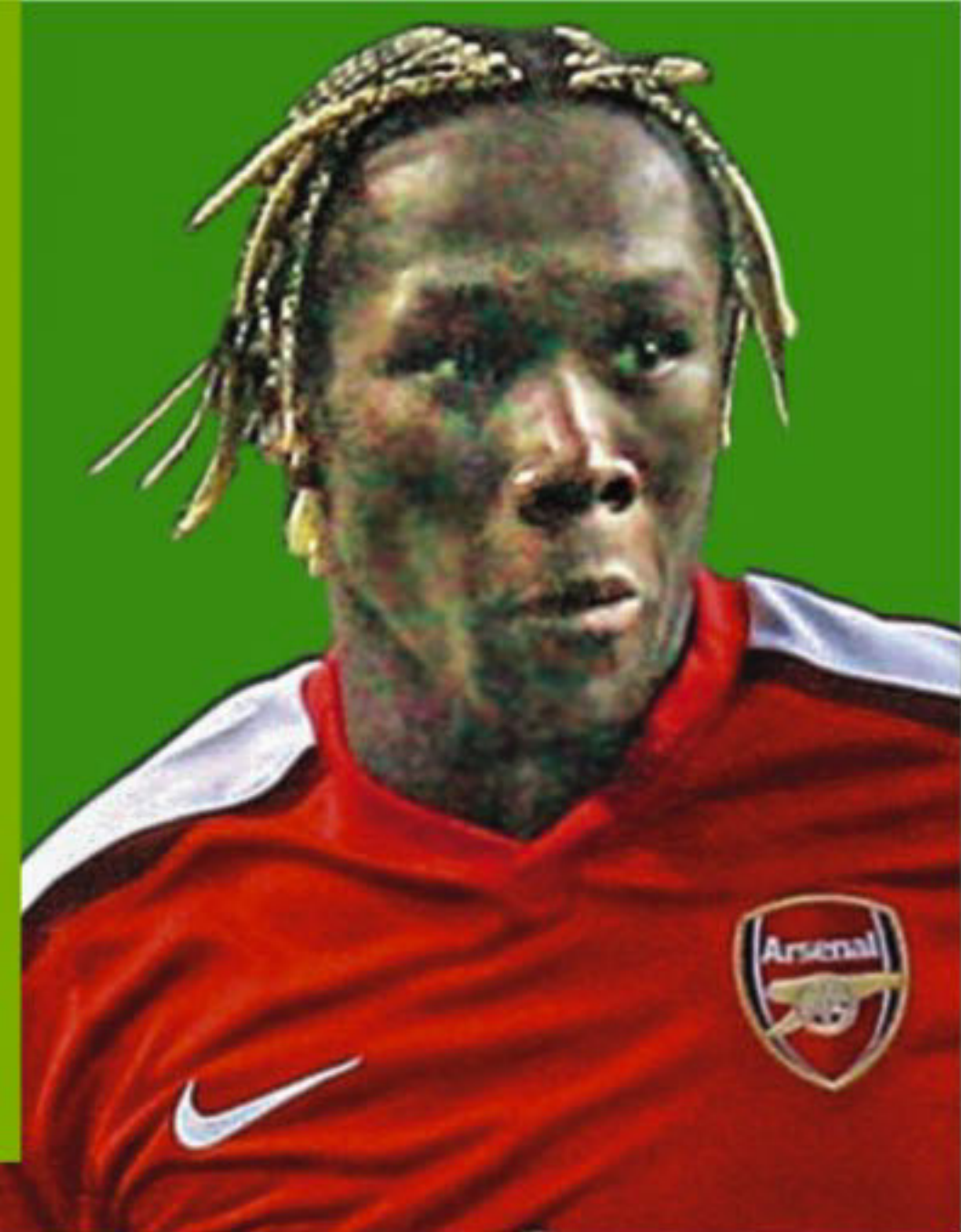


Sagna suffers broken leg

Arsenal's French right-back Bacary Sagna will be out of action for three months after breaking his leg in Sunday's 2-1 defeat at Tottenham, the club confirmed. Sagna landed awkwardly after a collision with Spurs defender Benoit Assou-Ekotto in the second half at White Hart Lane and was stretchered off before being taken to hospital for scans. "The club can confirm that Bacary Sagna sustained a fracture to the fibula in his right leg during the match against Tottenham Hotspur this afternoon," said an Arsenal statement.



