

## 17 on BCB payroll

Cricket

SPORTS REPORTER

Bangladesh Cricket Board (BCB) has brought seventeen players including five new faces on the payroll and approved allocation of ten per cent of the national team sponsorship money to the players and five per cent to the welfare fund.

The decisions were taken at a marathon meeting of the board of directors at the Sher-e-Bangla National Stadium in Mirpur yesterday.

Only left-arm seamer Sajedul Islam has not been offered a contract while all-rounder Nayeem Islam, opener Imrul Kayes and pacers Mahbubul Alam, Nazmul Hossain and Rubel Hossain have all been incorporated on the payroll.

"We want to include more players in the system and the number of players will increase

gradually in future," said Jalal Yunus, the BCB's media committee chairman who informed the media about the outcome of the meeting.

The board approved seventeen players for central contract and they will be placed under five grades.

Meanwhile, the salary of the national team players and the local staff of the team management was increased by thirty per cent in the board's previous meeting last month.

In another major move, the board approved a fresh appointment process for the chief executive officer's (CEO) post which has been vacant for the last two years. It also approved the appointment of one foreign curator, preferably from India or from any other Test playing nation.

The board confirmed the Sri Lanka National Cricket Academy and Sri Lanka U-19 Team tours in Bangladesh in April-May this year while they also approved the tour of Ranji Trophy team Maharashtra's tour to Bangladesh from May 16 to June 5 this year.

Maharashtra will play three T20 matches against the BCB XI, three one-dayers and two three-day matches against Bangladesh A team.

The board also discussed different upcoming tournaments -- the Club Cup championship, Port City League (PCL), CCDM Cup and the Women's Club Cup.

"We have had long discussions regarding different tournaments and as per decisions the CCDM Cup will take place in a concise format. Already two teams have expressed unwillingness to participate and that's why there is a

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### CONTRACTED PLAYERS

**GRADE A+:** Mohammad Ashraful and Mashrafe Bin Mortaza;  
**GRADE A:** Abdur Razzak, Shakib Al Hasan, Shahadat Hossain, Tamim Iqbal and Mushfiqur Rahim;  
**GRADE B:** Syed Rasel and Zunaed Siddiqui;  
**GRADE C:** Mehrah Hossain Jr., Rokibul Hassan, Nazmul Hossain, Mahmudullah Riyad, Nayeem Islam, Imrul Kayes, Mahbubul Alam and  
**ROOKIE GRADE:** Rubel Hossain.



### Did U Know?

The Soldier Field stadium in Chicago, Illinois, is the oldest field in the National Football League.



### What to WATCH

**ESPN**  
English Premiership  
Aston Villa v Everton  
Live from 7:00pm  
Manchester City v Fulham  
Live from 9:05pm  
Spanish Primera Liga  
Deportivo v Atletico Madrid  
Live from 12:55am (Monday)



### TALK TURKEY



### Harbhajan Singh

(Ace India spinner)  
"If we play to our potential, stick to the basics and focus on the job, we have the team that can beat anyone anywhere."

### LOCAL SNIPPETS

SPORTS REPORTER

Wari Club defeated Nobin Sangha by three wickets at the Jahangirnagar University ground yesterday in the Second Division Cricket League.

Batting first, Nobin Sangha made 192 from nine from 50 overs with Sagar top-scoring with 39 runs while Ashkur of Wari took three wickets. The Old Dhaka outfit reached the target in 41.5 overs with Mashui scoring 37 not out.

In other matches, Kalindi beat Gopibagh by 93 runs at the Fatullah Cricket Stadium, Al-Rashid beat Dhanmondi Pragati by 24 runs at the Dhaka University Ground, North Bengal beat Kakrail Boys by 45 runs at the Dhanmondi Cricket ground and Rayer Bazar beat East End by two wickets at the East End Club ground.

**DIV III CRICKET**  
Orient Cricket Academy beat Tongi Cricket Academy by seven wickets at the Gulshan Youth Ground in the Third Division Cricket League.

Batting first, Tongi were bowled out for 150 runs in 47.2 overs before Orient reached the target in just 25.5 overs with Jewel slamming a quickfire 65.

In another match, Narayanganj Cricket Academy beat Lalbagh Anwar by the slim margin of one wicket at the City Club Ground.

### Agencies to cover IPL

PTI, Johannesburg

The stalemate over the media coverage of the second Indian Premier League is finally over with the major international news agencies agreeing to cover the event after the organisers withdrew contentious conditions imposed on the media outlets.

Ending uncertainty over the coverage of the event, starting April 18, the negotiation between the News Media Coalition (NMC), representing media interests worldwide, and the IPL authorities found a way out, clearing the decks for the worldwide coverage of the Twenty20 extravaganza.

