

Teams geared for the unfamiliar

First BD-SA women's ODI today

 **Cricket**

SPORTS REPORTER

The Bangladesh women's cricket captain Salma Khatun was banking on her spinners ahead of today's first one-day international of the three-match series against the visiting South Africa women's cricket team at the Sher-e-Bangla National Stadium in Mirpur. This series marks Bangladesh's first full series against a full-member side.

"Our spinners can play a big role through the series as we think that the pitch will behave the way it used to before. We don't know each other, so it will be a good game tomorrow (Thursday)," said Salma yesterday.

She said that her team is determined to play impressive cricket in the series, after which the teams will play three T20 international at the same venue. The weather however may play spoilsport in today's match.

"We are determined to put up a good

SQUAD

Salma Khatun (captain), Ayesha Rahman, Sharmin Akter Supta, Rumana Ahmed, Fargana Hoque, Jahanara Alam, Lata Mondol, Nuzhat Tasnim, Khadijatul Kobra, Ritu Moni, Saila Sharmin, Lily Rani, Tajia Akter and Champa Chakma.



Members of the South Africa women's cricket team limber up for training at the Academy Ground of the Sher-e-Bangla National Stadium yesterday, ahead of today's first ODI against Bangladesh.

PHOTO: STAR

show and we hope that we can utilise the advantage of playing at home," she added.

South African skipper Mignon du Preez said that her team were looking forward to win the matches although the opponents are new to them.

"I am really looking forward to play this series in Bangladesh. We haven't played before so we don't really know what to expect. I think we should win the series in the end. We will assess tomorrow morning what would be a

good target," said the 22-year old South African skipper.

South Africa will play the matches as part of their preparation for the ICC Women's World Twenty20 to be held in Sri Lanka in September-October.

"I believe this series will give us the momentum for the World Cup. It is our final preparation and I think it will help us to get used to subcontinent pitches," she said.

Du Preez however was little bothered

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Bangladesh women's cricket team skipper Salma Khatun (L) waits for her turn to bowl during net practice at the Academy Ground of the Sher-e-Bangla National Stadium in Mirpur yesterday.

PHOTO: STAR

SELANGOR MASTERS

Molla off to solid start

SPORTS REPORTER

Bangladesh's Jamal Hossain Molla made a good start in the World-wide Holdings Selangor Masters as he fired a 3-under-par (69) to be placed joint fourth at the end of the first round on Wednesday. The Kishoregonj boy fired 4 birdies and a bogey at the Kota Permai Golf & Country Club to surge to the joint fourth position, three shots behind leader Thaworn Wiratchant of Thailand.

Bangladesh's top golfer Siddikur was one-under-par after completing fifteen holes before rain forced suspension of the day's play. Siddikur traded four birdies with three bogeys in the fifteen holes that he completed.

A third Bangladeshi golfer in the event, Shakhawat Hossain Sohel had a one-over-par (73) finish to the first round.

A total of 59 players including Siddikur will return on Thursday morning to resume their opening rounds before the second round starts.

Booters told to behave

SPORTS REPORTER

Arguments between footballers and referee over on-field decisions is commonplace in our football. Sometimes this sort of incidents lead to halts in matches. In a bid to reduce this sort of unwanted incidents, the Referees' Committee of Bangladesh Football Federation yesterday sat with some 80 footballers who are in the national football camp.

The booters were informed about the new rules and the participants admitted they have learnt new things that they had no idea about it and promised to behave in proper way in future.

"After this programme, now I have a clear idea about the off-side ruling and the cases where the referee might book a player. So I can say that I am not going to protest against the decisions I learnt from this meeting," said national team's midfielder Pranotosh Kumar

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Sub-junior chess

SPORTS REPORTER

Seventeen players shared the lead in the Azimuddin Bhuiyan Trust 32nd National Sub-Junior Chess Championship at the close of the second round at the Bangladesh Chess Federation hall room yesterday.

The leaders are Abdullah Al Saif, Ikramul Haque Siam, Fahad Rahman, Tanjina Akter Tani, Abir Ahmed Afri, Asim Chandra Apu, Farkan Ahmed Jhinuk, Habibur Rahman, Abir Ahmed, Mridul Kanti Budhya, Newaz Ayon, Rafsan Bin Omer, Rezaul Alam Raju, Saad Mohammad Junayed and Zannatul Ferdous.

The third round of the nine-round championship begins today at 3:00pm.

No 1 breaks new ground

AFP, New York



World No. 1 Victoria Azarenka advanced to the US Open semifinals for the first time on Tuesday while Russian third seed Maria Sharapova struggled before rain left her match postponed until Wednesday.

Reigning Australian Open champion Azarenka defeated seventh-seeded defending champion Samantha Stosur 6-1, 4-6, 7-6 (7/5), ensuring the 23-year-old top seed from Belarus will remain atop the world rankings no matter how the Open goes.

"I don't want to stop yet," Azarenka said. Sharapova was forced to stop, first by rain and then by US officials, who ordered the match to be suspended.



