

# Tigers return home today

SPORTS REPORTER



An upbeat Bangladesh cricket team return home this morning after fulfilling their target in the World Cup in West Indies, their best-ever success in three appearances in the mega event.

Outgoing coach Dav Whatmore will also accompany the team to complete his last assignment with the Tigers against India at home in next month's two-match Test and three-match one-day international series.

Bangladesh Cricket Board (BCB) requested all the former national skippers to be present at the Zia International Airport to receive the heroes.

Habibul Bashar's men made the promise before leaving the country almost two months back that their main target was to qualify to the second round in the showpiece event and they have achieved it by beating India and Bermuda in the preliminary round.

Despite their heartbreaking 74-run loss against Ireland, the Tigers not only enhanced their reputation with a splendid 67-run win against the then-number one ranked South Africa at the Super Eights but also buried their bitter memories of 2003 World Cup as they are making a Tiger-like return.

Bangladesh won seven matches out of 13 since they reached the Caribbean in the last week of February including the triangular series and the build-up matches which also included the self-confident two-wicket victory against a full-strength New Zealand side.

The national cricketers will however get little rest as the crucial

home series against India, who are scheduled to arrive in Dhaka on May 7, will start with the first one-day on May 10 at the Sher-e-Bangla National Stadium.

Chief selector Faruque Ahmed, who is also with the team, will sit with his colleagues soon after the arrival as the BCB have already announced that they will announce the squad for the home series by April 30.

The board will also announce the names of the captain and his deputy for the series as Bashar's and Shahriar Nafees's assignment were till the World Cup.

The board high-ups already told that they will announce the names only after the selectors picked up the squad. There was a debate on Bashar's fate as a captain following his below-par performance in the tournament but it was learned that the most successful Bangladesh skipper may get another chance to decide his one-day career.

On the other hand, left-handed opener Nafees, who have been on a rich vein of form in the last year achieving the 1000-run mark in a calendar year, has his form concerning the think-tank.

Meanwhile, the cricket team will take part in a talk show in the Bangladesh Television this afternoon.

Former Bangladesh captain Roquibul Hassan will moderate the programme in the state-run television which will see a number of former national skippers participating in the panel of discussions. Besides, academy team players will also take part in the programme.

"They made us proud that's why it would be a reception," said Roquibul.



PHOTO: AFP

Australia paceman Glenn McGrath (2nd from L) is the toast of his teammates after taking the wicket of South Africa batsman Mark Boucher (not in the picture) during their World Cup semifinal at the Beausejour Cricket Ground in Gros Islet, St. Lucia on Wednesday.



## Did U Know?

India will stage the 2011 ICC World Cup final. Pakistan and Sri Lanka will host semifinals, with the opening ceremony taking place in Bangladesh.



## TALK TURKEY



### Malcolm Speed

(ICC chief executive)  
"It is always sad when a player leaves the stage, especially when it is someone of Brian Lara's stature, but he has left us with some fantastic memories and for that cricket owes him a great deal."

### NAT'L YOUTH FOOTBALL

## 5 hattricks on opening day

SPORTS REPORTER

Jibon, Rubel and Hasan slammed hattricks as Lalmonirhat recorded the biggest win on the opening day of the Western Union National Youth Football Championship qualifiers yesterday.

All three players notched three goals at the Lalmonirhat Stadium each as the hosts Lalmonirhat brushed aside Panchagarh 9-0.

Ghafur and Jewel also slotted trebles in Dhaka's 7-1 thrashing of Madaripur at Shariatpur.

SEE PAGE 18 COL 5

# Fleming quits as ODI skipper

AFP, Kingston



New Zealand's Stephen Fleming announced his resignation as captain of his country's one-day team after the 81-run defeat by Sri Lanka in the World Cup semifinals here on Tuesday.

But Fleming said he wants to continue playing in the side and stay in charge of the Test team.

The 34-year-old opening batsman had been in charge for 10 years, leading his country in 218 one-day internationals, including three World Cups and two semifinals, New Zealand losing by nine wickets to Pakistan in 1999.

"I want to keep playing but I'm standing down as captain of the one-day side," Fleming, who won 98 and lost 106 one-dayers as skipper, told reporters.

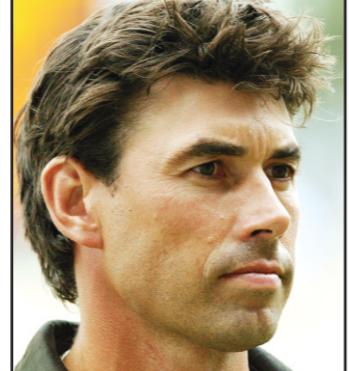
"I still want to captain the Test side," added Fleming, who became skipper in the longer format at the same time as taking over the reins

in the one-day team. "I've only just turned 34 and I think I've still got some good batting years ahead of me."

He added: "I want to concentrate on that for a while but I want to put a lot of energy into our Test cricket."

"I'd like to keep playing one-day cricket but as a batsman. In some way your energy levels are sapped when you captain the side."

"I want to play with a fresh mind and finish off my career with



STEPHEN FLEMING

some stats that I think I'm worth," said Fleming, who averages just under 33 in 280 one-day internationals with only eight hundreds.

"Obviously, I'd dreamed the dream of lifting the Cup and saying 'thanks very much' but it's not to be," said Fleming after New Zealand, yet to reach the World Cup final, had lost their fifth semifinal in the tournament's nine-edition history.

"It's been mapped out for some time. But from a professional point of view, it's important we get some fresh ideas."

"I'm very proud of what we've achieved. 218 games as captain is a long time and, professionally, I think I've done the job well. Whoever takes over, I want to be around to assist. I've no problems stepping back."

