

What to WATCH

MAASRANGA TV & STAR SPORTS1

ICC World T20

Bangladesh v Pakistan

Live from 3:30pm

England v West Indies

Live from 8:00pm

TEN ACTION

UEFA Champions League

Barcelona v Arsenal

Live from 1:45am (Thursday)

TEN SPORTS

UEFA Champions League

Bayern v Juventus

DAY'S EVENT

Bangladesh Cricket League

Four-day Match, Day 3, Time: 9:30am

Central Zone v North Zone

Tigresses humbled by hosts in opener

SPORTS REPORTER

The gulf between the national women's cricketers of India and Bangladesh was quite evident at the M Chinnaswamy Stadium in Bangalore yesterday.

The Women's World T20 began on a highly one-sided note as the Tigresses crashed to a 72-run defeat against the hosts in the opener.

That India's players were a lot more skilled was obvious right from the start of the game. Mithali Raj and Vellaswamy Vanitha shared a quickfire 62-run stand in just 7.4 overs for the opening wicket.

Both batters were quite keen on taking the attack to the Bangladeshi bowlers. Vanitha smacked seven fours during her 24-ball 38 before she was bowled by a flighted delivery by Bangladesh's 16-year-old left-arm spinner Nahida Akter.

An over later Smriti Mandhana was trapped in front by Fahima Khatun, and Bangladesh thought they could get back into the game. However, some huge hits from Harmanpreet Kaur and Veda Krishnamurthy spoiled those plans.

It is not very often that one gets to witness a large number of sixes in women's cricket, but yesterday was different. The two batters smashed two sixes each. While Kaur hit a 29-ball 40, Veda smacked a 24-ball 36.

This was after skipper Mithali scored a 35-ball 42. Rumana Ahmed, who was arguably the best bowler for Bangladesh on the field, later removed Mithali and Kaur.

When Sharmin Akhter drove Jhulan Goswami for a four through covers in the very first over after the exchange, one felt that the Tigresses could perhaps use the good wicket at hand and put in a total higher than they usually do; they rarely cross the 120-run mark.

However, as the game progressed, the run-rate got slower and things got a lot more difficult for the Women in Green. The task of facing the Indian bowlers was so overwhelming that Bangladesh skipper Jahanara Alam actually said that she was happy that her side had managed to post 91 against such a good side.

SCORES IN BRIEF

INDIA: 163 for 5 (Mithali 42, Harmanpreet 40; Fahima 2-31, Rumana 2-35)

BANGLADESH: 91 for 5 (Nigar 27 not out, Sharmin 21; Patil 2-16)

Result: India won by 72 runs

Juve to chase at the Allianz Arsenal in uphill battle against Barcelona

AFP, Berlin

Bayern Munich host Juventus on Wednesday in the Champions League last 16 return-leg clash eager to cut out any mistakes and prevent a repeat of the Italians' first-leg fight back.

Bayern host the Italian champions at the Allianz Arena looking to seal their fifth consecutive quarter-final appearance in the Champions League.

They were steaming towards the last eight when Thomas Mueller and Arjen Robben gave them a two-goal lead in Turin before Juventus pounced on mistakes in Munich's ranks with goals by Paulo Dybala and Stefano Sturaro.

Juventus are in rich form, unbeaten in their last 19 games, but coach Massimiliano Allegri suffered a set back on Monday when Italy midfielder Claudio Marchisio dropped out of training with a calf injury. Dybala is also out and Allegri was already missing defenders Giorgio Chiellini and Martin Caceres, while former Bayern striker Mario Mandzukic is nursing a knock.

Both Bayern coach Pep Guardiola and captain Philipp Lahm have warned the Germans can ill afford committing more mistakes for Juventus to again exploit.

Juventus' last Champions League win in Munich was back in 2004, but history favours the Italians.

Their record in two-legged ties against German sides is 13 wins and just three defeats, while Bayern's overall record is won four and lost six times to opponents from Italy.

In the night's other match, Arsenal manager Arsene Wenger admitted his side face an almost impossible task when they travel to face a red-hot Barcelona on Wednesday looking to overturn a 2-0 first-leg deficit to reach the Champions League quarter-finals for the first time in six years.

As so often in the second half of Wenger's 20-year reign, Arsenal will travel to the Camp Nou with a sense of what might have been. They had their chances to lead at the Emirates three weeks ago before Barca's brilliant forward triumvirate of Lionel Messi, Neymar and Luis Suarez cut through them with an unerring ease they have made routine.

