

# SPORT

## 'Good as long as you enjoy it'

SPORTS REPORTER

There is a group of cricketers like Aftab Ahmed, who have reached a stage where they made the career switch from a player to a coach and Abdur Razzak is from the same age group -- but at 36 he is still setting benchmarks for youngsters to aspire to in the domestic circuit.

The cricketing culture of Bangladesh discourages players of a certain vintage to chase the dreams. After 30, they are labelled as being past their primes, especially when it comes to consideration for the national team and even in the domestic leagues.

Left-arm spinner Razzak has remained one of the very few exceptions in Bangladesh cricket and after becoming the first Bangladeshi to pick 500 first-class wickets last year, the veteran cricketer also became the first to pick 400 List A wickets yesterday. His drive and constant urge to improve saw him make a brief Test comeback in the second Test against Sri Lanka in January 2018.

Razzak, who had 399 wickets in 268 games before yesterday, picked up his first wicket of the game in his first over and ended up bagging four wickets for just 15 runs from his eight overs for Prime Bank Cricket Club against Uttara Sporting Club in the Dhaka Premier League at Sher-e-Bangla National Stadium.

Razzak's good friend and Bangladesh ODI skipper Mashrafe Bin Mortaza was also in the race as he has 391 wickets in 280 games.

Razzak, however, was not aware of the achievement until he was informed by his teammates in the dressing room. He later said that picking up wickets is a different sort of feeling and it has kept him moving forward.

"To be honest I was not aware of the fact that I have picked 400 List A wickets as my teammates informed me later on the ground. Obviously, it feels good as long as you are enjoying the game, which I am, and at the same time it's a totally different feeling when you pick up a wicket. I have never planned or put any pressure on myself, which is the reason I am still enjoying my game," Razzak told The Daily Star yesterday.

The cricketer from Khulna also holds the record for the best bowling figures by a Bangladeshi in List A cricket, which he achieved in 2004 when he picked up seven wickets for 17 runs against Zimbabwe A at the Bangabandhu National Stadium.

Razzak also picked up the most five-wicket hauls by a Bangladeshi in List A cricket, with nine fivers. Mohammad Sharif has seven while Mashrafe and Rubel Hossain boast five five-wicket hauls each.

While a possible comeback to the national team must be a factor but there seems to be another as important. Razzak appears to have reached this height because of his mentality of enjoying and loving the game, and that has helped set him apart as perhaps the only one to have broken the age barrier.



Prime Bank spinner Abdur Razzak became the first Bangladesh bowler to reach the landmark of 400 List A wickets during a Dhaka Premier League match against Uttara Sporting Club in Mirpur yesterday. PHOTO: FIROZ AHMED

## Primes shine on Razzak's day

SPORTS REPORTER

Veteran left-arm spinner Abdur Razzak was not only the major contributor to Prime Bank Cricket Club's 57-run DLS-method win, but his four wickets for 15 runs in eight incisive overs also made him the first Bangladeshi bowler to reach the landmark of 400 List A wickets during the Dhaka Premier League (DPL) match against Uttara Sporting Club in Mirpur yesterday.

Further north, the Khan Shaheb Osman Ali Stadium in Fatullah saw Prime Doleshwar riding on an unbeaten 105-ball 61 from Taibur Rahman to chase a paltry 160-run total and win by three wickets against Bangladesh Krira Shikkha Protisthan (BKSP).

Meanwhile, at BKSP-3, Shinepukur Cricket Club romped to an eight-wicket victory -- courtesy of an unbeaten 83-ball 90 from Unmukt Chand -- against Brothers Union via DLS method in a rain-interrupted game.

It was however Razzak's day as he extended his lead atop the nation's List A wicket-takers' list. Once a regular in Bangladesh colours, the 36-year-old reached the milestone when he got his first wicket of the match by rattling the stumps of opener Anisul Islam in the 12th over after the right-hander scored a run-a-ball 33, leaving Uttara on 72 for two in chase of 230 for seven. After that, Uttara's middle order suffered a collapse, unable to handle the Razzak storm as the left-hander went on to dismiss Abrar Alam, Minhajul Abedin and Shakhir Hossain for cheap scores of 10, 11 and two respectively that saw Uttara reeling on 122 for five in 25.4 overs. Despite Sheikh Humayun's unbeaten 30, Uttara fell short on the day, managing only 182 for eight.

Earlier, Prime Bank posted the mediocre total, thanks to Al-Amin's 47-ball 60 accompanied by contributions from Salman

Hossain (37 off 42) and Nazmul Hossain (25 not out).

