

## 1ST TEST IN CHITTAGONG Battling duo takes game into 5th day

BISHWAJIT ROY from Chittagong

When England declared their innings with a mammoth lead and Bangladesh lost two quick wickets before lunch break, everybody was sensing the home side's defeat inside four days, but Zunaed Siddiqui and Mushfiqur Rahim staged a brilliant fight-back to take the first Test into the fifth day at the Zahur Ahmed Chowdhury Stadium here yesterday.

The two batsmen made sure that the Tigers were not going down without fight. The resistance came from them after Bangladesh lost five wickets for 110 runs in reply to an improbable winning target of 513 and their sixth wicket stand was intact for 81 runs before stumps were drawn for the day.

Left-handed Zunaed was not out on 68 while his partner Mushfiqur remained unbeaten on 47 as Bangladesh finished the day on 191 for five, still 322 behind the target.

Bangladesh however were unfortunate in losing their fifth wicket as umpire Tony Hill raised the dreaded finger against skipper Shakib Al Hasan although TV replays showed that the batsman in fact got a full glove on the sweep shot, it was tangled near his pads, but the ball came straight off the gloves and was squeezed into the ground.

The poor decision brought wicketkeeper Mushfiqur, who during the process reached the 1,000 Test runs in his 20th match, to the crease and the little right-hander continued his good form after making 79 runs in the first innings.

The most encouraging part of the sixth-wicket partnership was that they remained undefeated throughout the last session which denied England's early finish of the match.

Zunaed was struggling initially against the short balls but he looked to get back his confidence once Mushfiqur joined him. The pair batted 142 minutes together to repair the early damage and it was Zunaed who stayed in the crease for long 199 minutes.

Spinner Graeme Swann gave the first breakthrough in Bangladesh's second innings by removing Tamim Iqbal, who

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Bangladesh batsman Zunaed Siddiqui works the ball on the inside during his gritty knock of 68 not out on the fourth day of the first Test against England at the Zahur Ahmed Chowdhury Stadium in Chittagong yesterday.

## Rokibul meets BCB president

SPORTS REPORTER

Rokibul Hasan, the disillusioned former national cricketer, is inching towards a return to cricket, as it seems, less than a week after his bewildering decision.

The right-handed batsman who announced his resignation for being 'ignored' by the selectors went for a meeting with the Bangladesh Cricket Board (BCB) president AHM Mustafa Kamal at his office yesterday.

However, what was discussed between the two was not made public. The board president only said he had met Rokibul and the details of their meeting will only be made public after the board meeting on the 19th.

There was speculation in the media that Rokibul submitted an apologetic letter to the BCB withdrawing his resignation, but the president declined to confirm the receipt of any such letters.

The BCB directors will weigh up the 'Rokibul' issue in the March 19 meeting. Some are talking about a punishment up to a two-year ban while others are in favour of giving him a light penalty.

The man in question Rokibul preferred to remain out of reach.



- SuperSport5**  
Bangladesh v England  
First Test, Day Five  
Live from 9:30am
- SuperSport2**  
Indian Premier League  
Bangalore Royal Challengers v  
Kings XI Punjab  
Live from 4:30pm
- ESPN**  
English Premier League  
Wigan v Aston Villa  
Live from 1:45am (Wednesday)
- SuperSport3**  
UEFA Champions League  
Chelsea v Inter Milan  
Live from 1:45am (Wednesday)
- SuperSport7**  
UEFA Champions League  
Sevilla v CSKA Moscow  
Live from 1:45am (Wednesday)



- Bangladesh v England**  
First Test, Day Five  
Time: 9:30am  
Venue: Zahur Ahmed Chowdhury Stadium, Chittagong
- Bangladesh League**  
Farashganj v Muktiyoddha  
Time: 5:00pm  
Venue: Bangabandhu National Stadium

## MANIKGANJ CRICKET Nabajagaran reach final

OUR CORRESPONDENT,  
Manikganj

Nabajagaran Sangsad moved into final of the Poura Gold Cup cricket tournament with a 46-run victory over Dashara Palli Mangal Samity at Shaheed Miraj-Tapan Stadium in Manikganj yesterday.

