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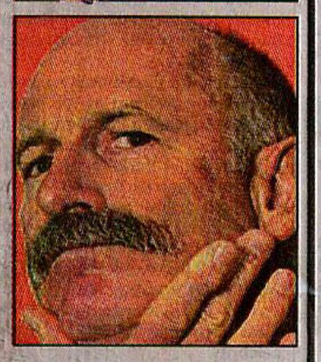
Did U Know?

Rajin Saleh became the first batsman from Bangladesh to get a pair in a Test match against India. Overall, he is the eleventh batsman from Bangladesh to get a pair.



Dennis Lillee
(Australian fast bowling great)
"I think that the Pakistanis are always a team that save their best until it's an interesting game. I don't see it as something they do on purpose -- you can't take too much notice of their training and lead-up games."

ESPN
English Premier League Highlights
Repeat at 5.30 pm
Football Focus
Live at 6.30 pm
Sportscentre
Live at 8.30 pm

STAR Sports
English Premier League
Arsenal v Chelsea
Taped at 12.30 pm
Sportsline
Live at 8 pm

Green Delta Premier Div Cricket
City Club v Mohammedan SC (FCS)
Abahani v Agrani Bank (BKSP)
Bangladesh Biman v Young Pegasus (DCS)
Green Delta Premier Div Hockey
Manner Youngs v Azad SC (1.15 pm)
Dhaka Railway v S Biman (3 pm)
Maan Bangladesh GM Chess

Enamul to lead HP squad

SPORTS REPORTER

Test cap Enamul Haque (Jr) will lead the CB High Performance Squad against Sri Lankan Cricket Academy in a four-day match starting at the Fatullah Cricket Stadium from December 16.

Opening batsman Shahriar Nafees Ahmed will be the left-arm spinner's deputy in the 14-member team that also includes Test discards Alok Kapali and Tareq Aziz.

The Sri Lankans, who are expected to arrive in Dhaka today, will also play a number of limited-overs matches against the HP Squad.

SQUAD
Enamul Haque (Jr), Nafees Ahmed, Alok Kapali, Tareq Aziz, Tushar Imran, Saqib Al Hassan, Shamsur Rahman, Dhiman Ghosh, Nazmus Sadat, Mushfiqur Rahim, Ashim Chowdhury, Shahadat Hossain Razib, SK Russell and Mahmudullah Riyad.

Dav fights for Tigers

Cricket

SPORTS REPORTER

One does not have to teach Bangladeshi fans what frustration is. It has been the one unmistakable feature that has followed the Tigers' time in Test cricket and coach Dav Whatmore has also swallowed a lot of it since taking over one and a half years ago.

It was another common tale of feeling disappointed after Bangladesh lost by an innings and 140 runs to India in the first Test with nearly two full days to spare but Whatmore largely kept it inside him and sought support from everyone to carry the team through these troubled times.

"I can feel your frustration. Yes, the whole country is frustrated I can feel it. But I plead with everyone, please have a little more patience," the Australian said during the post-match briefing yesterday.

Whatmore also rallied behind his charges.

"The boys aren't doing this intentionally. They are working as hard as they can. As long as you are showing some improvement, you give yourself a chance. Don't forget the opposition is pretty good, who ever we play.

"You must remember that not long so ago we came within a whisker of winning in Multan," said Whatmore before taking the skeptic and cynical international media and critics, who are suggesting that Bangladeshi cricketers were making a mockery of Test cricket, head on.

"That is absolute rubbish and are very dangerous comments. I think that is a very shallow view. That is one that comes from looking at the scoreboard. You need to understand the game and understand the situation that Bangladesh are in globally," said a visibly irate Whatmore while replying to an Indian journalist.

He also totally disagreed with those who thought that Bangladesh lacked talent to compete at the highest level.

"I honestly believe that the talent in this country is the same sort of talent that you get anywhere in the subcontinent. What we need is tougher competition to make the right decision under pressure. It's easy for you to say that the technique is not right but that's not correct."

But Whatmore acknowledged that things were not going well enough.

"We need to try and not hand the advantage to the opposition early. We need to do a bit of fighting to keep it even for a while. Now what's happening is that we are giving away the advantage early and the opposition is good. We can't really afford to do that."

The coach also thought it was a time for proper reflection.

