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# Star SPORT

DHAKA TUESDAY DECEMBER 7, 2004, E-MAIL: dssports@gononet.com

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## Waiting for India to come

Cricket

SPORTS REPORTER

Everything suddenly turned smoky at the Bangabandhu National Stadium on Monday, three days before the premier venue of the country hosts the first Test between Bangladesh and India.

Cricket fans were abuzz with anticipation to catch a glimpse of Sourav Ganguly, Sachin Tendulkar, Rahul Dravid, new sensation Irfan Pathan and Anil Kumble, who is only a wicket away from becoming the highest Indian wicket-taker in the five-day contest.

But a letter from an unknown group came as a shock for the whole nation in a month that is recalled for emotional reasons --- victory in Bangladesh's ninth-month War of Liberation in 1971 where India played a significant role.

India was also sporting enough to come to Dhaka in November 2000 and play the Inaugural Test. But the much awaited first full series between the two neighbours that includes two Tests and three one-day internationals has virtually come to a standstill because of some apparent pranks.

Bangladesh has played a number of Tests and one-dayers at home and the cricket loving people of the land have always greeted the touring teams with warm hospitality without creating a single incident on or off the field.

However this unfortunate 'letter' has cast an evil shadow that

cricketers and fans alike cannot accept.

"We are not ready to see an unnatural death of the series on the basis of an asinine threat. We have waited a long time to see the superstars from across the border," said 25-year-old Jafar Ullah, who came to the Big Bowl to watch the national cricketers train.

Coach Dav Whatmore looked disturbed with the sudden twist of events but the Australian refused to make any comment saying, "It's an administrative matter but we are eager to know the development."

"I never played India before, so I am excited before the series. I have a dream to take the wicket of Rahul Dravid in Test. He is a great batsman," said Mashrafe-bin-Mortuza, the Narail tearaway who is set to make an international return after one year due to injury.

Meanwhile, the ESPN-Star Sports, who will provide the live coverage of the series, has already started putting their equipment in place. Two umpires West Indian Jeremy Lloyd and Pakistani Aleem Dar and match referee Chris Broad of England are also in the city.

The ticket and seating committee of Bangladesh Cricket Board (BCB), in a press briefing yesterday, however said that the sale of gallery tickets, which were expected to be available through ONE Bank, might be pushed back by a day in light of what has happened.

But everything will fall into place once Sourav's men are cleared to come to Dhaka.



EVERYTHING BUT THE INDIANS IS READY: Bangladesh cricketers warm up prior to a practice session at the Bangabandhu National Stadium yesterday. Sourav Ganguly's India are scheduled to arrive here tomorrow to play in a full Test and ODI series.

## Hockey League postponed

SPORTS REPORTER

The Green Delta Premier Division Hockey League has been postponed for a couple of days following Mariner Youngs Club's demand to bring foreign umpires.

The league committee, which had promised to bring officials from abroad at the start of the ten-team fray, failed to keep its word and was forced to stop the league after Mariner protested against poor refereeing by local officials during their third-round tie against Abahani.

The committee took the decision on Sunday night. Meanwhile, Indian umpire HS Sakhee and Pakistani Zulfiqar Haider are expected to arrive in the city today. The league will resume tomorrow provided the duo arrives in time.

## Clean sweep for Biman in badminton

SPORTS REPORTER

Bangladesh Biman won both the men's and women's titles of the Bashundhara First Division Badminton League with a day left in the competition.

Biman men won their 11th and final round match when they blanked Ahban Badminton Club 5-0 at the Woodenfloer Gymnasium yesterday.

They beat Surjo Tarun by the same margin in the previous day.

GrameenPhone finished runners-up on their debut with ten wins when they edged Mohammedan Sporting Club 3-2 on Sunday.

Mohammedan finished third with nine wins.

Meanwhile, Biman's women's team also wrapped up the show when they beat Surjo Tarun 3-0 in their last match.



## Did U Know?

After losing seven matches in a row against Australia since January 29, 2002, the Kwis recorded their first one-day international win over their Trans-Tasman rivals on Sunday. Overall, this is their 26th in 91 matches against Australia -- 16th in 47 matches in Australia.