The Associated Press (AP), Agency France-Presse (AFP) and Reuters would now be

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## Booters to warm up in Nepal

Football

SPORTS REPORTER

Bangladesh national football team will play a practice match in Nepal ahead of the AFC Challenge Cup, which starts on April 26 in Dhaka.

Bangladesh will arrive in Kathmandu on April 16 and will play one practice match in the Nepalese capital against Nepal Police Team (previously known as Mahendra Police Club) on April 18.

Bangladesh Football Federation (BFF) are also trying to bring a team from Kolkata, India for another practice match in Dhaka before the competition begins.

Nepal Police participated in the country's top football league and in 2007, finished runners-up in the AFC President Cup in Pakistan. Bangladesh

will return to Dhaka on April 20 to host the AFC Challenge Cup from April 26.

The hosts will take part in the meet along with Myanmar, Cambodia, Macau and Mongolia as part of the Group A qualifiers for a spot in the eight-team finals of the third edition of the minnows' competition.

Four group winners and the best runners-up will join defending champions India, runners-up Tajikistan and North Korea in the final round.

The AFC Cup champions will also qualify for the 2011 Asian Cup finals in Qatar.

The Bangladesh Football Federation (BFF) has announced a 25-member squad on the last week of March. They are currently training under coach Dido.

The Brazilian coach and the team's Argentine trainer Ariel Coleman have stressed on the need for improved fitness levels for the players as they prepare for the international fixture later this month.

## Veeru's eyes on middle-order?

Cricket

CRICINFO, undated

Despite his success as an opener, Virender Sehwag has said he still belongs in the middle order and would love to bat there if he got the chance. Sehwag said he had asked the team management to push him down the order when he felt he was out of form but had been told he would contribute better as an opener.

"I was a middle-order batsman who was asked to open and luckily for me, things went really well," Sehwag told Indian Express. "In fact, till date, as an opener I am just doing a job given to me by the team management. Given a choice, I would happily slide down and play in the middle-order because that's where I

belong. But right now, I have a job entrusted to me and I love the responsibility, so no regrets at all."

In eight Tests in which he batted between No. 4 and No. 7, Sehwag averaged 41.55, with one century and two half-centuries. As an opener he averages 51.21 from 64 Tests.

Sehwag also said he and his opening partner Gautam Gambhir motivated themselves by placing bets on who would score faster. "I believe that a sense of competition always helps achieve your best and so we indulge in these little games. I really teased him when I outsourced him in the one-day series and he told me he would get back at me. After the Test series, he's teasing me about how many more runs he scored than me."

Sehwag felt he was going through the best

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Manchester United midfielder Paul Scholes (L) is congratulated by teammate Dimitar Berbatov after he has just scored the opening goal in an English Premiership match against Sunderland at the Stadium of Light yesterday.

PHOTO: AFP

### Sachin hails Gary's role

CRICINFO, undated

Sachin Tendulkar has praised India's coach Gary Kirsten for his role in the team's first Test series win in New Zealand for more than 41 years. Since beating Australia late last year India have been on a roll, with their confidence right up, and Tendulkar felt Kirsten's allowing the team to be themselves was key.

"A lot of credit has to go to coach Gary Kirsten who has allowed the natural instincts of players to flourish," he told the Mumbai-based tabloid Mid-day. "A lot has got to do with what's going on in a player's mind and Gary has played a huge role there."

"Along with Gary, the support staff Venkatesh Prasad (bowling coach), Robin Singh (fielding coach), our physio Nitin Patel and Paddy Upton (mental conditioning coach). It's the huge effort from all of them that has created this environment."

India, not having won a Test series in New Zealand for more than 41 years, achieved

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## MU see off Sunderland

AFP, London



Federico Macheda's fairytale start to his Manchester United career continued on Saturday when he scored with his first touch to sink Sunderland and keep the champions on top of the Premier League.

Six days after he scored a sensational stoppage-time winner against Aston Villa, the 17-year-old Italian came off the bench again to deflect Michael Carrick's low shot past Craig Gordon and seal a 2-1 win after Kenwyne Jones had cancelled out Paul Scholes's first-half header.

It was a victory that United scarcely deserved after another nery performance but it was sufficient to ensure Sir Alex Ferguson's side regained a one-point advantage over Liverpool at the top of the table.

United have the added insurance of a game in hand over their biggest rivals, who had bounced back from their Champions League mauling by Chelsea by knocking four goals past Blackburn without reply.

Fernando Torres was the architect of Liverpool's win with two first-half strikes, the Spanish striker following up a memorable fifth-minute volley with a header after 33 minutes to take his goal tally for the season to 14.

