

What to WATCH

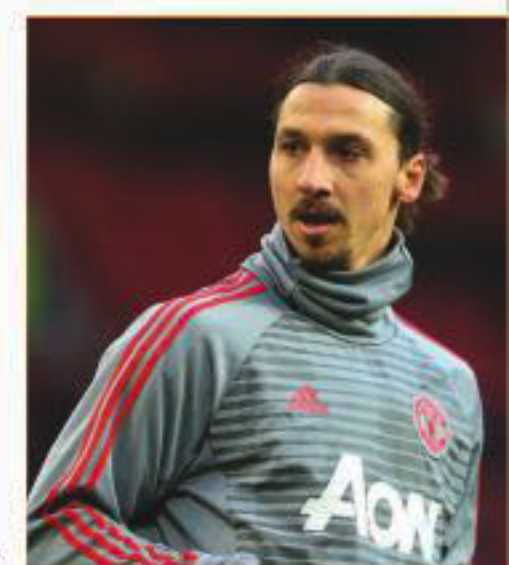
CHANNEL 9 & GTV
India v Bangladesh
 Second Test, Day One
 Live from 1:30pm (D/N)
STAR SPORTS SELECT 1
New Zealand v England

First Test, Day Two
 Live from 4:00pm
STAR SPORTS SELECT 2
Bundesliga
Dortmund v Paderborn
 Live from 1:30am (Saturday)

SONY SIX
Australia v Pakistan
 First Test, Day Two
 Live from 6:00am

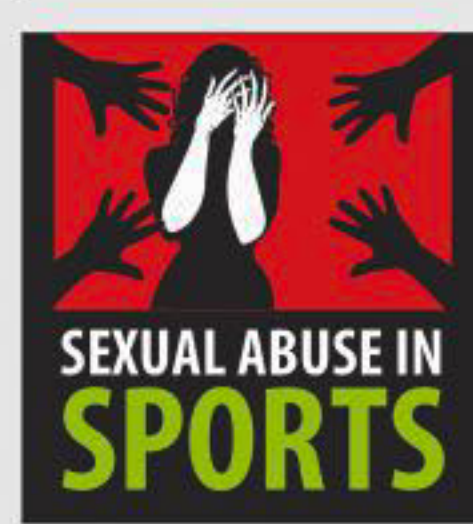
MILAN OFFER IBRA SIX-MONTH DEAL

Sweden star Zlatan Ibrahimovic has been offered a six-month deal to come to the aid of struggling former Italian giants AC Milan, according to reports in Italy on Thursday. The 38-year-old striker confirmed his departure from Los Angeles Galaxy last week following the club's elimination from the Major League Soccer playoffs. Gazzetta dello Sport and Sky Sports Italia reported that the former seven-time European champions have now made contact with the player's agent Mino Raiola. The US-owned club want the former Swedish international for six months and are prepared to pay him six million euros (\$6.6 million) if he remains for 18 months in total, Gazzetta claimed. Milan finished fifth last season, missing out on a return to Champions League football by just a point to city rivals Inter.



BTF gen secy accused of sexual harassment

SPORTS REPORTER



A case was filed against Bangladesh Tennis Federation (BTF) General Secretary Golam Morshed on Wednesday for sexually harassing an adolescent girl while she was participating in an ITF Junior International Tennis tournament in Dhaka earlier this month.

The case was filed under the Woman and Child Repression Prevention Act with the Gulshan Police Station. Investigation officer SM Kaium, while confirming it to The Daily Star yesterday, also said that an investigation was going on and police were trying to capture the accused.

Meanwhile, the National Sports Council (NSC) yesterday suspended Golam Morshed.

"Golam Morshed has been removed from his position as the general secretary with immediate effect on the grounds of misconduct and anti-discipline," said NSC secretary Masud Karim. Masud also said that he will act as BTF general secretary apart from his regular duty.

According to the FIR, the victim, who lives abroad with her family, came to Dhaka to take part in the ITF-sanctioned tournaments in Dhaka and Rajshahi, as well as another international club cup tournament.

