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## Did U Know?

The bag archers use to hold arrows is called quiver.



**Sir Alex Ferguson**  
(Man United manager)  
"It was my first victory on penalties. I lost three with Aberdeen and three at United, so it is seven times lucky and I'm delighted with that."  
After winning the UEFA Champions League title.



**SET Max**  
Indian Premier League  
Chennai Super Kings v Rajasthan Royals  
Live from 4:30pm  
Delhi Daredevils v Mumbai Indians  
Live from 8:30pm  
**STAR Cricket**  
England v New Zealand  
Second Test, Day Two  
Live from 4:00pm  
**TEN Sports**  
West Indies v Australia  
First Test, Day Three  
Live from 9:00pm

## LOCAL SNIPPETS

SPORTS REPORTER

Team Red face Green in the opening match of the Under-19 Challenge Series at the BKSP in Savar today.

On Sunday, Team Red take on the other team in the competition - Team Blue.

The main objective of the 10-day meet is to form an Under-19 side and also to provide learning opportunities for the players under the guidance of senior BCB coaches.

The teams will play each other thrice and after that the two top teams will play in the final scheduled for June 2.

**Team Blue:** Saikat Ali, Chowdhury Labbayek, Sadaf Sarkar Hasib, Mehadat Amin, Muhaimin M Shahid, Palash Shom, Anjum Ahmed Jessy (captain), Sabbir Ahmed, Alauddin Babu, Asaduz Zaman, Al Amin, Mohammad Shukran, Tajul Islam and Kamrul Islam.

**Team Green:** Nayeem Mohammad Asif, Raquibul Hasan, Tasamul Haque, Taibur Rahman Parvez, Mohammad Ali, Arafat Hossain, Sohel Rana, Noor Hossain (captain), Abul Hasan Raju, Kawsar Rony, Mobassir Khan, Mohammad Furkan, Joy Sarker and Victor Barua.

**Team Red:** Mayedul Islam, Irfan Sukur, Atiqur Rahman, Mominul Haque (captain), Ariful Zaman, Zakir Hossain, Rasel Khandaker, Islamul Ahsan, Imrul Muntakim, Mohammad Saim, Sohag Reza, Shaker Ahmed, Imrul Hasan Bikram and Saddam Hossain.

**PIONEER FOOTBALL**  
Mir Hazaribagh Krira Chakra trounced Red Sun 3-0 in an East Zone match of the Dhaka City Corporation Pioneer Football League at the Jagannath University ground at Dhupchola yesterday.

Bishnu struck twice in the 9th and 26th minutes while Riaz netted the other goal for the Hazaribagh side.

In the west zone, Uttara Sangsad Juniors edged past Islamabad Lucky Seven by a lone goal scored by Mohammad Hasan in the 12th minute at the Outer Stadium ground.

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# Abahani secure top 9

SPORTS REPORTER

**Defending champions** Abahani looked all set to retain their last season's squad for the coming B. League when they confirmed services of nine current national footballers on Thursday.

After the national squad's return from Narshingdi following a practice match, they completed formalities by signing eight of their players in addition to a new face late in the night for the second edition of the professional league.

The booters to show loyalty to the sky-blues are goalkeeper Biplab, defenders Nazrul, Waly Faisal, midfielders Joy, Abul, Zahed Parvez and forwards Ujjal and Emily.

Promising midfielder Mamunul Islam Mamun is the new recruit for Abahani, who are expected to get the rest of the players early next week.

"Yes, we have secured contracts of all the players who are in the national squad. Our target was to free the players from any tension before the SAFF Championship, so we got all the documents in hand," told manager Satyajit Das Rupu yesterday.

Rupu admitted that the top nine have been paid in advance substantial amounts for the season but made no comments on who would

be the highest paid footballer for the season.

Reportedly, captain Joy and Nazrul -- the two veterans who returned to the national team from retirement -- along with striker Emily will be among the highest paid.

"No one wants to leave the team and we are trying hard to accommodate every one. It would also be good to have the same side for successive years," opined the former national footballer, also a member of the Bangladesh Football Federation.

Abahani also have eyes on national striker Robin, who has been playing for the Dhanmondi outfit in recent tournaments and defender Sony.

"We will complete negotiation with the others and hope to announce the team soon," added Rupu.

Abahani, who will travel to Malaysia to play the AFC President's Cup from June 22-26, still have former national players Tarek and Siraji -- ignored for the SAFF Championship -- apart from experienced ones like Pradeep, Abdullah Parvez, Pranotosh, Mintu and Sujun -- who missed the entire last season through injury -- in the reserve.

Unlike the past, players don't have to be present during the transaction and all a team have to do is hand over the registration forms, prop-

erly signed by the players, to the authority.

