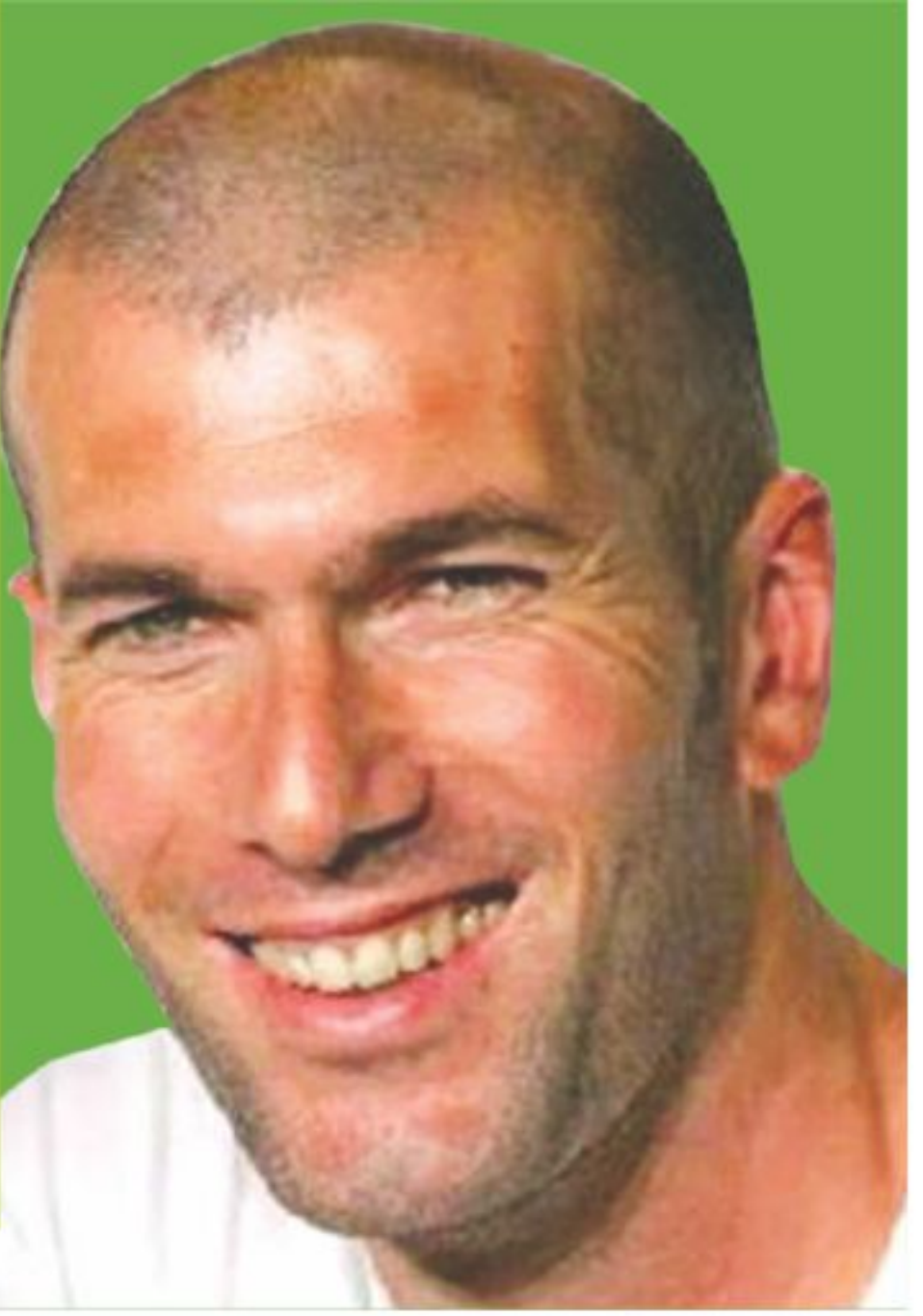




Star SPORT

Zidane invests in 4th div club

A bold approach from the French fourth division club in his wife's hometown has convinced Zinedine Zidane to invest in the financially strapped team. When the club's owners realised Zidane was spending time in the area at his in-laws, they plucked up the courage to see the star and ask him to help their financially troubled club. "Some people came to see me about their ambitions for Rodez football club and it seemed interesting. Things needed to be done and I wanted to help out," said Zidane.



Asia Cup again in Bangladesh



SPORTS REPORTER

Bangladesh will host next year's Asia Cup, thus becoming the venue for consecutive editions of the regional cricket extravaganza. The Bangladesh Cricket Board (BCB) president Nazmul Hassan Papon was quoted in a private TV channel as saying that the 2014 Asia Cup will be held in Bangladesh instead of India.

However, the BCB boss was not available for comment despite repeated attempts from The Daily Star to contact him.

