



PHOTO: TIGERCRIKET.COM  
Bangladesh speedster Mashrafe Bin Mortuza obliges a young Kenyan fan with his autograph following his record wicket haul at the Gymkhana ground in Nairobi on Tuesday.



## Did U Know?

The first child prodigy of chess was Paul Morphy. He learned the moves at the age of 8 and beat the strongest players in New Orleans at 11.



**Oliver Kahn**  
(Former Germany goalkeeper)  
"I want to win as much as I can with Bayern and winning the Champions League again remains a big aim of mine."



**TEN Sports**  
Sri Lanka v India  
First ODI  
Live from 3:00 pm

## Bell priority is Pakistan

BBC ONLINE, undated

England batsman Ian Bell is refusing to be caught up in hype of the countdown to the Ashes, with the final Test against Pakistan beginning on Thursday.

"We're about to win a big series so we want to concentrate on getting 3-0 against a world-class side in Pakistan."

"It's an important match for us all - it's the last Test match before Australia," he told BBC Five Live.

"The performances in this will be key for Australia but we've got a lot of cricket yet."

Tuesday marked 100 days to go before the first Ashes Test begins in Brisbane on 23 November.

But first England return to The Oval, the ground where last September they completed a series

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## Rising to reputation



SPORTS REPORTER

He was a villain only a week ago for giving away 18 runs in one prodigious over in Zimbabwe that eventually sealed a series defeat for the Tigers. But Mashrafe Bin Mortuza, who is known for winning the battle against career-threatening injuries for more than once, showed his strength of character yet again.

The 22-year-old paceman might still get the flak for the Zimbabwe debacle, but his efforts in Kenya that ended with a flourish at Nairobi's Gymkhana ground on Tuesday would certainly heal some of the wounds.

For a change, the combative tearaway, instead of sharing the new ball, came to bowl at number four in the third and final one-day against the hosts yesterday. And it brought the best out of him. His staggering figures of 6-26 in the allotted 10 overs that shot the Kenyans out for 118 was not only his personal best but also the best

achievement by a Bangladeshi bowler in the abridged version of the game.

His six-wicket burst that completed the whitewash of the East African nation earned him a unique milestone.

The "Narail Express" was the only third Bangladeshi bowler to achieve the feat of taking five or more wickets after Aftab Ahmed's 5-31 against New Zealand in 2004 at Dhaka and Mohammad Rafique's 5-47 against these opponents at the Fatullah Stadium earlier this year.

Mashrafe's Tuesday's effort also capped a fantastic turnaround after he had flown in Kenya a week ago with his reputation as the leading Bangladesh bowler at stake following that unforgettable last-over debacle in the third ODI in Zimbabwe.

Just to show how funny the game is, Mashrafe, who took only five wickets in the first part of the African safari, finished the Kenya series with a staggering 12 wickets including three each in the first two games.

Not only he took the man-of-the-match awards in all three games in Kenya, but had scored an unbeaten 43 in the second game to salvage

the game.

"Yes, the performance provided some sort of consolation for the debacle in Zimbabwe but actually I am looking forward to our next assignment which is the ICC Champions Trophy in India," said Mashrafe at the post-match presentation ceremony.

Stand-in skipper Khaled Mashud also showered praises on his number one bowler.

"He is a very vital player of the team. It was good to see him back to his belligerent best in Kenya after dismal showings in Zimbabwe," said Mashud.

Mashrafe also won the man-of-the-series award.

Coming in as a changed bowler for the second successive match, the right-arm paceman used the overcast conditions brilliantly. The veteran of 41 ODIs, started the carnage by trapping Malhar Patel leg before and also accounted for

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## SL tri-series on track

India take on hosts today in revised itinerary



AGENCIES, Colombo

South Africa's cricket authorities on Tuesday approved a proposal to continue with the limited-overs tri-series in bomb-hit Sri Lanka pending security clearance from the sport's world governing body.

The tri-series hung in the balance after South Africa indicated they wanted to return home following a blast close to their team hotel here on Monday which killed seven people and injured 17.

"We are told the International Cricket Council (ICC) wants to have its own security assessment," South African media manager Gordon Templeton told reporters here.

"After discussions with Sri Lanka Cricket (SLC), we have decided to stay on in Colombo and will take part in the tri-series if the security clearance comes."

"Police and security officials have assured us the highest levels of security in Sri Lanka are now in place to ensure the safety of the Proteas," said cricket affairs general manager Brian Basson.