"You've got to forget the result really. We can't afford to be thinking, oh God, we've lost the game. What we are really trying to dig in and tease out is the actual reasons why, rather than the fact that we lost the match. We need to look at the attributions, the actual reasons why we are not doing well."

Ganguly remains focused

Cricket

SPORTS REPORTER

Despite an easy sailing in the first Test where his side handed an innings and 140-run defeat on the home side inside four days, Indian captain Sourav Ganguly was not losing focus ahead of the second Test.

"Every Test is important. We've done very well in Test cricket in the past couple of years and we need to keep on winning. It's no different here. As I said motivation is not a factor, it is Test cricket after all," said Ganguly at a crowded post-match briefing.

The 32-year old, India's most successful skipper thought that Bangladesh's inability to sustain pressure gave the tourists' victory margin a flattering look.

"We were in a tough situation at 60 for 3. They played well in patches. I thought they bowled well in the first session of the second day. They picked up three wickets and there were a few dropped chances. It's early days in international cricket for them so you have to give them time."

Ganguly also felt that the current Bangladesh side's inexperience compared to the one he played against in their inaugural Test in 2000 was a significant factor behind them going down so badly.

"Experience does matter in Test cricket. This is a pretty young side. They had a few experienced guys when I played them four years ago. Most of these boys need to be persisted with because there is talent and they will get better with the experience."

The Indian captain was delighted with the performance of left-arm pacer Irfan Pathan who tormented the Bangladeshi batsmen with an eleven-wicket haul in the match.

"He's getting better with every game. He's young, he's just 20 and he's got loads of cricket ahead of him. He has to shoulder the responsibility of Indian fast bowling for quite some time," said Ganguly.

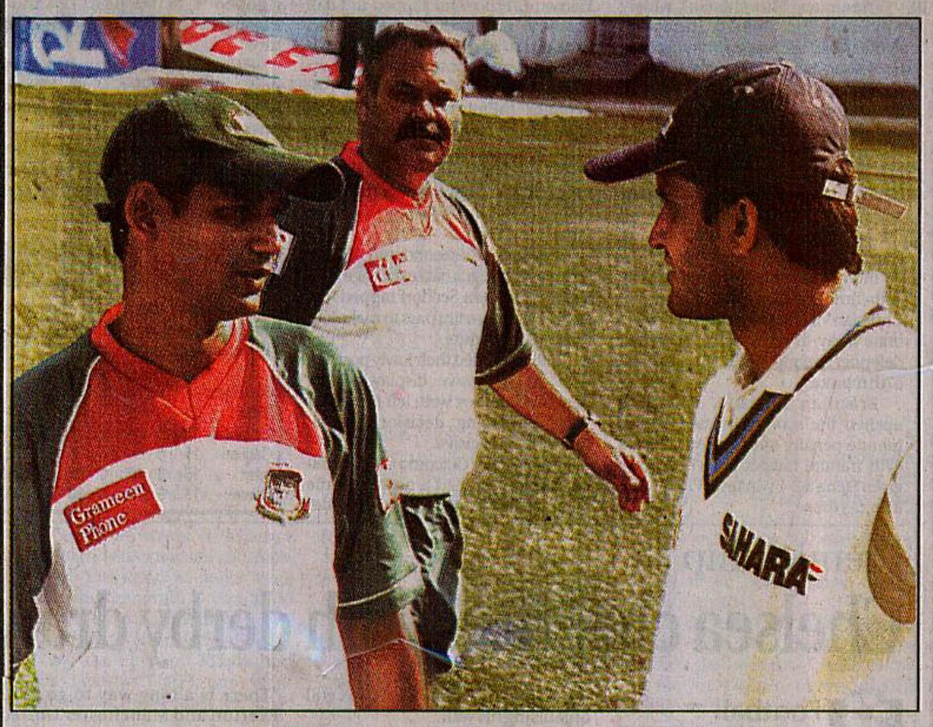


PHOTO: STAR

CAPTAINS ONLY: Bangladesh captain Habibul Bashar (L) and his India counterpart Sourav Ganguly chat while Bangladesh coach Dav Whatmore watches after the first Test yesterday.

Gilly wary of Pakistan

Cricket

AFP/REUTERS, *Perth*

Australian vice-captain Adam Gilchrist has warned his team against writing off Pakistan ahead of Thursday's first Test, saying both their batting and bowling could turn a match in moments.