WEST INDIES ARRIVE TODAY

Grit required

Cricket

SAKEB SUBHAN

The West Indies side arrive here today from the UAE with a 19-member Test and ODI squad to play a T20 international, three ODIs and two Tests against Bangladesh from October 11 to November 2. Five more players who are currently involved in the Champions League T20 in India are likely to join the squad tomorrow.

The series comes with the promise of good results as well as a cautionary tale. That tale should be fresh in every Bangladesh supporter's mind -- the 58 all out in the World Cup at home earlier this year against the same opponents in their last international meeting. There is reason for hope as the West Indies are set to come here with a side missing the class of the likes of Chris Gayle, Ramnaresh Sarwan and Dwayne Bravo, thus considerably weakening their batting. But it may be wiser to focus on the cautionary tale instead of getting carried away with the tourists' supposed weakness.

Though West Indies appear depleted in the batting stakes, the suit that caused Bangladesh the most grief is still intact and in sufficiently good health to cause

trouble once more. In the World Cup encounter, ten Bangladeshi wickets were shared by three bowlers -- the high pace of Kumar Roach, the accurate medium pace of captain Darren Sammy, and the left arm spin of Sulieman Benn.

In the squad set to tour Bangladesh, Roach and Sammy are there, and with them will be fast bowlers Ravi Rampaul and Andre Russell, while Benn's place goes to the massively impressive young leg-spinner Devendra Bishoo. Batting against them will not be any easier than it was in March.

Seven months on from that debacle, the Tigers have gone to Zimbabwe and lost both the one-off Test and the ODI series, and the captain who was supposed to lead the team into a new era, Shakib Al Hasan, has been sacked.

Under new skipper Mushfiqur Rahim and a new coach in Australian Stuart Law, the intent should now not be what it was in March, when the Tigers seemed not to have any coherent plans beyond their biff-bang batting approach. The