A long-range strike from Danish centreback Daniel Agger, seven minutes from the end, and a last-minute goal for young striker David Ngog

sealed the points on a day when Anfield remembered the 96 supporters who died in the Hillsborough disaster of April 15, 1989.

Chelsea kept their own title hopes alive with a 4-3 win over Bolton in a bizarre encounter at Stamford Bridge

Michael Ballack combined with Salomon Kalou to give the Blues a half-time lead and they cruised into a 4-0 lead when Didier Drogba claimed a second-half double sandwiched around a Frank Lampard penalty.

But three goals in the space of eight minutes -- from Andy O'Brien, Chris Basham and Matt Taylor -- ensured Chelsea were left hanging on desperately at the end.

Arsenal's long unbeaten run in the league appeared under threat after former Tottenham striker Mido's shot crept under Lukasz Fabianski to give Wigan a half-time lead at the JJB Stadium.

But the Gunners cut loose in the final half-hour with Theo Walcott, Mikael Silvestre, Andriy Arshavin and Alexandre Song all finding the net for a 4-1 win to consolidate the Gunners' grip on fourth place.

At the other end of the table, Middlesbrough gave their survival hopes a huge shot in the arm with a 3-1 win over relegation rivals Hull.

Tuncay Sanli's third-minute strike was quickly cancelled out by a header from Manucho, the Manchester United striker on loan at Hull.

But Matthew Bates toe-poked in Stewart

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Delhi Daredevils' Virender Sehwag (C), Gautam Gambhir (L), and Amit Mishra (R) pose with a giant cricket bat during a sponsored send-off event for the Indian Premier League, to be held in South Africa, in New Delhi yesterday.

PHOTO: AFP

### Akhtar on ICC's drug radar

INTERNET, undated

Pakistan's controversial pacer Shoaib Akhtar can be specifically targeted by the International Cricket Council (ICC) if it opted to carry out random dope tests during the one-day series between Pakistan and Australia starting in Dubai from April 22.

According to the media reports on Friday, some of the cricketers featuring in the one-day series can be asked to undergo dope tests by the ICC in line with the new anti-doping regulations adopted by the game's governing body.

If such tests are carried out, Shoaib will be an ideal candidate because of his past track record and the fact that he mysteriously became fit just weeks after suffering from a serious knee problem.

Shoaib, 33, tested positive for banned anabolic steroid nandrolone during the 2006 Champions Trophy in India. He has been mostly out of international action since then either due to injury or suspension.

But he made a stunning comeback to the Pakistan team for the April 22-May 7 series against the Aussies earlier this month after passing a series of fitness tests.

Reports suggested that the bowler may find himself in trouble during the series against the Aussies if asked to undergo dope tests.

The ICC has toughened its anti-doping policies. In February, a team of ICC experts had briefed the Pakistan players, backroom staff and officials on the new ICC Anti-Doping Code (2009) which came into effect January 1.

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## Younis predicts 5-nil prance

Cricket

INTERNET, undated

Pakistan captain Younis Khan has said that his team would beat Australia 5-0 in the forthcoming one day international series in the UAE.

Talking to reporters at the Gaddafi Stadium here, Khan, while replying to a question said: "No doubt it will be 5-0, but in favour of Pakistan."

He admitted that Pakistan has not played much international cricket in recent times, and it could affect its performance in the series.

Khan, however, said his team was capable of handing out surprises.

"Remember how Pakistan defeated England in 2005, which came here after beating Australia in the Ashes series," The Dawn quoted Khan, as saying.

When enquired about Shoaib Akhtar's slack performance in the ongoing training camp, he said it was not the right platform to judge a player like his caliber.

"One should watch Akhtar in the match as that was the real platform to examine the performance of a player," Khan added.

Replying to a question about suggesting Akhtar about his role in the team, Khan said:

"Who am I to give him advice, he is not a child and knows very well what the team expects from him."

"Shoaib is also duty bound to play for the country, and the team and not for himself. I feel no difference between Shoaib Akhtar and upcoming Ahmad Shahzad as far as performance of a player is concerned," he added.

Khan said he would have liked to perform against a full strength Australian team.

Australia has rested their three top players Ricky Ponting, M Hussey and Mitchell Johnson for the five match series.

Meanwhile, the sandy cricket grounds in Abu Dhabi and Dubai has made Pakistan pacers fear for injuries during the forthcoming matches.

"We have to maintain our speed and performance even in these difficult conditions and we are afraid that it would only bring injuries and fitness problems to us," The Daily Times quoted a Pakistan fast bowler, as saying.

Being located amidst a vast sand desert both the stadiums in Abu Dhabi and Dubai demand players to be more than hundred percent fit.

Particularly the fast bowlers would have to toil hard, as sand beneath the surface of the ground could create trouble in their run-up.