

# Hopes are high: Bashar

Cricket

SPORTS REPORTER

Bangladesh captain Habibul Bashar was confident that the Tigers have a good chance of making a mark on their tour of Sri Lanka starting on August 31.

Bashar's boys travel to the island nation for two Tests and three ODIs on the 25th of this month and the skipper had no doubts that the team's vibe had changed since their last visit in 2001 when they lost both Tests by big margins.

"My expectation is very high in Sri Lanka. We know they are playing very well and they are always a difficult proposition at home. But this time we are more confident and I believe we have a greater chance to do much better than what we had done last time," said Bashar at an official press conference at the Sher-e-Bangla Stadium in Mirpur on Thursday.

Bashar also expressed his satisfaction with the team given to him and acknowledged his greater role in selection.

"In the past, I have always been consulted by the selectors but this time the discussions were much longer. I am very satisfied with the squad and it is pretty similar to what I had in mind."

Coach Dav Whatmore also felt that the side was the strongest possible one.

"The team the selection committee picked with the captain's comments and thoughts we feel is the best possible group.

"It's a group that best reflects the different conditions from which we experienced in England. These boys we feel are the ones who will put as much pressure as they can on the opposition who are playing



## Did U Know?

The two-run victory of England against Australia in the second Ashes Test is the narrowest margin by any team at Edgbaston. The previous record was also held by England, defeating Australia by 29 runs in 1981.



### Brian Lara

(West Indies batting super star) "I'm a traditionalist so it's not for me. It's good for people who want to watch a game after work, but I think the art of batting is to work out the pitch and play yourself in. A Twenty20 innings would be over before I knew what had happened." **What he thinks about Twenty20 cricket.**



**STAR Sports**  
England v Australia  
Third Test, Day Two  
Live at 3.30 pm  
Sportscentre Update  
Live at 10.30pm



Premier Football League  
YMC Club vs Dipali Sangha (5:00 pm)  
Venue: Bangabandhu National Stadium

pretty well as you know."

Selector Athar Ali Khan was asked why Nafees Iqbal had been dropped from the ODI side.

"He has not had a very good series in England and we sent him to back to that country with the A side so that he could regain his confidence. We had a lot of discussion about him and we feel he needs a little bit of time. His case is similar to Mohammad Ashraful a couple of years ago when he was left out of the side and he managed to recover. We think Nafees will also come back with big confidence," said Athar.

The former Bangladesh opener explained that the inclusion of newcomer left-arm paceman SK Russel over more experienced

campaigners like Tapash Baisya and Talha Jubair was prompted by the variation factor.

"We haven't had a left-arm paceman for quite some time. He offers us a new dimension. He is not that fast but can swing the ball and is very accurate. He has also performed consistently at different levels and has proved more than once that he is capable of bowling very good spells."

Whatmore said the Bangladesh team had a plan in place for the ICC's new innovations like the super-sub and the power-play.

"Looking at the rules for replacement of players, it appears as though it is heavily loaded towards a batsman. But that doesn't mean that

we have not thought of a replacement bowler. The important thing is to have a plan and we have one and we will try to go out there and implement that.

"I think it will be more of a headache for the captain, but it's an exciting innovation and everyone is going to enjoy not only the replacement option but also the new field restrictions."

The former coach of Sri Lanka was also looking forward to the tour with relish.

"It's special and I would like very much for the Bangladesh team to stand up and be counted there."



PHOTO: STAR

Bangladesh cricket selector Athar Ali Khan addresses a press conference at the Sher-e-Bangla National Stadium in Mirpur on Thursday. On the right is captain Habibul Bashar and left is coach Dav Whatmore.

## Bobby wins battle over Jalal

SPORTS REPORTER

Chief election commissioner (CEC) for the Bangladesh Cricket Board (BCB) Idris Miah ruled out the councilorship of Maradipur's Golam Kabir yesterday. But there was good news for Abahani councilor Ahmed Sajjadul Alam Bobby.

Bobby's nomination came under scrutiny after the cricket committee chairman of the popular club AHM Mostafa Kamal proposed the name of Jalal Yunis.

