

Eusebio leaves hospital

Former Portugal and Benfica great Eusebio, who suffered a stroke during his stay in Poland to watch Euro 2012, was discharged from a Lisbon hospital on Wednesday, the hospital said. Eusebio, 70, was admitted to Lisbon's Luz hospital two weeks ago after arriving on a medical flight from Poland. "Eusebio left the hospital this afternoon, feeling good and out to have a meal," Luz hospital spokesman, Joao Paulo Gama, told Reuters. "He will be doing physiotherapy at home". Eusebio, Portugal's football ambassador, has been admitted to hospital four times



Khulna set for Tests

Cricket

SPORTS REPORTER

Khulna's Sheikh Abu Naser Stadium is all set to become Bangladesh's newest Test venue as the Bangladesh Cricket Board (BCB) is planning to stage one Test and one ODI there during West Indies' tour in November this year.

West Indies is scheduled to come to Dhaka in November to play two Tests, five one-day internationals and one T20 international. BCB has generally used the Zohur Ahmed Chowdhury Stadium as the second venue after the Sher-e-Bangla National Stadium in Mirpur for home series but this time they have to go for an alternative venue as the ground in Chittagong is undergoing renovation work.

Though there is another Test venue in the Shaheed Chandu Stadium in Bogra, the BCB's cricket operations committee chairman Enayet Hossain

Siraj said: "We have no other choice because the ground in Chittagong is undergoing renovation work. And we thought that Khulna would be our best option to host one Test and an ODI match when West Indies visit in November this year."

"Khulna presently has approval to host only the one-day internationals, so we need the approval from ICC to host Test matches. It will not be a problem because the facilities are satisfactory and we are working to improve everything before the West Indies series," he added.

The stadium, which was one of the five purpose-built cricket grounds established in the run-up to the 2004 Under-19 World Cup, previously hosted two ODI matches, where hosts Bangladesh took on Zimbabwe and Kenya back in 2006. Bangladesh also played one T20 International against Zimbabwe at the venue.

The stadium, with a capacity of 15,000, was also one of the alterna-

tive venues during the ICC World Cup 2011.

"Khulna has a good ground with logistical facilities so it is a good option for us. There is no major problem at all to host internationals matches. The condition of the ground is quite satisfactory and other facilities are also improving day by day. We talked with the city mayor [Talukder Abdul Khaleque] and other concerned people regarding the accommodation," said BCB's acting CEO Nizamuddin Chowdhury, who visited the venue along with BCB's director Dewan Shafiqul Arefin and other officials yesterday.

Siraj however said that they are worried about the condition of the Jessore-Khulna road but hoped that it will be okay by the time the West Indies team arrive.

If everything goes according to plan the Sheikh Abu Naser Stadium will be the country's seventh Test venue.



Action from yesterday's Green Delta Insurance Premier Division Hockey League match between Abahani and Ajax SC at the Maulana Bhasani Hockey Stadium. PHOTO: STAR

Abahani's sixth in a row

SPORTS REPORTER

Title contenders Abahani joined leaders Mohammedan in the Green Delta Insurance Premier Division Hockey League as they posted their sixth win with a 5-1 thrashing of Ajax SC at the Maulana Bhasani Hockey Stadium yesterday.

Abahani and Mohammedan have now equal 18 points but Mohammedan played a match less than Abahani's seven.

Pakistani Mohammad Mudassar put the Sky Blues ahead converting a penalty corner in the 12th minute before Hasan Jubair Niloy doubled the margin in the 22nd minute.

Ajax bit back pulling off a goal in the 26th minute through Rahat Sarwar but Abahani came strongly in the second half to add three more goals to ensure their sixth straight victory. Mudassar made it 3-0 in the 54th minute before his compatriot Sabbir Ahmed Khan struck two field goals in the 62nd and 67th minutes respectively.

Div I h'ball

SPORTS REPORTER

Mansur Sporting Club recorded a 36-10 win over Satirha Club in the Orient Bred First Division Handball League at the Shaheed M Mansur Ali Handball Stadium yesterday.

The winners led the first half 16-3.

In the day's other matches, Prime Sports Club routed Satirha Club 44-3 after dominating the first half 27-1 while Armabagh KS defeated Purbachal Parishad 33-23 after taking a slim 17-16 lead in the first half.

Serena sees off Nicole

AFP, Stanford

Wimbledon winner Serena Williams swept past tenacious teenager Nicole Gibbs 6-2, 6-1 Wednesday in her opening match at the WTA Stanford Classic.

World number four Williams was fighting off jet lag as well as reigning US college champion Gibbs, an American ranked 403rd in the world and a junior at Stanford University, host of the 740,000 dollars hardcourt event.

Sagor to bear Bangladesh flag

SPORTS REPORTER



Swimmer Mahfizur Rahman Sagor will do the honour of carrying Bangladesh's flag in the ceremonial march-past during the opening ceremony of 2012 London Olympic Games on July 27 in place of shooter Sharmin Akhter Ranta.

The Bangladesh Olympic Association (BOA) recently revised the decision in an effort to make sure Ratna prepares peacefully for her 10m air rifle event, which will take place a day after the opening ceremony.

Ratna, who carried Bangladesh's flag in Beijing's magnificent Bird's Nest four year's ago, is better among the five athletes competing in five disciplines of the world's biggest sporting specta-

cle. But she is far below the qualifying mark and will be competing in the event as a wild-card entrant like four other athletes from the country, which has never won any Olympic medal.

Bangladesh's participation in Olympic has so far been academic with selected athletes get the opportunity to rub shoulders with the bests in the world. And this time it will be no exception.

