

SPORT

India, Pakistan stumble in openers

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India and Pakistan both stumbled in their respective opening matches of the Asian Champions Trophy at the Maulana Bhasani Hockey Stadium yesterday. Defending champions and Tokyo Olympic bronze-medallists India were held to a 2-2 draw by South Korea while Asian Games gold-medallists Japan were held to a goalless draw by struggling giants Pakistan in the day's second match in which Japan played comparatively better than the four-time World Cup champions.

India, playing their first tournament since the Tokyo Olympics, got off to a flying start by taking a lead in the very fourth minute before doubling the margin in the 33rd minute. But they failed to keep the lead intact against a resolute Korea, who came out all-guns-blazing in the third and fourth quarters to snatch a point from the tournament favourites. India, with their fast-paced attacking game, looked well ahead of Korea, who sat back to defend from the start. But they also showed character to come back from two goals down and their goalkeeper

Jaehyeon Kim was superb under the post, thwarting a few penalty corners. India needed only four minutes to take the lead as Lalit Upadhyay controlled the ball outside the circle and danced past a couple of Korean defenders before sending the ball over Kim. However, India had to wait for nearly half-an-hour to double the lead, which came when Harmanpreet Singh converted a penalty corner after the team's first corner was well-thwarted by Korea. Trailing 2-0, Korea showed bravery and brilliantly fought back to give the Indian backline

a tough time and force them into conceding a couple of corners. Korea pulled one goal back through Jonghyun Jang, who converted a penalty in the 41st minute. Korea continued pressing hard and they finally found the equaliser in the 46th minute when Sunghyun Kim tapped home a fierce drive from the right flank. Although India thought they had restored their lead in the 53rd minute, the goal was ruled out by a Korean review. They faced further frustration as Korea foiled three more penalty corners in the remaining time to force India to split the points.



Tigers partake in first gym session

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Bangladesh national team cricketers partook in their first gym session in Christchurch yesterday after undergoing a strict three-day room quarantine for their two-Test tour of New Zealand. The first Test is slated for January 1 next year. Mominul Haque and Co, however, will still have to stay within the facility in Christchurch as they are undergoing a seven-day managed isolation period, having reached the country on December 10. Till the completion of the mandatory isolation period, the players will be able to do gym sessions and also roam around the quarantine facility premises in groups, just as they did yesterday. Compared to their last tour of New Zealand back in March-April this year, the Tigers are enjoying more relaxed quarantine protocols this time around. Last

time around the players could not take part in any practice games. However, on this tour, the Tigers will be able to participate in two warm-up fixtures, one between themselves and the other against a New Zealand XI. The dates of the warm-up fixtures are yet to be confirmed. After a T20 World Cup debacle in the Middle East, where they exited the mega event without a single win in five of their Super 12 fixtures, the Tigers were whitewashed in the T20I and Test series against Pakistan at home. The series losses and absences of few key senior stars have put Bangladesh in a precarious position with their confidence taking a beating after the recent results. The Tigers would look to make the best use of these warm-up matches, in order to get back some groove ahead of the Test series. The task remains a huge one as Bangladesh have never been able to beat the Kiwis in their backyard in 32 fixtures across formats.

Soumya ton sets up Central Zone

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Soumya Sarkar struck the third hundred of the innings to leave Walton Central Zone eyeing a win after declaring the first innings on 563 for 3 on the third day of their Bangladesh Cricket League at Zahur Ahmed Chowdhury Stadium against BCB North Zone in Chattogram yesterday. In their second innings, BCB North Zone ended the third day on 172 for 5, still trailing by 172 runs. Resuming the day on 430 for 2, Central Zone took a huge first-innings lead of 344 runs. Soumya, who was dropped from the national team following a string of poor performances, struck his fourth first-class ton, his first century in first-class cricket after nearly three years. The left-hander struck his last first-class hundred back in February, 2019 against New Zealand. He resumed the day on 39 and remained unbeaten after a 148-ball 104 featuring ten fours and a six. Salman Hossain and Mosaddek Hossain also struck fifties for Central Zone. Earlier, Mizanur Rahman and Mohammad Mithun smashed centuries and added a magnificent 327-run opening stand to lay the platform for a big total. In reply, North Zone kept losing wickets at regular intervals while opener Tanzid Hasan missed out his hundred by just ten runs as the left-hander was bowled on ninety by left-arm spinner Hasan Murad. Murad was instrumental for Central

Zone, ending with three wickets, while Mritunjoy Chowdhury and Robiul Haque picked up a wicket each. North Zone will have the daunting task of saving the game with skipper Marshall Ayub set to resume the final day on 28 runs. At the Shaheed Kamruzzaman Stadium in Rajshahi, Islami Bank East Zone lead by 26 runs in their second innings and will resume the final day on 195 for 5 against BCB South Zone. South Zone were bowled-out for 429 in reply to East Zone's 260, taking first-innings lead of 169. Zakir Hasan, who resumed the day on 91, went on to register his ninth first-class hundred before eventually being dismissed on 158 off 276 balls, striking 19 fours and two sixes. Anamul Haque, Mohammad Ashrafal and Nayeem Hasan bagged three wickets each for the bowling side. Despite adding 62 runs for the opening stand in reply riding on Imrul Kayes and Mohammad Ashrafal, East Zone lost their way in the middle. After picking up five-wicket hauls in the first innings, both left-arm spinner Nasum Ahmed and off-spinner Mahedi Hasan proved instrumental again for South Zone. Nasum scalped Imrul (39) and Rony Talukdar (12) while Mahedi removed Ashrafal (25) and Shahadat Hossain (5) as East Zone were struggling 90 for 4. Nahidul Islam then removed Nadif Chowdhury before Afif Hossain steadied the ship. He was not out on 75 alongside Irfan Shukkur, unbeaten on 18.

