

Shevchenko turns down Ukraine

Former Ukraine striker Andriy Shevchenko has turned down an offer to manage the national team, he said on Monday. "I believe that today leading the national team of Ukraine is a somewhat premature step for me," Shevchenko, the record marksman for his country with 48 goals in 111 appearances, said in a statement published on the Ukrainian Football Federation's web site. "I hope the leadership of the Football Federation will understand my decision," he added. Last week Ukraine football supremo Konkov offered Shevchenko the post.



PHOTO: STAR

The Tigers train at the Sheikh Abu Naser Stadium in Khulna yesterday. The venue will make its Test debut on Wednesday when the home side starts the second and final five-day game against the West Indies.

Nehru Hockey Meet Bangladesh crash in opener

SPORTS REPORTER

The Bangladesh XI made a frustrating start in the 49th ONGC-Nehru Senior Hockey Tournament after suffering a 6-0 defeat to Air India in their opening match at the Shivaji Stadium in New Delhi, India yesterday. Bangladesh had started their tour quietly with a 4-0 win over Panjab Bank XI in the lone practice match but they faced a tough challenge against Air India in the first match and conceded the lead in the very eighth minute through Joga Singh. Shivendra Singh doubled the lead in the 27th minute.

Air India were more attacking in the second half and added four more goals to end up with a convincing 6-0 win. Joga and Shivendra found the Bangladesh net one more time each while Somanna Pradhan and VS Vinaya scored one goal each to complete the rout.

Bangladesh is taking part in prestigious Indian tournament as part of their preparation for February's World Hockey League (Round-2). Bangladesh will play their second match against ONGC XI tomorrow.

52 candidates for BOA posts

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A total of 52 candidates including Army Chief General Iqbal Karim and Bangladesh's Kuwait ambassador Syed Shahed Reza brought nominations for the Bangladesh Olympic Association election, billed for November 29.

"A total of 59 nomination papers have been sold out for the BOA election till the last day of nomination distribution," said returning officer and deputy secretary of Youth and Sports Ministry, Obaidul Haq, yesterday adding that seven candidates bought one more nomination papers. Some 79 voters will elect a 37-member BOA

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Tigers get busy in Khulna

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Bangladesh cricket team had their first practice session at the Sheikh Abu Naser Stadium in Khulna yesterday afternoon. The Tigers who lost the first Test to the West Indies by 77 runs, despite taking a first innings lead, will now be aiming to draw the two-match series. The second Test begins tomorrow.

Captain Mushfiqur Rahim had earlier stated that it was the batting in the last two sessions of the first Test match that led the Tigers down. He was, however, content with the way the hosts played for majority of the game. The Bangladesh team management also pointed out that there were a number of positives from the first game. Shohag Gazi's impressive debut, Naeem Islam's maiden century and Rubel Hossain's effort were acclaimed.

Rubel, who has returned to international cricket after close to one year, was seen hitting the deck during the Tigers' training session yesterday. His performance in the second innings of the first Test suggested that the pacer had recovered well from his shoulder injury. Rubel though believes that there are still a few areas that he needs to work on.

"There are some areas that need attention, but those are not always required in Test matches; the throw from the deep, for instance. I am still working on it, but my throws from inside the circle are fine," said Rubel at a media conference organised at the stadium in Khulna. He further stated that he gained more confidence in his bowling as the match progressed.

"I believe I can improve my pace as I play."

The bowler also claimed that the wicket at Khulna resembled that of the Sher-e-Bangla National Stadium

in Dhaka. The player had played in Khulna during a match in the National Cricket League. "The wicket here is usually a batting wicket. When I played here it was during the rainy season, so it helped the bowlers back then," he added.

The upcoming Test match will play a crucial role in reflecting the Tigers' overall performance in this series. While there were a number of positive individual performances in the first game, a series whitewash would only add salt to the wounds of Bangladesh's already disappointing Test career.

The Test might also witness Shakib Al Hasan reach the 100-wicket mark and become only the second Bangladeshi, after Mohammad Rafique, to do so. The all-rounder has taken 98 wickets in 27 matches so far.

The Test match will also make Sheikh Abu Naser Stadium Bangladesh's seventh Test venue.

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We must do better, says Ramdin

SPORTS REPORTER

Denesh Ramdin, the West Indian keeper stated that the visitors were aiming for an even better performance in the second Test match which is scheduled to begin at the Sheikh Abu Naser Stadium in Khulna tomorrow.

"They (Bangladesh) showed character, a lot of them have the ability to spend time in the crease. We need to pick up early wickets with the new ball, it is very important for us. So hopefully Tino Best and Ravi Rampaul and hopefully Fidel Edwards can get a game in this match and set the opposition back," said Ramdin at a press conference at the stadium in Khulna yesterday.

"It was a good batting pitch, they played well. They assessed the conditions and played our bowlers like Sunil Narine and Veerasammy Permaul quite well. We got early wickets in the second innings

which put them under pressure, and we won in the end," he added.

The batsman who was not out on 126 in the first innings of the match, shared an unbeaten 296 run stand with Shivnarine Chanderpaul. He also stated that the century had given his confidence a huge boost.

