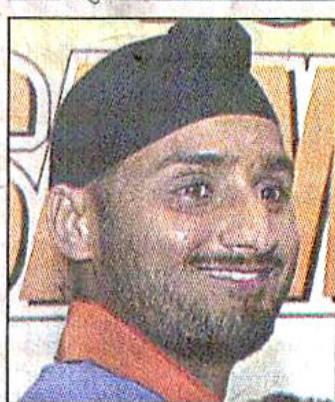




## Did U Know?

The first organized weightlifting competitions began in Europe in the late 1800s, and the sport's first world champion was crowned in 1891.



**Harbhajan Singh**

(India off-spinner)  
"Inzamam is the Sachin Tendulkar of Pakistan and his decision to retire from international cricket recently will definitely be an advantage for India."



**ESPN**  
English Premier League  
Chelsea v Man City  
Live from 7:55pm  
**STAR Sports**  
English Premier League  
Man United v Middlesbrough  
Live from 7:55pm  
Portsmouth v West Ham  
Live from 10:10pm  
Primera Liga  
Real Majorca v Espanyol  
Live from 12:30am (Sunday)

**DAY'S EVENT**  
National Cricket League  
(Second Round, Day Two)  
Sylhet v Dhaka  
Venue: Shaheed Chandu Stadium, Bogra  
Rajshahi v Barisal  
Venue: Rajshahi Divisional Stadium  
Khulna v Chittagong  
Venue: Khulna Divisional Stadium

## Indian selectors bide their time

CRICINFO, undated

India's national selectors have deferred the appointment of a Test captain, which was scheduled to happen during the selection committee meeting in Ahmedabad on Saturday. The focus of the meeting will now be on the squad for the first two ODIs of the series against Pakistan beginning on November 5.

Bhupinder Singh, the North Zone selector, said that the selection panel wanted to observe Mahendra Singh Dhoni's captaincy for a while longer before taking a decision on the Test captaincy.

"We had originally decided to watch Dhoni for 12 games and it's only five games now so we will have to wait," Bhupinder told Cricinfo. He, without confirming, indicated that the announcement could happen at the next selection meeting on November 8 in Mohali, when the squad for the rest of the ODI series against Pakistan would be announced.

Dhoni, who led India to the World Twenty20 title in his first assignment as captain, is one of two chief contenders for the Test captaincy along with Sachin Tendulkar. Tendulkar is also widely tipped for the job after two earlier stints during which he led India in 25 Tests.

# Shakib slams first century

SPORTS REPORTER



Shakib Al Hasan slammed his maiden first-class hundred as hosts Khulna cashed in against Chittagong on the first day of the second round four-day match of the 9th National Cricket League at the Birshreshtha Shaheed Flight Lieutenant Matiur Rahman Stadium yesterday.

The 20-year-old left-hander's exciting 108, first in first-class this season, and half-centuries from Tushar Imran and Imrul Kayes steered the star-studded home side, which had a fruitful first-round tie against Dhaka, to finish the day on 361-7 to confirm the maximum batting points of four.

National all-rounder Shakib, who has played three Tests and 34 ODIs, clobbered 13 boundaries and a six during his 140-ball knock, to continue his good form after having made 78 in the first innings in the opening round match and 56 in the one-day game.

"It's a confident knock and he played fluently to give us a flying start in this round. What is encouraging is that he has maintained some consistency. He was suffering from cold otherwise it could have been a much bigger innings," said Khulna

skipper Habibul Bashar, praising the century.

Number five Shakib, whose previous best was 85 in 17 first-class matches, gave only one chance in the nervous nineties but a diving Nazimuddin failed to hold the catch at gully off young paceman Rubel Hossain but was finally caught by Chittagong skipper Ehsanul Haque off Ashiqur Rahman.



SHAKIB AL HASAN...108

"It could have been much better if I made it much bigger and it was not impossible because I enjoyed batting on the flat track. Unfortunately, I was a little sick. I am looking forward to continue my form because I have a big target this season," said Shakib, who has already cemented his place in the

limited-over game but still failed to impress in the longer version.

Nazmus Sadat (15) and Kayes made a confident start for Khulna after being sent into bat first before the former was caught behind off Ashiqur to put an end to the 59-run opening stand.

Chittagong picked up one more wicket before lunch, when Bashar was bowled by his counterpart Ehsanul for 22 runs and the visitors got a quick break-through in the second session following the dismissal of left-hander Kayes, who smashed 52 off 89 balls with the help of eight fours and a six.

Shakib however joined Tushar to deny further damage and shared 96 runs for the fourth wicket before the latter was dismissed by left-arm spinner Saju Datta for 51. Right-handed Tushar smote seven boundaries in his 96-ball knock.

