

ONE-DAY WARM-UP MATCH - FATULLAH

## Eng open tour today

Cricket

SPORTS REPORTER

The visiting England team take to the field today when they meet the BCB XI in the first limited-overs warm-up match at the Fatullah Cricket Stadium. The match starts at 9am.

The English cricket team, led by Alastair Cook, arrived in Dhaka on Sunday night for a month-long tour consisting of three one-day internationals and two Tests. They however avoided doing any practice yesterday.

The tourists will play two limited-overs practice games, with the second warm-up match scheduled for Thursday at the same venue, to acclimatise before the three-match one-day series kicks off with a day-nighter on February 28 at the Sher-e-Bangla National Stadium in Mirpur.

Left-handed opener Shahriar Nafees, who made a forgettable return to international cricket after more than one and a half years against India last month, will lead an inexperienced local selection in the first practice match.

"It's just another game for me. I think everybody will try to play their best game," said

Shahriar when asked about the match.

He however said that there would be a good chance for the local team to achieve something against this England side.

"This England side is little bit inexperienced as some key players like Andrew Strauss are not accompanying the team. My personal opinion is that Bangladesh stand a very good chance to win matches in this series if we consider the condition and the strength of the opponents. And we proved our strength in our home condition against a team like India," Shahriar opined.

Due to hectic schedule the selectors initially announced the team without any national players who returned home from New Zealand in the early hours of Sunday but later included out-of-form Rokibul Hasan and all-rounder Nayeem Islam after Alok Kapali pulled out citing medical reasons.

Chief selector Rafiqul Alam said that they would consider more national players for the second practice match and there was a good chance for pace spearhead Mashrafe Bin Mortaza also.

"We were unable to give chances to too many players for the first game to accustom to the English attack but hopefully it will be possible

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NAT'L CRICKET LEAGUE

## Nasir lifts Rajshahi

SPORTS REPORTER

Nasir Hossain slammed a hundred as Rajshahi survived early hiccup against Khulna on the first day of the second round match of the second phase of 11th National Cricket League match at BKSP yesterday.

Batting at number seven, Nasir clobbered sixteen fours and a six during his 190-ball 122 as leaders Rajshahi, who suffered a shocking defeat in the first round of the second phase, declared their first innings on 269 for nine recovering from 91 runs for six.

New ball pair Robiul Islam and Syed Rasel initiated the early damage by taking five wickets. Robiul started the carnage by removing Sohravordi Shuvo for naught and took two more quick wickets to continue his impressive run in the country's lone first-class competition. Robiul picked up three for 104 runs while Rasel and spinner Murad Khan captured two wickets each.

The resistance finally came from Nasir who got useful supports from the tail-enders to ensure a decent total.

Khulna negotiated the day's last seven overs without any loss as they reached 111.

At the Sheikh Abu Naser Stadium in Khulna, it was also a tale of the tail-enders as Chittagong recovered from 111 for six to finish the day with 294 for eight riding on a 102-run unbeaten ninth wicket partnership between Arman Hossain and Kazi Kamrul.

Gazi Salahuddin stood tall in the top-order collapse as he occupied the crease for three hours to make a 144-ball 72 and then number seven Abdullah Al Mamun contributed 43 off 63 deliveries with five fours and two sixes.

Arman and Kamrul however frustrated the Dhaka bowlers most. Arman remained not out on 67 and Kamrul 41.

Talha Jubair, Mohammad Sharif and Mosharrar Rubel picked up two wickets each.

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PHOTO: STAR

England superstar Kevin Pietersen is having a look round the lobby of Sonargaon Hotel yesterday. The touring team cancelled their scheduled practice session on the day and instead they stayed indoors. England arrived here on Sunday night to play three ODIs and two Tests.

SECURITY THREATS ON 2011 WORLD CUP

## Aus, NZ on standby

CRICINFO, undated



ICC Cricket World Cup 2011

Australia and New Zealand are believed to be part of a contingency plan to shift the 2011 World Cup out of the subcontinent due to security threats. Justin Vaughan, the New Zealand Cricket (NZC) chief executive, admitted to such a move, but was hopeful that the tournament would go ahead as planned. He also said that New Zealand would tour India as scheduled at the end of the year.

