

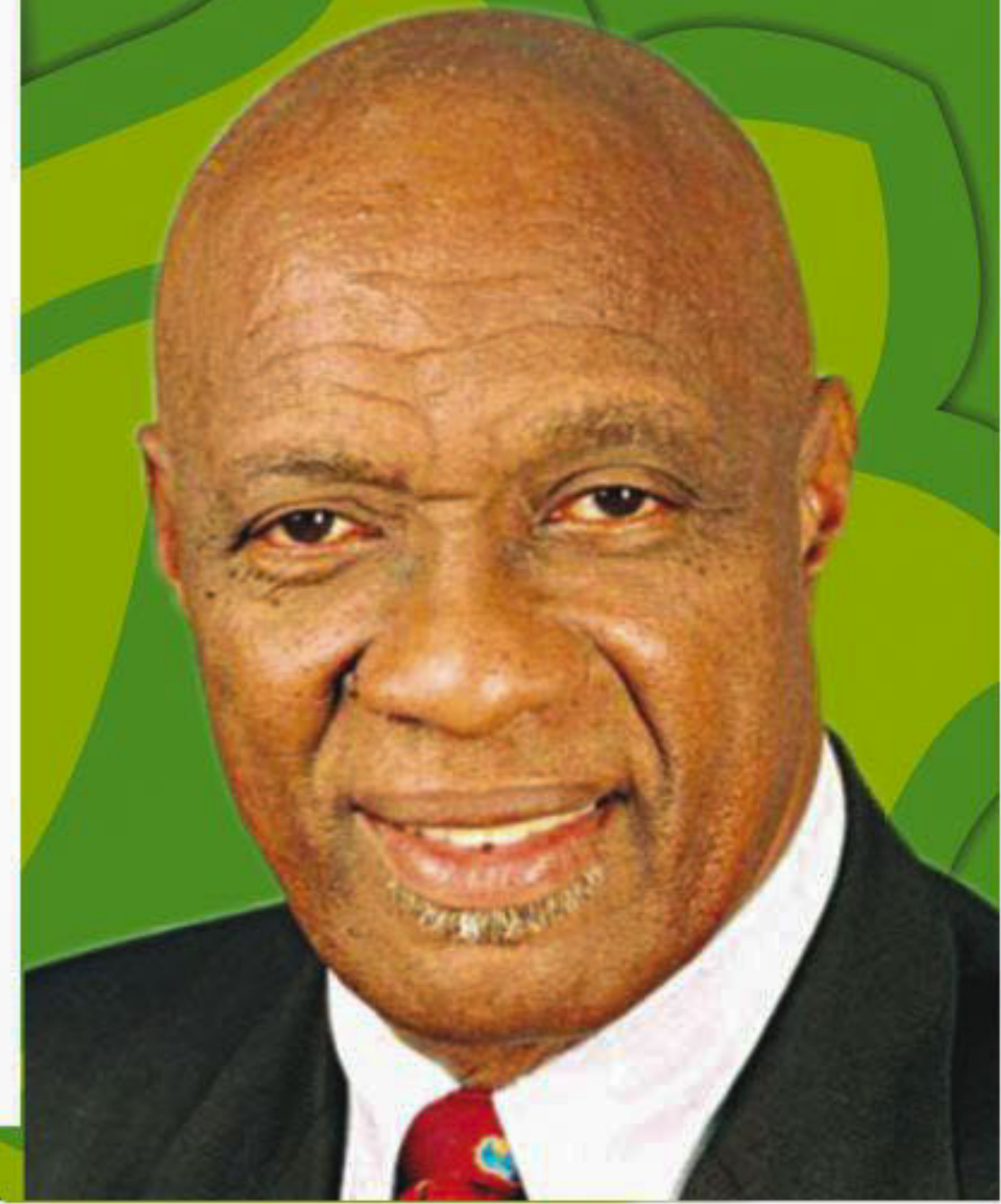
Star

SPORT

DHAKA MONDAY JUNE 18, 2012, E-MAIL: sports@thedailystar.net

Sir Wesley Hall

Wes Hall, the legendary West Indies fast bowler, has been knighted in the Queen's Birthday honours list. The government announced in Barbados on Saturday that the 74-year-old, who went on to head the West Indies Cricket Board and also become a colourful figure and speaker in public service, in government, business and religion, would be made a Knight Bachelor (KB) for his "contribution to sport and the community", reports Caribbean Media Corporation (CMC). As the minister for tourism and sports in the Erskine Sandiford administration, he has been credited



Cristiano Ronaldo hit back at his critics in the best way possible on Sunday night. Here the Portuguese striker celebrates the first of his two goals against Netherlands during their do-or-die Group B Euro 2012 match at the Metalist Stadium in Kharkiv. PHOTO: REUTERS

Portugal join Germany in last 8

AFP, Kharkiv

Portugal beat the Netherlands 2-1 on Sunday to set up a Euro 2012 quarterfinal with the Czech Republic and condemn the Dutch to a first group-stage European Championship exit since 1980.

