

**SA Games uncertain**

SPORTS REPORTER

The South Asian Games hangs in the balance after the International Olympic Committee suspended the Indian Olympic Association yesterday citing interference of the government in its elections, which were supposed to take place yesterday.

The SA Games, a biennial sports extravaganza of the South Asian nations, was supposed to be held in India earlier this year following the but the Indian Olympic Association failed to finalise a date due to row over some officials who were allegedly involved with corruption during the 2010 Commonwealth Games.

"We were expecting the new committee to fix the time of SA Games after the completion of the election but IOC's suspension on India makes the Games uncertain and it will not be held in India until the matter is solved," said Bangladesh Olympic Association (BOA) director general Col (retd) Waliullah yesterday.

**Nat'l youth hockey**

SPORTS REPORTER

Mymensingh, Comilla and Chittagong District won their respective matches of the Agrani Bank 23rd National Youth Hockey Championship at the Maulana Bhasani National Hockey Stadium yesterday. Mymensingh defeated Natore 3-0 in the first match, thanks to a brace from Ismail Ahmed.

Comilla beat Chittagong division by the same margin in the next match with Shayon Das bagging a brace. The biggest win of the day came for Chittagong District against Kushtia. Four goals from Nizamuddin and three from Raihan Chowdhury powered Chittagong to a 10-0 victory over Kushtia.

**Empty seats**

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The gallery, the part of the stadium with the cheapest seats and which usually generates the most noise and colour when on song, wasn't full even as the visitors began their chase in the evening.

The Grand Stand, which offers more expensive seats in comparison also had patches of empty seats.

"I didn't get to go to the stadium, but some of my friends did. It was quite frustrating to know that there were empty seats and that I still couldn't get tickets," said Ashfaq Chowdhury, a student of AIUB.

Explaining the reason behind the empty seats, Gazi Ashraf Hossain, organising secretary of the series said, "It's a regular scenario. Almost 6,000 tickets are given as complimentary passes to councillors and other dignitaries and they don't always turn up. Hence one can find the empty spaces in the stadium. People who buy the tickets though, always end up coming."

With Bangladesh performing well in the series, the upcoming matches, in terms of the 'ticketing demand' are almost certain to receive a similar response. However, with things going the way they are right now, it seems the dream of watching the Tigers play will remain unfulfilled for some, even as they see swathes of empty seats on their television sets.

**International stars in Big Bangla Run**

SPORTS REPORTER

Kenyan John Kelai, a winner of marathon event in the 2010 Commonwealth Games and Ethiopian Mosinet Geremew, a record holder in 10km run, have ensured their participation in the Big Bangla Dhaka International 10km Run to be held in the capital on January 18.

"We are expecting at least six elite marathon runners -- two each from Kenya, Ethiopia and England -- and 15 more non-elite runners from abroad in the Big Bangla Run," said run director Richard David Nerurkar at a press conference at the National Press Club yesterday.

"We are still negotiating with world class runners to ensure of their and thinking of bringing a female winner from international level," said Nerurkar, a fifth-place finisher in the 1996 Olympic marathon and three-time winner of the English national cross-country championship.

Nerurkar believes Bangladesh would be benefited from the Dhaka International Run in three ways -- by encouraging the people of this busy and populated city to live a healthy life, by presenting a positive image of the country

at the International level and by inspiring young Bangladeshi sports people to be more ambitious by getting in touch with world-class runners.

"As an English athlete, I know Bangladesh in two ways. One is that Bangladesh has a good cricket team and Bangladesh is a nation of flood which kills a lot of people," Nerurkar said. "Bangladesh can uplift its image through the International Run with massive participation, like what Ethiopia has done through its long-distance athletes even if Ethiopia has a bad image of poverty and famine."

Abdur Rahman Shimu, the chairman of the Big Bangla Run, informed that some 22,000 Bangladeshi participants have already registered their names for the race and that they were expecting 5,000 runners in the race which has also a target of raising fund for the country's underprivileged children.

Shimu sought the cooperation of all to make the first-ever Dhaka International Run a success.

Tony Haseeb, the publicity manager of the run, Mohammad Salahuddin, a sports commentator, and Grandmaster Dr Yuree also spoke on the occasion.



