



Rajshahi Mayor AHM Khairuzzaman Liton (L) Inaugurates the regional talent hunt programme for intellectually-challenged athletes at the Rajshahi Physical Training College yesterday.

## Cricket after 11 months Zim-Lanka 1st ODI today

AFP, Harare

Top-level cricket returns to troubled Zimbabwe after eleven months this week after Sri Lanka sent a 15-man squad to play a series of five one-day internationals that begins today.

Zimbabwe hosted an international team last year when West Indies toured in December.

The irony is that it was Sri Lanka, as much as any Test nation, which saw the end of Test cricket here four years ago.

It was they who, having won two Tests by an innings and more than 200 runs in 2004, were the first to declare they would not play five-day matches against Zimbabwe again.

England, New Zealand and Australia quickly followed suit.

Zimbabwe were then limited to 50-overs matches against other full members of the ICC plus four-dayers against such as Kenya and Namibia.

However, there are signs that Sri Lanka may find the locals rather more than pushovers.

They held Mahela Jayawardene's side to a draw in Bulawayo last week and on Monday they skittled the Sri Lankans out for 235 runs in fewer than the allotted 50 overs.

Unfortunately heavy rain prevented the home side, Zimbabwe "A", from batting in reply.

In the four-day game, Kumar Sangakkara scored 174 and Chamara Kapugedera 150 before retiring hurt in a total of 567-4 declared.

Zimbabwe made 165 and then 238-5, with three local batsmen getting half-centuries to save the game.

Sri Lanka coach Trevor Bayliss referred to their disappointing one-day batting performance as showing lack of application.

"We need to get back into gear and quickly" he told AFP. "I'm sure it will be very different when things get serious from Thursday."

The Sri Lankans have sent 15 players to this much-troubled country, including, according to Jayawardene, several youngsters gaining experience.

But there's plenty of experience, not least Muttiah Muralitharan, who Bayliss suggested will "go on and on."

Zimbabwe are working with a large squad which will be reduced Wednesday to 15, said convenor of selectors Kenya Ziehl.

Probably missing from the list will be former captain Tatenda Taibu who is in a long-running pay and conditions dispute with the Zimbabwe Cricket Association.

The five matches are scheduled for November 20, 22, 24, 28 and 30.

Late November normally sees the onset of the annual rainy season here, so it is possible some play will be lost.

The Duckworth Lewis system could well be brought into effect and some unusually damp conditions experienced.

## GP-SOB's talent hunt in Rajshahi

STAFF CORRESPONDENT, Rajshahi

The regional talent hunt programme for intellectually-challenged athletes started at the Rajshahi Physical Training College yesterday.

Gramophone, in partnership with Special Olympics Bangladesh (SOB), has organised the programme, which will conclude in Rajshahi on November 23.

The objective of the talent hunt is to create a 'national talent pool' of intellectually-challenged athletes and help empower them by nurturing and nourishing their sporting capabilities.

This national talent pool will be further groomed, nurtured and prepared for the next Special Olympics, the largest sports training and athletic competition for children and adults with intellectual disabilities, scheduled for 2011.

Rajshahi Mayor AHM Khairuzzaman Liton inaugurated the event.

Gramophone director of public relations Syed Yamin Bakht, DGM of corporate social responsibility Shafquat Hossain, founder chairman of SOB Ashraf-ud Dowla and chairman of SOB Shamim Matin Chowdhury were also present.

The talent hunt in seven disciplines -- aquatics, athletics, badminton, bocce, football, table tennis and cricket -- will be conducted under the guidance of specially-trained coaches from SOB.

It is expected that 150 boys and 50 girls from nine special schools covering Rajshahi, Bogra, Pabna, Rangpur, Dinajpur, Gaibandha, Kurigram, Lalmonirhat, Thakurgaon, Panchagar, Nilphamari, Joypurhat, Naogaon, Chapainawabganj, Natore and Sirajganj districts will be participating.

Earlier in 2007, the Bangladesh Special Olympics team performed exceptionally well in the 2007 Special Olympics World Summer Games, winning a total of 71 medals.

## 1st Division badminton from today

UNB, Dhaka

Three matches will be played on the opening day of the Fahami Group First Division Badminton League at the NSC Woodenfloor Gymnasium today.

