

# Star SPORT

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## Ade attacks coach

The fragile peace between Togo coach Didier Six and his star player Emmanuel Adebayor has been shattered following the team's quarterfinal loss to Burkina Faso.

In the aftermath of Sunday's 1-0 extra-time defeat, Adebayor rounded on the inexperienced Six in a no-holds-barred attack on the Frenchman's style of management.

"The coach was not a help! Me, I was on the pitch, so I couldn't do both jobs (coaching and playing).

"I tried to do my best, but it's true he didn't help us," the Tottenham striker



## Fixing BPL's new talking point

SPORTS REPORTER

When this reporter was approaching the Sher-e-Bangla National Stadium in Mirpur yesterday, a few cricket fans stopped him to ask the million-dollar question: "Brother, is it true that the match between the Dhaka Gladiators and Chittagong Kings was fixed?"

Those fans were not alone in their suspicion; whispers of suspected foulplay in the ongoing Bangladesh Premier League (BPL) have been in every nook and corner. The manner in which Dhaka Gladiators lost the last match of the Chittagong leg against Chittagong Kings has only served to deepen the suspicions, with Gladiators skipper Mashrafe Bin Mortaza adding more fuel to the flame. The Dhaka Gladiators management said that their regular captain Mashrafe was absent from the match due to a back injury, but the 'Narail Express' himself said that he was fit to play that match.

"Just before the start of the match my coach (Ian Pont) told me that 'you are not playing the match'. I can only

Dhaka Gladiators v Chittagong Kings match raises suspicion

Dhaka captain Mashrafe Mortaza, who was supposedly rested because of a back injury, says he was fully fit to play.

ICC's Anti-Corruption and Security Unit 'found nothing wrong', according to BPL governing council member secretary IH

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Tamim Iqbal's aggressive fifty provided the platform for Duronto Rajshahi to chase down Rangpur Riders' competitive 163 in some style at the Sher-e-Bangla National Stadium in Mirpur yesterday.

PHOTO: FIROZ AHMED

## Openers click again for Rajshahi

SPORTS REPORTER

A dominant 95-run opening stand between Tamim Iqbal and Chris Coventry powered Duronto Rajshahi to a comfortable seven wicket win over the Rangpur Riders at the Sher-e-Bangla National Stadium yesterday.

With 24 required of the last three overs, the fourth wicket pair of Sean Ervine and Jahurul Islam took three boundaries off Fidel Edwards in the 18th over and smacked 14 off the next as they reached home with an over to spare.

The win took Rajshahi to

the third spot in the table with eight points.

Chasing a target of 164, Rajshahi got off to a blazing start as their opening pair scored 95 runs in 11.3 overs. Both Tamim (50 of 36) and Coventry (47 of 35) flayed Rangpur's bowlers to the different corners of the park. The aggression began in the third over when Coventry dispatched Edwards over mid on and then witnessed Tamim smack a six over long-off in the last ball.



### SCORES IN BRIEF

**RANGPUR RIDERS:** 163 for 3 in 20 overs (Shamsur 68, Junaed 31, Nasir 30, Borgas 22 not out; Munaweera 1-27, Monir 1-23)  
**DURONTO RAJSHAHI:** 168 for 3 in 19 overs (Tamim 50, Coventry 47, Jamshed 38 not out, Ervine 14 not out; K'O'Brien 1-17, Taposh 1-28)  
**Result:** Duronto Rajshahi won by 7 wickets.

The aggression continued as the batsmen hurried to 51 for no loss in the first six overs. The opening partnership set the tone for Rajshahi as they required just 86 to win in the last 10 overs. Tamim reached his half-century in the 11th over with a delicate cut off Tapash Baisya for a boundary. He was caught at long-off in the next over while trying to play one shot too many.

Tamim's wicket startled Rajshahi a bit as the set Coventry was run out in the next over following a mix up with Dilshan

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## Shakib can play today

SPORTS REPORTER

Star all-rounder Shakib Al Hasan recovered from the hamstring injury that kept him out of Dhaka Gladiators' last two games in Chittagong.

The Tigers all-rounder, who trained with his Bangladesh Premier League (BPL) franchise Dhaka Gladiators yesterday, is fit to play the today's match against Rangpur Riders at the Sher-e-Bangla National Stadium in Mirpur, but the BCB's sports physician Debashish Chowdhury said that it would be nice if the all-rounder returned to action after getting the report of the bone scan.

"He can play the match if he wishes as he has fully recovered from the hamstring injury but we want to be a hundred per cent sure about his old shin

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## Mahmood delivers thumping win

SPORTS REPORTER

A match-winning all-round performance by Azhar Mahmood and a 47-ball 63 by Brad Hodge led the Barisal Burners to a comfortable seven-wicket victory over the Khulna Royal Bengals at the Sher-e-Bangla National Stadium yesterday.