Messi, Neymar and Suarez have scored a combined 103 goals this season, Arsenal's entire squad a mere 71.

Wenger tried to land Suarez whilst the Uruguayan was still at Liverpool in 2013. In a tale of Arsenal's penny-pinch culture under Wenger, they infuriated Liverpool by launching a bid one pound over Suarez's reported £40 million buyout clause.

Arsenal could have had Suarez on their side. Instead, when they line-up on Wednesday, they will likely be made to suffer and wonder what could've have been once more.

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APOLLO HOSPITALS DHAKA TOUCHING LIVES

PHOTO: AFP

A few youngsters crashed the gates during Barcelona's training session yesterday and were given the chance to mingle and take pictures with the players.

Navy honours SA Games winners

SPORTS REPORTER

Bangladesh Navy accorded a reception to the winning members of the 12th South Asian Games at the Sagorika Hall in the capital yesterday.

A total of 39 athletes from Navy took part in seven disciplines of the South Asian Games held in Guwahati and Shillong in India last month and between them they won two gold and 14 bronze medals in swimming, athletics, hockey, kabaddi and women's football.

Swimmer Mahfuza Khatun Shila, who won two golds, was given Tk 1.5 lakh while the bronze-winning athletes were awarded Tk 25 thousand each.

Bangladesh Navy also accorded a reception to its members who won gold and silver medals in the World long-range swimming competition.

Having congratulated the medal-winning athletes, Navy chief vice admiral Nizamuddin Ahmed said that the achievements of the members in the South Asian Games would boost the country's sports at domestic and international levels.

He also promised that the athletes from Bangladesh Navy would bring more laurels to the nation.

Gayle set to hit England

AFP, Mumbai

Controversial batsman Chris Gayle will be looking to ensure the West Indies' troubled build-up to the World Twenty20 becomes a distant memory when they open their campaign against England in Mumbai Wednesday.

The Windies are out to prove they are still a force in the shortest form of the game despite their declining Test status, while England want to atone for a humiliating early exit from last year's 50-over World Cup.

A pay dispute cast doubt over the West Indies' appearance in India and while the row was resolved at the 11th hour, relations between players and the country's cricket board remain tense.

Their preparations have also been hit by the withdrawal of all-rounder Kieron Pollard and off-spinner Sunil Narine, who is T20 cricket's top-performing bowler and has thrived in the Indian Premier League (IPL).

But in the enigmatic Gayle they possess a batsman capable of destroying whatever bowling attack he faces and single-handedly winning any match.

West Indies skipper Darren Sammy said the 36-year-old was unfazed by all the attention and would be his usual "destructive" self on the pitch.

"There always seems to be pressure for him to perform but Chris is just going to do what he has done throughout his T20 career," said Sammy in an eve-of-match press conference. "There's never too much pressure on Chris."

Gayle, 36, holds the record for the highest ever score in T20s, 175 off 66 balls, and hit the format's first international century during the inaugural World T20 in 2007.

But the second-ranked Windies, who are looking to add to their 2012 World T20 title, face a tough prospect at Mumbai's Wankhede Stadium in the shape of a new, attack-minded England side.

Eoin Morgan's team have turned their fortunes around since they were dumped out of the 2015 World Cup by Bangladesh, adopting a more aggressive attitude which has seen them up their run rate.

In Morgan, all-rounder Ben Stokes, opener Jason Roy and right-hander Joe Root, England have strength in depth but they will miss injured pacer Steven Finn.

England had a disastrous 50 over World Cup campaign last year, knocked out in the group stages after losing to Bangladesh.

But Morgan said two victories in warm-ups had given the team a boost.

"We've built a little bit of confidence and we are in a really good place mentally," said the captain in his pre-match press conference.

Morgan said it was important to gain momentum early in the tournament but not absolutely vital to win first match against a team that won the tournament in 2012.

HEAD-TO-HEAD IN T20IS

ENGLAND	PLAYED	WEST INDIES
4	12	8


LAST MEETING

13 March, 2014: West Indies won by 15 runs at the Oval

ANWAR ISPAT

LEICESTER'S 'BLESSED' YEAR EXPLAINED

The secret behind Leicester City's success this season may have finally been revealed, by a Thai monk! Phra Prommangkalachan, a Buddhist monk, has been visiting Leicester regularly for the past three seasons, blessing the pitch and gifting players lucky charms. And he believes that his visits may have had some effect on the side's fortunes, with the club currently five points clear of second-placed Tottenham in the Premier League with eight games of the season remaining. "I hang some amulets on their necks and I gave them these fabric talismans," he told AFP. "I'm not sure if they understood what I explained to them about it, but they knew that it would bring





Sheikh Jamal defender Yeamin Ahmed Munna (L) attempts to stop Selangor forward Patrick Ronaldinho Wleh during their AFC Cup Group E encounter at the Bangabandhu National Stadium yesterday.

