

SPORTS



Paceman Rubel Hossain (L) could not think of a better way to celebrate the news that he has been cleared of rape charge with a five-for in a Bangladesh Cricket League match at Fatullah yesterday.

PHOTO: FIROZ AHMED

Schedule announced

Pakistan come here on April 13, depart May 11

SPORTS REPORTER



The cloud of uncertainty that hovered over Bangladesh's cricket ever since A H M Mustafa Kamal's comments in Australia was wiped away yesterday as the itinerary of Pakistan's tour of Bangladesh was officially released by the Bangladesh Cricket Board.

There were plenty of concerns in the air ever since Kamal took a dig at the umpires of the quarterfinal game between Bangladesh and India. BCB president Nazmul Hassan Papon had earlier revealed that the Pakistan Cricket Board had unofficially let them know that Pakistan's umpires were afraid to come to Bangladesh after effigies of Aleem Dar, who stood as umpire in that quarterfinal, were burnt. A similar concern was expressed by the ICC as well.

There was also the question about coming to an agreement with the PCB with regards to compensation. All of these factors made the BCB president slightly uneasy and it was evident from the way he repeatedly stated the importance of the Pakistan series in the press conferences.

"My first target is to ensure that the Pakistan and India series work out in a smooth manner. If these two take place properly, the others [Australia and South Africa] will automatically

go well," Papon had said.

In a sense, Pakistan's tour should have been confirmed long ago and not just a week before their scheduled arrival. However, there was a question with regards to the amount of compensation, for not having toured Pakistan in 2012, that the BCB was willing to pay. The PCB had asked for 900,000 dollars, but a deal was made at 325,000.

Except for the solitary win in the World Cup in 1999, Bangladesh have never managed to beat Pakistan. With the Pakistan ODI team touring without Shahid Afridi and Misbahul Haq, with both now retired, it could be an opportunity for Bangladesh to better their records against their South Asian neighbours. Of the three ODIs, two Tests and one T20I, Khulna will host one Test while the rest of the matches will take place in Dhaka.

ITINERARY

April 13	Pakistan arrive in Dhaka
April 15	1-day practice match at Fatullah
April 17	1st ODI in Dhaka (D/N)
April 19	2nd ODI in Dhaka (D/N)
April 22	3rd ODI in Dhaka (D/N)
April 24	Only T20I in Dhaka
April 25	Travel to Khulna
April 28-May 2	1st Test at SANS, Khulna
May 3	Travel to Dhaka
May 6-May 10	2nd Test in Dhaka
May 11	Pakistan team departs

IN A NUTSHELL

Mash magic defies Central

A happy day for Rubel

SPORTS REPORTER



It was heartbreak for Mahmudullah Riyad and company at Fatullah yesterday. For the second consecutive day, the Walton Central Zone lost a game they were meant to win. On Sunday it was a heroic 70-odd from Nasir Hossain towards the end that defied them. And on Monday, it was a pair of veterans -- Mashrafe Bin Mortaza and Abdur Razzak -- that batted them out of the game.

Chasing 214, Prime Bank South Zone slumped to 132 for 6 and their top order was sent back to the pavilion by the 39th over. It was supposed to be game over for Mashrafe's side. The tail after all required to score close to 80 runs in the last 11 overs.

But what followed displayed just what years of international cricket can do to a player. Razzak and Mashrafe got together in an epic partnership which saw them not just sloggng their way out, but

actually working the death overs to precision.

For one, Central's left-arm attack seemed to have no effect on Razzak, a left-hander himself. Mashrafe on the other hand, charged the spinners at will. Both the batsmen began with a six each and had immedi-



Victorious veterans. PHOTO: STAR

SCORES IN BRIEF

WALTON CENTRAL ZONE: 213 all out in 45.3 overs (Dhiman 63 not out, Mahmudullah 31; Rubel 5-42, Razzak 2-44) v **PRIME BANK SOUTH ZONE:** 216 for 7 (Mashrafe 50 not out, Saykat 50, Razzak 28 not out; Sunny 3-11, Shuvagata 2-32) **Result:** South Zone won by three wickets.

ately announced their intent of fighting it out.

