



## Did U Know?

Mohammad Rafique of Bangladesh took 5/62 in the first innings of the first Test against Australia. It was the seventh time that he has taken five wickets or more in an innings, first against Australia.

## What to WATCH

### BTV & STAR Sports

Bangladesh vs Australia  
1st Test, Day Five  
Live at 10:00 am

### BTV & BTV World

AFC Challenge Cup  
SECOND SEMIFINAL  
Tajikistan vs Kyrgyzstan  
Live at 3:30 pm



### Zinedine Zidane

(French football legend)

"It would be good if I could finish my international career in the French team with a big and beautiful success. I want to become World champion again - that's my goal."



### Bangladesh vs Australia

1st Test, Day Five  
Venue: Fatullah Cricket Stadium  
AFC Challenge Cup  
Second Semifinal  
Tajikistan vs Kyrgyzstan (3.30pm)  
Venue: Bangabandhu National Stadium

## Chanderpaul quits WI captaincy

AFP, Antigua

Shivnarine Chanderpaul announced Wednesday his resignation with immediate effect as captain of the West Indies cricket team.

The 31-year-old, who took over from Brian Lara in March 2005, informed the West Indies Cricket Board (WICB) of his decision in a letter.

"This will give me an opportunity to focus on my batting and other areas of my cricket," he said in a statement.

"I have served my time as the captain and would like to pass the mantle on to another person. I would fully support my replacement, and work towards the good of the team."

"I would like to thank all who worked with me during my tenure as captain, and I am looking forward to continuing my hard work for West Indies cricket."

WICB president Kenneth Gordon thanked Chanderpaul for his services to West Indies cricket and stressed the importance of his role to the team.

A replacement captain will be announced shortly ahead of the seven-match limited overs series against Zimbabwe starting on April 29 with Chanderpaul's fellow Guyanese Ramnaresh Sarwan, the current vice-captain, a possible candidate.

Chanderpaul took over the post after the WICB left seven players out of the squad to tour South Africa, including Lara, because of a sponsorship dispute.

He served as captain from the 2005 home series against South Africa and Pakistan until the recent tour to New Zealand which resulted in a 2-0 defeat.



Bangladesh spinner Mohammad Rafique (C) is exultant after casting Australian batsman Damien Martyn on the fourth day of the first Test against Bangladesh at the Fatullah Cricket Stadium on Wednesday.

## Bashar's worst episode

SPORTS REPORTER



Cricket Photo

Bangladesh captain Habibur Bashar has termed his second innings dismissal as the most "pathetic" episode of his career and admitted that they had yet to learn the second innings trick.

With an overall 282-run lead, Bangladesh ended the third day's play evenly poised when the top-ranked Australia brought the high-flying Tigers down to earth by courtesy of another nightmarish second innings batting performance.

"It could have been a different story after the end of the fourth day's play if we had some more second innings runs on the board. Actually we are yet to get used to with this kind of situation," said Bashar yesterday.

"The way I was run out in the second innings was the most pathetic episode of my whole career. There is no excuse to the way I got out. It gave us a lesson that one mistake can snatch all your initiatives away when playing

against a team like Australia," conceded the Bangladesh skipper.

Meanwhile, the way Bashar was run out rather casually in a crucial stage of the match on the third day was heavily criticised besides Aftab Ahmed's wrong shot selection.

Bashar said that their poor second innings batting was the reason behind their unimpressive show on the field despite putting on a fighting target of 307 runs.

"Actually the guys were upset with the second innings performance. But I think that the match is still not over. If we can pick one or two early wickets on the fifth day things can be different than what you are now seeing," hoped Bashar adding that the behaviour of the pitch surprised him.

Coach Dav Whatmore also did not rule out a chance for Bangladesh after the end of the day's play where Australia will need another 95 runs with six wickets intact.

"It's still evenly poised. What we need to do is get some quick wickets. Getting wickets is the key here and what is important is that we get them early rather than anything else. If the wicket starts playing up then we definitely have a chance.

What was disappointing for me was that the wicket on the fourth day behaved a little too nicely given the circumstances," said Whatmore.

"We obviously wanted the wicket to play a bit more. But as it was it didn't work out for us. But we still had 306 runs on the board and it's still a pretty good fourth innings total to defend, a good position to be in but what was disappointing was that the wicket did not help as much as we had thought," he added.

The Sri Lankan-born Australian however was not frustrated with his boys' performance at all despite a second innings debacle.