A total of eight teams will take part in the league. They are: Biman, Gulshan SC, Ahaban, Surjo Torun, Tejkuipara KS, New Concern, Dewan Textile and Maha SC.

The men's champions will receive cash award of Tk 15,000 and the women Tk 10,000 respectively.

Sponsor Fahami group will finance the league budget of Tk31 lakh.

Bangladesh Badminton Federation president Kamal Uddin Ahmed disclosed the details at a press conference at NSC conference room yesterday.

Federation general secretary Zubaidur Rahman Rana, sponsor representatives Tanveer Ahmed and Faisal Odud were present.

Chief Adviser's special assistant Dr M Tamim will inaugurate the eight-day meet as chief guest.

## India must tour: Ashraf

AFP, Karachi

Pakistan's former cricket chief on Wednesday said India must tour the country early next year as planned or it could see Pakistani cricket "pushed to hell".

India are scheduled to play three tests, five one-day internationals and a Twenty20 match from January 13 to February 19, but the tour has been thrown into doubt amid fears over security in Pakistan.

Pakistan Cricket Board (PCB) has said it would consider switching the matches to neutral venues.

"If Pakistan fails to convince India to tour then Pakistan cricket will be hit worse because other teams will not come. I see our cricket almost pushed to hell," said former PCB chief executive Arif Abbasi.

The Indian government has refused to let the national junior hockey team visit Pakistan this month and there are fears in Pakistan the same could apply to the January-February cricket tour.

## SYMONDS TO PLAY

# Aus-NZ 1st Test today

Cricket

CRICINFO, undated

Andrew Symonds' Test exile is officially over after Ricky Ponting confirmed the allrounder would play in Thursday's first Test against New Zealand. Symonds was suspended following his fishing trip in Darwin before the one-day series against Bangladesh in August, but he has convinced himself, Cricket Australia and his teammates that he is ready to resume the No. 6 spot.

Australia's only remaining choice is whether to pick another allrounder in Shane Watson or the offspinner Jason Krejza on a pitch that will seam in the damp and humid conditions. The wicket is under-prepared -- Matthew Hayden called it "spicy" -- but if the predicted wet weather stays away Krejza will hold his spot. The call is a difficult one for Watson, who performed reasonably well with both disciplines in India, but Symonds' experience as a senior player meant he came in as soon as he was deemed ready.

"It was important that we got him back into our team," Ponting said. "Being a senior member of our team and a very successful member before he went out of it, it almost becomes an injury-type replacement. He's been

out for a couple of months. He's fit and ready to go and deserves his spot back in the side."

Despite Symonds having to go away and work out what he was doing wrong by the team, Ponting said he did not want the allrounder to change his personality. With the speed of Symonds' return -- and his form -- it is easy to wonder what the point of the exercise was if the squad is happy for him to be the same old Symo.

"I don't expect him to be the model citizen when he comes back into the side, I expect him to be the Andrew Symonds of old," Ponting said. "That's what we all love about him. We all love his personality and the way he is around the team."

Symonds has collected only 70 runs in three Sheffield Shield games for Queensland but Ponting has been impressed with his work in the nets this week and retains faith in his "big-game" qualities. Ponting hoped for more of the version of Symonds that scored 777 runs in his nine previous Tests, instead of the one that has struggled since undergoing psychological sessions as part of his rehabilitation.

"He does add a lot to your team," Ponting said. "He adds that X-factor, he adds that great presence in the field. He can bowl you some medium pace and offspin, so with that sort of cricketer in the line-up,

so far as balance goes, it is excellent."

Finding the right line-up was one of Australia's regular dilemmas in India, but that mostly surrounded trying to fit in the spin of Cameron White. Turn is not going to be much of a factor in this game, which is a shame for the New Zealand captain Daniel Vettori.

They will look at using Grant Elliott as a batsman at No. 7, a move which would leave the 19-year-old Tim Southee as 12th man. "We're trying not to bring in the fact that Grant bowls a little bit," Vettori said. "We want the best batsman at that position. The guy who comes in will bat at No. 7 and Grant is more accustomed to that than Peter Fulton."

Ponting and Andrew Hilditch, the chairman of selectors, decided on the 12 after looking at the pitch on Wednesday morning, with the fast bowler Peter Siddle being cut from the squad. Stuart Clark will return after missing the Nagpur Test and should enjoy the green surface that has been kept moist by rain since the weekend.