Nabajagaran batted first and were bowled out for 201 runs in 38.4 overs. Rubayet scored 41 runs from 40 balls while Pritom scored 27 from 53 balls.

Champak, Kamal, Liton and Tutul of Dashara Palli took two wickets each.

In reply, Dashara Palli were shot out for 155 in 29.4 overs. Tanvir remained not out on 46 while Masud added 24 runs. Bidyut picked up four wickets and Rubayet took two for Nabajagaran. Rubayet was later adjudged man-of-the-match for his all round performance -- 41 runs and two wickets.

Nabajagaran Sangsad will face Bandhu Ekadash in the final.

## BANGLADESH V ENGLAND 1ST TEST, DAY-4 'Commitment the key'

BISHWAJIT ROY from Ctg

The array of short balls produced by the England pace bowlers initially jolted left-hander Zunaed Siddiqui. Mushfiqur Rahim also received some nasty short balls in his helmet, chest and shoulder. Just before the tea break, Bangladesh were suddenly five wickets down, courtesy of a poor leg-before decision from umpire Tony Hill against skipper Shakib Al Hasan. Everyone thought that the match was on the verge of finishing on the fourth day.

But both the batsmen held their nerve against all odds, particularly Mushfiqur who looks to getting better and better with each innings. There was no shortage of grit and determination in their batting which was quite exceptional and exactly what everyone in Bangladesh is crying out for. The two batsmen's undefeated 81-run sixth wicket partner-

ship may not change the fate of the match but they ensured that Bangladesh had enjoyed their best moments in the first Test match, thanks to Zunaed and Mushfiqur, after the humiliation of the first three days. It was refreshing not because they built a partnership after yet another top order collapse rather it was their single-mindedness to finish the job for the day that was admirable.

Quite often the Bangladesh side strike up a partnership that falls prey to an untimely dismissal. So it was a pleasant change to see that Bangladesh batted through an entire session without losing any wicket.

There has been a lot of criticism about the Tigers' ability in the longer-version of the game but wicketkeeper batsman Mushfiqur Rahim gave the impression of a genuine batsman in the making to silence the critics. Zunaed, who was desperately looking for a decent score to keep his position in the team, was

struggling initially to settle in the middle but Mushfiqur, who salvaged some pride for his team also in the first innings with a well-composed 79-run knock, looked solid from the very first ball. It was not long ago the little right-hander struck his maiden hundred in January this year against India that also salvaged the pride for Bangladesh in defeat.

What was the secret behind the determination and the fighting spirit?

"It was our commitment," said Zunaed Siddiqui.

"We were only trying to enjoy the game in the middle. Our main focus was on how long we could stay at the middle," said the tall left-hander, who was not out on 68 runs.

"What we thought that in hot condition it would not be an easy task for the England bowler to bowl in full rhythm if we could survive for long," he added.

"I am not sure but I think I

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Milan midfielder David Beckham lies on the pitch during their Serie A match against Chievo at San Siro on Sunday. Beckham ruptured his Achilles tendon that looks certain to rule him out of the World Cup.

## WC blow for Beckham

AFP, Helsinki

Former England captain David Beckham will undergo surgery at a Finnish hospital on Monday afternoon on a ruptured Achilles tendon that looks set to rule him out of the World Cup.

"He will arrive in the afternoon, between 3:00 and 4:00 pm (1300-1400 GMT)," orthopaedic surgeon Sakari Orava told AFP.

England manager Fabio Capello said he had spoken to Beckham and that the 34-year-old looks set to miss this summer's World Cup after picking up the career-threatening injury in AC Milan's 1-0 Serie A win over Chievo.

Beckham twisted his left ankle during the final minutes of the match at the San Siro and limped off the field before being stretchered away in pain and in tears.

Orava explained that the operation at the sports injury clinic of Mehilainen hospital in

the western city of Turku would take less than an hour.

"It seems the problem is his Achilles tendon. We will have to see whether it's completely severed, partly severed, or something in between," Orava said.

"His recovery will depend on what kind of an injury this is, but it will likely take several months before it is completely healed," Orava said, adding Beckham could likely begin "light training" in a couple of months.

Asked about Beckham's prospects of recovering in time to compete in his fourth World Cup in South Africa, Orava said this "seems a little uncertain, even though I haven't seen him yet."

