

Academy progress to be assessed

SPORTS REPORTER

The Bangladesh Football Federation has decided to pick 60 young booters for its Sylhet Football Academy which is yet to start functioning.

The decision was taken at a meeting of the BFF Development Committee yesterday with BFF vice-president Badal Roy in chair.

"We will pick a set of 30 footballers each for U-14 and U-18 and the final selection of those players will be done by the foreign coaching staff," said Badal Roy after the meeting, adding that they were hoping to rope in foreign staff by the middle of next month.

Roy informed that the meeting decided to start the talent hunt programme at upazila level from September 1 with the help of District Football Association and then the BFF coaching staff will start their work at district level.

The Football Academy in Sylhet is not yet ready for operation as there is still no furniture at dormitory, staff quarters and administrative building. There is a gymnasium but that is not well-equipped while the football pitch is not playable and there is no filtration system at the swimming pool.

To assess things again, the officials of football federation and National Sports Council will visit the Sylhet Football Academy on August 25 and based on the assessment, the renovation work will get underway, informed Badal.

The ultimate

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not prima donnas, when it came to a close game.

"It means more than my name on my back. It means everything to the name on the front," Miami Heat's LeBron James said of performing in his USA jersey.

Michael Phelps, winning four more golds and becoming the most decorated Olympian of all time, arguably rivals Bolt as a mega-star.

Gabby Douglas captured hearts across America as the first black American to win the all-around women's gymnastics title.

Perhaps most eye-catching to Americans has been the general success of their women's squad, led by the gold medal soccer team.

"They dominated the US team in every way: More women than men made the American team, and they won far more gold medals than the American men," USA Today noted.

"The USA won 46 gold medals in the Games, more than any other nation. Women won 29 of them. Were US women their own nation, they would have finished ahead of every other country's total gold medal count except China."

Women

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all-rounder took charge of the Bangladesh women's cricket team on July 20 for six months.

SQUAD

Salma Khatun (captain), Ayasha Rahman Shuktara (vice-captain), Panna Ghosh, Lata Mondol, Ayesha Akter, Jahanara Alam, Rumana Ahmed, Fargana Houque, Nuzhat Tasnim, Sanjida Islam, Sultana Yesmin, Khadija tul Kobra, Tithi Rani, Sharmin Akter, Ritu Moni

81 booters

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aged between 18 and 20.

Mahbub Hossain Roxy and Mahbub Rahman Litu will look after the Yellow Team while Abdur Razzak and Kazi Altaful Haque will train the White Team.

All the selected players have been requested to report to their respective coaches on August 25 and a 10-day training camp which will get underway the following day.



Petra Kvitova of the Czech Republic kisses the winner's trophy after defeating China's Li Na in the final of the Rogers Cup at the Uniprix Stadium in Montreal on Monday.

PHOTO: AFP

Petra Montreal master



AFP, Montreal

Former Wimbledon winner Petra Kvitova claimed her first title of 2012 as she won a battle of ex-grand slam champions, beating China's Li Na 7-5, 2-6, 6-3 at the Montreal Masters on Monday.

Kvitova, the fifth seed, rode a roller coaster in the 62-minute opening set which featured 17 break points between the error-prone pair with a dozen of those saved.

"I hope this is good preparation for the US Open," said Kvitova. "I had some good matches here and hope to continue. But every tournament is different and every player is tough, so we'll see."

"It's great to have a good result in North America before the Open. I'm so glad I was able to play well here."

The momentum shifts were fast and frequent in the opener, with the 22-year-old Czech and her Chinese opponent, who won Roland Garros last season, exchanging the lead back and forth. Kvitova finally took the early lead on a fifth set point in a monster final game.

Dropping the first set seemed to spur on Li, 30, who had come from 5-1 down in her semi-final win over Lucie Safarova, and the 2011 Paris champion won a break at the start of the second set and went on to win it and level the match.

