

# Star SPORT

DHAKA WEDNESDAY JULY 20, 2011, E-MAIL: sports@thedailystar.net

## Diab's crazy act

Maybe in an effort to make things interesting, UAE's Awana Diab attempted a ridiculous penalty kick in his side's 6-2 thrashing of Lebanon in a friendly on Sunday. And it worked. Diab's setup seemed like any other for a penalty, but as he ran up to the ball, he stopped, turned around and back-heeled it toward the goal. The ball trickled into the net much to the disbelief of the Lebanese keeper. The UAE manager did not appreciate the creativity, though. He immediately substituted the player for his "disrespectful act."

---INTERNET



SHAKIB AL HASAN

## Who is right?

**Cricket**

SPORTS REPORTER

Bangladesh captain Shakib Al Hasan came down heavily on the Akram Khan-led selection panel for not taking his opinion over the selection of the team for Zimbabwe.

The all-rounder, who returned home from England on Sunday after playing county cricket, expressed his disappointment over the team selection while talking with the reporters at the Sher-e-Bangla National Stadium in Mirpur, continuing the streak of controversy with Akram's first selection.

Shakib, when asked whether he was consulted with, said the selectors didn't talk with him, adding: "I was told about the team after the selection. I feel that way [should talk with the captain of the team before any selection] and they should have felt similarly. They should have discussed with me before selection of the team for the Zimbabwe tour."

The Bangladesh skipper apparently looked angry with the matter and was not ready to make any comment on the 15-member team, which was announced on last Friday after a drama. "The people who selected the team can tell better how good the team is," responded Shakib, jokingly assuring that he will play with his eleven on the field.

Chief selector Akram Khan however was shocked and surprised by the comments of the Bangladesh skipper.

"I'm really shocked. It's really hard for me to believe that Shakib made such comments," said a disappointed Akram in his instant reaction over telephone, adding that the captain was very much part of the team selection procedure.

"I personally talked with him over telephone in front of my colleagues [Minhazul Abedin and Habibur Bashar] to take his view over the selection. I mentioned all the names for his opinions and he said it is okay."

Shakib might be annoyed with the team selection but he was optimistic about the upcoming tour to Zimbabwe where Bangladesh will play one Test and five one-day internationals.

"It would be a tough tour and it's always a challenge for us when we play with Zimbabwe. Off late we have had good records against them and hope it would be a good trip for us if we make a good start. I'm hopeful," said Shakib.

"The boys has been working hard in the preparation camp and played some longer-version matches which I think will be helpful for the team to adjust with the Test cricket after a long four-month break."

"It would have been nice if we could play more games in Zimbabwe because a competitive match is always different from one which played among own players," added Shakib.

Bangladesh captain was not at all happy with his batting performance in the T20 matches but the left-hander was not worried with his form and also assured that the fatigue will not be an issue despite the fact that he has been playing cricket for

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AKRAM KHAN

## DHONI HAS HIS GUNS, AMMUNITION

### Just needs to shoot

**Cricket**

REUTERS, New Delhi

Apart from motorcycles, Mahendra Singh Dhoni's obsession is firearms and the India captain would be thoroughly justified in believing he has enough ammunition to foil any bid to topple his team from the top of the Test rankings.

Minutes after sealing India's 50-over World Cup victory with a six in Mumbai's Wankhede Stadium, a drained Dhoni was already discussing how to sustain the dominance of the team who have been the number one Test side since December 2009.

The biggest hurdle since that crazy, humid April night awaits them in England in the form of a four-Test series starting at Lord's on Thursday, to be followed by five one-day inter-

nationals with a Twenty20 match thrown in.

Dhoni would like to believe that he has ticked most of the boxes.

Sachin Tendulkar is not just back in the squad but he made it a point to reach England early to get accustomed to the conditions, dropping in briefly at Wimbledon to watch Roger Federer.

Such meticulous preparation for someone who has spent 22 years in international cricket does not surprise former India captain Sunil Gavaskar.

"I'm not surprised he's out there trying to acclimatise and get some practice...also having had a word with Roger Federer

, be prepared for the pull shot past mid-on," Gavaskar said.

Tendulkar's

demanding fans will be expecting more than a few nice shots.

At the age of 38, Tendulkar is unlikely to return to England and he has yet to score a century at Lord's, venue of the first Test starting on Thursday. If he does reach his century he will be the first person to score 100 international centuries.

Tendulkar, Rahul Dravid (38) and VVS Laxman (36) share 99 centuries and 35,000 runs in Tests and Gavaskar said they would do anything to make their final England tour memorable.

Yuvraj Singh is also not short of motivation.

The architect of India's Twenty20 (2007) and 50 overs (2011) World Cups remains a fringe Test player, even after 11 years of international cricket, and this would be one of his few remaining opportunities to cement his place or else watch someone like Suresh Raina

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## Local stars to skip SL T20

AFP, Colombo

Sri Lanka's top stars will skip most of the matches in the country's inaugural premier league Twenty20, dealing another blow to the struggling event, an official said Tuesday.

Skipper Tilakaratne Dilshan, former captains Kumar Sangakkara and Mahela Jayawardene, all-rounder Angelo Mathews and slinger Lasith Malinga are among local players expected to miss most of the 10-day tournament starting Thursday.

