

Star SPORT

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Nel backs cricket in Pakistan

South African cricketer Andre Nel, who is part of the International World XI, participating in the two Twenty20 exhibition matches in Karachi, has said Pakistan cannot be denied for long as they are too vital to international cricket. "I think that Pakistan should not be denied for long, they are vital to international cricket and I don't see major security concerns here, the people have been warm and we are being looked after very well," The Dawn



Honours even after Day Two

SPORTS REPORTER



Chittagong captain and Bangladesh star Tamim Iqbal fell

eight short of his maiden first-class double century against Dhaka Metro yesterday, as the second day of the National Cricket League's (NCL) first-round matches ended with all games quite evenly balanced.

The Chittagong-Dhaka Metro match at the Shaheed Chandu Stadium in Bogra saw another centurion as Marshall Ayub led Dhaka Metro's reply. Shohag Gazi, playing for Barisal, stole the show with a brutal 119 against Khulna at the Sheikh Abu Naser Stadium and followed that with a four wicket-haul to helped his side take the edge in the game.

Rangpur's Naeem Islam hit an unbeaten 137 at the Cricket Garden in Rangpur where Enamul Haque Jr of Sylhet continued his good run to bag a five-wicket haul.

At the Sher-e-Bangla National Stadium in Mirpur, the game between Dhaka and Rajshahi picked up pace as Mosharraf Rubel's fighting 69 helped Dhaka take a lead of 233 runs.

Dhaka Metro vs Chittagong

Chittagong, who resumed on 345 for 2, lost their last eight wickets for just 54 runs as they were bowled out for 411. In reply,

Dhaka Metro rode on their young batting line up to end the day on 237 for 3. Marshal Ayub ended the day unbeaten on 100 had Mehrab Hossain Jr., who was batting on 53, for company at the close.

Rangpur vs Sylhet

Naeem Islam's marathon seven-hour innings helped Rangpur post 295 runs. Sylhet's Enamul Haque Jr was the chief destroyer as he ran through Rangpur's batting order. In reply Sylhet, ended the day on 168 for 4. Sylhet depended on their captain Alok Kapali and batsman Rumman Ahmed who scored a fluent 75.

Khulna vs Barisal

Khulna added 25 runs to their overnight score and got bowled out before lunch. The Barisal batsmen seemed to be in a hurry and finished their first innings within 63 overs, scoring 278. Wickets continued to tumble in the last session of the day as Khulna slumped to 67 for 5 at the end of the day. Khulna may currently be leading the game, but the collapse towards the end of the day has now put the ball in Barisal's court.

Dhaka vs Rajshahi

Late-order partnerships helped Dhaka take a lead of 233 runs after Rajshahi were forced to declare after the fall of the eighth wicket with the score on 178 as Mushfiqur Rahim and Saqlain Sajib, both of whom were involved in a collision on day one,

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Dhaka batsman Mosharraf Hossain walks off the field after scoring 69 during the second day of their National Cricket League encounter against Rajshahi at the Sher-e-Bangla National Stadium in Mirpur yesterday.

PHOTO: STAR

BCB president now to be elected

NSC stakes more claim in board



SPORTS REPORTER

The National Sports Council (NSC) yesterday vetted the amended constitution of the Bangladesh Cricket Board (BCB) paving the way for an elected president.

The games regulatory authority also reinstated the councillorship of former national cricketers, though in a modified version, in an approved constitution where the NSC staked a bigger claim in the directorship of the country's most affluent federation. It was learnt that the NSC wanted the post of three directors instead of the existing one in the board, which has now 24 directors apart from a government-appointed president.

NSC secretary Shafiq Anwar while talking to The Daily Star over phone last night confirmed the approval of the amended constitution that the BCB passed in its Extraordinary General Meeting (EGM) on March 1 this year.

He however did not provide further details. BCB acting-CEO Nizamuddin Ahmed also confirmed that they had received a dispatch from the NSC but refrained from providing any details.

"We have received something from the NSC and we have sent it to the president who is now in Singapore," said Nizamuddin.

A BCB director, who claimed to have got a copy of the

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Brother vs brother

SPORTS REPORTER



It is the battle of the brothers in the final of the Federation Cup today and it is big-budgeted Sheikh Russel KC who want to grab the first trophy in their club's history by beating Sheikh Jamal Dhanmondi Club. The potentially explosive clash will be held at the Bangabandhu National Stadium from 5:00 pm with BTV telecasting the match live.

The pinnacle of Sheikh Russel's success so far has been their runners-up finish in the now defunct Premier Division Football League. It has been a dry spell since then, but they aim to set right the wrongs this season after putting together a strong team with nine national footballers and three quality foreign recruits. In they way stands Sheikh Jamal Dhanmondi Club, who will be playing their third successive Federation Cup final. The head to head record is certainly not in favour of Russel, as they have failed to win any of their last six games against their more exalted opponents.

What is certain though is that the two best sides of the tournament will fight for

the coveted crown, as both traditional giants of Abahani and Mohammedan have failed to make it to this stage.

There is a keen sub-plot in the battle of the brothers as in-form strikers Zahid Hasan Emily of Russel and Mike Otojari of Jamal will go head to head. Emily leads the scorer list with six goals while Otojari has five.

Russel will be hindered in their quest by the absence of key winger Zahid Hossain who picked up a three-match suspension. Jamal will also be handicapped by the absence of their Nigerian striker Sunday Chizoba who is also suspended.

As such, the strong benches of both sides will come to play. On the pitch though, all eyes will be on the star men Emily and Otojari.

"I am hopeful to win the battle as our main strength lies in good understanding among the players and the style of passing game," said Sheikh Russel coach Maruful Haque.

The coach also believes they are going to face a better side but they did not want to think much about the opponents, who ousted Abahani and Muktajodha Sangsad on their way to reach the final.

Sheikh Jamal's Nigerian coach Joseph

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Mushfiq to bat, Sajib out of game

SPORTS REPORTER

Bangladesh and Rajshahi captain Mushfiqur Rahim and his teammate Saqlain Sajib did not bat yesterday in their National Cricket League (NCL) match against Dhaka as they were advised to take the day off by the Bangladesh Cricket Board (BCB) physio. The duo were involved in a head-on collision while going for a catch and had to be carried off the field of the first day of the match at the Sher-e-Bangla National Stadium on Saturday.

"Mushfiqur is fit and he'll play tomorrow. We wanted to keep him under observation for a day just in case his condition deteriorated. But he is fine now," said Dr Debashish Dutta, BCB physio. The

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Sheikh Russel's tournament top-scorer Zahid Hasan Emily (C) limbers up with teammates during a training session at the BUET Ground yesterday, ahead of today's Grameenphone Federation Cup final against Sheikh Jamal at the Bangabandhu National Stadium.

PHOTO: STAR

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