"If you told this to me on Sunday that we would be here fighting it out on Thursday then yeah I would say we have done well. We stuck at it which is important. I am pleased and proud of the boys. They have done well and what's also important is that we got some reward out of it. But we have done some really good things in this game definitely but we could have done a bit better especially in the second innings," he explained.

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## A battle of masterminds

### Tajikistan seek revenge against Kyrgyzstan



AFC Challenge Cup

Banglalink

SPORTS REPORTER

It would be a conflict of two old friends and similar style when a high-flying Tajikistan lock horns with neighbours Kyrgyzstan in the second semifinal of the inaugural AFC Challenge Cup at the Bangabandhu National Stadium today.

Kyrgyzstan coach Boris Podkorytov and his Tajikistan counterpart Sharif Nazarov know each other for a long time but when the two masterminds clash in a football match, especially when a place in the final is at stake, they would try every other trick in the book to unlock each others' weaknesses.

Both the coaches have so far shown that they would not stick to a single plan and change the strategy whenever it is necessary.

The two teams are peaking at the right moment and Kyrgyzstan are also on a high after eliminating sentimental favourites Palestine with a stoppage-time goal in the quarterfinal.

On the other hand, Tajikistan, who demolished hosts Bangladesh 6-1 in the quarterfinal attacking down the wings, would be seeking revenge of their solitary goal loss to Kyrgyzstan in the group stage and seal a final berth against Sri Lanka.

Whatever the situation is, both would rely on their midfield to deliver the goods with Tajikistan having more firepower. Apart from the

strikers, their four midfielders -- speedy and very strong in the air -- have also found the opposition net regularly.

Odil Irgashev, who has proved very effective from setpieces and can move lightning fast down the right flank, would be a headache for the rival defence but Kyrgyzstan midfielder Vadim Harchenko can also get the same respect from his opposition because of skilful play and crisp passes.

"Our plan is to go all the way and we are prepared well. It's football and tomorrow, we will try to show our best," said Tajikistan coach Nazarov, who had rested several key players during the group game against their central Asian neighbours.

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## Sourav a forgotten man

AFP, Jamshedpur

The Indian cricket team is not missing former captain Sourav Ganguly as it builds for next year's World Cup, stand-in captain Virender Sehwag said on Tuesday.

Sehwag, asked if the players had forgotten Ganguly's fallout with coach Greg Chappell and his subsequent exit from the team, said: "Of course, we have forgotten that. That was the past. We are now looking forward to the World Cup. Now with so many youngsters in the team we are looking ahead."

Standing in for the rested Rahul Dravid, Sehwag will lead India in the sixth one-dayer against England here on Wednesday with the hosts enjoying an unbeatable 4-0 lead in the seven-match series. The fifth match in Guwahati on Sunday was washed out without a ball being bowled due to bad weather.

Ganguly's future has generated heated debate across cricket-mad India ever since he was sacked as captain and dumped from the team following a public spat with Chappell in September.

The selectors have said there is no place for Ganguly, 33, because

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Australian wicketkeeper Adam Gilchrist plays one on the on-side during his knock of 144 on the third day of the first Test against Bangladesh at the Fatullah Cricket Stadium on Tuesday.

## Bracken, Cullen coming early

SPORTS REPORTER

Cricket Australia announced Wednesday that left-arm fast bowler Nathan Bracken and uncapped spinner Daniel Cullen would join the team ahead of the second Test on concerns that injuries would force changes in the present team.

The two bowlers, who are already part of the one-day team, arrived here late last evening.

Of particular concern to Australia was the fitness of leg-spinner Shane Warne, who retired from play late on day one after injuring his shoulder while throwing from the outfield.

"Our advice from team management in Bangladesh tells us there is one or two contingencies around player fitness that we may need to consider ahead of the second Test," newly appointed chairman of selectors Andrew Hilditch was quoted by AFP.

"Due to the limited timeframe between the two Tests, there is simply not enough time to wait until the end of the first Test before making a decision.

"In this light, we have made the decision to send Nathan and Dan over earlier than expected to give them time to prepare should they be required."

None of the players from the current Test squad is going back, it was also announced.

## Gilchrist rates 'keeping record higher

SPORTS REPORTER

After two days of Bangladeshi dominance, some semblance of normalcy was restored at the Fatullah Cricket Stadium on Tuesday as Australia wrested back the initiative after Bangladesh succumbed to a all-too-familiar second innings collapse late in the day.

