



Farhan ton powers Pakistan into Super Eight

Sahibzada Farhan's unbeaten 100 off 58 balls powered Pakistan to a 102-run win over Namibia in their do-or-die Group A match of the T20 World Cup in Colombo yesterday, completing the Super Eight line-up. Farhan reached three figures off 57 deliveries, becoming the second Pakistan batter to score a century in the competition after Ahmed Shehzad, who struck a 58-ball ton against Bangladesh in 2014. It was also the third century of this 10th edition, following hundreds by Sri Lanka's Pathum Nissanka and Canada's Yuvraj Samra, setting a new record for the most centuries in a single T20 World Cup edition. The 102-run margin also marked Pakistan's biggest victory in T20 World Cups, surpassing their previous best of an 82-run victory over the Netherlands in 2009.

PHOTO: AFP

SUPER EIGHT GROUPS

GROUP 1	GROUP 2
India	England
South Africa	New Zealand
West Indies	Pakistan
Zimbabwe	Sri Lanka



All Group 1 matches will be held in India, while all Group 2 matches will be held in Sri Lanka

SUPER EIGHT SCHEDULE

Feb 21: New Zealand v Pakistan (Colombo)
Feb 22: England v Sri Lanka (Kandy); India v South Africa (Ahmedabad)
Feb 23: Zimbabwe v West Indies (Mumbai)
Feb 24: England v Pakistan (Kandy)
Feb 25: New Zealand v Sri Lanka (Colombo)
Feb 26: West Indies v South Africa (Ahmedabad); India v Zimbabwe (Chennai)
Feb 27: England v New Zealand (Colombo)
Feb 28: Sri Lanka v Pakistan (Kandy)
March 1: Zimbabwe v South Africa (New Delhi); India v West Indies (Kolkata)

NO UPSETS, but plenty of heart

ASHEFAQ-UL-ALAM

Going solely by outcomes, International Cricket Council's (ICC's) dream of globalising the game through T20s has taken a hit so far in the ongoing ICC T20 World Cup, with Associate nations seemingly regressing, reaching a low they have not experienced in over a decade.

A total of eight Associate sides are competing in the ongoing 20-team tournament in India and Sri Lanka, and till yesterday's India-Netherlands match in Ahmedabad, none of them have managed to beat any of the 12 Full Members they are competing alongside.

Yesterday, the line-up of the Super Eights got finalised, and unsurprisingly, none of the Associates made the cut, breaking a streak that had been running for the past five editions.

Since the 2014 edition in Bangladesh, at least one Associate side had managed to progress to the second round.

Netherlands did it in 2014, Afghanistan – who became a Full Member in 2017 – progressed in the 2016 edition in India, Scotland and Namibia snuck in in 2021 in the UAE, the Dutch returned to the second round in 2022 in Australia, and co-hosts USA did it in the 2024 edition.

However, results don't always present the whole picture as a few of the Associates had come close to toppling a big wig this year.

In the tournament opener, the Dutch had reduced Pakistan to 119-7 chasing 148 in Colombo before a brisk 29 off 11 balls from Faheem Ashraf rescued Pakistan.

Later on that very day in Mumbai, the USA had hosts India six down for just 77 runs before a brilliant 49-ball 84 from skipper Suryakumar Yadav took the score to 161-9, out of the reach of the Americans.

The fate of both of these games could've been different had Netherlands' Max O'Dowd not dropped Faheem for seven and USA's Shubham Ranjane not grassed a return catch from Suryakumar on 15.

Other than them, Nepal came the closest,

falling just four runs short of an incredible win over England, failing to score 10 runs in the final over against Sam Curran.

Beyond these close finishes, the Associates, like always, have brought fresh enthusiasm into the tournament. The Nepalese fans earned everyone's appreciation with their undying support for their cricket team.

Italy, making its World Cup debut in cricket, made a very positive first impression, which included a commanding 10-wicket win over Nepal.

Some individuals also shone brightly. Canada's 19-year-old youngster Yuvraj Samra smashed a 65-ball 110 against New Zealand in a losing cause.



USA pacer Shadley van Schalkwyk, till yesterday's India-Netherlands match, was the highest wicket-taker with 13 scalps.

Had lady luck favoured them in a few games, the 2026 edition could've become one of the most successful World Cups for Associate cricket. But even with the regression in outcomes, the Associates have shown plenty of progress on the field, seemingly closing the gulf with Full Members and their fans adding to the flamboyance of a World Cup.

Stabilising BCB central to Aminul's challenge



With Bangladesh Cricket Board standing as the clearest example of how instability at the top can stall sporting progress, new State Minister for Youth and Sports Aminul Haque must first address the immediate dysfunctions that have hindered the system – and restore basic stability across the country's sports landscape before moving towards long-desired constitutional and structural reforms.

For Aminul, the priorities are clear as the former national football team captain inherits an unsettled sports sector.

Read the full story on The Daily Star website.

Bangladesh's 2028 T20 WC spot confirmed

STAR SPORTS DESK

Bangladesh are confirmed to have a spot in the 2028 T20 World Cup, with their position in the ICC Men's T20I Team Rankings set to secure automatic qualification for the tournament in Australia and New Zealand.

The final list of 12 automatic qualifiers will be determined by the rankings as of March 9, the day after the scheduled final of the 2026 T20 World Cup.