Wicketkeeper Sahagir Hossain was the other notable score with 47 off 98 balls that featured four boundaries and added 102-run with Shakib in the fifth wicket while Mashrafe Bin Mortaza played a 17-ball 21 to ensure their side's maximum batting points.

Ashiqur claimed three wickets for 71 and Saju captured three for 73 as Chittagong so far managed two bonus points.

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Rajshahi captain Khaled Mashud follows through on a sweep shot during his unbeaten 86 against Barisal during the first day's play of their National Cricket League tie at the Rajshahi Divisional Stadium on Friday.

PHOTO: TIGERCRIKET.COM

## SA make it 2-2

Cricket

BBC ONLINE, undated

South Africa cruised to a seven-wicket win over Pakistan to tie the one-day series 2-2 with one match remaining at the Multan Cricket Stadium last night.

Tight bowling and sharp fielding helped restrict the hosts to 230-9 despite 82 from Younis Khan, who put on 91 with captain Shoaib Malik (45).

Herschelle Gibbs (39) got the reply off to a flier before Graeme Smith (81) and Shaun Pollock (90) shared 159 runs.

"Victory was achieved with more than 12 overs left and the Proteas will go to Lahore for Monday's final confident."

Pakistan were always up against it once Shahid Afridi mis-timed a pull off Makhaya Ntini's fourth ball, Gibbs took a diving catch at mid-wicket to dismiss Yasir Hameed and Mohammad Yousuf was run out by a strong Johan Botha throw from the deep to make it 38-3.

But Younus clubbed Pollock and Botha over long-on for sixes as he and Malik revived the innings with a partnership spanning 114 deliveries.

Malik was undone by a slower Jacques Kallis delivery and spooned a catch to opposite number Smith at mid-off, before Andre Nel saw Younus mis-time a pull and Misbah-ul-Haq edge behind in the same over.

Abdur Rehman (31) and Kamran Akmal (28) provided a flourish at the end, including 18 off Nel's ninth over, as 50 runs came off the final 30 balls.

However that looked inadequate once Gibbs set about the Pakistan bowling, picking up three of his seven fours in Umar Gul's third over and two more in the next from Mohammad Asif.

He was adjudged lbw to one that leg-spinner Afridi appeared to be sliding down the leg-side but it

mattered little as Pollock joined Smith in continuing South Africa's smooth progress.

Smith was quick to punish anything too full on a pitch that had no real pace in it, although Gul failed to take a return catch when he was on 74.

Pollock was set to complete his

century after lofting Gul over long-on for six and being caught off a no-ball next up.

Rao Iftikhar Anjum had him snapped up at long-off and Smith at deep mid-wicket but by then the tourists had all but secured a comprehensive triumph.

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Pakistan batsman Younis Khan gets ready to pull the ball during his 82 against South Africa in the fourth one-day international at the Multan Cricket Stadium on Friday.

PHOTO: AFP

## All Stars add lustre

Cricket

AFP, Hong Kong

Cricketing superstars and former rivals Shane Warne, Brian Lara and Glenn McGrath will team up this weekend, hoping to fire an all-star team to victory at the Hong Kong Sixes.

The tournament, first held in 1992, produces frenetic cricket in which six-a-side teams bat for only five overs each innings and every fielder has to bowl.

Batsmen retire when they reach 31 runs, and matches last no more than 45 minutes.

The all-star squad, which also includes Anil Kumble, Craig McMillan, Geraint Jones and Heath Streak, will compete against nine national sides over two days at the Kowloon Cricket Club, set amid Hong Kong's towering skyscrapers.

Famous for its devil-may-care style and raucous crowds, the Hong Kong Sixes has a record of attract-

ing the world's top players, with Viv Richards, Sachin Tendulkar and Andrew Flintoff all appearing in past tournaments.

Organisers hope the competition will grow further on the back of the recent success of the short-form Twenty20 game and the massive interest in cricket in south Asia.

Harsh Sabale, an Indian entrepreneur based in Hong Kong, recently bought the rights to the event for eight years and has big ambitions to boost its international appeal.

"The Sixes is a lot of fun and it seemed wrong for it not to have a much greater profile," he said. "We hope to promote it as a major television event in the future."

"As cricket gets shorter, Sixes is well placed to deliver dramatic action that is above all fun to play and fun to watch. It produces fantastic entertainment, which is the most important thing."

"Obviously we are very gratified by the string of world-class players

who have come to Hong Kong this year to play, and we are also delighted by the level of enthusiasm among the public."

"We sold all the tickets within days and the only problem that we have is coping with fans who are desperate to see the cricket but can't get into the ground."

Brian Lara, speaking at a kids' cricket clinic ahead of the tournament, said: "It is going to be an exciting time playing alongside all the guys I have played against over the years."