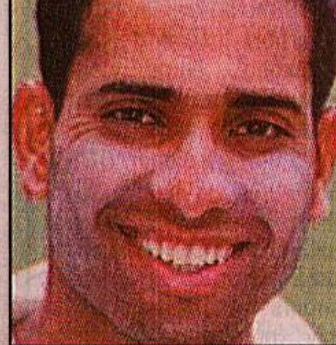


## What to Watch

- TEN Sports**  
Champions Trophy Hockey  
Spain v New Zealand  
Live at 10.45 am  
Netherlands v Pakistan  
Live at 1.30 pm  
India v Germany  
Live at 4 pm
- ESPN**  
UEFA Champions League  
Arsenal v Rosenborg  
Live at 1.30 am (Wedne. Jay)
- STAR Sports**  
Sportline  
Live at 8 pm  
Uefa Champions League  
Valencia v Werder Bremen  
Live at 1.30 am (Wednesday)



## Talk Turkey



**VVS Laxman**  
(Indian batsman)  
"Why should I be rested? I never asked for any rest. I'm fully fit and as keen as anyone else. I'm very hurt with this treatment. Why do I deserve this?"  
On being omitted from the ignored for the one-day series against Bangladesh.

## Hundred percent Agrani Naimur continues to star

SPORTS REPORTER



Newcomers Agrani Bank maintained their impressive unbeaten run in the Green Delta Premier Cricket League to go joint atop with Mohammedan Sporting Club at the end of the third round of matches yesterday. But Bangladesh Biman tasted their first defeat to slip from the top.

Half-centuries by opener Nazimuddin and Pakistani Zahoor Elahi inspired Old DOHS to a comprehensive 6-wicket win over Biman while Agrani's tail held its nerve to

record a three-wicket victory over Indira Road.

Meanwhile, Naimur Rahman once again inspired Abahani as the Dhanmondi giants notched their second consecutive.

### DOHS-BIMAN

Having won their first two matches against formidable opponents, Biman finally came unstuck against the third biggest Old DOHS at the Fatullah Cricket Stadium.

DOHS' in-form pace duo Hasibul Hossain and Nazmul Hossain made early inroads as Biman lost Rashedul Haque (3), Sajjad Ahmed and Mosharrif Hossain Rubel (0) on the same score of 12.

Left-arm spinner Enamul Haque (Jr) joined the party later as the national airliners ran into deep trouble at 81-8 which included the dismissals of Bangladesh star Mohammad Ashraful (1 off 14 balls) and Mohammad Sharif (3), whose batting exploits had boosted Biman in previous matches.

However, skipper Sanwar Hossain's patient 107-ball 57 and tallender Syed Russell's rapid 61 off 68 balls helped them reach exactly 200. The two added 101 for the ninth wicket before Sanwar was run out by his DOHS counterpart Akram Khan in the 46th over.

Sanwar had hit only two boundaries but left-handed Russell struck

SEE PAGE 14 COL 4

## Leonine further consolidate

SPORTS REPORTER

Leonine Chess Club stayed on course for clinching the Dutch-Bangla First Division Chess League title when the last year's runners-up routed Friends Chess Power 4-0 at the Chess Federation hall room yesterday.

After 12 rounds, Leonine stretched their collection to 45.5 points, 4.5 points clear from nearest contenders Muktijoddha Sangsad. Holders Bangladesh Biman are still third with 37.5 points.

Local Grand Master Niaz Murshed opted out of the 12th round game but his replacement Rafiqul Islam beat Din Mohammad Swapan easily after their foreign trio had won their respective matches. GMDao Thein Hai beat Mohammad Ali, GM Iuldashev Saidali defeated Delwar Hossain and GM Nguyen Anh Dung checkmated Alimul Haque Kazal for the league leaders.

Muktijoddha beat Dhaka University 4-0 with GM Ni Hua beating Uten, GM Igor Rausis defeating Hasan Imam, FM Khondokar Aminul Islam winning over Ariful Islam and FM Abu Sufian Shakil outplaying Sharmik Akand.

Biman's poor run continued as they managed a narrow 2.5-1.5 victory against Star Vision. GM Ziaur Rahman beat Hafizul Islam Chapal.

SEE PAGE 14 COL 1

## Vaughan focuses on SA

Cricket

AFP, Bulawayo

England captain Michael Vaughan led his country to a 4-0 clean-sweep against Zimbabwe on Sunday and then set his sights on repeating the magic against South Africa.

Vaughan, finished on a personal high by scoring a one-day career-best 90 as England won by 74 runs in Bulawayo on Sunday but said he was "happy to be leaving" for the "exciting" of England's schedule.

But while happy to be leaving behind the controversy of Zimbabwe, the England skipper knows that a much stiffer assignment awaits him in South Africa and then next summer when England will attempt to regain the Ashes.

