

Star SPORT

DHAKA THURSDAY FEBRUARY 7, 2013, E-MAIL: sports@thedailystar.net

Maradona no fraudster

Argentinian football legend Diego Maradona said he was no fraudster in a video put out by his lawyer on Tuesday, as the former star disputes a claim that he owes Italian tax authorities millions of euros (dollars).

"I am not a tax fraudster. I played football and other people signed for me," said Maradona.

"I am not afraid of returning to Italy," he said.

Maradona was convicted in 2005 and ordered to pay 37.2 million euros (\$50.4 million), including 23.5 million euros in



SRI LANKA TOUR Injuries a concern

Cricket

SPORTS REPORTER

A little more than three weeks remain before Bangladesh leave for Sri Lanka for their first international tour of the year, a fact that has almost been lost amid the hustle and bustle of the second edition of the Bangladesh Premier League (BPL) over the last three weeks or so.

Preparations for the tour kicked off last week when the national selectors submitted a 26-member preliminary squad to the Bangladesh Cricket Board's (BCB) cricket operations committee. The selectors chose the squad with the aim of identifying the fitness levels of each player. That objective however is yet to be fulfilled.

"We received a 26-member list last week but we haven't yet started working on it.

We'll have a meeting in two to three days time and decide on the next course of action," Enayet Siraj, chairman of the committee told The Daily Star yesterday.

While neither of the physiotherapists of the BCB has been called upon to submit a report on the players as yet, the injury scares from the ongoing BPL might well have a negative effect on the tour next month.

Rangpur's Abdur Razzak was diagnosed with a groin strain last Monday while Rajshahi's Tamim Iqbal, who was hit hard on his left wrist on Saturday is still unsure of playing the next game. Ace all-rounder Shakib Al Hasan, who missed out on the ODI series against the West Indies in November-December last year with a shin bone injury, still does not seem fully fit.

While he did recover from the hamstring injury that kept him out of two BPL games, he continues to complain of the shin bone injury, informed the BCB's physio two days ago. Shakib will undergo a bone scan to determine the extent of his shin injury. If the scan reveals something untoward, the all-rounder may be out of action for up to three months.

Selector Habibul Bashar however remained optimistic and believed that most of the injured players would recover in time. "There are a few injury worries no doubt. But most of them aren't that worrisome. We are however a bit concerned about Shakib since he is complaining of his old shin-related problem again," said Bashar.

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BCB cricket operations committee yet to work on the 26-member preliminary squad submitted by

Injury concerns cropping up in the ongoing BPL with Abdur Razzak, Tamim Iqbal and Shakib Al Hasan among those

Scope for new names to make the grade for the Sri Lanka tour, says selector Habibul Bashar.



PHOTO: STAR

Chittagong Kings wicketkeeper-batsman Brendan Taylor (R) kicks a football during their practice session at the Academy Ground in Mirpur yesterday, ahead of today's BPL T20 clash against the Khulna Royal Bengals.

Div I cricket

SPORTS REPORTER

Kazi Shamim claimed six wickets as Magnum Cricketers registered a two-wicket victory against City Club in the First Division Cricket Super League match at the City Club ground yesterday.

In the day's other match at the Dhaka University ground, Touhidul Islam captured five wickets as Bangladesh Boys beat Orient Sporting Club by 16 runs.

SCORES IN BRIEF BANGLADESH BOYS CLUB: 200 all out in 48.1 overs (Moklesur Rahman 35, Sakawat Hossain 34, Hasanuzzaman 32; Rony 3-32, Abdul Momin 2-18, Latiful Azom 2-19, Hossain Hassu 2-32).

ORIENT SPORTING CLUB: 184 all out in 41.1

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BPL returns today

SPORTS REPORTER



The second edition of the Bangladesh Premier League will continue after a day's break with the Chittagong Kings facing off against the Khulna Royal Bengals and the Sylhet Royals taking on the Rangpur Riders.

Chittagong will go into the game without New Zealand's Jacob Oram who will be flying back home due to family-related issues, informed Chittagong officials yesterday. Oram's place will be taken by the South African David Miller who reached the capital yesterday.

Chittagong Kings are currently in fourth place with six points and will be satisfied with nothing less than a win against last-placed Khulna today. Brendan Taylor, whose performance has propelled the Kings in this edition of the BPL was confident when he spoke at a press conference at Mirpur yesterday and said that they were aiming to reach the semifinals.

"There's still a lot of cricket to play so it's important to try and keep that momentum going. As a team it's important that we all come together now and look forward to hopefully a semifinal berth," said Taylor.

The Zimbabwean who has the highest batting average of the tournament believed that adjusting to pitches early in the game was the key to scoring in the wickets in

Dhaka. "It's always a challenge to play in Bangladesh, especially with all the spinners, but I have played quite a few games here and I have a better understanding [of the wickets] at the moment," he said.

Khulna's chances of a possible semifinal berth on the other hand looks slim as they have won only two out of the eight games they have played so far. The manner in which they have played their last few games suggest



their over-dependence on skipper Shahriar Nafees who incidentally, is the highest run-scorer of the tournament so far.

