

Titu springs no surprise

SPORTS REPORTER

Bangladesh's interim national football coach Saiful Bari Titu opted not to do much experiment with his squad as he picked the 28-member preliminary squad from 81 by retaining most of the regular faces.

Of the 28 players, defender Raihan Hasan and midfielder Sohel Rana have been drafted in for the first time after the teenagers put up good show in the inaugural AFC U-22 Asian Games in Nepal early this year while veteran Nasiruddin Chowdhury has also been called up for national duty for the first time.

Goalkeepers Maksudur Rahman Mustaque, Ziaur Rahman and Titumir Chowdhury Titu made a comeback to the preliminary squad while young goalkeeper Shahidul Islam Sohel, who was goalkeeper in both AFC U-22 Asian Cup and SAFF Championship in Delhi, was dropped from the squad.

Midfielders Imtiaz Sultan Jitu, Alamgir Kabir Rana and Mezbabul Haque, fit-again striker Enamul Haque and forward Towhidul Alam Sabuz have also been taken in along with four more strikers Zahid Hasan Emily, Mithun Chowdhury, Shakhawat Hossain Rony and Anwar Hossain.

Titu will conduct a nine-day training before flying to Nepal for two practice matches against the national team on September 18 and 20.

SAFF Women's Championship starts today

SPORTS REPORTER

Bangladesh start their campaign in the Holcim SAFF Women's Championship today when they take on holders India in Sri Lankan capital of Colombo.

The match will start at 8:30am local time at the Ceylon Rugby and Football Stadium. Bangladesh were eliminated from the semifinals in the last edition of the regional competition for women with loss to India.

The opening day's second match will be played between the hosts and Bhutan at the same venue at 3:30pm.

DC to be sold out

AFP, New Delhi

Indian Premier League (IPL) side the Deccan Chargers were put up for sale on Thursday in the latest upheaval for the money-spinning Twenty20 tournament that has been dogged by ownership troubles.

Deccan Chronicle Holdings, a media company, placed advertisements in newspapers inviting bids for the Hyderabad-based team to be lodged on September 13 with the new owners to be announced on the same day.

Stunning

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unbeaten 50-ball 15. The second match takes place today at the same venue.

SCORES IN BRIEF SOUTH AFRICA WOMEN'S TEAM: 75 all out in 34.4 overs (du Preez 24, Kapp 11, Luus 15 not out, extras 7; Jahanara 1-20, Salma 1-17, Kobra 3-8, Tazia 1-18, Rumana 3-10)

BANGLADESH WOMEN'S TEAM: 78-8 in 37.3 overs (Lata 31, Ritu 12 not out, extras 17; Shabnim 2-8, Kapp 2-13, Sunette 3-32)

RESULT: Bangladesh women's team won by two wickets.

PLAYER-OF-THE-MATCH: Lata Mondol (Bangladesh)

Four buy

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finally two more companies bought the schedule after the board was forced to extend the deadline to purchase the schedule from August 30 to September 6.

The fresh deadline for submission is September 12.



South Africa's victorious Paralympic relay team members (L-R) Zivan Smith, Samkelo Radebe, Arnu Fourie and Oscar Pistorius pose with the timer showing their new world record at the Olympic Stadium in London on

Zanardi's golden day

AFP, London

Former racing driver Alessandro Zanardi on Wednesday won Paralympic gold at a circuit where he once drove high powered cars, as the showpiece "Battle of the Blade Runners" took shape on the track.

It was also a day for multiple medalists, as the most-decorated male Paralympian took gold again in his ninth Games and Australia got a new star in the pool.

The 45-year-old Zanardi's win in the individual H4 (hand-cycle) time-trial at Brands Hatch was a triumph for the Italian former Formula One driver, who was critically injured and had both legs amputated after a horror smash in 2001.

He battled back into motorsport, even competing in a touring car race at the fabled southeast England circuit in a specially-adapted car with hand controls, before switching his efforts to hand-cycling.

And although he was travelling much slower than in his Formula One and Indy heyday -- his average speed was 38.652 kilometres (24.017 miles) per hour -- he described it as "a great accomplishment, one of the greatest" of his life.

