



## Did U Know?

The first-ever Test match was played at the Melbourne Cricket Ground between England and Australia over March 15-19 in 1877.

## What to WATCH

### BTV & SET Max

ICC World Cup 2007

(Super Eights)

Ireland v New Zealand

Live at 7:30 pm

### ESPN

English Premier Football League

Watford v Portsmouth

Live at 5:40 pm

Newcastle United v Arsenal

Live at 7:55 pm

Charlton v Reading

Live at 12:55 am (Tuesday)

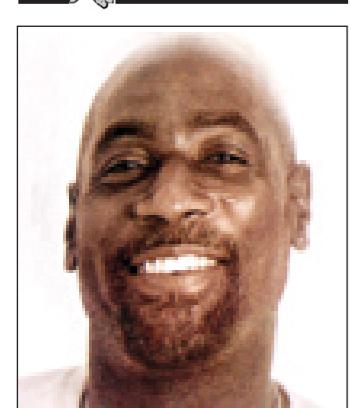
### STAR Sports

English Premier Football League

Fulham v Man City

Live at 7:55 pm

## TALK TURKEY



### Vivian Richards

(West Indies cricket legend)

"I've always rated him as one of the top-flight all-rounders in the world -- and he needs to come to the front. We know he's a strong hitter and a magnificent timer of a cricket ball -- and when he's on song he's someone I love to see play, with his aggression."

On Andrew Flintoff.

### Bob tests may take 2 months

PTI, London

The investigations into Bob Woolmer's murder have suffered a setback with the police revealing that they may have to wait for another two months to get the toxicology reports of the Pakistan coach.

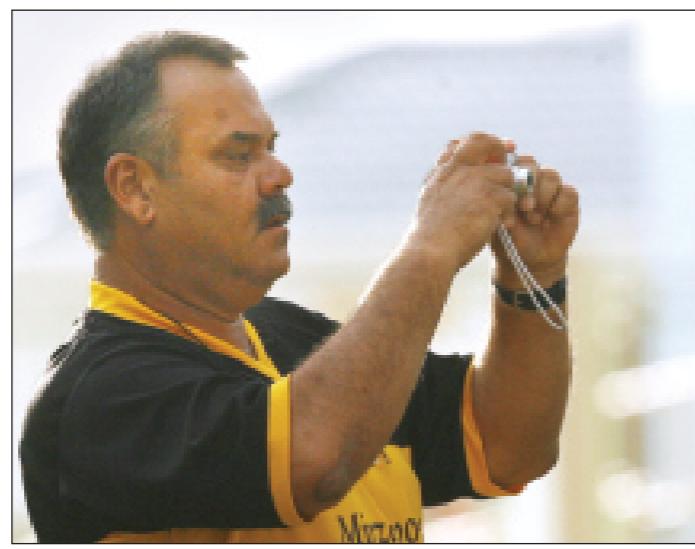
The tests are crucial for ascertaining the exact time and cause of Woolmer's death, three weeks after his body was discovered in a Kingston hotel following Pakistan's shock first round exit from the World Cup.

The Jamaica Police are still to zero in on any suspect and find out the motive for the crime.

"It's in everyone's interest to know exactly when he died and how. But frustrating as it may be, science goes at a certain pace," Jamaica's Deputy Commissioner of Police Mark Shields was quoted as saying in 'The Times'.

Despite recent media reports expressing doubts on police's assertion of the death being a

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NOT FAST ENOUGH: (top left) veteran Bangladesh spinner Mohammad Rafique takes down the stumps as South Africa batsman Ashwell Prince falls short of his crease. LEVELLED: (top right) South Africa captain Graeme Smith is disconsolate as he waits for his turn in the post-match presentation ceremony. IT'S ALL GREEN AND RED: (far right) jubilant fans adorn the Raju Bhaskaraj in front of TSC at the Dhaka University after the Tigers swept aside the Proteas in the early hours of Sunday. IN A LIMBO: (right) Bangladesh cricketer Shakib Al Hasan collides with runner Prince but still hangs on to Justin Kemp's return catch. CAPTURING THE MOMENTS: (above) Bangladesh coach Dav Whatmore takes photos during the presentation ceremony after Bangladesh defeated South Africa by 67 runs at the Guyana National Stadium in Georgetown on Saturday.

