

# Star

DHAKA SATURDAY JANUARY 22, 2022, MAGH 8, 1428 BS

# SPORT

## What to WATCH

GTV & T SPORTS  
BPL  
Comilla Victorians vs Sylhet Sunrisers  
Live from 12:30 pm  
Chattogram Challengers vs Minister Group Dhaka

Live from 5:30 pm  
T Sports  
La Liga  
Sevilla vs Celta Vigo  
Live from 11:30 pm  
Atletico Madrid vs Valencia  
Live from 2:00 am (Sunday)

STAR SPORTS SELECT HD1  
EPL  
Everton vs Aston Villa  
Live from 6:30 pm  
Manchester United vs West Ham  
Live from 9:00 pm

Southampton vs Manchester City  
Live from 11:30 pm  
STAR SPORTS SELECT HD2  
ICC U-19 World Cup 2022  
India vs Uganda  
Live from 7:00 pm

## FAF loving local food

SPORTS REPORTER

Former South Africa captain Faf du Plessis arrived for his very first stint in the Bangladesh Premier League (BPL) and has found local cuisines part of the attraction since coming here while also being able to take in the experience of coming to Bangladesh.

Du Plessis talked to the media after a practice session at Mirpur Academy Ground yesterday.

"I've been trying to come over for a few years now. The last time I tried, we had a series to play with South Africa and unfortunately couldn't get released.

"Then obviously the last two years was Covid so just delighted to be here. I have enjoyed my time in Bangladesh whenever I was with the national side and it's just another experience with different cultures and different teams and I really enjoy that. That's the journey I am on now," he said.

While he is Comilla's biggest star this term, he will be under the captaincy of the experience Imrul Kayes.

Faf said that sharing experience with local players was part of the charm.

"Obviously you want to get to franchises where you can be successful. Players like myself want to win trophies and it's a big part of why we play the sport.

"So I have experience I can share with the guys here, from a batting point of view and also from a captaincy point of view."

Asked if he has learned a Bangla word yet, he responded: "Not yet. I am just getting in some local food. Had biryani yesterday so it's good. Seen guys making guava with chilli and lime and its very nice," he said.



**Khulna Tigers' all-rounders Thisara Perera (L) and Mahedi Hasan bump fists after guiding their team to a five-wicket victory over Minister Dhaka in a high-scoring second match of the Bangladesh Premier League (BPL) at the Sher-e-Bangla National Stadium in Mirpur yesterday.**

PHOTO: FIROZ AHMED

## BPL THROWS a mixed bag on opening day

SPORTS REPORTER

The eighth edition of the Bangladesh Premier League (BPL) got underway with Shakib Al Hasan's Fortune Barishal beating Mehedi Miraz's Chattogram Challengers by four wickets at the Sher-e-Bangla National Cricket Stadium yesterday.

The first match of the BPL was a low-scoring affair although shot-selection from some of the batters left much to be desired. When Kennar Lewis hit the very first ball of the innings from Nayeem Hasan for six, it appeared a storm could be imminent but it was quickly stifled by the two spinners Nayeem and Shakib.

**Miraz, Shakib at opposite end of spectrum**  
Shakib's economical spell, producing just 9 runs in four overs, was crucial but it was his younger counterpart Miraz, who turned the game on its head.

"We were 25 runs short in my opinion. It was spinning a touch, but our bowlers kept it a bit short. Yes, I got four wickets, but would have been happy if we would have won the match," Miraz, who scalped four for just 16 runs to bag the player of

the match award, said at the post-match presentation.

Shakib, who now has 399 wickets in T20s, was happy with the outing despite not turning up with the bat. "I thought we bowled brilliantly, but we could've been a little better. Very happy with the way we played this game, but there are areas we can improve on. We needed some momentum to get going in the tournament," the Barishal skipper said.

**Covid cases still not a crisis**

Barishal reported three Covid cases in their ranks with wicket-keeper batter Nurul Hasan Sohan testing positive on 17th January while batting consultant Nazmul Abedeen Fahim and batter Munim Shahriar turning positive the next day. Sohan tested negative yesterday and another such test result today will see him return to squad. According to the Bangladesh Cricket Board (BCB) sources, the tournament should go on without any hitch as per their protocols.

**Russell's bizarre run-out**

A Tamim Iqbal fifty, Mohammad Shahzad's speedy 42 at the top and skipper Mahmudullah Riyad's 20-ball 39 saw Minister Group Dhaka pile on 183 for

6 against Khulna Tigers in BPL's night match but nothing could possibly capture imagination like the run-out Rony Talukdar effected in the 15th over of Dhaka innings.

