

SPORT

Dress rehearsal on many fronts

SPORTS REPORTER

With a firm belief that sports is above politics in the country, the Bangladesh Cricket Board (BCB) has decided to go ahead with their planned AMBER Victory Day T20 Cup, starting tomorrow at the newly-built Sylhet Divisional Stadium.

BCB president Nazmul Hasan Papon appealed to the government and all political parties to keep cricket out of any political programme or activities as he said that the ICC (International Cricket Council) and the ACC (Asian Cricket Council), as well as every other cricket nation, are keeping a close eye on the country ahead of the two multinational events --

the Asia Cup and the ICC World Twenty20.

Speaking at an official press conference in connection with the four-team tourney yesterday at the Sher-e-Bangla National Stadium in Mirpur, the BCB boss however hoped that the current situation regarding Pakistan will not affect the cricketing relationship between the two countries, although an Indian news agency (PTI), quoting an unnamed source, said that the possibility of Pakistan pulling out of the two mega events loom large.

The unscheduled four-team domestic T20 tournament will apparently serve the dual purpose of providing the national cricketers with some much needed practice in the shortest format while showcasing to the world that cricket can be played in Bangladesh without any disruption.



PHOTO: STAR

BCB president Nazmul Hasan Papon speaks during a press conference at Mirpur yesterday.

tions caused by political turmoil. After the press conference the board confirmed that they finalised a title sponsor and that the United Commercial Bank (UCB) came forward to sponsor the BCB President XI team led by Tamim Iqbal.

Mashrafe Bin Mortaza will lead Mohammedan, Shakib Al Hasan will captain Prime Bank while national skipper Mushfiqur Rahim will lead Abahani.

The teams were distributed through a lottery. There was an allegation that Gazi Tank, the reigning champions of the Dhaka Premier

League, was not approached properly to take part in the competition but BCB director Khaled Mahmud dismissed such notions. "I had personally contacted their owner. But he seemed to have a lot of reservations."

The first eight matches will be held in Sylhet while the remaining four matches and the final is scheduled to take place at Mirpur though the BCB are yet to get permission from the ICC to host the matches as the world's governing body now hold the rights of the venues ahead of the ICC World Twenty20.

The opening day will see Abahani take on UCB BCB XI at 1pm and Prime Bank take on Mohammedan at 5pm.

The tournament will be a dress rehearsal for the Sylhet Stadium ahead of the T20 World Cup. Papon mentioned that it will also give his players an idea about the pitch.

The players' fees will be divided into two grades. Mashrafe Bin Mortaza, Jahurul Islam, Mominul Haque, Shakib Al Hasan, Shohag Gazi, Rubel Hossain, Tamim Iqbal, Imrul Kayes, Naeem Islam, Mushfiqur Rahim, Mahmudullah Riyad and Ziaur Rahman have been placed in grade A while the rest of the players were placed in grade B.

But whether the money will reach their hands is another matter as the non-payment issue has become a new disease in Bangladesh cricket. The premier league clubs are apparently following the footsteps of the BPL franchises. The players have been alleging that they are yet to get the full payment from the clubs for the Dhaka Premier League.

Papon made light of the issue during the press conference by jovially asking his two directors -- IH Mallick (an Abahani official but Brothers Union councillor) and Mohammedan official Lokman Hossain Bhuiyan. Mallick's surprising retort was that they are waiting for the board's grant to pay the rest of the money to the players. And finally BCB boss said that he will put an



India batsman Cheteshwar Pujara raises his bat after his century on the third day of the first Test against South Africa at the Wanderers in Johannesburg yesterday.

PHOTO: AFP

Grade A players will each receive a tournament fee of Tk 2,50,000 while the fees for Grade B have been fixed at Tk 1,50,000.

The champions will receive Tk 20 lakh and runners up Tk 10 lakh.

The player of the tournament will receive Tk 1 lakh.

The BCB has awarded official (List A) T20 status to the competition.

Tickets rates: Tk 50 for two matches in a day.

Papon plans on discontinuing clubs' grants.

Shamsur Rahman (ankle injury) and Abdur Razzak (on personal leave) replaced by Sharif Ullah and Naeem Islam Jr. respectively.

Jamal swings heavy in Jamshedpur

SPORTS REPORTER

Bangladesh's professional golfer Jamal Hossain Mollah fired a seven-under-64 at the Golmuri Golf Club on Friday to grab the round two lead at the 12th TATA Open in Jamshedpur. Jamal's total score at the halfway stage reads nine-under-134.

Delhi's Manav Jaini, Jamshedpur-based amateur Karan Taunk and M Dharma of Bangalore were in tied second place at seven-under-136.