The pair settled in during the third set, with Kvitova earning a break for 4-2 and eventually earned the trophy three games later on her first match point after two and a quarter hours.

She had six double-faults while losing her serve four times on the way to victory.

World number 11 Li has how finished runner-up three times in 2012. The final was scheduled for Monday night so as not to clash with the closing of the London Olympics on Sunday.

The pair now stand level at two wins each in their series which began in 2011.

Kvitova earned a personal best in North America as she played her first final on the continent after never advancing past a quarter-final before.

The 22-year-old won her 34th match of the season against 11 losses as she earned her eighth career trophy.

Olympic relics up for grabs

AP, London

The London Olympics may be over, but it's not too late to take home a national flag from the athletes' parade or a used javelin.

Officials have put almost 2,000 Olympic relics up for auction, along with a replica of the "Isle of Wonder" book that Harry Potter author J K Rowling read from during the July 27 opening ceremony.

The book's price had risen to 1,066 pounds (US\$1,670) Tuesday, after opening at 1 pound a few days ago.

Among the stranger auction items also from the opening ceremony, directed by filmmaker Danny Boyle, are a farmer's hand-sickle, a Mary Poppins hat with electric lights, a suffragette protest banner, and a may-pole.

Historic Olympic memorabilia is also offered, though they don't come cheap: A 1948 London Olympic torch forged from aluminum is going for 14,000 pounds (US\$21,970) on Tuesday - and it appears to be starting price.

The sale of the items will go toward covering the cost of staging the games, as well as subsidizing additional costs incurred by selling Olympic torches to thousands of bearers at a discounted rate. Officials say the torches cost 500 pounds to manufacture, but the 8,000 bearers who took turns carrying the torch in a 70-day relay ahead of the games could buy them for 200

Kevin texts just 'banter'



AFP, London

South Africa team manager Mohammed Moosaajee has said Kevin Pietersen's controversial texts to members of the Proteas squad were just "banter" after claims he criticised England captain Andrew Strauss and Andy Flower.

Pietersen was dropped from the England team for the crucial final Test which starts at Lord's on Thursday after he refused to reveal the contents of the texts, which were sent during the drawn second Test at Headingley earlier this month.

The England and Wales Cricket Board (ECB) had told Pietersen his selection depended on him confirming publicly that no derogatory texts had been sent to the opposition or if they had been sent then he had to publicly apologise for them.

When South Africa-born Pietersen refused to respond to the ECB's request, he was axed and the 32-year-old's international career is now in tatters.

But Moosaajee played down the content of the texts and said the messages contained

nothing more than "banter".

He also refuted suggestions Dale Steyn and AB de Villiers were the two South Africans Pietersen had texted.

"There has been untruthful allegations in the media implicating members of our squad in the current issue between Kevin Pietersen and the ECB," Moosaajee said on Monday.

"We stand by the same stance we have taken since we heard the news about these allegations. Yes, text messages were sent but like we said before it was banter among team-mates, which is perfectly acceptable."

"The ECB has not made a formal approach to myself or any member of the team to see the text messages, as currently reported in the media."

"Allegations that Dale Steyn and AB de Villiers were the recipients of the texts are unfounded. Until such time that the allegations are met with the correct facts and evidence, we shall not comment."

"The internal issue between Kevin Pietersen and the English cricket board has been publicised for weeks, even before we arrived in the UK, and we don't want to get ourselves involved in an issue that has nothing to do with us."

Kenyans to be investigated

REUTERS, London



Kenyan authorities are frustrated that foreign athletes who train in the country turned the tables on the east African nation, whose disappointing track and field performance at the London Olympics has kicked off a storm of protest back home.

Kenya finished 28th in the overall medal table with two gold, four silver and five bronze medals, compared with 13th in Beijing four years ago when they won six gold, four silver and four bronze.

Their only two golds this time came from Ezekiel Kemboi in the 3,000 metres steeplechase and David Rudisha with his world record run in the 800m.

