

## Clubs return to action today

### Cricket

**SPORTS REPORTER**

The Bangladesh Cricket Board yesterday relieved opener Shahriar Hossain from the national pool, a day before the inter-club cricketers' transfer gets underway at the Bangabandhu National Stadium.

Shahriar, who last played for the country on the tour of West Indies in May-June, was bracketed in the 19-member national pool for the Premier League. But the dejected right-hander from Narayanganj announced his retirement in a bid to win a lucrative contract outside the pool.

The return of the big clubs in the transfer this year after being at loggerhead with the Cricket Committee of Dhaka Metropolitan (CCDM) over the start of the Premier League last season, has been welcomed by the cricketers, who suffered financially because of the dispute.

The transfer commences at 11 am and will continue until 3 pm for the next three days.

Shahriar's release gives him a chance to bargain like the other cricketers after missing an entire season. He is expected to join Mohammedan, who are keen to form a strong team containing the quota of three pool players - Bangladesh skipper Habibul Bashar, left-arm spinner Abdur Razzak and exciting opening batsman Nafees Iqbal.

According to the new system, one team can recruit maximum three players from the now 18-member pool: one batsman, one batsman or an all-rounder and a

bowler.

However Mohammedan is set to release their other pool members Javed Omar, Aftab Ahmed and Tapash Baisya, all linked to join arch-rival Abahani. But it was unclear where champion left-arm Mohammad Rafique would be headed.

The popular Motijheel club, who failed to win a league title for the last five years, are also set to sign big names like former national captain Minhazul Abedin and Narail quick Mashrafe bin Mortuza. Besides, they have also sought the service of left-arm pacer Manjurul Islam, portly right-hander Mazharul Haque and young wicketkeeper Dhiman Ghosh to form a competitive unit.

Naimur Rahman is also expected to leave Mohammedan and return to his former club Abahani, who for the first time in 16 years are set to launch a campaign without their batting stalwart Akram Khan.

The popular Chittagong right-hander, who has never been a part of the transfer after joining Abahani in the late 80s, has decided to switch to newcomers DOHS along side pool players Faisal Hossain, Hannan Sarkar and Nazmul Hossain.

DOHS has also targeted experienced pacer Hasibul Hossain, off-spinner Fahim Muntasir, out of favour national opener Al Shahriar, veteran left-arm spinner Enamul Haque Moni, young pacer Shahadat Hossain and young wicketkeeper Mushfiqur Rahim in an effort to make their first season in the most colourful domestic competition impressive.

Two-time champions Victoria

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FLYING LANKAN: Sri Lanka spinner Rangana Herath, who took a career-best 4-64, is airborne while taking a catch off his own bowling to dismiss Pakistan's Shoaib Malik on the fifth and final day of the first Test at Faisalabad yesterday.

PHOTO: AFP

## Easy wins for Usha, Sonali

### SPORTS REPORTER

Usha Kriya Chakra registered their second consecutive victory in the Club Cup hockey tournament when the local giants handed Wari Club a 6-1 defeat at the Maulana Bhasani National Stadium yesterday.

The winners, who launched their campaign in the curtain-raiser of domestic season with a 5-2 victory against Sadharan Bima, led the first half 2-1 as Muksed and Shuvro netted one field goal each before Rajib Hossain reduced the margin.

Striker Prince increased the gap after the breather with a field goal while Shuvro came up with twin strikes to take the match away from their lowly opponents.

Shuva sealed the victory with another field goal.

In the day's other match, Sonali Bank beat Sadharan Bima 3-1 at the same venue. The match was locked 1-1 in the first half. Sumon put the bankers ahead from a penalty stroke but Shaheen Shah equalised from a penalty corner.

Sohel scored twice after the break to ensure three points for Bank.

## Rajshahi run goal riot

### SPORTS REPORTER

Sajjadur Rahman scored four goals as Rajshahi recorded an easy 6-1 victory against Jamalpur in the final round of the JFA Cup Under-16 football competition at the Birshreshtha Mostafa Kamal Stadium in Kamalapur yesterday.

After a barren first-half, Muklesur Rahman and Abdul Hannan struck in the space of five minutes before Sajjadur slammed four goals at one stretch.

Chayan Mahmud scored the consolation goal for the losers.

In the first match, Barguna managed a hard-fought 1-0 victory over Narayanganj at the same venue with Jasimuddin Rana slamming the 68th minute winner.

## Toss vital for 2nd Test

### CU CORRESPONDENT

Bangladesh certainly had missed a golden opportunity to put pressure on New Zealand despite winning a good toss in the first Test in Dhaka last week. But the Tigers might get a second chance to make a turnaround here at the MA Aziz Stadium provided that skipper Khaled Mashud calls the coin correctly on Tuesday and his top-order for a change put up a decent total on the board.

