

STAR SPORTS SELECT 1
Afghanistan v West Indies
First T20I
Live from 2:30pm

SONY ESPN
UEFA Champions League
Bayern Munich v Olympiacos
Live from 11:55pm
Crvena Zvezda v Tottenham
Live from 2:00am (Thursday)

SONY SIX
UEFA Champions League
Leverkusen v Atletico Madrid
Live from 2:00am (Thursday)

CITY
TEN 1
Europa League
Vitoria SC v Arsenal
Live from 9:50pm
UEFA Champions League
Real Madrid v Galatasaray

Live from 2:00am (Thursday)
TEN 2
UEFA Champions League
Lokomotiv Moscow v Juventus
Live from 11:55pm
Atalanta v Man City

Live from 2:00am (Thursday)



(From L-R) Real Madrid's Karim Benzema, Ferland Mendy, Eden Hazard and Thibaut Courtois jog during a training session at Ciudad Real Madrid yesterday on the eve of their Champions League encounter against Galatasaray.

PHOTO: REUTERS

U-19s take on Bahrain today

SPORTS REPORTER

 Bangladesh will take on hosts Bahrain in their first match of Group E of the AFC U-19 Championship Qualifiers at the Khalifa Sports City Stadium in Manama today, looking to qualify for the final round for the first time in 17 years.

The match will kick off at 10:00pm Bangladeshi time.

Champions of 11 groups and four best runners-up will join Uzbekistan in the final round, which will be held from October 16 to 31 next year.

Bangladesh have been pitted alongside Bahrain, Jordan and Bhutan in the group and they will take on Jordan on November 8 before ending the qualifying campaign against South Asian rivals Bhutan two days later.

Bangladesh coach Andrew Peter Turner was looking forward to the competition as he felt his team is well prepared for the challenge.

"We are very much looking forward to this competition. We have prepared really well; had a very good SAFF competition. We've looked into the teams and the players and what they are about. We are looking to compete against three excellent teams," the coach said at the pre-tournament press briefing on Monday.

The English coach also said he was glad to see the support of the local Bangladeshi staff at the team hotel and hoped his team could give them a reason to celebrate.

BJF investigation proceeds at snail's pace

SPORTS REPORTER

The National Sports Council (NSC) have apparently made progress at a snail's pace in their investigation of the financial irregularities found in the Bangladesh Judo Federation (BJF). BJF president, Brigadier General (Rtd) SK Abu Baker, brought allegations of fund embezzlement against general secretary AKM Selim around four months ago.

Baker had filed a complaint on the matter to NSC secretary Masud Karim on June 25, requesting him to investigate the possible BJF fund embezzlement and take action against those concerned.

"Without my consent or approval, the BJF general secretary withdrew money from the federation account and used it illegally. That's why there is a great possibility that money was embezzled. Besides, the secretary seems to have no accountability," the letter read. "It is necessary to see how much money was debited and credited. I request you to take action against the offenders after auditing the BJF account by the auditor of CAG."

Baker also wrote that he would not operate the account and will not take responsibility if money gets embezzled.

After receiving the complaint, the NSC formed a one-member probe committee with director (admin) ABM Nasirul Alam taking up the charge. However, Alam's investigation is still ongoing and sought another two to three weeks to complete his report.

"I can't make any comments on it because I still need to investigate some things. I need another two to three weeks to complete the investigation," Alam told The Daily Star yesterday, adding that his investigation has gone on for the last two or three months.

It was also learnt that Alam had questioned both the BJF president and BJF general secretary on the matter about one-and-a-half months ago but he has yet to submit a report on it for unknown reasons.

NSC secretary Masud Karim said that he cannot make any moves until the independent probe committee submits its report.

"It is not financial irregularities, rather it is corruption and that is unfortunate for the country," BJF president Baker told The Daily Star yesterday. "I requested the minister [state minister for youth and sports] to disband the committee and form an ad-hoc committee but I don't know what they are doing."