Mo Farah, the British double Olympic distance champion and Uganda's Stephen Kiprotich, who won the men's marathon, train at the Iten High Altitude Training Centre near Eldoret, known as the world's capital of distance running.

Kiprotich is managed by Dutch company Global Sports Management, which also looks after Kenyan Asbel Kirui who came second in the marathon.

"You could see they were talking during the race. They were behaving as if you are helping their Ugandan rival in an Olympic race," said Kenya's Minister for Sport, Dr Paul Otuo, who has been in London since the Games started on July 27.

He said an independent committee would be set up when the team returned home on Wednesday to give a report on why the performance was poorer than expected.

'England can cope without Pietersen'



AFP, London

England off-spinner Graeme Swann has insisted the side will not be weaker for the absence of Kevin Pietersen for this week's third Test against South Africa at Lord's.

Even though star batsman Pietersen scored a superb 149 in the second Test at Headingley, he was dropped after failing to reveal the contents of text messages allegedly sent to South African players during that match.

The England and Wales Cricket Board (ECB) told Pietersen his selection was contingent upon him either confirming publicly no derogatory texts about his team-mates had been sent to South African players or, if they had, to apologise for them.

Pietersen has yet to respond to the ECB's request, amidst allegations the texts contained disparaging remarks about England captain Andrew Strauss.

But Swann was adamant the furore would have no impact upon a Test starting Thursday that England must win to retain their world number one ranking in the five-day game.

"We need to pull in the same direction, not 10 of us doing it and one of us not," Swann wrote in his column for The Sun on Tuesday.

"Just because you lose one player, it doesn't necessarily make you a weaker team."

"In fact, since Kevin retired from limited-overs cricket, we are unbeaten in all matches in the shorter formats."

Pietersen was named man-of-the-match at Headingley but afterwards gave an extraordinary press conference in which he hinted the Lord's Test could be his last and suggested dressing room unrest.

Younis, Gul out of Aussie ODIs



AFP, Karachi

Pakistan on Monday dropped seasoned batsman Younis Khan from a 16-man squad for a three one-day match series against Australia, starting in the United Arab Emirates later this month.

The matches will be played on August 28 in Sharjah, August 31 in Abu Dhabi and again in Sharjah on September 3.

The teams will also play three Twenty20s, for which a team was announced last month.

Khan, 34, had been in lean form during a five-match away one-day series against Sri Lanka last month, scoring only 10 runs in four innings.

He has so far played 245 ODIs for Pakistan, scoring 6,824 runs, but his last hundred came four years ago. Also out of the squad is ace paceman Umar Gul, who managed just four wickets in four matches against Sri Lanka.

Chief selector Iqbal Qasim said both Younis and Gul, a 28-year-old veteran of 111 one-day matches, have been rested.

"If you look at the last series against Sri Lanka, both Younis and Gul were struggling with form so we have rested them for the two

"I watched a video of Kevin's press conference last Monday at Headingley, when he spoke about supposed problems in the dressing room," Swann added.

"I was certainly shocked by those claims."

Former England opener Geoffrey Boycott, writing in the Daily Telegraph, said: "Texting comments to the opposition about the captain was unforgivable."

"Telling them how to bowl and get him out is simply not acceptable and deserves a public apology."

"Without Pietersen, England's chances of beating South Africa are greatly reduced," Boycott added.

"No young player can equal his experience and ability. England already have a young batsman, James Taylor, in only his second Test and now have a young Jonny Bairstow in only his fourth match."

"But having said that, winning is not the only thing. The issues around Pietersen are more important than England beating South Africa."

South Africa coach Gary Kirsten side-stepped the row by saying: "We will never under-estimate any team, we will never go into any Test match complacent and arrive thinking the job is done."

Pietersen had been known to be upset by a fake Twitter account - KP Genius - followed by several of his England team-mates but the man behind it, cricket fan Richard Bailey, said he'd closed it down.