"The team that wins the toss and chooses to bat first might establish control over match as the first two days will promise a lot of runs," observed Khokon, the curator of MA

Aziz Stadium, ahead of the second Test starting on October 26.

"Even the pace bowlers would not be able to get any assistance during this time. The wicket will only take a little turn on the third day while the fourth and fifth day will definitely belong to the bowlers," said Khokon adding that this wicket would be similar in nature like the one in Dhaka.

"Maybe the only difference will be a slight change in bounce," said the curator.

Bangladesh suffered an embarrassing innings and 99-run defeat in the first Test against the Black Caps. The match turned into a no-contest after Dav Whatmore's boys lost three wickets on the first morning and eventually were bowled out for 177. But observes feel that had the

batters applied themselves then a score of 250 to 300 was possible. It would have made the game interesting because Stephen Fleming's side would have had to bat on the third and fourth day in difficult conditions.

Meanwhile, the Tigers spent four hours in the nets at the country's second Test venue.

As the players trained all eyes however were on two local boys of the port city - Nafees Iqbal and Aftab Ahmed.

Nafees, who narrowly missed a half-century on debut in the second innings of the Dhaka Test, said that he was keen to make up for the mistake.

"I know this wicket better than anybody else and I want to leave my

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## Rana remains in the dark

### SPORTS REPORTER

The withdrawal of Mahbub Ehsan Rana's life ban still hung in the balance as the executive committee of Bangladesh Hockey Federation (BHF) did not discuss the issue in its yesterday's meeting.

BHF general secretary Shamsul Bari had earlier informed that it was just a matter of time to lift the ban on the talented Abahani midfielder after its president Air Vice-Marshal Fakhrul Azam sympathised with him.

But the BHF president excluded the topic from its agenda at the start of the meeting and told the other members to concentrate only on first two issues - the financial matter of recently concluded Under-21 Challenge Cup and the proposed Asian Club Cup meet.

After the meeting, the BHF secretary came up mealy-mouthed about the issue of Rana.

"I can only say that the situation has somehow become cloudy," Bari said without elaborating. The veteran organiser, however, informed that there was hardly any chance to withdraw his suspension before this year's Premier League.

But the surprise presence of BHF vice-president Monir Ahmed, the chairman of Mohammedan Sporting Club's hockey committee, in the meeting might have had something to do with the delay.

Monir, who was recently elected Bangladesh Football Federation (BFF) vice-president, had tendered his resignation from the body last year and did not return to the federation until yesterday although his resignation was not accepted.

The BHF imposed a lifetime ban on Rana following his unruly act during last year's Club Cup final between archrivals Abahani and Mohammedan.

## Herath hastens SL win

### Cricket

AFP, Faisalabad

Sri Lanka trounced Pakistan by 201 runs in the first Test here on Sunday to take a 1-0 lead in the two-match series.

Pakistan were bowled out for 216 in their second innings with left-arm spinner Rangana Herath taking a career-best 4-64.

Herath, whose previous best was 4-92 against Australia in Colombo earlier this year, took four of the six wickets that tumbled on the fifth and final day in an unchanged spell of 18.2 overs.

After resuming at 114-4 Shoaib Malik and Yousuf Youhana frustrated the tourists with a stand of 63 runs for the fifth wicket.

But Sri Lanka hit back by taking three wickets off 14 deliveries in the space of just five runs, to leave Pakistan 170-7 at lunch.

Youhana and Malik survived the

first hour as the bowlers pressed hard for an early breakthrough.

Youhana pulled Herath for two consecutive boundaries but the left-armer finally trapped him leg before wicket. Youhana batted 150 minutes to patiently build his 44.

Herath then removed Abdul Razaq with the first ball of his next over for nought. Moin Khan averted a hat-trick only to edge Chaminda Vaas to wicketkeeper Romesh Kaluwitharan in the next over after making one.

Malik added an invaluable 28 runs for the eighth wicket with Mohammad Sami who was run out soon after lunch for 6.

Malik then decided to hit out, taking three boundaries off Dilhara Fernando to reach his maiden half-century with ten boundaries.

But a slow delivery from Herath had Malik caught and bowled for 59 and then stumped Shoaib Akhtar for 12 as Sri Lanka scored a thumping victory.

Sri Lanka had set Pakistan a

world record-equalling 418 to win the Test after their star batsman Sanath Jayasuriya played an epic innings of 253 to help them post a second innings score of 438 on Saturday.

This becomes Sri Lanka's biggest win over Pakistan in terms of runs, beating their 144-run win against Pakistan at Sialkot in 1995.

The second and final Test starts in Karachi on October 28.