Zanardi's performance was a highlight of a day that also saw Britain's Sarah Storey win the women's individual C5 time-trial over

16km to give her a third gold after double success on the track and the 10th in her Games career.

There were more medals for other multiple Paralympic medalists, including the most-decorated male Paralympian, Jonas Jacobsson, of Sweden, who shot his way to the 17th gold of his stellar career at the Royal Artillery Barracks.

The 47-year-old has won 30 medals of all colours since making his debut nine Games ago in Arnhem, the Netherlands, in 1980.

At the Olympic Stadium, meanwhile, Britain's world record holder Jonnie Peacock fired a warning shot to his 100m rivals, including South Africa's Oscar Pistorius, as the finalists were determined for the Games' showpiece sprint.

The 19-year-old, who lowered the world best to 10.85sec in June, clocked 11.08sec in his T44 heat for leg amputee runners, equalling the Paralympic record that has stood for eight years -- then warned he would run faster.

"It was a bad wind, a big wind: 1.6. I'll be a bit quicker in the final," he told reporters.

Defending champion Pistorius, making a return to the track for the first time since his sensational 200m defeat on Sunday and controversial comments about the fairness of his rivals' artificial prostheses, ran a season's best of 11.19sec.

Women on road to victory

SPORTS REPORTER

The Bangladesh women's chess team were 2-0 up against Jordan, who are 25 ranking places below Bangladesh, in the ninth round of the 40th World Chess Olympiad being held at the Expro Center in Istanbul, Turkey yesterday.

WIM Rani Hamid defeated WIM Natalie Fuad and WIM Zakia Sultana beat WFM Boshra Al Shaebiy while Sharmin Sultana Shirin and Nazrana Khan Eve were playing against WIM Lougain Dahdal and WFM Ghayda M Alattar respectively when this report was filed.

Dominican Republic, who are seven ranking places below Bangladesh, were dominating Bangladesh in the men's draw, taking a 1.5-0.5 lead. GM Reefat Bin Sattar lost to FM Luis Maria Flaquer, GM Enamul Hossain Razib drew with IM Pinal Nelson while GM Abdullal Al Rakib and GM Niaz Murshed were playing against IM Jose Lisandro Munoz Santana and FM William Puntier respectively.

In the eighth round, the men's team defeated Zimbabwe 3-1 while the women's team played a 2-2 draw against the United Arab Emirates.

Sights set

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Cup and we felt happy that we could keep our commitment to emerge champions," said Jimmy, who scored five goals in three matches.

He, however, was a bit pessimistic about Bangladesh's future in hockey.

"If Bangladesh go on without any plan, then in the near future Bangladesh can produce negative results against Singapore or Hong Kong. So it is time to plan for the game of hockey," said the forward.

Sharapova in semis

Now seeks revenge against Azarenka

AFP, New York



Maria Sharapova advanced to a grudge-match US Open semifinal against top seed Victoria Azarenka while Serena Williams booked a last-four berth for the fourth time in five years in overwhelming fashion.

Russian third seed Sharapova reached the semifinals for the first time since her 2006 US Open title run by rallying to defeat French 11th seed Marion Bartoli 3-6, 6-3, 6-4 in a match that began on Tuesday but was halted by rain.

Sharapova, who improved to 12-0 in three-set matches this year, faces a Friday showdown against World No. 1 Azarenka who beat Sharapova 6-3, 6-0 in last January's Australian Open final.

"Tough challenge," Sharapova said. "She beat me in Australia quite easily and I would love to get my revenge at a Grand Slam."

Azarenka, who ousted defending champion Samantha Stosur of Australia on Tuesday, leads the all-time rivalry with Sharapova

5-4, including a victory in March's Indian Wells final and a loss in April's Stuttgart final on clay.

"It's always tough to lose in that final stage of a Grand Slam," Sharapova said. "She has been playing great tennis. This is a great opportunity for the both of us."

US fourth seed Serena Williams, a 14-time Grand Slam champion seeking her fourth crown on the Flushing Meadows hardcourt routed Serbian 12th seed Ana Ivanovic 6-3 in 58 minutes, firing 12 aces in a commanding performance.

"I came out really strong," Williams said. "Playing someone like Ana, the former No. 1, I knew I had to come out strong and play some amazing tennis."

