



Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina hands over cheques to the national cricket team's Test captain Musfiqur Rahim and ODI captain Mashrafe Bin Mortaza for the team's excellent performance in the recent tour to Sri Lanka.

PHOTO: PMO

Hostilities to resume after break

SPORTS REPORTER



The Dhaka Premier League is set to resume after a three-day break for Pahela Baishakh festivities. The second round of the competition will see Mahmudullah-led Abahani take on Partex Sporting Club, Mushfiqur Rahim-led Legends of Rugganj face Abdur Razzak's Sheikh Jamal Dhanmondi Club, and Brothers Union square off against Prime Doleshwar Sporting Club.

At the BKSP, Abahani will hope they can continue their good run and beat Partex Sporting, who were quite dreadful in their last game. Abahani won their last game against Khelaghar Samaj Kallyan Samiti, but it was a close affair.

They had gone into a shell early on after losing three wickets. It was only after Mahmudullah and Mosaddek Hossain shared a century stand for the fourth wicket that Abahani managed to recover. Mosaddek scored a century and, like he does so often, led them home unperturbed.

Partex Sporting are playing the premier league for the first time and their players are yet to get the experience of playing at the top level. They will be counting on their foreign recruit, Yashpal Singh, who scored a half-century in the last game and has more than 100 first-class matches under his belt.

The other game at the BKSP is bound to be much more interesting. Rugganj, with the likes of Mashrafe Bin Mortaza and Mushfiqur, will take on Sheikh Jamal who have a well-balanced team. Both teams won their previous games and are looking in good touch.

Mushfiqur had to play a brilliant knock towards the end to ensure that Rugganj did not suffer a surprise defeat at the hands of Brothers Union in the first game. However, they will want their batsmen to step up today. Sheikh Jamal's key player will be Imrul Kayes. Although the batsman missed out in the last game, everyone knows how destructive the top order batsman can be once he gets set.

They will also depend heavily on Nurul Hasan and Abdur Razzak. Nurul, who is fighting hard to find himself a spot in the national team, scored a brilliant 80 in the last game and was the lone reason why Sheikh Jamal managed to chase down their total. The veteran Razzak still seems to have it in him, as he scalped four wickets in the last game. It will be an intense match between two teams who look in good touch.

Far away from the BKSP, at the other end of town in Fatullah, Brothers Union will face Prime Doleshwar Sporting Club at the Khan Shaheb Osman Ali Stadium. Brothers' batting failed in the last game and they will hope that the likes of Alok Kapali can do better today. Their star in the last game was Myshukur Rahman. It was because of his half-century that Brothers managed to post a total above 200 and were in the game for a brief period.

Doleshwar on the other hand, won their first game thanks to Arafat Sunny's five-wicket haul. They will hope that the former national spinner can put in a star turn once again today.

PM rewards sports celebrities

BSS, Dhaka

Ganabhaban, the official residence of Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina, was abuzz with a huge number of sports celebrities last night as the premier honoured them through a gala reception.

On the occasion of Bangla Nababarsha 1424, the prime minister accorded the reception to the country's leading athletes who brought laurels for the nation at international level over the past six months.

As many as 339 athletes, coaches and officials attended the over one-hour long programme.

The prime minister first handed over keys of apartments to the three 2016 South Asian Games gold medallists -- swimmer Mahfuza Khatun Shila, weightlifter Mabia Akter

Simanta and shooter Shakil Ahmed.

She later handed over medals and cheques to the players of Bangladesh women's cricket team, men's cricket team, women's football team, under-14 football team, deaf cricket team, special Winter Olympics team, men's and women's archery teams, roll-ball skating team, men's and women's handball teams, national hockey team, national shooting team, weightlifting team, volleyball team and junior women's badminton team.

Mashrafe Bin Mortaza, captain of the ODI and T20 teams, received Tk one crore while Mushfiqur Rahim, skipper of the Test team, received the same amount from the premier.