Riyad immediately changed his ploy and decided to bring his pacers back into the attack; a move which worked out for both the veterans as they pounded on Mohammad Shaheed and Sharif smacking 22 runs in two overs. It was all one way traffic from there. Once Mashrafe got the momentum, he didn't stop.

With three overs remaining, South Zone required just 23 runs. Riyad brought in Sharif again and that's when Mashrafe decided to go for the charge. He welcomed him with a four off the first ball and then slapped him for ten runs off the last two balls of the over.

He deservedly ended the game and did so in style, by smacking a flighted Mosharaf Hossain-turner for a six to reach his half-century off 33 balls. The pair smacked 73 off 51 balls.

Earlier, Rubel Hossain steamed in to topple Central Zone's top order. His pace just seemed too good for the Central's players as he sped his way to a five-for.

SPORTS REPORTER



Pacer Rubel Hossain must have been over the moon yesterday. Not only did he run through

Walton Central Zone's batting line-up with a ferocious five-for at Fatullah, but also was relieved of the rape charge that was filed against him by actress Naznin Akter Happy.

Police yesterday reported that they did not find any evidence in support of the allegations labelled against the pace bowler. Inspector Halima Khatun, investigating officer in the case, submitted her report to the Chief Metropolitan Magistrate's Court yesterday morning.

According to the report, the IO did not find any evidence supporting Happy's allegation. Magistrate Meher Nigar Suchona fixed April 13 as the

next date of hearing.

Happy filed a rape case with the Mirpur Model Police Station under the Prevention of Women and Child Repression Act on December 13 last year against Rubel for allegedly having an affair with her, whom he had apparently promised to marry.

On January 8, Rubel was sent to jail after he surrendered before a Dhaka court in connection with the case.

The national cricketer got bail till submission of the police report from a Dhaka court on January 11 and he walked out of jail the same day.

After getting the bail, he left for Australia in January for the Cricket World Cup.

The court on December 31 ordered police to carry out DNA tests of Rubel and Happy.

Earlier on December 15, the High Court had granted Rubel an anticipatory bail for four weeks in the case.

Waugh too a nervous dad

SYDNEY MORNING HERALD

Not too many 14-year-old cricketers have a former Test captain on tap for advice but Steve Waugh admitted the only way he gets his observations through to his son Austin, who was picked for the NSW schoolboys under-15 team, was to pass them on via his club coach.

"Like all [sons] he doesn't listen to [his dad] so I've got to tell another coach to tell him what I'm thinking so it gets through to him," said Waugh upon his son's selection to play in the national schoolboy championships in Darwin this June.

Waugh also admitted that waiting for his son's name to be read out brought back the nerves he endured when he was an aspiring Test player.

"I was very nervous for him when he had his final trial and they picked the side 24 hours later," Waugh said. "It was like I was waiting to be selected for my first Ashes tour [again]. When you have 'Waugh' as your surname you're pretty much last on the list so it was nerve-racking.

We can go all the way: Kohli

INTERNET

Royal Challengers Bangalore (RCB) skipper Virat Kohli said that the inclusion of the likes of Subramaniam Badrinath, Dinesh Karthik has increased the batting depth of the franchise and that this advantage would help the likes of Chris Gayle, AB de Villiers and himself play with a lot more freedom.

RCB purchased a total of 9 players during the auction held in February, with their highest buy being Dinesh Karthik for a whopping 10.5 crore rupees.

"It is a very strong batting unit this time and we have got really good depth with a great mixture of Indian youngsters and great bowlers from around the world and some good power hitters."

The Vijay Mallya-owned franchise have reached the final of the tournament on two occasions in 2009 and 2011, and the 26-year-old Delhi batsman feels that RCB have the team that can go all the way and clinch their maiden title this year.

Rally car in city

STAR SPORT DESK

Good news for followers of racing cars. MJL Bangladesh LTD has flown in a WRC car of Team Omera in the city. The Ford Fiesta 1.6 Zetec, which is the brand that driver Marius Aasen of Omera proudly manoeuvres on all sorts of tracks across the world in



World Rally Championship, will be on display at different posh places of the city from next week.