Andre Russell looked ominous with a powerful six in the previous delivery but dabbed one down to short third man area for a single. Rony came running in with Mahmudullah running at the danger end and his throw found its mark, hitting the stumps at the striker's end. The throw, coming in at an angle, then ricocheted from the stumps at the striker's end and went on to hit the stumps at the non-striker's end, with Russell not even aware of what was happening, as evidenced by his lack of instinct to place his bat. The decision was referred to third umpire and although Mahmudullah was safe, Russell departed to the most bizarre run out which was in fact also a direct hit.

Rony later went on to score match-highest 61 as Khulna chased down the target with five wickets in hand and an over to spare. There were quite a few other contributions in the innings as the second match of the opening day seemed like was played on a different surface altogether than the first one.

## 2022 WORLD T20

### Tigers pitted against India and Pakistan

STAR SPORT DESK

Bangladesh have been placed in the same group with India and Pakistan as the fixtures for the upcoming T20 World Cup were announced on Friday.

Australia will host the 16-nation tournament, which begins on October 16 with a six-day preliminary stage of two four-team groups where Sri Lanka and Namibia in Group A, and West Indies and Scotland in Group B will be joined by four qualifiers yet to be determined.

The top two teams from both Group A and Group B will move forward to join Bangladesh and the other seven automatically qualified nations in the Super 12 stage.

England, New Zealand, Australia and Afghanistan have been drawn together in Group 1 while India, Pakistan, South Africa and Bangladesh are clubbed in Group 2.

The arch-rivals Pakistan and India will lock horns at the Melbourne Cricket Ground (MCG) on October 23, a day after Australia begin their title defence against New Zealand in Sydney.

The final of the mega event will be played at the MCG on November 13.

## U-19s eye QF berth



SPORTS REPORTER

Defending champions Bangladesh replied strong with a comprehensive eight-wicket victory against Canada in Basseterre on Thursday following a heavy defeat against England earlier in their opening Group A fixture of the ICC Under-19 World Cup.

The young Tigers will play their next match against the UAE today. Both teams, on equal points, will look to win in order to qualify for the quarterfinals alongside group leaders England.

Bangladesh will look to keep the momentum after the U-19s eased past their Canadian counterparts, who piled up 136 runs on the board after electing to bat first. Opener Anoop Chima top-scored with 63 runs off 117 deliveries.

Off-spinner SM Mehrob caused the most damage with the ball, dismissing four of the first six batters. Medium pacers Ripon Mondol and Ashikur Rahman picked the remaining wickets with Mondol bagging a four-wicket haul as well.

In reply, the young Tigers chased their target comfortably in 30.1 overs with eight wickets in hand, riding on Iftakher Hossain and Nowrose Prantik Nabil's 76-run stand for the second wicket. Opener Iftakher remained unbeaten on 61 runs off 89 balls.

