



PHOTO: STAR
Bangladesh national team players stretch during a practice session at the Sher-e Bangla National Stadium in Mirpur yesterday. They will take on England in the second Test which will start from today.

BANGLADESH V ENGLAND 2ND TEST STARTS TODAY

Another step on the learning curve

SPORTS REPORTER

Bangladesh captain Shakhil Al Hasan was reluctant to give much away on the eve of the second and final Test against visiting England that starts at the Sher-e-Bangla National Stadium in Mirpur today. The all-rounder was perhaps not interested to parrot the usual promises but coach Jamie Siddons stuck with his guns saying that he expected his boys to be consistent in their performance.

Without any doubt batting would be the key for the Tigers if they want to push

their opponents hard in the second game like in the first one which they lost by 181 runs in Chittagong and the Australian believed that his batsmen should be consistent in their performance and they have to put the pieces together.

Wicketkeeper batsman Mushfiqur Rahim was exceptional in Chittagong as the little right-hander gave the visitors a tough time in both innings and Siddons wants more from his batsmen to continue their improvement in the five-day game.

"The one thing we are looking for is to be consistent. All of our top order - apart from our number four position - are centuries in Test cricket now, and they have all made them in the last four

months. But we're still having Mahmudullah making a fifty then nothing, Tamim [Iqbal] 80 then nothing, Shakhil [Al Hasan] nothing then a score. To get scores of 400 you need more consistency than that," said the Bangladesh coach in a pre-match briefing at Mirpur yesterday.

"To make 630 over two innings against England was a reasonable effort, but we're still probably 150 short. Our players are all confident of performing at this level and they'll be confident of performing on that wicket. We just need them to put it together in the same match. That's what England did to us, and it's what we

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SCHOOL HANDBALL

Four win opening games

SPORTS REPORTER

Scholastica School, BIS, Green Herald and Dhanmondi Tutorial won their respective opening matches of the Sunny Dale 7th Boys' Mini Handball Tournament at the newly-built Handball Stadium yesterday.

Scholastica defeated SOS Shishu Palli 7-6, BIS beat Oparajeo Bangla 3-2, Green Herald recorded a 6-4 win over St Gregory's, who were also thrashed 12-3 by Dhanmondi Tutorial.



PHOTO: AFP
England captain Alastair Cook (L) talks with coach Andy Flower during a practice session at the Sher-e Bangla National Stadium in Mirpur yesterday.

England to go for spin?

SPORTS REPORTER

There was some surprise when England chose to stick on with their usual three-man pace attack and just the one spinner on a spin-friendly track in Chittagong. However, their tactics did not backfire due partly to the more experienced batting line-up of the English and the partly to the guile of Graeme Swann who took 10-for to take England to a 181-run victory.

However, the Tigers gave a good account of themselves in the last three days as they went for a mammoth chase of 513. Tigers ran England close down as they frustrated the bowlers for 138 overs before eventually going down. And that fightback, coupled with the

likelihood of another spin-friendly wicket, may prompt the England thinktank to opt for another spinner chopping a pace bowler in their bid to finish the series 2-0 when they take on the Tigers in the second Test at the Sher-e-Bangla National Stadium in Mirpur today.

England's young skipper Alastair Cook gave the impression that they might break away from the English tradition of three pacers and one spinner to take more out of the a typical sub-continent pitch.

"We'll sit down after a look at the wicket and pick a team to win the game. If we think that two seamers and two spinners is the best way to go, then we will do that, even though it is very un-English. We are used to playing in English conditions where it's very unlikely you'd ever go to

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Champs get Gunners

Man Utd face Bayern

AFP, Nyon

Arsenal face Barcelona in the Champions League quarterfinals in a repeat of the 2006 final won by the Spanish giants.

Manchester United, beaten by Barcelona in last year's final, face Bayern Munich, Inter Milan are up against CSKA Moscow and Lyon were pitted against fellow French side Bordeaux in the draw made here Friday.

The first legs are scheduled for March 30/31 with the second legs on April 6/7.

The semifinal draw was also held, with the winner of the United and Bayern tie meeting Lyon or Bordeaux, and Inter or CSKA playing Arsenal or Barca.