"You cannot move the timing of the tournament (the World Cup), in March-April, so really there's only Australia-New Zealand and South Africa who could host it," Vaughan told Stuff.co.nz. "Obviously, players need to be safe, but we cannot run away when a threat is made. By tightening the security measures around the teams we somehow have to make it safe otherwise the sport will struggle to survive if we

cannot find a solution.

"We've got to find a way to make this work because Asia is the heartbeat of cricket in the present day."

Vaughan said that assessing security for the India tour would also be critical. "India is so important and you cannot envisage a scenario when you cannot tour India -- it's not worth thinking about," he said. "The host's security plans are vital. I'd go anywhere in the world if there was the right security plan. I'd go to Iraq, if the right security was in place."

However, Haroon Lorgat, the ICC chief executive, assured that major cricket nations would work in unison to ensure the World Cup did not fall prey to terrorism. "The World Cup is the big piece of work that we have to deliver -- and we intend to do so," Lorgat told the Guardian. "The whole issue of security is dynamic, but we will assess it very carefully and implement whatever measures are necessary

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PHOTO: STAR

Bangladesh Cricket Board XI captain Shahriar Nafees (C) receives some batting tips from coach Minhazul Abedin (L) while middle-order batsman Rokibul Hasan listens during a practice session at the Sher-e-Bangla National Cricket Stadium in Mirpur yesterday. Shahriar and company take on visiting England in a limited-overs warm-up game at the Fatullah Cricket Stadium today.

## Another poor day for shooters

SPORTS REPORTER

Bangladeshi shooters continued their dismal performance in the Commonwealth Shooting Championship as the Abdullah Hel Baki and Toufique Shahriar Chandan pair finished fourth in the men's 50m rifle 3 position pair event at the Dr. Karni Singh Shooting Range in New Delhi, India yesterday.

Chandan (1135) and Baki (1122) together scored 2257, eight points less than the bronze winners Scottish Graham Rudd and Neil Stirton, who together made 2266.

The Indian shooters dominated the show as they also bagged gold in the event with Sanjeev Rajput and Gagan Narang scoring 2323 while English pair James Huckle and Ken JNR Rarr won bronze scoring 2295.

Meanwhile, Bangladesh won a bronze in the men's 10m air rifle pair event on the opening day of the competition.

## BCB board sits today

SPORTS REPORTER

The national team management has been invited to attend today's board of directors meeting of the Bangladesh Cricket Board (BCB) at the Sher-e-Bangla National Stadium in Mirpur.

"Captain, coach and team operations manager will apprise the board about the New Zealand trip. We also asked the Under-19 team management to appear in the meeting to give their opinion on the World Cup performance," said BCB's media committee chairman Jalal Yunus yesterday.

There are six topics to be discussed during the meeting including the extension of contracts of bowling coach Champaka Ramanayake and Ruwan Kalpage.

It was learnt that the position of team operations manager Shafiqul Haque Hira is also in doubt as most of the directors are in favour of bringing changes to the post.

**DAY'S EVENT**

BCB XI v England  
Warm-up one-dayer  
Venue: Fatullah Cricket Stadium  
National Cricket League  
(Four-Day Match, Day Two)

Rajshahi v Khulna  
Venue: BKSP-2  
Dhaka v Chittagong  
Venue: Sheikh Abu Naser Stadium, Khulna

## Aminul looking forward

Football

SPORTS REPORTER

A distressed Bangladesh national football team returned home yesterday after finishing their AFC Challenge Cup finals campaign on a low with an embarrassing 3-0 defeat to hosts Sri Lanka in their last encounter.

Before the start of the third edition of the third-tier Asian nations' meet in Colombo, Bangladesh had set their sights on the semifinals. They made an astonishing start with a 2-1 win over inaugural meet's champions Tajikistan and gave neighbours Myanmar a scare before going down 1-2 in the second match.

Bangladesh's performance in the first two matches had intensified expectation of qualifying for the last four before facing Sri Lanka, but they frustrated all to go 3-0 down to exit tamely from the tournament.

Captain Aminul Haque blamed the worst defeat against Sri Lanka on the hot

weather as well as tiredness of the players though coach Saiful Bari Titu had earlier said that the players took on too much pressure and thereby collapsed to Sri Lanka.