In Fatullah, a team highest of 30 runs off 69 balls came from opener Prantik Nawroz as BKSP were bundled out for a below-par total, courtesy of Doleshwar's disciplined bowling unit. However, after the exchange, Doleshwar made a meal out of a presumably easy chase as they suffered a batting collapse at the top before Shykat Ali and Taibur came to rescue, stringing together a pivotal 57-run fifth-wicket stand after Doleshwar were left struggling on 50 for four in 15.5 overs. Although Shykat fell in the 35th over after scoring 43, Taibur remained unbeaten to see his side through with 30 balls to spare.

Elsewhere, Brothers managed 197 for five in 40 overs which saw the target for Shinepukur become 239 runs from 40 overs as per the DLS method. In chase, Chand's unbeaten knock saw Shinepukur reach the target comfortably in 35.4 overs.

### SCORES IN BRIEF

#### PRIME BANK VS UTTARA

**Prime Bank:** 230 for seven in 38 overs (Al-Amin 60, Salman 37; Asaduzzaman 2-29, Anisul 3-24)  
**Uttara:** 182 for eight in 38 overs (Humayun 39 not out, Tanzid 35; Razzak 4-15)  
Result: Prime Bank won by 57 runs (D/L method)

#### BKSP V DOLESHWAR

**BKSP:** 160 all out in 44.4 overs (Prantik 30, Akbar 28; Sunny 2-29, Enamul 2-39)  
**Doleshwar:** 165 for seven in 45 overs (Taibur 61 not out, Shykat 43; Tanzim 3-35)  
Result: Doleshwar won by three wickets.

#### BROTHERS UNION V SHINEPUKUR

**Brothers Union:** 197 for five in 40 overs (Junaid 74, Jani 54; Shoriful 2-38)  
**Shinepukur:** 239 for two in 35.4 overs (Chand 90 not out, Shadman 77; Sharifulah 1-33)  
Result: Shinepukur won by 8 wickets (D/L method)

## Ashim, Sajib, Mamun, Sushmita, Bonna thru'

SPORTS REPORTER

Even though Ashim Kumar Das could not produce his best performance, he managed to finish among top 15 in the qualification round of men's compound individual event in the Asia Cup (Stage-1) in Bangkok yesterday.

Ashim, who had produced his career best score of 696 during Berlin Archery World Cup in 2018, scored 691 out of 720 to finish 13th among 45 participants in the qualification round. Later he got a first-round bye to set up a second-round clash against Kazakhstan's Akbarali Karabayev.

Ashim's teammates Sheikh Sajib and Abul Kashem Mamun also did well in the qualification round and progressed to the second round by beating their respective rivals.

Sajib, who finished 22nd with a score of 686 in qualification, beat Malaysia's Thwin Ye 142-132 while Mamun, who finished 24th with a score of 685, beat Sri Lanka's Bandara Rajapaksa 139-131 in their first round matches.

Meanwhile, Sushmita Banik finished sixth with a score of 685 in the qualification round of women's compound individual event and set up a second-round match against India's Arshiya Chaudhary.

Bonna Akter, who became 22nd with a score of 674 in the qualification round, beat Laos's Kongkham Bouasengphachanh 142-102 in the first round, but Shyamoli Roy was eliminated from the first round after she lost against Thailand's Kodchapor Pratumsumwan 136-133.



ASHIM KUMAR DAS

## Dinajpur win second crown

SPORTS REPORTER

Dinajpur District won their second National Cricket Championship (NCC) through a four-wicket triumph over Mymensingh District in the final of the 39th edition of the tournament at the SKCS-2 ground in Cox's Bazaar yesterday.

After being asked to bat first, Mymensingh suffered a top order collapse, losing three wickets for just seven runs in 3.5 overs. However, a 56-run fourth-wicket partnership between Asaduzzaman Prince and Mussadek Hossain steadied the ship somewhat before the former departed for 18 runs off 32 balls in the 18th over. Musaddek, who scored a team high 56-ball 38, was the next one to fall. After that Mymensingh kept losing wickets at regular intervals and were eventually bundled out in just 38.5 overs for a paltry 128.

In chase, after a 30-run opening stand between Prottoy Kundu and Susanto Debnath, Dinajpur lost three quick wickets in the span of just 13



Players of the Dinajpur District team celebrate lifting the National Cricket Championship trophy for the second time after defeating Mymensingh District in the final in Cox's Bazaar yesterday. PHOTO: BCB

balls, adding just eight runs and were left on 38 for three in 10 overs. Arif Reza's 54-ball 46, which saw five

boundaries, helped Mymensingh reach the target in just 29.2 overs. Arif who was named player-of-the-match,

was also instrumental with the ball earlier as he returned figures of one for 24 in six overs.