The hosts are overwhelming favourites to win the series opener starting on Thursday after the touring side were badly beaten in their final warm-up match against Western Australia.

Gilchrist, however, believes Pakistan are an unpredictable team who should not to be taken lightly.

"All of us have seen Pakistan be hot and cold, whether it's a tour match or an international game, so we'll be wary of them still," Gilchrist told Australian Associated Press in Perth.

Gilchrist echoed the sentiments of opening batsman Justin Langer who said Shoaib Akhtar, the world's fastest bowler, remained a trump card for Pakistan.

"They have that ability and the attacking flair of their players and Shoaib is a prime example," he said.

"He's done it to us before, you give him a bowling spell where he can come on, particularly with reverse swing at his pace, and he can take five for 20 in one spell and totally end an innings.

The 29-year-old Akhtar has a career average of 24.32 but his form against Australia is not as solid with an average of 40.10, although he did capture 5-21 against them in October, 2002 during a Test match in neutral Colombo.

Akhtar has bowled little so far on tour and completed only 17 overs in short bursts during Pakistan's 10-wicket rout by Western Australia, but

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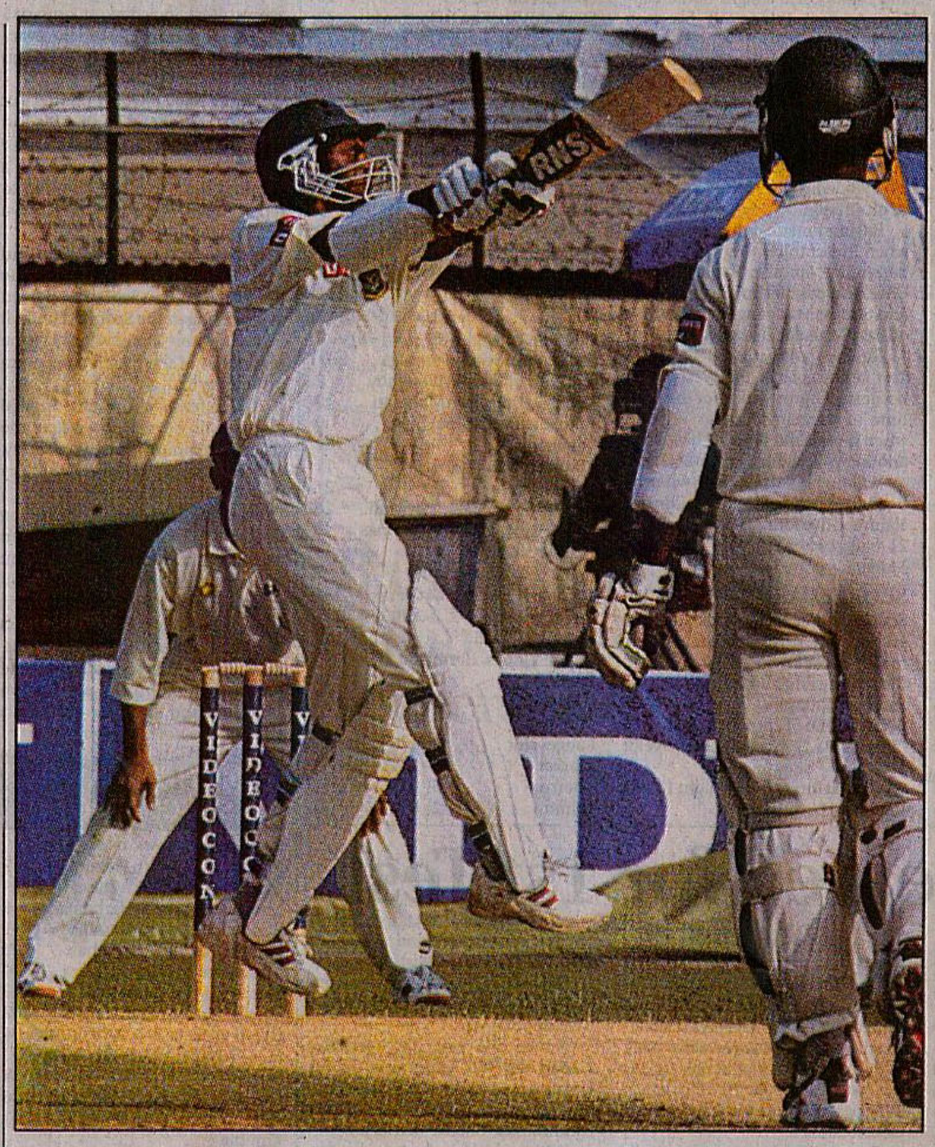

PHOTO: ANISUR RAHMAN

ONE LONE TIGER: Bangladesh's Manzarul Islam jumps into the air while cutting one over point for four on way to scoring 69 on the fourth day of the first Test against India at the Bangabandhu National Stadium yesterday.