"My niece [brother's daughter] came to Bangladesh to take part in an ITF Junior Tennis tournament and was accommodated at Dhaka Club rest house with the help of Golam Morshed. On November 4, 2019, Golam Morshed invited my niece to dinner at about 7:20pm. My niece accepted and went on his private vehicle to a Gulshan house on road 90. He offered liquor and cigarette at the place. He also sexually abused her in the vehicle and used abusive words," the plaintiff said in the FIR.

"My niece tried to stop him and requested him time and again to not use abusive language. He took my niece to the coffee house and then again took her to his house and made an indecent proposal. My niece then refused all his proposals and started shouting. Later, Morshed sent her to the Dhaka Club rest house on an Uber at about 11:00pm," said the plaintiff.

The plaintiff also said that the victim left Dhaka on November 14 'without informing us'.

"But my brother came to know of the incident through an email from my niece and after consulting with tennis high-ups, we decided to file the case. That is why it took us some time to file the case," the plaintiff said in the FIR.

The Daily Star tried to communicate with Morshed, but despite repeated calls and texts, he did not respond.

Last month, BTF treasurer Sheikh Mohammad Aslam had brought allegations of financial irregularities against Morshed.

CAN THE NEW WAVE IN CHESS FLOURISH?

SABBIR AHMED



Manon Reja Neer, a nine-year old boy from Narayanganj, pulled off a surprise in the recently concluded National Chess Championship. The youngest Candidate Master of the country, who finished 10th, had hogged the spotlight when he held 14-time champion Grand Master (GM) Ziaur Rahman in the seventh round. Neer also broke a 40-year-old record for being the youngest to appear in the national championships, previously held by the country's first GM Niaz Murshed, who first participated at the age of 10.

It was not just Neer who carried the flame of youth; were glittering performances from 16-year-old International Master Fahad Rahman and 14-year old Tahsin Tajwar Zia, son of GM Ziaur, in the 45th edition of the competition was a welcome boost for chess in the country, which saw its last GM a good 11 years ago.

The presence of these prodigies brought a breath of fresh air and new hope to the chess fraternity.

However, the question remains about whether these fresh faces will breathe new life into a chess scene that has been stagnating. Are there enough opportunities for new talent to thrive and achieve the highest feats?

Lack of international and domestic meets, parental and financial support have long been considered to be major factors in the poor state of the game in the country. The obvious question now is whether there is currently any combined effort from organisers, sponsors and the government

to create a genuine platform for promising players like Neer, Tahsin and Fahad to flourish?

"There are two major problems: one is financial constraint and the other is a lack of proper judgement," Ziaur Rahman told The Daily Star.

"We are not arranging enough tournaments for players. On the other hand, the players don't get any financial support from any sponsor when they travel abroad to play in tournaments. When someone played well, a lot had been written but we forgot the other players. And bias is also a

constraints had contributed to the poor state of the sport, but also raised questions about the players' lack of self-motivation.

"Yes, there are many problems including financial constraints but the lack of self-motivation of the players is also an issue. They have to set a targets like becoming an IM or GM and motivate themselves to achieve that target. So far, we have five GMs who were devoted to their game and their parents were also supportive," said Shamim.

"Nobody can deny that there are financial constraints. We went to the last

five- to six-member team to Europe under the leadership of a Grand Master. They will take part in training as well as playing some tournaments during their visit," Shamim said.

"But the federation cannot do everything alone; everybody has to come forward to revive the good old days and players also have to take the initiative to bring in sponsors," he added.

Bangladesh had produced the Asian sub-continent's first Grand Master in Niaz Murshed some 32 years ago, but till date the country has only five Grand Masters, a



FAHAD RAHMAN



MANON REJA NEER



TAHSIN TAJWAR ZIA

big issue," he continued.

"I feel really bad as the ratings of our players are not increasing; instead, even the GM's ratings are decreasing. We are operating with wrong planning," he concluded when talking about the new talents' chances to shine in the future.