"The Sixes is exciting stuff and since I retired, this is my first stint back on the cricket field, so I am looking forward to it."

Taking on the all-stars in the hunt for the 100,000-dollar winners' cheque will be teams from Australia, Bangladesh, England, Hong Kong, India, New Zealand, Pakistan, South Africa and Sri Lanka.

Last year's tournament was won by outsiders South Africa, who beat favourites Pakistan in the final.

## Tigers play 3 games today

SPORTS REPORTER

Bangladesh will play three matches on the opening day of the Hong Kong Cricket Sixes tournament at the Kowloon Cricket Club today.

They play their first match against Australia, second against South Africa and take on the All Stars team in the third game of the Sobers group.

The seven-member Bangladesh team reached Hong Kong on Thursday and will return home on October 29.

## BCCI get serious on coach

PTI, Mumbai

After being without a coach for seven months, the Cricket Board has decided to choose Greg Chappell's successor and has convened a meeting of the coach selection committee here next week.

"The coach selection committee (for the national team) will meet in Mumbai on November 3," BCCI secretary Niranjan Shah told PTI from Rajkot.

Former Australian captain Chappell did not seek a renewal of his contract following India's disastrous show in the World Cup and later the team had functioned

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## 'Don't change my girlfriends'

INTERNET, undated

The Jharkhand government laid out the red carpet for India captain Mahendra Singh Dhoni on Thursday.

During the facilitation ceremony on his homecoming, the state government handed out the keys of a car and a cheque of Rs 5 lakh to Dhoni.

However, the media wasn't interested in knowing about how Dhoni's bank balance has swelled, they wanted to know about his love life.

"Please don't change my girlfriend every two days. It's tough to keep track as I am linked to a new girl so often. If you are forcibly linking me to someone, then at least the alliance should last a little long," said Dhoni about him linking to Bollywood actress Deepika Padukone.

His status as the most eligible bachelor may or may not have changed, but his hairstyle certainly has.

"I have not changed my look for close to three and a half years. So, I went and changed it. I wanted to give my hair some rest! Hopefully I will have a new style after one year or so," Dhoni said.

Dhoni, like many other senior players like Sachin Tendulkar, has been rested for the challenger series.

Clearly sponsorship commitments and felicitations are keeping all the players busy, but the new captain insists that rest and recuperation are going to be essential before the series against Pakistan.

## Mashud nears ton

SPORTS REPORTER



Rajshahi skipper Khaled Mashud led from the front on the first day against Barisal in the 9th National Cricket League at the Rajshahi Divisional Stadium yesterday.

In Bogra, Dhaka rode on fifties from Anwar Hossain and Al Shahrar as they moved to 237-4 at the end of play against Sylhet.

As they moved past the 200-mark, Dhaka took one point while Barisal also took a point, thanks to their bowlers picking five Rajshahi wickets.

### RAJSHAHI-BARISAL

Left-arm seamer Sajidul Islam picked up where he left off, removing both Rajshahi openers Jahurul Islam and Rabiul Karim.

His new-ball partner Talha Jubair then joined the act, picking up Rafiqul Islam and Naeem Islam as Rajshahi slumped to 46 for four.

But Barisal forgot to remove

Mashud, who came in at number five when Naeem fell lbw to Talha for a three-ball duck.

For the rest of the day, Mashud and all-rounder Mushfiqur Rahman made sure Rajshahi move from a disastrous position to one where they can dictate terms.

The partnership between Mashud and Mushfiqur was a great example of patience. They knew the task in hand and had a fair idea that there is time aplenty in a four-day match.

Mashud moved to fifty, having batted for two and a half hours. He ended the day not out on 86 off 240 balls, having hit eleven boundaries. Having missed a hundred against Sylhet, Mashud will be particularly attentive of reaching a hundred.

"Yes the hundred is in my mind. I am looking forward to tomorrow (Saturday)," said Mashud.

"The wicket was quite difficult in the morning and had they attacked a little more, we could have lost 6 or 7 wickets quite easily," he added while referring to the damp conditions in the morning.

Mushfiqur batted with the same amount of persistence, but was more forceful than Mashud. He fell with 22 balls remaining in the day when Rokibul Hasan caught him off the bowling of medium-pace Arafat Salahuddin for 67 off 195 balls. Like Mashud, he also struck 11 boundaries. Anisur Rahman was unbeaten on 0 and will start today with Mashud at the crease.

Barisal used nine bowlers but other than their opening bowlers, none made any impression on Mashud or Mushfiqur.

### SYLHET-DHAKA

Sylhet skipper Rajin Saleh got the perfect response from his bowlers after he had won the toss and decided to field. Quick bowler Nazmul Hossain trapped Dhaka's doughty opener Javed Omar in front of the stumps only in the fifth over of the morning.