This year's transfer, however, is going to be a very difficult one for the footballers with most of the teams going through financial crisis including giants like Muktijoddha Sangsad and Brothers Union.

Muktijoddha virtually have no committee to run the show but it was learned that officials and players have reached the high-ups of the ministry in a bid to maintain their strength.

Brothers have yet to decide on their future but the Gopibagh side, who won successive titles in the last seasons of the now-defunct Premier League, are also hopeful to get the fund to strengthen the squad.

Mohammedan and Sheikh Russel are apparently in a better position than Muktijoddha and Brothers, having negotiated with their last season's booters. However, both are playing the waiting game to have a slice from Muktijoddha if they fail to get support for the football team.

Players fear that their remuneration will take a dip, especially after the clubs' so-called 'gentlemen's agreement' although officials have denied any such arrangement. There are allegations that many of the teams have yet to give full payments even for the last season.

# Ponting punishes WI

Cricket

AFP, Kingston

Three wickets, two to Darren Sammy, and purposeful bowling from West Indies slowed Australia down before lunch on the second day in the opening Test here on Friday.

At the interval, Australia, choosing to bat, reached 372 for seven in their first innings with Andrew Symonds not out on 18 and Brett Lee not out on four.

Australia continued from their bedtime of 301 for four, looking to mount a formidable first innings total, but the West Indies' bowlers, making full use of the hard, uneven Sabina Park pitch, shattered the visitors' plans with accurate bowling.

The pressure mounted and Brad Hodge cracked, when he tried to guide a delivery from Fidel Edwards to third man and was caught behind for 67 in the first half-hour of the morning to leave Australia 326 for five.

Australia were so hemmed-in by the miserly bowling from West Indies that they could only add 24 runs in close to an hour in between the time that Hodge and Mitchell Johnson were dismissed.

Johnson, who entered about a quarter of an hour before the close on the previous evening in the role of night-watchman, spent another one and a quarter hours at the crease frustrating West Indies before Darren Sammy made the breakthrough, when he was caught at mid-on for 22 driving at a slower delivery.

With lunch approaching, and the shackles still very tight, Brad Haddin, playing his first innings as Australia's 400th Test player, tried to loose the bonds placed on the Aussies and paid a hefty price.

The Australian wicketkeeper/batsman essaying a pull off the back-foot to a short delivery from Sammy got and under edge, and he was caught behind for 11.

Edwards has been the most

successful West Indies bowler with the three wickets for 78 runs from 20 overs, and Sammy has supported with two for 56 from 24 overs.

Australia have won 12 of the last 13 Tests they have contested against West Indies. They hold the Frank Worrell Trophy - symbol of Test supremacy against West Indies - and they have not lost a Test series in the Caribbean since 1991.

The second Test between the two

sides starts on May 30 at the Vivian Richards Cricket Ground in Antigua, and the third Test starts on June 12 at Kensington Oval in Barbados.

The Aussies also contest a Twenty20 International and five One-day Internationals.

Scoreboard at lunch on the second day of the first Test between West Indies and Australia at Sabina Park

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**NORMAL SERVICE RESUMES:** Australia captain Ricky Ponting acknowledges the dressing-room after reaching his century against West Indies on the first day of the first Test at Sabina Park in Kingston on Thursday. He went past Indian great Sunil Gavaskar's 34 Test hundreds.

# Punjab serve warning

CRICINFO, undated



Despite having little to play for in this dead rubber, Kings XI Punjab put on an imposing performance against the Deccan Chargers at Punjab Cricket Association Stadium in Mohali on Friday and gave the other teams plenty to think about ahead of the semifinals.

Though the match went down to the last over, Punjab's openers had done enough to keep their side on the top through the innings. Shaun Marsh and Kumar Sangakkara injected a dash of nitro fuel to the run chase, adding 50 in 3.5 overs. That only one in the first six overs went for less than 10 runs is an indication of how brutal their assault was. Marsh pricked up from where he had left off against Mumbai while Sangakkara gave no sign of the fact that injury had forced him out of the last five games.

The first four balls of the innings - going for three runs - were clearly

an ominous calm before the storm. Marsh whacked the fifth for four through mid-off and hooked the final one for a massive six over backward square leg.

Adam Gilchrist, the Deccan captain, replaced RP Singh with Venugopal Rao in the third over, like he successfully did against Mumbai. This time the change was disastrous because instead of getting a wicket, Venugopal was hit for a four to long-off and a six over midwicket. P Vijaykumar was taken for 15 runs in his second over that included an exquisite shot by Marsh - with his left elbow high and perpendicular to the pitch, he lifted a fuller ball on off stump to long-on for six. Sangakkara also punished Scott Styris with a six and a four but in Styris's next over Punjab's run-graph began to curve downwards. He conceded only four runs and the wickets began to fall soon after.