Williams, who lost to Stosur in last year's final, will face Italian 10th seed Sara Errani on Friday for a berth in Saturday's final.

Errani became the first Italian woman in the Open era to reach the US Open semifinals with a 6-2, 6-4 victory over 20th-seeded compatriot, doubles partner and best friend Roberta Vinci.

Rage grows in Pakistan

Ex-stars call for award boycott



AFP, Karachi

Former Pakistan players on Thursday urged a boycott of the International Cricket Council (ICC) annual awards ceremony over the omission of spinner Saeed Ajmal from the shortlist for Test player of the year.

An independent jury comprising former players, officials and mediamen provoked anger in Pakistan after omitting the wily off-spinner from the shortlist of four candidates, which includes Sri Lanka's Kumar Sangakkara, Australian Michael Clarke and South Africans Vernon Philander and Hashim Amla.

Ajmal, 34, took 72 wickets in 12 Tests from August 2011 to July this year, including 24 wickets in a 3-0 rout of then world number one team England in January-February.

The Pakistan Cricket Board (PCB) earlier this week lodged a protest with the ICC demanding a review of the shortlist for the September 15 ceremony to be held in Colombo, Sri Lanka. But the ICC said an independent jury had decided the list.

"The way the ICC has ignored Ajmal is unjust and the PCB must convey its reservations by boycotting the awards ceremony in Sri Lanka," former Pakistan captain Rashid Latif told AFP.

"Ajmal deserved to be on the shortlist and his omission is unjust."

Former batsman Basit Ali urged the PCB not to accept the decision.

"The decision to leave out Ajmal is inexplicable and Pakistan must not attend the ceremony," he said.

Mohsin Khan, the former opener who coached the team that beat England this year, said the selection process should not come down to personal preferences.

"This ICC process to shortlist players is clearly flawed because cricket is all about performance, not personal likes and dislikes. Better if the PCB boycotts the awards function," Mohsin said.

"It will at least send out a strong message to the ICC. South Africa also did it in 2009 when their deserving players were ignored for the awards."

The PCB said it was considering the option of boycotting the event. A final decision is expected within the next few days.

Pakistan spin Oz out



AFP, Dubai

Pakistan's spinners Mohammad Hafeez, Saeed Ajmal and Raza Hasan bowled Australia out for just 89 to set up an easy seven-wicket win in the first Twenty20 international here on Wednesday.

Ajmal (2-13), Hasan (2-15) and skipper Hafeez (2-24) shook the Australian batting before left-arm paceman Sohail Tanvir (3-13) wrapped up the innings in 19.3 overs. Pakistan then romped home in 14.5 overs to take a 1-0 lead in the three-match series.

It was an easy win for Pakistan at Dubai Stadium after going down 2-1 in the preceding one-day series.

Shoaib Malik hit the winning boundary, finishing with nine not out while Kamran Akmal finished with an unbeaten 31 with three boundaries and a six.

The victory was never in doubt once Pakistan bowled well. Hafeez (17) and Imran Nazir (22) gave Pakistan a solid start of 30 before losing Hafeez and Nasir Jamshed (10) in quick succession.

Akmal and Malik saw off the target without any discomfort. The second match will be played here on Friday.

Earlier Australia were let down by poor

shot selection against quality spin bowling after they were sent into bat.

Australia hit only three boundaries in the innings with their last coming in the fourth over as Pakistani spinners never allowed them to settle on a turning track, reducing their opponents to their second-lowest Twenty20 total.

Opener David Warner top-scored with 22 off 25 deliveries, hitting two boundaries.

Cameron White (15) and captain George Bailey (14) were the only others to reach double figures.

Paceman Umar Gul dismissed Shane Watson (eight) in the third over while Tanvir accounted for Michael Hussey (one) in the next before Warner and Bailey put on the best stand of the innings, adding 33 for the third wicket.

Pakistan's spinners then came into their own, as the last eight wickets went for a mere 43 runs.

Australia's lowest Twenty20 total of 79 came against England at Southampton in 2005.