"They [the players] will likely choose which matches they want to play, because they are being rested for the upcoming Australian tour," Sri Lanka Cricket media manager Brian Thomas told AFP.

The Australian team arrives in Colombo on July 30 to play three Tests, five one-days and two Twenty20 games during their tour that ends on September 20.

Sri Lanka's cricket authorities were forced to shorten the T20 league after the Indian cricket board prevented its players from taking part.



India's batting maestro Sachin Tendulkar spinning the ball during a practice session at Lord's in London yesterday.

PHOTO: AFP

## Emily, Mithun play hookey for cash

**Football**

SPORTS REPORTER

While the nation looks on to their performances in the World Cup pre-qualifying away game against Lebanon, national striking duo Zahid Hasan Emily and Mithun Chowdhury decided to make light of matters by allegedly travelling to Manikganj on hire to play in the semifinals of the DC Gold Cup.

The actions ahead of a match that could propel Bangladesh football to new heights have left the entire football community struggling to comprehend their actions.

The national booters, who have been training for their Lebanon match at BKSP for the last three days, were rested yester-

day as they will fly for Beirut tonight but the duo skipped the rest to venture out and 'earn some more money'.

The fact becomes even more shocking when one considers that Emily and Mithun will reportedly rake in Tk 23



ZAHID HASAN MITHUN CHOWDHURY

lakh and Tk 20 lakh respectively from Muktijoddha Sangsad, the club they have signed on for to play in next season.

Our Manikganj correspondent informs that Emily and Mithun were fielded for Manikganj Municipality XI against Harirampur Upazila XI, but both left after the first half amid whisperings of their roles ahead of the national team's assignment in Lebanon.

Emily and Mithun wore jersey numbers 10 and 7 respectively and even used fake names "Shagor" and "Atique" in the players' lists. However in this case, their fame proved their undoing and numerous spectators recognized them immediately leading to the hasty departure.

Joint secretary of Referee Association in Manikganj, Sarker Masud, confirmed that Emily and Mithun played in the match while goalkeeper of Manikganj Municipality XI, Anwar Hossain Anu

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## MS's bat sold for £100,000

AFP, New Delhi

The cricket bat used by India skipper Mahendra Singh Dhoni to hit a match-winning six in the World Cup final has fetched a staggering 100,000 pounds (160,500 dollars) at an auction, media reported Tuesday.

The auction was held in London on Monday to raise funds for his charitable foundation that was launched in India last year, the Press Trust of India news agency said.

The Indian captain, who scored an unbeaten 79-ball 91 with the bat in his team's six-wicket win over Sri Lanka in the final in Mumbai in April, sealed the match when he smashed seamer Nuwan Kulasekara for six.

Dhoni said that the charity will work on "improving children's accessibility to cricket by building a sports academy where children will be able to develop their talents across a whole range of disciplines."

He is currently leading the side in England for a four-Test series starting at Lord's on Thursday.

## Ilievski's mission Lebanon

**Football**

SPORTS REPORTER

Barring a couple of players, the Lebanon national football team is quite an unknown quantity for their Bangladeshi counterparts since these two sides never met before. Although some of them have met at club level a few times, it gives the team's think tank little food for thought. The case is worrisome for Bangladesh's newly-appointed coach Nikola Ilievski, who has been in charge for only three weeks, and the Macedonian is making sure he gathers as much knowledge as he can about the opponents before taking them on.

The 56-year old coach has talked with Kuwait's Serbian coach Goran Tufegdzcic, whose side handed an emphatic 6-0 defeat to Lebanon in a friendly match earlier this month, informed assistant coach Golam Jilani yesterday.

Lebanon have played two more warm-up matches and lost to Oman 1-0 and suffered a massive 6-2 defeat at the hands of United Arab Emirates as part of preparation for their July 23 home leg of the World Cup Pre-qualifier against Bangladesh.

Ilievski also managed some footages of the Lebanese team through internet to gain knowledge about the opponents.

"There is no alternative to play good football than our opponents (Lebanon) if we want to ensure a positive result," Ilievski was quoted as saying by assistant coach Jilani.

In their three-day practice camp at BKSP, the Bangladesh coach put emphasis on technical and tactical aspects and saw the players shooting, crossing and making set-piece yesterday.

The coach also went through the drawing board to make his charges understand his plans before the start of the practice, said Jilani.

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## Test C'ship final could be timeless

AFP, London

The new world Test Championship could witness the first 'timeless' Test in more than 70 years, according to Haroon Lorgat.

The International Cricket Council (ICC) chief executive said the format, where matches are played to a finish, regardless of time constraints, could be revived for the final of a four-team tournament to determine the world's leading Test side due to take place in England in 2013.

Currently Tests are limited to five days, usually with six hours' playing time, but can end in a draw if bad weather interrupts the match or either side cannot bowl out the other twice.

"It is common knowledge that we hope in 2013 the top four teams will be involved in two semifinals and a final to determine a world Test champion," Lorgat said.

"The committee is currently working on it but it is not a good idea to end up with a drawn Test match."

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