

A team go to WI tonight

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The Bangladesh A team will leave tonight for West Indies to play two four-dayers, three one-dayers and two T20 matches against the West Indies High Performance Centre.

National all-rounder Nasir Hossain, who will lead the second string side in the series, said yesterday that it is a good opportunity for the national players to claim their place in the national side.

“Our main target is to play good cricket during this tour and I think it’s a good opportunity for the national players who are in the team,” Nasir told the reporters after the last practice session at Mirpur yesterday.

Nasir struggled in his recent performances for the Tigers, so he will definitely try to get back his confidence. Also in the team are Imrul Kayes, Shamsur Rahman, Marshal Ayub, Naeem Islam and Mominul Haque for whom the tour is an opportunity to give the selectors food for thought ahead of the coming international assignments.

“I always emphasise on team performance but here the players will definitely try to improve their individual performance and in the end the individual performance helps the team’s cause,” said Nasir.

The selectors will also looking forward to see how the pace bowlers make use of this tour; the focus will be on young left-arm seamer Mustafizur Rahman, who was

SQUAD

Nasir Hossain (captain), Naeem Islam (vice-captain), Imrul Kayes, Shamsur Rahman, Mominul Hoque, Marshall Ayub, Abdul Majid, Mustafizur Rahman, Nurul Hasan, Shuvagoto Hom, Muktar Ali, Elias Sunny, Robiul Islam, Shubhashis Roy and



Bangladesh A skipper Nasir Hossain (L) shares some thoughts with teammates during their last practice session at Mirpur yesterday, on the eve of their departure for West Indies. PHOTO: STAR

CHAMPIONSHIP LEAGUE

Rahmatganj secure title

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Rahmatganj MFS became champions of the Premier Bank Bangladesh Championship League having taken an unassailable 14-point lead at the top, with four matches in hand, after beating second-placed Agrani Bank Ltd 3-0 at the Birshreshtha Shaheed Mostafa Kamal Stadium in Kamalapur yesterday.

After a barren first half, Nurul Absar struck twice in a span of five minutes while Helal netted the third goal as the Old Dhaka outfit confirmed their title, thereby securing a place in next season’s Premier League.

No female shuttlers for Asian, CW Games

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The Bangladesh Badminton Federation has decided not to send any female badminton players to the upcoming Asian Games and Commonwealth Games, disregarding the recent performances of female shuttlers in recent international events.

“The female shuttlers are not up to the international standard. If we send them to such big tournaments not only will they be embarrassed, our sport’s image will be blemished,” claimed the federation’s joint secretary Golam Aziz Jilai, defending the decision to send only male shuttlers to these games.

However, reality says something different. The last two medals earned from international events were courtesy of female shuttlers. The pair of Shapla Akter and Rasel Kabir won a bronze medal in the mixed doubles event of the 2010 SA Games while Shapla also won another bronze in the singles event of an international tournament in the same year in Dhaka.

Aiman Ibne Zaman and Raisuddin will participate in the Commonwealth Games while Enamul Haque and Ahsan Habib will take part

PREMIER DIV HANDBALL

Narinda to fly in two Indians

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Last season’s runners-up Narinda Pragati Boys Club are set to sign up two Indian handball players ahead of the nine-team Premier Division Handball League, which gets underway from Friday.

Narinda Pragati Boys Club manager Didarul Islam Liton informed that two Indian players -- Shamsher Singh and Hardev Singh have agreed in principle to play for the club and are expected to arrive here tomorrow.

The recruitment of the two foreign players will be after a long gap of nine years. The last time the club recruited foreigner players was in 2005, and then too they called in two Indians.

Challenges for both parties

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The resignation of Shane Jurgensen had left Bangladesh cricket in a chaotic state. With a major international event

like the World Cup on its plate, the departure of a head coach is a body blow for any cricket administration but the Bangladesh Cricket Board (BCB) wasted little time in filling the vacuum by roping in former Sri Lanka Test batsman Chandika Hathurusingha.

In the current climate, especially with the lucrative coaching opportunities in the Indian Premier League (IPL), finding a suitable coach is not at all an easy task for a country like Bangladesh; the reason being the high salary packages demanded and the problem with the cultural adjustment of candidates from outside the sub-continent.

Taking this reality into consideration BCB’s five-member search committee seemed to have negotiated with the right man within the

shortest possible time. The name of Chandika Hathurusingha has not been near the top of the wish list for coaches, and Bangladesh have appointed coaches with much higher profiles in its history. It would be hard to find someone hoped for this name to take over from Jurgensen, so it might not be big news, but Bangladesh cricket has reason to hope as Hathurusingha has quietly garnered a reputation as a good mentor.