AKM Selim has staunchly denied all the allegations made against him and insists that the BJF president has an ulterior motive behind his actions. He also said that he would accept any punishment handed to him if the allegations are proven true.

"I have been doing everything by the constitution and the enquiry committee went through the account. Besides, we have completed the audit of the account by an external audit firm. There is no evidence of fund embezzlement," Selim told The Daily Star.

"Actually he is doing this for another reason. He doesn't want to accept the members of the elected committee and their decisions. Sometimes he imposed his own decisions by bypassing the executive committee's decision. He rules like a dictator and uses abusive words on us," alleged Selim, who was elected general secretary in March, 2016 with his committee's tenure set to expire in March, 2020.

"The NSC can do whatever they think will benefit the greater interest of Judo but I am ready to accept action if the allegations are proven," continued Selim.

On the ground of anonymity, an official on the BJF executive committee said that the conflict between the president and the

general secretary began during the congress of the Judo Union of Asia (JUA) in April earlier this year. Apparently, Selim himself wanted to be member of the JUA but the president instead proposed Kamrunnahar Hiru, who was eventually elected as the Bangladesh representative.

The official also said that Selim had withdrawn about Tk 9 lakh for use on foreign tours and then a further Tk 8.5 lakh for judo mats without approval, claiming that Selim had violated the federation's norms. He further alleged that Selim kept the Tk 8.5 lakh for four months before clearing the duty of judo mat.

The supposed friction between the president and general secretary has put the federation in jeopardy as there have been no initiatives taken in regards to organising domestic competitions or participating in international tournaments for the last four months. However, preparations for the South Asian Games are ongoing under the supervision of the Bangladesh Olympic Association.

The BJF is the fifth national organisation after the wushu, football, squash and tennis federations to have had allegations of financial irregularities brought against them by their own office bearers.

NZ take series lead after Eng collapse

AFP, Nelson

A dramatic England collapse which saw five wickets fall for only 10 runs allowed New Zealand to snatch a 14-run victory in their Twenty20 international in Nelson Tuesday.

It also put New Zealand 2-1 ahead in the series with two games to play.

England were on track to overhaul New Zealand's 180 when they reached 139 for two in the 15th over, with captain Eoin Morgan in full flight as he cracked sixes off consecutive Mitchell Santner deliveries.

But with England needing 42 off the remaining 31 deliveries Santner turned the match when he had Morgan caught by Colin Munro off the final ball of the over.

Dawid Malan (55) and James Vince (49) had laid a solid foundation for England at the top of the innings. But Morgan's dismissal started a collapse which saw Munro run out Sam Billings for one.

SCORES IN BRIEF
NEW ZEALAND: 180 for 7 in 20 overs (Guptill 33, De Grandhomme 55, Taylor 27; Curran 2-29)
ENGLAND: 166 for 7 in 20 overs (Malan 55, Vince 49; Ferguson 2-25, Tickner 2-25)

Result: New Zealand won by 14 runs and lead 5-match series 2-1.
Player-of-the-match: Colin De Grandhomme.

Atalanta aim to avoid another slaughter

AFP, Milan

Gian Piero Gasperini warned that psychology will be key as Italian newcomers Atalanta look to avoid another huge defeat at the hands of Champions League rivals Manchester City in Milan on Wednesday.

The Premier League champions can seal their ticket to the knockout rounds with a win over Atalanta, who have lost all three Group C games in their first ever foray into the elite European competition.

Man City are top of their group with maximum nine points and 10 goals scored, with the Bergamo side bottom after conceding 11 goals conceded and scoring just two.

Five of those came last time out, when an 11-minute Raheem Sterling hattrick helped City to a 5-1 win in Manchester.

"The psychological aspect will be fundamental," said Gasperini.

"It's a tight turnaround, but we'll prepare as best we can."

Atalanta hit back in Serie A days later with a 7-1 demolition of lowly Udinese, but they have felt the absence of star Colombian striker Duvan Zapata, who has been out with a thigh injury picked up on international duty last month.

