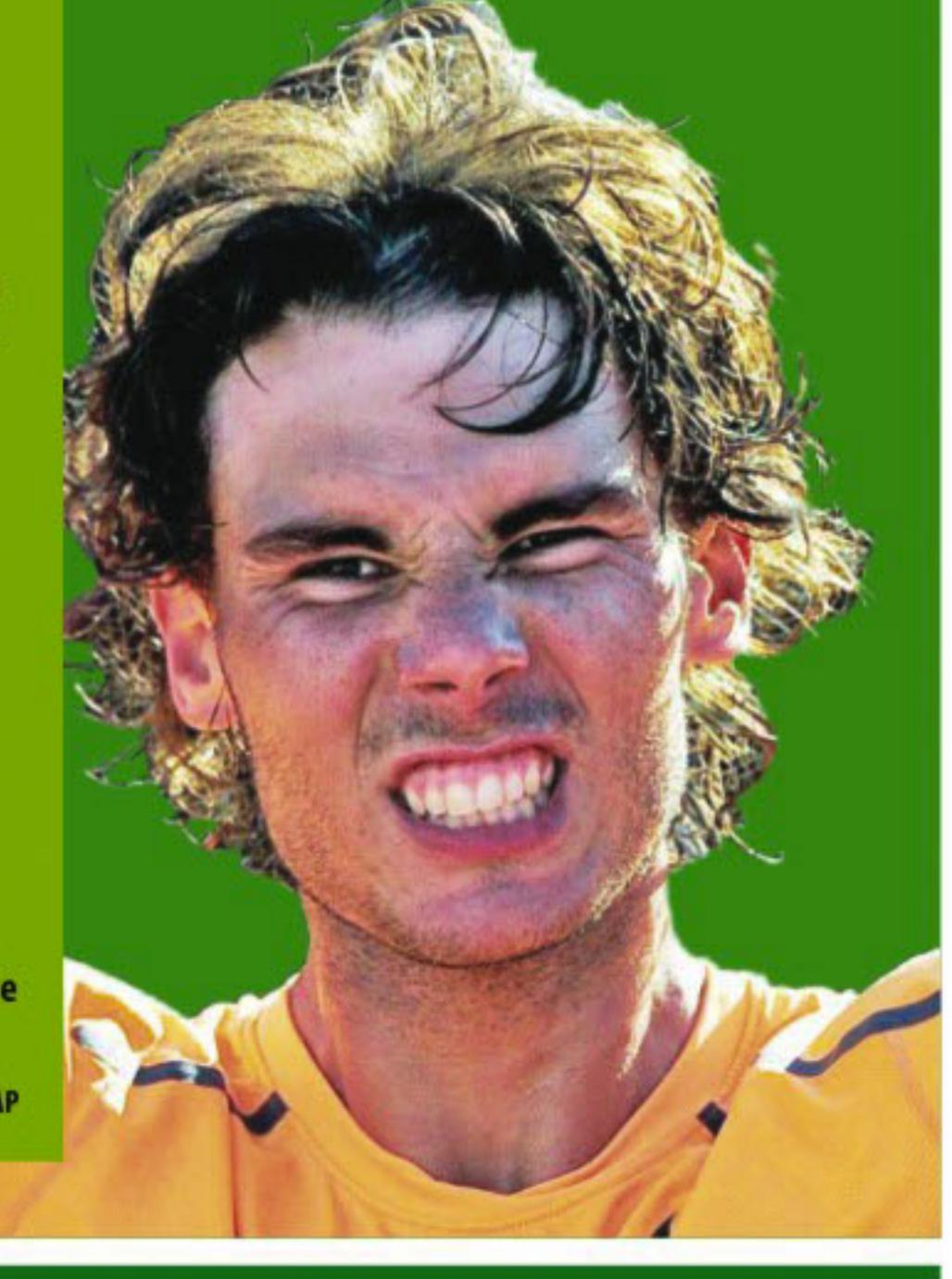
Star SPORT

DHAKA SUN MAY 6, 2012, E-MAIL: sports@thelystar.net

Nadal unhappy with blue clay

Rafael Nadal blames the ATP for allowing the introduction of the blue-clay surface. The six-time French Open champion was troubled when he practiced on it for the first time Thursday, describing it as soft and slippery. He's also unhappy with the placement of the advertising boards. A longtime critic of event organizers, Nadal said Friday that the ATP should "never have allowed such a change at a tournament of this scale" in his native Spain. He also was displeased when the Madrid Open was moved on the schedule from the hard-court season.

