



PHOTO: FACEBOOK

An earthquake hit the northern coast of New Zealand on Thursday night, triggering a tsunami warning. But to everyone's relief, the Bangladesh team were safe and sound in Christchurch, far from the epicentre of the tremor. The following morning, some of the players, including Mushfiqur Rahim and Hasan Maqshud, posted pictures of themselves on social media as they trained for the second day in succession following seven days' quarantine.

BCB committed to continue Wolves series despite Covid scare

SPORTS REPORTER

The Bangladesh Cricket Board (BCB) said they are committed to continuing the multi-format series between the Bangladesh Emerging Team and the visiting Ireland Wolves after the first of five unofficial ODIs was cancelled yesterday due to a visiting player testing positive for coronavirus. The news broke during the 30th over of the Bangladesh Emerging Team innings when the hosts were 110 for four at the Zahur Ahmed Chowdhury Stadium in Chattogram. The on-field umpire stopped play and informed the cricketers that one of the Irish players had tested positive. BCB CEO Nizamuddin Chowdhury told The Daily Star that two types of tests – a nasal swab and a throat swab – were done before the first match. One set of results showed everyone as having tested negative, but the other set of results which arrived yesterday

morning with the match already underway, revealed that pacer Ruhan Pretorius had tested positive. The 30-year-old pacer, who picked up a wicket in the game, was later isolated and players and officials of both teams underwent another round of tests. "Look, we have zero tolerance in taking necessary steps to ensure the health safety of all," the BCB CEO said. "We are not going to take any chance and the player in question has already been isolated and was tested. We will get the results soon and will take the necessary steps with the other players and staff of both teams. "I have spoken with the visiting Ireland Wolves officials and they have taken the matter very sportingly. We are committed to continue this series as per schedule." The visiting Ireland Wolves lost the lone four-day game by 23 runs and are scheduled to play the second ODI tomorrow at ZACS. The one-day series will be followed by a two-match

unofficial T20I series. "These incidents are part of the new normal in this pandemic and if the result of the test had come before the start of the game, it would have been taken care of smoothly and the match wouldn't have been cancelled. The player in question had no symptom, but we will go through testing of all the related people and expect to get the results by tomorrow [Saturday]," he added. The incident took place a day after the Pakistan Super League was cancelled as the number of positive Covid-19 cases among players and support staff had reached seven, forcing organisers to halt the tournament after just 14 games. This was the first time the BCB had to cancel a game due to coronavirus-related reasons. The board successfully hosted the 50-over domestic BCB President's Cup, which was followed by the Bangabandhu T20 Cup last year. It also hosted three ODIs and two Tests against the West Indies this year.

Saif blank Brothers

SPORTS REPORTER

Saif Sporting Club ended the first phase of their Bangladesh Premier League campaign on a high note, inflicting a 4-0 defeat on Brothers Union at the Bangabandhu National Stadium yesterday. However, even though Saif, runners-up of the season's curtain-raising Federation Cup, had started the competition as one of the title contenders, they are now 12 points behind leaders Bashundhara Kings. Saif failed to carry their Federation Cup momentum into the league as they suffered four defeats in 12 matches, drawing one and winning seven. Yesterday's win

Ahmed Fahim, who then put a through pass to Yeasin Arafat and the defender's shot found the back of the net following a deflection off defender Munna Mia. Fahim again turned into provider when played a cut-back inside the box for Kenneth Ikechukwu, who doubled the lead with a side-footed volley in the 19th minute. Okoli made it 3-0 with a placing shot in the 72nd minute after receiving a long ball from defender Riyadul Islam Rafi. Brothers Union then saw Chamir Ullah denied in the 81st minute by goalkeeper Pappu Hossain, who was lucky to not concede a goal the next minute as substitute Mezbah Uddin's header ricocheted off the crossbar. Nigerian forward Okoli wrapped it



Saif SC striker John Okoli celebrates one of his two goals with teammates during their 4-0 win over Brothers Union at the Bangabandhu National Stadium yesterday.

PHOTO: FIROZ AHMED

helped them climb to fourth position with 22 points, three behind second-placed Abahani. Under the tutelage of Belgian coach Paul Put, Saif put up some spirited performances in the Federation Cup and the league but the 64-year-old coach was relieved off his duties after 10 matches. That prompted the club management to pass the baton to assistant coach Zulfiqar Mahmud Mintu and the local coach proved his worth by helping his charges put four past their opponents in the last two games. Saif yesterday picked up from where they left against Bangladesh Police [4-1] as they took only 32 seconds to break the deadlock. From an attack through the right flank, John Okoli fed the ball to Faisal

up with another placing shot in the 83rd minute after being found free in Brothers' attacking third by Yeasin's long ball. In the day's other match, Rahmatganj registered their third victory, coming from behind and thrashing hosts Arambagh KS 4-1 in Munshiganj. Mehbub Hasan Nayan scored a brace while Christ Remi and Beknazarov scored one apiece after Nihat Jaman Uchash had put Arambagh ahead early in the first half. With their third win, Rahmatganj moved to eighth position with 13 points from 12 matches while Arambagh stayed at the bottom with a single point from 12 outings.

