

## BCB's EGM today

SPORTS REPORTER

The councillors of the Bangladesh Cricket Board (BCB) will sit in an extraordinary general meeting (EGM) today to endorse the much-talked-about draft constitution of the board.

And ahead of the meeting, BCB president Maj Gen Sina Ibn Jamali said that he was very optimistic about the success of it.

"We have taken the initiative to make an ideal constitution to successfully run the game in the country. We have taken opinion and suggestion from cross section of people and I am hopeful about the success of the EGM," Jamali told the reporters at the Sher-e-Bangla National Stadium in Mirpur yesterday.

The constitution review committee, where the president himself was personally involved, has brought major changes in the formation of the board that included a recommendation of

SEE PAGE 18 COL 5

## TIGERS-NZ SERIES Aviana gives discount on ticket fares

SPORTS REPORTER

Aviana Airways Ltd. (Royal Bengal) has signed a MoU with Bangladesh Cricket Board (BCB) yesterday to become official airlines for the Bangladesh-New Zealand series.

As per the contract BCB will get thirty-five per cent discount on ticket fares.

The BCB officials informed at a press conference that it was a new initiative and would save nearly Tk 2 lakhs.

Managing director of Aviana Squadron leader (ret'd) Syed Habibur Rahman also spoke on the occasion.



## Did U Know?

Carlo Ancelotti won the UEFA Champions League as an AC Milan player in 1988-89 and 1989-90 before coaching them to victory in 2002-03 and 2006-07.



## Matthew Hayden

(Australia's star opener)

"The Indian series is one of the great challenges in cricket and I feel up to it mentally. I am feeling very comfortable and confident with my game at the moment."

On his preparations for the upcoming series.



Citycell B. League  
Sportscentre India  
Sports News  
Live at 8:30pm



Citycell B. League  
Mohammedan v Mukti Joddha (5:00pm)  
Venue: Bangabandhu National Stadium

# Three new faces in Selectors' love for pace lifts eyebrows

Cricket

SPORTS REPORTER

Three uncapped players got the nod when the national selectors announced a 14-member squad on Monday for the three-match one-day series against New Zealand that will start on October 9 at the Sher-e-Bangla National Stadium in Mirpur.

The bleeding of youngsters is hardly an unpractised trend in national team selections. Nearly every series sees one or two rookies being thrown into the deep end. This time however, the Bangladesh Cricket Board (BCB) had a valid excuse which chief selector Rafiqul Alam was quick to stress on.

The soft-spoken selector said that his panel was forced to bring in opener Imrul Kayes, middle-order batsman Nayeem Islam and pacer Mahbubul Alam following the

retirement of some national players. However he seemed certain that the rookies were ready to take the challenge at the highest level.

From the party that toured Australia, Alok Kapali, Dhiman Ghosh and Forhad Reza joined the unauthorised Indian Cricket League (ICL) along with eleven others and thereby received a ten-year ban by the BCB.

Former national player Rafiqul Alam, who was up against the most volatile press so far in his eleven month tenure, came up with amusing explanations at the official briefing when asked about the inclusion of four pacers and left-handed batsman Mehrib Hossain, who made only one run on the Australia tour although he had made a hundred in the practice match, in the side.

The question was raised about why they picked four pacers, especially the inexperienced Mahbubul Alam, when even the Kiwis were

talking about the slow pitches here.

"What we thought that Robin [Mahbubul Alam] will get a chance to learn from our coach [Jamie Siddons]," said a bemused Rafiqul.

He made it clear that conditions did not play a role in selection as he later added: "He [Mahbubul Alam] might even play. We considered Robin in place of Dollar [Mahmud] who failed to fulfil our expectations. On the other hand Robin was excellent last year at different levels as an attacking pace bowler."

The answers descended to farce when Rafiqul explained the rea-

sons behind Mehrib Hossain's place. "If you compare him to Tushar [Imran], I must say he is getting highest training facilities to prepare himself."

The selection committee also bemoaned the lack of international options following the departure of some experienced players.