### SCOREBOARD

Final scoreboard on the fifth and final day of the first Test between Pakistan and Sri Lanka at the Iqbal Stadium in Faisalabad on Sunday:

**SRI LANKA:** First innings 243 (Samaraweera 100; Akhtar 5-60, Sami 4-71)

**PAKISTAN:** First innings 264 (Hameed 58, Malik 48; Herath 3-68)

**SRI LANKA:** Second innings 438 (Jayasuriya 253, Sangakkara 59, Jayawardene 57; Kaneria 4-117)

**PAKISTAN:** Second innings (over

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**Ronaldo**  
(Real Madrid's Brazilian super star)  
"My future is at Real, where I am very happy. But if a day came when I had to leave, the first team I would think of would be Inter."

## What to WATCH

**ESPN**  
Sportscentre  
Live at 8:30 pm  
English Premier Football League  
Man United vs Arsenal  
Repeat at 9:30 pm

**TEN Sports**  
Serie A  
AC Milan vs Inter Milan  
Repeat at 10:00 am

**STAR Sports**  
Primera Liga  
Barcelona vs Osasuna  
Same Day Delay at 10:30 am  
Sportsline  
Live at 8:00 pm

## Men progress, women fail

### SPORTS REPORTER

Bangladesh men's team continued with their impressive run in the 36th Chess Olympiad when they beat Tajikistan 2.5-1.5 in the eighth round at Calvia in Spain on Saturday.

International Master Reefat bin Sattar enabled Bangladesh to win the round as he beat IM Suhrob Khamdamov. Another IM Abdullah Al Rakib split points with IM Isaev Jamsheed, IM Enamul Hossain Rajib drew with Khouseonov Rashid and FIDE Master Sheikh Nasir Ahmed shared points with Negmat Ziyaev.

But the women's team lost their boards against Uzbekistan 0.5-2.5.

With the outcome, Bangladesh men's team improved their tally to 17 points while women's team remained stuck to 9.5 points.



Chittagong boys Nafees Iqbal (L) and Aftab Ahmed during a training session of the Bangladesh national cricket team at the MA Aziz Stadium yesterday. It is expected that the two will make the playing eleven.

PHOTO: STAR

## End of road for Moin?

### Cricket

REUTERS/AFP, Faisalabad

Pakistan captain Inzamamul Haq signalled the end of the road for wicketkeeper Moin Khan on Sunday after his team lost the first Test to Sri Lanka by 201 runs.

Inzamam, previously criticised in the national press for shielding Moin, said that a new wicketkeeper should be given a chance in the second Test at Karachi.

"Moin's performance in his last 15 to 16 one-day internationals and last few Test matches has not been

up to the mark. We have to try out a new wicketkeeper now," he said.

Moin made his comeback against South Africa in October last year after being ignored by the national selectors for more than two years but failed to deliver on his return.

The 33-year-old has played 69 Tests and 219 one-dayers but has scored just one century and one half-century in his last 10 Tests and accumulated 167 runs in his last 20 one-day internationals.

Pakistan have included wicketkeeper Zulqarnain Haider in their Test squad although they used batsman Younis Khan as a wicketkeeper during the recent

triangular series with Sri Lanka and Zimbabwe when Moin missed two games due to illness.

Moin was sacked as captain in April 2001 after a tour of New Zealand but came back into favour shortly after former captain and wicketkeeper Rashid Latif walked out following differences with the selectors.

Inzamam also blamed his batsmen in general for the huge defeat and said there could be other changes for the final match in the two-Test series which starts in Karachi on Thursday.

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## Tendulkar brings back business

### CRICINFO, undated

Sachin Tendulkar's significance to Indian cricket comes not only from the manner in which he plays, but from the interest he arouses in fans.

As soon as he announced that he was fit and intended to play in the third Test against Australia at Nagpur, ticket sales at the venue shot up dramatically.

"Sales suddenly tripled on Saturday," said an official of the Vidarbha Cricket Association, speaking to the Times of India.

"While the maximum collection was 3 lakh rupees two days ago, today it fetched 9 lakh."

REUTERS/AFP, Nagpur



AUSTRALIA INDIA 2004-05

31, will make his comeback after missing the first two Tests with an elbow injury. Australia lead the four-Test series 1-0.

"The elbow is not going to be normal in the near future," he told reporters on Sunday. "There is some stiffness. The injury can't get better overnight. Once I spend time in the middle the muscle will relax."

"After 115 Tests, you've to be prepared to overcome all obstacles. I'm mentally prepared. I've played enough against Australia. I know what to expect."

Tendulkar, who has been out of action with tennis elbow since the Asia Cup final in August, passed a fitness Test in Mumbai on Saturday.

"There is no pain, but the elbow is obviously not a 100 per cent," he said. "When you get scraped, for example, there is a scab after the blood dries and it takes time to go no matter what you do."

Tendulkar has scored 9,470 Test runs, 1,789 of them against Australia at an average of 57.7. He is just one behind Sunil Gavaskar's

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PHOTO: AFP



SEE YOU SOON: Master Indian batsman Sachin Tendulkar, who is returning for the third Test against Australia, bats in the nets during a practice session at the Vidarbha Cricket Association ground in Nagpur yesterday.