"I've been working really hard in the nets back home, had two good scores in the Champions League, and then I went back home and worked some more. We decided to go out there and have a partnership, it paid off well once I spent time at the crease," said the wicketkeeper. He, however, stated that there was still a long way to go before he could secure his position as the West Indies' Test wicketkeeper.

Despite his good performance in the first innings of the Test match, Ramdin was excluded from the visitors' one day international squad, a side that he hopes

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PHOTO: COURTESY

Bangladesh booters need to stretch beyond their limit if they want to put up an improved performance in their second FIFA friendly against Malaysia today after a 5-0 thrashing by Thailand on Saturday.

Hoping for a better show

Football

SPORTS REPORTER

The Bangladesh national football team will be hoping for an improved performance in today's FIFA international friendly against hosts Malaysia at the Bukit Jalil National Stadium.

The match is scheduled to get underway at 8:45pm local time (6:45pm Bangladesh time).

Bangladesh suffered a disappointing 5-0 defeat at the hands of Thailand in their first FIFA friendly this week but Bangladesh coach Saiful Bari Tuti believes his charges would not produce another disap-

pointing result against Malaysia, who are not as strong as Thailand.

"We watched footage of the friendly between Malaysia and Thailand and it seemed us that the Malaysian players are not as skilled as the Thai players. So I think we have good opportunity to put up a better performance against Malaysia than in the first match against Thailand," said Tuti on the verge of leaving Thailand yesterday afternoon for Malaysia.

Tuti admitted that they could not launch any attacks against Thailand and that the players broke down after conceding three goals in the first 19 minutes. As such the first 15

minutes against Malaysia would also be crucial for them.

The coach hinted that he would change his formation against Malaysia to switch to 4-5-1 from a defensive 5-3-2 in an effort to control the midfield and reduce pressure on the backline.

There might have a couple of changes in the starting eleven as goalkeeper Mamun Khan comes in place of Maksudur Rahman Mustaque. The booters had one-and-a-half hour practice session in the morning at the Beckham Football Academy in Bangkok.

In previous records, Bangladesh

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Siddikur off to Spain

SPORTS REPORTER

Siddikur Rahman flew off for Girona, Spain last night hoping to make it to the European Tour for next season. The premier golfer from Bangladesh, who celebrates his 28th birthday today, hopes his birthday brings good luck for him, especially after some indifferent performances in the last few events. Siddikur, who failed to qualify last season, will be vying against 200 golfers from around the world for 30 places which will allow him to participate on the European Tour events year-long.

"I could not do well in the last few events probably due to playing too much golf. But I am hoping to do well in the European Tour Qualifier this time as I know the course very well," said Siddikur over phone yesterday.

The European Tour Qualifiers will be held from November 24-29 at the PGA Catalunya Resort in Girona, and after that event Siddikur will take part in two Asian Tour events in Thailand, one in Malaysia and another in India before returning home towards the end of December.

Razzag sets new record

SPORTS REPORTER



Veteran left-arm spinner Abdur Razzak created a new record in Bangladesh's domestic cricket as he became the first player to pick up two consecutive 10 wicket hauls. Razzak, who is currently the highest wicket taker of the league with 38 wickets in four matches followed his 13-wicket haul in the previous game with figures of 10 for 215 in the fourth round. His effort at the Sylhet Divisional Stadium led Khulna to a 188-run victory over Dhaka Metro.

Meanwhile, Mosharraf Hossain led Dhaka to a seven-wicket win against Rangpur at the Shaheed Chandu Stadium in Bogra. Rajshahi slumped to their second loss in the league as they crashed to an innings defeat at the BKSP against Chittagong. The port city thumped the reigning champions by an innings and 116 runs. Sylhet

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SCORES IN BRIEF

SYLHET: First innings 206 all out in 93.1 overs and second innings 239 all out in 74.1 overs.

BARISAL: First innings 131 all out in 59.3 overs and second innings 149 all out in 74.5 overs. (Fazle 31; Enamul 6-61, Nabil 3-37)

Result: Sylhet won by 165 runs. **Man-of-the-match:** Enamul Haque Jr. (Sylhet)

RAJSHAHI: First innings 239 all out and second innings 158 all out in 47.1 overs. (Jaharul 56, Farhad 39; Younus 5-62, Noor 3-41)

CHITTAGONG: First innings 510 all out in 152.1 overs. **Result:** Chittagong won by an innings and 113 runs.

Man-of-the-match: Mahbubul Karim (Chittagong)

RANGPUR: First innings 283 all out in 85.4 overs and second innings 153 all out in 55.2 overs.

DHAKA: First innings 355 all out in 110.4 overs and second innings 82 for 3 in 19.5 overs. (Rony 39, Saikat 41; Tanveer 1-9)

Result: Dhaka won by 7 wickets. **Man-of-the-match:** Mosharraf Hossain (Dhaka)

KHULNA: First innings 355 all out in 90.2 overs and second innings 361 for nine in 76.2 overs dec.

DHAKA METRO: First innings 320 all out in 96.1 overs and second innings 208 all out in 54.1 overs. (Mehrab 56,