After a hearing on Wednesday, the CEC wanted to have a discussion with Abahani chairman Salman F Rahman before taking a decision. But reportedly, the Abahani chairman was not available. Besides, Mostafa Kamal also did not appear in his defence, leaving the CEC to declare Bobby as Abahani's councilor.

Meanwhile, there was no alternate candidate from Madaripur and the place was announced void like Chittagong.

## Chappell will not attend meeting to pick captain

PTI, Mumbai

India's cricket coach Greg Chappell would not attend Friday's selection committee meeting here to choose the captain for the forthcoming tour of Zimbabwe.

"Chappell would not attend the meeting to choose the captain, but he would be present at the selectors' meeting the next day to pick the rest of the squad members," S K Nair, secretary of the Board of Control For Cricket in India (BCCI), told this news agency from Thiruvananthapuram.

Nair also said the BCCI was awaiting an update on the fitness of Sachin Tendulkar.

"We have asked team physiotherapist John Gloster to give an update on Tendulkar's fitness and his progress. We would be talking to Tendulkar too on the matter before selecting the team," Nair said.

Tendulkar underwent surgery in London for an elbow injury at the end of May and was ruled out of cricket for 12 to 16 weeks.

Asked about the injury sustained by Irfan Pathan which has ruled him out of the forthcoming Afro-Asian one-day international series, Nair said his report too was awaited.

The Baroda paceman apparently suffered the injury on his right shoulder when he fell while fielding the ball on the boundary during India's tri-series final against Sri Lanka on Tuesday.

# Wanderers stay alive

SPORTS REPORTER

Dhaka Wanderers Club's newfound form kept their hopes alive to avoid relegation from Premier Bank Premier Football League with a 3-1 win over Arambagh Krira Sangha at the Bangabandhu National Stadium yesterday.

The old guards of Dhaka football, who could get just four points in the first leg, kept up an impressive return leg campaign that started with a creditable 1-1 draw with Mohammedan Sporting Club. The victory against Arambagh, Wanderers' second in three games, not only raised their tally to 12 points but also placed them seventh with the vanquished in the ten-team table and ahead of Youngmen's Club and Dipali Juba Sangha.

Wanderers, who drew 2-2 with Arambagh in the first leg, took the lead even before the next door neighbours could have settled in the middle. The game came alive in the fifth minute with Masud Alam firing

home a minus from Nigerian midfielder Patrick.

Despite dominating the rest of the show, Wanderers had to remain contented with a solitary goal lead at the break. But a win for Wanderers was never in doubt after Milon struck twice inside one minute in the second half.

The Wanderers striker, who had scored two goals in the first leg, ended his goal drought in the second when he tapped home a chip by Patrick in the 66th minute. Just after the opponents restarted the game, Milon picked up the ball near the centre circle and raced past two defenders and the Arambagh keeper before slamming home for his fourth league goal.

Run ragged by another relegation-threatened side, Arambagh got a consolation goal two minutes from time when Ugandan forward Patrick Bazaria's long range shot slipped through the gloves of Sohel at the Wanderers goal.



PHOTO: STAR

Wanderers' Nigerian midfielder Patrick (R) challenges his Arambagh counterpart Imrul for possession during their Premier Bank Premier Football League match at the Bangabandhu National Stadium on Thursday.

## Solid reply by BD A

SPORTS REPORTER

A sparkling 70 by in-form Tushar Imran and half-centuries by skipper Shahriar Nafees and Nazimuddin inspired Bangladesh A's solid reply against Surrey in the three-day match at The Oval yesterday.

Resuming on 45 without loss on the second day, the visitors lost Mehrab Hossain after adding only five runs. But one-down Tushar Imran was involved in two significant partnerships to help the side level Surrey's first innings total of 336-5 declared before being bundled out.

Tushar, whose two centuries on the tour so far have brightened his chances of a Test recall, shared 71 with Nafees for the second wicket. The right-hander added a further 59 with Alok Kapali before being caught by Pakistani Saqlain Mushtaq off left-arm spinner Nayan Doshi, the son of famous former Indian spinner Dilip Doshi.