Needing to win by two clear goals to stand any hope of progressing, Holland took an early lead through Rafael van der Vaart but were undone by goals in each half from man of the match Cristiano Ronaldo. From a Dutch perspective, the

final score was rendered immaterial as Germany win 2-1 against Denmark in the other Group B match away at Lviv, meaning they would not have qualified for the last eight even in case of victory.

Germany advanced to the quarterfinals as defender Lars Bender scored his first international goal after Lukas Podolski, who was making his 100th appearance for Germany, celebrated his century with the opening goal on 19 minutes which was cancelled out by a Michael Krohn-Dehli just five minutes later.

The Germans will now play Friday's quarterfinal against Group

A runners-up Greece in Gdansk, their Euro 2012 base, while Portugal will play the Group A winners the Czech Republic in Warsaw on Thursday.

Runners-up at the World Cup two years ago and top scorers in qualifying, the Netherlands leave Ukraine with their tails between their legs after three consecutive defeats.

Van der Vaart needed less than 11 minutes to vindicate his manager's decision, collecting a pass from Arjen Robben and shaping a delightful 25-yard shot inside the left-hand post to put Holland ahead.

However, if the Dutch thought they were in for a comfortable

evening, Portugal quickly had them on their toes with a flurry of chances sparked by Ronaldo drifting inside and brushing the post with a low strike.

Dutch goalkeeper Maarten Stekelenburg was allowed to shine on his 50th appearance, thwarting Helder Postiga following an errant back-pass by Gregory van der Wiel and then showing sharp reflexes to box away a Ronaldo header.

Holland failed to heed the warnings though, and in the 28th minute Ronaldo levelled, powering onto Joao Pereira's incisive, stabbed pass and clipping the ball past Stekelenburg from close range.

Siddikur comes second best

Golf

SPORTS REPORTER

It was another near miss for Bangladesh's most celebrated golfer Siddikur Rahman in his bid to win a second Asian Tour title, as he finished second to Thai veteran Thaworn Wiratchant in the Queen's Cup in Thailand yesterday.

Siddikur, the 2010 Brunei Open winner, looked all set for the elusive title for a large part of the day, before he faltered late while the Thai veteran of 12 tour wins surged past to take the title with a three-stroke lead.

Siddikur, who started the fourth round on joint first position along with Wiratchant and two others, took a one-stroke lead twice before faltering at the fifteenth hole of the Santiburi Samui Country Club, where he made an uncharacteristic blunder by missing a two-foot putt.

That seemed to be the motivation for Wiratchant as he raced home to victory

with a five-foot birdie on 16 before a 12-foot eagle conversion at the 18th hole. Siddikur, on the other hand, failed to up his game in the last few holes as he finished the day on par for an aggregate of four-under-par (280).

Wiratchant, who was also victorious in Samui in the 2008 Bangkok Airways Open, matched countryman Thongchai Jaidee's record number of triumphs (13) on the region's elite circuit and earned 47,550 dollars.

The Thai hero also conceded that Siddikur's miss was the turning point of the last round.

"This week, it was tiring, it was tough. You fight with the course and conditions. The turning point was the 15th hole when Siddikur missed his putt. Any time you have a chance, you have to make birdie and I did (on 16)," said Wiratchant to Asiantour.com at the end of the event.

Siddikur shared the second spot with Juvic Pagunsan of Philippines and each got a cheque of 25,425 dollars for their

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Siddikur Rahman shows the ball after converting a birdie putt in the fourth and final round of the Queen's Cup at the Santiburi Samui Country Club in Samui, Thailand yesterday. PHOTO: AFP

'Start league or face pull-out'

SPORTS REPORTER

Five clubs including Usha KC and Mariner Youngs gave the Bangladesh Hockey Federation an ultimatum to start the Premier Division Hockey League tomorrow; or else face pull-out from the 11-team league, which was supposed to get underway from June 17 after nearly two years.

The league committee was forced to defer the league by a week after one of the two Indian umpires failed to reach the capital in time to conduct the league.

"Despite the confirmation of visas and tickets of the two foreign umpires, one of them was unavailable to start the league. This is a failure of the federation which will make us, Usha KC, face a big financial loss. Besides, we have roped in foreign recruits for a certain period but the deferment will make the league longer," said Usha sports secretary Mohammad Faruk at a press conference at the Bangladesh Hockey Federation yesterday.

The representatives of Dhaka Mariner Youngs, Wari

Tigers slow off the blocks

SPORTS REPORTER

Bangladesh never really threw themselves at the Zimbabwe total to lose by 11 runs in the Twenty20 triangular series opener yesterday at the Harare Sports Club. The Tigers haven't quite shrugged off the cobwebs of not playing for more than two months and it showed, mostly in their batting.

Just like Zimbabwe undermined their sound start by getting stuck at 154-6 in 20 overs, the visitors did the same when they couldn't capitalise on the 61-run opening stand between Tamim Iqbal and Mohammad Ashraful to be restricted to 143 for 5. Though the partnership slowed down towards the end, the rest of the batsmen had it all set up for them, but none really took off. There were too many miscued shots, many of which fell short of the deep fielders, interjected by the odd boundary.