"We have also been advised by the South African high commissioner in Colombo all indications are that the team and cricket in general do not appear to be targets in the general unrest in Sri Lanka."

"The safety of the team has been paramount in all our deliberations and we have been assured upgraded security levels for the team will achieve this."

The additional security measures include armed guards, traffic-free roads for transport, bulletproof coaches and armoured back-up vehicles.

The ICC has three days to gauge the situation in the Sri Lankan capital

before South Africa's first match in the series against India on Saturday, according to the revised schedule drawn up by the organisers.

The series gets underway on Wednesday with a day-night match

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PHOTO: AFP  
Sri Lanka fast bowler Lasitha Malinga (L) is escorted by a police official as he leaves a practice session at the Sinhalese Sports Club (SSC) in Colombo on Tuesday. The security measures are due to the bomb attack in Colombo on Monday.

## COLOMBO CLIPS

SPORTS REPORTER from Colombo

Bangladeshi shuttlers will go into action this morning as the 10th SA Games badminton competition starts at the Sugathadasa Indoor Stadium today.

Parash and Hannan will play in the singles events while Javed and Mokhtar and the Parash-Sumon pairs are lined up for doubles matches.

Bangladesh have never won a medal in badminton and face the threat of early elimination if they find regional giants India or Pakistan in the first round.

"This is a knockout competition and if we face Indian or Pakistani shuttlers, it would be bad news," said manager and coach Golam Aziz Jilani here yesterday.

Jilani, a former national champion, lamented the fact that the regional rivals have improved more than the Bangladeshi players.

"India, Pakistan and Sri Lanka have always been better than us. But we are now even behind Nepal. We relied on technique in our playing days but now it is all about speed and power. Our players are not built to match this," he said adding that team event is the only hope for Bangladesh in the competition.

### NO TRAINING FOR SHOOTERS

The Bangladesh shooting team's early arrival in a bid to train ahead of the competition went useless as the organisers have yet to complete works at the new shooting range.

The Walisara Navy Shooting Range is the only venue built for the SA Games and Bangladesh shooting team's armourer Ziauddin Ahmed told that the range is yet to be opened.

"We and the Pakistani team have come early but all our shooters have been confined to their rooms," he said.

The shooting team are staying at the Brownish Hotel, an hour's drive from capital Colombo. The competition starts on August 19, a day after the official opening of the eight-team biennial Games.

## U-17 booters bounce back

SPORTS REPORTER

Bangladesh bounced back from their first match defeat to register a 2-1 victory against Laos in the AFF Under-17 Football Championship in Vietnam on Monday.

Towhidul Islam Sabuj put Bangladesh ahead in the 34th minute, but Laos equalised just one minute after the breather.

Sabbir Mahmud then found the net in the 72nd minute to confirm the victory after a 3-1 defeat against hosts Vietnam in the first game.

Bangladesh play their third and last match against Myanmar today.

## Footballer hunt begins Aug 17

SPORTS REPORTER

The under-14 footballer hunt programme of the Canary Wharf youth football development programme will get underway in Khulna on August 17.

Former national coach Golam Sarwar Tipu has been appointed chief coach for the programme.

After a three-day programme in Khulna, it will then move to Bagerhat (August 20-21), Satkhira (August 22-23), Magura (August 24-25), Narail (August 26-27) and Jessore (August 28-29).

## Blackwell eyeing Champs Trophy

BBC ONLINE, undated

Ian Blackwell is hoping to prove his fitness with Somerset and play for England in October's Champions Trophy in India.

Blackwell, who injured his shoulder in May, is set to bat for the county in next week's game with Gloucestershire.

It could be another two weeks before he can bowl but he feels he can make the 14-man squad for India after being named in a provisional 30-man list.

"It is a case of keeping my fingers crossed," the 28-year-old slow left-arm bowler told the Western Daily Press.

"Jamie Dalrymple will probably go as one of the spinners and they will probably pick one other."

Blackwell spoke to chairman of selectors David Graveney three weeks ago, when he was planning a comeback to club cricket in his native Chesterfield.

"That was great news for him because he thought I was out for the season," said the Somerset skipper. "He said, 'Don't rush back

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## Bangladesh await revamped Afghans



AL MUSABBIR SADI from Colombo

Bangladesh's chances of staying in contention for a second football gold medal in the South Asian Games depends on how the young guns of Diego Cruciani react a day after drawing a match against Nepal that they should have won.