Organisers speak at a press conference at the National Press Club yesterday to announce the details of the Dhaka International 10km Run which will be held in the capital on January 18.

PHOTO: COURTESY

**Warne 'could' play Ashes**

Cricket

AFP, Sydney

Shane Warne Wednesday apologised to Australia Test skipper Michael Clarke after comments about a possible dramatic return for next year's Ashes series against England sparked a media frenzy.

"Sorry @MClarke23 if you woke up to calls!!!! See you soon buddy," he tweeted to the skipper, a close friend.

The 43-year-old leg-spinner, regarded as one of the game's greatest players, quit Tests in 2007 but captained the Indian Premier League side Rajasthan Royals for four years, winning the inaugural tournament in 2008.

Now preparing for another season in Australia's Big Bash League with the Melbourne Stars, he told News Limited newspapers that he had "absolutely no doubt" he could bowl successfully at Test level again.

Warne said that if Clarke suggested his services were needed after the Test team's recent bowling struggles against South Africa, he would give it some serious

thought.

"If your best friend says, 'Mate, I want you to seriously consider making a commitment to Australian cricket and coming back out of retirement', [to] make myself available for selection, that's a different scenario," Warne said.

"From a purely bowling perspective, I don't think my form would be the concern, it's just the time and actually making that commitment again."

He added that he felt the urge to play the five-day game again while watching the third and final Test against South Africa in Perth when the Australian attack struggled to make an impact in the Proteas' second innings.

"I felt like I wanted to jump off the couch and grab the ball," he said.

"I really felt for Michael Clarke from a captaincy point of view.

Australia lost the third Test on Monday by 309 runs and the series 1-0.

But with Australian media buzzing about a possible return, Warne, who remains Australia's highest ever wicket-taker with 708 Test scalps, took to Twitter to hose down the speculation.

**25 runs short: Mahmudullah**

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Mahmudullah identified their below-par score as the main reason behind their not being able to seal a memorable series win, while also ruing the fact that they could not make enough early inroads into the West Indian batting.

"I think we were 20 to 25 runs short," said Mahmudullah of the four-wicket defeat. "But the kind of wicket that it was, if we could have taken the wickets earlier and were a little more tight, the result might have been a little different."

Narine, who has become a sensation in the cricketing world of late with his mystery spin, had been kept at bay by the Tigers throughout this tour until this game. Mahmudullah thought that his success was due to him bowling his own version of the carom ball more in the ODIs and the pitch which assisted the Caribbean twirler.

"I think in the Test matches, he didn't use his mystery delivery. In Khulna when he started using it from the first ODI it's been effective," explained the vice-captain. "The pitch was quite good as well. It was gripping and turning. So that helped as well. He bowled well. Hopefully we'll see his videos and find out how to pick him."

man of his abilities Mahmudullah bats too low down the order, but the man himself was happy with his role. "Whatever the team combination is, I bat accordingly, I have no problems batting down the order or batting where I am right now," he said. "It was my wish to bat till the 50th over but unfortunately I couldn't. But I'll learn from this match and play accordingly in the next matches."

His 58-run sixth wicket partnership with skipper Mushfiqur Rahim, while it saved the Tigers' blushes, could have given them a winning platform had Mushfiqur not gotten out in the batting Powerplay overs. "When Mushfiq and I were batting our target was around 230 to 240. But unfortunately we couldn't succeed in the Powerplay. It was our plan to play good cricketing shots then. And hit in the last 10 overs."

Despite the reversal, Mahmudullah did not feel that the Tigers would be under any pressure as they were still 2-1 up in the series. "I believe that we are still confident enough to win the last two games," said Mahmudullah. "I don't think we were in any sort of pressure or will feel anything. We are still positive and will go hard at winning the last two matches."

**FIFA technical director due today**

SPORTS REPORTER

FIFA technical director Jean Michael Benezet, along with FIFA Asia's technical official Vincent Subramanian, is scheduled to arrive in Dhaka this morning to conduct the final selection of the Bangladesh Football Federation (BFF) Academy in Sylhet.