The introduction of spinners Rohit Sharma and Pragnan Ojha gave Deccan some hope of replicating the Bangalore Royal Challengers' shock win over the Chennai Super Kings earlier in the week. Sangakkara swept Rohit's

first ball for four to fine leg to reach his fifty off 23 balls - for the second time in the tournament - but when he tried to loft him down the ground, Sangakkara failed to mid-dle the shot and fell to Chamara Silva at long-on.

Marsh and Yuvraj Singh were circumspect against the spinners and Yuvraj fell, trying to break loose, when he tried to slog Ojha and RP took a difficult catch at midwicket. Marsh fell three overs later and was soon followed by Luke Pomersbach, who top-edged to Rohit at extra cover. But Mahela Jayawardene and Piyush Chawla wrapped up the game with no more hiccups.

Deccan had put on a credible batting display and if they had been able to contain Marsh and Sangakkara, the match could have gone down the wire.

Deccan's openers took advantage of Punjab's innocuous opening bowlers and added 79 in 11.1 overs. Gilchrist and Herschelle Gibbs punished the bad balls early in the innings. When VRV Singh bowled full and wide, Gilchrist drove him for fours through extra

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Winners of the Grameenphone-Prothom Alo Sports Awards pose for a photograph with Prothom Alo Editor Matur Rahman and the jury at a local hotel yesterday.

# SAFF squad likely to be named today

SPORTS REPORTER

The national football team will play their last preparation match at home today ahead of next month's SAFF Football Championship.

Abu Yusuf's men, who drew with an All-African XI on Thursday, will face Sporting Independent -- a team of top local footballers outside the national team led by former national striker Alfaz Ahmed.

The match will kick off at the Bangabandhu National Stadium at 4pm.

Yusuf is expected to name the final 20-member squad also today as the team leave for Thailand en route to Sri Lanka on May 26.

Bangladesh, who will play their group matches in the regional football extravaganza against Bhutan, Afghanistan and co-hosts Sri Lanka in Colombo, will play two more preparation matches in Bangkok on May 27 and 29.

Maldives will host the group comprising reigning champions India, Pakistan and Nepal.

The 26-member Bangladesh squad will be led by Shafiquzzaman after Kazi Nabil Ahmed withdrew himself as team leader.

Former national striker Sheikh Mohammed Aslam has been named manager.

Sporting Independent will be managed by veteran coach Wajed Gazi who has announced a 23-member team for the warm-up game.

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# NATIONAL CRICKET Barisal reach semifinal

SPORTS REPORTER

Barisal rode on Masud to book a place in the semifinals of the 28th National Cricket Championship after a three-wicket victory over hosts Sylhet yesterday.

The left-arm spinner took four wickets giving away just eight runs in a fantastic 9-over spell that skittled out Sylhet for only 108 runs in 41.1 overs. In reply, Barisal reached their target in 29.2 overs in the 43-overs-a-side match.

Fazle struck 40 while Mahin contributed 30. For the hosts, Tanhar and Meheedi took two wickets each but that was not enough.

# Sonali's third in a row

SPORTS REPORTER

Goals from Sheikh Nannu and Selim Khalid gave Sonali Bank their third consecutive victory in the Green Delta Insurance Premier Hockey League when they routed Dhaka Mariner Youngs Club 2-0 at the Maulana Bhasani National Hockey Stadium yesterday.

After a barren first half, Nannu put Sonali Bank ahead in the 45th minute through a field goal and then Selim doubled the margin eleven minutes later, also from a field attempt.

As last year's runners-up Mariners remained on seven points to miss the super league, Sonali Bank have amassed 19 points from nine games at the end of their first-leg campaign.

Azad Sporting Club moved to 12 points with a clinical 4-2 victory over Sadharan Bima in the day's first match.

Mohammad Jubair struck thrice while Pushkar Khisha netted the other goal for Azad. Raju and Afsar netted one goal apiece for Sadharan Bima.

This was a welcome win for Azad who were beaten in their last two matches.

# 2007 brings Ashraful to the limelight again

SPORTS REPORTER

It came as a spell of rain falling in the desert when Bangladesh captain Mohammad Ashraful was declared the Sportsman of the Year during Grameenphone-Prothom Alo sports awards ceremony yesterday.

One may be surprised about the winner's name considering the fact that the right-handed premier batsman has been going through tough times this year as well as being under immense pressure for a long lean patch.

But the country's leading batsman got the award for his last year's achievement as the country's leading cellular phone operator and the leading daily awarded the top sports persons of the year 2007 at a local hotel.