Krejza grabbed 12 wickets on debut in Nagpur last week while Ponting said Watson was the best fast bowler on the tour. "They'll be desperately unlucky, whoever misses out," Ponting said. Having four fast bowlers in the outfit is a concern for Ponting, whose side is regularly under over-rate

pressure.

Ponting has been criticised for his decision-making in Nagpur, where he called on part-time bowlers to lift the speed of the game, and the issue is nagging at him. "I, and our team, have been as guilty as anybody in being behind in our overs and making it not as good a spectacle as it could be," he said. "I have stayed away all week from talking to the team about the over-rates. If they don't understand it now as a result of what's been in the papers and spoken about for the last week, they never will."

While Australia worry, New Zealand have no concerns. "We've never had a problem with over-rates," Vettori said. "We have problems with being too fast and have to slow ourselves down. I'll try not to bowl myself too often in this game."

TEAMS

AUSTRALIA (from): Matthew Hayden, Simon Katich, Ricky Ponting (captain), Michael Hussey, Michael Clarke, Andrew Symonds, Shane Watson, Brad Haddin (wicketkeeper), Brett Lee, Mitchell Johnson, Stuart Clark, Jason Krejza.

NEW ZEALAND (from): Aaron Redmond, Jamie How, Jesse Ryder, Ross Taylor, Brendon McCullum (wicketkeeper), Daniel Flynn, Grant Elliott, Daniel Vettori (captain), Iain O'Brien, Kyle Mills, Chris Martin, Tim Southee.

## LOCAL SNIPPETS

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Sadharan Bima and Euro famous shared a goalless draw. Bima reached 17 points after 14 matches while Famous, who have played 13 games, are on 15 points.

## DIVIII SOCCER

The four-day transfers of Third Division Football League will begin today at the Bangabandhu National Stadium. A total of 18 teams, split into two groups, will take part in this year's competition, which is scheduled to start after the Eidul Azha.

The top four teams from each group will compete in the super league -- also divided into two groups. The champions and runners-up from each group will be promoted to second division. The bottom team of each first-phase group will be relegated to Pioneer League.

The teams: Muslim Institute, Swadhinata KC, Tongi KC, City United, Jirabo SC, Mirpur Ekadash, Dikusha SC, BKSP, Gulistan Club, Lalbagh SC, PWD, Rahmatganj SC, Rainbow AC, Kasaituli SKS, Shantinagar Club, BG Press, Rampura KC.

## KABADDI

UNB: Dhalpur Tokai beat Gulistan Tokai 62-18 with three lonas in the 2nd Orient Breat Tokai kabaddi competition at the Outer Stadium kabaddi court.

Khilgaon Tokai outclassed Paltan Tokai 71-33 with five lonas while Goran Tokai defeated Jatrabari Tokai 74-29 with four lonas in the other matches.

## Miandad new PCB DG

CRICINFO, undated

Javed Miandad, the former Pakistan captain, has been named the Pakistan board's director-general. Saleem Altaf, who had recently been appointed director-general, will now take charge as chief operating officer -- while appointing Altaf, the PCB, under new chairman Ijaz Butt, had done away with the chief operating officer's role, and rechristened it as director-general, PCB.

Miandad was highly tipped to take over as Pakistan's coach following the dismissal of Geoff Lawson last month, but he had turned down a fourth stint in charge of the team. Ijaz Butt, the new PCB chairman, later said Miandad was the board's first choice for the job, now taken up by Intikhab Alam.

"Intikhab was our second choice after we first went for Javed Miandad," Butt had told Bigstarcricket.com. "But it was very good of Javed to tell us that he was not interested in the position and that he would rather help us in other ways in an advisory capacity."

A spate of changes have taken place after Butt assumed charge. Former Test batsman Ijaz Ahmed and Shoaib Mohammad were appointed to the selection committee, with Saleem Jaffer, the surviving member of the previous three-man panel, named chairman of selectors. Talat Ali, the team's permanent manager since October 2006, stepped down, with Yawar Saeed, a veteran administrator and former manager, taking up duties for the ODI series in Abu Dhabi.

