

## Standstill over standing committees

Mahmudur Rahman new BCB CEO

Cricket

SPORTS REPORTER

Bangladesh Cricket Board (BCB) on Saturday named Mahmudur Rahman as its new chief executive officer.

Rahman, who served as the head of corporate affairs of British American Tobacco, won the two-way battle against Mainul Haq in a chaotic executive committee meeting that ended without any decision over the formation of the important standing committees at a local hotel yesterday.

Rahman, with the background of a sports journalist, will succeed Zimbabwean Macky Dudhia, who held the hot seat of the board till October 2005.

Apart from the appointment of Rahman, the second EC meeting inside a week failed to make any headway over the formation of standing committees, an issue the board had promised to solve in the meeting.

The meeting turned into a total chaos during the break after two EC

members from districts led verbal assault against BCB general secretary Mahbulul Anam, who did not return when the meeting resumed after the break citing family commitments.

Other guests at the posh hotel in Gulshan were taken aback no sooner Mohiuddin Bulbul, a councillor from Feni, and Mahmud Jamal of Rajshahi stormed out of the meeting only to vent their anger against the BCB high-ups with their vocal cord in full fury.

The ugly episode also prompted joint-secretary Reazuddin Al Mamun to quit the meeting but he stayed back following request from vice-president Shah Nurul Kabir Shaheen, who chaired the meeting in the absence of board president Ali Asghar.

It was learnt that the meeting turned hot after the seven-member scrutiny committee led by Mahbul proposed a draft list of different standing committees for the approval of the house. The protest sparked from the strong representatives of Golam Rasul Molla-led District Forum. It was however, eventually solved when the meeting approved the inclusion of

Shaheen and the controversial Molla in the scrutiny committee. The committee was supposed to sit again last night to finalise a fresh list of standing committees.

"Appointment of Mahmudur Rahman as the CEO was the only outcome in the meeting while other issues were yet to be decided. The nine-member committee will meet tonight to discuss on the standing committees but I can't say when it would be finalised," said Mamun adding that the next meeting will take place sometimes in March.

The meeting also saw vice-president Golam Dastagir Chowdhury pressing for a 'resolution of condemnation' in protest against what he claimed ignoring Dhaka as a venue for the home series against Sri Lanka later this month. Dastagir walked out after the resolution was not adopted in the meeting.

"It's a shame that the National Sports Council (NSC) can make their 24-tier tower on time but failed to complete the renovation works of two stadiums in Dhaka. It

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### Did U Know?

The first player to receive the ball directly from a throw-in, drop-ball, corner kick or goal kick in a football match cannot be offside.



Carlos Alberto Parreira (Brazil football coach)

"I am not worried about (Nelson) Dida's current form. I have full confidence in him and in his quality. He has a lot of experience and is a hard worker."



**ESPN**  
Australia vs South Africa  
11th ODI  
Live at 9:15 am  
English Premier Football League  
Tottenham Hotspur vs Charlton Athletic  
Live at 7:25 pm  
Chelsea vs Liverpool  
Live at 9:55 pm  
**STAR Sports**  
Football Extra  
Live at 9:00 am

### Tigers' camp starts today

SPORTS REPORTER

After a grueling domestic season, the Tigers will resume national duty when the training camp for two Tests and three one-dayers against Sri Lanka begins today at the indoor facilities in Mirpur.

The national selection committee has announced a 20-member preliminary squad on January 28 with talented middle-order batsman Alok Kapali being the only notable inclusion.

Habibul Bashar's men are expected to make light training in first week under the supervision of coach Dav Whatmore and before going to Bogra on February 13 where they will play their first two day-night one-day internationals against Sri Lanka on February 19 and 20.

### SL coming here sans big guns?

CRICINFO, undated

Sri Lanka are poised to appoint a new captain and rest key senior players for their forthcoming tour of Bangladesh which follows the ongoing triangular VB Series in Australia.

According to selection sources, Marvan Atapattu, Chaminda Vaas and Muttiah Muralitharan are expected to be rested as the selectors look to the future.

Sri Lanka's selectors are concerned about player burnout due to the team's intensive schedule in 2006 and want to keep senior players fresh.

Captain Atapattu has been struggling with a back injury and the break will allow him to recover fully for a Test and ODI series against Pakistan starting in March. Muralitharan will miss the one-day leg of the tour so he can see his newly born son for the first time.

The final make-up of the squad and the new captain will be finalised on Monday when the selectors meet. Lalith Kaluperuma, the chairman of selectors, is currently in Australia with the team but will return in time for the meeting.

