

Star

## SPORT

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## Hollywood film about Barca

Great news for fans of Green Street, Bend It Like Beckham and Soccer Dog: European Cup -- the rich and illustrious canon of soccer in the cinema is set to be expanded with a Hollywood movie about FC Barcelona.

Paul Greengrass -- the Oscar-winning British director of United 93, The Bourne Ultimatum and Green Zone -- is currently at the Cannes Film Festival looking for international backers for "an epic cinematic portrait of FC Barcelona", which will focus primarily on the four years in which Pep Guardiola guided the Catalan giants to 13 trophies.

-- INTERNET



## Pybus signing still in balance

Cricket

SPORTS REPORTER

Although it appeared to be a done deal between the Bangladesh Cricket Board (BCB) and coach Richard Pybus a week ago, the situation now seems to have changed as new demands have made their way to the table.

Richard Pybus came to Dhaka on a short visit on May 10 and a day of meetings with the Bangladesh Cricket Board made it all but certain that the Englishman would become the next head coach of the Bangladesh cricket team.

Particularly, the words from BCB boss Mustafa Kamal during the meeting caused many to believe that it was just a matter of time before the deal was done.

"There won't be any more interviews, nobody else is coming. We want one person and I'm sure we will succeed. We have spoken to him [Pybus] and we are quite interested to get him. We can get a concrete decision from him in six to seven days," Kamal had confidently declared at the time.

There was supposed to be a positive

response from Pybus by Saturday, but BCB media committee chairman Jalal Yunus said yesterday that they were negotiating with Pybus regarding some issues and that it will take a further seven-eight days for something definite to be known.

"We have to wait because we are discussing some issues," said Yunus.

When asked about the possibility of reaching an agreement with the Englishman, Yunus said: "I don't know what will happen but right at the moment what I can say is that we are not yet done with the deal. We have to wait seven-eight more days," he added.

Yunus also said that they have been in touch with the other applicants so that they can go for an alternative if they eventually fail to confirm Pybus as the next head coach of the Bangladesh cricket team.

Pybus had earlier reached a consensus with BCB regarding the financial issues during his visit but it was learnt that he came up with some new demands and conditions for which the board will have to pay more than initially expected. At present, financial issues look like a major hurdle for the board in making the deal.



Russian tennis star Maria Sharapova plays a backhand return against Angelique Kerber of Germany during their semifinal match of the WTA Rome Masters yesterday. Sharapova won 6-3, 6-4 to book a berth in the final.

PHOTO: AFP

## Sk Jamal win at Feni

SPORTS REPORTER

Sheikh Jamal Dhanmondi Club returned to winning ways in the Grameenphone Bangladesh Premier League as they outplayed Feni Soccer Club 3-0 at the Shaheed Salam Stadium yesterday. The defending champions, who came into this match on the back of a 0-2 defeat at the hands of Farashganj, dominated proceedings from the beginning and came away with three well deserved points, which took them to 15 points from 13 outings and lifted them to sixth position in the 11-team table.

The Feni club, on the other hand, who had lifted themselves out of the bottom position with a couple of important victories and draws in the last week of March, once again find themselves hovering just above the drop zone. Feni have 10 points from 13 matches, just one above Rahmatganj and Arambagh at the bottom, both of whom have a game in hand.

That good run of form a month and a half ago saw the Feni side hold Sheikh Jamal to a 1-1 draw at the Bangabandhu National Stadium. So, there were expectations of a good show in front of their own crowd this time, but the hosts failed to show much resolve in holding the visitors.

Sheikh Jamal started the match at a blistering pace and took the lead in the 12th minute, thanks to their Nigerian

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## GMs up against forum

Chess

SPORTS REPORTER

Both the panels in the upcoming Bangladesh Chess Federation elections -- the players consensus panel led by GM Niaz Murshed and the players-organisers consensus panel led by Bhola's councillor Saiful Tareq -- submitted their nominations on the last day of submission yesterday, with both parties still believing there is scope for further consensus.

Initially there were four separate panels in the polls which later came down to two separate panels following the intervention of the District and Divisional Organisers' Association (DOA) more popularly known as the forum, which is backing the players-organisers consensus panel. The other panel is backed by five Grandmasters and organisers of different Dhaka clubs.

A total of 117 voters will elect a 25-member committee, comprising one president (govt nominated), four vice presidents, one general secretary, two joint secretaries, one treasurer and 16 members. The election is scheduled for March 31.

"We are supposed to be playing

chess now but the reality is we have to come to the polls. We are here to protest those people who are not known in chess arena and are backed by the forum (District and Divisional Organisers' Association).

"We will be hoping for the support of councillors who are involved with chess and love the game and want to see chess in a new height," said GM Niaz Murshed after submitting the nominations.

The grim reality of chess is that there has been no actual play in the country for quite a while. No top-level chess tournament has been held nationally in the recent past. The ad-hoc committee could not hold a single Grandmasters' tournament which used to be a common event in the yearly calendar. During the regime of the ad-hoc committee, Bangladesh Chess Federation even lost sponsors like Standard Chartered Bank and Mercantile Bank for their lack of accountability.

GM Enamul Hossain Razib, who kept himself away from the game in the last two years in protest of the appointment of ad-hoc committee, admitted that there is still opportunity to form a common panel as the opposition panel has asked them to sit for consensus.