Aamer Sohail, the former Pakistan captain and opener, was appointed director of the National Cricket Academy (NCA), replacing Mudassar Nazar, who left for a coaching post with the ICC last month. Wasim Bari, the former wicketkeeper and chief selector, was appointed director of human resources and administration.



## Did U Know?

Court No. 2 at Wimbledon has earned the nickname "The Graveyard" as it is here that many seeded players have been knocked out of the competition.

## Dhoni urges Yuvraj

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Stuart Broad believes his side have the talent to recover from their dire situation in the series.

"There are five games left and we know momentum can change quickly in cricket," he said.

"If we can get a few basics right, win the next one and go on a little spree, then we'll be in with a shout and it will be a tight series."

"We're still a good side. We beat South Africa 4-0 in the summer."

Broad was the pick of England's bowlers in the second match in Indore, claiming three early wickets to reduce India to 29-3, before claiming the prized wicket of Yuvraj Singh for 118 to finish with figures of 4-55.

With Yuvraj Singh in sensational form with the bat, Broad admitted one of England's principle motives will be dismissing the left-hander as early as possible.

"On these slow wickets it's quite hard to get it around his

nose, but you've just got to keep him guessing and hopefully he'll nick one," he said.

Broad has suffered more than most at Yuvraj's hands having been dispatched for six successive sixes in one over during the World Twenty20 tournament in South Africa last year.

"I certainly haven't stood still. I've had to learn different balls and I realised how tough international cricket was and I do think it has helped me," he said.

## TEAMS

ENGLAND (from): Kevin Pietersen (capt), James Anderson, Ian Bell, Ravi Bopara, Stuart Broad, Paul Collingwood, Andrew Flintoff, Steve Harmison, Samit Patel, Matt Prior, Owais Shah, Graeme Swann.

INDIA (likely): Gautam Gambhir, Virender Sehwag, Suresh Raina, Yuvraj Singh, Virat Kohli, Mahendra Singh Dhoni (capt/wk), Yusuf Pathan, Harbhajan Singh, Zaheer Khan, Ishant Sharma, Munaf Patel.

## Barisal close to win

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innings on 366 for nine. His six-and-a-half hour knock was ended when Mohammad Younus trapped him leg-before with the team's score on 347. The burly left-arm from Cox's Bazar got three while paceman Tariq Aziz took four wickets.

Chittagong replied well, scoring 125 for two with Nafis Iqbal and Rezaul Karim hitting half-centuries but the latter's run out would give Dhaka the momentum going into the final day.

SYLHET V KHULNA If the first day belonged to Mithun Ali, Ashrafal Aziz made the second day his with a century of his own.

The right-hander who opened the batting with Mithun in the under-19 World Cup, stroked 105 with the help of eight boundaries and a six in a knock that spanned more than three hours.

His innings meant Khulna were just 50 runs away from the hosts' score of 300 all out. Nabil Samad held back the visitors somewhat with three wickets for 55 runs.

## BRIEF SCORES

BARISAL: 166 and second innings 342 in 116.4 overs (Rony 41, Faruque 19, Hannan 99, Imran 18, Nasir 92, Raisul 24, Shahin 12, Tariqul 5, Talha 7, Saiju 7, Kamrul 1, Kabir 1-58, Shuvo 4-119, Farhad 4-33, Shaiful 1-43).

RAJSHAH: 204 and second innings 48-7 in 19.3 overs (Mahbub 0, Jahurul 0, Farhad

22, Mashud 0, Anisur 11, Shuvo 12\*, Mushfiqur 0, Alamgir 0, Talha 1-13, Tariqul 3-14, Kamrul 2-9, Nasir 1-1) [target: 305].

CHITTAGONG: 314 and second innings 125-2 in 29 overs (Salahuddin 8, Nafis 52\*, Rezaul 59, Imran 1-28).

DHAKA: First innings 366-9 dec in 128.2 overs (Javed 13, Anwar 65, Shamsur 15, Marshall 181, Riyad 1, Nadif 41, Milon 12, Arafat 4, Elias 0, Imran 11\*, Tariq 4-61, Younus 3-110, Raihan 2-80).

SYLHET: First innings 300 all out in 96.3 overs (Rahman 5, Imtiaz 8, Saikat 88, Mithun 106, Rajin 49\*, Kamrul 1, Rezaul 17, Taposh 0, Nabil 0, Rashedur 2, Monir 12, Zia 1-46, Dollar 2-50, Rabiul 3-58, Atiqur 2-82, Anas 2-41).