"The situation forced us to bring in some new players because of player retirement which left little options for us. Opening was a big problem that's why we picked Imrul as a third opener after Tamim [Iqbal] and Zunaed Siddiqui."

"Imrul showed his potential in domestic competitions and with the academy and A teams. Zunaed is also out of form but we considered his experience," explained Rafiqul, who however was not ready to consider Tushar Imran and Rajin Saleh's experience, choosing rather to focus on their poor performance.

SEE PAGE 18 COL 1

## SQUAD

Mohammad Ashraf (captain), Mashrafe Bin Mortaza (vice-captain), Tamim Iqbal, Zunaed Siddiqui, Imrul Kayes, Shakib Al Hasan, Mehrib Hossain, Nayeem Islam, Mushfiqur Rahim (wicketkeeper), Mahmudullah Riyad, Abdur Razzak, Syed Rassel, Shahadat Hossain and Mahbubul Alam.



PHOTO: STAR

TARGETING TIGERS! New Zealand all-rounder Scott Styris (L) and opening batsman Ross Taylor are doing throwing practice during a training session at the Sher-e-Bangla National Stadium yesterday. The Kiwis will play the first ODI against the hosts here on Thursday.

## 3-1 predicts Sehwag

Cricket

AFP, New Delhi

India could thrash Australia 3-1 in the upcoming Test series if it is played on turning pitches, opener Virender Sehwag said on Monday.

"If we play on spin-friendly tracks, the series might go 3-1 in our favour," the hard-hitting Indian batsman told CNN-IBN news channel.

"India is the only team that beat Australia in Australia twice. We beat them in Perth last time and before that in Adelaide."

"So we are accepting the challenge and we will fight it out. Hopefully, we will do well and reclaim the Border-Gavaskar

Trophy." Of the 22 Tests played for the Trophy, Australia have won 10 and India eight, with four draws.

Sehwag, the only Indian to have smashed a triple-century, is key to the hosts' fortunes as an aggressive opener in the four-Test series starting in Bangalore on Thursday.

"I am in good nick at the moment and looking forward to this series. I hope I do well because it's against the Aussies and everybody knows it's a tough task to get runs against them."

Sehwag, who has 5,157 runs from 60 Tests, singled out the spin department as a weak link in the Aussie team.

"In my opinion, they have a quality pace attack but don't have quality spin bowling. I have seen

their off-spinner (Jason Krejza) who gave 123 runs in 20 overs (in the first innings) against the Board President's XI," he said.

"I think we will go after him." The 29-year-old opener, however, said it would be a mistake to read too much into Australia's below-par performance in the drawn tour game at Hyderabad over the weekend.

"In a practice game, you don't give your 100 percent, you are just practising for the Test match and are not worried about the result," he said.

"I think the Aussies got what they wanted out of the game and they are ready for the Tests."

The tourists were embarrassed by India's second string over the

SEE PAGE 18 COL 5

# They're under pressure that comes from within

Cricket

CRICINFO, undated

Mahendra Singh Dhoni has said that Indian's senior batsmen -- Rahul Dravid, Sachin Tendulkar, Sourav Ganguly and VVS Laxman -- are under pressure more due to their own high expectations than that of the fans and the media.

With age catching up -- Laxman, who turns 34 next month, is the youngest of the middle-order veterans -- and all four of them in poor form during the recent Test series in Sri Lanka, their places have come under scrutiny.

Dhoni, however, insisted that the seniors still have a lot to offer. "There is more pressure on them

because of their own expectation level and because they have set the benchmark so high," he told NDTV.



MAHENDRA SINGH DHONI

"There is more pressure that comes from within."

"I don't think you can really write them off, they have plenty in them. But at the same time you have to look into the future. It's all about transition, making a respectful last few years in their international career."

Dhoni, India's limited-overs captain, also said that the seniors could still hold their own despite the presence of talented youngsters who are pushing for Test spots.

"We definitely have players who are talented and can make it big, but at the same time, it's not really about talent. Their adaptability and preparation matters."

