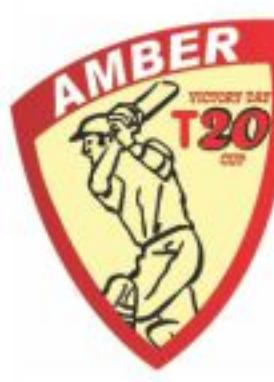


V-Day T20 Cup comes to Dhaka

SPORTS REPORTER



After a successful round of matches in the renovated Sylhet Divisional Stadium, the Victory Day T20 Cup will begin its second leg at the Sher-e-Bangla National Stadium at Mirpur from today.

The T20 tournament was the first competition at the venue after it went through a renovation in a bid to be eligible to host the ICC World Twenty20 next year and it received a good response ahead of the grand event from both players and fans. People flocked to watch their favourite cricketers play T20 cricket and at times the galleries resembled scenes generally seen during an international match.

The Dhaka leg will begin with rivals Mohammedan Sporting Club and Abahani Limited locking horns in the first match of the day.

In the absence of their captain Mushfiqur Rahim, who is suffering from a muscle strain to his back, fourth-placed Abahani will be led by Mahmudullah Riyad. Second-placed Mohammedan will be captained by Mashrafe Bin Mortaza. In the day's other game Shakib Al Hasan's Prime Bank Cricket Club, who are at the top of the table, will

take on Tamim Iqbal's UCB-BCB XI.

While the absence of Mushfiqur will be a big blow for Abahani, they will be looking to their youngsters, including the likes of Soumya Sarker -- their highest run-scorer -- and the hard-hitting Nazmul Hossain Milon.

Mohammedan, on the other hand, will hope that their star batsmen -- Jahurul Islam and Mominul Haque -- who have had a quiet time in the tournament so far, to come good. The last time the two teams met in this competition, Abahani thrashed Mohammedan by 77 runs.

Prime Bank Cricket Club have been by far the best team in the tournament so far. Young Sabbir Rahman has been especially impressive, having scored 180 runs in the first four matches at an average of 80. Their opener Anamul Haque, who leads the run charts with 186 runs, hammered a century in the last game and is in fine form. Shakib with six wickets and a half-century in the last game seems to be approaching his best form and his side will be firm favourites when they take on Tamim's UCB-BCB XI today.

Tamim, with 143 runs in the competition, has been UCB-BCB's best performer so far. However, for them to progress into the finals, they will need better performances from the likes of Naeem Islam, Mithun Ali and Imrul Kayes -- all of who have been inconsistent with the bat.



Sheikh Jamal striker Mithun Chowdhury celebrates his hattrick against Uttar Baridhara Club during the opening match of the Bangladesh Premier League at the Bangabandhu National Stadium yesterday.

PHOTO: STAR

U-19s take on Malaysia today

SPORTS REPORTER

Bangladesh Under-19s' Asia Cup campaign will kick off today when they take on Malaysia in their first group match at the Abu Dhabi Oval 1.

Bangladesh has been placed in Group B along with Sri Lanka, Afghanistan and Malaysia while India, Pakistan, Nepal and the UAE make up Group A.

Bangladesh will play their next game against Afghanistan tomorrow and their last group match against Sri Lanka on December 31 at the Sheikh Zayed Cricket Stadium in Abu Dhabi.

The semifinals are slated for January 2 and the final will take place at the Sharjah Cricket Stadium on January 4.

BKSP rule V-Day gymnastics

SPORTS REPORTER

Gymnasts of the Bangladesh Kira Shikha Protishthan (BKSP) grabbed 11 gold, 14 silver and eight bronze medals in the Victory Day Gymnastics Competition which was held at the National Sports Council Gymnasium yesterday. BKSP's gymnasts won all the events, except for the men's floor and parallel bars, which were grabbed by Links and Builds gymnast Ishad Hossain. Ishad bagged two gold and a bronze medal while Mohammad Al Amin, Mohammad Shishir and Mushfiqa Akter -- all from BKSP -- won two gold each. Secretary general of Bangladesh Olympic Association Syed Shahed Reza witnessed the events and distributed prizes among the winners. A total of nine institutions and clubs participated in the daylong

No place for Kallis

AFP, Durban

Retiring Test all-rounder Jacques Kallis was not included in South Africa's preliminary 30-man squad for the International Cricket Council World Twenty20 tournament to be played in Bangladesh in March and April next year.

Kallis announced on Wednesday that he would retire from Test cricket at the end of the current Test against India but said he was available to play for South Africa in limited overs cricket.

In particular he stated his ambition to be part of his country's 50-overs World Cup campaign in Australia and New Zealand in 2015.

Andrew Hudson, the convener of selectors, was not immediately available for comment but a Cricket South Africa spokesman said there was nothing to be read into Kallis' non-selection for the squad announced on Friday.

"Jacques has not been part of the Twenty20 squad for some time and he has made it clear he wants to earn selection for the 50-overs World Cup."

Kallis, 38, has not played for South Africa in a Twenty20 international since the 2012 World Twenty20 in Sri Lanka, where he scored only 24 runs in three innings, although he took seven wickets in five matches, including four for 15 against Zimbabwe.

SPORTS REPORTER



Mithun Chowdhury scored a hattrick and set up the other goal as defending champions Sheikh Russel KC inflicted a heavy 4-0 defeat to newly-promoted Uttar Baridhara Club in the opening fixture of the 7th Bangladesh Premier League at the Bangabandhu National Stadium yesterday.

