

23 sign for Muktijoddha

SPORTS REPORTER

Last season's professional football league runners-up Muktijoddha Sangsad formed a mediocre squad as the freedom fighters' side completed their registration formalities by signing up 23 players at the Bangladesh Football Federation (BFF) yesterday.

Muktijoddha Sangsad were forced into forming a mediocre side after most of their last season's star players like Zahid Hasan Emily, Mithun Chowdhury, Mamunul Islam, Ariful Islam, Shakil Ahmed, Rezaul Karim, Mustakur Rahman and Maruf Ahmed left to join the big-budgeted Sheikh Russel and Sheikh Jamal Dhamondi Club.

Zahid Parvez Chowdhury, Mohammad Yusuf, Faisal Mahmud, Ziaur Rahman and Rokonuzzaman were the only remarkable signings this season for the All Red outfit. Muktis had formed star-studded teams in the past but they had to be content with two runners-up trophies of Bangladesh Premier League in a row.

"We will say it is not a bad squad which is comprised of young players and we hope to do better at our home ground in Gopalganj," said coach Shafiqul Islam Manik during the players' transfer formalities.

Squad: Zahid Parvez Chowdhury, Prodip Barua, Shahed Azam, Jahirul Islam, Mohammad Biplob, Jewel Rana, Mohammad Yusuf, Faisal Mahmud, Ziaur Rahman, Akramuzzaman, Rokonuzzaman, Azmal Hossain Biddu, Mohammad Rony, Shihab, Aminur Rahman Shohag, Sohel, Mohammad Ali, Rashed Mahmud Liton, Shaymal Ahmed Rony, Mostafizur Rahman Saikat, Tanmoy Hossain Taru, Didarul Haque and Paul Emmanuel Damy.

Driven by
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and we also got some extra runs which helped us lot. I was starved for strike initially but I didn't panic and all of our batsmen just used a bit of power to get all the boundaries," he added.

Gaylor however also gave credit to their bowlers. "Australia also has some good players who can change the game but the early wickets helped us to earn this comfortable victory."

It was a battle between Gaylor and Shane Watson but the Australian all-rounder did not find his feet at any point. Instead, Australia's only solace was captain George Bailey's 63 off 29 balls that contained four sixes and six fours.

"We were absolutely outplayed. Gaylor was subdued for a while but while he's at the crease he's always in your mind. But we set ourselves to get to the semi-finals and I don't think there's one area specifically where we can improve on. But from tonight you can probably say all three!" said Bailey.

"We did what we had to do, everybody turned up. Chris and Marlon [Samuels] set it up for us and the bowling turned up too. If you look at the quality in the dressing room, if we go out on the field and execute we can beat any team," Darren Sammy said with a smile.

In the afternoon there had been a forlorn story for the West Indian fans as their women's team lost to Australia in the semifinal but Darren Sammy's men took adequate revenge.

Akmal fined

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Umar finished the game at the Premadasa stadium unbeaten on 29 as his team failed to chase down a 140-run victory target.

Sri Lanka will face either Australia or West Indies in Sunday's final.

A team outplay

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Nazmul Apu received the man of the match award for his bowling figures of 3 for 19 in 4 overs.

SCORES IN BRIEF

WEST INDIES HP: 105 all out in 19.4 overs (Kyle Hope 30, Kjorn Ottley 20; Nazmul 3-19, Enamul 3-27)

BANGLADESH A: 106 for 6 in 19.4 overs (Shamsur Rahman 29, Ziaur Rahman 20; Jason 2-20)

Result: Bangladesh A won by 4 wickets



Muktijoddha Sangsad's 23 new recruits sit before completing their registration at the Bangladesh Football Federation House yesterday.

PHOTO: STAR

Pakistan sad at T20 exit

AFP, Karachi

Former players spoke for millions of disappointed fans Friday after Pakistan crashed out of the World Twenty20 semifinals, blaming defeat on poor planning and lacklustre batting.

Pakistan lost to hosts Sri Lanka by 16 runs in the first semifinal Thursday, having failed to beat a modest 140-run target.