The Bangladesh Cricket Board (BCB) gave the money to the cricket team for their stunning performance against Sri Lanka recently.

The prime minister also handed over Tk one

crore each to Bangladesh Hockey Federation and Bangladesh Swimming Federation. The BCB had recently pledged to give the money as donations to the two federations.

She also gave Tk 10 lakh to Bangladesh under-16 women's football team, who became champions in the AFC women's championship qualifiers in Dhaka in August last year. The BCB provided for this donation too.

Speaking on the occasion, the prime minister congratulated the players and officials of Bangladesh teams and said that the government does everything necessary for the development of sports and games in the country.

Giving emphasis on practising sports and games alongside education, Sheikh Hasina called upon the well-off of the society to supplement the government's efforts for promotion of sports and games.

Alida to turn up for BD

SPORTS REPORTER

Bangladesh has so far not been widely represented by expatriate athletes at the international arena yet. So far only four athletes -- Denmark-born footballer Jamal Bhuiyan, Germany-based footballer Riasat Khaton, US-based gymnast Syque Caesar and England-born shooter Quaysoor Miah -- have represented Bangladesh at an international level. However, the list looks set to be increased as US-born athlete Alida Sikder is getting the opportunity to represent Bangladesh in the 4th Islamic Solidarity Games, which will be held in Baku from May 12 to 22.

Alida, a 19-year-old student of the University of Southern California, will join the Bangladesh contingent in Baku where Bangladesh will be represented in eight disciplines -- shooting, weightlifting, swimming, wrestling, gymnastics, athletics, karate and zorkhaneh.

Bangladesh Athletics Federation's (BAF) general secretary Abdur Rakib Montu told reporters that they have included Alida considering her performances in the inter-school and college championships in USA. Alida was once the best long-jumper in her state, added Montu.

Apart from the long-jump event, Alida will also compete in the 100m sprint.

Meanwhile, the BAF will hold an open trial on Tuesday to select athletes for the upcoming Asian Track and Field meet, which will be held in India from July 6 to 9.

There will be 11 events for men and four events for women at the Bangabandhu National Stadium for the trial.

Vettel wins Bahrain GP

AFP, Manama

Ferrari's Sebastian Vettel won his second race of the season on Sunday when he edged out Mercedes title rival Lewis Hamilton at the Bahrain Grand Prix.

Valtteri Bottas, who started on pole position in the second Mercedes, was third with Kimi Raikkonen coming home in fourth place.

Hamilton's challenge was hit by a five-second penalty for slowing down in front of Red Bull's Daniel Ricciardo in the pit lane.

FOOTBALL FOR FRIENDSHIP

Three shortlisted for global event

SPORTS REPORTER



Three under-12 footballers were short-listed yesterday after an open trial to represent Bangladesh in the Football for Friendship project to be held in Russia

in June-July this year.

The footballers are Daanial Karim Ansari, a seventh grade student of Australian International School in Dhaka, Golam Rabbi, a sixth grade student of Sohidnagar High School in Narayanganj and Sampad Hasan, a sixth grade student of Hazi Ibrahim Alam Chand High School in Narayanganj. Out of the three youngsters, one will be finally chosen by the BFF Development committee within a couple of days.

"Some 200 budding footballers including a dozen from English medium schools took part in the trial and three have initially

been selected. The final selection will be carried out by the BFF Development Committee within a short period of time," informed BFF technical coordinator BA Jubair Nipu yesterday.

The selected player from Bangladesh will play as a striker in one of the eight groups during the Football for Friendship project, which will run alongside this year's FIFA Confederations Cup, in Russia.

Football for Friendship, an international children's social project organised by FIFA's and the 2018 FIFA World Cup's official partner Gazprom, will be the fifth edition of the project. Bangladesh have been named for the first time as 64 boys and girls from as many countries will be participating in the event.

The participating boys and girls will also get the opportunity to discuss with famous footballers and journalists and watch the final match of the Confederations Cup at the St Petersburg Stadium.