He also said that Australia will

SEE PAGE 18 COL 2

## Black Caps' lone practice tie today

SPORTS REPORTER

Visiting New Zealand team will play their lone practice game today when they take on a BCB XI in a limited-overs match at the Fatullah Cricket Stadium.

Out-of-favour for the three-match one-day series, Rajin Saleh will lead the local selections against Daniel Vettori's Black Caps.

The match was originally scheduled to be played at the BKS ground but it has been shifted to Fatullah because of waterlogging at the sports institute following rain over the last few days.

It is however unlikely to see the match start on time as the ground condition was not good at Fatullah as well following the last few days' rain.

"It will be possible to start the match on time if we get sunshine in the morning. The sunshine this [Monday] afternoon helped us lot to prepare the ground but the outfield condition is still not good,"

SEE PAGE 18 COL 3

## Rajib 3rd in C'wealth chess

SPORTS REPORTER

Bangladeshi Grandmaster Enamul Hossain Rajib clinched bronze medal in the Commonwealth Chess Championship which concluded yesterday in Nagpur, India.

The third-place finish also earned the young Bangladeshi GM a purse of one lakh rupees.

In the 11th and final round, Rajib defeated MS Thej Kumar of India to take his collection to 8.5 points.

The gold went to British GM

SEE PAGE 18 COL 1



PHOTO: STAR

WELCOME ABOARD: Bangladesh captain Mohammad Ashraf (2nd from R) shares a light moment with Mahabubul Alam (L) while Naeem Islam (2nd from L) and Imrul Kayes look on during a practice session of the Tigers at the Sher-e-Bangla National Stadium. The picture was taken last week. The fresh trio has been included for the three one-day internationals against New Zealand.

# MSC face Mukti today League committee revises fixture

SPORTS REPORTER



The Citycell B. League resumes after the Eid vacation today with revised fixtures for the fourth round matches, which will determine fate of some senior players.

Mohammedan play Mukti Joddha in the first clash of heavyweights in this year's professional league which kicks off at 5pm at the Bangabandhu National Stadium while holders Abahani, instead of touring to Khulna to play their namesakes, will play hosts in the capital for the sake of the national team.

Mohammedan, who have rested for 18 days since their 3-0 win over Arambagh at the start of the second round, had a bye in the third round and should be fresh enough to go and add three points to their present collection of four.

Bottom-table Mukti Joddha have had the worst possible start, having lost all three matches after taking lead on two occasions but the struggling giants had good news before their match against this year's Federation Cup champions.

The Reds have received Tk ten

lakh as sponsorship money from Prime Bank, an amount that would perhaps take care of at least running the camp properly if not making payments to the players.

They have also in hand the international transfer certificate of Nigerian defender Davies Majemu, who could give Asgar Ali Nasir's side some solution to balance the wobbly backline.

It would also be a chance for skipper Feroz Mahmud Titu to play full 90 minutes for the first time in

## POINTS TABLE

Teams	M	W	D	L	GF	GA	Pts
Russel	3	2	1	0	9	3	7
Brothers	3	2	1	0	5	2	7
Abahani	3	2	0	1	4	2	6
Mohammedan	2	1	1	0	4	1	4
Ctg Abahani	3	1	1	1	2	2	4
Rahmatganj	2	1	0	1	3	3	3
Farashganj	3	1	0	2	4	5	3
Arambagh	2	1	0	1	2	4	3
Khulna Abahani	3	1	0	2	4	9	3
Ctg MSC	3	0	2	1	2	4	2
Mukti Joddha	3	0	0	3	2	6	0

## TOP SCORERS

5 goals: Alfaz (Russel)  
3 goals: Mehdi (Khulna Abahani)  
2 goals: Youness (Russel), Enamul (Farashganj), Idris (Rahmatganj), Emeke (Abahani), Oniya (Brothers)

SEE PAGE 18 COL 5

# Sourav sounds a caution

Cricket

AFP, Bangalore

India's Sourav Ganguly warned his side Monday not to underestimate the touring Australians after they struggled with bat and ball during a drawn four-day match in Hyderabad over the weekend.

