

SPORT



Gazi Group Cricketers batsman Nasir Hossain led his side to a seven-wicket victory against Mohammedan with a fluent run-a-ball 106 at the BKSP in their Dhaka Premier League match yesterday.

PHOTO: STAR

PM's Baishakhi treat for athletes

SPORTS REPORTER

Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina is expected to accord a gala reception and give cash awards to athletes and national teams which have brought laurels to the nation at the international level over the past six months to celebrate Pahela Baishakh.

Around 400 athletes, coaches and officials are expected to attend the programme at the Gono Bhaban on Sunday evening after the Prime Minister expressed her desire to meet the country's athletes and recognise them by providing incentives to each and every person who has had success at the international level.

To fulfil the desire of the sports-loving Prime Minister, the youth and sports ministry is preparing the list of athletes and national teams who have either won trophies or bagged medals in international competitions.

"A list comprising 350-plus athletes and nearly 50 officials and coaches from 10-12 disciplines has been prepared as the Prime Minister has expressed her desire to have dinner with them and give cash awards to each and every player to celebrate Pahela Baishakh," said Harunur Rashid, the youth

and sports secretary of Bangladesh Awam League. He added that the list of the athletes and officials would be finalised by the PMO.

Over the past six months Bangladesh has hosted a few international tournaments while also participating in international tournaments abroad and have produced satisfactory results.

The disciplines so far included cricket, football, hockey, chess, shooting, swimming, badminton, weightlifting, volleyball, golf, archery, specified floor hockey in special Olympics, roll ball and bridge.

"It is a different initiative by honourable Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina as we had earlier seen that teams were only awarded immediately after their success. This time all successful athletes and teams will be accorded by the sports-loving Prime Minister," said Harunur. "Such recognitions will definitely inspire the athletes to produce better results in the future."

Harunur also informed that the Prime Minister was likely to hand over the flats to SA Games gold winning athletes -- swimmer Mahfuza Khatun Shila, weightlifter Mabia Akter Simanata and shooter Shakil Ahmed -- as she had promised to.

Saif SC rope in foreign coach

SPORTS REPORTER

Bangladesh Premier League outfit Saif Sporting Club are all set to bring in Ghanaian-born English coach Kimberley Tyrone Grant for the upcoming season, a club official said yesterday.

Grant will replace Serbian coach Nikola Kavazovic, who was terminated during Saif SC's pre-season preparations in Kolkata. Saif SC returned home on Wednesday after having a one-month camp in Kolkata.

44-year old Grant, a former Ghana national footballer, has experiences of playing in both Ghana and England and has worked as a football director for England-based football academy KG-IFA. "We were actually searching for a coach who has experience of managing underrated players and Grant has such experience. He is likely to arrive here next week," said Nasiruddin Chowdhury, the managing director of Saif SC.

Ashiquzzaman to coach in NY

SPORTS REPORTER

Former national hockey player Mohammad Ashiquzzaman has been roped in as a coach-cum-play of New York City Field Hockey Club in the United States.

"I was signed as a player for the senior team and also as a coach of the youth team for one year," Ashiquzzaman informed yesterday.

He added that the club would be taking part in the New York-based North East League as they bid for a hat-trick of titles with the squad comprising three Olympic players from England and New Zealand.

Kohli fit for IPL

REUTERS, Mumbai

India captain Virat Kohli has recovered from his shoulder injury and is fit to play in the Indian Premier League Twenty20 tournament for the Royal Challengers Bangalore, the BCCI said on Thursday.

Kohli missed the first three matches as he underwent rehabilitation after injuring his right shoulder while fielding during the third Test against Australia. The injury forced him to miss India's final Test win over Australia in Dharamsala but the BCCI said on Thursday the 28-year-old has regained match fitness.

Rubel heat sizzles Kalabagan

Nasir hits ton in Gazi Group win

SPORTS REPORTER

There were contrasting pictures at two of BKSP's venues during yesterday's Dhaka Premier Division Cricket League matches. While Rubel Hossain fired with the ball in the morning session in one venue, Nasir Hossain put the bowlers to the sword in the other venue during his unbeaten hundred.

Rubel's six-wicket burst set up Prime Bank's five-wicket victory against Kalabagan Krira Chakra while Nasir continued his Emerging Teams Asia Cup form with a blazing unbeaten knock to help Gazi Group Cricketers register a comfortable seven-wicket victory against Mohammedan, who played without captain Tamim Iqbal as the opener's one-match ban from last season was applied in the first game.

At the Fatullah Cricket Stadium, wicketkeeper batsman Nurul Hasan slammed 80 as Sheikh Jamal Dhanmondi Club posted a two-wicket victory over Victoria.

At BKSP ground-4, Mohammad Ashraf made his first appearance in the coveted 50-over domestic competition since returning to competitive domestic cricket serving a ban for match-fixing, but Rubel refused to let him celebrate

the occasion as the right-arm paceman started the carnage by uprooting the stumps of the veteran batsman.

Rubel then removed the other opener Joshim Uddin in quick succession as Kalabagan were reduced to 18 for two but Hamilton Masakadza and Tushar Imran repaired the damage, adding 87 runs for the third wicket before both batsmen were dismissed by Soumya Sarker.

Rubel then did the rest of the job, finishing with six for 21 as Kalabagan were bundled out for 184.

Prime Bank rode on Indian Ummukt Chand's unbeaten 61 to reach the target in 46.5 overs.

At BKSP-3 ground, Gazi Group made a poor start in reply to a 221-run winning target as Jahurul Islam was dismissed for one and Mominul Haque for two, but Nasir first repaired the damage with

opener Anamul and then made it an easy chase by adding 144 runs in the undefeated fourth-wicket stand with Parvez Rasool, who scored 53.

