

Tamim ton guides Prime Bank

SPORTS REPORTER

Just a day after leading Bangladesh to an emphatic 10-wicket victory over Ireland to wrap up the three-match ODI series 2-0, ODI skipper Tamim Iqbal struck an unbeaten hundred to guide Prime Bank Cricket Club to a comfortable seven-wicket win over Mohammedan Sporting Club in the Dhaka Premier League yesterday.

Tamim remained not out on 109 off 156 deliveries, striking 12 fours, as Prime Bank chased down a modest 200-run target set by Mohammedan at the Khan Shaheb Osman Ali Stadium in Fatullah.

Tamim, along with Mohammad Mithun, added 72 runs for the opening stand before the latter was dismissed on 31. Prime Bank then saw wickets of Nasir Hossain and Yasir Ali fall in quick succession before Mushfiqur Rahim, the player of the series of the Tigers' ODI series against Ireland, paired with Tamim in an unbeaten 119 runs stand that saw their side cruise to victory in 42.1 overs. Mushfiqur remained not out on 39 off 57 deliveries.



Earlier, Mohammedan, eyeing their first win of the league, were bundled out for 199 after being sent to bat. Opener Mahidul Islam Ankon's 41 was the highest score for Mohammedan.

Nasir remained pick of the bowlers for Prime Bank, picking up three wickets for 29 runs in six overs. Pacers Rubel Hossain and Rejaur Rahman Raja took two wickets each as Prime clinched their fourth consecutive win.

At BKSP-4, a century from Fazle Mahmud saw Sheikh Jamal seal an 11-run win (via DLS) over Brothers Union. Apart from Mahmud's knock, skipper Nurul Hasan Sohan scored 66 runs in Sheikh Jamal's 287 for 6.

Chasing the revised target of 207 in 29 overs following resumption after a break due to rain, Brothers Union were all-out on 195 runs despite fillets from Sabbir Hossain and Zahiduzzaman.

In the other rain-curtailed game at BKSP-3, Legends of Rugganj sealed a three-wicket win over Shinepukur Cricket Club. Riding on Amite Hasan's century, Shinepukur managed to post 207 all-out.

Rugganj reached the revised target of 168 runs in 36 overs, thanks to 40-run knocks from Chirag Jani and Irfan Shukkur.



Thursday night saw the two GOATS of football, Lionel Messi and Cristiano Ronaldo, reach milestones. CR7 became the player with the most international caps in history with his 197th appearance, surpassing Kuwait's Bader Al-Mutawa, and marked the occasion with two goals in Portugal's 4-0 win over Liechtenstein in a Euro 2024 qualifier. Ronaldo's second goal was also his 100th competitive international strike, more than any other footballer. Meanwhile, Argentina's World Cup-winning captain Messi became only the second player to 800 career goals after Ronaldo as the world champions defeated Panama 2-0 on their return to the pitch.

PHOTO: TWITTER

Camera-shy Bangladesh primed for Seychelles

ANISUR RAHMAN from Sylhet

The way fitness coach Ivan Razlog and physio Kandasmy Senthil Kumar Yoseshwar kept an eye on journalists, especially cameramen and photographers to ensure no footage of the training session was being captured, it seemed as if Bangladesh were set to play a crucial international match at the Sylhet District Stadium today.

Following repeated signals from the sidelines, camerapersons lay down their equipment while Spanish coach Javier Cabrera worked on the game plan. The grand occasion that the team was working towards was the first of two friendlies between two of the lower-ranked teams in the FIFA Rankings: Bangladesh, who are 192nd, and Seychelles in 199th place.

The first FIFA-sanctioned friendly will get underway today at 3:45pm and be broadcast on T Sports.

The hosts, who have been struggling for a long time, however see the two matches against Seychelles, a squad full of amateur footballers aside from two plying their trade in England, as a chance to raise their ranking.

Cabrera was hoping to best Seychelles after taking inspiration from an unofficial match against Malawi in Saudi Arabia, which saw the men in red and green create many chances in a come-from-behind 1-1 draw against an opponent ranked 120th.