For Arsenal the draw offers up a chance to gain revenge on missing out to Barcelona 2-1 at

the Stade de France in Paris four years ago. It will also mean a return to the Emirates Stadium for Arsenal old boy Thierry Henry.

The Gunners motored into the last eight this time around with a 5-0 thrashing of 2004 winners Porto on Tuesday for a 6-2 aggregate victory.

Arsenal secretary David Miles said: "This draw gives us what it gives us - we can only play and hopefully beat what's in front of us."

"Actually we owe Barcelona one - if that's the word. We'll be up for it - and we are looking to get a couple of decent results."

For three-time winners Manchester United Friday's draw meant they cross swords again with Bayern, the team they beat with two injury-time goals at the Camp Nou for the 1999 title.

But two years later Bayern beat United in the quarterfinals to go on to lift the trophy themselves.

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RIVALS' CLASH ENDS IN DULL DRAW

MSC gain no ground

SPORTS REPORTER

Mohammedan Sporting Club kept their faint hopes of a title alive in the Bangladesh League after playing out a goalless draw against leaders and arch-rivals Abahani in their crucial home match at the Bangabandhu National Stadium yesterday.

Having started the game seven points behind perennial foes Abahani, Mohammedan found no way of forcing a victory in this do-or-die clash and had to be content with a draw despite putting up a spirited show from the word go.

Abahani, for the matter, maintained their seven point lead with 34 points after the allotted 12 matches in the first leg while Mohammedan, who have played a match less than Abahani, now has 27.

They will now play their last match of the first leg against Chittagong Mohammedan SC on March 24 in the port city.

"Everything is not over. We have still 13 matches in hands and I think we are quiet in the title race because no can say that Abahani will not lose points in their next 12 matches," said Mohammedan coach Maruful Haque after the game.

Mohammedan looked determined to secure full three points against Abahani and they started to put up their signs from the first minute with defender Nasir running the right flank to whip a threatening cross that was actually a symbol of what was coming next.

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PHOTO: STAR
Mohammedan striker Abdul Baten (L) and Abahani defender Rajani Kanta Barman fight for the ball during their Bangladesh League clash at the Bangabandhu National Stadium yesterday.

BCB punishes Rokibul

SPORTS REPORTER

Bangladesh Cricket Board (BCB) has terminated Rokibul Hasan's players contract with the national team and banned the batsman for three months.

The decision was taken in a board meeting yesterday where his 'retirement' on March 10 and consequent letter revoking the decision was condemned and termed 'disruptive'.

The board took the stance after recommendation from the Technical Evaluation Committee which sat on Thursday after Rokibul submitted the letter to the team's operations manager Shafiqul Haque the day before.

Rokibul will miss out on the substantial salary package with immediate effect and will not be considered for selection in the national team till mid-June of this year.

This means the 22-year-old will miss the England series but the cricket board has allowed him to participate in domestic cricket competitions.

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GRANDMASTERS CHESS

Saptarshi keeps lead

SPORTS REPORTER

Indian IM Saptarshi Roy Chowdhury maintained his solitary lead in the Six Seasons Grandmasters Chess Tournament at the close of the fifth round at the Tulip Hall of Uttara Club yesterday.

Saptarshi now has four points after he drew his fifth game against Russian GM Ildachev, who along with GM Niaz Murshed and Indian Praveen Kumar shared the second position with 3.5 points each. Niaz beat Praveen.

In day's other matches, FM Aminul Islam beat Indian IM Sahaj Grover, FM Abu Sufian Shakil drew against FM Minhazuddin Ahmed Sagar and the match between Indian GM Dibyendu Barua and FM Syed Mahfuzur Rahman Emon was adjourned.

PLAYER PROFILE

Name: Mohammad Jahurul Islam

Age: 23 years

Born: December 12, 1986, Rajshahi

Batting style: Right-hand bat

Fielding position: Wicketkeeper

Major teams:

Rajshahi, BCB

Development Squad,

Bangladesh A

Nickname: Omi



FIRST-CLASS RECORDS

M	I	NO	Runs	HS	Ave	100	50	Ct	St
60	110	11	3598	139	36.34	7	24	62	2

●Jahurul is set to debut as Bangladesh's 58th Test player.