Ahead of the Test series starting Thursday, Ganguly, a long-time nemesis of the Australians and a former India captain, said Ricky Ponting's men remained formidable opponents.

"Hope no one is getting excited by what happened in Hyderabad,"

Ganguly told reporters in Chennai, where he was turning out for India A against New Zealand A to prepare for the four-Test series.

"Australia is a fantastic side, everyone knows that. They will be ready when the first ball is bowled in the first Test in Bangalore on Thursday."

"We will have to be at our best to beat them. They are the world's number one side, but I think India too will be equal to the challenge."

"It should be a very good contest."

The outspoken Ganguly rattled Australia, especially former captain Steve Waugh, when he led India to a thrilling 2-1 win at home

SEE PAGE 18 COL 6

## TIGERS-NZ SERIES Tickets at AB Bank

SPORTS REPORTER

The tickets for the first and second one-day internationals between Bangladesh and New Zealand will be sold today at selected branches of AB Bank Limited.

Tickets will also be available at designated ticket booths of the stadium.

The first one-dayer is on October 9 at the Sher-e-Bangla National Stadium in Mirpur while the second match will also take place at the same venue on October 11.

The third ODI will be held at the Chittagong Divisional Stadium on October 14 and the tickets will go on sale at AB Bank branches in Chittagong from October 12. Tickets will also be available at the designated ticket booths of the Stadium on match day.

Tickets for the first Test, which starts on October 17 at the Chittagong venue, will be sold at AB Bank branches in Chittagong from October 15 and will also be available at ticket booths of the

SEE PAGE 18 COL 5

the league and impress national coach Shafiqul Islam Manik.

However, Maruful Haque's Mohammedan -- with as many as eight national players and three foreigners in the side -- would pose a big threat for Mukti Joddha to put an end to their losing streak.

Meanwhile, this would be the only domestic engagement for the national team players this month as Bangladesh participate in the Merdeka Cup in Malaysia from October 15-25.

Shafiqul Islam Manik will keenly watch the games and look for weaknesses in players before trimming the 28-member preliminary squad to the 20-member final squad on October 11.

Top players like Mohammed Suhan, Matru Munnna, Abul Hossain and Titu have been nursing injuries and a few others have been struggling for form to keep Manik waiting for the five matches in this round.

The B. League committee, which had a meeting last night, has also agreed to Manik's proposal of shifting Khulna Abahani's home match against Dhaka Abahani to Dhaka. Manik had made this request to save most of his national

SEE PAGE 18 COL 5

## 8 for Merdeka finalised

SPORTS REPORTER

Bangladesh Football Federation (BFF) yesterday confirmed the eight participating teams in the prestigious Merdeka Cup to be held in Malaysian capital Kuala Lumpur from October 15-25.

Mozambique have replaced Kazakhstan as the eighth team, according to a message received from the Malaysian FA.

Apart from Bangladesh, who lost all three group matches last year, Afghanistan and Nepal are the other South Asian nations competing.

Sierra Leone, Myanmar and Vietnam join hosts Malaysia to complete the set.

The groupings have yet to be done.

## Bridge team hold Norway

SPORTS REPORTER

Bangladesh national bridge team, now playing in the World Mind Games in Beijing, pulled off a major upset when they held World and European champions Norway to a draw in the seventh round yesterday.

On the opening day, Bangladesh defeated Morocco 25-0, Belgium 23-7 and lost 23-7 to Spain.

The team, comprising Moazzem Hossain, Feroze Ahmed, Salahuddin, KH Huq, Mobinul Islam and Rafiq Siddiqui, got off to a flying start on the second day beating Ukraine but slipped against Chinese Taipei and Guadeloupe.

In yesterday's second round match, Bangladesh thrashed Georgia 23-7.

Bangladesh were eighth out of 18 Group C teams after eight rounds. The top four teams will move to the second round.

