



## Did U Know?

Pakistani Nasim-ul-Ghani is the first and only nightwatchman to hit a Test ton. He scored 101 against England at Lord's in 1962.



### Ali Asghar

(BCB president)

*"It was just a responsibility entrusted upon them (Aston Moore) and that arrangement has expired in September. It is no more valid at the moment."*

**While refuting reports that he had struck a secret deal with the Malaysia-based organisation.**

**What to WATCH**

**ESPN**  
South Africa v New Zealand  
Second one-day international  
Cape Town  
Live at 6.30pm

**DD Sports**  
India v Sri Lanka  
Second ODI at Mohali  
Live at 2pm

## Bracken or MacGil?

AFP, Sydney

Australia have signalled Nathan Bracken might be a better option than reuniting leg-spinner Stuart MacGill with Shane Warne for next week's opening cricket Test against the West Indies in stormy Brisbane.

Bracken, the left-arm New South Wales (NSW) seamer with three Test appearances, was added to a 12-man Australian squad Thursday at the expense of batsman Brad Hodge more with an eye to conducive weather.

Storms and rain have lashed Brisbane this week with more likely next week making for ideal seaming conditions at the Gabba.

MacGill's selection has been championed by pundits led by former captain Steve Waugh and he was endorsed from skipper Ricky Ponting after his nine-wicket haul in the recent Sydney Test match against the World XI.

But the hopes of MacGill, the taker of 169 wickets in 34 Tests, looked to have been effectively dashed by Brisbane's stormy weather.

Bracken, 28, is regarded as the best-credentialed swing bowler in the country and is able to extract movement with the new ball and the old with reverse swing.

Selectors also have memories of Bracken's last appearance at the Gabba in last season's Sheffield Shield final, when he destroyed Queensland with first-innings figures of 6-27 to set up a NSW victory.

Chairman of selectors Trevor Hohns said weather and the pitch would dictate who was 12th man at the Gabba but indicated Bracken's swing bowling was more suitable to Brisbane's traditional seam-friendly conditions.

"In the past, at the Gabba, very rarely if ever, have (we) played two

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# Cruciani's boys impress

BFF XI-3, CHINA-1



Football

SPORTS REPORTER

A double strike from Ariful Kabir Farhad gave Bangladesh Football Federation (BFF) XI a flying start in the Grand Royal Challenge Cup football tournament as they thrashed China Under-23 3-1 in Yangon yesterday.

The Abahani striker, who got the nod from new Argentine coach Diego Cruciani to start as Alfaz's striking partner, put the BFF XI -- virtually the national team -- ahead after 11 minutes in the opening match with a deft touch on a trademark Arman freekick.

Before the Bangladesh celebration was over, the Chinese youth team came back with an equaliser five minutes later but the SAFF Champions took total control and outplayed their rivals reportedly with 'a different type of football' introduced by the Latin coach.

And the pressure told when the shaven-headed Farhad struck his second goal five minutes before the break. It was a dream comeback for Farhad, who first earned his national call during an invitational tournament also in Myanmar in 1995 but remained

in the wilderness for lack of form.

His substitute Rokonzaman Kanchan sealed the victory ten minutes from time but could have made it 4-1 had not his powerful drive hit woodwork.

Bangladesh, who won their first ever international title in Myanmar in 1995 under leadership of the late Monem Munna, have a good chance to



FARHAD

play in the final of the four-team meet as the hosts brushed aside an understrength India Under-20s by more than ten goals in the day's other match, according to a message received in Dhaka.

Bangladesh team leader Ashrafuddin Chinnu was ecstatic after the team's impressive win.

"I have not seen any Bangladeshi team play like this in 15 years," Chinnu told over phone from Yangon.

"They were tremendous in the first half and played with a definite Latin touch. Playing with short passes, they completely outplayed the opponents," the former national winger said.

Although Cruciani had told before the team's departure that he would not use Aminul under the bar, he finally decided to pick the strongest team with the national number one custodian playing in the first match.

"We fielded Aminul because China were a strong team and we did not want to make a bad start," Chinnu added.

Bangladesh, who are participating in the meet as part of their preparation for the Asian Cup pre-qualifiers against Pakistan and the SAFF Football Championship, will play hosts Myanmar tomorrow and India on October 31 in the last league match.

The BFF XI line-up (4-3-1-2): Aminul, Hassan Al Mamun, Sujun, Nazrul, Titu, Arman, Joy, Matiur Munna, Ujjal (Arman Azizi), Alfaz (Asad) and Farhad (Kanchan).

## INDIA V SRI LANKA 2ND ODI

# Fast paced at Mohali



Cricket

AGENCIES, Mohali

India skipper Rahul Dravid said Thursday his team were set to try out various new strategies in the ongoing seven-match one-day home series against Sri Lanka.

"I wouldn't say we have been experimenting but that we have been trying out some cricket strategies," Dravid said ahead of the second match to be played here under lights today.