The scene was set after a century by Australian vice-captain Adam Gilchrist who had more to smile about after his 350th dismissal and crossing the 5000-runs mark. Gilchrist brought back his side to the game with a fighting knock of 144 that was studded with fourteen fours and six hits over the ropes. He was involved in two crucial partnerships with lower-order batsmen Brett Lee and Jason Gillespie. With Gillespie, he shared a 73-run eighth wicket stand, which took them past the dreaded follow-on mark.

Gilchrist cut loose during his partnership with Stuart Clark, hitting sixes at will off the left-arm spinners. He scored all of the 49 runs in the stand before being last out, caught by Shahadat Rafique.

Looking to capitalise on a 158 runs first innings lead, Bangladesh's innings never got going even after a good opening stand, as they lost wickets at regular intervals, with some avoidable dismissals which played into the world champions' hands.

Captain Habibur Bashar and Aftab Ahmed showed callousness with the skipper running himself out and the young batsmen getting out LBW, trying to slog sweep leg-spinner Stuart Macgill.

"We are getting ourselves back into the game now after being dominated in the first two days", said the prolific batsman and wicketkeeper.

When asked about his landmark filled match, Gilchrist was typically humble in his response, "I'm pretty tired out, but among the landmarks the 350 dismissals brought me the greatest delight. All credit to my bowlers, really," said the man from New South Wales.

## Smith doubtful for first Test

BBC ONLINE

Graeme Smith could be ruled out of South Africa's first Test against New Zealand because of a finger injury.

A decision will be made after he bats in the nets on Thursday, ahead of Saturday's Test at Centurion Park.

The captain injured his left ring finger during practice for the final Test against Australia and was forced to miss that match.

Physio Shane Jabaar said Smith had a 50-50 of playing "he will bat in the nets then we will have a better idea."

Vice-captain Jacques Kallis is scheduled to take over the captaincy should Smith not play, as was the case in the third Test against Australia.



## AKRAM INSWINGER

the world. He adapted very well to the conditions and accumulated runs being the last to get out for 144.

Bangladesh were very quiet on the field, this is the time when the captain should have motivated everybody to be lively and noisy on the opponents. When Bangladesh came in to bat they had a reasonably good start losing the first wicket for 48. Then captain Habibur Bashar ran himself out and it seemed that he was taking a stroll in the park. His casual approach definitely had a big impact on the team. Aftab once again played a slog sweep shot and got himself out. No wonder he is dropped from the side now and then for playing such atrocious shots.

Time and again Bangladeshi batsmen let themselves down batting in the second innings. The coach can teach them but can not play for them, players need to perform in the middle and carry out their

responsibilities. After two days of domination Bangladesh were still on the driving seat with a 281-run lead with five wickets in hand.

On Day Four, the home side lost the remaining five wickets within 40 minutes in addition of only 22 runs showing their immaturity to handle pressure.

Hayden and Hussey adapted well to the condition to give Australia a good start and Ricky Ponting played a magnificent knock without taking any risk, playing mostly on the front foot.

By the end of the day, the balance of the match shifted in favour of the Australians and Bangladesh have 40 percent chance of coming right from behind. If Bangladesh can pick up a couple of wickets tomorrow morning, they will be right back in the game. It is important that the hosts believe in themselves that they can do it and win.

## Sri Lanka in final



AFC Challenge Cup

Banglalink

SPORTS REPORTER

Nepal's AFC Challenge Cup hero Pradeep Maharajan turned a villain when he misfired two penalty kicks in the first semifinal yesterday to ease Sri Lanka's way to the final with a 5-3 victory in the tiebreaker after the regulation period and extra time ended 1-1 at the Chittagong MA Aziz Stadium.

Pradeep, who was inspirational in Nepal's journey to the last four with five goals, shot the ball wide from the spot in the 63rd minute after Sri Lanka goalkeeper Sugath Thiakarathne had hacked down Nepal's Basanta Thapa inside the area.

Nepal created ample chances in

the first half but captain Basanta alone wasted three sitters.

Sri Lankan striker Channa forced a fine save by rival custodian Bikash Malla before Izzadeen's header sailed over the bar also in the first half.

"It was a lucky day for us. Our players have proved that we are one of the best sides in the tournament. They have worked very hard and implemented the strategy on the field properly," said Sri Lanka's happy coach Sampath Perera.

"Pradeep is the best penalty taker for us and he missed twice in a crucial game. It was a bad day for him and our team. Whatever, I am satisfied with their show today," said Nepal coach Shyam Thapa.



Sri Lankan booters celebrate their semifinal victory over Nepal in the AFC Challenge Cup at the MA Aziz Stadium in Chittagong on Wednesday.