PHOTOS: AFP AND STAR

## Oh, Ashraful we knew it

BISHWAJIT ROY



After the spirited celebrations on March 26 when Bangladesh qualified for World Cup's second stage, the country's cricket crazy fans suddenly plunged into a sombre mood, having watched the Tigers' meek surrender to trans-Tasman countries Australia and New Zealand.

However, the depression was once again over as Habibul Bashar's men ignited wild celebrations at home early Sunday morning by pulling off a magnificent 67-run victory against world no. 1 South Africa in Guyana.

What was the most uttered name throughout the country on Sunday? The answer definitely is Mohammad Ashraful, the 22-year-old Bangladesh batsman who came back to limelight for the first time since his epic match-winning hundred in Cardiff against Australia in 2005.

And it was none but his cricketing associates who show-

ered praises on the little man for scripting another glorious chapter in the country's cricket history and the common sentiment was: Only he can play this kind of knock.

Ashraful laid the foundation of the splendid victory with a masterful 83-ball 87 that was laced with a dozen sweetly timed boundaries. Applauded by renowned TV commentators as classy, wonderful and flamboyant, the innings gave Bangladesh a fighting total of 251 and that was defended successfully with brilliant bowling and fielding to convert the efforts into the Tigers' first ever one-day triumph over the Proteas.

"Thanks Ashraful, you gave us a night to remember. What an innings it was! Actually he has the calibre to play such kind of a knock because I have had the opportunity to watch him from very close," said Tushar Imran, who could not make the World Cup squad.

"The victory took our cricket to a new height because I know how tough South Africa are as a team," said Tushar, who played Bangladesh's four out of previous seven one-dayers against the

Africans. "It is significant because we beat the number one team who show no mercy to their opponents," said the dashing right-hander.

To out-of-favour opener Al-Shahri, once considered as the most talented batsman of the country, the innings has not come as a surprise. He believes that his club-mate Ashraful should play such big knocks more often.

"We played together in the national team and club and I know what he is capable of. Only he can play such a classy knock. We sometimes ask ourselves why Ash (Ashraful) couldn't make it a habit. I can't find the words to express my feeling how it was to see our best batsman dominate the proceedings against the top-ranked side," said the popular stroke-player.

"I have no doubt about his commitment and the way he took the responsibility on his shoulders to swing the match away from the South Africans was something new to me. The way Aftab (Ahmed) and Ashraful batted, actually shattered the opposition's morale.

"We chased in many of our

previous wins but the success on Sunday proved that this team can also win by defending a total," he pointed out.

The joy knew no bounds for all-round Alok Kapali, who remains an enigma by missing out on the national team despite his talents.

"Superb...superb... superb innings. It is a dream for a batsman to play a shot like Ashraful played against Langeveldt through the covers. The way he repeatedly scoop-paddled over his shoulder was simply outstanding. He once again proved why he is considered as the most talented batsman in the country," said Kapali.

"It was really a nice feeling to hear all the good words from the commentators who hardly miss an opportunity to criticise our cricket. When our team scored 250-plus I sensed there would be something because we have a very good team of left-arm spinners. Usually we can't give our bowlers a decent total to defend," he added referring to the Tigers' 36th ODI success in 155 appearances.

## Bashar points at semis

AFP, Georgetown



Bangladesh captain Habibul Bashar has said his team are also in contention for a semifinal berth in the World Cup after posting a shock victory over top-ranked South Africa here.

When asked whether Bangladesh fancied their chances of making it to the semifinals, Bashar said: "Yes, we do but we need to work very hard in the remaining three matches."