Two other FIFA officials will also accompany the FIFA director, who will go to Sylhet tomorrow to see the BFF Academy even though the academy is yet to be completed fully. There is furnishing to be done at the dormitory, the administrative building, the coaches and staff quarters, and filtration of the swimming pool needs to be done as well as making the pitches even.

The game's governing body has already requested the National Sports Council to provide those things to make the academy ready for the training but the game's regulatory body has yet to get the go-ahead from the finance ministry.

After the visit to BFF Academy, the FIFA officials will return to the capital and begin the final selection from a total of 152 booters on Saturday.

**Our focus**

FROM PAGE 16 and Kieron Pollard lost their wickets cheaply. The visitors in fact almost went through a similar collapse following the 111-run partnership between Powell and Samuels for the second wicket.

Samuels though believed that it was only a matter of time before the batsmen in the team joined the party. "We have a lot of quality batsmen who are finding their way in our team. This win was also a special team effort. There will be times when few will have to stand up if others don't do it on the day," said the West Indian.

Having guided his team to their first win in the five-match ODI series, Samuels stated that the visitors would focus on one game at a time. "We'll take it step by step. We are making a comeback, so we can't afford to think about anything apart from the next game. We just have to play basic cricket and take move in strides."



PHOTO: INTERNET

India's master batsman Sachin Tendulkar acknowledges the applause after reaching his half-century against England on the first day of the third Test in Kolkata yesterday.

**Tendulkar finds runs**

England win the opening day

Cricket

PTI, Kolkata

Sachin Tendulkar marked his return to form with a patient 76 but England claimed the honours on the opening day by reducing a jittery India to 273 for seven in the first innings of the third Test on Wednesday.

Tendulkar played a composed innings under pressure facing 155 balls and hitting 13 boundaries in the process. His partnership of 79 for the fifth wicket with Yuvraj Singh was the highlight of the Indian innings as most of the other top order batsman failed to capitalise on starts.

He missed a century when he was forced to edge one off seamer Jimmy Anderson and the catch was taken by wicketkeeper Matt Prior diving to his right.

Anderson got the ball to reverse consistently in the post tea session which saw England get three wickets after getting two each in the first couple of sessions on a Eden Gardens track which appeared good for

batting.

It was Tendulkar's first half-century since the Sydney Test as he appeared relieved after getting to the mark with a boundary of pacer Steven Finn.

Electing to bat on flat wicket that had little to offer, India had a promising start from Gautam Gambhir (60) and Virender Sehwag (23). But Gambhir could not convert his fine start for yet another time, while Virat Kohli's poor form in the series continued as he could manage only six runs.

Anderson (3 for 68) rocked the home team at the fag end of the day with the second new ball. He bowled a perfect off-cutter that breached Ravichandran Ashwin's defence. At stumps, skipper Dhoni was unbeaten on 22 (from 59 balls) along with Zaheer Khan who was yet to open his account. This is the first time that floodlights were used in a Test match at the Eden with the last 40 minutes being played under artificial lights.

**SCOREBOARD**

INDIA: First innings

Bowler	O	M	R	W
Gambhir cTrott b Panesar	60			
Sehwag run out (Finn/Prior)	23			
Pujara b Panesar	16			
Tendulkar cPrior b Anderson	76			
Kohli cSwann b Anderson	6			
Yuvraj cCook b Swann	32			
Dhoni not out	22			
Ashwin b Anderson	21			
Zaheer not out	0			
Extras: (b-5, lb-11, nb-1)	17			
Total: (For 7 wks in 90 overs)	273			
To bat: Ojha, Sharma				
Fall of wickets: 1-47, 2-88, 3-117, 4-136, 5-215, 6-230, 7-268				

**England:** Cook, Compton, Trott, Pietersen, Bell, Patel, Prior, Swann, Panesar, Anderson, Finn.

Toss: India.

**Div I football**

FROM PAGE 16

Kamal Stadium in Kamalapur yesterday. Jewel scored in the 15th, 43rd, and 81st minutes with Sumon and Jahid getting the other two goals for the winning side. Raju and Komol scored one apiece for Sunrise.

Youngmen's Club of Fakirerpool will take on Dhaka Wanderers at the same venue today.