-- AP



New Tigers coach likely this month

Cricket

SPORTS REPORTER

No sooner had Stuart Law departed yesterday, the Bangladesh Cricket Board (BCB) intensified its search for the new head coach. Law's replacement could be named as early as this month with the major candidates being asked to come to the BCB headquarters and give their interviews.

In previous times the BCB had to look for a proper candidate and convince him to take up the job. The change may have come up after the large amount of interest shown by the various coaches so far, which is linked to the team's success in the Asia Cup last March.

The board has been taking its time to find a coach, and despite May 15 being the deadline for the applicants, they have already begun communicating with some of the candidates.

It has been reported that Englishman Mick Newell, the Nottinghamshire director of cricket, is in the running while Dermot Reeve and Dean Jones have also let their Tigers aspirations be known. It was learned that the BCB is mostly targeting coaches from Australia, South Africa, England and New Zealand.

When asked what the BCB will look for in the new coach, media committee chairman Jalal Yunus said, "We look at his coaching profile, bigger it is the better. We will see how successful he is, at county or state level."

"We will also see if he is a good motivator and the bonus would be if he has coached at international level. We will try to appoint a head coach as early as possible though we don't have any activities in the next few months. We have already begun the process," he said.

Jalal, who is part of a group of directors who looks for the coach (including the acting CEO Nizamuddin Chowdhury), said that it is a good sign that coaches are now keen on taking up the Bangladesh job rather than what happened at previous times.

"I think it [coaches' interest] has made our job easier, and it is definitely a good sign. It is definitely after the consistent performance at the Asia Cup that everything has changed," he said.

"When we were looking for a coach last year, we didn't have much choice. We went for Stuart Law then, but this time we have some very good coaches in our radar," added Jalal, who also said that they are ready to stretch the budget to land their choice of coach.

At a time when Bangladesh are looking for a coach, the

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Kolkata skipper Gautam Gambhir lofts a ball towards the mid-wicket fence during his 56 against Pune in their IPL match at the Eden Gardens in Kolkata yesterday. Kolkata won the match by 7 runs to occupy the second position in the league table.

PHOTO: AFP

NEW STADIUM High-ups in Cox's Bazar to pick site

SPORTS REPORTER

Sports Minister for Youth and Sports Ahad Ali Sarkar led a delegation to Cox's Bazar to select the land for a stadium ahead of the 2014 Twenty20 World Cup.

He took chairman of the Parliamentary Standing Committee on Youth and Sports Zahid Ahsan Russell, Bangladesh Cricket Board director Dewan Shafiq Arefin and acting CEO Nizamuddin Chowdhury with him to the beach town to inspect a suitable ground for the proposed stadium.

A meeting between the BCB, NSC and the Sports Ministry last week advised for the women's T20 World Cup, to be held alongside the men's competition, to be played in Cox's Bazar.

Nizamuddin informed that they had seen four areas and chosen one around the beach. "The first step would be to acquire the land and since everyone concerned came here, we are hopeful that work will start very soon," he said.

"I think the minimum requirement could be fulfilled before the 2014 event if work begins quickly. We have plans to upgrade it into an international venue as it will be important to brand Bangladesh," said Nizamuddin.

KKR crush Ganguly's Pune

PTI, Kolkata

Kolkata Knight Riders prevailed in their prestige fight against Pune Warriors, defeating the Sourav Ganguly-led side by seven runs in a thrilling Indian Premier League match at the Eden Gardens yesterday.

Dubbed as the 'Battle Royale' of this edition of IPL, Gautam Gambhir and his boys held their nerves as the Pune batting again faltered at the death to slump to their fifth consecutive defeat.

It could also have been a match between the two Bangladesh players in the IPL, Kolkata's Shakib Al Hasan and Pune's Tamim Iqbal, but it was not to be as Shakib has played only three matches so far this season while Tamim is yet to make his IPL debut.