KHULNA: First innings 250-5 in 82 overs (Amit 34, Ashrafal 105, Sahagir 9, Tushar 25, Nahid 18, Anas 21\*, Salim 18\*, Nabil 3-55, Monir 1-61, Rashedur 1-64).

## Chandpur

FROM PAGE 17

Comilla to 174-9. At Pirojpur, Barisal (147-8) beat Bhola (146) by two wickets.

They joined Khulna, Faridpur, Rangpur, Habiganj and Mymensingh in the eight-team finals.

In another match of the remaining zone, Nilphamari (236) dumped Lalmonirhat (121) by 115 runs at the Dinajpur Bara Maidan.

## Bowlers toil in rain

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could offer any threat to the three South African batsmen.

The slower bowlers, who gave the New Zealanders some trouble in the last series at home, were nowhere to be found in much tougher conditions. Mahbubul Alam came up with good inswingers on a few occasions against left-handed Smith but South African skipper negotiated all of those deliveries safely.

The bigger worry however for the Bangladesh skipper was the wicket-keeping of

Mushfiqur Rahim.

## SCOREBOARD

Scoreboard at stumps on the first day of the first Test between South Africa and Bangladesh in Bloemfontein on Wednesday:

SOUTH AFRICA: First innings Smith not out 138 McKenzie c Mehra b Shahadat 42 Amlan not out 103 Extras: (b-2, lb-6, nb-8) 16 Total: (For 1 wkt in 81 overs) 299 To bat: Kallis, Prince, De Villiers, Boucher, Harris, Morkel, Steyn, Ntini Fall of wickets: 1-102

Bowler O M R W Mashrafe 17 4 43 0 Mahbubul 15 5 38 0 Shahadat 14 0 81 1 Shakib 25 1 95 0 Nayeem 5 0 19 0 Mehra 5 0 15 0

BANGLADESH: Tamim Iqbal, Imrul Kayes, Zunaed Siddique, Mohammad Ashraf, Mehra b Hossain, Shakib Al Hasan, Mushfiqur Rahim, Nayeem Islam, Mashrafe Bin Mortaza, Shahadat Hossain, Mahbubul Alam.

Toss: Bangladesh. Umpires: SJ Davis (Australia) and JJ Gould (England).

## Pacers impress AD

FROM PAGE 17

"If you are not up to scratch at this level and with the amount of cricket you play these days, you are going to get injured more often," he suggested when asked what could be the best recipe for an injury-prone bowler like Mashrafe to keep his fitness.

The 42-year-old Donald also explained his comments -- "Tigers have their feet in toilet" -- about the Bangladesh batsmen prior to the Test series and made it clear that it's just a common term and one could not be hurt by this.

"It's very common when guys face up to an attack like South Africa. I see the way Bangladesh bat; their feet really don't go anywhere. That's what I meant, using the term 'feet in the toilet' and I don't think things will change that much to be honest," he explained.

"I just think if South Africa bowl like they can, if they find the length they can, on this particular wicket, which will have a bit of bounce and it will get quicker than I see a few problems."

"But I mean that South Africa must bowl aggressive length and those kind of length that South Africa will bowl will take the feet away, that's what I have meant at that time," he added.

While Donald had hardly any good impression on the Bangladesh team, another former South Africa bowler Omar Henry was very much hopeful about Bangladesh cricket.

"I was keen to get the job of Bangladesh coach because the country has a lot of potential in international cricket. Anyone would love to work with these young guys because they have the talent," said Henry, the first

non-white cricketer to play for South Africa.

"The most exciting fact is that people all over Bangladesh are very much interested in cricket and that's why I expressed my desire to coach the team."

"I could not reach any agreement because the then CEO (Mahmudur Rahman) was not ready to make a three-year contract," revealed the 53-year-old former left-arm spinner, who made his debut at the ripe old age of forty because of Apartheid and played just three Tests and as many ODIs.

"It's ridiculous to make a two-year contract with any coach because one has to spend at least one year only to understand the situation and the guys, and then he can apply his method on his charges to get the result from the third year," he observed.

## CROSSWORD By Eugene Sheffer

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