

# SPORT

## MSC romp to hat-trick

Players better paid now: Sathira

SPORTS REPORTER

An allround effort from captain Salma Khatun led Mohammedan to its third consecutive championship in the 5th Women's Club Cricket tournament yesterday. Her unbeaten 46 and miserly figures of 1 for 21 in eight overs led Mohammedan to a seven-wicket victory over Sheikh Jamal Dhanmondi Club at the Dhanmondi Cricket Stadium yesterday.

After electing to bat first Sheikh Jamal were restricted to 129 for 8 in the allotted 40 overs. In reply, Mohammedan reached their target and completed a hat-trick of championships with seven overs to spare.

Mohammedan's chase however had its own debacles as they lost early wickets and were struggling at 37 for two in 13 overs. However, a 61-run partnership between Salma and Rumana Ahmed (21) ensured that there were no further hiccups.

While Salma was adjudged the player of the match her teammate Sathira Jakir, who scored 194 runs and took 13 wickets in the competition, was declared the player of the competition.

Mohammedan, which has traditionally fielded the strongest side in the competition, dominated the tournament right from the start. There were a number of low-scoring matches in the tournament as well which led many to tag it as a one-sided competition.

Mohammedan's players however believed that the competitiveness among the teams had increased, "Yes there were a number of low-scoring matches, but there were 4-5 teams which were good and gave a good fight. Some other clubs had new players but their standard wasn't too good," said Sathira.

With regards to the Mohammedan's dominance, Salma stated that if other clubs had similar budgets for its players then the tournament would be more balanced. "Players will obviously want to play for clubs that pay you well," she said.

Apart from the competitive aspect, Sathira stated that women cricketers were given 'more importance' by clubs these days. "The facilities provided by the clubs are better than before and we are also getting paid better this year, so altogether it's encouraging," said Sathira.

Salma reportedly received the highest amount of the competition -- Tk 3 lakh -- while players like Rumana and Suktara Rahman received Tk 2 lakh each.

Considering that the national contracted players receive monthly salaries that range roughly in between Tk 10,000 and Tk 20,000, it shows just how important the club competition is for them.



Mohammedan SC players celebrate as their captain Salma Khatun receives the Women's Club Cricket trophy from BCB president Nazmul Hassan Papon after winning the final against Sheikh Jamal Dhanmondi Club at the Dhanmondi Cricket Ground yesterday.

PHOTO: STAR

## BCB elections set to gain momentum

SPORTS REPORTER

The shackles that prevented the Bangladesh Cricket Board (BCB) from holding the elections might be broken when the Appellate Division of the Supreme Court gives its directive, as expected, today.

The BCB needs one constitution to hold the polls but it has two at the moment -- one from 2008 and the other amended constitution in 2012. The latter was sent to the BCB's ad-hoc committee by the National Sports Council (NSC), but since it is a court issue, the elections are being delayed.

The elections cannot be conducted as per the 2008 constitution if the board wants to follow the International Cricket Council guidelines as the sport's global governing body wants an elected body, including an

elect president instead of a government nominated chief.

However, questions were raised on the process NSC, the country's sports regulatory body, followed to approve the 2012 amendments, and as a consequence the issue was referred to court. Many guess that the Appellate Division may ask the BCB to pass the amendment in an EGM (extraordinary general meeting).

It seems that the incumbent board members including the president are confident about getting the verdict in favour of the 2012 constitution, and even if not, a panel under the leadership of incumbent board president Nazmul Hassan Papon will contest the elections of the country's richest sports body. On the other hand, another panel, led by former BCB president and ruling party MP, Saber Hossain Chowdhury, is also expected to contest the polls.

## WI 242 for 7

AFP, Gros Inlet, Saint Lucia



A late assault by Dwayne Bravo sparked life into a lethargic West Indies effort as the home team totalled 242 for seven batting first against Pakistan in the fifth and final one-day international at the Beausejour Stadium on Wednesday.

The captain smashed 48 off just 27 deliveries with five fours and three sixes, dominating a 53-run seventh-wicket partnership with former skipper Darren Sammy, who belted his way to an unbeaten 29 off 18 balls.