"Our openers looked in a panic," former captain Asif Iqbal told AFP.

Free medical camp

Shadhinata Krira Sangha, a first division football club, launched a free medical camp for the poor people at the club office at the Taltala Market in Khilgaon yesterday.

The club will provide free medical service in every first and third week of each month, informed club general secretary Syed Saifur Rahman.

On the first day, some 30 poor people received the medical service provided by Parkway General Hospital.

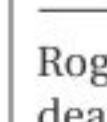
Summer Open Badminton

The Summer Open Badminton tournament got underway at the Shaheed Tajuddin Ahmed Indoor Stadium yesterday with 160 shuttlers including 10 women taking part in the ranking tournament.

The tournament will feature four events men's singles, doubles, women's singles and doubles as 140 shuttlers compete for the men's singles title while ten competitors will fight for the women's singles title.

SA Chowdhury, CEO & managing director of Bangladesh Commerce Bank Limited, inaugurated the tournament while Bangladesh Badminton Federation vice presidents Shiblee Robaitul Islam, Alamgir Hossain and Enayetul Islam were among others present.

Death-threats & Djokovic

 Tennis

AFP, Shanghai

Roger Federer will have to shrug off a bizarre death threat as he returns to action at the Shanghai Masters from Sunday to combat Novak Djokovic's attempt on his world number one crown.

Security precautions are in place for the Swiss player and his family in the teeming Chinese city, after a unknown blogger made the outlandish threat to "assassinate" the 17-time Grand Slam champion.

"On October 6, I plan to assassinate Federer for the purpose of tennis extermination," read the message, posted under the name 'Blue Cat Polytheistic Religion Founder 07' on baidu.com.

The user also posted a doctored image showing a decapitated Federer on his knees on a tennis court, with an axe-wielding executioner posing next to him.

While the credibility of the threat was unknown, organisers were taking no chances.

"We are fully aware of the comments that have been made and we take all such issues seriously," a tournament official told AFP.

The incident has provided an unwelcome distraction ahead of the Shanghai Masters, where Federer and Djokovic will take centre-stage along with Britain's defending champion Andy Murray, fresh from his US Open success.

Plain sailing for big guns

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Bangladesh international Zahid was also not far behind and impressed after earning a spot kick. Zahid was brought down by Police defender Ashraful inside the box and Emily sent the goalkeeper the wrong way to put Sheikh Russel ahead in the tenth minute. Sony doubled the lead with a powerful shot from outside of the box two minutes from the break.

Zahid, the former Abahani winger, made it 3-0 in the 62nd minute with a brilliant over-head flick before defender Linkon collected a low-cross from Sony to widen the margin in the 76th minute. Substitute striker Anwar Hossain sealed the match scoring the fifth goal two minutes from time.

Back to the first match at the BNS, Mohammedan, who last season failed to qualify for the Federation Cup semifinals, got off to a

flying start, riding on tournament's second hattrick by Olalekan after Jessor DFA's Ekashod's Titu had slotted the first hattrick in the qualifying round.

Olalekan last season joined the Black and Whites in the middle of the professional football league to help them finish third in the league and the Benin man managed to enter Bangladesh due to his dual citizenship of France and marked his start with a treble.

He put Mohammedan ahead in the very sixth with a close-range header before doubling the lead in the 41st minute with a flick and completed his hattrick with a tap-in from close range in the 45th minute.

Substitute striker Mohammad Robin, who

returned the Black & Whites from archrivals Abahani, sealed the match in the 85th minute to leave the field with heads held high.

Wasim points at pitch

AGENCIES, Karachi


Former Pakistan captain Wasim Akram has lashed out at the authorities for preparing an unsporting track for the ICC World Twenty20 semifinal between Pakistan and Sri Lanka at the Premadasa Stadium in Colombo.

Wasim, who is in Colombo as a commentator and expert, described the pitch on which Sri Lanka defeated Pakistan by 16 runs last night in a low scoring game as "impossible pitch to bat on".

"I should say that this pitch certainly was not in the spirit of the game. It was an impossible pitch to bat on and I am surprised they had such a surface for such a big match," Akram told Geo News channel.

