

## 100-member squad for Asiad

UNB, Dhaka

Bangladesh will send a 100-member contingent to the 15th Asian Games to be held in Doha from December 1-15.

The contingent consists of 77 athletes including nine females and 23 officials.

Bangladesh will compete in 12 disciplines in the biggest sporting event in the continent -- athletics, swimming, shooting, football, hockey, kabaddi, weightlifting, chess, cue sports (billiard and snooker), judo, taekwondo and golf.

The first batch -- the football team -- will fly for the Qatar capital on November 25 as the soccer competition begins on November 28, two days ahead of the formal opening of the Games. The rest of the contingent will fly gradually.

Chef de mission of Bangladesh contingent Kutubuddin Aksir will leave for Doha on November 23 to make necessary arrangements for the team.

Number of athletes and officials (disciplines-wise): Athletics 4 (3+1), swimming 5 (4+1), football 24 (20+4), hockey 20 (16+4),

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## NAT'L CRICKET LEAGUE

### Third round starts today

SPORTS REPORTER

The third round of the Ispahani Mirzapore Tea 8th National Cricket League begins today with leaders Dhaka facing the challenge of hosts and Chittagong at the Chittagong Divisional Stadium.

Dhaka lead the table with ten points, followed by Rajshahi who host Sylhet at the Rajshahi Divisional Stadium. Both Rajshahi and Chittagong have eight points.

In the other four-day match, Barisal will play their home match at the Dhanmondi Cricket Stadium against Khulna.



## Did U Know?

The earliest recorded Olympic Games result was from the 180 metre sprint in the 776 BC. The winner was a man named Coroebus.



**Shivnarine Chanderpaul**  
(West Indies batsman)

"You can't worry about what number it is, you have to go out and play the game and play hard like always. One hundred Test matches was a goal I had set myself in life. Hopefully I can carry on and meet the other goals." On the eve of playing his 100th Test match -- the second Test against Pakistan in Multan on Sunday.

## What to WATCH

### TEN Sports

Pakistan v West Indies  
Second Test, Day 3  
Live at 10:30 am

UEFA Champions League  
Arsenal v Hamburg

Live at 1:00 am (Tuesday)

Celtic v Man Utd

Delayed at 2:45 am (Tuesday)

### ESPN

Sportscenter India

Sports News

Live at 8:30 pm



PHOTO: STAR

Bangladesh wicketkeeper Khaled Mashud (L) poses on the ramp with a model during the "DEKKO-bangladesherkhela Sportsman of the Year-2005" awards at the Shawkat Osman Memorial auditorium in the Public Library yesterday.

## Flintoff's test by Ashes

Cricket

AFP, Brisbane

One of the imponderables of England's quest to hang on to the Ashes is how the burden of captaincy will weigh on match-winning all-rounder Andrew Flintoff.

Wicketkeeper Adam Gilchrist, who has been caretaker captain of Australia in six Tests, knows the crushing workload of crouching behind the stumps, batting at No.7 and making decisions as skipper.

Gilchrist, the deputy to Ricky Ponting for the Ashes series, which gets underway at the Gabba in Brisbane on Thursday, says there is potential for Flintoff to be blunted by the many demands he will face -- or to revel in the leadership role.

Flintoff was a major reason why England regained the Ashes from Australia in last year's series, scoring 402 runs and taking 24 wickets.

Gilchrist believes Flintoff will handle the captaincy in the five-Test series, from what he has seen of the inspirational Lancashire all-rounder.

"Every issue that confronts the team or team management you (as captain) are alerted to, you're aware of, you're part of that decision-making. It's a big workload," Gilchrist said in Brisbane on Monday.

"There's always potential for that (becoming worn out during a long series), but there's also potential where a captain gets on a roll, and Flintoff has obviously proven he's an inspirational character for that team."

"Who knows which way it will go, but it is a big workload to take on the captaincy on any tour, no matter what you do."

"Flintoff's a strong character. He's physically strong, and he seems like emotionally and mentally he's quite tough now after all the experiences he's been through over the last couple of years."

"He's an inspirational character, so I have no idea what he's like with his decision-making, his field-setting and planning, but we'll soon find out about that, but he seems to have done pretty well so far."

Earlier this year, thrust into the leadership because of Michael Vaughan's injury, Flintoff led an inexperienced England team to a highly-creditable Test series draw in India.