The function at least reminded everybody that it was not long ago

the Tigers skipper had provided something special to cheer about as his blitzkrieg knocks gave Bangladesh their maiden one-day victory against South Africa during the World Cup in the West Indies and international success against West Indies during the Twenty20 World Cup in South Africa. His brilliant Test hundred against Sri Lanka at the P Sara Stadium also marked the year.

"It is a very important award and I am honoured. It will encourage me to do better performance," said Ashraful in his instant reaction.

Like the previous years the event brought the whole sporting arena under one roof where past and current sports icons gathered in the cordial ceremony, hosted skillfully in the characteristic style of Prothom Alo's Sports Editor Utpal Shuvra where he first declared the winner of the Lifetime

Achievement award.

The award went to Abul Hasan, not so common a name to this generation, who represented Pakistan national volleyball team as well as playing football and being involved in other sports like athletics... a multi-skill sportsman.

"At the fag end of my life someone honoured me for my contribution to sports. I am really happy and I must thank Grameenphone and Prothom Alo to arrange this kind of event," said an emotion-choked Abul.

Former cricket captain Minhajul Abedin announced the name of the Emerging Sportsman award and it was none other than Tamim Iqbal who hogged the spotlight in the last World Cup in the Caribbean because of the left-hander's swashbuckling match winning half-century against India.

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# Taylor takes NZ ahead

Cricket

AFP, Manchester

Ross Taylor's dashing, unbeaten 67 kept England's attack at bay before bad light forced an early halt to the first day's play of the second Test here at Old Trafford on Friday.

New Zealand reached stumps on 202 for four, having slumped to 123 for four after a promising start.

All-rounder Jacob Oram, who made a century in the drawn first Test at Lord's, was 22 not out after Daniel Flynn had retired hurt.

Together with Taylor he'd shared in a counter-attacking stand of 66 in 80 balls, their runs coming in under an hour.

Left-arm quick Ryan Sidebottom, who struck twice in seven balls before lunch, led England's attack with two for 33 in 16 overs.

Earlier, opener Jamie How made a composed 64 and put on 80 for the first wicket with Aaron Redmond (28) after New Zealand captain Daniel Vettori won the toss and elected to bat.

New Zealand resumed after lunch on 92 for two, with How 58 not out and Taylor unbeaten on four.

But How had added only six runs when he edged pace bowler James Anderson, on his Lancashire home ground, to wicket-keeper Tim Ambrose.

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England swing bowler Ryan Sidebottom leads a vociferous appeal during the first day of the second Test against New Zealand at Old Trafford in Manchester on Friday.

# Back to basics

Cricket

AFP, Kingston

Australia captain Ricky Ponting has so much enjoyed the change of pace of the longer form of the game that he obliged with his 35th Test hundred of 158 helping his side reach 301 for four against West Indies when stumps were drawn on the opening day of the first Test on Thursday at Sabina Park.

Ponting scored a hundred in Australia's previous Test against India in January in Adelaide, but he struggled to come anywhere near his best in the subsequent one-day internationals and his brief run in the Indian Premier League.

"I didn't feel like I did much wrong at all to tell the truth," Ponting told reporters. "I probably played and missed three or four balls, and didn't hit too many in the air, and the one that I did, I got

caughton."

Ponting batted serenely for a shade short of six hours and, at times, literally appeared as though he was toying with the West Indies attack which was hamstrung by the withdrawal just prior to the start of key strike bowler Jerome Taylor with a stiff shoulder.

He said he felt good to be in control at the wicket with plenty of time to build an innings, rather

than to be confronted with the slap-and-dash of ODIs and Twenty20s.

"It's nice to know you have six hours to go out and build an innings," Ponting said. "In something like the IPL, sometimes you have got six balls or six minutes to go and have a hit."

"The start of a Test series is always exciting for me. We have played a lot of limited-overs cricket of late, and our last overseas Test was nearly two years ago and we only played the five Tests in the whole of our last summer."

"Test cricket has been a bit of a rarity for us of late, so I've been looking forward to putting the whites on again and 'the Baggy Green', and the green helmet, and getting out there, and spending some real quality time in the middle. I got that here."

Ponting acknowledged that he had been working pretty hard at his

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MOST TEST CENTURIES	
Player	100s
Sachin Tendulkar (India)	39
Ricky Ponting (Australia)	35
Sunil Gavaskar (India)	34
Brian Lara (West Indies)	34
Steve Waugh (Australia)	32
Matthew Hayden (Australia)	30
Jacques Kallis (South Africa)	30
Don Bradman (Australia)	29
Allan Border (Australia)	27
Garfield Sobers (West Indies)	26