

# Star SPORT

DHAKA WEDNESDAY MARCH 16, 2011, E-MAIL: sports@thedailystar.net

## Beckhams expecting a baby girl

British football superstar David Beckham and his former Spice Girl wife Victoria are expecting a baby girl in July, a spokesman said Monday. The couple announced in January that she was pregnant with their fourth child, but did not give the due date and gender. Beckham's Los Angeles spokesman Jeff Raymond confirmed press reports that Beckhams will get a daughter. "Obviously, we're very lucky to be expecting again, and this is the first time I'm going to say it: It's a little girl," Beckham was quoted as



## Still room for improvement

BISHWAJIT ROY

The under pressure Bangladesh side achieved the best of all possible outcomes in Chittagong after a shocking defeat against West Indies to revive the flagging enthusiasm among the cricket crazy fans in the country about the ICC World Cup.

Taking advantage of the conditions the Tigers displayed a splendid team spirit to script a famous two-wicket victory over England which was followed by a comfortable six-wicket win against Netherlands on way to keeping their quarterfinal chances very much alive.

On both occasions, the bowlers laid the foundations as the slow and low surface in the port city suited them most. But the most encouraging fact was that the team played together as a perfect 'unit'. There had been lot of talk about the team's recent dependence on two players in captain Shakib Al Hasan and dashing opener Tamim Iqbal but in the last two games it was refreshingly proven wrong after the way players like Mahmudullah Riyad, Shafiqul Islam and Imrul Kayes came forward to rescue their team.

While the Tigers have made some stirring comebacks in the tournament, there are some areas where Jamie Siddons's men must improve ahead of the big challenge against South Africa in the last group match at the Sher-e-Bangla National Stadium in Mirpur on March 19.

As Bangladesh vice-captain Tamim Iqbal and experienced left-arm spinner Abdur Razzak both said yesterday, the team is hardly looking at any equation rather they are charged up to qualify into the quarterfinals by winning their last Group B match against

mighty South Africa. To do that, however, the Tigers' have to show much better performances than in their last two games.

It is not as if the conditions at Mirpur are much different from Chittagong, but the opponent is also tougher because South Africa is one of the big teams in the showcase event, especially they have variety in their bowling attack, so it would be a real test for the Bangladesh batting which has yet to prove it's best in the tournament.

"Definitely we are happy after the way we bounced back in the tournament to win the last two games but we are yet to show our best batting performance in the tournament. I think there is a lot of scope to improve our batting," admitted Tamim while talking with this reporter yesterday.

"I am glad to see that everybody tried their best to contribute for the team and that's why we won the last two games. It was the result of total teamwork. The last two match result reflected that everybody has been trying to improve their performance and everybody is hungry to contribute for the team. It's nice that everybody is trying to play their part but Shakib and myself must also play our roles as per expectations," said Tamim adding: "I'm disappointed with my performance because I failed to do something special in my home ground. I'm not happy with my batting performance because 30/40 runs doesn't mean anything. I failed to score as per my expectation and now I'm looking forward to the next group match" The left-hander made two ducks in five innings besides, 70, 44 and 38.

Praising his partner Imrul Kayes' batting performance in the last two games, Tamim said that it just showed that everybody has been trying to follow the coach's team role.

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In-form Bangladesh batsman Imrul Kayes enters Dhaka's Sheraton Hotel after the journey back from Chittagong yesterday.

PHOTO: ANISUR RAHMAN

To get this picture email to pics11@ovi.com



## Strauss, Swann doubtful for WI game

AFP, Chennai

England captain Andrew Strauss and off-spinner Graeme Swann are doubtful for the key World Cup clash against the West Indies after missing training on Tuesday with stomach problems.

Meanwhile struggling fast bowler James Anderson was seen receiving treatment for a problem with his right shoulder during training but a team spokesman said he remained available for selection.

"They're two key players and would be in anybody's team," England batsman Jonathan Trott said of Strauss and Swann.

"I'm pretty confident they will be all right. These things are normally 24 or 48 hours. I'll give you a better idea Wednesday if they train.

"It's one of those things. You go from sweating on the field into cold air conditioning and stuff like that. I'm not 100 per cent today but I should be tomorrow."

England must beat the West Indies at Chennai's Chidambaram Stadium on Thursday to have a chance of qualifying for the quarterfinals -- and even then they will need other results to go their way.

Defeat would see England, already beaten by Ireland and Bangladesh, crash out of the World Cup before the knockout phase.