The BCB president's disclosure of a major issue on a particular private television channel not only exposed his apparent partiality towards that channel, but more importantly stands to annoy the other member countries of the Asian Cricket Council (ACC).

Alternative sources later confirmed that the decision to host the tournament in Bangladesh was taken at the ACC board meeting on April 8 in Kuala Lumpur but it was learnt that there was a gentleman's agreement among the members that no one will disclose the matter within two months of the meeting.

The disclosure from the BCB president may therefore create a bad impression of the board. The Pakistan Cricket Board (PCB) especially may not take the matter lightly as they did not want the decision to go public till the end of their national elections.

When contacted, BCB's media committee chairman Jalal Yunus informed that: "Yes, we learnt from our board president that he got a positive response from the member countries during the ACC (Asia Cricket Council) meeting about holding next year's Asia Cup in Bangladesh. We are, however, waiting for formal confirmation from ACC."

Yunus also informed that it will be held in February next year before the ICC Twenty20 World Cup to be held

SEE PAGE 17 COL 1



A gymnast performs on the floor of the National Sports Council gymnasium yesterday, as part of preparation for the 8th Bangladesh Games which is scheduled to begin on April 20.

PHOTO: STAR

Tamim to miss first Test



SPORTS REPORTER

Left-handed opener Tamim Iqbal will not be available for selection for the first Test against Zimbabwe starting from April 17 at the Harare Sports Club ground.

Bangladesh team operations manager Tanjeeb Ahsan Saad informed the Daily Star Sport over telephone from the Zimbabwean capital yesterday that an X-ray was done on the injured thumb of the opener on Friday and the report suggested that the Chittagonian will need more time to be match fit.

"The X-ray reports suggested that he (Tamim Iqbal) will need more time. Tamim will miss the first Test and it's not certain whether he will be fit for the second Test. He is improving but the progress is very slow," informed Saad. The second Test will start from April 25 at the same venue.

When selecting the 15-man Test squad the selectors were not sure whether Tamim, who had fractured his thumb while fielding in the first one-dayer against Sri Lanka at Hambantota last month, would be ready in time for the first Test but were confident of his participation in the second Test. Tamim suffered the thumb injury shortly after recovering from the wrist injury which ruled him out of the first Test in Sri Lanka.

Saad however said that other players are fully fit and practised for the second consecutive day at the Harare Sports Club ground yesterday.

"Except Tamim everybody is fine. The weather is very pleasant and the temperature is similar to November-December in Bangladesh," said Saad, adding that the facilities provided by the home country were satisfactory.

Bangladesh will go into the first Test of the two-match series without playing any practice match.

The good news for the tourists is that star all-rounder Shakib Al Hasan will return to the Test fold after missing

SEE PAGE 17 COL 4

'Exposure, not results'

SPORTS REPORTER

Salma Khatun, the Bangladesh women's cricket captain, said that the team were not frustrated by the outcome of their maiden tour of India.

The team returned yesterday after losing all three T20Is and three ODIs during their first trip to India.

"If you only look at the result than you must say we had a very poor tour but I believe that it was a good tour for us. Our performance was not bad despite the fact that we lost all matches. We are happy that we could play some international cricket," said Salma, who was brilliant in her performance in the bilateral series.

"We have very little experience in international cricket, so you can't judge us only by the result. The more we play the more we will learn. We need more opportunities like the India tour, so that we can improve our performance. But we are progressing well," she added.

Zia loses again

SPORTS REPORTER

Grandmaster Zaiur Rahman lost against GM Abhijeet Gupta of India in the 6th round of the 15th Dubai Open Chess Championship in UAE on Friday night. The second loss in six matches meant Zia has 3.5 points from six games. Zia was scheduled to take on FM Mohannad Farhan of Jordan in the seventh round on Saturday night.

Venues not ready yet

SPORTS REPORTER



With only six days left to the start of the 8th Bangladesh Games, many of the 28 venues are still unprepared.

The kabaddi mat, the basketball floor, the railing at the volleyball ground need repair work. The swimming pool also needs a new pumping machine. But the National Sports Council (NSC) has refused to allocate any funds, which is why the Bangladesh Olympic Association is looking to do this out of its own accord.

"The NSC, which is the owner of the venues, is unwilling to carry out the renovation work which is why the BOA will have to do the job. We will be spending an extra six to seven lac taka on this purpose," informed acting general secretary of the BOA Ashikur Rahman Miku at a press briefing at the BOA house yesterday.

Miku also informed that the budget for the opening and closing ceremonies, which was estimated at 11 crore taka initially (half the amount of the Games budget), has been brought down to 8 crore taka.

However, despite the lavish spending on the ceremonies, the games' most attractive disciplines -- athletics and swimming -- is likely to be conducted under hand timing, even if the costs for digital timing would have been only a fraction of the games budget.