Tushar's entertaining 84-ball knock featured ten fours and two sixes while left-handed Shahriar, who settled for a patient 50 in 111 balls, sent the ball nine times to the ropes.

Alok was also combative, hitting six boundaries and a six in 65 balls, but departed in the middle of a mini collapse which saw the second string Bangladesh side slump to 193-5.

Having lost three wickets in the space of 13 runs, Nazimuddin began a recovery operation with rich contributions from Syed Russel (33) and Talha Jubair (37).

Nazim, who faced 134 deliveries to score 53, was the eighth man out and Talha followed him without any addition to the total. However, last pair Shahadat Hossain and Enamul Haque added 14 runs to wipe out the first-innings deficit. Off-spinner Saqlain was the peak of the Surrey attack taking 3-82 from 29 overs.

The home side were 43-0 in their second essay shortly before close of play.

## BU, Youngmen's deny involvement in match-fixing

SPORTS REPORTER

Brothers Union and Youngmen's Club Fakirerpool yesterday denied any involvement in wrong-doing after Mohammedan, Abahani and Sheikh Russel KC blamed the two clubs for playing fixed-matches.

The three local giants on Wednesday appealed to the Bangladesh Football Federation (BFF) president SA Sultan to punish all five clubs involved in the ongoing Premier League. A joint statement issued by the trio also claimed Farashganj Sporting Club, Dhaka Wanderers and Arambagh Krira Sangha as the other teams involved in a syndicate of match fixing.

With the BFF president and general secretary Anwarul Hoque Helal both out of town, there was no way the federation could take any step within one day as it had been demanded by Mohammedan, Abahani and Russel.

"Only the president can open the letter because it is directed to him. I came to know about the allegations but I can not make any comments on behalf of the federation," said BFF deputy general secretary Manzoor Hossain Malu.

"But as general secretary of the Youngmen's Club, I can say that we have never been involved in such a scandal. It is a lie and I condemn this," said Malu.

"We have been struggling to avoid relegation with a bunch of young players. There isn't a good reason to drop points to any team willingly. We have played good football so far and this type of allegations would only hurt their moral at this stage," he added.

Brothers Union also denied the allegations and said that it was a ploy to 'tarnish' the club's image. The officials, however, refused to make any comments saying that they will give their opinion in a press meet today.

## Hosts lift BKSP Cup

SPORTS REPORTER

Hosts BKSP Reds lifted the North Bengal CA 3rd BKSP Cup hockey title defeating Punjab National Bank Academy 4-2 in the tiebreaker after the final ended 3-3 yesterday.

Mamun struck twice and Nannu one for the home side while Rohan, Laprit Singh and Devendra scored one goal apiece for the visitors in the exciting match at the BKSP hockey turf.

Earlier, BKSP Reds brushed aside BHF Greens 5-1 to clinch the third place.

State Minister for Youth and Sports Fazlur Rahman distributed prizes among the winners.



PHOTO: AFP

UNCHARTED TERRITORY: Australian leg-spinner Shane Warne spreads his arms to celebrate his 600th Test wicket at Old Trafford on Thursday.

# Fitting of the magician

Cricket

AFP, Manchester

Legendary Australian leg-spinner Shane Warne has been bamboozling England's batsmen ever since bowling the ball of the century to dismiss Mike Gatting at Old Trafford on the 1993 tour.

And he was at it again on Thursday when he became the first man in the history of the game to take 600 Test wickets when he dismissed Marcus Trescothick in the third Ashes Test at the same venue.

Now on his fourth and last tour of England, the 35-year-old is the 'Sheikh of Tweak'.

So revered is he in England that his is only the third portrait of an Australian cricketer to hang in the

venerable Long Room at Lord's along with late greats Donald Bradman and Keith Miller.

Wisden Cricketers' Almanack acclaimed Warne among their five cricketers of the 20th Century.

But Warne arrived for the Ashes series in the midst of traumatic marriage break-up blamed on several highly-publicised affairs with women which reportedly occurred since he moved to England to play for Hampshire three months ago.