India thrashed the visitors by 152 runs in Nagpur on Tuesday with seamer Irfan Pathan's promotion in the batting-order taking the opposition by surprise.

"We will continue to try out new things but it will all vary from match to

match. Some things are done with the short-term results in mind and others with a longer view," said Dravid, who was man of the match at Nagpur for an aggressive 85 not out after Pathan (83) and Tendulkar (93) had set the tone.

"What is important is a good start like we got in the last match. I think psychological advantage does not matter because we are experienced sides," he added.

Sri Lanka skipper Marvan Atapattu conceded that his team had run out of ideas in the last match.

"India outplayed us in all departments. But then this will be a different game and we are confident of bouncing back," said Atapattu.

"The positives we could draw from the match was that (Kumar) Sangakkara (43) was looking danger-

ous. I also thought Dilhara Fernando bowled well on his comeback," said the Sri Lankan skipper.

"These are home grounds for India and their record too is good at home. It is a challenge for any team to do well abroad and so it is for us," he said.

Sri Lanka coach Tom Moody did not look too much into the one-sided affair in Nagpur saying it was all about who seized the initiative on a particular day.

"There was nothing wrong with our strategy but they took advantage of batting first. India played with a sense of freedom and the risks that they took paid off," said the former Australian player.

Moody said his team had enough options even if all-rounder

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PHOTO: AFP

**ALLROUNDER OR A BOWLER WHO CAN BAT? Indian star cricketer Irfan Pathan (L) prepares to bowl as teammate Sree Santh (R) looks on during a practice session at the Punjab Cricket Association ground in Mohali on Thursday.**

# Pathan's balancing act



Cricket

AFP, Mohali

Rising seamer Irfan Pathan can also bat, but the Indian team think it is too early to hand him the tag of an all-rounder.

Pathan has been an integral part of the side for some time but in the opening outing of the seven-match one-day

series against Sri Lanka in Nagpur on Tuesday he gave visions of sealing the seaming all-rounder's slot.

The well-built left-armer from Baroda showed his prowess with the bat as he slammed eight fours and four sixes in a career-best knock of 83 on getting a surprise promotion to the number-three position.

His 164-run second-wicket stand with master blaster Sachin Tendulkar set up a resounding 152-run victory but captain Rahul Dravid said it was too early to call Pathan an all-rounder.

"Let us say that he is a bowler who can also bat. He has to do a lot to be known as a genuine all-rounder," said Dravid, who rubbished comparisons with England all-rounder Andrew Flintoff.

"Pathan and Tendulkar set the game up for us but then it was just one of those matches in which everything went

according to plan for us," said Dravid, who has been named captain for this series as well as the five one-dayers against South Africa next month.

Dravid, though, would be happy if Pathan were to do well with the bat consistently after India's experiments with all-rounders failed to get results.

Ajit Agarkar has always been more of a bowler while others like Sanjay Bangar and Reetinder Sodhi failed to grab the position in recent years.

Pathan, who turned 21 on Thursday, thinks it best to just enjoy his batting for the time being.

"I am concentrating on my bowling, though I like to do my best with the bat when I get a chance," said Pathan, who has scored 495 runs and bagged 64 wickets in 39 one-dayers.

In the ongoing series, Pathan has the chance to not only establish

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## Goodwill envoys get going

SPORTS REPORTER

The UNICEF on Thursday officially announced three Bangladeshi sports personalities table tennis legend Zobera Rahman Linu, national cricket captain Habibul Bashar and ace batsman Mohammad Ashraful as its goodwill ambassadors for one year.

The presentation ceremony took place at a local hotel with UNICEF representative to Bangladesh Louis-Georges Arsenault bestowing the honour on the three champion athletes of the country.

"UNICEF understands the important role national spokespeople can play in highlighting the plight of children and the work of UNICEF at the same time. In Bangladesh, when these cricketers speak, the country listens," said Arsenault.

Bangladesh skipper Bashar was taking it as an opportunity to do something for underprivileged children.

"When I see the street children, without food and clothes, I feel very sad as a father. I'm really proud that UNICEF has created an opportunity for me to do something for those helpless children," said the country's most successful batsman.

"I want to ask all parents, I have immunized my child have you also? I have had my son's birth registered have you as well? I know I will send my son to school would you too?" echoed the 33-year-old Bashar in line with the UNICEF's slogans.

"I feel very happy to devote myself for the social-welfare at an early age and I promise to offer myself for those who are deprived of or are far off from education," said Ashraful, the youngest Test centurion on debut.

Sixteen-time national champion in table tennis Linu expressed her happiness at the appointment and said, "I feel extremely honoured and want to thank the UNICEF for offering me such an opportunity to serve the nation."

## Unease at the BCB

SPORTS REPORTER

There was uneasy calm at the Bangladesh Cricket Board (BCB) a day after its joint-secretary Reazuddin Al Mamun tendered his resignation.