Jamal, who is currently at sixth position in the PGTI Order of Merit, climbed from overnight tied 17th to the top of the leaderboard after firing eight birdies against a bogey in round two.

Shakhawat Hossain Soehl of Bangladesh was tied for 49th place while another Bangladeshi, Mohammad Rezaul Karim, failed to make the cut which was set at two-over-145.

When will BOA start intensive training?

SPORTS REPORTER

The Bangladesh Olympic Association (BOA) is seemingly in hesitation about starting the intensive training for athletes ahead of next year's Commonwealth Games and Asian Games despite having picked 26 top athletes from amongst the medal-hopefuls in four disciplines nearly one-and-a-half month ago.

BOA had started to sort out the disciplines in early October and took a month to select 26 athletes from four disciplines -- shooting, boxing, archery and taekwondo. But they are yet to start the long-term training with only sixth month left to the start of the Commonwealth Games in Glasgow.

No BOA official was ready to make a comment regarding the training but a source within the association said that they had set January 1 as a tentative date for the start but that date might be changed, depending on the political situation.

However, a member of BOA training and development committee, who preferred to remain anonymous, said that they have taken all necessary steps to start the training after signing individual deal with every athlete, fixing monthly salary of Tk 15,000 and washing charge of Tk 3000 for each of

the athletes and coaches.

According to him, foreign coaches in all four disciplines are expected to arrive here by February.

However, it has been learnt that the National Shooting Federation has already confirmed Korean coach Lee Jong Hyun, who had coached Bangladeshi shooters previously while Boxing Federation is trying to rope in a Ukrainian coach named Gurenko by January 15. But, there has been such no initiative from archery and taekwondo federations as they are banking on local coaches.

"We will decide everything regarding the start of the intensive training during Sunday's meeting. Apart from the training, the meeting will also decide how many disciplines we will participate in the Commonwealth and Asian Games," said the BOA official, adding that the Commonwealth Games authority has deposited 100,000 dollars to the account of Bangladesh Olympic as part of the preparation of the athletes.

Meanwhile, the BOA has made an estimate of approximately Tk 2 core for the intensive training and another handsome amount for training for the second category athletes under the supervision of respective federations.

Fahad in joint lead

SPORTS REPORTER

Bangladeshi FIDE Master Fahad Rahman beat Ter-Saakin Grigori of Russia in the second round of the Open U-10 group of World Youth Chess Championship at Al-Ain, United Arab Emirates on Thursday.

Fahad secured two points from two rounds and was sharing the lead with 38 players.

Saarc Open karate

SPORTS REPORTER

Amir Azimi of Iran emerged champion in the 3rd Saarc Open Full Contact Karate Competition at the National Sports Council Gymnasium yesterday. A total of sixteen competitors from four countries -- Iran, Afghanistan, Nepal and Bangladesh -- participated in the day-long competition. Shahadat Hossain Shajib of Bangladesh became champion in the U-18 group.

India in control after Pujara ton

REUTERS, Johannesburg

Cheteshwar Pujara punished South Africa's wilting bowling attack with a sparkling 135 not out as he and Virat Kohli helped India take complete control of the first Test at the Wanderers on Friday.

A third-wicket stand of 191 between Pujara and Kohli (77 not out) lifted India to 284 for two in their second innings at the close of play, a commanding lead of 320.

South Africa's cause was not helped by a grade one ankle ligament strain to Morne Morkel, leaving him a serious doubt for the second Test starting in Durban on Boxing Day.

Pujara showed admirable patience and plenty of skill in compiling his sixth Test century, but did offer a relatively simple caught

SCOREBOARD

INDIA: First innings 280 all out (Pujara 25, Kohli 119, Rahane 47, Dhoni 19; Philander 4-61, Morkel 3-34)

SOUTH AFRICA: First innings (overnight 213-6)

Smith lbw b Zaheer	68
Petersen lbw b Sharma	21
Aniba b Sharma	36
Kallis lbw b Sharma	0
De Villiers lbw b Shami	13
Duminy c Vijay b Shami	2
Du Plessis c Dhoni b Zaheer	29
Philander c Ashwin b Zaheer	50
Steyn c R Sharma b Sharma	10
Morkel b Zaheer	7
Tahir not out	0
Extras: (lb-4, nb-3, w-1)	8
Total: (All out in 75.3 overs)	244
Fall of wickets: 1-37, 2-130, 3-130, 4-130, 5-145, 6-146, 7-226, 8-237, 9-239.	