Bad news for Sachin fans?

SPORTS REPORTER

Cricket lovers in Chittagong are likely to miss a great chance to watch batting maestro Sachin Tendulkar in action when the second Test starts at the MA Aziz Stadium on December 17.

It is believed that the champion Indian batsman, who equalled Sunil Gavaskar's world record 34 centuries in the first Test at Dhaka, might be rested.

If in fact Tendulkar, who has just recovered from a tennis elbow, is rested for the Chittagong Test then his place will go to middle-order batsman Mohammad Kaif.

Indian skipper Sourav Ganguly also gave a hint of some changes during the post-match briefing at the Bangabandhu National Stadium after his side's emphatic innings and 140-run victory with a day to spare.

"We have a thought in our mind about giving some of the young guys in the squad a chance to play in the next Test and also in the one-day series to come. You need to give everybody a go to find out how good they are," said Ganguly without elaborating.

Tendulkar scored an unbeaten 248, his highest Test knock. It was also the fourth double hundred for the 31-year-old little master.

B'DESH-INDIA FIRST TEST SCOREBOARD

Final scoreboard on the fourth day of the first Test between Bangladesh and India at the Bangabandhu National Stadium in Dhaka on Monday:

BANGLADESH: First innings 184 (Ashraful 60 not out, Rafique 47, Manzarul 24; Pathan 5-45, Kumble 2-45, Zaheer 2-51)

INDIA: First innings 526 (Tendulkar 248 not out, Zaheer 75, Ganguly 71, Gambhir 35, Laxman 32, Karthik 25; Mushfiq 2-104, Rafique 2-113, Baisya 2-114, Mashrafee 2-125)

BANGLADESH: Second innings (overnight 170-8)

Omar lbw b Pathan	4
Iqbal lbw b Kumble	54
Bashar c Zaheer b Pathan	12
Saleh lbw b Pathan	0
Ashraful lbw b Pathan	0

SEE PAGE 14 COL 5

A pitch too good to be true

Cricket

SPORTS REPORTER

The first Test between Bangladesh and Indian might be remembered as another mismatch after a crushing innings and 140-run defeat for the home side, but the pitch at the Bangabandhu National Stadium was the real winner.

Perhaps playing host to its last Test, the grand old venue was the talking point on the fourth morning of the Test after India wrapped up the last two Bangladesh wickets inside half an hour.

Appreciation for the local ground staff was on everyone's lips and it was not surprising when ESPN-STAR Sports commentator Alan Wilkinson started the presentation ceremony thanking the hardworking ground team for preparing a wicket, which was too good to be true.

Indian captain Sourav Ganguly also showered praise after seeing a wicket, which is refreshingly different than the traditional slow and low subcontinent wickets.

"It was a fantastic wicket for a Test match because it suited both parties (batsmen and bowlers. I hope Chittagong will offer a same kind of track," said the 'Prince of Calcutta' after the match.

Ganguly made the remark a day after his young left-arm paceman

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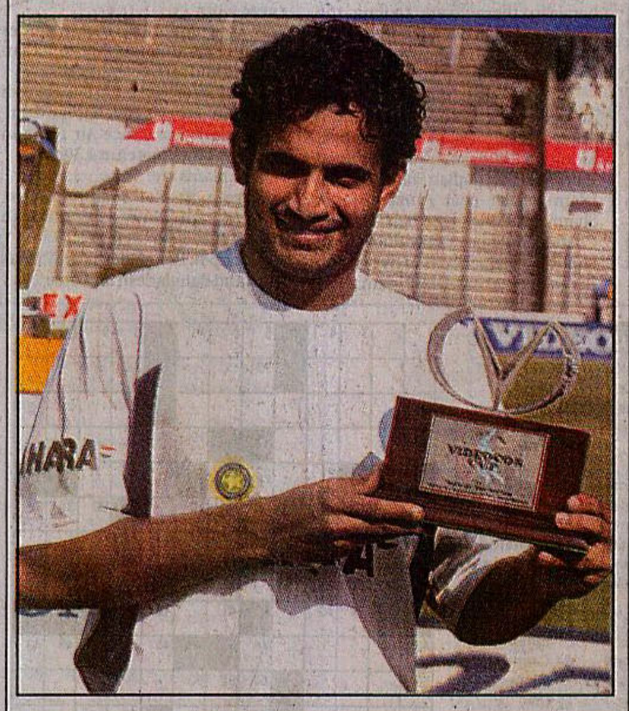

