

SPORT



Bangladesh coach Chandika Hathurasingha (C) gives some instructions to his charges ahead of the third day of net sessions in Sussex yesterday.

PHOTO: BCB

Mash back to be with ailing wife

SPORTS REPORTER



Bangladesh ODI captain Mashrafe Bin Mortaza returned home from Sussex yesterday to be with his ailing wife Sumona Huq, who was hospitalised on Saturday.

The Tigers left for Sussex on April 26 in order to take part in a conditioning camp over there. However, three days on and Mashrafe has been compelled to return. According to Bangladesh Cricket Board officials, Mashrafe has a return flight booked on May 4 and he will return if everything returns to normal.

"He has returned due to a family emergency. His wife was admitted to a city hospital on Saturday and he decided to come visit her. We are in touch with Mashrafe and his family and the board is supporting them in every way possible.

"The fact that he has had to return to Dhaka goes to show that this is a serious matter and we are giving it our utmost importance. If everything goes according to plan, he will return on May 4," informed BCB director Jalal Yunus.

Sources say that while the situation is not life-threatening, it is serious and that Huq is still under observation. Mashrafe is likely to stay in Dhaka until and unless his wife completely recovers. If the recovery does take time then he could miss his scheduled return on April 4.



Light-hearted practice for Tigers

SPORTS REPORTER

The Bangladesh national cricket team are scheduled to play their first practice match of their tour of Ireland and England today when they take on the Duke of Norfolk's XI at the Arundel Castle Cricket Ground in Sussex today.

The match, however, might be a light-hearted affair since the Duke of Norfolk's XI is a team that is comprised of retired English cricketers and county players. Former England wicketkeeper Chris Adams, who played five ODIs and five Tests for England, will lead the Duke of Norfolk's XI. Adams is now 46 and last played first-class cricket back in 2008.

"Bangladesh will definitely take this match as part of their preparation. They will work on getting adjusted to the conditions there. But it will be more of a festive environment. There's plenty of tradition involved with this team. A number of foreign teams have played in this ground. South Africa A will be going there soon," informed BCB media manager Rabeed Imam.

Bengaluru FC to touch down tonight

SPORTS REPORTER

I-League champions JWS Bengaluru FC are scheduled to arrive here tonight to play their away-leg match of the AFC Cup against Bangladesh Premier League champions Abahani on Wednesday.

Last edition's runners-up Bengaluru are at the top of the four-team table with the maximum of nine points from three outings, three more than second position Maziya SRC of Maldives. Mohun Bagan are in third position with three points from as many matches.

Five-time professional football league champions Abahani are at the bottom with three straight defeats and the Sky Blues will be trying to salvage some pride in their home ground against Bengaluru FC, who beat them 2-0 in Bangalore on April 18.

NAT'L HOCKEY C'SHIP Navy, BAF in last eight

SPORTS REPORTER

Bangladesh Navy and Bangladesh Air Force emerged champions with their third straight wins in their respective groups to move into the quarterfinals of the ATN Bangla National Hockey Championship at Maulana Bhasani Hockey Stadium yesterday.

Fresh from their 31-0 and 43-0 wins over Gazipur and Narail respectively, the national players-studded Bangladesh Navy posted another big 27-0 win over Meherpur to raise their total goal tally to 101 in three matches. Farhad Ahmed Situl (five goals), Deen Islam (five goals) and Roman Sarker (four goals) slotted hat-tricks while Fazle Rabbi scored four and Mamunur Rahman Chayan and Rimon Kumar struck three goals each. Imran Hasan Pintu, Kamruzzaman Rana and Krishna Kumar also put their names on the score-sheet scoring one goal each.

Bangladesh Air Force maintained their hundred percent winning run by beating Patuakhali 11-0 while Rajshahi mauled Khulna 12-0 and Gazipur thrashed Narail 8-0.

Razzak spins through Partex

Mohammedan hammer Victoria; Brothers outplay Khelaghar

SPORTS REPORTER



Veteran slow left-arm bowler Abdur Razzak showed that he still has it in him as he scalped his eighth five-wicket haul in List A cricket to lead Sheikh Jamal Dhanmondi Club to a three-wicket win over Partex Sporting Club in Fatullah yesterday.

The games at the BKSP were more one-sided with Brothers Union thumping Khelaghar SKS by 71 runs and Mohammedan beating Victoria Sporting Club by seven wickets.

Batting first at the Khan Shaheb Osman Ali Stadium, Partex were bundled out for just 201 runs in 46.3 overs. Their opener Jony Talukdar was the key run-getter, scoring a cautious 84-ball 65. However, the rest of the batsmen could

not survive the Razzak onslaught as they crumbled one after the other. Razzak finished with figures of five for 22. His spin partner Tanbir Hayder took two wickets and also enforced a run-out.

