



PHOTO: FIROZ AHMED

## SPORTS STARS CELEBRATE VICTORY DAY

(Clockwise from left) The Victory Day was celebrated across the country's sporting arenas, with cricket and football legends taking part in exhibition matches in Dhaka on Tuesday. Former national footballers such as Arman Mia and Amit Khan Shuvro featured in an exhibition match between the Red Team and the Green Team at the BFF Artificial Turf. Meanwhile, former national cricket stars Mohammad Rafique, Habibul Bashar, Jahangir Alam, Khaled Mashud and Hasibul Hossain represented Shaheed Mustaq XI in an exhibition match against Shaheed Jewel XI at the Sher-e-Bangla National Cricket Stadium in Mirpur in the morning. Later in the evening at the same venue, Mehidy Hasan Miraz and Najmul Hossain Shanto led two teams of current cricketers in an exhibition match organised by the Cricketers Welfare Association of Bangladesh.

## 'Bad omen' as eight First Division clubs relegated

SPORTS REPORTER

Bangladesh Cricket Board (BCB) vice-president Faruque Ahmed has called the failure of eight First Division clubs to appear in matches – a breach that led to their relegation – a “bad omen” for Bangladesh cricket.

The protesting clubs, citing alleged irregularities in the recent BCB elections, have questioned the legitimacy of the current board.

Fault lines opened up further as the rift between the board and the protesting clubs saw the ongoing First Division league postponed for two more days after two matchdays. Matches scheduled for the next round on December 17 and 18 will be postponed, the BCB press release read.

Eight First Division clubs walked over in matches on Sunday and Monday, leading to the BCB issuing a press release yesterday saying that teams failing to appear in scheduled matches resulted in relegation, effective from next season, as per tournament regulations. Consequently, Partex Sporting Club, Gazi Tyres Cricket Academy, Amber Sporting Club, Kalabagan Krira Chakra, Khelaghar Samaj Kallyan Samity, Surjotorun Club, Kakrail Boys Club and Orient Sporting Club have all been demoted to the Second Division.

“There are not two sides here; there is one side, I think the clubs do not want to play,” Faruque told the media after the Victory Day exhibition match yesterday morning at Mirpur's Sher-e-Bangla National Cricket Stadium.

“Now, I don't know how much benefit anyone gets by stopping the game. The loss will be for Bangladesh cricket players.



**CAMERON GREEN**  
Country: Australia  
Role: All-rounder  
To: Kolkata Knight Riders  
For: INR 25.20 cr



**PRASHANT VEER**  
Country: India  
Role: Left-arm spinner  
To: Chennai Super Kings  
For: INR 14.20 cr



**LIAM LIVINGSTONE**  
Country: England  
Role: All-rounder  
To: Sunrisers Hyderabad  
For: INR 13 cr



**MATHEESHA PATHIRANA**  
Country: Sri Lanka  
Role: Pacer  
To: Kolkata Knight Riders  
For: INR 18 cr



**KARTIK SHARMA**  
Country: India  
Role: Wicket-keeper batter  
To: Chennai Super Kings  
For: INR 14.20 cr



**MUSTAFIZUR RAHMAN**  
Country: Bangladesh  
Role: Left-arm pacer  
To: KKR  
For: INR 9.20 cr



## Big bucks and broken records

The Indian Premier League mini auction in Abu Dhabi yesterday delivered a flurry of surprises. A fierce bidding war unfolded for Australia all-rounder Cameron Green, who emerged as the most expensive overseas signing in IPL history. Sri Lanka pacer Matheesha Pathirana also commanded a hefty price, while uncapped Indian players Prashant Veer and Kartik Sharma secured big paydays. Bangladesh's most consistent presence in IPL, Mustafizur Rahman, sealed a record-breaking contract for a player from his country.

➤ The amount paid for Green surpassed the previous overseas record of INR 24.75 crore, set by Kolkata in the 2024 auction for Mitchell Starc.