MSC elections today after 10 years

SPORTS REPORTER

Mohammedan Sporting Club Limited is all set to see a change in its board of directors as the club's annual general meeting and elections will take place at a hotel in the capital today following a 10-year gap. The last AGM and elections of the Motijheel club was held in 2011 even though an extra-ordinary general meeting was held the following year to bring some changes in the constitution. Since then, no general meeting has been held due to internal problems and a court injunction. Former Army chief General (rtd) Md Abdul Mubeen has already been elected unopposed to replace Obaidul Karim as the club's chairman. There was an effort to form a consensus board of directors but some candidates declined to withdraw their names, forcing the voting which will see 337 voters selecting 16 directors among 20 candidates. Of the 20 director candidates, six are incumbent: Mostafa Kamal, Kabir Ahmed Bhuiyan, Mahbub Ul Anam, Kamrun Nahar Dana, Hanif Bhuiyan and Manzur Alam. The 14 others are new faces. M Ekramul Haque, Moeen Uddin Hasan Rashid, Mostakur Rahman, Jamal Rana, Kazi Firoz Rashid, Masduzzaman, Abu Hasan Chowdhury Prince, Khuzista Noor-E-Nahrin, Shafiqul Islam MP, Siddiqui Rahman, Sajed AA Adel and Abdus Salam Mursheedy are contesting for the first time.

Australia force T20 series decider

AFP, Wellington

Australia crushed New Zealand by 50 runs in a low-scoring fourth T20I in Wellington Friday to level the series at 2-2. The result sets up a winner-takes-all blockbuster in the final match at the same venue on Sunday, with Australia in red-hot form after struggling early in the series. The Australians scored 156 for six in their 20 overs after winning the toss and electing to bat. In reply, New Zealand were all out for 106 after 18.5 overs. Captain Aaron Finch anchored the tourists' innings with a gritty 79, making him Australia's most prolific T20 international run scorer on 2,310, ahead of David Warner's 2,265. Finch chiselled out his 14th T20 half-century off 55 balls before cutting loose with four sixes in the final over, in which Kyle Jamieson conceded 26 runs. But he struggled for partners as the Black Caps pinned back Australia's batters with accurate bowling and a steady flow of wickets. Despite his man-of-the-match batting performance, Finch singled out his bowling attack for praise, saying they were outstanding on a wicket that did not play as expected. "I thought we adapted really well, it was a really polished performance with the ball," he said. New Zealand skipper Kane Williamson was frustrated at a passive display that he said needed to improve for Sunday's decider.



Rishabh Pant walks back to the pavilion after scoring a sparkling century against England on the second day of the fourth Test in Ahmedabad yesterday.

PHOTO: REUTERS

Pant puts India on top

REUTERS, Ahmedabad

Rishabh Pant launched a spectacular late assault in his flamboyant 101 to put India in charge of the fourth and final Test against England in Ahmedabad on Friday. Ben Stokes led England's lion-hearted bowling effort in the first two sessions but Pant's century-plus partnership with Washington Sundar tilted the game in favour of the hosts who finished day two on 294-7. Sundar was batting on 60 at stumps and Axar Patel was on 11 with India 89 ahead after being 121-5 at one stage. "We were on the back foot after losing those wickets but the partnership between Pant and Washington was very important," India opener Rohit Sharma said. "It got us to where we wanted, put us in the driver's seat." "Right now we have 90-odd lead, which is fantastic. I just hope Axar and Washington can carry the same intent tomorrow as well and put us in a good position." Having posted a below-par 205, England could not afford to let India get off to a flying start and their bowlers

responded brilliantly after the hosts resumed the day on 24-1. James Anderson bowled a tight line while Stokes, who battled an upset stomach on Thursday and still top-scored with 55, was relentlessly hostile. Left-arm spinner Jack Leach earned the breakthrough trapping the obdurate Cheteshwar Pujara lbw for 17. Stokes bent his back to generate awkward bounce and one such delivery fetched him the prize wicket of Virat Kohli. The India captain could merely nick the rising delivery behind to be dismissed for an eight-ball duck. Rohit, who made 49, was smacked on his helmet by another such delivery from Stokes. The all-rounder returned after the lunch break to deny Rohit his fifty and Leach sent back Ravichandran Ashwin to peg back India. Pant began cautiously but accelerated spectacularly, especially after England took the second new ball. The left-hander nonchalantly reverse-swept Anderson to race into the 90s and slog-swept Joe Root for a six to bring up his third test century. The England duo combined to end his swashbuckling innings as he swatted an Anderson delivery to Root at short mid-wicket.

'Chelsea defeat a massive blow'

REUTERS, Liverpool

Liverpool manager Juergen Klopp described Thursday's 1-0 home loss to Chelsea as a "massive blow" as his side set an unwanted club record of five successive home league losses. A sixth Premier League defeat in their last nine games left the champions in seventh, facing the prospect of finishing outside the top four. The extent of Liverpool's frustration was there for all to see when top scorer Mohamed Salah was substituted just past the hour -- the Egyptian clearly baffled by the decision as he took his place on the bench shaking his head. "Unfortunately, we cannot say it is only at home," Klopp said. "It is not about Anfield or whatever, it is in general, too often. In the decisive moments we have to improve. "We have to show our quality in these moment and we don't do that often enough. It is a massive blow. It is not done yet. We have to win football games."



Liverpool's star striker Mohamed Salah was visibly unhappy at being substituted during their 1-0 defeat against Chelsea at Anfield on Thursday night.

PHOTO: REUTERS

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