His wife, Simone, and three children have since returned to Melbourne.

The fall-out has been damaging. Kerry Packer's Channel Nine ripped up his lucrative 11-year contract with the broadcaster because of his off-field indiscretions while one columnist demanded that he "should never again be allowed

to debase the Australian colours by wearing them."

"It's obviously been a tough time for me, I don't think that's any secret," Warne said in the lead-up to the series.

"One of my strengths as a cricketer over the years has been the ability to overcome any obstacles. Whatever's been put in front of me, I think I've always responded pretty well."

Off-field controversies have been constant bedfellows for the talismanic bowler, dubbed 'Hollywood' for a succession of headlines for all the wrong reasons.

In 1995, Warne was fined along with teammate Mark Waugh for his alleged involvement with a book-maker.

While playing for Hampshire in 2000, a British tabloid told of how Warne had left "dirty messages" on the answerphone of a nurse he had met in a Leicester nightclub.

South African woman Helen Cohen Alon also claimed in August 2003 that she was offered 28,000 US dollars by an associate of Warne to keep quiet about their relationship in a series of threatening phone calls and text messages.

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# Vaughan finds form

Cricket

AFP, Manchester

England captain Michael Vaughan led his side to 195 for two at tea on the first day of the third Test against Australia at Old Trafford here Thursday as Shane Warne became the first bowler to take 600 Test wickets.

Vaughan, who had managed a mere 32 runs in four innings in the first two Tests with a best of 24, was 93 not out after winning the toss and in sight of becoming the first batsman in this series to make a century. Ian Bell was 14 not out.

Warne made history in his fifth over when he had opener Marcus Trescothick, trying to sweep, caught off the glove by wicket-keeper Adam Gilchrist for 63 to leave England 163 for two.

The ball hit the keeper's knee and rolled up his leg before he held on before a joyful Warne celebrated by holding the ball to the sky.

It was a timely dismissal for Australia, who had seen Gilchrist, drop both Trescothick and Vaughan earlier in the day.

England's second-wicket pair added 137 after Andrew Strauss had lost his off-stump to a Lee

yorker for six.

England resumed after lunch on 93 for one with Trescothick 35 not out and Vaughan 41 not out.

Still on his lunch score, Vaughan's edged cut off recalled quick Glenn McGrath was dropped by Gilchrist, diving high to his right, with England 110 for one in the 29th over.

It was Gilchrist's second drop of the innings after he'd missed Trescothick off McGrath on 13.

And next delivery Vaughan was bowled off-stump by McGrath, whose 13 overs to tea coast 61 runs, only for experienced West Indies umpire Steve Bucknor to call no-ball.

Warne came on for his first bowl of the day in the 34th over with England 130 for one. But Vaughan played out the over in comfortable fashion.

And next over he struck McGrath for two successive fours, the second a flourishing square-drive.

Warne though checked England's progress, ending Trescothick's 117-ball innings with nine fours, to move 51 wickets clear of Sri Lanka off-spinner Muttiah Muralitharan in the list of Test cricket's most successful bowlers.

Earlier, McGrath was straight

into action in the first over after missing England's 1-1 series-leveilling two-run second Test win at Edgbaston with a right ankle injury sustained before the match started last Thursday after treating in a cricket ball during the warm-up.

Despite being on crutches last weekend, McGrath -- who took nine for 82 in Australia's 239-run first Test win at Lord's last month -- had Trescothick playing and missing first ball.

And his second delivery reared off a length, Trescothick lucky to get four runs as the ball flew over the slips.

Brett Lee, Australia's other new-ball bowler, had also been a fitness doubt for this match after suffering an infection in his left knee following his 43 not out at Edgbaston that almost guided the tourists to a sensational win.

Strauss, hit on the jaw and neck by an 89mph Lee bouncer, after missing an attempted hook, shortly afterwards became Lee's 150th Test wicket.

Ironically, given the fitness fears surrounding their strike bowlers, Australia saw batsman Michael Clarke go off in the second over with

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