Pakistan were in control through most of the innings via tight, disciplined bowling, pacers Junaid Khan (3 for 48) and Mohammad Irfan (2 for 34) leading the effort until Bravo cut loose.

Such was the transformation that after crawling to 159 for five in the 42nd over, 83 runs were hammered off the remaining 58 balls to at least give the West Indies a fighting chance of restricting the Pakistani batsmen in conditions that appear tailor-made for batting on a hot, steamy afternoon.

SCORES IN BRIEF:

WEST INDIES: 242 for 7 in 50 overs (Bravo 48, Samuels 45, Charles 43; Junaid 3-48, Irfan 2-34)

## Amla worry for Proteas

AFP, Colombo

A groin injury to star batsman Hashim Amla has added to South Africa's woes as they attempt to prevent their limited-overs tour of Sri Lanka from falling apart.

The Proteas are already 2-0 down in the five-match one-day series after being thrashed by 180 runs in Saturday's opener, before falling by 17 runs in a rain-ruined game on Tuesday.

South Africa have now lost 11 consecutive one-day matches on Sri Lankan soil since 1993, but AB de Villiers's tourists must win Friday's third match in Pallekele to stay afloat in the series.

Amla, who missed the first match due to a stiff neck, fell awkwardly while fielding near the boundary line on Tuesday and was rushed to hospital, where scans showed a strain to the left groin muscle. Team manager Mohammed Moosaajee said Amla was being put through intensive treatment to ensure he is fit to play in the rest of the series.

"Hashim jarred his left knee into the ground while fielding, after which he reported discomfort in the pelvic and groin region," Moosaajee said.

"Injuries of this nature usually take three to seven days to recover. But he will receive intensive treatment and rehab in the coming days to give him the best possible chance of being ready for the rest of the series."



PHOTO: AFP

India captain Virat Kohli raises his bat after reaching a match-winning century in the first of five ODIs against Zimbabwe at the Harare Sports Club yesterday.

## Ton-up Kohli drives India

REUTERS, Harare



Virat Kohli scored a century at more than a run a ball as India cruised to a six-wicket victory in the first one-day international against Zimbabwe in Harare on Wednesday.

Set 229 to win, the visitors started their chase slowly but accelerated with captain Kohli at the crease. He raced to 115 off 108 balls before being caught at long on.

Kohli put on 159 for the third wicket with debutant Ambati Rayudu (63 not out) in India's total of 230 for four.

"The way I batted pleased me; the ball was doing a bit and it was about

playing it out and playing percentage cricket," Kohli said.

"The ball did quite a bit in the morning and our bowlers put it in good areas, so we created a bit of pressure." India won the toss and elected to bowl, but they might have regretted that decision when Zimbabwe put on 72 for the first wicket.

Pakistan-born opener Sikandar Raza struck a career-best 82 and Elton Chigumbura 43 not out as Zimbabwe reached 228 for seven. Leg spinner Amit Mishra was the pick of the Indian bowlers with three for 43 in his 10 overs.

"We could have been a little more proactive, instead of letting them just bowl at us and tie us down, I think we

could have taken the game to them more," Zimbabwe skipper Brendan Taylor said.

"Against a quality side like India you have to post 270 plus, the wicket dried out nicely and it made it very difficult for us to defend."

The second game in the five-match series is at the same venue on Friday.

SCORES IN BRIEF

ZIMBABWE: 228 for 7 in 50 overs (Sibanda 34, Sikandar 82, Williams 15, Chigumbura 43 not out; Mishra 3-43)

INDIA: 230 for 4 in 44.5 overs (Sharma 20, Dhawan 17, Kohli 115, Rayudu 63 not out; Utseya 2-34)

Result: India won by six wickets. Player-of-the-match: Virat Kohli.

## Opportunity for Taylor?

AFP, London

Nottinghamshire batsman James Taylor has emerged as the leading candidate to replace Kevin Pietersen in the third Test against Australia if the England star fails to recover from injury.

Pietersen suffered a calf strain during the second Test at Lord's and was unable to take the field for Australia's second innings.

The South Africa-born batsman is currently undergoing treatment ahead of the Old Trafford Test, which starts next Thursday.