"I realise I need to improve my one-day stats. Hopefully I can take this form into Test series in South Africa and the seven one-day games," said Vaughan.

"It was a convincing series win. The boys did well in different situations."

He also praised the efforts made by the youngsters in his squad who were given their chance after first choice players Marcus Trescothick and Andrew Flintoff were rested and pace bowler Steve Harmison refused to tour.

"It was a tour where we gave opportunity to a few players and they have come in and done a very good job," said Vaughan.

"It makes the selectors' job a little bit harder because we are producing a good pool of players."

Zimbabwe captain Tatenda Taibu, with his team racked by selection controversies, knows his young, inexperienced team have a lot to learn.

"We are not quite there yet. We need a bit of experience and the more games we play the better we become," said the wicketkeeper.

"We are just getting individual performances on the day but we have to play good cricket for 100 overs and we have to get it together in a game and we really haven't done that and really have to work on that."

"I'm very lucky that I have a bunch of young guys who really want to play for their country and give their best."

England only went to Zimbabwe under duress with the threat of a heavy fine and suspension by the International Cricket Council (ICC) overcoming political and moral concerns they had about the regime of Zimbabwe President Robert Mugabe.

But there was no disguising Yorkshire batsman Vaughan's

SEE PAGE 14 COL 5



A smiling England captain Michael Vaughan shows off the man-of-the-series trophy after fourth and final one-day international against Zimbabwe in Bulawayo on Sunday.

## Spanish delight

AFP, Seville

Spain showed themselves to be the undisputed kings of clay on Sunday in a record-breaking 3-2 Davis Cup final triumph over the United States.

Carlos Moya was the hero of the hour, the man who missed his country's only previous win in the 104-year-old competition in 2000 with back trouble, securing the all-important third point with a 6-2, 7-6, 7-6 victory over Andy Roddick.

Roddick, so near and yet so far in a season spent largely in the shadow of Swiss star Roger Federer, this time had to bow to Moya's superior claycourt skills and burning desire to make up for four years ago.

The 22-year-old American also had to doff his cap to Rafael Nadal, the 18-year-old Spanish hurricane, who blitzed him in four sets on the opening day after Moya had first easily seen off Marty Fish.

Nadal's participation made him the youngest ever champion at the age of 18 and 195 days and showed Spain's extraordinary strength in depth.

The youngster from Mallorca, the Balearic island from which Moya also hails, made it three key wins in as many ties in his debut season with his success at Roddick's



TOAST OF SPAIN: Members of the Spanish Davis Cup team toss their mate Carlos Moya in the air after the world number five won the third singles match of the final against the United States in Seville on Sunday.

## Pakistan's chance to test Aussie Test bat

Cricket

AFP, Perth

The Pakistan pace duo of Shoaib Akhtar and Mohammad Sami will get their first crack at an Australian Test batsman so far on this tour when they take on a Chairman's XI captained by Justin Langer in a limited-overs match here on Tuesday.

The match, to be played at Perth's Lilac Hill ground, is a traditional fixture for touring teams in Australia and is part of the tourists' lead-up to the first Test at the WACA ground starting December 16.

Both bowlers showed early form against a Western Australian second XI in a warm-up match last week, although Pakistan eventually lost the three-day fixture by 10 runs after a dismal second-innings batting

collapse. Langer, who opens the batting for Australia with Matthew Hayden and is sure to be taking notes on the Pakistanis, won't have quite the same firepower at his disposal in the 50-overs-a-side match for the national chairman's side.

Instead he will make use of retired Australian Test bowlers Geoff Lawson, now a radio commentator, and Tony Dodemaide, now in cricket administration, in a side made up largely of up-and-coming local youngsters.

Pakistan captain Inzamamul Haq, who missed the game against the WA second XI with bronchitis, is expected to skipper the side on Tuesday.

Big-hitting has been encouraged, with prizes on offer for players who hit a designated sign, smash a six onto or over the Player's Pavilion or belt a ball into the nearby Swan

River. New South Wales all-rounder Dominic Thorneley, who made an unbeaten 261 against Western Australia in the Sheffield Shield domestic competition earlier this season, is one of only two players not from the host state -- with Lawson being the other.

Several members of the Western Australian team which will take on Pakistan at the WACA ground in a

SEE PAGE 14 COL 1

**DAY'S EVENT**  
Dutch-Bangla Chess League (3:00 pm)