

What to WATCH

T SPORTS & GTV
ICC Men's T20 World Cup
Bangladesh vs England
Live from 04:00 pm
Scotland vs Namibia
Live from 08:00 pm

T SPORTS
La Liga
Real Madrid vs Osasuna
Live from 1:30 am (Thursday)

DAY'S EVENT

NCL (DAY-4)
RANGPUR VS DHAKA, SICS
DHAKA METRO VS RAJSHAHI

HI, COX'S BAZAR
SYLHET VS KHULNA, SYLHET



West Indies' Chris Gayle falls to the ground after playing a shot during the Twenty20 World Cup match against South Africa yesterday. The left-hander was dropped from three to four in the batting order but the change in position barely helped to regain his form as the big-hitter fell for 12.

Raja's fifer puts Sylhet in command

SPORTS REPORTER

On the third day of the second round of the National Cricket League, Sylhet pacer Rejaur Rahman Raja grasped a fifer in 12.2 overs to restrict Khulna to 178 as Sylhet took command ahead of the final day in their Tier-1 encounter at the Sylhet Academy Ground.

In chase of the 203-run target, Sylhet ended the day on 112 for three. They require another 91 runs to win on the last day with seven wickets in hand.

Meanwhile, Rangpur's Ariful Haque played a lethal 98-run knock as his side amassed 321 all out in their Tier-1 encounter against Dhaka at the Sylhet International Cricket Stadium yesterday.

Rangpur started the day on 96 for three before Ariful stitched a solid 66-run partnership with Nasir Hossain.

Dhaka spinners Nazmul Islam Apu and Shuvagata Hom Chowdhury plucked four wickets apiece. In reply, Dhaka were on 38 for no loss in their second innings, taking a 111-run lead ahead of the last day.

Away at Cox's Bazar, an incredible 116-runs partnership by Dhaka Metro tail-enders Aminul Islam Biplob and Abu Hidar Rony guided them to 339 all out in their first innings in a Tier-2 clash against Rajshahi.

Biplob hit a patient 65 off 161 featuring seven fours and one maximum while Rony played a destructive 68 off 90 with six fours and four sixes. Rajshahi's left-arm spinners Sunzamul Islam and Taijul Islam picked up four wickets each.

Rajshahi came out for their second innings and made 24 runs while losing a single wicket, ending day three trailing by 63 runs.

PHOTO: AFP



Proteas bounce back with big win

AGENCIES

South Africa hammered holders West Indies by eight wickets in a game overshadowed by Proteas star Quinton de Kock's refusal to take the knee prior to Tuesday's Twenty20 World Cup clash.

Aiden Markram smashed 51 to lead South Africa's chase of 144 in an unbeaten 83-run third-wicket stand with Rassie van der Dussen (43) to achieve their target with 10 balls to spare in the Super 12 contest.

South Africa bounced back from their opening loss to Australia, while two-time champions West Indies have lost both their matches.

Cricket South Africa ordered its players to kneel in Dubai and lend their support to the anti-racism movement but De Kock pulled out of the game due to "personal reasons".

Temba Bavuma's team took the knee after their decision to field first.

"When the news hit us, it did kind of take us



back as a team. A guy like Quinnie [de Kock], he obviously plays an integral role within the team, not just with the bat but as a senior player but with that, Klaassen coming in there was an opportunity for him, it was another game of cricket that we had to play for our country and

we had to live up to that," said Bavuma after the match.

South African skipper expressed his satisfaction over his side's performance in the second game.

"Much better than our first game. We knew there were areas that we needed to improve on. Particularly our batting. Our bowling again was outstanding. A good day for us," he added.

Opener Evin Lewis hit 56 in West Indies' 143-8 as they suffered another heavy loss, having made just 55 in a crushing defeat by England three days ago.

"Obviously just a matter that we haven't scored enough runs. It's disappointing today," said West Indies skipper Kieron Pollard.

Fast bowler Dwaine Pretorius took three wickets as West Indies again failed to fire after a painstaking 16 off 35 balls from Lendl Simmons at the top of the order.

Skipper Kieron Pollard hit a useful 20-ball 26 before falling to Pretorius, who was on a hat-trick only for Dwayne Bravo to hit a boundary.



DE KOCK WITHDRAWS FROM SA-WI GAME AFTER REFUSING TO TAKE KNEE

South Africa's Heinrich Klaassen takes the knee before their match against West Indies show solidarity with Black Lives Matter movement. However, South Africa stumper-batsman Quinton de Kock skipped yesterday's match citing "personal reasons" after the team were directed to take a knee in their remaining matches in the tournament. Cricket South Africa (CSA) said its board met on Monday evening and decided the team should adopt "a consistent and united stance against racism" by taking the knee prior to the start of their remaining matches. "Several other teams at the World Cup have adopted a consistent stance against the issue, and the board felt it is time for all SA players to do the same," the CSA statement read. De Kock had declined to take a knee in the past calling it "my own personal opinion."