But England's selectors have ear-marked Taylor as the man to step up in case Pietersen doesn't recover and on Wednesday it was announced the 23-year-old will temporarily switch counties and play for Sussex against Australia in a tour match this week.

"We would like to thank Nottinghamshire and Sussex for their support and understanding in allowing Nottinghamshire batsman James Taylor to play for Sussex against Australia in the three-day tour match beginning on Friday," said England coach Andy Flower in a statement.

"This will provide James with a valuable opportunity to play in a longer format of the game while we consider our options ahead of the third Ashes Test next week."

## Strikers on song

SPORTS REPORTER



Promising strikers Wahed Ahmed and Toklish Ahmed are finding the back of the opposition net quite regularly as

the national team's Dutch coach Lodewijk De Kruif continues his experiments to find the right combination for his side.

The charges of De Kruif played the sixth practice match yesterday, this time between the ranks. The coach divided the 24 players in two groups -- namely the Blue side and the Green side. The Blue side came out 2-1 victorious with national team's probable strikers Zahid Hasan Emily and Wahed Ahmed scoring once each to continue their rich vein of form in these practice matches. Wahed has bagged six goals so far in these matches while his senior partner Emily raised the tally to three. Toklish Ahmed, playing in the right wing instead of a

striking position for the Blue side, also found the back of the net for the third time to stake his claim for the

striker's position.

De Kruif will be hoping his strikers take this form into the Thailand tour later this month where they will be playing two friendlies. Striking position seems to be the least of concerns at the moment but the Dutchman is still searching for the right players for the positions of stopper and left wing while the positions of central midfielder, left-back, right-back and goalkeeping look settled as same booters are playing in those positions regularly.

The tour of Thailand will be important for both De Kruif and the players as this will be a platform to get his tactics and personnel right before the SAFF Championship while the players will be expecting a permanent place in the squad by superior performance.

The charges of De Kruif are supposed to play another practice match among them before leaving here for Thailand later this month even though the Thailand Football Association has yet to finalise the tour schedule.

## Transfers not before August's end

SPORTS REPORTER

Just a day before the scheduled date of the players' transfers process of the Dhaka Premier League, the Bangladesh Cricket Board through a press release stated that the competition had been further delayed and that the dates would be fixed after a board meeting scheduled to be held on July 29. According to the press release the player recruitment has been deferred till the end of August and the league is 'expected' to begin in the first week of September.

Quoting the BCB's media committee chairman, Jalal Yunus, the press release stated: "We hope to declare specific dates for the player recruitment programme and the start of the Premier Division Cricket League after the board meeting on 29 July."

As per the decision taken in the board meeting in July, the league was supposed to begin on August 29 and the player selection was scheduled for today. The league which was first supposed to take place in March has already been delayed several times this year.

## Club c'ship uncertain

SPORTS REPORTER

The Bangladesh Football Federation (BFF) had stuck a deal worth Tk 3 crore with Prime Bank in November last year to hold district football leagues and the National Club Championship featuring all district league champions but the snail's pace of the district leagues has led the Club championship towards uncertainty.

With almost nine months into the deal, the game's governing body has been able to finish only 27 District Football Associations (DFA) leagues out of 61 DFAs. Despite disbursing financial assistance (Tk one lakh and in some cases more than Tk one lakh), most of the DFAs could not complete their leagues on time.

After the completion of district leagues by July, the National Club Championship, which was last held in 2009, was supposed to get underway from August 20. But the championship now hangs in the balance as there will not be enough participants.

"There is almost no chance of holding the National Club Championship this year because the DFA Monitoring Committee wants all DFAs to participate which is not possible at the moment," said BFF general secretary Abu Nayeem Shohag yesterday.

## Isinbayeva to leave after Worlds

AFP, Moscow

Russian pole vault queen and double Olympic champion Yelena Isinbayeva announced Tuesday she would be retiring after her home World Athletics Championships, which take place in Moscow in August.

"My career will come to its end at the World Championships," Isinbayeva told reporters after winning the national title at Moscow's Luzhniki arena.

"For me it will be a really nostalgic moment. I want to enjoy a joyful career finish and will show my best at the World Championships."