He, however, thanked the Bangladesh Chess Federation (BCF) for their recent initiatives to stage tournaments.

BCF general secretary Syed Shahab Uddin Shamim admitted that financial

four Chess Olympiads with the assistance of the government but we got only Tk 1 lakh for each," he informed.

He however had some good news for the country's chess.

"For the first time a SAARC International Tournament will be held from November 25. Three GM tournaments will be held on the occasion of the grand celebrations of the birth centenary of Father of the Nation Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman. We are also planning to send a

sordid picture indeed, as the pipeline has almost dried up.

Shamim was hopeful that the country would not have to wait for long to get a sixth GM.

If that is the case and the country's chess has taken a positive turn, then prodigies like Neer, Fahad and Tahsin could make it to the top sooner rather than later. The trio have shown that there is enough promise in the sport; it is now the fraternity's turn to play their hand before the timer runs out.

Nine-day camp shortened drastically

SPORTS REPORTER



Bangladesh coach Jamie Day was forced to cancel the under-23 national team's training camp for the upcoming South Asian (SA)

Games after Bangladesh Premier League champions Bashundhara Kings denied the early release of eight players, citing FIFA regulations.

Of the 20-member squad, only 11 players reported to team manager Satyajit Das Rupu yesterday, the opening day of their training camp. Captain Jamal Bhuiyan had joined ahead of the camp's opening day on Monday but eight Bashundhara Kings players -- goalkeeper Anisur Rahman Zico, Yeasin Khan, Bishwanath Gosh, Sushanta Tripura, Bipul Ahmed, Mohammad Ibrahim, Mahburur Rahman Sufil and Rabiul Hasan -- did not report did not report yesterday.

Earlier, Bashundhara Kings had sent a letter to the Bangladesh Football Federation (BFF), saying that they would release the players on November 30, just a day ahead of the 13th SA Games in Kathmandu, Nepal.

According to the revised schedule,

the team will get only a day to prepare for the football event but coach Day has denied any possibility of replacing the players and said that they would now have to adapt.

"There are a lot of national team players in Bashundhara Kings and would it be stupid to take any drastic measures right now. We changed the date [for the camp] now and that's just something we have to accept and move on from," Day said. "We won't have time to acclimatize to the Nepali conditions or get the appropriate training now, which will have an effect on our performance, but we have a good group of boys who will do their best."

"We can't have a training camp with ten players because it will do little to benefit the national team so we thought it right to cancel the camp and will now meet on the 30th as a team to travel to the SA Games."

Meanwhile, BFF general secretary Abu Nayeem Shohag informed the media about what the letter entailed at the BFF House yesterday.

"Yesterday [Wednesday], we received a letter from Bashundhara Kings, saying that the SA Games does not belong to FIFA window, so they are not bound to release any players

according to FIFA rules. They did however say that they would release the players on November 30, so that they could get a couple of days to practice with the squad ahead of the SA Games," said Shohag.

Bashundhara Kings president Imrul Hasan also explained that they made this decision with the next domestic football league season in mind.

"We can't have pre-season preparation as the Federation Cup will start soon after the SA Games. We haven't even had a successive three-day training since September. We have to keep the interests of the club and at the same time we also need to look after the nation's interests."

Ahead of Bangladesh's match against Oman in the joint qualifiers for the World Cup and Asian Cup, Bashundhara Kings wanted to release the players just 72 hours before the match but BFF president Salahuddin intervened to have the players reach Oman 10 days ahead of the fixture.

Imrul said that they will release the players on Nov 29 after playing a warm-up match either against local side Sheikh Jamal DC or East Bengal FC.

Stokes, Denly lift England

AFP, Mount Maunganui



New Zealand targeted the wicket of "freak" Ben Stokes on Thursday as they battle to get back into the first Test against England at Mount Maunganui.

The honours were even when the New Zealand-born Stokes went to the middle just before tea on day one with England 120 for three.

