

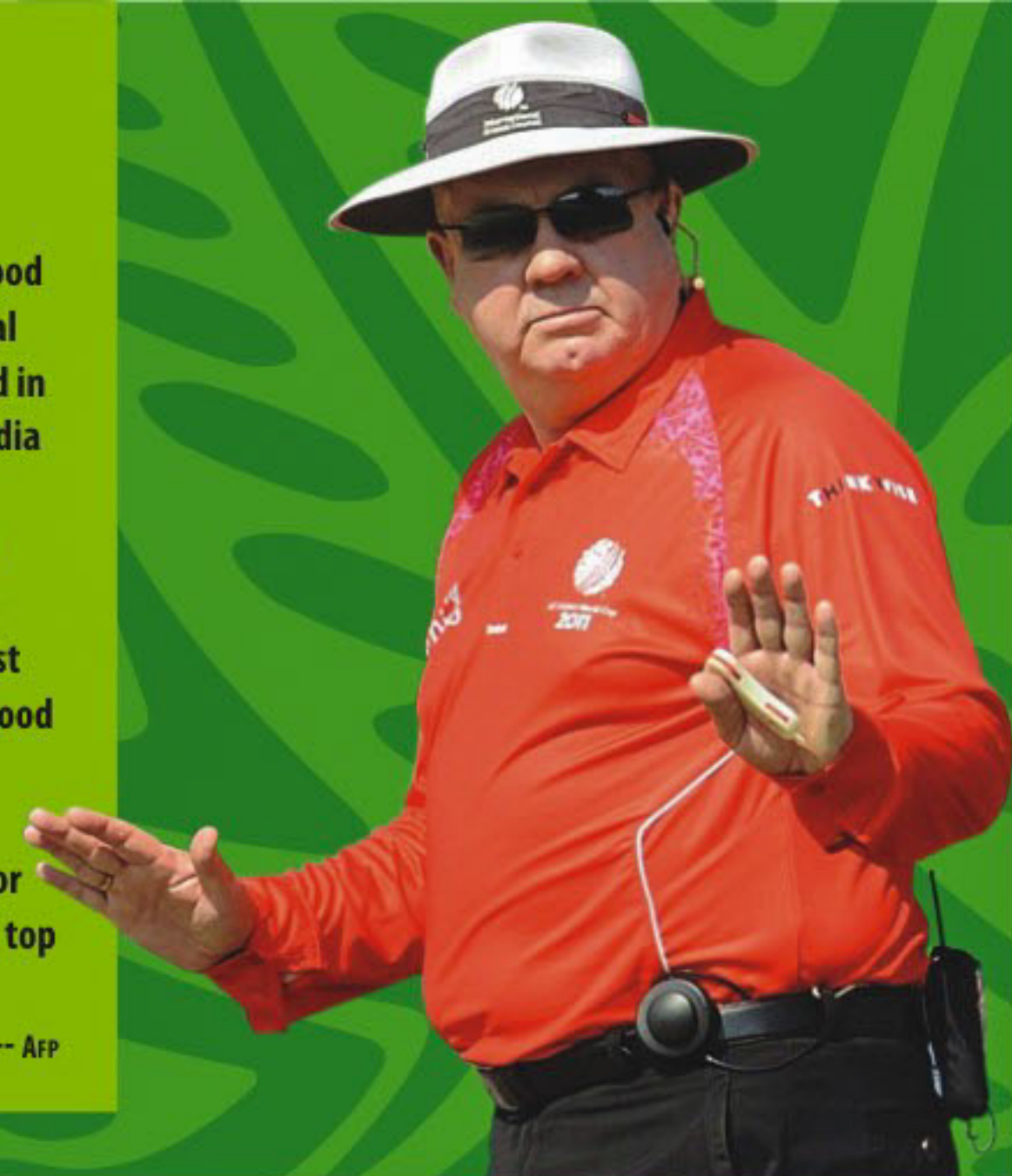
# Star SPORT

DHAKA THURSDAY MARCH 10, 2011, E-MAIL: sports@thedailystar.net

## A Davis ton!

Australian umpire Steve Davis stood in his 100th one-day international on Wednesday when he officiated in the World Cup match between India and Netherlands. Davis, 58, made his international debut on December 12, 1992 in a match between Pakistan and West Indies in Adelaide and has also stood in 31 Tests and 14 Twenty20 Internationals. In all, 14 men have umpired 100 or more ODIs with Rudi Koertzen on top of the list with 209.