Bangladesh were deprived of full three points after conceding a last gasp penalty in their opening match against the Himalayan Kingdom on Monday. But they can still confirm a place in the last four provided that they win today's game against the spirited Afghans, who held mighty India to a goalless draw in one of the three opening day's matches of the 10th SA Games.

Cruciani, the Argentine coach, however thinks it would be a difficult task if the under-23 players reproduce the lacks they had shown against Nepal in a 1-1 draw.

"Afghanistan played better than India. India usually plays good football but their inexperienced side was no match for the Afghans yesterday," Cruciani told reporters at the Trans Asia Hotel lobby.

"They have a dangerous and powerful striker in number 11

(Hafizullah) and both the wing midfielders use the flanks effectively during attacks. The right fullback (Saleem) and midfielder Reza are the men to mark. I've seen them play tidy and organised football against India," said the 43-year-old who watched the Indo-Afghan game.

"They are not fast like Nepal. The way Nepal played full 90 minutes was a surprise to me because we are better than them. They lost 4-0 to the Thailand under-20 team in Bangkok in a preparation match. We almost drew with the same team," he said referring to Bangladesh's 1-0 loss to the Thai youths during a warm-up match on way to Colombo.

"Against the Thais, our team showed better finishing but they were physically below par against Nepal. It was a very bad performance. I am not satisfied with the food here because the menu is for tourists, not for sports persons. Too many items are on the offer at the buffet and the players are taking too much food. I alone cannot control them. I need help from the management to restrict them from eating as much as they can."

Cruciani was so annoyed that he hardly touched dinner Monday night, skipped breakfast yesterday, and refrained from talking with his boys. But his mood improved before the afternoon training session.

"I have had a talk with the captain and vice-captain. I will talk with the

group in the field. During the last half an hour, their had been no link between the attack and defence. The midfield and players upfront were not backing up the defenders, allowing Nepal to go on the offensive. I can't accept this. I want more sacrifice from everybody.

"Some players don't understand me or forget my instructions. We need the spirit and mentality to fight. If we repeat the same performance against Thailand, we can beat Afghanistan. But playing like yesterday, we can forget about winning this tournament," the coach warned.

He also criticised the refereeing. "Not only the penalty was controversial but the referee also ignored his assistants' signal when we should have won freekicks. Our liaison officer Pakir Ali told me that this Sri Lankan referee loves draws. I have seen so many decisions going against us in recent times that I am really getting frustrated," he added.

Captain Feroz Mahmud Titu also admitted that they were not at their best.

"We were 60 to 70 per cent fit. We did individual running but there was lack of coordination. Players did not back up the others, creating gaps in the middle which put pressure on the defence in the last part

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PHOTO: SADI  
Captain Feroz Mahmud Titu (second right) is having a chat with a teammate as the Bangladesh team take a walk after lunch at the team hotel in Colombo yesterday.

## Target damage limitation



NUR UDDIN ALAMGIR, Ctg

The Qatar national football team is both upbeat and cautious ahead of today's match against Bangladesh in the AFC Asia Cup Qualifying Round today at the Chittagong MA Aziz Stadium.

The match will start at 4:00pm and Bangladesh Television (BTV) will broadcast the match live.

Dzematudin Musovic, the Bosnian-born coach of Qatar, showed some respect for his opponent when he said that they are not underestimating the Bangladesh

team. "In football things can happen beyond your imagination anytime and that's why we are taking the match seriously," he said at a pre-match press meet yesterday afternoon.

The Qatar team led by Saajal Aishamari landed at the Chitta-gong Shah Amanat International Airport in the morning. After completion of hotel check in and having a little rest at the Tower Inn Hotel they came straight to the field at around 4.00pm and then took time to tune their physical condition.

The Qatar coach was however dismayed at the quality of the stadium and pitch and expressed his

dissatisfaction terming it a substandard ground.

Team captain Aishamari, a defender in the right back position, hoped to win the match comfortably but remained tight-lipped when asked by the media people to speak of the stronger points of his team.

"I don't like to reveal any technical points or the strong sides of my team before the match," was his cool reply.

"Nevertheless, we would not frustrate you on the field and I promise to present a good match," he assured the Chittagong-crowd.

He also termed Bangladesh as a good team.

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PHOTO: STAR  
The visiting Qatar football team members train for the first time at the MA Aziz Stadium in Chittagong on Tuesday.