## Russel powers KKR to another victory

STAR SPORT DESK

Andre Russel put in a tremendous all-round performance as Kolkata Knight Riders registered their second victory in two matches, beating Kings XI Punjab by 28 runs in their IPL fixture in Kolkata yesterday.

Russel smashed 48 of 17 deliveries as Kolkata racked up 218 for four in their 20 overs before the West Indian came back to scalp two wickets as the visitors were restricted to 190, despite a 34-ball 58 from Mayank Agarwal and an unbeaten 40-ball 59 from David Miller.

Batting first, Russel came down the order to help set up the massive total for Kolkata after half centuries from Nitish Rana and Robin Uthappa had set the tone for the innings.

Russel, who hit a sensational 19-ball 49 against Sunrisers Hyderabad, was brilliantly yorked by Mohammed Shami. But it was adjudged a no-ball as only three KXIP fielders were inside the 30-yard-circle against a mandatory minimum of four.

The Jamaican then hit top gear, smashing Andre Tye for two sixes and two fours. He then went on to hit Shami for three sixes in a row to take KKR past 200.

Playing his first match after the 'Mankading' controversy, Kings XI Punjab skipper Ravichandran Ashwin found the going tough after he opted to bowl with Sunil Narine unleashing the fury early on with a nine-ball 24.

### SCORES IN BRIEF

**Kolkata:** 218 for 4 in 20 overs (Uthappa 67 not out, Rana 63, Russel 48; Tye 1-37, Shami 1-44)  
**Punjab:** 190 for 4 in 20 overs (Miller 59 not out, Agarwal 58; Russel 2-21)  
Result: KKR won by 28 runs

## Australia romp to 3-0 lead

AFP, Abu Dhabi



Adam Zampa and Pat Cummins broke through the Pakistan batting line-up as Australia took an unassailable 3-0 lead in the five-match one-day international series with an 8-run win in Abu Dhabi yesterday.

Zampa recorded his best figures in ODIs with four for 43 runs while Cummins took three wickets for 24 runs as Pakistan were bowled out for 186 runs, chasing Australia's mammoth total of 266.

Earlier, skipper Aaron Finch fell 10 short of his third consecutive hundred as the Aussies chose to bat first on winning the toss.

The right-handed opener scored 90 off 136 balls with five boundaries and a six to anchor Australia after light rain delayed the start by 15 minutes at Sheikh Zayed Stadium.

Finch, who scored 116 and 153 not out in Australia's eight wicket wins in the first two matches -- could have been the first Australian to score three hundreds in as many ODIs.

Glenn Maxwell (55-ball 71 with eight boundaries and a six) gave the total its

final touches. Finch holed out to leg-spinner Yasir Shah in the 42nd over but he had once again built the innings.

### SCORES IN BRIEF

**Australia:** 266 for 6 in 50 overs (Finch 90, Handscomb 47, Maxwell 71, Carey 25

not out; Wasim 1-34, Sohail 1-35)

**Pakistan:** 186 all out in 44.4 overs (Imam 46, Imad 43, Umar 36; Zampa 4-43, Cummins 3-24)

Result: Australia won by 80 runs to lead the series 3-0.



Captain Aaron Finch's 136-ball 90 propelled Australia to 266 against Pakistan in the third ODI at Sheikh Zayed Stadium in Abu Dhabi yesterday. PHOTO: AFP

## Three tennis players in Div-1

SPORTS REPORTER

Three Bangladeshi young tennis players have been handed an opportunity to take part in the ITF Asian U/14 Development Championships: Division-1 following their good performance in Division-2, which was held in Thailand in January.

Under the banner of International Tennis Federation, Masfia Afrin, Roman Hossain and Mahadi Hasan Alvee will play in the Division-1 tournament to be held from May 5 to 18 in Uzbekistan. China, Chinese Taipei, Hong Kong, India, Indonesia, Japan, Kazakhstan, South Korea, Malaysia, Philippines, Sri Lanka, Thailand, Uzbekistan and Vietnam will be taking part there as teams but Bangladesh is not eligible as a team to take part in Division-1.

Four boys from Bangladesh had previously earned such opportunities, but this is the first time a girl from Bangladesh got this opportunity to show their talent in comparatively better level of competition, claimed Bangladesh Tennis Federation's (BTF) officer Mahmud Alam. The BTF official added that Alvee became runner-up in boys' singles, Roman finished second in boys' doubles while Afrin played in girls' singles semifinals of Division-2.