But right at the death when the required run-rate climbed, Bangladesh found fours and sixes hard to come by with Chris Mpofu, Kyle Jarvis and newcomer Robinson Muzhange kept the Tigers tied down by hitting the block-hole regularly, after the Zimbabwean spinners -- Graeme Cremer and Prosper Utseya -- brought them back into the game.

"It was a good wicket to bat on so our bowlers did very well to restrict them," Mushfiqur Rahim said at the end of the game. "The opening batsmen started well but they [Zimbabwe] came back very well in the middle overs, our set batsmen couldn't capitalise."

But the 23-year-old skipper also added that he would go with the same shape despite some of the failings.

"Both the openers did well so we will continue with them. We learned a few things in this game and we'll try to rectify our mistakes," he said.

By the 14th over Tamim (38 off 35 balls) and Ashraful (22 off 28 balls) had gone but Mushfiqur too followed suit when Muzhange broke through his defences.

Ziaur Rahman, making his senior debut, though it wasn't an official international game, tried to swing from the hips one too many times, connecting sweetly just the first time. But his slog-sweeping kept finding fielders (he also survived a dropped catch) and finally he fell to the shot, skying Mpofu to be caught very well by Sean Ervine, for a 22-ball 23.

Mahmudullah Riyad and Nasir Hossain added 37 for the fifth wicket but it was never rapid enough. Riyad was dismissed by Jarvis in the final over in which they needed 19 runs.

Earlier it was Hamilton Masakadza's rapid 62 off 35 balls that set the pace for the hosts after they chose to bat first. By the time

Muktis take the lead

SPORTS REPORTER



Title contenders Muktijoddha Sangsad opened up a three-point lead at the top of the Grameenphone Bangladesh Premier League with a 3-0 victory over defending champions Sheikh Jamal Dhanmondi Club at the Bangabandhu National Stadium yesterday, thanks to a Mithun Chowdhury brace after Maruf Ahmed had given them a 10th minute lead.

This was Muktijoddha's fourth straight win, putting them three points clear of second-placed Abahani, who however played two matches less than the All Reds. The win also ensures the title will be decided when Muktijoddha take on

Abahani in their last match.

"Now we are keeping our eyes on Abahani's next two matches before we face them. If Abahani drop points in their next two matches, then the last match becomes the virtual title decider, otherwise we will have to beat them twice to win our maiden title," said Muktijoddha coach Shafiqul Islam Manik.

Abahani have 40 points having played 17 matches and if they win their next two matches against Rahmatganj MFS and Feni Soccer Club, they would be on 46 and will need only a draw against Muktijoddha in the last match to claim their fourth professional league title. Muktijoddha, on the other hand must beat Abahani to go level on points and force a title deciding play-off match.

Muktijoddha went into yesterday's game without their in-form striker Sunday Chizoba and defender Rafael de Androde due to suspension, but hardly felt their absence as they took an early lead in the tenth minute. Maruf had intended to whip a cross from the right-flank, but to the Sheikh Jamal goalkeeper's surprise, the ball found itself at the back of the net.

After Zahid Hasan Emily's failure of to connect a Mithun cross from up close, Sheikh Jamal came close to equalising the margin but a Kester Akon header was blocked by goalkeeper Mashudur Rahman Mustak. That was the only chance created by Sheikh Jamal, who stay at sixth position with 25 points from 19 matches.

Muktijoddha doubled the lead a



Muktijoddha striker Mithun Chowdhury (R) races past the Sheikh Jamal goalkeeper to score one of his two goals during their Grameenphone Bangladesh Premier League match at the Bangabandhu National Stadium yesterday. PHOTO: STAR

Satabdi in semifinals

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Ctg

Satabdi Goshti Cricket Academy beat Chittagong Kings by 37 runs in the CJKS-Urban American Under-18 Twenty20 tournament at the MA Aziz Stadium yesterday.

Winning the toss, Satabdi scored 139-9 in 20 overs with Pear making 48. In reply, Chittagong Kings managed 102-8 with Inzamam scoring 39.

In the day's other match, Chittagong Cricket Academy (95-4 in 16.2 overs) defeated Neo Cricket Academy (94-9 in 20 overs) by six wickets.

JDC Udioman Cricket Academy will play against Satabdi in the first semifinal while Ispahani Cricket Academy take on Port City Cricket Academy in the second semifinal today.

School football semis today

SPORTS REPORTER

Isdair Rabeya Hossain High School of Narayanganj will play against Habiganj Richi High School in the first semifinal of the Islami Bank National School Football Tournament at the Birshreshtha Shaheed Mostafa Kamal Stadium in Kamalapur today.

The second semifinal will be between Chittagong Kathir Haat High School and Rajshahi Damkura Haat High School at the same venue later today.

EURO2012
TODAY'S MATCHES

Gdansk, Group C:
Croatia v Spain
(12:45am, June 19)

Poznan, Group C:
Italy v Ireland
(12:45am, June 19)