WI TOUR ITINERARY

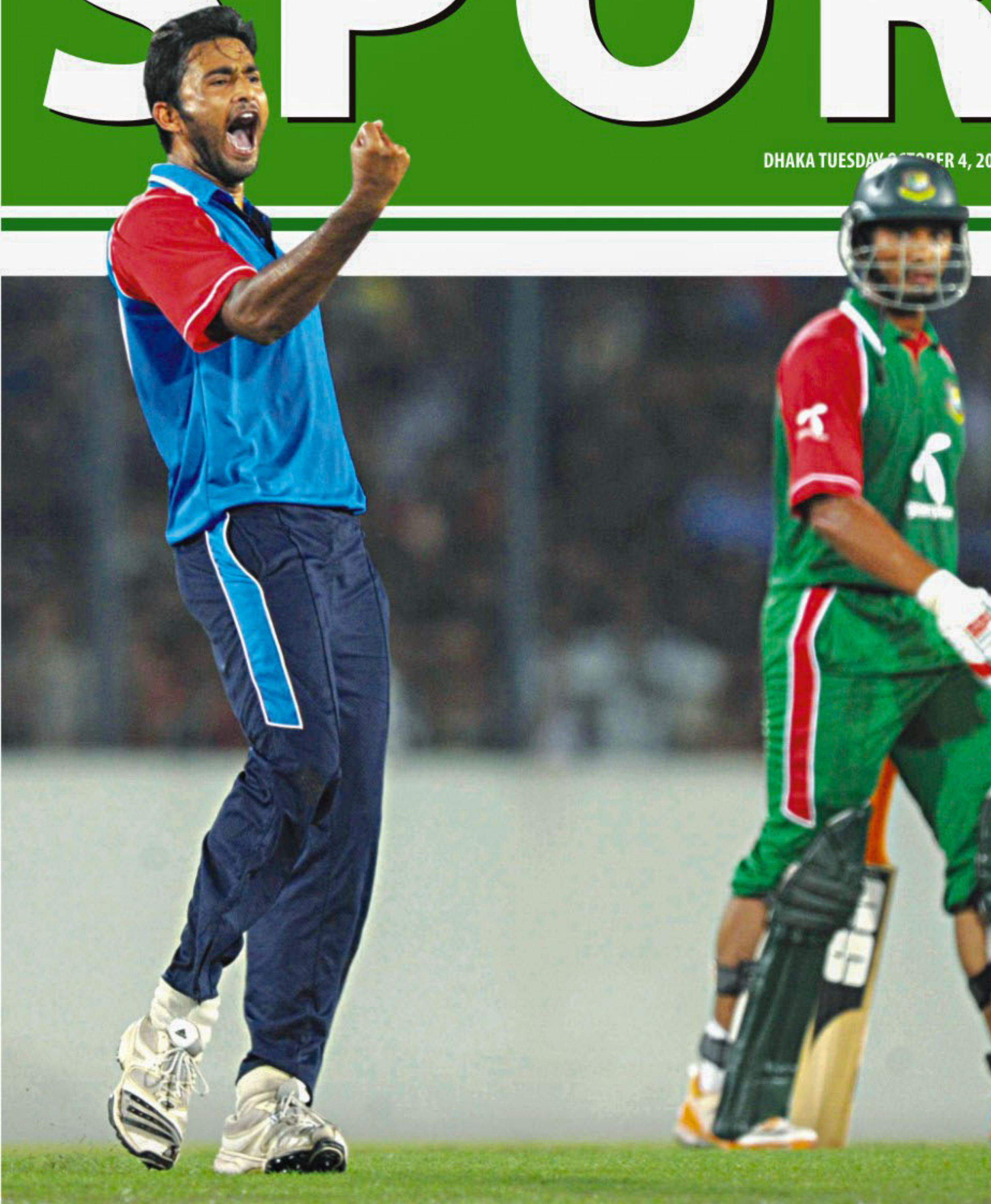
Date	Match	Venue
11 Oct	Twenty20 (D/N)	Mirpur
13 Oct	1st ODI (D/N)	Mirpur
15 Oct	2nd ODI (D/N)	Mirpur
18 Oct	3rd ODI (D/N)	Chittagong
21-25 Oct	1st Test	Chittagong

Tigers will do well to target this Windies series as their next turning point. There are possibilities of something special if the cricketers have learnt anything from their cautionary tale. This turnaround should not focus as much on the ODIs as on the two Tests that follow. It is in the longest version of the game where the Tigers' competence faces the harshest questions, and even a drawn series will do wonders for their credibility.

Be it in Tests or ODIs, the problems faced are similar: a general unwillingness to guts it out and get through the tough times to enjoy the fruits of patience.

This is in no way limited to their batting; this same problem in the bowling department cost them dearly in the Test in Zimbabwe where bowlers, with the exception of Robiul Islam, strayed from a good line and length when wickets were not forthcoming. In Test matches especially, the ability of bowling sides to create pressure and sustain it is a cornerstone of good teams.

Now is the best time for the Tigers to grasp this ability, because if they can avoid their batting debacles, a weakened West Indies batting line-up may falter, especially given their known weakness against spin bowling on helpful tracks. The smattering of Bangladesh victories have mostly been borne on sparkles of talent. It is now time to adopt the virtues of grit, else come November 2 fans will once again be rueing an opportunity missed.



BCB Green fast bowler Shahadat Hossain (L) is elated after taking the wicket of Tanvir Haider. Bowling with a lot of heart, he finished with 2 wickets conceding only 12 runs in his 4 overs in the T20 practice match against BCB Red at the Sher-e-Bangla National Stadium yesterday.

PHOTO: STAR

Greens trump Reds

Cricket

SPORTS REPORTER

The return of competitive Twenty20 cricket was welcomed yesterday by a large crowd who were treated to a late onslaught, but saw little from those Tigers who will take on West Indies in the same format next week.

Around 8,000 people turned up at the floodlit Sher-e-Bangla National Stadium expecting to find the usual Twenty20 nosh-up but all they got was a low-scoring encounter that had more airy swishes than meaty blows. BCB Red, a team that had most of the Tigers' Twenty20 line-up, made 119 for six after electing to bat first, which BCB Green chopped down in only 16.5 overs, making 121 for one.