The World Cup gets underway on June 11. Beckham was expected to remain in Finland for "a minimum of a couple of days" to recover, Orava said.

Orava added he had previously only seen Beckham on television, but had treated the football legend's teammates from AC Milan and England.

## Shakib climbs Now the second best ODI bowler

STAR SPORT DESK

Bangladesh captain Shakib Al Hasan jumped one place to become the second best one-



SHAKIB AL HASAN

day bowler when the International Cricket Council (ICC) released the latest ODI rankings in Dubai yesterday.

The left-hander with 711 rating points edged out Zimbabwean Ray Price who slipped to third position with 696 points.

There was however no change in the ICC Player

Rankings all-rounders with Shakib still leading the field.

West Indies fast bowlers Darren Sammy, Dwayne Bravo and Kumar Roach have all achieved career-best rankings in the rankings.

Sammy, Bravo and Roach shared 23 wickets between them in the series against Zimbabwe which the West Indies won 4-1 and have been rewarded with big jumps in the latest rankings at the end of New Zealand-Australia and West Indies-Zimbabwe ODI series which concluded on Saturday and Sunday, respectively.

Sammy, who took eight wickets in the series, vaulted 37 places to share 20th spot with another Bangladesh left-arm spinner Abdur Razzak. Bravo jumped 20 places to occupy 24th spot after picking up seven wickets while Roach has rocketed 23 places to sit in 80th position after snapping up eight wickets in the series.

Australia fast bowler Mitchell Johnson, who won the Sir Garfield Sobers Trophy after being named as the 2009 ICC cricketer-of-the-year at the ICC Awards in Johannesburg, has also returned to the top 10 after a stellar performance against New Zealand.

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## Finn impressed by Tigers

SPORTS REPORTER from Ctg

The fighting spirit of two Bangladesh batsmen Zunaed Siddiqui and Mushfiqur Rahim on the fourth day of the first Test at the Zahur Ahmed Chowdhury Stadium also impressed the English tent as lanky paceman Steve Finn told after the day's play.

"They played very well, they didn't score many runs but they didn't play any loose shots, they didn't give any chances a couple of lbw decisions weren't given, and probably weren't out either. The Bangladeshi batsmen played well, but we expected that, coming over here on their own turf, we were going to have to work hard to take their wickets," said the 20-year-old bowler who troubled the home batsmen with his pace.

Finn however had one success in the second innings as he got the wicket of Imrul Kayes.

"Since I was seven or eight it's something I've aimed towards. Every young kid wants to play Test cricket, and by no means had I built up a picture in my mind that it was going to be easy, especially on a flat track," he said.

"It's a fantastic opportunity to come over here. By no means did I think, ten days ago, lying in bed, I'd be playing Test cricket in ten days. But I played the warm-up game, came out with no inhibitions, and said I want to

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## Omari screamer lifts Sk Russel

SPORTS REPORTER



A second-half strike from Samir Omari helped Sheikh Russel KC end first-leg of the Bangladesh League with a victory over falling giants Brothers Union 1-0 in their last encounter of the first leg at the Bangabandhu National Stadium yesterday.

After losing points in three successive matches, Sheikh Russel took to the field with hope of returning to winning ways and they appeared as if they were determined to achieve it with a bang. Sheikh Russel might have taken the lead in the very first minute, but for some good defending from Sheikh Russel defender Apu.

Maruf Ahmed ran down right the flank with the ball to earn a corner. He himself floated it for Ghanaian Abass Inusah, whose well-judged header was headed out from goal line by Apu. Two minutes later Mohammad Rony fired the ball wide despite having goalkeeper Iran Sheikh alone inside the danger zone.

With twelve minutes gone, Iran Sheikh thwarted a combined effort of Sheikh Russel as he foiled all three shots from Maruf, Rony and Moro Mohammad. Four minutes later Rony failed to beat the goalkeeper again from a one-on-one situation.

Sheikh Russel players pressed hard for an opener till the

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Kamal Hossain (C) of Sheikh Russel comes under challenge from a Brothers Union player during their Bangladesh League encounter at the Bangabandhu National Stadium yesterday.

PHOTO: STAR

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