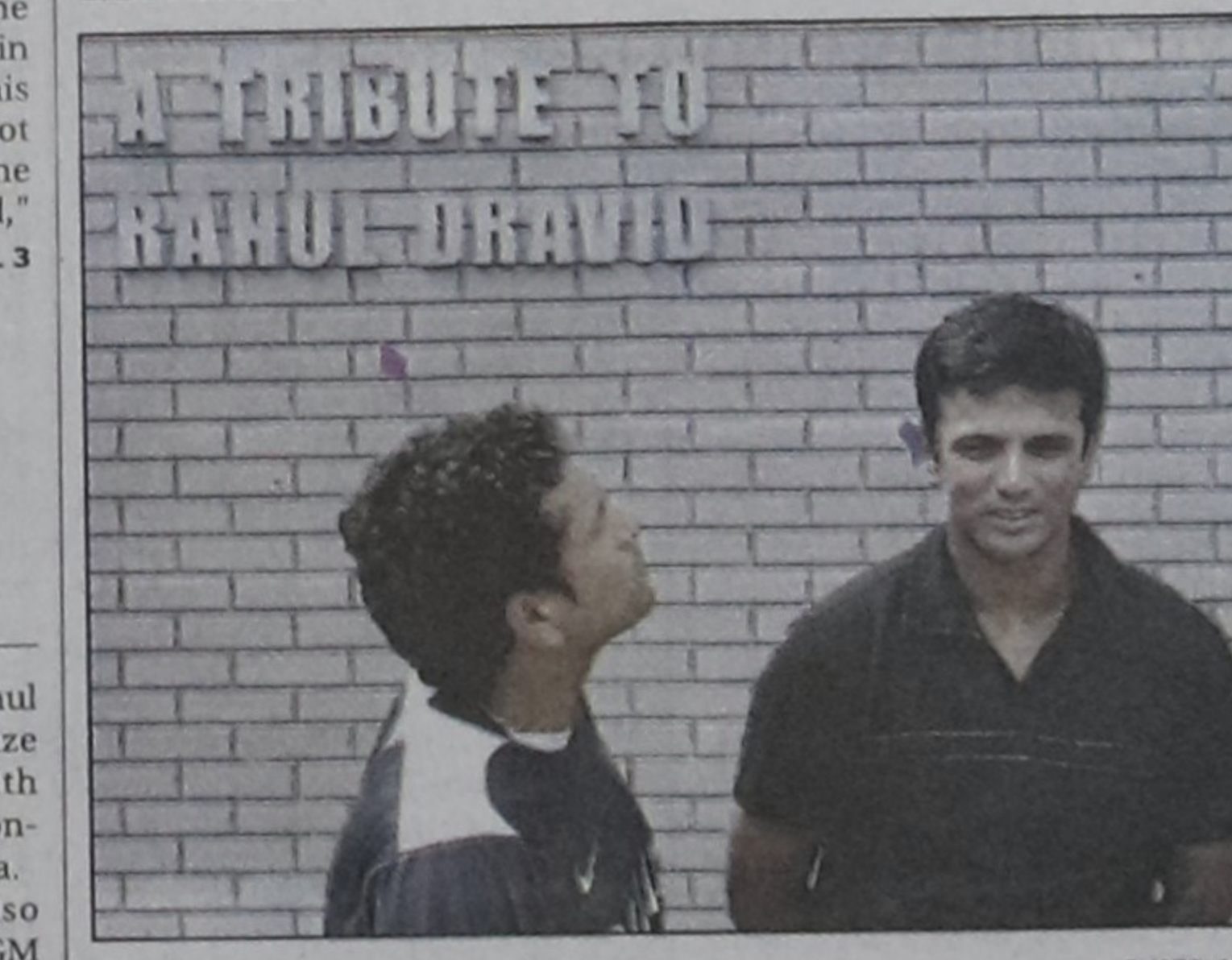


PHOTO: AFP

WALL FOR 'THE WALL': India batting maestros Sachin Tendulkar (L) and Rahul Dravid stand in front of a commemorative wall during a function at the Chinna Swamy Stadium in Bangalore yesterday. A real estate company organised the function to unveil the wall, constructed to honour Dravid for his achievement of scoring more than 10,000 runs in both Tests and ODIs.