-- AFP



## Tigers positive ahead of vital clash

BISHWAJIT ROY from Chittagong

The Bangladesh team turned up for training yesterday after a day's break at the Zohur Ahmed Chowdhury Stadium, coming back in a united mood.

The sentiment, as top-order batsman Junaed Siddiqui and vice-captain Tamim Iqbal said, was that normalcy has returned to the team after the shocker against West Indies and the off-field controversies that followed. The left-handers also informed that the team has recovered fully from the loss and are ready to play their best cricket in the crucial Group B match against England on March 11 in the port city.

Only a win against England can keep Bangladesh's hopes alive for a quarterfinal berth. After the disaster last Friday, there had been a lot of controversies centring on skipper Shakib Al Hasan, so everybody will be keen to see how Shakib's young brigade handles adversity when they take on England in the vital game.

But the main question centres on the team's preparations to get back into rhythm with the bat in hand. Bangladesh hit their lowest ODI score of 58 against West Indies and while one might bracket it as an "abnor-

mal day", the fact is that Bangladesh's batting is a real concern in the tournament. The Tigers have so far played three games and alarmingly, some of their batting seemed out of track. What was also evident was that some of the batsmen failed to carry on their innings after a good start. Junaed Siddiqui, the No 3, was among them. It seemed that the batsmen simply forgot how to build an innings by milking singles rather than looking to be too positive in their batting like Junaed had in the three games so far.

"We had a lack of partnerships in the last three games and the team didn't get any big innings. So the batting should click and one or two of the batsmen from there must carry the innings. We are totally focused on this matter and working hard so that we can do something in the next game," said Junaed, who scored 37, 3 and 25 thus far.

To find a solution, it is likely that the Bangladesh think-tank will make some changes in the batting order as Rokibul Hasan may be brought up to his customary No 4 position instead of wicketkeeper-batsman Mushfiqur Rahim who has had an ordinary time in that position. There is hardly any chance to see any change in the top-order but the brains trust are considering one or two

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**EYES ON THE BALL:** Bangladesh captain Shakib AL Hasan is in the act of taking a catch while teammates look on during practice at the Zohur Ahmed Chowdhury Stadium yesterday, ahead of tomorrow's crucial World Cup match against England.

PHOTO: ANURUP KANTI DAS

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## Sponsors behind Shakib

SPORTS REPORTER from Ctg

Different sponsors of Shakib Al Hasan pledged their support to the all-rounder despite the ongoing controversy.

After the crushing defeat to West Indies last Friday, Shakib has faced tremendous pressure from all quarters and it multiplied after he hit back at former cricketers and after a picture of him was published on a news website.

But lubricants giant Castrol, one of Shakib's major corporate sponsors, confirmed that they were right behind their brand ambassador.

"Players have ups and downs in their career. He's going through a tough time in the game but we are sure he will bounce back in the next game," said Castrol's brand manager Nahid Hasan.

"We are with him at the moment and we know that one good game will do him a lot of good," added Nahid.

United Commercial Bank Limited also confirmed that Shakib will get their full backing. "His age is an issue but people make mistakes at that age. We are supporting

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**England captain Andrew Strauss (L) and Jimmy Anderson do some lunges as they warm up for their practice session at the Zohur Ahmed Chowdhury Stadium yesterday.**

PHOTO: STAR

## Dangerman touches down

MOHAMMAD ISAM from Chittagong

Eoin Morgan's strides are not the biggest but as he walked across the Zohur Ahmed Chowdhury Stadium to meet the press yesterday, the image of the left-hander bossing tomorrow's game flashed by. Conventional wisdom says that the visitors have lost two big guns Kevin Pietersen and Stuart Broad -- and got one back but in reality, it is merely one-all.