PHOTO: REUTERS



Bangladesh U-23s play against Kuwait today

SPORTS REPORTER

Bangladesh U-23 football team will look to begin their AFC U-23 Asian Cup Qualifiers campaign on a winning note when they take on Kuwait in a Group D encounter at the Jar Stadium in Tashkent, Uzbekistan today.

The match will get underway at 4:00pm (Bangladesh time) as hosts Uzbekistan and Saudi Arabia square off at the same time at Pakhtakor Stadium.

Head coach Maruful Haque has set sights on a maiden final round appearance in the continental championship in the team's fifth attempt.

At the official press conference in Tashkent yesterday, Bangladesh's lone UEFA A licenced coach, Haque, reiterated his target of a win against Kuwait, whose senior side are 45 places ahead of Bangladesh in FIFA ranking.

"I know our opponents are much higher in terms of FIFA ranking but on match day, the team that will perform better according to strategy and tactic will come out with a win," Haque said. "We are confident about winning our first match against Kuwait. We must respect

our opponents and I told the boys to perform according to the strategy and prepare mentally to take this challenge."

Bangladesh had four weeks of preparation but played no practice matches before heading to Uzbekistan while Kuwait have recently played in a regional tournament. However, Haque is optimistic about performing well with a team that has a mixture of experienced and new players.

"Our focus and target are to qualify for the final round, so we formed a squad with a mixture of experienced players and new players," replied Haque to a query.

Captain Tutul Hossain Badsha also echoed the sentiment of the coach and vowed to perform according to the game strategy.

"We know our opponents are good but we are ready for tomorrow's match. We are looking forward to the game and will try to win it. The coach has told us to follow the strategy to get a result and I am hopeful that we will perform well to get a good result," said Badsha, who, along with five U-23 players, were part of the senior side in the recent SAFF Championship.

THE PRINCE OF SPIN

AFP, Dubai

Rashid Khan remains Afghanistan's original spin king, but Mujeeb Ur Rahman has emerged from his shadow as a rising star to make an instant impact at the Twenty20 World Cup.

The 20-year-old bamboozled the opposition batsmen with his mystery spin on Monday to return T20 best figures of 5-20 in Afghanistan's 130-run rout of Scotland in Sharjah.

Mujeeb bowls off spin, leg spin and the googly with equal guile and has bagged 30 wickets in 20 matches in the shortest format since his debut as a 16-year-old in February 2018.

"Congratulations to our nation and it's my first player of the match in a World Cup," Mujeeb, who played his first ever match in the T20 World Cup, said to his countrymen who have been cheering their team under the new Taliban regime.

"The people supporting us here gave me a lot of positive energy. Fans have been supporting us and that's one reason we've played well."

Afghanistan cricket has overcome tough odds including the possibility of being banned from the tournament if the women's game was discontinued by the Taliban.

The players though have set aside the turmoil to focus on the T20 World Cup with skipper Mohammad Nabi saying they are well "prepared".

Mujeeb, who hails from a humble family in the Khost city of the war-torn region, rattled Scotland's top and middle order, taking three wickets in his first over including two in successive deliveries.

By the time senior spinner Rashid came into the attack in the seventh over of the Scotland chase, Mujeeb's heroics -- 4-14 in three overs -- had

already reduced the Scots to 37-5.

He bowled three googlies -- a leg spinner that pitches and spins in to a right-hand batsman -- to send Scotland skipper Kyle Coetzer, Calum MacLeod and Richie Berrington trudging back to the pavilion.

Former Afghanistan coach Andy Moles had termed Mujeeb a "complete package" and the youngster justified the compliment with sterling performances at the Under-19 stage.

Mujeeb claimed a five-wicket haul in Afghanistan's historic triumph at the Under-19 Asia Cup where they beat Pakistan in the final. He finished the tournament with 20 wickets in five matches.

Mujeeb got his big break in the lucrative Indian Premier League when Kings XI Punjab -- now Punjab Kings -- bought him for \$630,000 in the

2018 edition.

He played in Afghanistan's first ever Test match, against India, in June 2018. The match was also his first-class debut.

The same year Hampshire signed Mujeeb for the T20 Blast alongside Colin Munro of New Zealand. "Mujeeb, he is a magician. He has got all the tricks in the trade. Very very remarkable young lad. He has every ball you can come across," said a Hampshire teammate.

Mujeeb recently played in the Hundred for Northern Superchargers.

Mujeeb once said that India skipper Virat Kohli "was his biggest wicket", but with his career just beginning, Afghanistan will be expecting many more memorable scalps from the prince of spin.



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SCORES IN BRIEF



WEST INDIES
143 for 8 in 20 overs (Lewis 56, Pollard 26; Pretorius 3-17, Maharaj 2-24)

SOUTH AFRICA
144 for 2 in 18.2 overs (Markram 51, Dussen 43, Hendricks 39; Akeal 1-27)

RESULT
South Africa won by 8 wickets.

PLAYER-OF-THE-MATCH:
Anrich Nortje.