



## Did U Know?

Alec Bedser, the former England fast bowler, is the only bowler to dismiss Don Bradman for a duck on more than one occasion.



### Luca Pancalli

(Italian Football Federation chief commissioner)  
"Enough is enough. Violence is everywhere, but violence in the stadiums connected to a game -- I find that truly unacceptable."  
Inciting his intentions to eradicate violence from soccer after the 'Catania tragedy' last Friday.

### Women's cricket final today

#### SPORTS REPORTER

Khulna clash with regional rivals Bholia in the final of the first ever Women's Cricket Championship at the Mirpur Sher-e-Bangla National Stadium today.

Bangladesh Cricket Board (BCB) president Abdul Aziz will witness the final and distribute trophies as chief guest.

On their way to the final, Khulna crushed Jahangirnagar University by 113 runs while Bholia snatched a three-wicket win over Dhaka in the semifinals.

### Dhaka Bank Jr tennis from today

#### SPORT REPORTER

The Dhaka Bank 21st Bangladesh International Junior Tennis Championships (Group 3) will begin in Dhaka today.

A total of 100 boys and 48 girls from 23 countries will take part in the 8-day event, told the organisers at a press conference at the Bangladesh Tennis Federation yesterday.

Already, the Group-4 competition has been hosted at BKSP while the Group-3 Rajshahi-leg was completed yesterday.

Dhaka Bank and co-sponsors Qatar Airways will provide Tk 5 lakh and Tk 91,000 respectively out of the total 7-lakh taka budget.

The qualifying rounds of the singles will be held today while the main draw starts tomorrow.

### My form is back: Irfan

#### PTI, Vadodara

Irfan Pathan claims he has rediscovered his form and rhythm after playing in domestic matches and hope to do well in the forthcoming World Cup.

"I played in three Ranji Trophy matches after being rested from the Indian team. I bowled 109 overs and picked 15 wickets," Pathan told PTI.

"I have got my form back, and also the rhythm. I am fully prepared now. Getting back into the Indian team is always tough. But I was mentally tough." The Baroda left-arm seamer was sent home from the tour of South Africa after a prolonged form slump.

The 22-year old answered the selectors with a stunning performance in the Ranji Trophy semi-final against Mumbai when he picked a five-wicket haul, reducing the opponents to none for five in the course of his new ball spell, in the second innings.

## Bashar hits form

### Cricket

#### SPORTS REPORTER

Nothing could have been better than the way Habibul Bashar began his campaign in Zimbabwe by leading his side from the front to a 45-run victory in the first one-day of the four-match series at the Harare Sports Club ground yesterday.

It was the Tiger's eighth consecutive win against their southern African opponents but considering their previous tour experience this first match success was very crucial for the Tigers to fulfil their mission of beating the Africans in their own den.

This time Bashar's men made no mistake to take the early advantage and continue their supremacy over the hosts.

Smarting under the heartbreaking 3-2 away defeat in July-August last year, the 34-year old Bangladeshi skipper had promised to maintain a cautious approach towards their opponents unlike the last trip and set an individual target to make a big score. Both his desires were fulfilled in the first game when his side rode on his career best 78 and 68 by young Sakib Al Hasan to post a challenging total of 260-9 on the board before wrapping up their opponents for 215 runs in 48 overs.

For Bangladesh leading pace-man Mashrafee-bin-Mortuza, who had the nightmare of conceding 17

runs in a over in the last tour which had played a decisive role in his side's series defeat, it was a remarkable start as his searing spell of 4-31 in 9 overs helped the tourists to shoot out the home team.

There was whisperings from certain quarters about Bashar's one-day fortunes but his innings definitely pointed towards the fact

style by checking his favourite pull shots, smote seven boundaries from 87 deliveries to eclipse his previous best of 74 also against the same opponents in 2001 at the same venue.

He was dropped by bowler Gary Brent but it ultimately did not turn out to be expensive for the home side as he was on 70.

Put into bat by home skipper Prosper Utseya the visitors were reduced to 93-3 following the dismissal of Mehrali Hossain (12), Shahriar Nafees (34) and Aftab Ahmed (31). But Bashar joined his young partner Sakib to set the platform for a big total associating 105 runs in a fourth wicket stand.

It was none but the 19-year old Sakib who once again showed why he is considered as a very dependable player in the middle order as the left-handed batsman scored a 74-ball 68 that featured six boundaries. The young all-rounder was not only successful with his willow by making his second fifty after an unbeaten 67 against Sri Lanka in the ICC Champions Trophy in 15 appearances but also lent his support with his left-arm spin to take two wickets for 37 runs in 10 overs.

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that he has still the ability to serve his side with the World Cup knocking at the door. The Tiger's skipper however got a half-century after 13 matches following his 70 against Australia at Fatullah in April last year.

On way to his thirteenth half-century in 95 matches, Bashar who has significantly changed his batting

style by checking his favourite pull shots, smote seven boundaries from 87 deliveries to eclipse his previous best of 74 also against the same opponents in 2001 at the same venue.

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and lost control of their bowling.

Hodge's first 17 runs were all singles, but then he started to find the boundary and faced just 86 balls, hitting seven fours and one six and fittingly scoring the winning runs.

Ponting said he had faith Hodge could do the job.

"I've never had any doubts about Hodge's abilities or capabilities," Ponting said.

"He took over through the middle of that innings really."

"His last 70 must have come off

40 balls or something, so it's a match-winning knock under pressure."

"I think he can definitely keep doing that for us there."

The result means the winner of Tuesday's clash between New Zealand and England will face Australia in the tri-series finals.

The run chase came after Black Caps opener Lou Vincent backed up his tough talk with a superb 90 to lay the foundation for New

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