Sri Lanka are due to depart for Bangladesh on February 17. Most discussion will centre around the appointment of the captain and vice-captain. Kumar

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### 'We do not need extra motivation'

CRICINFO, undated

India captain Rahul Dravid has said that experiments during the one-day series against Pakistan will depend on strategy and indicated that key players will play in their usual positions.

"Shuffling of batting order will depend on strategy and other conditions but the post-mortem of the Test series shows that we will have to play the key players in the positions suited to them," said Dravid.

"It (the ODIs) would be an altogether different ball game from the Tests. We have a young team and we will not make many changes in it. We would mostly be opening with (Virender) Sehwag and (Sachin) Tendulkar. We also have Gautam Gambhir."

He ruled out notions of the team having low morale after the loss in the third Test at Karachi.

"We do not need any extra motivation for the ODIs. That we are playing Pakistan is motivation in itself for the team. Pakistan are playing at home and we know that we are up against a good side. They've done well so far. It will be a nice challenge."

"We didn't do well with the new ball and we've to learn to play well under pressure," said Dravid when asked to comment on Sunil Gavaskar's criticism of India's performance at Karachi. "We also need to have a bowler who can take 20 wickets in Test."



India captain Rahul Dravid practises batting while wicketkeeper Mahendra Dhoni walks by during their training session at the Arbab Niaz Stadium in Peshawar on Saturday.

## Murali in the clear again

Cricket

AFP, Perth

Sri Lankan spinner Muttiah Muralitharan revealed Saturday that he had undergone a new battery of scientific tests to prove to Australian crowds once and for all that he does not "chuck".

The beleaguered Muralitharan called a press conference with experts in human movement from the University of Western Australia (UWA), who supported his claims that his bowling action was legal.

Sitting alongside team manager Michael Tissera and UWA scientists Bruce Elliott and Jacqueline Alderson, Muralitharan said he was baffled why Australian crowds refused to accept him as a legitimate bowler.

"I've gone to tests again... and still people are trying to bully me in a way," he said.

"Every time I bowl they shout it from the grounds, every time I go near the boundary line they say things, that means they are not accepting me."

"Sometimes you feel 'Why do you want to come and play?'" Muralitharan has been taunted by Australian crowds since he was first no-balled seven times during Sri Lanka's Boxing Day Test against Australia in Melbourne in 1995. Since then he has been checked

and cleared four times by the experts at UWA, who carry out testing on behalf of the International Cricket Council.

He said that over the last 11 years he had undergone more testing than almost any bowler, but for some reason he was not respected in Australia.

The problems were not racial, he said, although South Africa's players have complained of racists slurs during their tour here.



MUTTIAH MURALITHARAN

But he said Australia was the only country where the issue arose. "It happens mostly, you could say 99 percent in Australia rather than any other country I have been to," he said.

"Every country... England,

South Africa... everywhere, people respect me. They enjoy my bowling and they enjoy the cricket."

Local media reports last week claimed Muralitharan's action was again under question, noting that he was bowling more than 20 kilometres per hour (12.5 miles per hour) faster than when he was tested by UWA in 2004.

The reports, and ongoing taunts from Australian crowds who constantly chant "no ball", prompted the off-spinner to clear his name.

The latest tests, carried out last Thursday, show that even bowling at faster speeds, both Muralitharan's controversial "doosra" and his offbreak deliveries complied with the rules.

His average elbow extension while bowling the doosra at an average of 86.5 kph was 12.2 degrees, well within the 15 degrees allowed by the ICC under current rules. The average for his offbreak was 12.9 degrees at 95 kph.

"There's nothing more he could do," Elliott said.

"The latest testing shows, irrespective of whether he's bowling a doosra or an off-break, all his deliveries were under 15 degrees, so none were illegal."

The professor said Muralitharan was bowling faster because he had undergone shoulder surgery since 2004.

Sri Lanka are clearly fed up and

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## Tours itinerary of 2006 home series released

SPORTS REPORTER

The Bangladesh Cricket Board (BCB) confirmed yesterday that north-Bengal town Bogra will host its first international matches during Sri Lanka's tour of Bangladesh in February-March.

Sri Lanka arrive in Dhaka on February 17 and begin their tour in Bogra with back-to-back one-day internationals (day-night) at the Shaheed Chandu Stadium, which got the approval of the ICC last month, on February 19 and 20.

The Lankans will return to Bogra to play the second and final Test (March 6-10) after playing the third ODI (February 24) and the first Test (Feb 27-Mar 3) in Chittagong.