## Cabrera focusing on relationship

SPORTS REPORTER

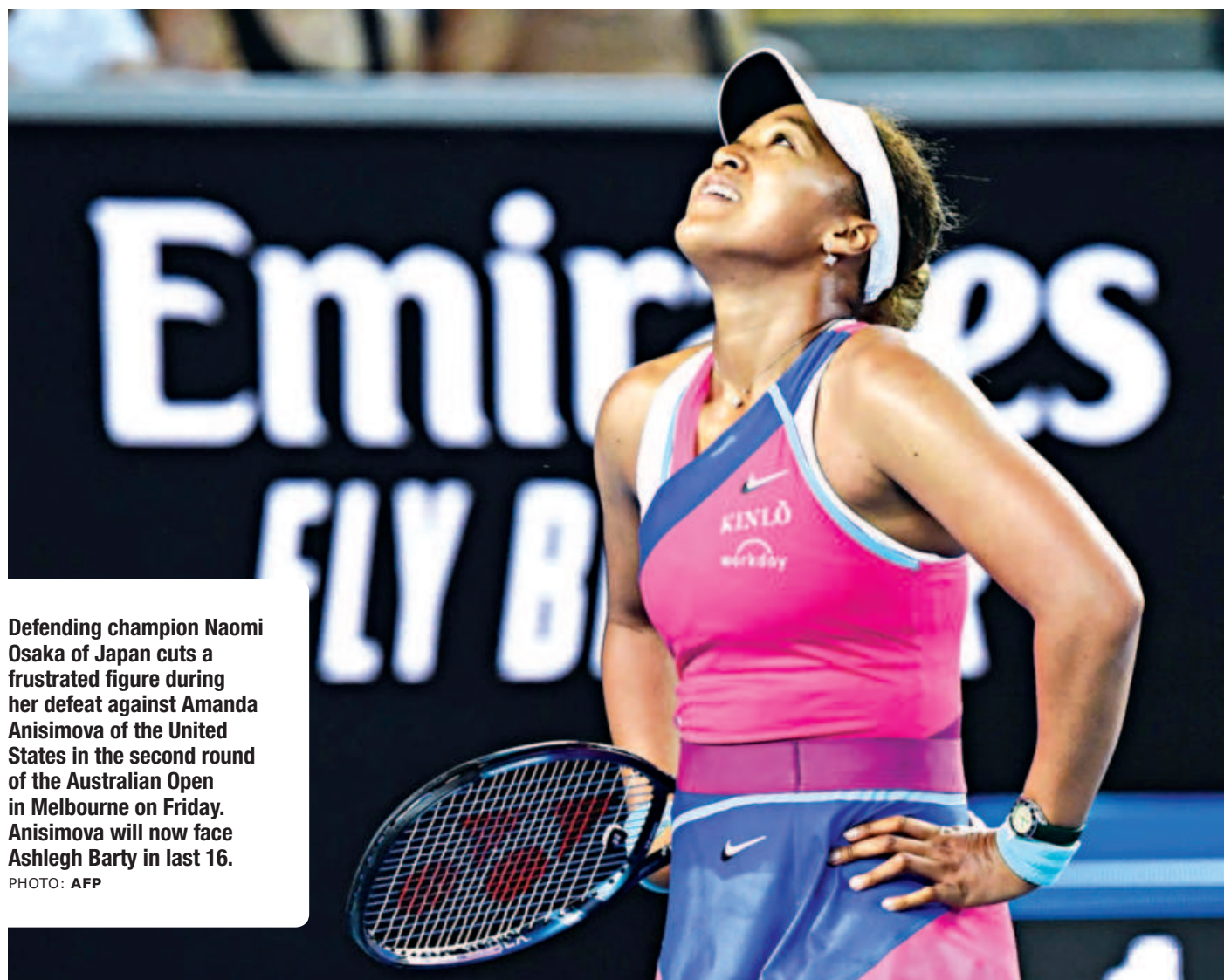
Bangladesh's new head coach Javier Cabrera yesterday promised to follow each player including the current ones of the national team closely in the upcoming Bangladesh Premier League with an aim to forming a competitive squad.

The 37-year-old Spaniard yesterday visited Abahani to watch the club's training session and met with the players, the coaches and club officials to know how the clubs works daily and to understand the context of Bangladesh football structure as he will be visiting other professional clubs in coming days in order to make a good relationship among the players, clubs and the national team.

"The message to the players of the national team was that I am going to be very close and want to create a close relationship with them. I do believe this relation between the players and coaches will give the players opportunity to perform best [on the ground] because I am going to watch them and that every single player in professional league is going to have the chance in the national team," Cabrera told reporters after speaking to Abahani players, head coach Mario Lemos and club officials at the training ground.

"I know the BPL is a very competitive league and I want disciplined players of what the game demands at this moment," said Cabrera.

"I know about Jamal [Bhayan] and Tariq [Raihan Kazi]. To me, Jamal is a very important asset of the team. Tariq is a good reference for the young players. He has great potential and I am looking forward to having training sessions with them," added the Spaniard.



**Defending champion Naomi Osaka of Japan cuts a frustrated figure during her defeat against Amanda Anisimova of the United States in the second round of the Australian Open in Melbourne on Friday. Anisimova will now face Ashleigh Barty in last 16.**

PHOTO: AFP

## South Africa cruise to series win

REUTERS, Paarl

Opener Janneman Malan scored 91 as South Africa chased down a victory target of 288 for a comfortable seven-wicket win over India and an unassailable 2-0 lead in the three-match series after the second One-Day International at Boland Park on Friday.

India chose to bat in sweltering conditions and posted 287 for six in their 50 overs, which looked a good total on a slow wicket that should have favoured them.

But South Africa paced their reply superbly, with Malan and fellow opener Quinton de Kock (78 from 66 balls) putting on 132 for the first wicket.

The home side, who won the first ODI by 31 runs, reached their target with 11 balls to spare.

The third and final match of the series will be played at Newlands in Cape Town on Sunday.