

PCB responds positively

Cricket

SPORTS REPORTER

The Bangladesh Cricket Board (BCB) received a positive response from their Pakistan counterparts yesterday.

The Pakistan Cricket Board (PCB) sent a formal mail to BCB where they stated that the opportunity for bilateral discussion will remain open and they also expressed interest to meet the BCB high-ups at any convenient place.

"Yes, we received a formal response from the Pakistan Cricket Board (PCB) and they are very positive. We also believe that our bilateral relationship will not be hampered following postponement of the tour," said BCB's media committee chairman Jalal Yunus when asked about PCB's formal response.

BCB's acting CEO Nizamuddin Chowdhury also confirmed the receipt of a formal response from PCB. He said that they have been in continuous touch with their Pakistan counterparts and insisted that the reactions in the Pakistani and international media do not reflect the sentiment in the letter from the PCB.

"We are in good terms with the PCB and are communi-

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Bilateral discussions to remain open

Media reactions not reflected in formal response

BCB confident of Pakistan players'



Prime Bank South Zone batsman Anamul Haque plays an on-drive during a patient 74 against Islami Bank East Zone on the first day of the second round of the Bangladesh Cricket League at the Sher-e-Bangla National Stadium yesterday.

PHOTO: STAR

Div I cricket

SPORTS REPORTER

Tasin Hasin Cricket Academy beat Baridhara Dazzlers by 32 runs yesterday in a First Division Cricket League match held at the BKSP. The Cricket Academy rode on a half century by Rubel Mia as they set a total of 254 for the loss of 9 wickets. Dazzlers' Shahidul Islam finished with figures of 3 for 58. In reply, the Dazzlers finished on 222 for 9. Shihab Ahmed top-scored with 75.

Meanwhile, Magnum Cricketers defeated Surjo Tarun Club by 60 runs at the Dhanmondi Cricket Stadium. The Jahangir Nagar University Ground witnessed a low-scoring affair as Orient Sporting

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Listless Brothers up against BJMC

SPORTS REPORTER

 Brothers Union, once regarded as the third force in domestic footballing circuit, have been going through their worst patch of form since their introduction at top level football in 1974. The

Team	Match	Wins	Draw	Lost	GD	Points
Abahani	6	4	1	1	7	13
Sheikh Jamal DC	5	4	1	0	7	13
Sheikh Russel KC	5	4	0	1	2	12
Mohammedan	6	3	1	2	3	10
Muktijoddha SKC	6	3	1	2	2	10
Team BJMC	5	1	2	2	-1	5
Feni Soccer Club	5	1	0	4	-5	3
Arambagh KS	5	1	0	4	-6	3

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All Oranges have suffered five straight defeats in the ongoing Grameenphone Bangladesh Premier League and are yet to register a single point.

"I played for the Brothers Union and now I am the team manager but I've never seen the club do so disappointingly in the league," said Amer Khan, who said he could not remember whether Brothers have ever suffered five straight defeats in the league.

The All Oranges showed promise in the season's curtain-raising tournament, Federation Cup, as they beat Abahani to emerge group champions before being eliminated from the quarterfinals, losing against Muktijoddha Sangsad 2-0.

But they failed to keep the momentum in the professional football league as they went down against Mohammedan (3-0).

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Day of starts

Cricket

SPORTS REPORTER

The first day of the second round of the newly-formed Bangladesh Cricket League witnessed a number of players getting good starts but fail to reach the three figure mark. Prime Bank South Zone's Anamul Haque scored a patient 74 against Islami Bank East Zone at the Sher-e-Bangla National Stadium, before an attempted sweep off Yasin Arafat led to his fall. Arafat was the day's highest wicket taker as he finished with figures of 4 for 50.

It was a similar scenario in the Shaheed Chandu Stadium in Bogra where BCB North Zone's Junaed Siddique (78) and Farhad Hossain (72) lost their wickets after getting set. The players were involved in a 140-run stand for the second wicket.

SOUTH ZONE v EAST ZONE

Anamul's half-century and contributions from the tail helped South Zone post 248 after being put into bat. The team, which is largely made up of

Anamul Haque and Junaed Siddique both shine with half-centuries

players from the National Cricket League champions, Khulna, slumped to 71 for three after the first 25 overs as openers Soumya Sarkar (0) and Imrul Kayes (20) went cheaply. A 61-run stand between Tushar Imran and Anamul steadied the innings briefly before Tushar was bowled by the slow-left armer, Nabil Samad.