Without him Atalanta have slipped from third to fifth in Serie A, eight points behind leaders Juventus after a 2-0 defeat to Cagliari at the weekend.

Juventus, Inter Milan and Napoli are used to measuring themselves against the European elite, but Atalanta's only trophy was the Italian Cup back in 1963.

The turnaround in their fortunes has been orchestrated by former Genoa and Palermo boss Gasperini who took over in 2016.

The 61-year-old's success at Atalanta came eight years after being sacked by Inter Milan after just three months.



Manchester City star Raheem Sterling (L) attends a training session at City Football Academy in Manchester yesterday on the eve of their Champions League tie against Atalanta.

PHOTO: AFP

The northerners sprinted to third in Serie A last season ahead of Inter Milan, their best ever finish, with the most goals scored, and reached the Italian Cup final.

This season they have continued on the same path leading the way in the scoring charts with 30 goals scored after 11 rounds.

Their success has been largely powered by Zapata, who stayed on after finishing second top scorer in Serie A last season with 23 goals.

Zapata (6) and Muriel (8) have accounted for 14 league goals between them this term.

Faldo Series gets underway

SPORTS REPORTER

The sixth edition of the Faldo Series Bangladesh Championship got underway at the Kurmitola Golf Club in Dhaka yesterday.

A 100-strong field of junior golfers will vie for glory over three days, with the age-group winners getting an opportunity to participate in the 14th Faldo Series Asia Grand Final in Vietnam in March, 2020.

Recognised as the only global amateur series for boys and girls, the Faldo Series was established in 1996 and features 40 events in 30-plus countries worldwide today.

President of the junior division of Bangladesh Golf Federation Major General Moshfequr Rahman and tournament administrator of Faldo Series Asia-Europe Osman Rafidi Bin Ramzan inaugurated the event.

Neymar escapes with a warning

AP, Bobigny

Neymar will escape prosecution for an alteration with an opposition supporter after Paris Saint-Germain's surprise defeat in the French Cup final in April, sources told AFP on Monday.

Prosecutors have decided the Brazilian star will receive a written warning and no further action will be taken.

