



## Did U Know?

Fishing is the biggest participant sports in the world.



Bangladesh cricket coach Dav Whatmore (R) makes a point during a press conference to announce the Test tour party for England at the Chittagong Club on Thursday. On the left is chief selector Faruque Ahmed and BCB's media committee chairman Riazuddin Al Mamun is at the centre.

## Rahim from nowhere Paced-up Tigers for England

Cricket

STAFF CORRESPONDENT, Ctg

Mushfiqur Rahim was an inclusion out of the blue in the England bound Bangladesh squad which was announced here on Thursday.

Wicket-keeper Rahim, who is now leading the Bangladesh Under 19 squad in Australia and was not part of the Tigers' 20-man preliminary squad, was added to the 16-man team as cover for long-serving Khaled Mashud.

There were as many as five pace bowlers including 18-year-old Shahadat Hossain Rajib, reputed to be the quickest in the country, who received his first call-up to the senior team. Also in the side for the first time was left-handed teenaged opener Shahriar Nafees Ahmed. Both Shahdat and Shahriar had toured England last year with the U-19 squad for a Test and one-day series against the hosts. Lanky quick Anwar Hossain returned to the main fold after living in the wilderness since touring Australia in 2003.

There was no room for left-arm spinner Abdur Razzak. All-rounders Khaled Mahmud and Manzarul Islam Rana, paceman Nazmul Hossain and batsman Tushar Imran were not part of the Test plans. The four will join the side in England at the start of the second and final Test for the triangular one-day competition also involving England and Australia.

"We have taken into consideration the conditions in England. Shahriar has been a consistent performer for the last one and half years in domestic cricket and has also toured England. These factors helped his selection as an extra opener," said chief selector Faruque Ahmed while declaring the team at Chittagong Club. This was the first time the national cricket team was being announced outside of Dhaka. Faruque also felt that the southpaw had what it takes to bat at number three or the down the order.

About Shahdat, Faruque said he had the potential to do well in England where conditions would favour him.

"His pace is similar to

Mashrafe's and he has performed well in the recent Zimbabwe tour with the A team." Shahdat took 12 wickets in the two A Tests he played and bagged another eight in five limited over matches in Zimbabwe.

Faruque also explained the reason behind the surprise choice of Rahim: "It will be a long tour which might put extra burden and pressure on Mashud. To provide him some relief, we are taking Rahim as the second wicketkeeper."

Faruque observed that the best possible squad had been selected and coach Dav Whatmore was also of the same opinion.

"The condition in England is totally different and tough. Yet our objective will be to show people there that our boys have improved over the last few series," said Whatmore who signed a fresh two-year contract with the Tigers on Wednesday.

On expectations Faruque said he wants the side to fight hard. "We all know how strong the England team is. Despite that we will try to make our presence felt."

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## Even going on Day 1



SPORTS REPORTER

Half-centuries by Monirul Islam and Sakibul Hassan helped hosts Khulna recover from an early collapse against first-class champions Dhaka on the opening day of the tenth and final round match of the Ispahani Sixth National Cricket League yesterday.

In other matches, visiting Chittagong hit back against Barisal after being bundled out for a moderate total while the Golam brothers lifted Sylhet at home against runners-up Rajshahi.

**KHULNA-DHAKA**  
Dhaka, who secured their back-to-back title in the previous round with an unassailable seven-point lead over Rajshahi, reduced Khulna to 23-2 after the home side elected to bat at the

Khulna Divisional Stadium. But Monirul's unbeaten 82 off 202 balls and a 96-ball 54 by Sakib helped Khulna reach 230-5 at stumps.

Arafat Sunny grabbed three wickets including opener Rezwana Kabir, who gave a return catch to the Dhaka left-arm spinner after repairing the initial damage with a stubborn 42. Sunny also dismissed Sakib, who hit six fours and one six.

Monirul, who has so far cracked seven fours and three sixes in his 272-minute effort, had Jamal Babu batting with him on 26.

**BARISAL-CHITTAGONG**  
Pace bowler Mohammad Sharif captured four early wickets and left-arm spinner Mosharraf Hossain picked up three to help Barisal book Chittagong for 230 in the first innings. But the visitors hit back with Sabir Khan reducing the home side to 85-6 at close of play at the Barisal Stadium.