But against Sri Lanka at Lord's in May he bowled himself for a marathon 51 overs in the second innings, as England saw what had seemed a likely win evaporate into a draw.

Gilchrist said in the six Tests he was captain for four wins, a loss and a draw, he was always mindful that he would be handing back the reins

to either previous captain Steve Waugh or Ponting.

"I'm far from pigeon-holing players but when you've got that third string to the bow it's a lot of work, but I loved it when I did it, it's a very good challenge," he said.

"Probably why I enjoyed it so much is that I knew that I was always handing it (the captaincy) back and I don't know what the long-term plans are for Michael Vaughan and the England captaincy, but I knew in the back of my mind that I was a caretaker so I could really throw myself at it."

"Having it permanently, I would probably find it too much."

Gilchrist believes Ponting, much criticised for his captaincy during last year's Ashes series, has become a better team leader over the last 14 months.

"Rick has said that he learnt from (last year's) Ashes and he wanted to become a stronger leader in that role as captain and figurehead of our team."

"The guys have responded and he's done quite well in that area and he's just learnt as he's gone along."

"He's definitely better for that experience since then and better from the experience of the Ashes."

"I think he's very well prepared and sure he'll be able to handle the scenarios of this series pretty well."

## Dav at odds with Ashraful?

Cricket

BISHWAJIT ROY

There is hardly any doubt that Mohammad Ashraful has yet to justify his rare breed of talent though he had glinted the cricket world quite sometimes but his exclusion from the team for the upcoming home series against Zimbabwe left a thousand questions unanswered chief of which was whether the young man was alone to be blamed.

The inconsistency seemed to be a chronic syndrome in his batting that's why anybody can justify the selection panel's decision of brining back his form by keeping him away from the team but the question was raised whether it was the only reason

behind the 'chopping'.

Nobody could mind if only cricketing affairs played a role behind the important decision but it was now already published in different newspapers that the stubborn stance of coach Dav Whatmore forced other selectors to take the tough decision. The events revolving the latest selection drama also led the cynics to believe that the Sri Lankan-born Australian has taken the 'Ashraful' case as a personal mission.

There were allegations that Whatmore was not even on talking terms with the country's most talented batsman for eight months after Bangladesh's last tour of Sri Lanka.

Although the high-profile coach kept everyone guessing by not appearing at Sunday's press conference citing illness, the

tendency of both chief selector Faruque Ahmed and captain Habibul Bashar to bypass the 'Ashraful' issue was quite evident during the hostile briefing.

It was learnt that both the chief selector and the Bangladesh captain had to give up the fight after Whatmore even proposed to take a rookie (Nadif Chowdhury) in place of Ashraful during the selection committee meeting.

It seems that Whatmore himself has confused Ashraful most by promoting him to the opening slot now and again, especially his decision to send Ashraful to open batting against Kenya in the last game surprised many in the team as he had played an unbeaten 67 against the same opponents in the first match batting at number five.

Although there was much talk about his recent form the fact

however portrays that it was not as bad if compared to his last year's performance (he scored one historic hundred against Australia and made two fifties in 14 ODI innings in 2005).

Ashraful had a great start in the year when he smashed one Test hundred and two back-to-back ODI half centuries against Sri Lanka during a home series in February but he suddenly lost his way although he got starts sometimes in both versions of the game. The team think-tank even saw his 18-run knock against Sri Lanka in the ICC Champions Trophy as an indication of a return to form.

So it was mysterious why the selection panel suddenly came so hard on the batsman with the next World Cup around the corner.

Faruque Ahmed's confirmation

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## Taylor turns it around

Cricket

AFP, Multan

Chris Gayle and Daren Ganga made a confident start after Jerome Taylor's five-wicket haul in the second Test against Pakistan Monday, boosting the West Indies' hopes of levelling the series.

Gayle was unbeaten on a punishing 87 and Ganga was 59 not out at stumps, taking the tourists to 151-0 in reply to Pakistan's first-innings total of 357 on the second day at the Multan Stadium on Monday.

The West Indies, 1-0 down in the three-match series after losing by nine wickets in the first Test in Lahore, now trail by 206 runs with all their wickets in hand.