45TH NATIONAL CHESS C'SHIP Niaz beats Reefat to extend lead

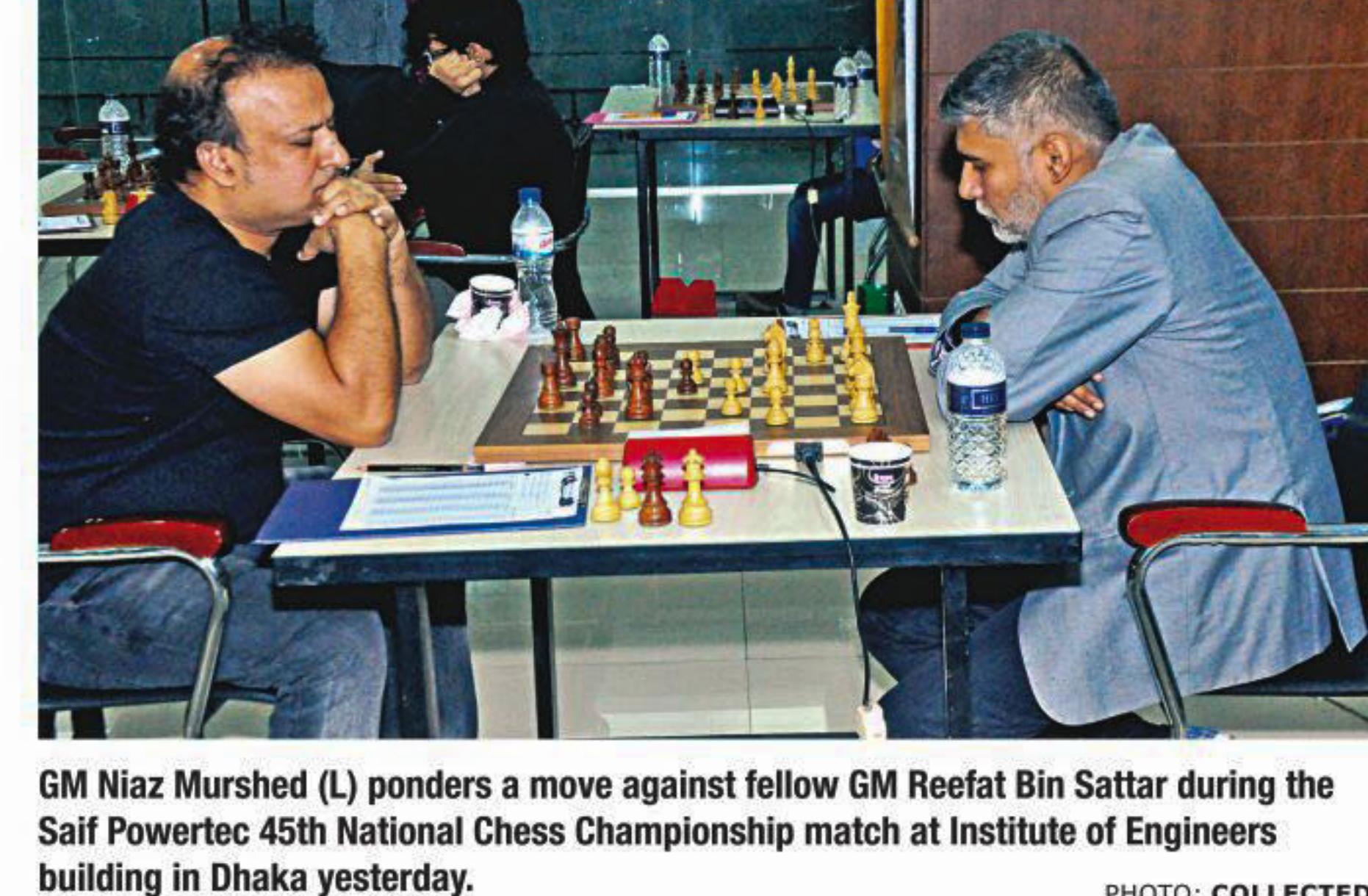
SPORTS REPORTER

Grand Master Niaz Murshed beat fellow GM Reefat Bin Sattar to extend his lead in the Saif Powertec 45th National Chess Championship at the end of the fourth round at the Institute of Engineers of Bangladesh building in the capital yesterday.

The sub-continent's first GM, playing with black pieces, beat Reefat after 38 moves to take himself to four points from four games.

Niaz was leading six players -- GM Abdullah Al Rakib, GM Ziaur Rahman, IM Fahad Rahman, IM Minhaz Uddin Ahmed, IM Abu Sufian Shakil and FM Taibur Rahman -- who shared the second position with three points each.

In some of the other games, Rakib drew against Minhaz; Taibur beat FM Sheikh Nasir Ahmed; Zia beat CM Saiful Islam Chowdhury; GM Enamul Hossain Razib beat FM Syed Mahfuzur Rahman; CM Manon Reja Neer beat Delwar Hossain while and WIM Rani Hamid beat CM Monir Hossain.



GM Niaz Murshed (L) ponders a move against fellow GM Reefat Bin Sattar during the Saif Powertec 45th National Chess Championship match at Institute of Engineers building in Dhaka yesterday.

Nadal confirms ATP Finals place

AFP, Madrid

World number one Rafael Nadal, recovering from injury, confirmed Tuesday he will compete at the season-ending ATP Tour Finals in London from November 10-17.

"Yesterday I had an MRI in Majorca and despite a slight strain to the left abdominal muscle I will go to London," tweeted Nadal, forced out of last week's Paris Masters by the same injury.

"Thursday or Friday I will start hitting services. The idea is to play the ATP Finals. Thanks for your support."

Nadal took over as world number one this week from Novak Djokovic who went on to win the Paris Masters.