After the exchange, Sheikh Jamal lost early wickets and the pressure was on. After 33 overs they were 153 for six and the game could have gone either way from there. However, Tanbir, who had a good time in the first innings, rode on the momentum and scored a match-saving 34 off 61 balls. He remained unbeaten and took his team home with three wickets in hand.

At the BKSP, Myshukur Rahman scored an unbeaten 84 and Farhad Hossain scored 67 to lead Brothers Union to 267 for six. Khelaghar SKS crumbled during their chase and slumped to 105 for eight in 33 overs. That is when number 10 Dolar

Mahmud scored his maiden half-century and delayed the defeat. They ended up finishing on 196 for nine. While Nazimuddin scored 68, Dolar scored an unbeaten 53 and the duo put on a 73-run stand, which unfortunately went in vain.

In the other game at the BKSP, an all-round performance from Shamsur Rahman, who scored an unbeaten 74 and scalped two wickets, helped Mohammedan secure a seven-wicket win over Victoria Sporting. Batting first Victoria were bowled out for 154 in 40 overs with slow left-armers Taijul Islam and Enamul Haque Junior running through the batting order. While Taijul finished with four for 37, Enamul took three for 31.

With the bat, he led the chase with his 77-ball 74 and took his team home in 30 overs.

SCORES IN BRIEF

BROTHERS UNION V KHELAGHAR SKS

BROTHERS: 267 for 6 (Myshukur 84 not out, Farhad 67, Mizanur 48; Tanvir 3-49, Masum 1-29)

KHELAGHAR SKS: 196 for 9 (Nazim 68, Dolar 53 not out; Nihad 3-37, Bisla 2-24)

Result: Brothers won by 71 runs.

Player of the match: Myshukur Rahman

SHEIKH JAMAL DC V PARTEX SC

PARTEX: 201 all out in 46.3 overs (Jony 65, Paras 30; Razzak 5-22, Tanvir 2-47)

SHEIKH JAMAL: 202 for 7 in 45.2 overs (Mahabubul 42, Tanvir 34 not out; Mamun 3-37, Masum 2-43)

Result: Sheikh Jamal won by three wickets.

Player of the match: Abdur Razzak

VICTORIA SC V MOHAMMEDAN SC

VICTORIA: 154 all out in 40 overs (Rubel 42, Moinul 27; Taijul 4-37, Enamul 3-31)

MOHAMMEDAN: 158 for 3 in 30 overs (Shamsur 74 not out, Abhishek 39 not out; Monir 1-19, Mahubul 1-38)

Result: Mohammedan won by seven wickets.

Player of the match: Shamsur Rahman

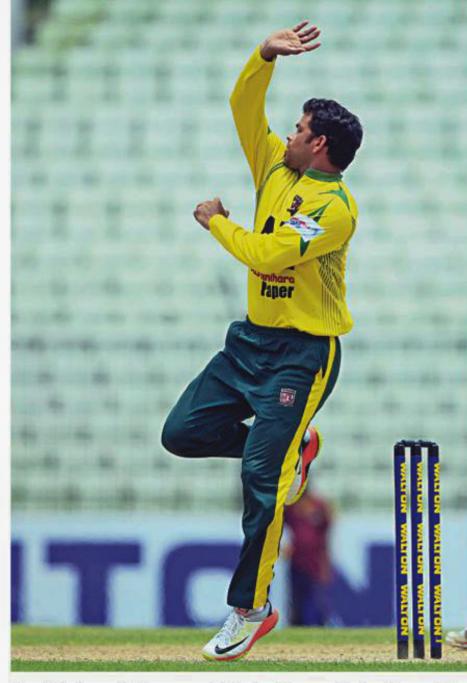


PHOTO: FIROZ AHMED

Sheikh Jamal Dhanmondi Club skipper Abdur Razzak's eighth five-wicket haul in List A cricket authored a three-wicket win over Partex Sporting Club in a Dhaka Premier League match at Fatullah yesterday.

Abahani put best foot forward

SPORTS REPORTER



Defending champions Abahani seem to have formed a top-class squad for the upcoming season as the Sky Blues signed 12 national footballers on the concluding day of the month-long players' transfer window yesterday.

While other title competitors of the Bangladesh Premier League pinned their hopes on a mixture of youth and experience, five-time professional football league champions Abahani have retained the services of the old guns who were part of last season's Federation Cup, Premier League triumphs and the second-place finish in the Independence Cup.

The Dhanmondi-based outfit recovered from the departure of five senior players as they roped in five national players in Nasir Chowdhury, Raihan Hasan, Yeamin Munna, Sohel Rana and Rubel Mia from Chittagong Abahani and two promising talents in Imtiaz Sultan Jitu from Brothers Union and Didarul Islam of Rahmatganj MFS.