Gayle -- the player of the

Champions Trophy in India earlier this month with 414 runs including three hundreds -- hit ten boundaries and a six during his 233-minutes at the crease and put the home bowlers into submission.

The 27-year-old Jamaican, who managed 34 and 11 in the first Test, cut loose after tea by hitting leg-spinner Danish Kaneria for two successive boundaries to reach his half-century.

He treated Mohammad Hafeez with the same disdain, pulling the off-spinner for a huge six over mid-wicket and then driving two consecutive boundaries to stamp his authority.

Ganga, who played second fiddle to Gayle, reached his eighth Test fifty when he drove paceman Umar Gul for his ninth boundary to add to the home team's problems.

Earlier fast bowler Jerome

Taylor took 5-91 -- his second five-wicket haul in nine Tests -- and Corey Collymore posted (2-67) to stop Pakistan from hitting a big score after they resumed at 263-4.

The 22-year-old Jamaican Taylor bowled his heart out on a lifeless pitch and was rewarded as the West Indies took the last six Pakistan wickets for 88 runs.

Taylor said the pitch had been no help.

"The wicket is inconducive for bowling but we bowled in the right areas and knew how dangerous Inzamamul Haq could be," he said. "His wicket was the prized one and once we got him we knew we were there."

"There is a lot of work to be done in this Test and we need to build on the good start and press for a win," added Taylor, whose previous five-wicket haul was the

5-50 he took against India at Kingston earlier this year.

The tourists started with the second new ball and got an early result in the third over, when Taylor produced a sharp outswinger to find an edge off Inzamam's bat to wicketkeeper Denesh Ramdin.

Inzamam failed to add to his overnight score of 31.

The West Indies could have snared Malik in the next over, but Brian Lara grassed a low catch when the batsman was on 14.

Dwayne Bravo at third slip let Malik off again four runs later, with Collymore the unlucky bowler on both occasions.

Collymore, who bowled unchanged for 15 overs, finally forced an edge off Malik to third slip, where Bravo held a superb left-handed catch. Malik hit seven

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PHOTO: AFP

West Indies bowler Jerome Taylor (R) follows through after bowling a delivery as Pakistan batsman Abdur Razzak looks on during the second day of the second Test match between the sides at the Multan cricket stadium on Monday.

## Ujjal gets his place in nat'l team

SPORTS REPORTER

Bangladesh Football Federation (BFF) yesterday confirmed that Mehdi Hassan Ujjal will be the 20th player in the Qatar-bound national football team.

Ujjal, who missed the camp for a week, was show-caused by the BFF to account for his absence.

The Abahani star, a key midfielder of the under-23 side that include three seniors, told in his reply to the federation that he missed the camp as he had to stay in his hometown in Magura due to the illness of his father.

The federation, however, warned the footballer not to make a similar offence in the future.

The BFF had named 19 players on Sunday for the Asian Games.

Coach Hassanuzzaman Babloo has been preparing the youth squad since the return of the senior national team from Hong Kong on November 17 following their last match of the 2007 Asian Cup qualifier which Bangladesh lost 2-0 to the hosts.

## BHF meeting deferred Asian Games preps in full swing

Hockey

SPORTS REPORTER

Bangladesh Hockey Federation (BHF) has deferred its yesterday's executive committee meeting by a couple of days.

It was expected that the fate of the postponed Premier Hockey League would be decided at the meeting but it could not be held on schedule as BHF president and Bangladesh Air Force chief Air Vice Marshal Fakhru Azam was busy to attend a foreign delegate.

BHF general secretary Shamsul Bari informed that the meeting will be held tomorrow afternoon.

Meanwhile, the preparation for the Asian Games finally got momentum after Abahani, Usha and Sonali Bank breed their players to join the camp.

The three teams initially decided to restrict their recruits because of the BHF's postponing the league

but later softened in the greater interest of the game.

For the last two days, Pakistani coach Kamran Ashraf got the full squad at his disposal but it was uncertain whether he could take all his choices to Doha for the Games.

Kamran picked four new faces in the national team but as they were not included in the preliminary list, the Asiad organising committee

is unlikely to allow their participation.

Although Shamsul Bari was optimistic at the start, he sounded hopeless about their chances.

"We have contacted the organisers but it seems that we will have to travel with players from the preliminary list only. Anyway, we are expecting a final decision from

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