After opting to bat, Chittagong crashed to 37-3 before Ehsanul

Haque (81 off 133 balls) and skipper Sabir Khan (49 off 79 balls) inspired a fightback during an 84-run stand for the fourth wicket.

Barisal openers Imran Ahmed (25) and Bikash Sharma put on 63 runs in 17 overs but all hell broke loose as they lost five wickets on the same score in the space of 23 deliveries.

Off-spinner Sabir bagged 3-13 and fellow left-arm twaker Ahsanullah Hassan took 2-25 to inflict the stunning collapse.

**SYLHET-RAJSHAHI**  
At the Sylhet Stadium, tournament top scorer Golam Rahman made 71 and his elder brother Golam Mabud scored 70 as the home side finished the day on 264-7 after choosing to bat.

Left-handed opener Rahman's 152-ball stay featured nine fours and

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## BD getting 76,000 euros from FIFA

AFP, Paris

Asian football infrastructure devastated by the tsunamis on December 26 last year will be improved by a 5.8-million-euro pay-out from the sport's world governing body, FIFA said in a statement on Wednesday.

FIFA's contribution to rebuilding after the disasters has now reached 8.3 million euros in total.

Of the 5.8-million-euro pay-out, Indonesia and Sri Lanka each received 1.9m, India and the Maldives got 765,000 each, Thailand got 383,000 and Bangladesh 76,000 euros, FIFA added.

Mohamed Bin Hammam, the Asian Football Confederation president and FIFA executive committee member said: "The money will be used for repairing the football infrastructure damaged or destroyed by the tsunamis."

## U-19 cricketers keep winning

SPORTS REPORTER

Bangladesh Under-19 cricket team continued their impressive run on the tour of Australia when they picked their sixth consecutive win yesterday defeating Queensland's QAS Regional Squad by five wickets.

The local boys were skittled out for 149 in 49.4 overs with Charles topscoring 41 and opener Prossliner making 33.

Aslam Khan, Rezaul Islam and Sohrwardi Shuvo each claimed two wickets apiece.

In reply, the visitors took 35.4 overs to reach 151-5. Shamsur Rahman made 45 and Farhad Hossain 35.

## Mohammedan, Abahani begin unimpressively

SPORTS REPORTER

Mohammedan and Abahani got off to winning starts on the opening day of the Tibet 20th Federation Cup final round yesterday. But the two popular clubs showed little signs of improved performance after their disappointing showing in the Independence Cup, where they were eliminated from the semifinal stage.

Moments of individual brilliance rescued a lacklustre Mohammedan with a 2-1 win over Dhaka Wanderers in the opening match. Captain Alfaz scored a spectacular goal from a setpiece and fed the match winner to substitute Manju in the second-half after Milon had equalised for qualifiers Wanderers.

In the other Group B match under lights, a 51st minute strike by Farhad helped Abahani squeak past Arambagh 1-0.

**MOHAMMEDAN-WANDERERS**

The last year's runners-up went ahead even before their opponents had settled with Alfaz curling in a left-footed freekick from 19 yards into the far corner of net, giving Wanderers keeper Sohel no chance to react.

But apart from that touch of class from the Mohammedan captain, the Black and Whites hardly impressed their fans, who have been complaining about the team's weakness from the start of the season.

Under new coaching pair Saiful Bari Titu and Mohammed Panir, who

took over from sacked Korean coach Man Young Kang before this tournament, the midfield and defence lacked coordination.

Mohammedan could have conceded an equaliser three minutes later when a wicked deflection off a flag-kick beat custodian but only to be cleared by Faisal Mahmud from the line.

Biplay also made two fine saves

to deny a cross by Milon and a fierce freekick by Wanderers defender Narayan before Milon put the ball just wide from close on the brink of first-half under pressure from the defenders.

The pressure told on the hour when Milon, who has scored plenty of goals against Mohammedan in recent years, finally equalised with a

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Mohammedan's Alfaz Ahmed (L) and Narayan Pal of Dhaka Wanderers are in pursuit of the ball during their Tibet 20th Federation Cup encounter at the Bangabandhu National Stadium on Thursday.

## Ponting's bat causes all the concern

Cricket

AFP, Sydney

The MCC want to ban Australian captain Ricky Ponting's revolutionary cricket bat ahead of this year's Ashes series in England, reports said here Thursday.