The former left-arm pacer said the dry and turning pitch was a test for the batsmen and he always knew that even chasing 140 on it would be a challenging job for any side.

"On this pitch 140 was like chasing 180. I don't know how you can have such a pitch for such a big match, it was disappointing," he said.

The former skipper also pointed out that the pitch was not meant for T20 cricket.

Wasim said that before the men's semifinal the women's semifinal was already been played on the pitch, which was already assisting the bowlers.

"When Pakistan batted 60 overs had been bowled on it. This is not acceptable for such a big match," Wasim, who has taken 414 Test and 502 one-day wickets, said.

The former pacer added that the "poor surface robbed the spectators of entertainment".

Wasim also criticised the umpiring in the match pointing out that a rank bad decision had cost Pakistan the wicket of their in-form player, Nasir Jamshed.

"The moment umpire gave Nasir out leg before I knew the ball had pitched outside the leg side. Such errors are unpardonable in such a big match," he said.

Former Pakistani former players also criticised the pitch, slamming the International Cricket Council for failing to properly ensure a sporting pitch for the big match.

Former Test leg-spinner, Abdul Qadir said that since T20 cricket was played for total entertainment it the duty of the ICC to ensure preparation of sporting pitches.

"People want to see runs scored and big hits in T20. Such low scoring games is okay for Test match but not in T20 cricket," Qadir said.

Former Test batsman and national coach, Mohsin Khan said he was surprised at the quality of the pitch prepared for the knock-out match.

"It meant basically the toss played too much of a vital role," said Mohsin.

'Proud of my team'

AFP, Colombo


Defending champions Australia will face England in the women's World Twenty20 final after cruising past the West Indies by 28 runs on Friday.

Seamer Julie Hunter claimed 5-22 as Australia, restricted to 115-7 after electing to bat, shot the West Indies out for 87 in the semifinal at the Premadasa Stadium in Colombo.

Lisa Stalekar marked her 50th T20 international with a top score of 23 and then conceded just six runs in her four overs to help Hunter fashion Australia's emphatic win.

Australia take on main rivals England in Sunday's final looking to avenge a seven-wicket defeat during the league phase in Galle.

Australia began the match on the wrong foot when Alyssa Healy was dismissed off the second ball and Jess Cameron fell in the third over, both wickets going to left-arm spinner Shanel Daley.

Stalekar was supported in the recovery by Alex Blackwell (21), while Fields boosted the total with an unbeaten 19.

SCORES IN BRIEF

AUSTRALIA: 115-7 in 20 overs (Lisa 23, Alex 21, Jodie 19 not out, Shanel 2-23, Shaquana 2-23)

WEST INDIES: 87 all out in 19.2 overs (Shanel 25, Juliania 31, Hunter 5-22)

Result: Australia won by 28 runs.

Retirement

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said last month it was time for him to hang up his bat after he made a series of low scores against New Zealand in a home Test series.

Tendulkar has scored a record 51 Test centuries but he has now gone 25 innings without a hundred in the five-day format since making 146 against South Africa in Cape Town in January, 2011.

England are to play four Tests against India in November and December and Tendulkar made clear he expected to be playing.

"I need not take a (retirement) call right now. When I play in November, I will reassess things," he said.

Questioned about suggestions from a number of former players that his reflexes had slowed, Tendulkar insisted that only he could determine whether he was still up to playing at the highest level.

"I am still the best judge of what happens to my mind and body. When I feel it is time, I will take a call," he said.

"It is going to be a tough call nevertheless. It is going to be tough because this is what I have been doing all my life. It is going to be difficult to suddenly hang (up) my boots one day."

Farah again

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Six weeks later, he captivated the 80,000 capacity crowd in the Olympic Stadium with two wins executed in spectacular fashion with blistering finishes over the last lap to become the first Briton to win Olympic titles in long distance running events.

Na Li of China reaches for a backhand during the women's singles quarterfinal against Agnieszka Radwanska of Poland at the China Open in Beijing yesterday.

PHOTO: AFP