Before hosting Australia in their only other home series this year, Bangladesh will play three ODIs against ICC associate members Kenya on March 15, 17 and 20. The venues are yet to be decided. Kenya will also play a warm-up match during their 12-day stay.

The BCB also released the itinerary of Australia's visit with the first Test scheduled to play in Dhaka from April 10-14. However, the matches in Dhaka will only be played if any of the two under-construction venues, Mirpur Stadium and Faullah Stadium, receive ICC's approval.

Australia, who are due in Dhaka on April 6 for a 24-day trip, will play the second Test in Chittagong (April 16-20), the first ODI also in the port city (April 23) and the last two one-dayers in Dhaka on April 26 and 28.

## Aslam destroys Mohammedan

SPORTS REPORTER

A devastating six-wicket haul by Aslam Khan helped bottom-table Brothers Union trounce Mohammedan Sporting Club by nine wickets on the concluding day of the AkTel Premier Cricket League yesterday.

Left-arm seamer Aslam, who shared the new ball with Kazi Rubaiyat in his first league match of the season, captured six-37 in nine overs to shoot out Mohammedan for just 59 runs.

Brothers fielded their second string attack but their rivals, after electing to bat first on a placid wicket at the Faullah Stadium, skittled out in just 18.4 overs. Brothers did not use any other bowler and Rubaiyat bagged 3-22 from his 9.4 overs including three maidens. Aslam was adjudged man-of-the-match.

Neither of the pace duo got the wicket of Mohammedan and national captain Habibul Bashar, who was run out for eight. Moniruzzaman and Monirul were the only batsmen to cross the double-figure with 12 and 17 runs respectively.

Brothers needed only 10.4 overs to race to 63-1 and pick their second win in five Super League games. Rashedul Haque was unbeaten on 38 while his fellow opener Arafat Sunny made 11. Enamul Haque remained unbeaten on four.

It was Mohammedan's third loss which saw one of the favourites finish joint fourth with Bangladesh Biman, who ended their campaign with a commendable seven-wicket victory against runners-up Sonargaon Cricketers at the Dhanmondi Cricket Stadium also yesterday.

National opener Javed Omar, fresh from his century against DOHS in the previous round, made 85 off 123 balls to spearhead Biman to 195-3 in reply to Sonargaon's 194 with more than eight overs to spare. Pakistani batsman Ashraf Ali contributed 65 from 91 balls during a 128-run third wicket stand with man-of-the-match Javed.

Biman's veteran left-arm seamer Anisur Rahman topped and tailed in the Sonargaon innings to finish with 4-33 from 9.2 overs. It was newcomers Sonargaon's first defeat in the Super League as well as the first loss for skipper Mohammad Ashraf in nine games.

### SCORES IN BRIEF

**MOHAMMEDAN:** 59 all out in 18.4 overs (Moniruzzaman 12, Monirul 17, Rubaiyat 3-22, Aslam 6-37).  
**BROTHERS:** 63-1 in 10.4 overs (Rashedul 38 n.o., Arafat 11, extras 10, Talha 1-17).  
Result: Brothers won by nine wickets.

**SONARGAON:** 194 all out in 49.2 overs (Rafiqul 22, Sriram 21, Ashraf 24, Sajjad 48, Salim 22, Rasel 2-38, Anis 4-33, Sharif 1-41, Mosharraf 2-45).  
**BIMAN:** 195-3 in 42.3 overs (Javed 85, Ashraf 65, extras 22, Tapash 1-45, Mahbul 2-31).  
Result: Biman won by seven wickets.

### SUPER SIX TABLE

|           |    |    |   |    |
|-----------|----|----|---|----|
| DOHS      | 16 | 14 | 2 | 28 |
| Sonargaon | 16 | 11 | 5 | 22 |
| Victoria  | 16 | 9  | 7 | 20 |
| MSC       | 16 | 9  | 7 | 18 |
| Biman     | 16 | 9  | 7 | 18 |
| BU        | 16 | 8  | 8 | 16 |

## Bangladesh take on Kiwis

ICC U-19 World Cup kicks off today

Cricket

SPORTS REPORTER

For the first time, Bangladesh are being considered as one of the favourites in the ICC U-19 Cricket World Cup which kicks off in Sri Lanka today.

Although Bangladesh had never managed to reach the Super-League phase in previous four attempts, the side led by one-Test Musfiqur Rahim have all the experience and quality at this level to make an impression.

And the young Tigers will have to maintain their recent form in their opening match against New Zealand today to ease their way to the championship stage from a group involving defending champions Pakistan and minnows Uganda.