Bangladesh, currently ranked 9th, are poised to claim the final three direct spots alongside Afghanistan (ranked 10th) and Ireland (ranked 12th), with no international fixtures left that could alter their standings before the cut-off date.

After being excluded from the ongoing T20 World Cup, there were concerns whether Bangladesh could secure an automatic qualification spot.

Co-hosts Australia and New Zealand were granted automatic entry for the 2028 edition, with New Zealand also qualifying through their Super Eight finish.

The remaining eight positions in the 20-team event will be filled through regional qualification pathways, based on the competitive strength of each region.



World Cup winning Germany footballer Mesut Ozil attends the inauguration ceremony of the Shaheed Buddhijibi Mortuza Medical Centre of the University of Dhaka yesterday following its renovation. The programme was also attended by Dhaka University Vice-Chancellor Niaz Ahmed Khan, Turkish Ambassador to Bangladesh Ramis Sen, and Bilal Erdogan, son of Turkish President Recep Tayyip Erdogan.

PHOTO: COURTESY

Racism allegations mar Real's win in Lisbon

AGENCIES

Allegations of racial abuse overshadowed Real Madrid's 1-0 victory away to Benfica in the first leg of their Champions League play-off tie yesterday.

The visitors returned to Lisbon less than three weeks after a dramatic 4-2 defeat at the same venue, when goalkeeper Anatoli Trubin struck a stunning late goal to send Benfica into the knockout stages on goal difference and push Real into the play-offs. This time, however, the headlines were dominated by controversy.

Vinicius Junior settled the contest with a superb early second-half strike, arrowing a shot into the top corner. His brilliance quickly gave way to tension. The Brazilian was booked for dancing in front of the home fans, prompting an exchange with Benfica's Argentine winger Gianluca Prestianni.

During the confrontation, Prestianni pulled his shirt over his mouth before appearing to say something to Vinicius, who immediately approached referee Francois Letexier, pointing at Prestianni and seemingly claiming he had been called "mono" – the Spanish word for monkey. Play was halted for several minutes before resuming, with Vinicius subjected to jeers from sections of the home crowd.

The stoppage contributed to 12 minutes of added time but Benfica failed to find an equaliser and now

face an uphill task at the Bernabeu next week.

The match remained spiky throughout. Benfica coach Jose Mourinho was sent off late on for angrily protesting that Vinicius should have received a second yellow card. He will miss the return leg.



PHOTO: FACEBOOK

After the game, Real coach Alvaro Arbeloa told Movistar: "(Racism) is something we have to eradicate from the world of football and if the players don't fix it then this is very complicated."

Vinicius also responded on Instagram. "Racists are, above all, cowards. They need to put their shirts over their mouths to show how weak they are," he wrote,

referencing the gesture made during the clash. "Nothing that happened today should be tolerated in my life or my family's."

Mourinho said Prestianni had denied racially abusing Vinicius and criticised the Brazilian's celebration. "When you score a goal like that,

you celebrate in a respectful way," Mourinho said. "There is something wrong because it happens in every stadium – where Vinicius plays, something happens, always."

Prestianni denied the accusation on Instagram, insisting he had "never" directed racist insults.

UEFA said it would "investigate allegations of discriminatory behaviour."

CAREER OPPORTUNITY

Pubali Bank PLC. a leading largest private commercial bank with 518 online branches, 22 Islamic Banking Windows and 276 Sub-branches with a diverse and motivated workforce is inviting applications from the tech-savvy professionals who are highly qualified, dynamic and experienced to guide the bank forward to its next phase of innovation and growth in software technology in a rapidly evolving digital landscape.

FOR: ICT OPERATION DIVISION

1. Senior Principal Officer (Database Administrator) No. of Posts: 02
2. Senior Officer (Assistant Database Administrator) No. of Posts: 03
3. Senior Officer (Network Engineer) No. of Posts: 02
4. Senior Officer (System Engineer) No. of Posts: 03
5. Officer (Assistant ICT Security Engineer) No. of Posts: 04
6. Officer (Assistant Network Engineer) No. of Posts: 02
7. Junior Officer (Junior Assistant ICT Security Engineer) No. of Posts: 04
8. Junior Officer (Junior Assistant Network Engineer) No. of Posts: 05
9. Junior Officer (BACH, BEFTN & RTGS support Engineer) No. of Posts: 03
10. Junior Officer (Software Support Engineer) No. of Posts: 12
11. Junior Officer (Network/IP Telephone Support Engineer) No. of Posts: 02
12. Junior Officer (System Support Engineer) No. of Posts: 06

FOR: SOFTWARE DEVELOPMENT DIVISION AS SOFTWARE DEVELOPER

1. Senior Principal Officer No. of Posts: 05
2. Principal Officer No. of Posts: 05
3. Senior Officer No. of Posts: 40
4. Officer No. of Posts: 17



For details, please visit <https://www.pubalibangla.com/career>
Interested candidates who fulfill the requirements should apply online by 06:00 p.m. of 16 March, 2026.

- One candidate can apply for one post only.
- Only short-listed candidates will be called for written test/interview. No TA/DA will be applicable for this purpose.
- Management of the Bank reserves the right to reject any or all applications without assigning any reason whatsoever.

HUMAN RESOURCES DIVISION
Head Office, 26 Dilkusha C/A, Dhaka