The Bangladesh players celebrate their 170-run victory over Sri Lanka in the opening match of the Tri-nation Physically Challenged Cricket Tournament at the Jagannath Hall Ground of the Dhaka University yesterday. Batting first, Bangladesh scored 218 for eight before dismissing the opposition for just 48 runs. PHOTO: STAR

BCL hands CDSA 48-hr ultimatum

STAFF CORRESPONDENT, Ctg

The Chittagong city unit of Bangladesh Chhatra League (BCL) yesterday issued a 48-hour ultimatum to stop the construction works of the swimming complex and other establishments at the Chittagong Outer Stadium next to the MA Aziz Stadium.

The unit submitted a 'complaint and memorandum' to the Chittagong deputy commissioner (DC) Shamsul Arefin, who is also the president of Chittagong Districts Sports Association (CDSA). In the absence of the DC, it was received by additional deputy commissioner (Education and ICT) Habibur Rahman, said a BCL press release.

BCL urged the Chittagong DC to take effective measures to stop all kinds of construction works at the Outer Stadium within the given time, adding, "Otherwise, all concerned of CDSA have to take the responsibility of any kinds of untoward incident."

The unit termed the decision of CDSA of constructing swimming complex, parking space and public toilet in the outer stadium as 'unethical'.

The Outer Stadium is one of the few remaining areas in Chittagong where children can play and the city's sporting history is intertwined with the venue with the likes of cricketers Tamim Iqbal, Akram Khan, Minhazul Abedin and brilliant footballer Asish Bhadra honing their skills here.



Skipper Rohit Sharma's unbeaten 40 powered Mumbai Indians to a six-wicket victory against Gujarat Lions in the IPL match in Mumbai yesterday. PHOTO: AFP

Mumbai, Pune win

AGENCIES, Mumbai



Mumbai Indians registered their fourth win on the trot in the tenth edition of Indian Premier League (IPL) by beating Gujarat Lions by six wickets at the Wankhede Stadium on Sunday.

Chasing a fighting target, Mumbai had the worst possible start as opener Parthiv Patel was dismissed of the second ball of the innings by Praveen Kumar for a duck.

After an early reprieve, Nitish Rana issued a remarkable fightback for Mumbai along with Jos Buttler.

The duo scored at a fast pace to pile on the pressure on Gujarat, while Rana notched up his second IPL half-century.

Andrew Tye finally dismissed Rana for 53 and Munaf Patel shifted the match in Gujarat's favour by removing Buttler for 24, as two new batsmen were at the crease.

However, Keiron Pollard and skipper Rohit Sharma completely changed the momentum of the match by hitting quick runs. Pollard played the role of the aggressor as he bludgeoned two sixes in as many overs to keep Mumbai in the hunt.

Pollard then took Tye to the task in the next over by hitting a six and a four, but in

his next over, Tye dismissed Pollard for 39.

With eight runs needed of the final Praveen Kumar over, Rohit Sharma hit a four off the first ball and then ran two doubles.

In the day's second match, Pune defended a modest 161 against hosts Royal Challengers Bangalore, winning by 27 runs at the M Chinnaswamy Stadium.

Opens Rahul Tripathi (31) and Ajinkya Rahane (30) took Pune to 63 in 7.4 overs, before both fell in quick succession. Australia skipper Steven Smith (27) and former India skipper Mahendra Singh Dhoni (28) then had a 58-run partnership. Although record signing Ben Stokes managed just two runs, Manoj Tiwary gave their innings a late boost with an 11-ball 27.

After the exchange, Stokes came back with a vengeance, finishing with figures of three for 18 and dismissing the dangerous Virat Kohli -- who kick-started his second game in the IPL with a six off his ball. Stokes then added the wickets of Shane Watson and Adam Milne, both bowled.

Shardul Thakur also picked up three wickets, getting Mandeep Singh, Stuart Binny and Pawan Negi, while conceding a hefty 35 runs. Tahir picked up the crucial wicket of AB de Villiers as Bangalore eventually ran out of steam.