"Our target is to win both games. We are not thinking that Seychelles are a weak

team. We have to prove ourselves and show the consistency that we have lacked in previous years. We have always alternated between good and bad performances. But we need to be more consistent and this is a very good opportunity to show the consistency that we did in Saudi Arabia. We have to be very serious about the two games," Cabrera told this reporter after the pre-match press conference.



The 37-year-old also opined that playing against a lower-ranked side did not add any pressure but added that playing in front of a home crowd would.

"It is not pressure. I think it is important to have tension. Again, we have to be smart enough to face the opponents in the most professional way and so it makes sense to think whether they are higher or lower-ranked sides," Cabrera said. "Seychelles played against Comoros, who are 17 places

ahead of Seychelles, but they drew. Don't believe Seychelles is a weak team. That would be the first mistake and we will regret it."

Captain Jamal Bhuiyan is also optimistic of securing a win although the last time the two teams met during a four-nation tournament in Sri Lanka in 2021, Seychelles staged a strong comeback in a 1-1 draw.

"We are ready for the match. The mood in the group is good and everybody is positive about the next two matches. Everyone knows that if we can produce good results in these two matches, it will be good preparation for the upcoming SAFF Championship," Jamal said.

Nevertheless, Bangladesh will want goals from their strikers, including Nigeria-born Eleta Kingsley, who is likely to make his debut for Bangladesh.

On the back of only six training sessions, Seychelles coach Neville Both expressed his desire to win both matches to inspire his young players ahead of the Indian Ocean Games in August.

"I watched Bangladesh's last game and I think they have progressed since 2021. I know the game won't be easy, but I like to say that we will try to win, especially the first one, because we are preparing for August's Indian Ocean Games. We are going to play strongly in the first match and then try our young players in the second game so they can gain experience," said Both, who is also a physical education teacher in Seychelles.

U-17s edge past India

SPORTS REPORTER

Bangladesh beat India 1-0 in the SAFF U-17 Women's Championship, thanks to an own goal from India, at the Birshreshtha Shaheed Mostafa Kamal Stadium yesterday.

The goal came in the 74th minute of an otherwise drab affair, where neither team created too many meaningful chances. It looked as if the championship would produce its first stalemate following a glut of goals before India defender Akhila Rajan headed the ball into her own net while trying to clear a cross inside the box.

India, who were playing their second match after beating Nepal 4-1, were the more attacking side throughout the match though, but Bangladesh keeper Songita Rani Das was solid under the bar, foiling every Indian effort that came her way. The defenders also came to Bangladesh's rescue a few times.

Bangladesh, who came into the match on the back of a 3-0 defeat against Russia following an 8-1 thrashing of Bhutan, failed to build the game from behind as most of the time they tried to take long-ball approach, eventually losing possession in the process on most occasions.



Both teams had a great chance each in the first half, but failed to make that count. After a pretty even first half, India started the second half strongly and initiated many attacks but failed to beat Songita. Sagorika then failed to guide Sauravi Akanda Prity's cross into the net in the 54th minute, despite being inside the box with no markers around. India though continued their domination but that own goal led to their downfall and Bangladesh held firm for the remainder of the match to earn all three points.

Meanwhile, favourites Russia thrashed Bhutan 9-1 in the first match of the day. With two wins and a positive goal difference of 11, the European nation sit on top of the five-team table after the second match day.



Premier all-rounder Shakib Al Hasan marked his 36th birthday with a noble initiative, inaugurating the 'Shakib Al Hasan Cancer Foundation' at a hotel in the capital yesterday. Shakib, during his speech at the inauguration ceremony, said that this is a first step in his long term plan with the ultimate objective being building a cancer hospital in the country.

PHOTO: COLLECTED

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Trans athletes decry ban

REUTERS

Transgender athletes have condemned World Athletics' exclusion of transgender women from elite female competitions, while the decision was welcomed by some sportswomen as a win for fairness.

Athletics' global governing body on Thursday voted to ban transgender women who have gone through male puberty from competing in women's events, citing a "need to protect the female category".

"What's happening is the most vulnerable are being excluded from sport more for political reasons," Canadian cyclist Kristen Worley, a transitioned athlete told Reuters.

Ricki Coughlan, one of Australia's first transgender athletes in professional running, said WA's ruling would embolden the "forces of hate" against transgender people.

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