PHOTO: AFP
Victoria Azarenka of Belarus is elated after vanquishing Samantha Stosur of Australia in their US Open quarterfinal in New York on Tuesday.

completion of her match pushed to Wednesday when showers struck for the third time on Tuesday with French 11th seed Marion Bartoli leading 4-0.

That left Azarenka to wonder who would be her foe in her first US Open semifinal on the Flushing Meadows hardcourts in the year's final Grand Slam tournament. Azarenka leads Sharapova 5-4 and Bartoli 8-3 in career results.

Wednesday's other quarterfinals will send US fourth seed Serena Williams, a 14-time Grand Slam champion, against Serbian 12th seed Ana Ivanovic and Italian 10th seed Sara Errani against 20th-seeded compatriot Roberta Vinci.

Sharapova, the 2006 US Open champion who completed a career Grand Slam by winning the French Open title in June, would return to second in the world rankings next week if she defeats Bartoli.

Azarenka, into the US Open last

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Redwan's rash reaction

SPORTS REPORTER

The Bangladesh Cricket Board (BCB) director Abdullah Al Fuad Redwan yesterday created a bit of a fuss by first submitting a resignation letter as the women's wing chairman and then withdrawing it.

Redwan took the decision to resign from the post following criticism from the board high-ups about his interference in team selection and other technical issues.

It was learnt that BCB high-ups came down heavily on Redwan during the board's emergency meeting on Tuesday.

Redwan however flatly denied his resignation.

"It's not true. I have not submitted my resignation, so there is no question of withdrawal. It may happen that you react angrily to something but it will not last for ever," said Redwan when asked about his resignation.

MSC sign three

SPORTS REPORTER

Mohammedan Sporting Club Ltd became the first team to sign up three players for the Bangladesh Premier League three weeks after the players' transfer window was opened in mid-August.

The Black and Whites retained the services of midfielders Shariful Islam, Sohel Rana and defender Mohammad Yeasin, who were regular members of the playing eleven under the guidance of Nigerian coach Ezeugo Emeka.

Mohammedan football manager Amirul Islam informed that they would sign rest of the players gradually and complete registration formalities by September 12.

The 10-team professional football league is scheduled to get underway from November 5.

AJMAL'S OMISSION FROM AWARD SHORTLIST

ICC has nothing to do

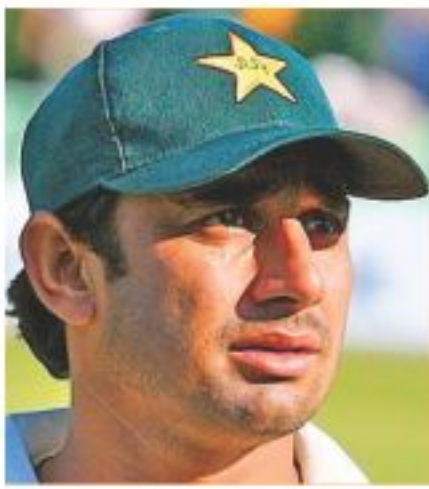
 **Cricket**

CRICINFO, Dubai

The International Cricket Council has shot down Pakistan's objection to Saeed Ajmal's omission from the ICC's Test Cricketer of the Year award shortlist, stating that it was an independent jury who cast out Ajmal from the longlist.

The Pakistan Cricket Board (PCB), however, questioned the ICC process and urged it to revise the selection procedure.

The PCB had lodged a protest with the ICC after Ajmal was left off the award shortlist last week. The ICC, though, refused to reconsider Ajmal's case.



SAEED AJMAL

"The ICC has no authority to change the results of the academy," an ICC spokesman told ESPNcricinfo. "The voting results are final and binding on everyone."

In 2010, England off-spinner Graeme Swann was omitted from the longlist for the Cricketer of the Year award prepared by ICC itself but after the ECB put up his case, the ICC included his name after admitting an oversight.

Unlike Swann in 2010, Ajmal was in the longlist this year but missed out when an independent 32-member jury that included former Pakistan captain Aamer Sohail and Pakistan

journalist Majid Bhatti nominated Sri Lanka

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Bengali rugby star Bulbul eyes gold

ANSAR AHMED ULLAH



Bulbul Hussain, wheelchair rugby player from London Borough of Tower Hamlets, is hoping to win a medal at the 2012 Olympic and Paralympic Games.

The 40-year-old Bulbul took up the sport a year after a car accident in Bangladesh in the mid 1990s that left him with spinal injuries. At first he did it to regain fitness, but after a few training sessions Bulbul decided to commit himself fully to the sport. Bulbul first started competing in wheelchair rugby in 1997. Attracted to the sport because of its speed and the competitive element, Bulbul won a gold medal when he played in his first major tournament at the National Championships in Stoke Mandeville.

Bulbul said: "It was hard to break into the squad and took me a long time. I really had to focus and work hard to make it."

Bulbul with his team Great Britain lost their opener 56-44 in a tight game against the top ranked United States last night. They are also likely to face stiff competition from Australia and Canada both among the top ranked teams in the world. However, Bulbul believes home advantage will give the British the boost that they need to win gold,

despite the opening day setback.

He said: "USA are the favourites but at home we expect to beat them. Last time we played we pushed them to three overtimes,

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BULBUL HUSSAIN