The late game will see Rangpur Riders trying to make amends after their crushing 88-run loss against Dhaka in the last game. While the Riders began the tournament well, they have slowly slumped to sixth in the table with six points in eight matches. They will have to beat Sylhet to stand any chance of making it to the next round.

Muktijoddha fined

SPORTS REPORTER

Muktijoddha Sangsad have been fined Tk one lakh while Team BJMC officials have been served show-cause notices in two separate incidents of the ongoing Grameenphone Bangladesh Premier League.

According to a BFF press release, Muktijoddha Sangsad's Mohammad Yousuf hurled abusive words at the referee after their goalless draw against Brothers Union in Gopalganj on February 3. Coach Shafiqul Islam Manik, assistant coach Abdul Quiyum Sentu, player Ajmol Hossain Biddut also misbehaved with the referee while ball-boy Mamun assaulted him physically. Yousuf has been suspended for two matches, Mamun has been banned from stadium while others have been warned.

In another incident recently, BJMC official Mohammad Hossain, ball-boy Anwar and Imran

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PHOTO: AFP

Spanish tennis great Rafael Nadal celebrates a victory with Argentine Juan Monaco (not in frame) during their ATP Vina del Mar tournament doubles match against Czech Republic's Frantisek Cermak and Lukas Dlouhy on Tuesday.

Winning return for Nadal

Tennis

AFP, Vina del Mar

Spain's Rafael Nadal launched his return from a seven-month injury break by teaming with Argentina's Juan Monaco for an emphatic doubles victory in the ATP clay court event here on Tuesday.

The return of the world number five, playing his first tournament since he was beaten in the second round at Wimbledon by Czech journeyman Lukas Rosol in late June, is the focus of attention at the 410,200-dollar tournament.

In a warm-up for his long awaited singles match on Wednesday, Nadal teamed with Monaco to post a 6-3, 6-2 victory in just 65 minutes over second seeds Frantisek Cermak and Lukas Dlouhy in the first round of the doubles.

As the top seed, the 11-time Grand Slam champion enjoyed a first-round singles bye and will open his singles campaign with a second-round clash against Argentine qualifier Federico Delbonis.

Delbonis beat compatriot Guido Pella 2-6, 7-6 (7/4), 7-6 (7/1).

"It was a great feeling to play again and I'm very happy for doing it with a friend like Monaco in a great atmosphere that we had on the court," Nadal said.

"In doubles the effort is always less. We will see how it goes in singles and how my physical condition is."

Nadal, who will be 27 in June, has been careful to play down expectations, saying he still has some pain from his troublesome knees and doesn't expect to immediately rediscover his old winning ways in his first tournament back.

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Bangabandhu, Bangamata finals today

Football

SPORTS REPORTER

The finals of the 3rd Bangabandhu Gold Cup Primary School Football Tournament and the 2nd Bangamata Begum Fajilatunnesa Mujib Gold Cup Primary School Football Tournament will take place today at the Bangabandhu National Stadium.

South Dondari Keranipara Registered Non-government Primary School of Nilfamari will take on Meheripara Registered Non-government Primary School of Cox's Bazar in the Bangabandhu Gold Cup final at 12:00pm while Nischintapur Registered Non-government Primary School of Sylhet take on Palichara Government Primary School of Rangpur in the Bangamata Gold Cup at 2:30pm at the same venue.

Both the tournaments got underway in June last year at union and municipality level. Some 60,776 schools participated in the Bangabandhu Gold Cup while 59,700 schools took part in the Bangamata Gold Cup. A total of 10,852 matches have taken place at union, upazila, district and divisional level before the final round got underway in Dhaka from December last.

In a bid to nurturing students' mental, physical, artistic and attitudinal aptitude, the Bangabandhu Gold Cup was introduced in 2010 followed by Bangamata Gold Cup in the following year. This time the theme of the tournaments is "Let go to school, everyone."

Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina is expected to witness the games and distributes prizes among the winners after the finals today.

ASIAN ZONAL CHESS Liza in lead

SPORTS REPORTER

WIM Shamima Akter Liza enjoyed solo lead in the women's group of the Asian Zonal Chess Championship with maximum five points after the fifth round played in Colombo, Sri Lanka yesterday. Liza beat WIM Ranasinghe of Sri Lanka while national champions Sharmin Sultana Shirin lost against her Sri Lankan counterpart Methmini Nelinika in this round.

Meanwhile, Bangladeshi men conceded the lead in their group as Pakistani IM Mahmood Lodhi took command with 4.5 points. National champion GM Niaz Murshed, GM Ziaur Rahman and GM Reefat Bin Sattar were in joint second position with 4 points each. In the fifth round, Zia beat Rajib and Niaz drew with Reefat.

Sagor leads amateur golf

SPORTS REPORTER

Sagor of Bangladesh led the Runner Group 28th Bangladesh Amateur Golf Championship after the first round at the Kurmitola Golf Club in Dhaka yesterday. Sagor was at four-under-par (68), followed by Karan Taunk of India at two-under-par (70) and Wasim Rana of Pakistan at one-under-par (71).

In the team category, Bangladesh 'A' and 'B' were holding the first position jointly while Pakistan team was holding the second position and Indian team the third position.

Amateur golfers from eight countries of the region, including Bangladesh, are taking part in the event.