Asked, who his successor should be, Fleming mentioned experienced left-arm spinner Daniel Vettori, still only 28, as a possible candidate.

"The way we've groomed Daniel

SEE PAGE 18 COL 8

# Arambagh pricks Russel pride

## Russel officials attack referee



SPORTS REPORTER

Iddi Badambuze's early strike helped Arambagh put an end to leaders Sheikh Russel's seven-match undefeated run in the B. League with an impressive 1-0 win yesterday.

The Ugandan slotted the ball into the net after six minutes when a corner by Kenyan midfielder Nicodemus was backheeled towards him by Ritu to catch the rival defence napping.

The last match of the eighth week, however, brought the worst out of team officials as Russel's

match official had turned down a second-half appeal for penalty.

Russel still shared lead with Muktijoddha and Abahani – all three level on 15 points – but the latter have the advantage of playing one game less.

Arambagh's fourth win in seven games pushed them just behind the leaders with 13 points.

The day belonged to the four Africa-based footballers fielded by Arambagh, who outmanoeuvred Russel's Moroccan quartet on the pitch.

Apart from a long-range effort by overlapping rightback Mishu just before the break, Russel hardly took a shot at the rival goal in the entire first half despite Touati Younes returning after a three-match lay-off due to injury.

SEE PAGE 18 COL 4

### POINTS TABLE

Teams	M	W	D	L	GF	GA	Pts
Russel	8	4	3	1	10	3	15
Muktijoddha	8	4	3	1	14	5	15
Abahani	7	4	3	0	7	1	15
Arambagh	7	4	1	2	9	5	13
Mohammedan	7	3	2	2	12	5	11
Ctg MSC	7	3	2	2	8	5	11
Brothers	7	2	3	2	8	7	9
Farashganj	7	2	3	2	7	7	9
Khulna AKC	7	2	1	4	8	11	7
Ctg Abahani	8	1	0	7	3	18	3
Rahmatganj	7	0	1	6	2	18	1

# SL Academy take top spot

SPORTS REPORTER

A patient 69 from Tharanga Paranavithana gave Sri Lanka Academy a 16-run victory over Bangladesh Academy in the Academy Cup at the Fatullah Stadium yesterday.

The local side chased a modest 236 for their second win but the visitors fielded and bowled well to restrict Bangladesh Academy to 219 for 9 in their 50 overs. Earlier, the islanders scored 235 for 9 as they batted first after being put in by Mehrab Hossain.

The 25-year-old left-hander struck five fours and a six in his 96-ball knock that spanned till the 42nd over when he fell to off-spinner Mahmudullah Riyad while trying to raise the run-rate. He shared a 77-run sixth wicket stand with Angelo Matthews, who struck a 67-ball 45.

For the locals, Shafiq Al Jabir, Mehrab and Mahmudullah took two wickets each, while Kamru Islam took a wicket.

Left-handed opening pair of Imrul Kayes and Junayed Siddiqui were in charge early on but after Imrul fell to a run out on 42 of 6.5 overs, the innings slowed down. Nazimuddin also followed suit but again, Rokibul Hasan held forte with a commanding 48.

The young right-handed Rokibul who struck 313 in the National League last month, hit four boundaries but once he fell in the 32nd over, only Sahagir Hossain (42 off 52 balls) tried to win the game for the Academy side.

For the visitors, Chaminda Vidanapathirana, Lakmal Fernando and Nisal Randika took two wickets each.

This was the Sri Lankans' second win in three matches while both the Bangladesh and Pakistan Academy sides had one win each from two matches.

### LOCAL SNIPS

SPORTS REPORTER

A super five-wicket haul from Mamanur ensured a 31-run victory for North Bengal Cricket Academy over Udyoti Club in the Kai-Altech Second Division Cricket League at the Dhamondi Cricket Stadium yesterday.

In a low-scoring affair, Udyoti failed to chase down 162 runs set by North Bengal who were earlier bowled out in 47.2 overs. Udyoti's turn to bat, were bowled out for 130 runs in 35 overs.

In the other matches, Badda

SEE PAGE 18 COL 1

# Captain Fantastic

Jayawardene takes SL into final

AFP, Kingston



Sri Lanka captain Mahela Jayawardene led his side into the World Cup final with a maiden tournament hundred.

The 25-year-old left-arm spinner took five wickets for 11 runs in 23 balls to all but seal victory as New Zealand slumped to 116 for seven.

Murali held a brilliant one-handed catch to dismiss all-rounder Jacob Oram off his own bowling.

Next ball Brendon McCullum's top-edged sweep was athletically caught by a diving Chamara Silva, running round from square leg to leave Murali on a hattrick at the start of his next over.

But before then opener Peter

Fulton, who top-scored with 46, chipped left-arm spinner Sanath Jayasuriya, one of three survivors along with Vaas and Murali from the 1996 team, to Silva at mid-on.

Daniel Vettori survived the hattrick but was then plumb lbw to Murali's 'doosra' for nought.

And not even a few hard hits from Craig McMillan, batting at seven and with a runner after being off the field with a stomach muscle injury, were going to change the outcome.

Alastair Cook stand of 59 delayed proceedings before Jeetan Patel (34) was last man out, hoisting out Dilshan.

SEE PAGE 18 COL 6

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### ZEALAND V SRI LANKA SCOREBOARD

Scoreboard of the World Cup first semifinal between Sri Lanka and New Zealand at Sabina Park in Kingston, Jamaica on Tuesday:					
SRI LANKA					
R	M	B	4s	6s	
73	112	74	9	1	
1	11	6	0	0	
18	50	42	2	0	
115	155	109	10	3	
21	36	33			