The BCB high-ups on Thursday decided to refrain from making any comments apparently in an effort to buy some time to appease the aggrieved Mamun. Mamun resigned following media reports that board president Ali Asghar struck a secret deal with Aston Moore over handling the future TV rights and other sponsorship issues. Mamun refused to make further comments on his resignation which the board president, who is currently busy with political activities in his hometown, didn't accept.

A close source informed that the BCB high-ups were waiting for the return of ex-development committee chairman Arafat Rahman from Saudi Arabia to resolve the present crisis.

Although Asghar refuted reports that he did not struck any secret deal with Aston Moore, many termed it a lame defense.

"One thing is now sure that the BCB president had a deal with that agency. No doubt everybody was kept in the dark about it. Now an attempt is on to make both parties keep mum to avoid further complications," said a BCB official on condition of anonymity.

"Actually there has been a lot of disputes over certain issues during the last six months and it became

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## CAB U-17s bounce back

SPORTS REPORTER

The visiting CAB (Cricket Association of Bengal) Under-17 team bounced back to take a 2-1 lead when they registered a six-wicket victory against Rajshahi Division Under-17s in their third limited-overs match at the Dhanmondi Cricket Stadium yesterday.

Opening batsman Sayan Mondal led the CAB side to an easy win with an 84-ball 63. He was also adjudged the man-of-the-match.

The Rajshahi boys, who elected to field first, made a paltry 153 all out in 49.2 overs. Mysukur Rahman and Sohan Parvez each added 27 runs.

Chandan Paul was the most successful CAB bowler picking up three wickets for 41 runs in 10 overs.

In reply, CAB reached 156-4 in 46.1 overs.



PHOTO: STAR

**ON A GOODWILL MISSION: (L-R) Bangladesh cricket captain Habibul Bashar, UNICEF Representative in Bangladesh Louis-Georges Arsenault, former table tennis champion Zobera Rahman Linu and batting star Mohammad Ashraful pose for a photograph during the UNICEF Bangladesh GoodWill Ambassadors Introduction program at Hotel Sheraton on Thursday.**

## NEW ZEALAND V SOUTH AFRICA 2ND ODI

# Vettori calls it crucial



Cricket

AGENCIES, Cape Town

South Africa captain Graeme Smith has again spoken out against the 'super sub' rule in one-day internationals.

Speaking before Friday's second one-dayer against New Zealand at Newlands, Smith said the subject was discussed at an international captains' meeting in Sydney before the recent ICC super Test between Australia and a World XI.

"There wasn't much support for it, to be honest," Smith told reporters. "There was a feeling that cricket is an 11-man game and should be played that way.

"The way it works at the moment is unfair and favours the side winning the

toss far too much.

"The general feeling was that if they want to keep a system involving 12 players then maybe both teams could name their respective 12th men after the toss when you know whether you're batting or bowling," Smith said.

The 24-year-old Smith was not in favour of the substitute system when it was introduced in May and has expressed doubts whenever questioned on the subject.

Daniel Vettori, the New Zealand spinner, has said that the match is crucial from the series point of view after South Africa grabbed the momentum with a win in the first game at Bloemfontein.

"Both teams want to grab that first game and we were in with a chance all the way through -- we both knew

how important it was," Vettori told.

"If we can take two games this weekend, or even split the games, then we're in with a chance. But the Cape Town game is really, really important."

"We need to get the basics right. A couple of missed catches and a couple of run outs cost us in the first game," added Vettori. "We need to smarten those things up against a side like South Africa who do get the basics right."

Both New Zealand and South Africa have several allrounders in the side giving them much flexibility with batting and bowling options but Vettori said that New Zealand weren't going to spring big surprises.

"Not for us. We've always liked to know what our roles are and

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# Flintoff ready for captaincy



Cricket

AFP, London

Ashes hero Andrew Flintoff revealed Thursday that he would accept an offer to captain England and brushed aside suggestions there was a rift after current skipper Michael Vaughan suggested he would not be suitable.

Flintoff was the star of England's 2-1 Ashes series win over Australia in the summer and Vaughan believes the all-rounder's workload would be "overwhelming" if he was also captain.

But Flintoff insisted he would be ready for the challenge if an opportu-

nity to lead his country arose after Vaughan's reign.

"I think everyone in the side has got aspirations of captaining their country, if it ever came up I'd jump at the chance," Flintoff said.

"At the moment Vaughany is doing an unbelievable job. I'm enjoying playing under him and long may it continue but if -- maybe a few years down the line -- there was a chance then it's obviously something you'd have to be interested in.

"He was only saying what he thinks, I've known Michael for a few years and he would have my best interests at heart so it's not something that's going to bother me or upset me."

Flintoff wants to retain the Ashes urn in a year's time and also make an impression at the World Cup the following summer.

"I want to play in a Test side ranked number one in the world, which would mean retaining the Ashes next year," Flintoff told BBC Radio Five Live.

"I want to win a World Cup. I've played in two and have not been through to the super-six stages yet. So the West Indies will be a big few months.

"I'm enjoying playing cricket with England and desperately want to play for the best side in the world."

## WE WANT TO HEAR FROM YOU

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-- Sports Editor