A powerful stand worth 93 off 54 balls between Mahmood and Hodge meant that Barisal required just 18 of their last five overs. They scored 12 off the next two and eventually won the game with 13 balls remaining.

Chasing a target of 146, Barisal lost two wickets within the first six overs and were struggling at 35 for two. Joe Denly was bowled by Samuel Badree in the fifth over, while Sabbir Rahman was caught at mid-on off Asif Ahmed courtesy of a superb diving effort by Shapoor Zadran in the sixth over.

Azhar Mahmood joined Brad Hodge at the crease at 35 for 2 and they revived Barisal's chances in the game with a half-century partnership. The pair hit a boundary every over to stay at par with the

### SCORES IN BRIEF

**KHULNA ROYAL BENGALS:** 145 for 7 in 20 overs (Nazimuddin 33, Nafees 66; Mahmood 3-23, Maharooof 2-28, Kapali 2-24)  
**BARISAL BURNERS:** 148 for 3 in 17.5 overs (Hodge 63, Mahmood 52 not out; Badree 1-25, Reza 1-27)  
**Result:** Barisal Burners won by 7 wickets.

required run-rate and steadily took Barisal to a comfortable 66 for 2 at the end of 10 overs. With 80 to win off the last 10 overs, the acceleration began.

Daniel Harris was smacked away for two boundaries in the 11th, spinner Sanjamul Islam received similar treatment in the 12th, and 11 came off the 13th.

Hodge reached his half-century in the 14th over through a delicate cut that beat the short-third man. He followed that with a 91-meter six over deep long on. The batsmen took full advantage of some erratic bowling by Forhad Reza in the 15th

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## ASIAN ZONAL CHESS Bangladeshis in command

SPORTS REPORTER

Four Bangladeshi Grand Masters along with a Pakistani and a Sri Lankan shared the lead in the points table with maximum 2 points after the second round of the Asian Zonal Chess Championship, which is being held in Colombo, Sri Lanka. National Champion GM Niaz Murshed, GM Ziaur Rahman, GM Reefat Bin Sattar and GM Enamul Hossain, Pakistani IM Mahmood Lodhi and Sunil Weeramantry of Sri Lanka were the players in lead.

In the women section, three players are sharing lead with 2 points each. They are -- national women's champion Shrimin Sultana Shirin, WIM Shamima Akter Liza and Ranasinghe of Sri Lanka.



Cameron Borgas completes an outstanding catch on the mid-wicket boundary yesterday that cricket fans at the Sher-e-Bangla National Stadium will remember for a long time.

PHOTO: STAR

## Payment issue all but solved

SPORTS REPORTER

The BPL governing council confirmed yesterday that all franchises except one paid the twenty-five percent fees of the players.

IH Mallick, member secretary of the BPL's governing council, said that they were hopeful that the long-standing problem will be solved by today, the last deadline for the franchises to solve all financial problems.

"The good news is that we have already gotten money from six franchises and are hopeful that Sylhet Royals will also complete the payment before the deadline. We once again want to say that there is no point in being worried with the payment," said IH Mallick.

The non-payment issue has become a headache for the Bangladesh Cricket Board (BCB) as the franchises have defaulted on one deadline after the other, although it was promised that the twenty-five percent fees will be paid before the start of the tournament.

"It takes at least a week for the players to receive the payment as there are some processes. We are actually facing difficulties with the proper documents," said BCB's acting CEO Nizamuddin Chowdhury.

An emergency board meeting however will take place today at Mirpur where BPL issues will form the main agenda, besides which the board is likely to take a decision against umpire Nadir Shah after a three-member investigation committee found him guilty of spot-fixing.

The investigation committee, headed by retired district judge Jamil Mustafa with former cricketer Shakil Kasem

## U-18 cricket

SPORTS REPORTER

Sawon Gazi claimed seven wickets for 63 runs as Barisal bounced back against Rajshahi on the second day of the Young Tigers U18 National Cricket Competition at the District Stadium in Dinajpur yesterday.

At the Shaheed Chandu Stadium in Bogra, Khulna's Mehedi hogged the spotlight against Dhaka Division South with a 142-run knock.

**SCORES IN BRIEF**  
**BARISAL:** First innings 175 all out in 64.1 overs (Abu Sayem 58, Sawon Gazi 20 not out; Hamidur Rahman 4-45) and second innings 150-2 in 57 overs (Panna Mia 77, Abdullah Ali Saif 29 not out).

**RAJSHAHI:** First innings 216 all out in 78.1 overs (Sovon Das 82, Rakibul Hasan 35; Sawon Gazi 7-63, Hasan Abir 3-20).

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Bangladesh players (in blue shirts) compete against Nigeria in the semifinal of the floor hockey event at the Special Olympics World Winter Games in Pyeongchang, South Korea yesterday. They won the game 2-1 and set up a final clash against Canada today.

PHOTO: COURTESY

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