Passport-less Rakibul ruled out

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Rookie forward Rakibul Hasan will not be available for selection against India as the hosts begin their Asian Champions Trophy campaign at the Maulana Bhasani Hockey Stadium today because he does not have a Bangladeshi passport. The Bangladesh Hockey Federation (BHF) declared a 20-member national squad on December 10, including five new players alongside 16-year-old Rakibul. Rakibul played a warm-up match against Pakistan and scored Bangladesh's only goal in a 3-1 defeat, but he is missing the passport required to represent a nation in any international tournament. "We selected him for the national squad on the basis of his performances in domestic competitions but we don't know whether Rakibul, who is a 16-year-old BKSP student, has a passport or NID," BHF vice-president and selection committee chairman Sajed A Adel said. "We came to know about it on December 12 and he went to Passport office today [Tuesday] but he came back due to a problem with his birth registration. I heard a mistake happened with his mother name," said Adel. "He will go to the passport office tomorrow again and won't be available for the first match against India. But, we hope, he will be available for the next matches."

Another women's team cricketer tests positive

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With another cricketer of the Bangladesh women's team testing positive for coronavirus, a total of three players are now in isolation after returning from Zimbabwe earlier this month. The Bangladesh women's team returned to the country following the World Cup qualifiers which were halted midway due to concerns over the Omicron variant, a new variant of Covid-19, in Africa. Although the two other players were tested positive for the Omicron variant previously, the third cricketer has not been infected by the new variant of Covid-19, confirmed the Bangladesh Cricket Board (BCB) women's wing manager Tawhid Mahmud to The Daily Star yesterday. "All the three cricketers are now kept in isolation at Mugda Medical College and Hospital under the government's supervision," informed Tawhid. Having returned to the country on December 1, the Tigresses were undergoing a five-day institutional quarantine under the government's supervision at a hotel in the capital. The quarantine period was later extended after the first two cricketers tested positive for Covid-19. However, due to the presence of VIPs at the hotel for the Victory Day celebration, the cricketers were later moved to the BCB Academy for health and safety purposes. All the other members of the team have been undergoing a 14-day mandatory quarantine since returning to the country. They will undergo another round of Covid-19 tests today and upon returning negative results, the cricketers will be allowed to return to their homes.



Ajax Sporting Club players celebrate after winning the title of the Dhaka Women's First Division T20 Cricket League yesterday. Ajax beat Shahid Ahsan Ullah Master Cricket Academy by three wickets in the final at the Sheikh Hasina Cricket Stadium Site in Purbachal. A total of 10 teams participated in the league which started on November 30.

PHOTO: BCB



মহান বিজয় দিবস
২০২১ এর শুভেচ্ছা

দুরদীর্ঘ পরিকল্পনা আপনার স্বাধীনতা
জীবন বিমায় আনুন আর্থিক নিরাপত্তা

ডেল্টা লাইফ ইনসিওরেন্স কোম্পানী লিমিটেড-এর সম্মানিত সকল বীমা গ্রাহক, শেয়ারহোল্ডারবৃন্দ ও শুভানুধ্যায়ীদের সদয় অবগতির জন্য জানানো যাচ্ছে যে, ইতিমধ্যে বিভিন্ন সময়ে প্রিন্ট ও ইলেকট্রিক মিডিয়ায় ডেল্টা লাইফ সম্পর্কে যে সমস্ত সংবাদ প্রকাশিত ও প্রচারিত হয়েছে তার জন্য সম্মানিত বীমা গ্রাহক/শেয়ারহোল্ডারবৃন্দের দৃষ্টিভঙ্গির কোন কারণ নেই। এ সব অতীতের প্রশাসক পূর্ব আমলের ঘটনা। বর্তমানে বীমা উন্নয়ন ও নিয়ন্ত্রণ কর্তৃপক্ষ (আইডিআরএ) একজন অবসরপ্রাপ্ত সচিবকে ডেল্টা লাইফের প্রশাসক হিসাবে নিয়োগ দিয়েছেন। ডেল্টা লাইফের সকল কার্যক্রম স্বাভাবিকভাবে অব্যাহত আছে এবং পূর্বের চাইতে বর্তমান প্রশাসকের পরিচালনায় কোম্পানীর কার্যক্রমের গতি এবং ব্যবসা উত্তোরোত্তর বৃদ্ধি পাচ্ছে। গ্রাহকের বীমা দাবী দ্রুত পরিশোধ করা হচ্ছে। সম্মানিত সকল বীমা গ্রাহক, শেয়ারহোল্ডারবৃন্দ ও শুভানুধ্যায়ীদের প্রাপ্য সুবিধাসমূহ ও স্বাভাবিক কার্যক্রম চলমান আছে এবং থাকবে ইনশাআহ। সকলকে মহান বিজয় দিবস ও স্বাধীনতার সুবর্ণজয়ন্তীতে শুভেচ্ছা।

ডেল্টা লাইফ ইনসিওরেন্স কোম্পানী লিমিটেড