## 'Schedule no excuse'

AFP, Chennai

Graeme Swann said a congested England fixture list was no reason for the side's stuttering World Cup campaign as they prepared for a make-or-break clash against the West Indies on Thursday.

England came into the event on the back of a gruelling Ashes tour -- where they defeated Australia 3-1 but were then thrashed 6-1 in the one-dayers -- and had just a three-day turnaround before heading out to the subcontinent.

"We do live in the middle of a ludicrous cricket schedule but it's no excuse," said England off-spinner Swann.

"For a start half the other teams in the world

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## What's in an award!

AFP, Chittagong



ICC Cricket World Cup 2011

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It's not often that a match-winning performance on the cricket field gets overlooked when adjudicators decide man-of-the-match awards.

But it has happened three times to Bangladesh seamer Shafiqul Islam in this World Cup, each time the award going to batsmen who are as surprised as teammates and fans alike by the choice.

The 21-year-old had put on spirited displays with bat and ball to keep Bangladesh's dream alive of playing in the knock-out rounds of a tournament they are co-hosting for the first time.

After Bangladesh were restricted to 205 by Ireland on a good surface in Dhaka, Shafiqul produced a burst of 4-21 that helped bowl out the rivals for 178.

Opener Tamim Iqbal, who won the award for making 44 and taking a crucial catch, admitted then that Shafiqul deserved the honour more

than him.

Against England, Bangladesh plunged to 169-8 chasing a modest target of 226, when Shafiqul and Mahmudullah Riyad turned the game on its head by adding 58 unbeaten runs for the ninth wicket.

Tail-ender Shafiqul came out swinging to make 24 not out, including the only six of the day in seasoned off-spinner Graeme Swann's final over which cost 16 runs.

But the man-of-the-match award went to Imrul Kayes for scoring 60 at the top of the order.

"Shafiqul should have got it," said Kayes, who won his second award on Monday against the Netherlands for 73 not out as Bangladesh chased down 160 for the loss of four wickets.

Dutch captain Peter Borren credited Bangladesh's success to Shafiqul, who conceded just seven runs in his first six overs to restrict the rivals to 28-0 by the ninth over.

"Shafiqul bowled very well today," Borren said. "He was consistent and did not bowl bad balls.

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**TODAY'S MATCH**

Match	Time	Venue
Australia v Canada	3:00pm	Bangalore

## Trott senses the urgency

AFP, Chennai



ICC Cricket World Cup 2011

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England batsman Jonathan Trott says the side must deliver their first all-round team performance of the tournament if they are to qualify for the quarterfinals of the World Cup.

The Ashes winners and World Twenty20 champions head into their final group match against the West Indies on Thursday needing a win to reach the last eight -- and even then they will need other results to go their way.

A third loss following shock defeats to Ireland and Bangladesh would send England packing after another disappointing World Cup campaign.

However, England can take confidence from their previous match at Chennai's Chidambaram Stadium when they beat a highly fancied South Africa side by six runs in a tense, low-scoring thriller.

"We haven't played consistently," said Trott, who earlier in the tournament

equalled the record for the fastest 1,000 runs in one-day internationals of 21 innings previously shared by West Indies great Vivian Richards and England's Kevin Pietersen.

"We've either played badly with the bat and well with the ball or badly with the ball and well with the bat."

England only managed 225 against Bangladesh, with Trott top-scoring with 67.

"Against Bangladesh I think I could have hit a few more boundaries here and there. We probably came unstuck in the powerplay. If we had got that right we would have been right up there with a big enough total to defend," he said.

Trott has also overtaken the record of former England opener Geoff Boycott, one of the best defensive batsmen of his generation, for most ODI runs without a six for an England batsman but is not best pleased with the comparison.

"Have you not watched me play T20? There are big fields at Edgbaston (Warwickshire's home ground in Birmingham) as well.

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Australia v Canada

The Kangaroos have been unbeaten under Captain Ricky Ponting so far in the World Cups since 2003, and they will look to continue their dominance in the mega event. Australia has already qualified for the knockout stages of the World Cup. Considering the all-round strength of Australia, it will be a tough ask for Canada to post a threat to the defending champions. However, the minnows do have some players, who can help the team to win their second match of the tournament. Players like John Davison, Ashish Bagai, Jimmy Hansra, Henry Osnde and Rizwan Cheema will have to come up with a combined effort in today's match. If these players click at the right time for their team, an upset can be possible.

Milton

**ovi**

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