Sagor, a SAFF silver medalist, is Bangladesh's fastest swimmer and has scored his best 24.53sec in 50m freestyle two year's ago. He will take part in a 50m freestyle heat in London fully aware of the fact that an improvement on his timing would be an achievement in itself even if he finishes last in the heat.

Mohan Khan will represent Bangladesh in the track and field event. The

country's fastest man can consider himself extremely lucky if he gets a chance of running alongside world's fastest man Usain Bolt or his Jamaican rival Asafa Powell in one of the heats.

Emdadul Haq Milon, a gold winner in Asian Youth championship two year's ago, will be Bangladesh's first archer in an Olympic meet. He will however get a lifetime opportunity to walk along the lush green of Lord's, a premier cricket venue which will be used for archery competitions during the Olympics.

Bangladesh will also represent a gymnast in Syque Caesar in London, which is hosting the summer Olympics for a second time.

A 15-member contingent that also contains 10 officials is expected to leave Dhaka for London on July 22.

Clubs for 3 foreigners

Football

SPORTS REPORTER

While most of the club officials and coaches want three foreign players to play in a match in the upcoming sixth professional football league in an effort to give more opportunity to the local booters, the Bangladesh Football Federation (BFF) is apparently considering allowing four foreigners for a game.

The officials and coaches of Mohammedan, Abahani, Muktijoddha Sangsad and Sheikh Russel KC are in favour of allowing two to three foreign players in a match while Sheikh Jamal Dhanmondi Club seeks four foreign players, citing lack of quality local players.

Before Bangladesh U-22 team's engagement in AFC U-22 Asia Cup last month, the league committee sat with the clubs, who requested the committee to reduce the number of foreigners, but the committee has

yet to decide on it though the players' transfers window will open on August 16.

The professional football league committee last season had decided to allow three foreign players in a match, but BFF president Kazi Salahuddin overruled that to allow four foreigners for a game and registration of seven foreign players, saying that would make the league more attractive and competitive besides making the teams stronger.

And the league committee is likely to keep last season's foreign quota intact this time too. "We have no alternative to reducing dependency on foreign players if we want to keep the country's football alive," said Mohammedan's football manager Amirul Islam Babu, adding that his club, despite being a depleted side, had played better than others in the second-leg of the just-concluded Bangladesh Premier League and five players from their line-up were chosen for the national U-22 squad.

SEE PAGE 17 COL 1

Draw ends SL drought

Cricket

AFP, Pallekele

Sri Lanka won their first Test series in three years after the final Test against Pakistan ended in a thrilling draw in Pallekele on Thursday.

The hosts made a brave bid to chase down a target of 270, reaching 132-2 by tea on the fifth day, before they were pegged back by a three-wicket burst from off-spinner Saeed Ajmal. Dinesh Chandimal scored

65 and the prolific Kumar Sangakkara returned unbeaten on 74 as Sri Lanka made 195-4 before the game was called off with nine overs remaining at the Pallekele International Stadium.

The 1-0 scoreline -- following a 209-run victory in the first Test in Galle -- was Sri Lanka's first Test series win since beating New Zealand 2-0 at home in 2009.

The rain-hit second Test in Colombo was drawn, while the entire second day's play in Pallekele had been washed out.

Earlier, Asad Shafiq remained unbeaten on 100 as Pakistan declared their second innings at 380-8 half-an-hour before lunch to attempt a series-levelling win.

But the tourists were thwarted by a pitch that eased out under the hot sun and a determined effort by the home team's batsmen in front of some 1,000 spectators.

Openers Tharanga Paranavitana and Chandimal gave Sri Lanka a bright start with a 44-run partnership by the 10th over.

Left-handed Paranavitana made 22 when he was caught at second slip by Younis Khan off Junaid Khan, one ball after being dropped by Pakistan captain Misbahul Haq at first slip.

Chandimal, a last-minute inclusion for the match after Tillakaratne Dilshan opted out due to health worries in his family, anchored the innings at the start.

The 22-year-old's third half-century in four Tests contained fluent strokes on both sides of the wickets, including eight boundaries.

But Chandimal was dismissed in the last over before tea, snapped up low at mid-off by Shafiq off Ajmal, ending an 88-run stand for the second wicket with Sangakkara.

Skipper Mahela Jayawardene plodded for 44 balls to make 11 when he attempted to scoop Ajmal to the leg-side and only managed to give a catch to Mohammad Hafeez running back from short-leg.

Ajmal picked up his third wicket when he bowled Thilan Samaraweera for 10, with Sri Lanka still 92 runs away and 15.5 overs left in the match.



Sri Lanka captain Mahela Jayawardene holds up the trophy after his team's first Test series victory in three years, following the conclusion of the third and final Test against Pakistan at the Pallekele International Stadium yesterday. The match ended in a draw. PHOTO: AFP

SEE PAGE 17 COL 2

TO GIVE BETTER SERVICES CROWN CEMENT IS NOW AT GULSHAN

CROWN CEMENT HAS SHIFTED ITS CORPORATE OFFICE TO GULSHAN AND NOW YOU CAN GET US AT:
 HOUSE # 1 & 7, ROAD # 95, BLOCK # CEN (A)
 NORTH AVENUE, GULSHAN-2, DHAKA-1212
 TEL: +88 02 9852631, 9852633, 9852634
 9852636, 9852641, FAX: +88 02 9852643

M. I. CEMENT FACTORY LTD.

CROWN CEMENT
FOR SOLID FOUNDATION

crowncement.com

SEE PAGE 17 COL 4