According to MJL, the car will be showcased for enthusiasts at places like Kurmitola Golf Club, Bashundhara City, Jamuna Future Park and at different private universities.

MJL Bangladesh Ltd is also going to organise the "Omera Experience Marius Aasen Go Kart Competition" in Dhaka. An MJL press release also read that both the Omera's rally car and Aasen, who is likely to be in the city in the second week of May, will be present in the finale.



KAMAL'S RESIGNATION Shakib says no comment

STAR SPORT DESK

Shakib Al Hasan didn't wish to comment on ICC president Mustafa Kamal's resignation and his feud with ICC chairman Narayanswami Srinivasan.

The premier Bangladesh all-rounder, now in India to play for defending IPL champions Kolkata Knight Riders, also hoped that India would go ahead with their tour of Bangladesh in June.

"I strongly hope that India will tour Bangladesh... I'm not thinking anything negative," Shakib told reporters on Sunday.

Besides, he said that his absence from a majority of the KKR group league matches in the IPL won't be much of a problem for the franchise.

The left-arm spinner will play first the two matches in the IPL and return home for a full series against Pakistan.

Fresh face in opening?

SPORTS REPORTER



The selectors have submitted the Bangladesh ODI team for the upcoming Pakistan series yesterday morning. Although the Bangladesh Cricket Board is yet to make the team public, it was learnt that the Tigers might witness a new opening combination for the limited-over matches in Mirpur.

A 14-member squad has been submitted for the first two ODIs. According to sources, the injured Anamul Haque, who had hurt his shoulder during the World Cup, is unlikely to make the team since he is yet to recover completely.

The selectors therefore may either go for Imrul Kayes or a fresh face all together. There is a chance for the selectors to have overlooked Imrul due to his recent lack of form which brings into contention the openers who have done well in domestic cricket in the last few months; and there are a host of them.

Rony Talukdar, Liton Kumar and Abdul Majid have fared spectacularly in the National Cricket League. Of all of them though, it has been Liton who has impressed the most, having scored more than a thousand runs in the recently concluded competition.

He showed off his confidence in the first match of the Bangladesh Cricket League's one-day tournament as well as he smacked the likes of Rubel Hossain and Mashrafe Bin Mortaza around the park.

Shafiqul Islam maybe the other player from the World Cup squad to be dropped. The pacer has hurt his hand and is likely to be replaced by Al-Amin Hossain.

Leg-spinner Jubair Hossain, who rose to fame during the last series against Zimbabwe, may not feature in the ODI series either. After the series against Zimbabwe though, Jubair has reportedly lost out a bit on his accuracy. He wasn't given as many opportunities in the NCL either.

Mashrafe will not be featuring in the first ODI due to a ban that was slapped on him for slow over-rates in the World Cup. His deputy Shakib Al Hasan will be leading the side.



Victorious Faridpur team celebrate with the trophy after beating star-studded Bangladesh Navy in the final of the ATN Bangla National Hockey Championship at the Maulana Bhasani National Hockey Stadium yesterday.

PHOTO: STAR

Faridpur rule after 8 yrs

SPORTS REPORTER



Faridpur lifted the ATN Bangla 30th National Hockey Championship title with a 2-1 win over star-studded Bangladesh Navy in the final at the Maulana Bhasani National Hockey Stadium yesterday.

Pranshanta Kumar Sarker gave Faridpur a lead in the 23rd minute but it lasted only two minutes as national midfielder Moinul Islam Koushik levelled the margin in the 25th minute to bring Bangladesh Navy in the game. Both sides kept on pressing for the lead and

Faridpur struck the decisive goal in the 46th minute, thanks to a nice little flick by national striker Pushkor Khisha Mimo.

The win ended Faridpur's long drought for title. It's their first trophy after eight years. For Bangladesh Navy, who made the final for the first time, it was too close yet too far.

It was the third title for Faridpur who last became champions in 2007.

Koushik became the highest scorer in the championship with 12 goals while Mimo was named the best player of the 23-team championship.

In the day's third-place deciding match, Bangladesh Army beat Dhaka 2-1.