PHOTO: BFF

Selangor come out on top in 7-goal thriller

SPORTS REPORTER

Sheikh Jamal Dhanmondi Club twice threw away the lead to suffer a 4-3 defeat to Selangor FA in a thrilling Group E fixture of the AFC Cup at the Bangabandhu National Stadium yesterday.

The hosts put on a much-improved performance against Selangor FA, but they had to walk off with yet another defeat, thanks to the repeated fumbles by defenders as well as the goalkeeper. Three defeats in as many matches have all but extinguished the Bangladesh champions' hopes of qualifying for the 16-team knock-out round.

Selangor FA, on the other hand, kept their hopes alive as they raised their tally to four points from three matches, thanks to brilliant performance by Argentinian forward Mauro Olivi and Liberian-born striker Patrick Wleh, who together struck three out of the four goals.

With their backs against the wall following two defeats, Sheikh Jamal started the match brightly with three foreigners -- Landing Darboe, Emeka Darlington and Wedson Anselme -- scoring one goal each, but all their efforts went in vain due to unpardonable mistakes from national defenders Yeamin Munna, Tapu Barman, Kesto Kumar and goalkeeper Shahidul Alam Sohel.

Landing provided Sheikh Jamal a 29th-minute lead with a powerful 30-yarder, but the lead lasted only 11 minutes as unmarked Wleh headed an Olivi cross home from inside the box.

Wleh, who frequently caused havoc from the right flank, raced past Tapu to square-pass it to Gopi Ramchandra, who nicely placed home to give the visitors the lead in the 53rd minute.

Conceding the lead worked as a wake-up call for Sheikh Jamal, who then scored two goals in two minutes to regain the lead. First, Landing saw his close-range shot parried by goalkeeper Morazlan and then he headed the follow-up for Emeka, whose header found the back of the net in the 64th minute. In the following minute, Wedson received a through-pass from Landing and raced down the left to drive an angular shot past Selangor goalkeeper to wrestle back the initiative.

But the joy lasted only five minutes as the Sheikh Jamal defenders failed to stop Wleh from the right as the tall striker darted deep to cut it back for Olivi, who tapped in inside from inside the six-yard box in the 70th minute.

Sheikh Jamal should have left the field with at least a point, but goalkeeper Shahidul Alam Sohel gifted the winning goal in the 83rd minute to Olivi, who drove a feeble shot from inside the box, which Sohel failed to keep in his grips.

With seven minutes left, Sheikh Jamal went all out to create at least three scoring chances but luck was not with them as Selangor goalkeeper Norazlan made a couple of decent saves while a defender made a goal-line clearance in the dying moments.

UNICEF to work with BFF

SPORTS REPORTER

UNICEF yesterday showed their interest in working with the Bangladesh Football Federation (BFF) to educate players at the grassroots level.

The higher-ups of the game's governing body, including president Kazi Salahuddin, had a meeting with UNICEF officials yesterday morning and agreed to work jointly with UNICEF, Reach Out to Asia (ROTA), Futbol.net and Barcelona FC to educate the players.

"UNICEF will work on basic principles such as humanity, team building, team spirit, gender issues, cooperation, winning and losing attitude and following of the laws. We will now sit with the education ministry as well as UNICEF to chalk out the plans before the programme gets underway within two to three months," said BFF general secretary Abu Nayeem Shohag.

Sara Bordas Eddy, chief field services, UNICEF, Pawan Kucita, chief education section, UNICEF, Bruno Ramos, coordinator of projects, FC Barcelona and Naseer Iqbal, International Program specialist, ROTA were present.