But with stumps, with Stokes in imperious form, the score had doubled and England will resume on Friday on 241 for four, with the 28-year-old all-rounder unbeaten on 67.

"He's a special talent. He's a bit of a freak at times," New Zealand short-ball specialist Neil Wagner said after Stokes clubbed his bouncers four times to the boundary.

"Everyone wants to get him out because you know what an important wicket it is... but that's my thing, we always try and strive to get the good players out."

Stokes has tormented New Zealand this year after he played a key role in England's nail-biting victory on boundary comeback in the 50-over World Cup final in July.

As well as dispatching Wagner's short stuff, he also showed a liking for the fuller delivery when he took four boundaries off successive balls from Trent Boult, including one that burst through the hands of the usually reliable Ross Taylor at first slip.

It was a drop that frustrated the New Zealanders who had earlier seen opener Rory Burns survive three chances including a waist-high edge that went between Taylor and Tom Latham in the slip cordon.

Stokes and Joe Denly (74) put on 83 for the fourth wicket to lift England after they had slowly accumulated runs through the first two sessions.

SCORES IN BRIEF
ENGLAND: 241 for 4 (Burns c Watling 52, Sibley 22, Denly 74, Stokes 67 not out; De Grandhomme 2-28)

Women's T20 squad unveiled for SA Games

SPORTS REPORTER

The Bangladesh Cricket Board (BCB) had announced a 15-member women's squad for the T20 cricket event of the 13th South Asian Games, to be held in Kathmandu and Pokhara, Nepal from December 1.

Bangladesh were drafted in Group B alongside Pakistan and Maldives while Group A comprises of India, Sri Lanka, Nepal and Bhutan.

Bangladesh will play their first game against Maldives on December 2 while the final group match against Pakistan will be held on December 5. The semifinals are slated for December 7 and the final is set for December 9. All matches will be take place at the Pokhara Rangshala.

SQUAD: Salma Khatun (captain), Nigar Sultana Joty, Jahana Alam, Ayesha Rahman, Farjana Haque Pinki, Murshida Khatun, Sanjida Islam, Shobnam Mostary, Fahima Khatun, Shamima Sultana, Nahida Akhter, Kadrijatul-Kubra, Ritu Moni, Pujja Chakravorty and Rabeya.

DRU MEDIA CUP The Daily Star in semis

SPORTS REPORTER

The Daily Star went through to the semifinals of the Dru Media Cricket tournament beating Channel-24 by 15 runs at the Maulana Bhasani Hockey Stadium yesterday.

Battling first the Daily Star scored 121 runs. In reply Channel-24 managed 106 runs. The Daily Star's Fazlur Rahman was the man of the match for scoring 64 runs and taking one wicket.

Costa out for three months

AFP, Madrid

Diego Costa is facing three months out after Atletico Madrid confirmed the striker underwent surgery on a cervical disc yesterday.

Costa felt discomfort in his neck last week in training and the club decided the injury required surgery.



Australia paceman Mitchell Starc took four wickets against Pakistan on the first day of the first Test in Brisbane yesterday.

PHOTO: ICC

Aus pacers dominate Day 1

AFP, Brisbane



Australia seized the advantage on the opening day of the first Test when they bowled Pakistan out for 240 just before stumps at the Gabba in Brisbane on Thursday.

After the visitors resisted stubbornly in the first session, reaching 57 for no wicket at lunch, pace trio Mitchell Starc (4-52), Josh Hazlewood (2-46) and

Pat Cummins (3-60) tore through the Pakistan batting order to put the hosts in charge at the close of play.

Australia seized the initiative after lunch when they took five wickets for just 19 runs, reducing Pakistan from 75 for none to 94 for five.

SCORES IN BRIEF

PAKISTAN: First innings 240 all out (Masood 27, Azhar 39, Shafiq 76, Rizwan 37, Yasir 26; Starc 4-52, Hazlewood 2-46, Cummins 3-60)

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