Nasir smashed five sixes and nine fours during his run-a-ball 106.

At Fatullah, Abdur Razzak claimed four wickets and Shohag Gazi took three wickets to wrap up Victoria for 209 runs, a target Sheikh Jamal overtook with the help of Nurul Hasan's 94-ball 80.

SCORES IN BRIEF

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| VICTORIA: 209 all out in 48.2 overs (Nasiruddin 44, Uttam 88; Razzak 4-29, Gazi 3-29) | two wickets. | Chand 61 not out, Al Amin 35; Sanjit 3-25 |
| SHEIKH JAMAL: 210-8 in 49.2 overs (Rajin 32, Nurul 80, Tanvir 31; Monir 3-36, Arifat 2-44) | KALABAGAN KC: 184 all out in 46.2 overs (Masakadza 38, Tushar 47; Rubel 6-21, Soumya 2-33) | Result: Prime Bank won by five wickets. |
| Result: Sheikh Jamal Dhanmondi Club won by 7 wickets. | PRIME BANK: 186-5 in 46.5 overs (Ummukt Chand 61 not out, Al Amin 35; Sanjit 3-25) | MOHAMMEDAN: 220-8 in 50 overs (Shamsur 35, Rahmat 78, Miraz 52; Alauddin 2-40, Mehadi 2-29) |
| | | GAZI GROUP: 223-3 in 37 overs (Anamul 54, Nasir |



RUBEL HOSSAIN...6 for 21



NURUL HASAN...80

Gayle, McCullum in SA T20 League

AGENCIES, Cape Town

Lasith Malinga, Brendon McCullum and Chris Gayle were among the eight marquee players named for the inaugural edition of Cricket South Africa's T20 league scheduled for later this year.

The other marquee players for the tournament are Kevin Pietersen, Kieron Pollards, Dwayne Bravo, Eoin Morgan and Jason Roy.

The eight marquee players have agreed to two-year contracts and will be entered into a mini-draft, with the highest bidding franchise owner having first pick and the rest following the same process.

Franchise owners will be asked to consider the fact that some of these players, by virtue of having played for some years in South Africa, already hold strong ties to certain cities in South Africa.

"We are thrilled by the calibre of the top eight international players we have lined up to participate in our new T20 League," CSA chief executive, Haroon Lorgat, said. "They are all stars in their own right and will add great value to the franchise teams they will represent."

"This top quality list of players will set a high standard for our tournament. With each one of them [being] a household name in the world of cricket, we can certainly look forward to some enthralling contests that will grip the imagination of fans in South Africa and around the globe."

CSA is hoping to create a competition similar to the Indian Premier League and Australia's Big Bash, with private ownership, foreign investment and a roster of international names. The eight franchise teams will also be allocated a marquee South Africa player.

"South Africa, as everyone knows, is very close to my heart. So being a part of something innovative in their cricketing structure really excites me," said Pietersen, who is commenting on the Indian Premier League.

Pak increase World Cup'19 chances

DAWN.COM

After clinching the one-day international series against West Indies 2-1, Pakistan have gained one ranking point to make it 90, strengthening their chances of qualifying for the ICC World Cup 2019 directly.

However, Pakistan's position in the ICC ranking is unchanged as they are still eighth, behind Bangladesh.

After losing the series to Pakistan, the chances for the West Indies to directly qualify for the tournament have further dented as they now have only 83 points.

Hosts England and seven other countries will qualify for the World Cup directly on the basis of their ICC world rankings, for which the cut-off date is Sept 30, 2017.

The remaining four teams will come through a qualifying round to make it a 12-team event.

"This was the final series before the annual update is carried out on 1 May to ensure the table continues to reflect teams' recent form with older results being discarded," an ICC press release said on Wednesday.

Chinese investors buy AC Milan

AFP, Milan

Serie A giants AC Milan were sold to Rossoneri Sport Investment Lux on Thursday in a deal which sees the Chinese-led consortium take a 99.9% stake in the club to usher in a new era in Italian football.

The seven-time European champions who are Italy's most successful club

in international competition, have been owned by former three-time Italy prime minister Silvio Berlusconi since 1986.

After Milan's struggles to match their unrivalled success of the 1990s, Berlusconi, 80, hands over the reins following a 31-year spell in charge which garnered five Champions League titles, eight Serie A titles, seven Italian Super Cups and five UEFA Super Cups.

"I will always be AC Milan's number one fan and I wish the club's new owners

all the best for the future," Berlusconi said in comments reported by Sky Sport.

"It is with a mix of sadness and emotion that I leave the club. I will never forget the emotions I felt. "If Milan are to be competitive, resources are needed. One family can't do it all by itself."

The 740 million-euro deal was confirmed shortly after 1300 GMT.

It sees AC Milan become the second Chinese-owned club in the city, and in Italy's top flight, after Inter Milan.



April 13, 1997 is a red letter day for Bangladesh cricket. 20 years after that eventful day at Kilat Club ground in Kuala Lumpur, where Bangladesh won the ICC Trophy defeating Kenya, it is still revered as the most defining moment in Bangladesh's cricket history. That success actually served as the first firm step towards changing Bangladesh's cricketing landscape. Bangladesh Cricket Supporters Association recalled the momentous day at a colourful programme at the Daily Star Centre yesterday, where a few of the heroes of 1997 -- some selfless coaches, organisers, cricket commentators and a few reporters who were part of that historic occasion, reflected on that nerve-wracking victory standing close to that glittering trophy, which has become a symbol of pride for a cricket-crazy nation. PHOTO: STAR