Mushfiqur Rahman Mohon, a

member candidate led by DOA, also felt that they were still trying to form a common committee where only chess-related persons would get entry.

"From the beginning, we wanted a common panel in a bid to accommodate the real organisers from chess and still trying to do it though there are differences between the two panels. There are still some hours left to the nomination withdrawal, let's see what happens and we are hopeful," said Mohon.

"Our target is to spread chess across the country," said Mohon, whose panel has chosen Saiful Tareq as general secretary although Saiful has no affiliation with the game at any level. The panel kept incumbent general secretary Mokaddesh Hossain in his position.

The panel led by the DOA has majority vote in the electorate and they are clearly ahead of the players' consensus panel. However, they are a worried after all five grandmasters of the country came under one umbrella.

Replying to a query, Niaz said, "If the polls are held in a fair manner, we will accept the results whatever they are. And we promise we will return to the game under organisers who will be elected."

## Maria, Li to fight it out

Tennis

AFP, Rome

Russian defending champion Maria Sharapova beat Germany's Angelique Kerber 6-3, 6-4 to set up a Rome Masters final against Li Na of China.

Sharapova advanced in 89 minutes against Kerber, whose move into the WTA top-10 on Monday will complete a line-up for 10 different nationalities at the summit of the women's game.

Li, who will defend her French Open title when the grand slam starts a week from Sunday, reached the title match at the Foro Italico without hitting a ball in her semifinal as opponent Serena Williams withdrew, claiming back pain but admitting the pullout was really just a precaution.

"When I was warming up this morning, I was really looking forward to playing against one of the best players ever," said Li, who has not won a title since her triumph in Paris a year ago.

"Of course I'm happy to reach the final but I don't like winning like that. I am so sorry for Serena and hope she gets healthy."

Sharapova earned revenge against 12th seed Kerber after losing to the German at the Paris Indoors in February after beating her only a few weeks earlier in the Australian Open

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## Shakib takes KKR to No 2

SPORT DESK

Kolkata Knight Riders all-rounder Shakib Al Hasan served a timely reminder of his quality as his fine all-round show delivered a convincing 34-run victory over Pune Warriors India in their Indian Premier League match at the Subrata Roy Stadium in Pune yesterday.

The win takes Kolkata to second spot on the IPL points table and sets up a qualifier match against table-toppers Delhi Daredevils on May 22.

Shakib, who was adjudged man-of-the-match for his 30-ball 42 and bowling figures of 2 for 18, came in at the fall of Jacques Kallis's wicket with the score on 40 in 8.4 overs. He took his time to settle, scoring only five off his first twelve balls while Brendon McCullum was also going at less than a run-a-ball at the other end. Then two sixes off Shakib's bat in the thirteenth over bowled by Michael Clarke shifted the momentum. Their 67-run partnership was brought to an end when McCullum fell to Wayne Parnell in the seventeenth over. Shakib fell ten runs later, bowled by Bhuvneshwar Kumar. Yusuf Pathan and Manoj Tiwary then continued the attack to take the score to 136 for four.

Pune were never in the chase as Kolkata's trio of spinners -- Shakib, Sunil Narine and Iqbal Abdullah -- applied the stranglehold on the slow pitch. Shakib dismissed Sourav Ganguly leg-before and had Anustup Majumdar stumped, while Narine was as hard to decipher as ever, giving away only 15 runs in four overs for one wicket. Pune could only stutter to 102 for eight at the end of twenty overs.

SCORES IN BRIEF

KOLKATA KNIGHT RIDERS: 136 for 4 (Shakib 42, McCullum 41; Parnell 2-18)

PUNE WARRIORS INDIA: 102 for 8 (Ryder 22, Majumdar 17; Shakib 2-18, Pathan 2-12)

Result: Kolkata Knight Riders won by 34 runs.

Man-of-the-match: Shakib Al Hasan



With picturesque mountains in the background, cheerleaders take a leap for the Delhi Daredevils during their IPL T20 match against Kings XI Punjab at the Himachal Pradesh Cricket Stadium in Dharamsala yesterday.

PHOTO: AFP

## LOCAL snippets

SPORTS REPORTER

Dinajpur Municipal School outplayed Quamrunessa School by 3-0 goals in the UCB First Women's Hockey at the Maulana Bhasani National Hockey Stadium yesterday.

After a barren first half, Sabnun Akhter scored three goals in the 31st, 57th and 59th minutes respectively.

In the day's other match, Bandarban District Team beat Mirpur Nahar Academy by 2-0 goals at the same venue.

Shraboni Rani and Maria Sailook scored one goal each for Bandarban in the 42nd and 50th minutes respectively.

## School football

Barisal Baptist Mission High School emerged divisional champions in the National School Football Tournament defeating Patuakhali Govt. High School 1-0 in the final yesterday. Rahim scored the only goal of the match.

Meanwhile, Mongolchondi Nishchintopur High School became champions in the Sylhet district by defeating Tahirpur High School of Biswanath 2-0 in the final yesterday.

## Manikganj cricket

Bandhu XI registered their third win in the Colonel Malek Smriti Premier Cricket League with a 73-run victory over Retired XI at the Shahid Miraz Tapan stadium in Manikganj yesterday. Bandhu XI batted first and scored 234 for eight runs in 40 overs with rich contributions from Manik (49), Saikat (44) and Nadim (35) runs. Johnny picked up three wickets for Retired XI. In reply, Retired XI were all out