➤ Green is now the third most expensive player in IPL history, behind India internationals Rishabh Pant (INR 27 crore) and Shreyas Iyer (INR 26.75 crore).

➤ The previous highest price for a Bangladesh player was INR 6 crore in the last edition, when Mustafizur was picked up by Delhi Capitals.



“What I am most concerned about now is that the trend they have started – at any time, over any issue, stopping the game – could become a system... I think this is a bad omen,” he added.

At least 50 players staged a protest outside BCB gate 2 over the ongoing conflict. Faruque said the board is looking to resolve the issue quickly, with a meeting scheduled with the 12 remaining First Division teams on Wednesday to draw up a new schedule.

Already, there is awareness within the Cricket Committee Of Dhaka Metropolis (CCDM) that similar occurrences of walkovers will take place in the Second Division. A CCDM official informed, “The Second Division league will begin in January, and we have heard that 10-12 teams will not play.

“We will talk to the clubs on [December] 20th and give the schedules for players' transfers and the start of the league.”

## PSG ordered to pay Mbappe around 60m euros in wage dispute

AFP, Paris

Paris Saint-Germain were ordered to pay their former forward Kylian Mbappe up to 61 million euros (\$71.8 million) in unpaid wages and bonuses by a French labour court on Tuesday.

France captain Mbappe, who left PSG in June 2024 to join Real Madrid, had been claiming over 260 million euros in total from his former club.

PSG in turn had demanded Mbappe pay them 440 million euros.

Mbappe, 26, also claimed the Parisian club applied the wrong French legal classification to his contract, but that was rejected by the court.

The labour court said the final figure of between 60 million and 61 million euros was made up of 55

million euros in unpaid salary and around six million euros in holiday payments.

Qatari-owned PSG did not immediately say if they intend to appeal.

Lawyers for Mbappe said in a statement they “noted with satisfaction the decision given by the labour court.”

“It re-establishes a simple truth – even in the professional football industry, labour laws apply to everyone,” the lawyers added in a statement.

The French club had said they were basing the figure they were claiming in part on a botched 300m-euro transfer to Saudi club Al Hilal which Mbappe refused in June 2023.

Mbappe left for Real Madrid on a free transfer when his contract expired the following summer.



PHOTO: REUTERS

Manchester United blew the lead three times to miss out on moving up to fifth in the Premier League as Bournemouth would not be beaten in a thrilling 4-4 draw at Old Trafford on Monday. United have lost just once in their last 10 games, but coach Ruben Amorim will be frustrated as more points at home were frittered away despite arguably the best attacking display of his reign in charge.

## Fortis flourish as Arambagh crumble

SPORTS REPORTER

Fortis FC registered their first win of this season's Federation Cup with a commanding 4-0 victory over promoted Arambagh KS in their Group B match at the Bashundhara Kings Arena in Dhaka yesterday.

The win lifted Fortis to the top of the Group B standings with one victory and two draws. Mohammedan SC sit second with four points from two matches, after their fixture against Bashundhara Kings was postponed by a week due to the unavailability of the Cumilla venue.

After holding stronger sides Kings and Mohammedan in their opening two matches, Fortis were far more clinical against Arambagh, whom they had also beaten 1-0 in their earlier Bangladesh Football League meeting this season.

Arambagh, still without a win, attempted to put Fortis under pressure but struggled to break down a well-organised defence. Fortis took the lead in the 26th minute when Gambian captain Pa Omar Babou sent a long ball forward for Hasan Jummon Nijum, who controlled it inside the box and volleyed past goalkeeper Azad Hossain.

Babou then made it 2-0 from the penalty spot after being brought down in the area by defender Kazi Rahat Mia. Fortis extended their advantage in the 68th minute as a Nigerian forward Onyekachi Okafor capitalised on another long pass from Mithu Chowdhury, bursting into the box from the right before finishing clinically.

Mithu Chowdhury was involved again late on, delivering another accurate long ball for substitute Murshed Ali, who beat a defender and calmly placed his shot beyond the advancing Azad Hossain in the 75th minute to complete the rout.