●He replaces Aftab Ahmed in the middle-order but came into the Tigers side after Rokibul Hasan's retirement.

●Jahurul scored 965 runs at 68.92 with highest score of 139 in the 2009-10 National Cricket League.

●He has already played a staggering 60 first-class matches before he will make his international debut. He is the second highest first-class run-getter after Faisal Hossain of Chittagong.

●In fact, Jahurul will enter a Bangladesh Test team with the highest first-class runs under his belt.

●What he said: "This was definitely a moment I have looked forward to since I became a cricket player. The dream of playing cricket at Test level has always been my chief motivation."

"I have been in good form coming into the national team and I will take the confidence of the runs I had scored into

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Malik, Naved cleared for PCL

AFP, Karachi

Pakistan gave permission Friday for banned former captain Shoaib Malik and all-rounder Rana Navedul Husain to play in the Port City League (PCL) the Bangladesh domestic Twenty20 league that will take place in Sharjah later this month.

Earlier this month the Pakistan Cricket Board (PCB) banned Malik and Naved from all forms of the game for a year and fined them three million rupees (35,000 dollars) for breaching players' code of conduct.

Local media reported both players were banned for match-fixing but the PCB has not specified the violation.

"The penalties on these players were for international cricket for the Pakistan team but they are eligible to play in domestic competitions, so they are cleared to play in Bangladesh," PCB official Wasim Barit told AFP.

Besides Malik and Naved, former captains Younus Khan and Mohammad Yousuf were also banned on March 10 for an indefinite period due to "in-fighting", after an investigation into the team's disastrous December-February tour.

Shahid Afridi, Kamran

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Hayden blazes Delhi

INTERNET, undated



PREMIER LEAGUE

ON FRIDAY

CHENNAI SUPER KINGS

VS

DELHI DAREDEVILS

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from Justin Kemp, a near replica of his ICL catch, that kept Delhi under 200.

Albie Morkel and Justin Kemp failed to contribute much, and the onus fell on Raina after Chennai lost three wickets for 27 runs. However, the stand-in captain kept producing the goods, picking up boundaries -- six of them -- whenever the equation started to look tricky, and his unbeaten 49 carried Chennai home with five balls to spare.

With Sehwag going, though, Raina's team was looking at a much bigger target. His 38-ball 74 came as easy as his strolled singles, but Chennai managed to create and latch on to more catching opportunities to slow down Delhi just about enough in the last eight overs.

Sehwag's innings took about as much time as it took David Warner and Dilshan to struggle and get out, managing 21 off 32 between them.

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Deccan sneak to a win

STAR SPORTS DESK

Despite a fabulous 60 from Irfan Pathan, Kings XI Punjab fell to a 6 run defeat against Deccan Chargers in their IPL clash at Cuttack yesterday.

Batting first Deccan put up 170 for 7 in their 20 overs with Aussie duo Andrew Symonds (53) and Adam Gilchrist (33) the biggest contributors. Yuvraj Singh was the most successful bowler returning with figures of 2-21 off his 4 overs.

In reply, Kings XI struggled for large periods and were 68-6 at one point. However Pathan bought up a marvellous rearguard, with 5 sixes and 3 fours in his 29 ball knock. It proved not to be enough as Kings XI floundered after his dismissal

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SuperSport5
Bangladesh v England
Second Test, Day 1
Live from 9:30am

SuperSport2
Indian Premier League
Rajasthan Royals v Kolkata Knight Riders
Live from 4:30pm

Mumbai Indians v Bangalore Royal Challengers
Live from 8:30pm

SuperSport3
Primera Liga
Real Madrid v Sporting
Live from 1:45am (Sunday)

Espanyol v Sevilla
Live from 3:00am (Sunday)

SuperSport7
Bundesliga
Dortmund v Leverkusen
Live from 11:30pm



Day's Event
Bangladesh v England
Second Test, Day 1
Time: 9:30am
Venue: Sher-e-Bangla National Cricket Stadium