Pietersen might be England's most celebrated cricketer but it is no secret that Morgan is England's most dangerous, the lad from Dublin easily grabbing that mantle after a number of match-winning knocks. Perversely, the Tigers' left-arm spinners would have hoped Pietersen stay a bit longer but he has left and been replaced by Morgan, a man who has "no special plans" for the likes of Shakib Al Hasan and Abdur Razzak.

Morgan, originally left out after suffering a finger injury during the Australia ODIs earlier this year, was planning to go to the Manchester United - Marseille Champions League game next week but got the SOS from coach Andy Flower a few days ago and had to catch the next flight to Dhaka. Although he had to be rushed for tomorrow's game, Morgan said that only one factor would counter his experience in this country; otherwise playing in

Bangladesh is an enjoyable experience for the former Ireland international.

"The conditions are always challenging here. There's a different bounce and more turn on the pitch. As I have said, this is my fourth time in Bangladesh and all I have to adjust to is the heat," said Morgan. "I am hoping to produce some past performances as I have done here."

"I have done very little batting. I've been training quite a lot with Middlesex in the last few weeks in their pre-season camp. I don't feel that sort of undercooked or underprepared. I feel fresh. Over the next couple of days, my preparation will be pretty similar to what it has been in the past," he added.

Every Bangladeshi cricket fan would of course remember, bitterly, his 110 not out against the Tigers last March, the single-handed effort helping England evade certain defeat at the Sher-e-Bangla National Stadium. But he has visited the country earlier with the Ireland Under-19s in the age-group World Cup in 2004 and then again in 2008 with his home country's national side. "I love making match-winning contributions, and I'd look to do the same in this tournament," he said, adding that he would be continuing to bat at his desired position in the World Cup.

"I've been very successful at No 5 in the past and it's my favorite position to bat. I come in the middle overs and being a left-hander who plays spin okay, yes I love playing at five."

"For me being a left-hander is a massive

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## Fans get hold of tickets

PRANABESH CHAKRABORTY, Chittagong

Expectations of a positive result from Bangladesh in their crucial tie against England in Chittagong on Friday was high amongst the fans as they started to get hold of their match tickets yesterday.

Fans standing long hours under the sun got their prized possession in exchange for the confirmation letters from the A K Khan premises at Alankar near the Zohur Ahmed Chowdhury Stadium yesterday.

"Ah! I have got my two tickets after standing for six long hours!" exclaimed Saiful Alam Munna a college student, as his face glowed with joy.

He was one of the early ones to get the ticket as he came at the wee hours. Behind him thousand more of cricket lovers waited for their turn.

"I have come here at 5am and waited at least six hours for the tickets. Still it seems a dream come true that I would enjoy a mega event like the World Cup."

He, however, termed the process of ticket distribution as a bit slow and said, "People who have come from far distances

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**TODAY'S MATCH**

Match	Time	Venue
Sri Lanka v Zimbabwe	3:00pm	Pallekele

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Sri Lanka v Zimbabwe

Sri Lanka must win this match with a big margin after the unfortunate rain affected match against Australia. They just got 1 point from that match and already lost a match to Pakistan. They must be thinking to bring back their stable position in the group A. On the other hand Zimbabwe has played long innings against other relatively weak teams but Tatenda Taibu cannot deliver his duties. Zimbabwe team must come across as a whole and play like one team where every individual should play his role. They should play well under pressure and perform excellence to show their dignity on the pitch.

Abdul kuddus

Send your opinion in 100 words on Bangladesh - England match to [analysis11@ovi.com](mailto:analysis11@ovi.com). The best analysis will be published.

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