Bowler	O	M	R	W
Zaheer	26.3	6	88	4
Shami	18	3	48	2
Sharma	25	5	79	4
Ashwin	6	0	25	0

INDIA: Second innings

Dhawan c Kallis b Philander	19
Vijay c De Villiers b Kallis	35
Pujara not out	135
Kohli not out	77
Extras: (b-5, lb-5, w-8)	18
Total: (For 2 wickets in 78 overs)	109
To bat: R Sharma, Rahane, Dhoni, Ashwin, I Sharma, Zaheer, Shami.	
Fall of wickets: 1-23, 2-93.	

Bowler	O	M	R	W
Steyn	21	4	64	0
Philander	18	5	53	1
Morkel	2	1	4	0
Kallis	14	4	51	1
Tahir	11	0	55	0

and bowled chance to the hapless Imran Tahir when he had just passed his 50. The leg-spinner put it down to compound a miserable match.

Pujara and Kohli stepped up the scoring rate and smashed 175 in 38 overs in the final session.

Paceman Vernon Philander earlier became the fastest South African to take 100 Test wickets when he enticed Shikhar Dhawan (15) to steer the ball to second slip Kallis, who took his 199th catch in Test cricket.

Philander claimed his 100th victim in his 19th Test, the joint-sixth quickest to the milestone in Tests, and he reached the mark one match faster than South Africa's previous record-holder, Dale Steyn.

The tourists made short work of the South African tail in the morning session, despite battling 59 from Philander, dismissing the hosts for 244 as they picked up the final four wickets for the addition of 31 runs.

Zaheer Khan finished with

Chanderpaul crosses Border

AFP, Hamilton

Veteran West Indies batsman Shivnarine Chanderpaul was hailed "a legend" Friday after overtaking Australian Allan Border as the sixth highest all-time run scorer in Test cricket.

His 122 not out in the third Test against New Zealand was also his 29th century and his 17th unbeaten, putting him one ahead of Indian great Sachin Tendulkar as the batsman with the most unbeaten Test hundreds.

Chanderpaul now has 11,199 runs from his 153 Tests. Border scored 11,174 runs from 156 Tests before he retired in March 1994, the same month the 39-year-old Chanderpaul made his debut.

As the West Indies and New Zealand players saluted Chanderpaul -- Denesh Ramdin described him as "a legend" and Kane Williamson said "he's class you can learn a lot from" -- Chanderpaul preferred to acknowledge Border.

"AB is a great man and scored a lot of runs against us in the past and we have a lot of fast bowlers. I'm happy to get



Veteran West Indies batsman Shivnarine Chanderpaul celebrates his century on the second day of the third Test against New Zealand at Seddon Park in Hamilton yesterday.

PHOTO: AFP

Shiv and spin keep Windies on top

AFP, Hamilton

Shivnarine Chanderpaul's record 17th unbeaten Test century and a master-class from a patched-up spin attack gave West Indies the edge over New Zealand as they chased a series-levelling win Friday.

Chanderpaul's 122 not out, overtaking Allan Border's record and putting him sixth on the all-time scorers' list, left the tourists at 367 all out before New Zealand finished day two of the third Test on 156-3.

Ross Taylor, seeking his third century in as many Tests, was on 56 and Brendon McCullum was on 11 after New Zealand lost openers Hamish Rutherford and Peter Fulton cheaply.

Taylor stood in a 95-run partnership with Kane Williamson (58), the second victim for Sunil Narine who was called into the side after Shane Shillingford's ban for an illegal action.

The many variations in the twin spin assault of Narine and Veerasammy Permaul caused multiple problems for the New Zealand batsmen, who struggled to read the turning ball.

But the real honours for the West Indies lay with Chanderpaul, who came to the rescue and rewrote the record books in the bargain when the tourists were in trouble at 86-5 on the first day.

THE TOP SIX			
Player	Matches	Runs	Avg
Sachin Tendulkar	200	15921	53.78
Ricky Ponting	168	13378	51.85
Rahul Dravid	164	13288	52.31
Jaquques Kallis	165	13140	55.21
Brian Lara	131	11953	52.88
Shivnarine Chanderpaul	153	11199	52.08

V-DAY SPORTS

Vertical Horizon b'ball champs

SPORTS REPORTER

Vertical Horizon clinched the title of Citycell Victory Day 3-on-3 Basketball

Championship title beating Bangladesh Krisna Shikha Protishthan (BKSP) by 13-11 points in an entertaining final at the Dhanmondi Basketball Stadium yesterday.

The first half of the match was tied at 6-6 points. Mahin of Vertical Horizon scored highest 7 points while Shishir of BKSP scored 5 points.

KARATE

Two-day long Victory Day Karate Competition began at the National Sports Council Gymnasium yesterday. Iffat Ahsan Maria won gold in the senior women's kata singles. Naimul Islam won the gold in the boys' (10-12) singles kata while Nazim Rahman won gold in the men's junior (16-18) singles kata event.