When a coach from the sub-continent establishes himself in a country like Australia and receives high praise for acumen from a cricketer like Kumar Sangakkara, he cannot surely be dismissed out of hand. There is no reason to be over-excited, but certainly some cause for hope.

To be successful, both Chandika Hathurusingha and the Bangladesh Cricket Board (BCB) have to overcome the challenges ahead. The Sri Lankan must prove that he is good enough to handle a Test team. There is undoubtedly a gulf of difference between successfully

running a state team, playing a role as a shadow coach or coaching an associate member, and guiding a Test nation. The pressure and expectations will be altogether different for the 45-year old. Therefore it is also a major opportunity for Hathurusingha to rise to new heights on the international coaching map.

Khaled Mahmud, the former national skipper who is one of the members of the search committee, has full faith on the new coach.

“We are really optimistic. He is hard-working and we believe he will be able to make an impact on our national team. We have little doubt about his ability as a coach because it’s not easy for any Asian to establish himself in Australia. I have seen his work closely and his work ethic is fantastic,” praised Mahmud.

As important as this appointment however, is whether the BCB can create a truly professional atmosphere for a coach to implement his vision.

Only good management can bring out the best from employees. And in this regard the BCB’s history is

Siddikur to try his luck for US Open

SPORTS REPORTER



Bangladesh’s premier golfer Siddikur Rahman is leaving for England on Friday to take part in the qualifying round of the US Open, the second Major of the season. The two-time Asian Tour winner, who had failed in his previous attempt last year, will be bolstered by his latest result in the

ICSI Philippines Open on Sunday, where he finished runner-up.

The 29-year-old golfer said he looking forward to fulfilling his dream of playing in the US Open, on his return from the Philippines on Monday night.

“I am leaving for England on Friday, three days before the qualification, to have some practice there. The qualification will be held on May 26 over two rounds of 18 holes each. Seven competitors will qualify out of a total of 80 from that zone,” said Siddikur on his return from Philippines on Monday night.

Currently in 13th position in the Asian Tour Order of Merit, Siddikur has had an up-and-down season so far. Out of the six Asian Tour events he took part in, Siddikur finished second in two events while missing the cut in two events.

Siddikur recently admitted that his putting has not been great in recent times and that he needs to rectify it.

“My long game has always been there but my short game hasn’t been up to my standard so far. Hopefully I can improve on my short game soon. I think I’m hitting it very well. If I can get my putter hot then I will get another good result,” said Siddikur.

KKR thrash CSK Hyderabad stay in the hunt

AGENCIES, Undated



Kolkata Knight Riders took a giant stride towards ensuring a play-off berth as they walloped Chennai Super Kings by eight wickets to take their winning streak to five matches in the seventh edition of the Indian Premier League on Tuesday.

Robin Uthappa got his seventh successive 40 plus score in the championship as his 40-ball-67 enabled the home team to chase down a tricky target of 156 with ease as it turned out to be a worthwhile wait for the supporters present at the Eden Gardens.

After Uthappa laid the foundation, Shakib Al-Hasan gave finishing touches in a 21-ball 46 not out (6x4, 2x6) in an unbeaten 34 run stand with Manish Pandey (18 n o) as KKR eased to the win with 12 balls to spare.

KKR with 14 points steered four points clear of RCB and Sunrisers as they would now require two more points to seal their play-off berth from the two remaining home games.

Earlier on Tuesday, a clinical performance by the Sunrisers Hyderabad top order ensured a seven-wicket victory against Royal Challengers Bangalore, which kept them in the hunt for the playoffs.

Chasing a target of 161 riding on Virat Kohli’s (67) first half century of the tournament, Sunrisers knocked off the runs in 19.4 overs as Shikhar Dhawan returned to form with a stroke-filled 50.

While Dhawan started the chase in right earnest, David Warner, back in the opening slot, smashed his way to 46-ball 59, it was skipper Darren Sammy, who smashed a six off the penultimate over by erratic Varun Aaron, who decisively turned the game.

SCORES IN BRIEF

CHENNAI: 154 for 4 in 20 overs (B McCullum 28, Raina 65, Du Plessis 23, Dhoni 21 not out; Narine 1-24, Cummins 1-29)

KOLKATA: 156 for 2 in 18 overs (Uthappa 67, Gambhir 21, Pandey 18 not out, Shakib 46 not out; Jadeja 1-23)

Result: Kolkata won by 8 wickets.

Player-of-the-match: Robin Uthappa.