English midfielder Lee Tuck and Nigerian Sunday Chizoba have been major architects of Abahani's success but they lost both and instead roped in Sheikh Jamal DC's Landing Darboe of Gambia and Emeka Darlington of Nigeria while Ghanaian Samad Yussif has also been retained.

"We always form a team to become champions and this time too, we have formed a balanced squad with the best local collection,

as well as three foreign players who are the best players in three departments in Dhaka grounds," said Abahani manager Satyajit Das Rupu over phone yesterday, adding that they also have a strong reserve bench which is very important in a long campaign.

Rupu also believes Abahani will have an added advantage in the upcoming season due to their participation in the ongoing AFC Cup, where they have already played three matches.

"The footballers have been in action in the AFC Cup and the understanding among the players is already being built, so we will have an added advantage in the start of

the season," believed Rupu.

Despite forming a formidable side, crowd-pullers Abahani did not turn up to the BFF House with the players to complete the registration formalities; instead, they sent officials to complete the registration, much to the disappointment of its supporters especially after archrivals Mohammedan SC turned up amid much fanfare.

Like Abahani, Sheikh Jamal Dhanmondi Club, Team BJMC, Farashganj SC, Rahmatganj and Brothers Union completed their players' registration formalities through their officials on the concluding day but Arambagh KS came to the BFF House in festive mood,

accompanied by a band party.

After returning to the top flight last season, Arambagh produced surprising results to become runners-up in the Federation Cup before a mid-table finish in the 12-team league, but this time they have lost their most of their players to the powerhouses.

"We have got little time to form the squad but I believe we will produce results close to that of last season," said UEFA A-licensed coach Maruful Haque. "I am not a hero. The players are the real heroes of my team. Now that the players have helped me become established, I will establish this group of players."



Players of Arambagh KS pose for photographs after completing their registration formalities at the BFF House yesterday.

PHOTO: BFF

NOVOAIR BPGA Cup golf begins

SPORTS REPORTER

The 4-day long NOVOAIR BPGA Cup professional golf tournament started at the Kurmitola Golf Club yesterday. About 90 golfers will participate in this tournament in 23 different groups.

The tournament, organised by Bangladesh Professional Golfers Association, was inaugurated by managing director of NOVOAIR Mofizur Rahman and secretary general of BPGA Brigadier General GM Kamrul Islam, SPP (Retd).

BKSP-Dhaka final

SPORTS REPORTER

Bangladesh Krira Shiksha Protisthan (BKSP) and Dhaka won their respective semifinals of the U-18 National Football Championship at the Bangabandhu National Stadium yesterday, and will face off in the final on Thursday.

BKSP beat Sylhet 4-3 in a penalty shootout after regulation and extra-time produced a goalless draw. Dhaka handed out a 2-1 defeat to Chittagong, thanks to a goal apiece from Saif Shariar and Mominul Islam, while Shahidul Islam reduced the margin for Chittagong.

Punjab thrash Delhi

PTI, Mohali



Kings XI Punjab dished out a disciplined all-round performance to notch up a superb 10-wicket win over Delhi Daredevils and keep their IPL play-off hopes alive on Sunday.

In one of the most pathetic batting performances in this edition of the Indian Premier League, Delhi Daredevils were shot out for just 67 by Kings XI Punjab in 17.1 overs after invited to bat.

Sandeep Sharma (4/20) was the wrecker-in-chief as he returned with a four-wicket haul, while Axar Patel (2/22) and Varun Aaron (2/3) picked up two wickets each. Mohit Sharma (1/3) and Glenn Maxwell (1/12) also contributed with one wicket each.

Chasing the easy target, opener Martin Gupthill (50 not out) and Hashim Amla (16 not out) completed the job in 7.5 overs. This is only Punjab's fourth win in nine matches.

Earlier, Daredevils batting looked like a rudderless ship with none of the batsmen getting past 20-run mark. The highest individual score was 18 from Corey Anderson.

Stand-in-skipper Karun Nair hit a huge six off the bowling of Sandeep to release some pressure off the visitors.

This was the second lowest score in this year's IPL after 49 by Royal Challengers Bangalore. Injured Zaheer Khan did not play and in an inexplicable decision, the team management named Karun Nair the skipper. Nair has been out of form since his triple hundred in Test cricket and did nothing to inspire the confidence of his colleagues.

SCORES IN BRIEF

DELHI DAREDEVILS: 67 all out in 17.1 overs (Nair 11, Anderson 18, Rabada 11; Sandeep 4-20, Patel 2-22, Aaron 2-3)

KINGS XI PUNJAB: 68 for no loss in 7.5 overs (Gupthill 50 not out, Amla 16 not out)

Result: Kings XI Punjab won by 10 wickets.

Player-of-the-match: Sandeep Sharma.