**CROSSWORD By Eugene Sheffer**

- |                                      |                                 |                               |                                  |
|--------------------------------------|---------------------------------|-------------------------------|----------------------------------|
| <b>ACROSS</b>                        | <b>35</b> Catches some rays     | <b>DOWN</b>                   | <b>20</b> Frail thing            |
| <b>1</b> Length                      | <b>36</b> Smoke                 | <b>1</b> Every-               | <b>21</b> Pal                    |
| <b>2</b> Fish                        | <b>37</b> Buyer of stolen goods | <b>2</b> Fish eggs            | <b>22</b> Car                    |
| <b>5</b> Matter-horn, for one        | <b>38</b> Attack of Pakistan    | <b>3</b> Work unit            | <b>23</b> Sweetie                |
| <b>8</b> Lan-guage of                | <b>41</b> Bando of baseball     | <b>4</b> Old sayings          | <b>24</b> Grab                   |
| <b>12</b> Man of the manor           | <b>42</b> Judicial garment      | <b>5</b> In the thick of      | <b>26</b> Ancient                |
| <b>13</b> Bygone space station       | <b>43</b> Sing                  | <b>6</b> "30 Rock" role       | <b>27</b> Terrible guy?          |
| <b>14</b> Tide type                  | <b>48</b> Piece of work         | <b>7</b> Charisma             | <b>28</b> Galvanizing stuff      |
| <b>15</b> Make valid                 | <b>49</b> Commotion             | <b>8</b> Fictitious           | <b>29</b> Facility               |
| <b>17</b> San —, Italy               | <b>50</b> Historic times        | <b>9</b> Clarinet insert      | <b>31</b> Advertise              |
| <b>18</b> Pantheon member            | <b>51</b> Accompanying          | <b>10</b> Knight's lady       | <b>34</b> From the start         |
| <b>19</b> Stockholm's land           | <b>52</b> Allow                 | <b>11</b> "Once — a time ..." | <b>35</b> Penn and —             |
| <b>21</b> West Pointer               | <b>53</b> En-grossed            | <b>16</b> Parcel of land      | <b>37</b> Air safety org.        |
| <b>24</b> — pin and pick it up, ..." |                                 |                               | <b>38</b> Cornfield intruder     |
| <b>25</b> Colors                     |                                 |                               | <b>39</b> Arizona tribe          |
| <b>26</b> Fine                       |                                 |                               | <b>40</b> Touch                  |
| <b>30</b> Actress Hagen              |                                 |                               | <b>41</b> Edinburgh resident     |
| <b>31</b> Puncture                   |                                 |                               | <b>44</b> Praise in verse        |
| <b>32</b> By way of                  |                                 |                               | <b>45</b> A Gershwin brother     |
| <b>33</b> Preach                     |                                 |                               | <b>46</b> Microwave              |
|                                      |                                 |                               | <b>47</b> "Guinness Book" suffix |

Solution time: 21 mins.

A	F	T	G	A	E	L	S	T	O	W
S	O	W	A	B	B	O	T	A	G	E
P	O	O	L	T	A	B	L	E	B	L
M	A	T	T	E	D	S	O	R	E	
I	R	A	R	O	B	N	O	T	E	S
F	I	L	L	N	O	S	M	A	R	E
F	A	K	I	R	Y	E	S	L	I	E
D	R	A	W	A	W	A	K	E	N	
O	R	I	A	N	A	T	A	M		
W	A	R	D	I	R	T	P	O	O	L
E	S	T	O	V	U	L	E	A	D	E
S	P	Y	M	E	T	E	D	R	A	G

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
30				31				32		
33			34				35			
			36				37			
38	39	40				41				
42				43	44			45	46	47
48				49				50		
51				52				53		

**CRYPTOQUIP**

FB F TQIQ UM PEH "KQI RKHPFOXQ  
FP OXFUQ BENXJMXP," F  
P X R R M P Q F T M X I Z N Q  
X P F V D N M Z H J E V D X E D Q.

Yesterday's Cryptoquip: FORMER AMERICAN PRESIDENT WHO WAS OFTEN CAUGHT DANCING TO POPULAR MUSIC: GROOVER CLEVELAND.  
Today's Cryptoquip Clue: F equals 1