But Rajin had to wait till after lunch for more success as the other opener Anwar Hossain and Shamsur Rahman batted with

SEE PAGE 18 COL 5

## Murali takes a blow!

Cricket

INTERNET, undated

Whatever concern Muttiah Muralidaran may have about Australian crowds this summer, it may not compare with the instant life must have flashed before his

eyes on Thursday.

During Sri Lanka's first practice session of this short two-Test tour, the cheeky, ever-smiling Murali was bowling beautifully in the Adelaide Oval nets, making the ball turn sharply at times on the damp, green surface to tie his teammates in knots.

But vice-captain Kumar Sangakkara broke the shackles, with a brutal straight drive which threatened to decapitate the 35-year-old until he threw himself backwards to the ground.

Those big, beaming eyes were transformed from bright to startled as he sat on the ground for a moment contemplating the nasty consequences of what may have been before retiring to safety behind a side net.

"He's got good reflexes that guy," Sangakkara said later with a laugh. "It was more of an accident than anything else."

"It's great to bat against him, even in the nets."

Murali showed no obvious signs of the biceps problem which kept him out of the recent one-day series against England.

"He's a guy who enjoys his cricket. He's been away with an injury for about four weeks and he's really missed turning his arm over," Sangakkara said.

"We're just looking forward to getting him into the side, making us strong and helping us win Test matches. He's a guy who works really hard."

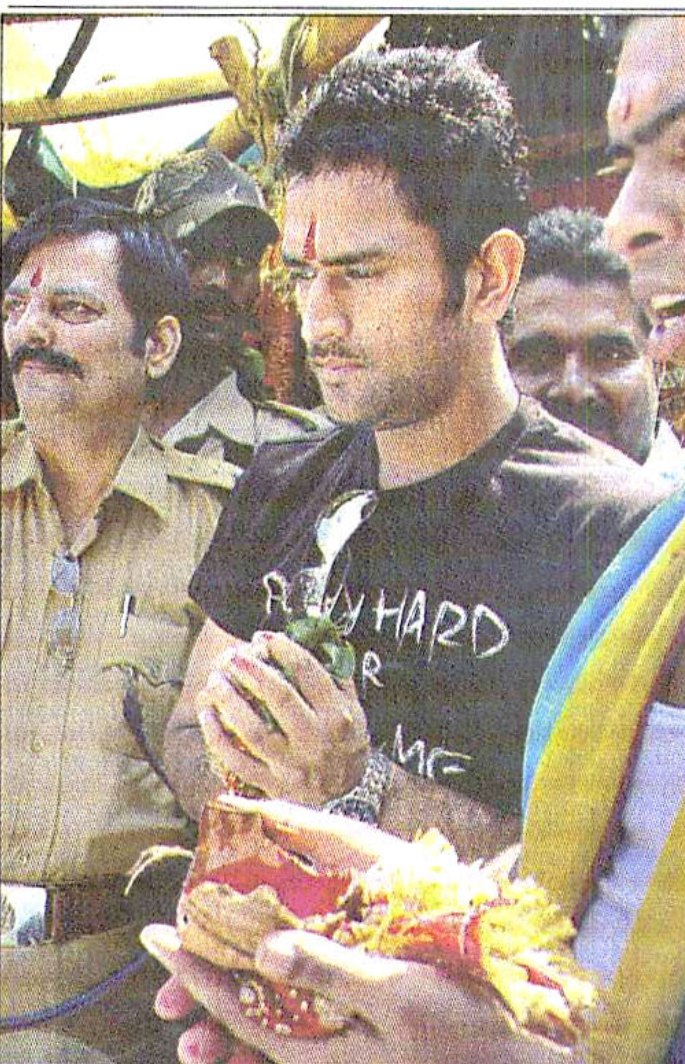
"I've never seen a guy as much in the nets. His theory is whatever he wants to do, he has to be able to land the ball on the spot that he wants to. That's what he works on."

Murali will play in the opening three-day tour match against a Cricket Australia Chairman's XI, beginning in Adelaide on Saturday. There will be a second tour match against Queensland late next week before the first Test at the Gabba from November 8.

The Chairman's XI is made up of players pushed out of their state sides by the return of the international players for a very rare appearance in a full Pura Cup round.

The side is captained by West Australian wicketkeeper Luke Ronchi, who moves aside for Adam Gilchrist, and includes NSW left-arm seamer Doug Bollinger, who claimed a hat-trick against Western

SEE PAGE 18 COL 2



IS THAT YOU DHONI? India captain Mahendra Singh Dhoni performs a religious rite on his new car, a gift from his state government, in Ranchi on Friday.

PHOTO: AFP