The loss means Pune has put paid to any hopes whatsoever of making it to the playoffs, while KKR have consolidated their second position in the standings

with 15 points from 11 outings.

Chasing 151 to win, KKR restricted Pune to 143 for eight with Ganguly the top-scorer with 36 off 35 balls during which he hit four boundaries and a lone six.

Marchant De Lange, who replaced an injured Brett Lee, gave KKR a perfect start with two wickets -- Michael Clarke and Robin Uthappa -- from his first two overs.

Reduced to 45/2 in the power play, Pune found themselves in desperate need of a partnership when Iqbal Abdulla and Jacques Kallis ensured further slide for Ganguly's men as Pune recorded yet another top-order failure.

Kolkata had Pune reeling at 55 for five at one stage before Ganguly and Angelo Mathews's 73-run sixth wicket partnership which came off just 56 balls turned the match in the visitors favour.

Mathews gave Ganguly good support from the other end as the duo stitched 73 runs for the sixth wicket to

keep Pune in the hunt.

But Ganguly's dismissal soon after he hit a six over long on off Rajat Bhatia in the 18th over swung the match in Pune's favour. With 12 needed from last three balls, Mathews perished in search of a big one, brilliantly caught by Manoj Tiwary at long on to virtually pocket the match for Kolkata.

Earlier, Kolkata frittered away a rollicking start as Pune hit back in the last 10 overs to restrict the hosts to 150 for five at a jam-packed Eden Gardens.

Opting to bat, Kolkata skipper Gautam Gambhir played yet another captain's knock with his third consecutive half-century, 36-ball 55, and added 113 runs with Brendon McCullum, who scored 42 off 43 balls.

In the first half of the KKR innings, erratic bowling by Pune -- they leaked nine wides inside the powerplay -- helped the cause of the hosts as they raced to 68 for no loss in the first six overs.

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Rajasthan outclass Punjab

SPORT DESK

Some pyrotechnics with the bat and a disciplined effort with the ball gave Rajasthan Royals a convincing 43-run victory over Kings XI Punjab in their IPL match at the Punjab Cricket Association Stadium in Mohali yesterday.

Winning the toss and batting first, the fireworks started as soon as Ajinkya Rahane's wicket brought Shane Watson to the middle. Watson hit a furious 17-ball 36 with four boundaries and two sixes and along with skipper Rahul Dravid, who was also playing well, Watson propelled the score to 76 for one before falling in the eighth over. Dravid carried on till the fourteenth over

when he fell to Harris for a 39-ball 46 studded with eight boundaries. Then Ashok Menaria with a 27-ball 34, and Brad Hodge with 36 from 23 balls, provided the late burst to take the score to a formidable 177 for six.

In reply, Punjab's chase never quite got off the blocks as they lost early wickets in the face of disciplined bowling from Rajasthan. Shaun Marsh held one end up with 34 from 27 balls as Punjab slipped to 55 for 3 in the eighth over, and his fall to Jofra Archer with the score on 59 spelled doom for the home side. Azhar Mahmood with 24 and Gurkeerat Singh with 23 offered some resistance, but the ever-increasing required run rate meant the match was over as a contest even before the final over had started. Shane Watson was

Rajshahi in U-16 final

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Manikganj

Rajshahi reached the final of the Standard Chartered Young Tigers Under-16 National Cricket Championship as they defeated Dinajpur by one wicket at the Shaheed Miraj Tapovan Stadium in Manikganj yesterday.

Batting first, Dinajpur were bowled out for 126 in 44 overs. Sadekul Islam top scored with 56 runs while

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Chelsea paint Wembley blue

AFP, London



Chelsea withstood a late Liverpool onslaught to seal their fourth FA Cup final victory in six seasons here Saturday with a 2-1 win at Wembley.

A goal in each half from Brazilian midfielder Ramires and veteran striker Didier Drogba clinched a narrowly deserved win for Chelsea, with substitute Andy Carroll scoring for Liverpool.

The win saw Chelsea skipper John Terry enter the record books as the first man to captain one side to four victories in the competition having already lifted the famous trophy in 2007, 2009 and 2010.

The defeat denied Liverpool the opportunity to end a largely disappointing season with a second piece of silverware following their League Cup triumph over Cardiff in February.

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