SEE PAGE 17 COL 2

Beximco golf ends

SPORTS REPORTER

Siddiqui Alam Sikder clinched the title of the 1st Beximco Cup Golf Tournament which concluded at the Savar Golf Club yesterday. Zefan became the runner-up in the tournament which was participated by 330 golfers.

Major General (retd) Tariqul Ahmed Siddique, rcds, psc, Security Adviser to the Prime Minister was present as chief guest at the closing and prize giving ceremony. A S F Rahman, Chairman of Beximco Group attended the occasion as the special guest.

Nazmul Hasan Papon, president of Bangladesh Cricket Board (BCB) & managing director of Beximco Pharmaceuticals along with army high officials and diplomats were present at the event.

Chennai clinch last-ball thriller

Mumbai beat Pune by 41 runs

AGENCIES



Ravindra Jadeja and skipper Mahendra Singh Dhoni snatched a dramatic four-wicket victory off the last ball for Chennai Super Kings over Royal Challengers Bangalore in their Indian Premier League match at the MA Chidambaram Stadium in Chennai yesterday. In the day's other match, Mumbai Indians sealed a comprehensive 41-run win over the Pune Warriors at Wankhede Stadium in Mumbai.

Needing two runs from the last ball of the over in chase of 166, Jadeja hit a short ball from Rudra Pratap Singh straight down the throat of deep third man but the umpire signalled a no-ball, and as the batsman had crossed for a single Chennai and not Bangalore finished victorious.

It was a fantastic comeback from the men in yellow as after the loss of early wickets they were behind the asking rate for most of the chase. When the last five

overs began, Chennai needed 65 with six wickets in hand. From there first Dhoni, and at the end Jadeja, ramped up their efforts, taking in excess of 10 runs from each over. With 16 needed off the last over, Jadeja hit the first two deliveries for four and six, setting the stage for Singh to overstep and hand Chennai a match they had fought valiantly to win.

Chasing 166, Chennai got off to a terrible start, losing openers Mike Hussey and Murali Vijay with just ten on the board coming from four overs. Then Suresh Raina and Subramaniam Badrinath put on 56 for the third wicket, before Dhoni and Jadeja weighed in with a match-turning partnership of 59 in only 5.5 overs. Dhoni's dismissal for a 23-ball 33 off the first ball of the penultimate over put the onus on Jadeja who emerged the hero of the day with a 20-ball 38.

Earlier in the match, Bangalore rode on half-centuries from skipper Virat Kohli and AB de Villiers to score a competitive 165 for

SEE PAGE 17 COL

Farashganj held by Rahmatganj

SPORTS REPORTER

Farashganj SC moved to the top of the Premier Bank Bangladesh Championship League after a 1-1 draw against Rahmatganj MFS at the Birshreshtha Mostafa Kamal Stadium in Kamalapur yesterday.

Nurul Absar opened the scoring for Rahmatganj in the 28th minute, but Mohammad Nasir equalised for Farashganj in the 57th minute.

The draw took Farashganj to sole lead on 13 points from seven matches, one point clear of Uttar Baridhara who have played six matches. Rahmatganj stayed at fourth position with eight points from six matches.

U-19s salvage a draw



SPORTS REPORTER

The first four-day match between Bangladesh Under-19 and the visiting Sri Lanka Under-19 ended in a draw at the Sher-e-Bangla National Stadium in Mirpur yesterday.

The teams will travel to Sylhet today to play the second and final four-dayer starting from April 16 and the first two one-day matches of the five-match series on April 21 and April 23.

On the final day, the visitors declared their second innings on 207 for eight to set an improbable wining target of 333. Bangladesh then recovered from some early hiccups to negotiate 25 overs for 71 runs at the loss of three wickets before stumps were drawn for the final day.

Mehedy Hasan and Mossadek Hossain shone with the bat to make it a draw after

the visitors put up huge total in their first innings while leg-spinner Jubair Hossain bowled brilliantly, picking up three wickets in the second innings to finish with an eight-wicket haul.

Minod Bhanuka hogged the spotlight with the bat for the touring side by making a hundred while AK Tyronne claimed two wickets in Bangladesh's second innings to finish with nine wickets in the match and the player-of-the-match award.

SCORES IN BRIEF

SRI LANKA UNDER-19: First innings 422 and Second innings 207-8dec in 73 overs (Mendis 52, Bhanuka 21, Devinda 23, Kulasekara 26, Anuruddha 32 not out; Pradhan 3-37, Jubair 3-56, Rahatul 2-39).

BANGLADESH UNDER-19S: First innings 397 and second innings 71-3 in 25 overs (Sadmal 34, Mehedy 28, Tyronne 2-29).



Sri Lanka Under-19 bowler AK Tyronne (2nd from R), who took nine wickets in the drawn first four-dayer against Bangladesh Under-19, receives his player-of-the-match trophy from BCB director Jalal Yunus at the Sher-e-Bangla National Stadium in Mirpur yesterday.

PHOTO: STAR