The diminutive forward, who had scored only three goals for the treble-winners last season, equalled the feat within 63 minutes of the match and also set up the other goal for his Jamaican strike partner Ricardo Cousins as the defending champions ambled to the three points after having won against the same opponents by a single goal earlier in the Federation Cup.

Mithun thrived on a support role behind three forwards, in an uncon-

ventional and attacking 3-3-1-3 formation adopted by coach Maruf Haque, which gave Sheikh Russel the fluidity and pace to punish the opposition by scoring two goals in each half.

Sheikh Russel never looked in trouble or at odds with their new system as they held the ball and unsettled the Uttar Baridhara backline while facing very little threat from the opposition on a chilly winter evening under the floodlights.

Mithun's hattrick is the third in his professional football league career as the diminutive national forward had previously scored hattricks against Khulna Abahani and Farashganj SC in the second and fourth editions of the professional football league respectively. The hattrick in the second edition saw Mithun score eight goals for Chittagong Abahani while his second league hattrick in the fourth edition of the league left

him scoring 17 goals for Muktijoddha Sangsads. After a very lean season, Mithun is looking to capitalise on his new role and newfound scoring skill.

"I just tried what we had been doing in practice and I was confident that I would be able to score if I got proper assistance from my teammates," said a delighted Mithun, who has set his sights on helping Sheikh Russel KC win as many matches as they can.

"If we can keep the winning streak in the coming days, I believe I will be getting more goals," said Mithun, who broke the deadlock in the 34th minute by striking from inside the box after availing a free-kick from Uruguayan Francisco Usucar.

The 26-year old forward then doubled the margin with a placing shot in the stoppage time of the first half by darting into the box, capitalising on a square-pass from winger

Sabuj Kumar Biswas.

Mithun set up the third goal with a neat through-pass for Ricardo, who did a few stopovers before slotting it past the goalie for his first goal in the 49th minute. Mithun completed a deserved hattrick in the 63rd minute by snatching the ball away from Uttar Baridhara defender Kosoko and nodding it in.

"Though we won the match easily, I think my players have the ability to show more," said Sheikh Russel coach Maruf Haque. "The opponents were not as strong as they seemed in the Federation Cup and we have not truly been tested against them."

About his new 3-3-1-3 formation, which is quite rare in the world of football as only a handful of ultra-attacking coaches used it to some success, Maruf Haque said it is rather his limitation in firepower and able wide men that made him choose this style, which he might be



Mushfiqa Akter of BKSP maintains her flow as she grabbed 2 gold medals in the Victory Day Gymnastics Competition at the National Sports Council Gymnasium yesterday.

SA on song after Steyn burst

AFP, Durban

Dale Steyn ended a bowling drought with a six-wicket haul as South Africa fought back on the second day of the second and final Test against India at Kingsmead on Friday.

Steyn took six for 100 as India slipped from their overnight 181 for one to 334 all out.

South Africa reached 82 for no wicket by the close.

Steyn had Cheteshwar Pujara caught behind by wicketkeeper AB de Villiers in the sixth over of the day which

started more than three hours late because of rain.

Murali Vijay followed in Steyn's next over when he

gave a catch down the leg side. Rohit Sharma shouldered arms and was bowled off the next delivery. Kohli and

INDIA: First innings (overnight 181-1)				
Bowler	O	M	R	W
Dhawan c Peterson b Morkel	29			
Vijay c De Villiers b Steyn	97	30	9	100
Pujara c De Villiers b Steyn	70	21	6	56
Kohli c De Villiers b Morkel	46	23.3	6	50
R Sharma c Steyn	0	11	1	36
Rahane not out	51	22	2	75
Dhoni c Smith b Steyn	24	4	0	10
Jadeja c Kallis b Duminy	0			
Zaheer c De Villiers b Steyn	0			
I Sharma c De Villiers b Steyn	4			
Shami c Smith b Morkel	1			
Extras: (lb-1)	12			
Total: (For no loss in 20 overs)	334			82
Bowler	O	M	R	W
Zaheer	4	0	20	0
Shami	5	0	23	0

SOUTH AFRICA: First innings

Smith not out

Petersen not out

Extras: (lb-1)

Total: (For no loss in 20 overs)

Bowler

O

M

R

W

Zaheer

4

0

20

0

Shami

5

0

23

0

ICC continues trials to improve DRS

AFP, Abu Dhabi

Cricket's governing body Friday furthered its process of improving the much-debated decision review system by providing direct replays to a non-match umpire, a trial also experimented earlier this year.

Friday's independent trial, conducted during the fifth and final one-dayer between Pakistan and Sri Lanka in Abu Dhabi, takes various camera inputs from the broadcaster which are viewed by a non-match umpire on a system that is completely independent of the TV coverage, and independent of the game.

The system was first trialled earlier this year in the Old Trafford Test in the Ashes between Australia and England.

England's Richard Kettleborough, not officiating the match, used direct pictures of the Pakistan-Sri Lanka match which allowed him to use various angles and judge in a better way as compared to the existing system in which replays are provided by the broadcasters.

The new system, called Officiating Review System, is in line with the ICC Board's decisions to improve the DRS system to make faster and more accurate decisions.

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