"Yes the parody was me," said Bailey. "It was for humour purposes only and as soon as I realised it was upsetting people I took it down."

"No professional cricketers were involved in it...I would also like to apologise to anyone I know involved with England Cricket who I may have put in an awkward or embarrassing position."

tough series ahead, the first against India in December and then against South Africa early next year," Qasim told AFP.

Qasim denied Younis's career was over. "By no means (is it) over, he can stage a comeback after rest," said Qasim.

Wicketkeeper batsman Kamran Akmal, already recalled for the Twenty20 series against Australia, also bagged a place in the one-day team.

"We observed during the Sri Lanka series that our batting struggled, especially the lower order, so we included Kamran who gives solidity to the batting," said Qasim.

Opener Nasir Jamshed, withdrawn from the team for Sri Lanka due to a finger injury, will also make a return, as will all-rounder Anwar Ali.

Ali, 23, has played just one Twenty20 for Pakistan, in 2008.

The three Twenty20s against Australia will be played on September 5, 7 and 10 -- all in Dubai.

SQUAD

Misbahul Haq (captain), Nasir Jamshed, Mohammad Hafeez, Azhar Ali, Asad Shafiq, Umar Akmal, Kamran Akmal, Shahid Afridi, Sohail Tanveer, Aizaz Cheema, Saeed Ajmal, Imran Farhat, Shoib Malik, Abdur Rehman, Junaid Khan, Anwar Ali.

CROSSWORD By Eugene Sheffer

- ACROSS**
- 1 Hanks role
 - 5 Love (Sp.)
 - 9 Cauldron
 - 12 Vicinity
 - 13 Sandwich shop
 - 14 Lawyers' org.
 - 15 Computer access codes
 - 17 Fa-la link
 - 18 Small chalk-boards
 - 19 Art supporter
 - 21 Blood type
 - 22 Antilean language
 - 24 Osculation "tools"
 - 27 Every iota
 - 28 Additional
 - 31 "Little Teapot"
 - 32 Greet the villain
 - 33 Erstwhile acorn
 - 34 Cold War initials
 - 36 Leading lady?
 - 37 Terrier type
 - 38 Move laterally
 - 40 Acidity factor
 - 41 Angle
 - 43 Read Ullmann or Tyler org.
 - 48 World travelers' needs
 - 51 Raw rock
 - 52 Mother of Helios
 - 53 Works with
 - 54 Simple card game
 - 55 Millinery
 - 56 Knight's wife
 - 2 Caspian feeder
 - 3 Arizona city
 - 4 Penne
 - 5 Commotions
 - 6 Mal de —
 - 7 On in years
 - 8 Stair part
 - 9 Depositor's record
 - 10 Reed instrument
 - 11 Lofty
 - 16 Symbol of intrigue
 - 20 Intend
 - 22 Piece of garlic
 - 23 Shaving cream additive
 - 24 Actress Lucy
 - 25 Online ex-changes
 - 26 Nisan holiday
 - 27 Son of 36-Across
 - 29 Shaft of light
 - 30 — out a living
 - 35 Wardrobe malfunction part
 - 37 Cover
 - 39 Profundity
 - 40 Energy
 - 41 At a snail's pace
 - 42 100 centesimi, once
 - 43 Unpaid TV ads (Abbr.)
 - 44 — Major
 - 45 Goblet
 - 46 Being, to Brutus
 - 49 "Eureka!"
 - 50 Collection

DOWN

1 Spaces

Solution time: 25 mins.

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CRYPTOQUIP

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CZOYEC JPWMC VTYPSYBK.

Yesterday's Cryptoquip: BECAUSE THE SLUMBERING BUNNY IS DREAMING, I ASSUME IT COULD BE HAVING RABBIT EYE MOVEMENT.

Today's Cryptoquip Clue: M equals T