At 178 for 8 it seemed as though

the Southerners wouldn't get past the 200-mark. However, a cameo by number 11, Robiul Islam, which included four sixes put the runs on the board for the team. In reply, East Zone lost the newest member of their team, Shahriar Nafees before the end of the day's play as he was trapped in front by Shohag Gazi in the 7th over. East Zone finished on 50 for 1.

NORTH ZONE v CENTRAL ZONE

After electing to bat, North Zone

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SCORES IN BRIEF

SOUTH ZONE: First innings 248 all out in 73 overs (Anamul 74, Robiul 39 not out; Yasin: 4-50) v

EAST ZONE: First innings 50 for 1 in 15 overs (Nafis Iqbal 17; Shohag 1-3)

NORTH ZONE: First innings 280 for 5 in 90 overs (Junaed 78, Farhad 72;

Must win game for India

Second ODI against Pakistan today

PTI, Kolkata

 Wrecked by Pakistan seamers in their opening ODI match, India's under-fire cricketers will have to pull themselves up against the archrivals when they clash in a must-win second one-day international here on Thursday with the form of their top-order batsmen a concern.

Pakistan pacer Junaid Khan had sucked the life out of Indian batting when his fiery spell of four for 43 in Chennai mopped up the top-order and eventually set up a six-wicket victory for his team.

None of the top five batsmen could even reach a double digit figure and if it would not have been for skipper Mahendra Singh Dhoni's heroic unbeaten 113, things would have been more embarrassing for the hosts who are trailing the three-match series 0-1.

Another defeat would mean India's second series loss in less than a fortnight after England recorded their first Test series win (2-1) on Indian soil in 28 years.

With odds heavily stacked against them at Eden Gardens, a struggling India will be under tremendous pressure on Thursday to keep the three-match series alive.

It remains to be seen how captain Dhoni makes the famed top-order click

with both Virender Sehwag and Gautam Gambhir struggling to give a good start to the team.

In absence of retired ODI batsman Sachin Tendulkar, senior pro Sehwag is yet to take up the challenge and lead the batting from the front.

Sehwag had a poor 2012, accumulating 217 from 10 matches. Barring a 96 against Sri Lanka last year, he's yet to fire since his record-breaking 219 in December 2011.

The Sehwag conundrum is hurting India's cause and the Delhi opener will need to come up with a sizzling innings to give India a dazzling start, something that more often than not translates into a big win.

Considering that Sehwag, who did not play the T20Is, specially figured in India's ODI scheme of things, his return to form will be the need of the hour.

"When the senior player like Sehwag comes into the side, when he is specially picked for the series, he needs a go ahead," Dhoni said indicating that Sehwag will remain at his slot.

Virat Kohli too is going through a mini-slump and it has only added to India's misery. Kohli had injured his foot in Chennai and there's a cloud of uncertainty over him but India would want the promising right-hander to be back in his usual number three.

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South Africa fast bowler Vernon Philander (C) celebrates taking his fifth wicket, that of New Zealand batsman Bradley-John Watling, during the first day of the first Test at Newlands in Cape Town yesterday. Philander's five wickets for only seven runs saw the Kiwis dismissed for only 45.

PHOTO: AFP

Dominant SA take control

Cricket

AGENCIES, Newlands

South Africa reached a position of sheer dominance at the end of the first day's play of the first Test against New Zealand at Newlands in Cape Town yesterday. An unbeaten century from opener Alviro Petersen and twin half-centuries from Hashim Amla and Jacques Kallis carried the hosts to 252 for three, after they skittled the Kiwis out for just 45 in the first innings.

Fast bowler Vernon Philander took five wickets as the Proteas dismissed the Black Caps in just 19.2 overs, the eighth-shortest completed innings in Test cricket, but they lost captain Graeme Smith in the last over before lunch.

Resuming on three for one, Petersen and Amla set about steadying the innings and consecutive leg-side boundaries by Petersen from the first two balls of the session eased the pressure.

The prolific Amla then became the main aggressor as he struck three boundaries off wicket-taker Doug Bracewell before taking his team past New Zealand's score in the 12th over with a fine on-drive.

Amla continued his dazzling strokeplay, racing to his half-century from just 55 deliveries with a drive through the covers off Chris Martin.

Petersen was more sedate but had still contributed 37 by the time Amla brought up the 100-partnership with a single to the cover boundary.

The stand ended 15 minutes before tea, though, as Amla was trapped lbw for 66 after walking across his

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