Ctg Abhani want Manik to be punished

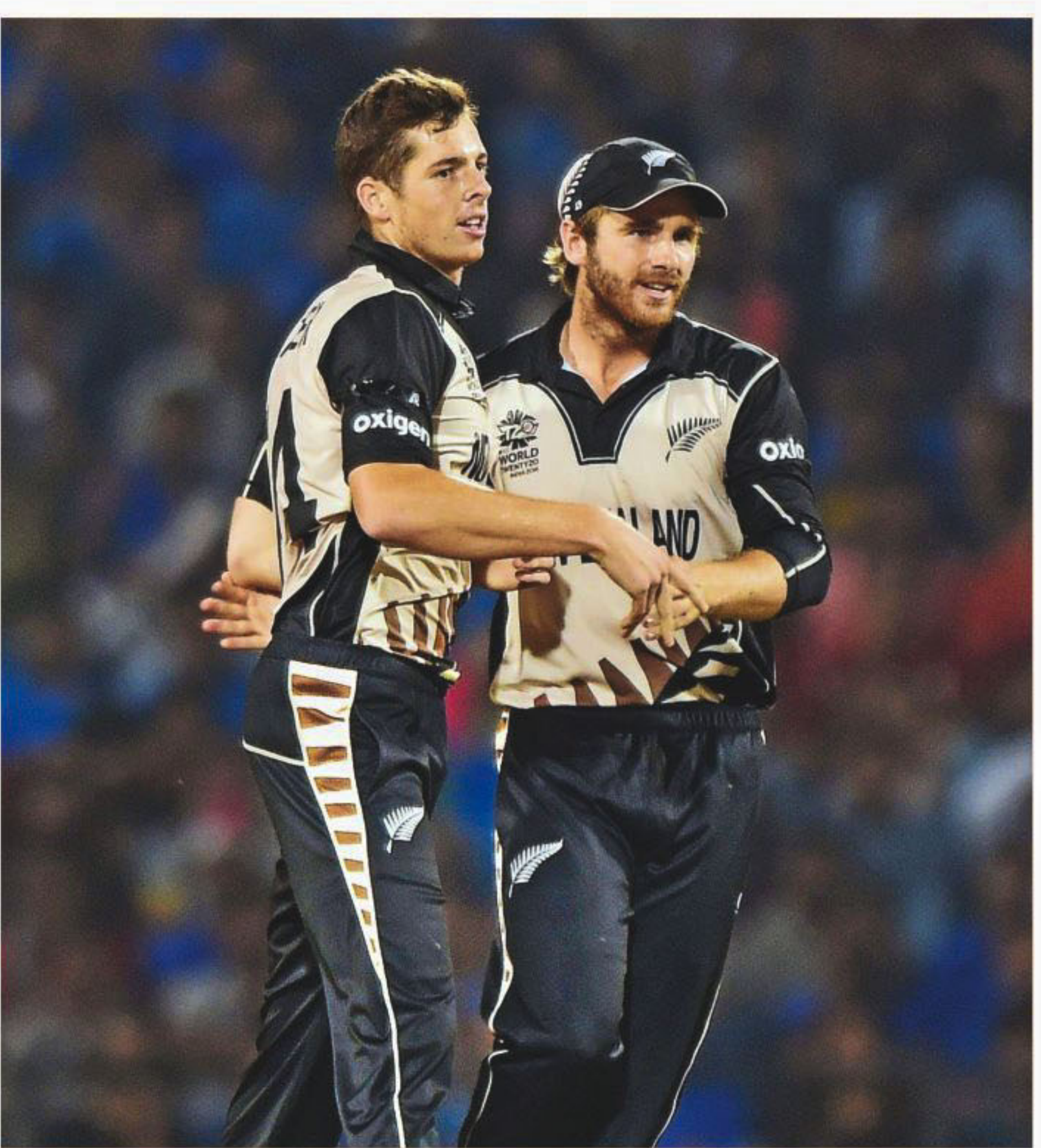
SPORTS REPORTER

Chittagong Abahani have demanded the punishment of coach Shafiqul Islam Manik for his unlawful exit from the club yesterday, just one day after the Bangladesh Football Federation (BFF) decided to serve a show-cause notice to the former national footballer-turned-coach following his defamatory comments about BFF officials.

Chittagong Abahani demanded compensation, citing that they were in trouble after Manik left to take charge of another club. They also demanded the cancellation of Manik's coaching license.

"We roped in Manik for the upcoming season but he suddenly left the club after receiving a better offer from another club, leaving us in trouble. Thus, we can't practice. He should be punished for cheating the club," said Chittagong Abahani secretary general Shamsul Haque Chowdhury.

Manik guided Chittagong Abahani to victory in the Sheikh Kamal International Club Cup championship in October last year and he joined Sheikh Jamal DC last month ahead of the AFC Cup.



STAR ECONOMICAL BOWLER: New Zealand bowler Mitchell Santner (L) decimated India's famed batting attack in their World T20 Super 10 match yesterday. The left-arm spinner gave away just 11 runs and claimed four wickets in as many overs to lead the Kiwis to victory.

PHOTO: AFP



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