"We played excellent football in the first two matches against Tajikistan and Myanmar, but could not justify our real strength against Sri Lanka because of the hot weather as well as the booters' tiredness following their involvement in eight international matches in 20 days," said Aminul at the Dhaka International Airport.

The booters looked gloomy when they came out from the Zia International Airport and walked straight for the carriers and Aminul talked to the reporters as coach Saiful Bari Titu did not accompany the team and is scheduled to arrive here today.

It is emerging as a trend that Bangladeshi booters always collapse in the crucial matches. Such as, they under the supervision of Edson Silva Dido failed to produce their best against Myanmar and went 2-1 down in qualifying round of the AFC Challenge Cup at home despite having won the first two games against

Macao and Cambodia and again while coached by Shahidur Rahman Shantoo looked dead and buried against India in the SAFF Championship semifinal and went 1-0 down to end a promising start.

Refuting the claim, Aminul said that the players did not feel any pressure.

"We always play for a win and never feel any pressure," country's number one goalkeeper said. "We lost to India because of a lack of practice and to Sri Lanka due to weather and the tiredness of the players."

The backline was the main concern for Bangladesh in the match against Sri Lanka as coach Titu opted to play striker Nasiruddin as a defender in place of the suspended Rezaul Karim and kept real defender Mamun Mia out of the starting eleven and the decision was later proved wrong as Sri Lanka launched their most attack through wing of Nasiruddin.

Aminul also defended his coach's decision to field Nasiruddin instead of Mamun Mia and said the decision of the coach was not wrong. The goalkeeper also

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## Kieswetter surprised

Cricket

CRICINFO, undated

England's newest recruit, Craig Kieswetter, will play his first match for his adopted nation on Tuesday, exactly a week after completing his residency qualification, when he takes on a BCB XI at Fatullah in England's first warm-up match of their tour of Bangladesh.

Kieswetter, 22, was not originally selected for the Bangladesh tour, but earned a late call-up to the one-day party after impressing for the England Lions during their recent series in the UAE, not least with a hard-hitting 81 that secured a five-wicket win over the senior side in Abu Dhabi.

Andy Flower, England's head coach, confirmed that Kieswetter had been chosen with a view to playing in the World Twenty20 in the Caribbean at the end of April, and he is likely to open the batting in the first warm-up, alongside the new captain, Alastair Cook, with Matt Prior retaining his role behind the stumps.

"The call-up definitely came out of the blue for me, I wasn't expecting it at all," Kieswetter told reporters at the team hotel in Dhaka. "I found out on the bus on the way back from training and felt really ecstatic about it, and chuffed, but there are butterflies and nerves going around. But I'll be trying to do the best that I can in training and hopefully in the matches too."

Regardless of his obvious talent, which has been honed with guidance from his Somerset opening partner, Marcus Trescothick, who is arguably England's finest one-day batsman of the past decade, Kieswetter's South African origins have stirred up controversy -- especially given that his new teammates Kevin Pietersen and Jonathan Trott also followed the same qualification path to international cricket.

But with a Scottish mother providing him with a strong British link, Kieswetter is unfazed about the step-up he's about to take. "People are entitled to their own opinions and everyone will have them, but for me it's about being proud to wear the England shirt and I am," he said. "I am delighted about this opportunity."



PHOTO: INTERNET

England newcomer Craig Kieswetter gets acquainted with rickshaw, a very popular Bangladeshi transport, at Sonargaon Hotel yesterday.



**TEN Sports & SuperSport3**  
UEFA Champions League  
Stuttgart v Barcelona  
Live from 1:45am  
(Wednesday)

**SuperSport7**  
UEFA Champions League  
Olympiacos v Bordeaux  
Live from 1:45am  
(Wednesday)

**STAR Sports & SuperSport4**  
English Premier League  
Man United v West Ham  
Live from 2:00am  
(Wednesday)

**ESPN**  
Sportscentre India  
Sports News  
Live at 8:30pm

## Hockey season from late March

SPORTS REPORTER

After the omission of the domestic competitions for almost one year following the preparation of the national hockey team for the concluded South Asian Games, the hockey season will get underway on March 27 through the curtain-raising tournament, Club Cup hockey.

The decision was taken at the meeting of the league committee yesterday at the Maulana Bhasani Hockey Stadium where almost all representatives of the participating 11 clubs attended. The meeting also decided to

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