In the other matches on the opening day, South Africa face Australia at the Sinhalese Sports Club, Scotland take on hosts Sri Lanka at the R Premadasa Stadium and Zimbabwe are pitted against Ireland at the Nondescripts Cricket Club ground.

The Kiwi-Bangladesh Group-A match will be played at the batting paradise of P Saravanamuttu Stadium, the oldest Test venue in Colombo, and the much-vaunted Bangladesh batting will have to deliver like the two warm-up games.

With hard-hitting opener Tamim Iqbal hitting an explosive hundred in their ten-wicket rout of USA and the middle order shining in a three-run win against Zimbabwe after amassing 265-7, Bangladesh are well poised to give New Zealand a run for their money.

New Zealand have lost both their warm-up games, joining neighbours Australia who suffered defeats to India and Pakistan in the warm-ups. However, New Zealand hold a better record at this level against Bangladesh, whose best finishes are winning the Plate for the bottom-half teams of the competition.

Bangladesh won the Plate in

1998 in South Africa and two years ago at home when they defeated Australia in the Plate final.

But many believe that apart from India and the in-form West Indies, Bangladesh are well equipped to go all the way. In the last few months, the squad has gelled superbly and the morale is up after two tournaments. They lost the first two matches of the

Afro-Asian Cup in India, to finalists India and Sri Lanka, but defeated Zimbabwe, Pakistan and South Africa to end on a high. The form was reflected when they clinched the title in a triangular series at home also involving England and Sri Lanka.

The preparation under Australian coach Allister de Winter has

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Polina Zybura of Russia in action against South Korean Na-Laeha during their opening day engagement of the Dhaka Bank International Junior Tennis Tournament at the National Tennis Complex in Ramna on Saturday.

## Sharapova shocked

Tennis

AFP, Tokyo

Swiss comeback queen Martina Hingis proved she was back to her best form by beating defending champion Maria Sharapova on Saturday for a final berth in the Pan Pacific Open tennis tournament.

The 25-year-old wild card entrant pulled off a stunning 6-3, 6-1 victory for her first-ever win against a top 10 player since she came back in action this season.

Seeking to regain the title she won in 1997, 1999, 2000 and 2002, Hingis will now take on second seed Elena Dementieva, who defeated fellow Russian fourth seed Anastasia Myskina 6-4, 3-6, 6-4.

"I feel definitely very good being in the finals again. I hadn't thought to make it this far...," said four-time champion Hingis.

"Everybody has always been asking me which player you want to play and I always said 'Maria,' because I've never played her and she's a great champion, she has won Wimbledon at such a young age. Hingis had the first break

opportunities leading an advantage point in the second game and another at 30-40 in the sixth game, only to see Sharapova hit a service winner and an ace to save them.

But on her next chance at 30-40 in the eighth game, her backhand shot hit the net cord and landed on the Russian's side to give Hingis a 5-3 lead before serving out for the set with an ace.

Sharapova had to break point on her serve in every game of the second set and when Hingis converted twice to lead 2-1 and then 4-1, it was apparently a Swiss day.

Hingis completed the match by scoring another break in the seventh game on a Sharapova backhand error finishing off the match in 66 minutes without facing a single break point against her.

"She (Hingis) was picking up the ball very early... she used the quickness of the court as the advantage and came up with some good shots," said Sharapova.

"We had a battle until about 3-all, and then she broke me. After that she served two aces. She gained a lot of confidence. That's what happened, one or two points and the other person gains a lot of confidence from that," she added.

## Momentum with Pakistan ahead of one-dayers

PTI, Peshawar

India and Pakistan went into the series on equal terms, but the hosts have got their nose clearly ahead at the end of three Tests.

Just like the previous time when Pakistan visited India, the momentum after the Test-leg has swung decisively in Pakistan's favour and Rahul Dravid's men begin the limited-overs series on the backfoot.

One of the hallmarks of a strong outfit is having more than one player to compete for the same slot in the line up. And that is the case with the current Pakistan team that recovered so spectacularly from the dead to vanquish India by a huge margin in the third and deciding Test in Karachi.

The fact is Pakistan won despite losing the services of its influential and performing captain Inzamamul Haq who was unable to play because of a back pain.

Another person missing from the line up was Shoaib Malik, who had opened the innings with Salman Butt earlier in the series, following the unfortunate death of his father during the Faisalabad Test.

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Martina Hingis of Switzerland celebrates her victory over defending champion Maria Sharapova of Russia in the Pan Pacific Open semifinals in Tokyo on Saturday.

PHOTO: AFP