BANGALORE: 160 for 6 in 20 overs (Gayle 14, Kohli 67, Yuvraj 21, De Villiers 29; B Kumar 2-27)

HYDERABAD: 161 for 3 in 19.4 overs (Dhawan 50, Warner 59, Ojha 24. Finch 11 not out; Aaron 2-36)

Result: Hyderabad won by 7 wickets.

Player-of-the-match: David Warner.

MEXICO 1970

Muller: The Bomber

If Lionel Messi is the new Maradona, then Gerd Muller was the German Jimmy Greaves.

Like Greaves, Muller was the arch poacher but there was an added dimension to his game which built an astonishing career tally of goals and a showcase of silverware, which surpassed even the Spurs and England legend.

The key to his extraordinary facility in the penalty box was hidden in the first nickname bestowed upon him, a rather less flattering one than the pseudonym Der Bomber by which he was to become feted.

When he first appeared as a teenager for his home-town club Nordingen the coach referred to him as ‘The Short Fat Muller’ and the description stuck with him until he was bought by Bayern Munich.

Muller admitted to feeling insulted at first but came to understand that his somewhat stunted, stocky build was to be the making of him. In addition to the slide-rule precision with which he rolled the ball over the goal-line, Muller could score ugly.

That low centre of gravity and short turning circle enabled him to twist and contort himself into scoring from the most awkward and unlikely positions. A whole generation of world-class defenders despaired at the way Muller could squeeze the ball into the net when



PHOTO: DAILY STAR ARCHIVE

Muller would end up winning the World Cup in 1974, but in 1970 he settled for being the tournament’s top scorer, with 10.

they were convinced they had him closed down.

One such hooked effort dealt the killer blow to England in the 1970 World Cup quarterfinal, after Sir Alf Ramsey’s unwise substitution of Bobby Charlton freed Franz Beckenbauer, Der Kaiser, to launch the West German fight back from two down and into extra time.

The impossibility of containing Muller shines out at us from the statistics. He scored at the astounding

ratio of more than a goal a game for Germany... 68 in 62 international appearances. He amassed 365 goals in 422 Bundesliga matches for Bayern and netted 66 times for his club in 74 games in European competition.

Given that deadliest of weapons at centre-forward, it was hardly surprising that Bayern stock-piled three European Cups, four Bundesliga titles and four German cups in the Muller era.

Even so, it is said that during one key game when they were under pressure the Kaiser asked the Bomber if he could lend a hand with the defending, to which Muller replied: ‘When you all join me in the goal-scoring I’ll come back and help you out.’

There were two hatricks in Mexico ’70 – against Peru and Bulgaria – and after knocking out England he scored twice against Italy, only for West Germany to lose that semifinal 4-3.

So the finest moment of all had to wait four years. When it came, it provided the perfect climax. Germany were the hosts in 1974 and Muller’s last goal for his country – in Munich – was the winner against Holland in the final. Muller then walked away from the international game at the age of 28 having won everything.

It took 32 years – and Ronaldo the Brazilian phenomenon – to

Hostels turning into hotels

SPORTS REPORTER

The dormitory of the Sultana Kamal Women’s Complex in Dhanmondi has been transformed into a virtual women’s hostel as some 14 former athletes, including swimmer Dolly Akter, cricketers Nishat, Champa Chakma, Shipra and table tennis player Rahima, have been staying there day after day by exploiting a clause of the dormitory allotment policy of the National Sports Council (NSC).

As per clause 15 under the policy of hostel usage, a sportsperson individually may use the room at the dormitory for a maximum of seven days with the advance payment of government charges, but those athletes no longer tied to their sport have been using the dormitory for a long time while refusing to comply with any rules.

There have been allegations that these former athletes have flouted the rules by using different electronic devices in their respective rooms and returning to the dormitory after the designated curfew.

The matter came into light when Mohammedan women cricketers on Monday went to stay there ahead of the women’s cricket league and some 16 women cricketers were put up in a single room because of room shortage as those former athletes -- who now work at different organisations and schools -- have been staying there for a long time.

Ayesha Begum, administrator of Women’s Complex, admitted the fact to reporters and said that those athletes have been renting dormitory rooms and they cannot accommodate other current athletes due to unavailability of rooms.

NSC secretary Sibnath Roy however said that they are going to follow the NSC policy strictly and force them to leave the dormitory and solve the problem immediately.

Not only the dormitory of the Women’s Complex, some sports organisers have also occupied four rooms at the old building of the NSC over the last three years while a badminton official has been in a room at the Maulna Bhasani Hockey Stadium for the last 10 years, taking up the space for the athletes, but the NSC officials have taken no action regarding this.