PHOTO: STAR

11 SHOOTER: India left-arm paceman Irfan Pathan poses with the man-of-the-match's trophy after the first Test yesterday.

A BCB relief!

SPORTS REPORTER

The fourth morning of the first Test between Bangladesh and India was refreshingly different at least for the professionals as they could work in peace without being disturbed by the high-profile non-professional officials of the Bangladesh Cricket Board (BCB).

It was nice to see journalists and players exchanging pleasantries 29 minutes after the match finished at the Bangabandhu National Stadium yesterday. Thankfully, there was none of the BCB busybodies around like the last three days, where they tried everything to put everybody in a caged environment.

The only embarrassment was the delayed arrival of BCB's highly paid Zimbabwean chief executive Macky Dudhia.

Dudhia kept players of both teams waiting for more than half an hour before he hurriedly stepped onto the stage with a the big smile on his face.

Although Dudhia made a belated appearance, other Board high-ups did not turn up.

Maybe they were too embarrassed by the team's performance and decided to skip the ceremony. But at least some of them might be happy with the early finish because it ensured one thing -- no catering worries especially for the journalists.

Nazmul in for second Test

SPORTS REPORTER

Young paceman Nazmul Hossain got a Test call up when the selectors named a 14-member Bangladesh squad for the Chittagong Test against India yesterday.

The selectors also retained the same 13 players from the Dhaka Test but it is likely that Narail Express Mashrafee-Bin-Mortuza, who made a commendable return from injury in the first Test, will be rested.

Nazmul's inclusion could lead the home side fielding three specialist seamers in a Test for the second time. The first time the Tigers picked three genuine quicks was against the West Indies two years ago also in Chittagong.

The second and the final Test begins at the MA Aziz Stadium from December 17.

BANGLADESH: Habibul Bashar (captain), Khaled Mashud (vice-captain), Rajin Saleh, Javed Omar, Nafees Iqbal, Mohammad Ashraful, Aftab Ahmed, Mohammad Rafique, Mushfiqur Rahman, Tapash Baisya, Mashrafee-Bin-Mortuza, Manzarul Islam, Talha Jubair and Nazmul Hossain.

Mohammedan crash out of Nepal meet

SPORTS REPORTER

Man Young Kang experienced a horror on his first assignment when Mohammedan Sporting Club crashed out of the Himalayan Bank Cup football tournament after their first match in Nepalese capital Kathmandu yesterday.

Mohammedan, who flew to Nepal only on the day before, lost their quarterfinal match to local league champions Rising Star 2-0 at the Dasharath Stadium, according to a message received in Dhaka.

South Korean coach Kang, who was in charge of the Bangladesh national team in 1995 and coached Mohammedan and Muktijoddha later, returned to Dhaka last month to take over the job with the local heavyweights.

Mohammedan finished fifth in the Premier League last season and were knocked out of the National Football League in the semifinals this year.

Pepsi V-Day volleyball

SPORTS REPORTER

The Pepsi Victory Day Volleyball Tournament begins today at the Shaheed Suhrawardi National Indoor Stadium in Mirpur with one foreign team taking part.

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Bangladesh-India Series Quiz 5
Who has the highest individual test score for Bangladesh in an innings?
A Habibul Basher B Aminul Islam Bulbul C Akram Khan D Khaled Mashud Pilot
Answer by sending SMS* to the number 2003
e.g. If your answer is A then write Quiz1 A and send it to 2003
For each quiz, five correct answer providers (selected by lottery) will receive attractive prizes!!
*Charge Applicable
[Quiz 4 answer: C]
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