Bangladesh made a mockery of the rankings when they registered a 67-run victory over Graeme Smith's team in a Super Eights match here on Saturday, their first-ever win over South Africa in one-day internationals.

South Africa were dismissed for 184 chasing a 252-run target to suffer their first defeat in the second round.

"This game was important for us because we were a bit laidback," said Bashar, whose side had lost to defending champions Australia and New Zealand in the first two

matches. "It (the win) has brought a bit of our toughness back. We have a chance now. If we had lost, we would have absolutely no chance. We do have a chance now, but we have to work really hard."

"This is a big win for Bangladesh. It is more important because it shows that we are in the Super Eights not just to participate, but to

show the world we are capable of pulling off big surprises."

Bangladesh had already turned the formbook upside down when they whopped India in a group match in Trinidad last month, a win that eventually knocked the former champions out of the tournament.

But Bashar said the victory over South Africa was different.

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## Ash feels great

AFP, Georgetown



Stylish batsman Mohammad Ashraful finally bridged the gap between potential and performance with his brisk half-century in Bangladesh's shock win over South Africa in the World Cup.

He has often come under fire for performing much below his potential since making a dream debut against Sri Lanka in 2001 when he became the youngest-ever batsman at 17 to score a Test century.

Just when Bangladesh believed that they had found a gem, they were in for a disappointment as Ashraful could never maintain the consistency required to become a great player.

Ashraful is an enigma. He is a spectators' delight when in flow and capable of dominating any attack on any surface with a wide range of attacking shots.

But he has not done justice to his talent, throwing his wicket away in a bid to play one shot too many early in his innings.

Bangladesh were fortunate to find Ashraful in good touch on Saturday as the middle-order batsman hammered an 83-ball 87 with

12 fours to help his side post a challenging 251-8 against South Africa in a Super Eights match here.

The total was good enough to put pressure on South Africa, who were bowled out for 184 to suffer their first-ever defeat against Bangladesh in one-day internationals.

"It's a great feeling because South Africa are number one in the world," said Ashraful, named man of the match.

"I played good cricket and I was thinking that if I stay at the wicket then I have a good chance of scoring big. I played some improvised shots because I like these shots and have practised them a lot back home."

"I can realise the mood in

Bangladesh. They love cricket and it will be an unbelievable feeling for them."

This was not the first time Ashraful had played an important innings in his team's victory over a big side.

Ricky Ponting's Australians will not easily forget Ashraful, who cracked a 101-ball 100 with 11 fours to script his team's upset five-wicket victory in a triangular series match at Cardiff in 2005.

It remains his only hundred in 96 one-day internationals and his team's only win over the formidable Australians.

Ashraful has already given his

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## LADESH V SOUTH AFRICA SCORE

Scoreboard of the World Cup Super Eights match between Bangladesh and South Africa at the Providence Stadium in Guyana on Saturday:

	R	M	B	4s	6s
Javed Omar c Smith b Nel	17	57	41	2	0
Tamim Iqbal c Boucher b Nel	38	90	59	6	0
Habibul Bashar c & b Nel	5	19	14	0	0
Shakib Al Hasan c Smith b Kallis	9	30	27	1	0
Mohammad Ashraful c Langeveldt b Nel	87	127	83	12	0
Aftab Ahmed c Nel b Ntini	35	59	43	2	2
Mushfiqur Rahim run out	6	16	13	0	0
Mashrafe Bin Mortaza b Nel	25	20	16	3	1
Mohammad Rafique not out	3	11	7	0	0
Abdur Razzak not out	2	2	2	0	0
Extras: (lb-7, w-12, nb-5)			24		
Total: (For eight wickets in 50 overs)			251		
Did not bat: Syed Rasel					
Fall of wickets: 1-42, 2-59, 3-69, 4-84, 5-160, 6-179, 7-233, 8-248.					

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**TODAY'S MATCH**

Team	Time	Venue
Ireland v New Zealand	7:30 pm	Guyana