The Marylebone Cricket Club (MCC), cricket's lawmaker, is concerned that Ponting's bat has been strengthened by a thin strip of carbon graphite which it feels gives the Australian skipper an unfair power advantage.

The MCC has expressed its concerns to the International Cricket Council (ICC), which will debate the matter as part of an overall review of bats at a meeting in Dubai next month, the Daily Telegraph said Thursday.

The newspaper said the Lord's-based organisation did not respond to its telephone calls and emails

because it said it could not work out which department was permitted to talk publicly on the issue.

But an ICC spokesman confirmed to the newspaper that

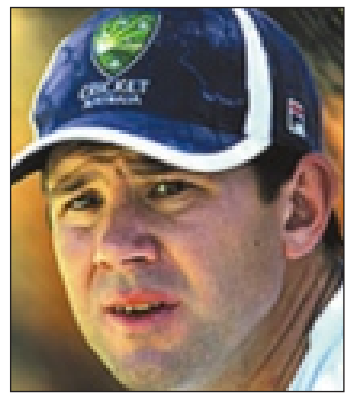
Ponting hit a double-century against Pakistan with the bat in Sydney last January, a century in the Asian tsunami charity match at the Melbourne Cricket Ground and made 293 runs at 97.66 in three Tests in the recent series in New Zealand.

The laws of the game state that the blade of the bat may be covered with material for "strengthening, protection or repair" as long as the material doesn't damage the ball.

Rob Elliott, the managing director of Kookaburra, which made the bat and is also the largest manufacturer of cricket balls in the game, said it was "rubbish" to suggest the graphite provided extra power or would damage the ball.

Elliott said the MCC wanted to ban the bat and felt it could be a part of the MCC's attempt to try to destabilise

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RICKY PONTING

Ponting's bat was up for review. "At present there is a MCC process ongoing on this matter and,



THE PICTURE SAYS IT ALL: Frustrated Mohammedan supporters put up a poster demanding a quality foreign football coach and players during yesterday's Federation Cup match.

PHOTO: STAR

**Imran Khan**  
(Pakistan cricket legend)  
"For me the high point of the series was Inzamamul Haq's captaincy from the front and Sourav Ganguly's failure to do the same for India." On Pakistan's success on the just-concluded tour of India.

**What to WATCH**

**TEN Sports**  
South Africa v West Indies  
Third Test, Day two  
Live at 8:00 pm

**ESPN**  
Cricket Gold  
10:00 am  
Sportscenter  
Live at 8:30 pm

**STAR Sports**  
World Sports Special  
4:00 pm  
Sportline  
Live at 8:00 pm

**DAY'S EVENT**

**Federation Cup Football**  
Mukjoddha vs Youngmen's (4:00 pm)  
Brothers vs Sheikh Russel (6:00 pm)  
Venue: BNS

**Ispahani Nat'l Cricket League**  
(Four-day, Day Two)  
Rajshahi vs Sylhet  
Venue: Sylhet Stadium  
Khulna vs Dhaka  
Venue: KDVS  
Chittagong vs Barisal  
Venue: Barisal Stadium

## STANCHART CRICKET North clinch U-17 title

SPORTS REPORTER

An explosive 36 off 19 balls by last man Emon Ahmed helped North Zone lift the Under-17 title of the Standard Chartered Young Tigers School Cricket Tournament yesterday.

Emon hammered three fours and three sixes in his cameo appearance as North snatched a one-wicket victory over South Zone in a last-over thriller at the Dhanmondi Cricket Stadium.

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## Nepal sweep Pepsi beach v'ball titles

SPORTS REPORTER

True there is no sea beach in Nepal, but the men and women's teams from the Himalayan kingdom won both the titles of the Pepsi Beach Volleyball Tournament in Bangladesh's sea resort town of Cox's Bazar yesterday.

In the men's final, Nepal beat Bangladesh Rifles 21-14, 21-16 while their women came from behind to beat Usha Krira Chakra 19-21, 21-18, 15-13 at the Laboni Point.

Golam Rasool, Police Super of Cox's Bazar, distributed prizes as chief guest. Golam Quddus Chowdhury, Executive Director of Transcom Beverages, was present as special guest.