SCORES IN BRIEF

AUSTRALIA: 89 all out (Warner 22, Bailey 14, White 15; Hafeez 2-24, Tanvir 3-13, Ajmal 2-13)
PAKISTAN: 90 for 3 (Hafeez 17, Nazir 22, Akmal 31 not out)

Result: Pakistan won by seven wickets.
Man-of-the-match: Mohammad Hafeez.

Fed beaten by Berdych BD golfers

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record against the world number one, will now face British third seed Andy Murray for a place in Sunday's title match.

"I'll just try to bring something from today and try to add something a little more for my next match," Berdych said.

Berdych boasts a 4-2 career winning record over Murray, who reached a second successive US Open semifinal when Croatia's Marin Cilic squandered a set and 5-1 lead to lose 3-6, 7-6 (7/4), 6-2, 6-0.

Murray won 15 of the last 18 games to secure a seventh win in eight meetings with the 12th-seeded Cilic.

"There is pressure on you to perform well, expectations are high and sometimes you're nervous."

Teary-eyed Andy Roddick said goodbye to the US Open, New York and his career in an emotional fourth-round defeat to Argentina's Juan Martin Del Potro.

The 30-year-old, the last American man to win a Grand Slam event when he claimed the US Open in 2003, had already said this would be the last tournament of a 12-year career which yielded 32 titles and 20 million dollars in prize money.

"I've loved every minute of it -- for the first time in my career I'm not sure what to say," said Roddick, who was in tears -- as was model wife Brooklyn -- as he addressed the crowd after his 6-7 (7/1), 7-6 (7/4), 6-2, 6-4 loss.

Seventh-seeded Del Potro, the champion in 2009, booked a Thursday quarterfinal date with defending champion Novak Djokovic.

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which was disrupted by rain on Wednesday when he could play only fifteen holes, and he finished the round with a score of one-over-par 73. He started the day on one-under-par but two bogeys ruined what could have been a fruitful first round. In the second round he traded three bogeys with four birdies to finish with one-under-par 71 and narrowly missing a cut with an overall tally of even 144 in joint 51st position.

For Sohel however the even-par round could not save him from the cut.

At the other end of the leaderboard Michael Tran of Vietnam surged from his first-round position of second with a four-under-par 68 to share top spot with Thailand's Thaworn Wiratchant, who consolidated his first-round six-under-par 66 with a round of three-under-par 69 in the second.

CROSSWORD By Eugene Sheffer

ACROSS

1 Appear to be

5 Erstwhile acorn

8 KFC flavorer

12 Notion

13 Eisenhower

14 Hodge-podge

15 Chris Martin's band

17 Desire

18 Weep

19 Ersatz bullets

21 Pass along

24 Piglet's papa

25 Memo acronym

26 Protect oneself

30 Doctrine

31 Prognosticators

32 Half of XIV

33 Fan of Jerry Garcia et al.

DOWN

1 "— 'em, Fido!"

2 Tokyo's old name

3 Wet wriggler

4 Wild and crazy

5 Unctuous

6 Alious (Abbr.)

7 Computer component

8 "The Da Vinci Code" director

9 Verve

10 Skaters' mecca

11 Androids

16 Snoop

20 Deposits

21 Incursion

22 Being, to Brutus

23 Dalai —

24 Speak sheepishly?

26 X-rated entertainment, maybe

27 Still

28 "— Mis-behavin'"

29 Ph.D. hurdle

31 Counterfeit

34 About to nod off

35 Jazz fan, maybe

37 Pantheon member

38 Expansive

39 Always

40 Staff member?

41 Infant

44 Blunder

45 Raw rock

46 Falsehood

47 Water barrier

Solution time: 21 mins.



1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11
12				13			14			
15				16			17			
			18			19	20			
21	22	23		24						
25				26				27	28	29
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42				43	44			45	46	47
48				49				50		
51				52				53		

CRYPTOQUIP

J D Y W I L M M L J X Q Y W H X T Y G
N E M J D J Y M J Q X G Y H X W Q L N
Q L T N B B H J Q T M L T C H T
Q N R R J E I J M B T E E C Q J R R J E

Yesterday's Cryptoquip: SORROWFUL
BROADWAY TUNE ABOUT THE ENTRY OF A GROUP OF GENETIC REPLICAS: "SEND IN THE CLONES."

Today's Cryptoquip Clue: G equals F