But there was entertainment. It began and ended with the BCB Green's reply with the bat when Rokibul Hasan, Shahriar Nafees and Mominul Haque went after the BCB Red bowlers, virtually the bowling line-up of the Tigers.

The much-maligned Rokibul, who was sent to open, played a forceful hand at the top of the innings, hammering a 14-ball 23 that had four boundaries and a pulled six off Namzul Hossain. Perhaps it was the lack of

pressure but some of his strokes -- the smash through point or the flowing drive down the ground -- reminded everyone that the Jamalpur-born still has much to offer.

There were very few singles on show as his opening partner Shahriar Nafees also got stuck into the BCB Red attack, despite losing Rokibul in the sixth over with the score on 45. Abdur Razzak picked up the only wicket.

Nafees ensured a stroll to the finish line with his unbeaten 55-ball 61, hammering seven boundaries and a slog-swept six. He shared an unbroken 76-run stand with the young Mominul Haque, who struck two sixes, both lofted drives off Elias Sunny and Robiul Islam respectively, and two boundaries in his 32-ball 35.

But the earlier show by those for whom the match was turned into a T20 affair from the originally scheduled one-dayer failed to inspire.

Tamim Iqbal lasted only five balls as he gave an easy catch to Noor Hossain after scoring six. The promoted Naeem Islam batted out seven balls before his first try to burst through the infield was thwarted by a flying Shuvogoto Hom Chowdhury at mid-off.

Skipper Mushfiqur Rahim's wild slog had him caught at mid-wicket by Noor Hossain before Imrul Kayes, the only top-order bat

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Hafizur and Chumki on the fast track

Athletics

SPORTS REPORTER

Hafizur Rahman and Shamsunnahar Chumki became the fastest man and woman of the Walton 11th National Summer Athletics Championship at the Bangabandhu National Stadium yesterday.

It was a double delight for Chumki after her 200m sprint triumph on Sunday while Hafizur's was a memorable return to the back after missing the event in the last two editions due to muscle injury.

The Bangladesh Air Force sprinter dethroned holder Mohan Khan of Bangladesh Army to win the 100m sprint gold for the first time in his career at a time of 10.90 seconds.

Mohan, a promising sprinter, had to be content with only a bronze as he finished behind the

second-placed Mezhah Ahmed. Mezbah clocked 11.00 seconds while Mohan's bronze was ensured in 11.10 seconds.

"I feel great after winning the 100m sprint, especially for the fact that I never expected to win the gold making a comeback after two years. However, I was confident that I could win at least a medal," said the 26-year Hafizur.

Hafizur first competed in the 100m sprint in 2005 and became second but has since seen his performance graph dip as he finished fourth the following year. He missed the 2007 competition and finished third in 2008 at 10.50 seconds where his teammate Abu Abdullah won gold. The injury ruled him out of competition for the last two years but he toiled hard in the training this time to get back in form.

Hafizur's feat means Bangladesh discovered four differ-

ent fastest men in the last four competitions. Hafizur believes lack of practice and eagerness among the athletes results in a new name topping the list each time.

Mohan too admitted that he did not have sufficient practice before the summer meet as he trained only 18 days after enjoying a 40-day holiday.

Contrary to the men's, the women's 100m sprint has seen either Chumki or Nazmunahar Beauty take the honours. And this time it was Beauty's disqualification in the heats that paved the way for Chumki to regain the 100m crown even though she faced stiff challenge from junior fastest sprinter Papia Rani Sarker.

Chumki, who also won the 200m sprint on Sunday, took 12.30 seconds to win gold while Papia timed 12.40 seconds to win the silver medal.

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Shamsunnahar Chumki and Hafizur Rahman pose for the cameras after becoming the fastest woman and man in the Walton 11th National Summer Athletics Championships at the Bangabandhu National Stadium yesterday.

PHOTO: STAR

London Games track opened

AFP, London

The athletics track at London's Olympic Stadium, which will host next year's Games, was inaugurated on Monday.

The red synthetic rubber track, made by an Italian firm, was tested by several athletes including middle-distance runner Hannah England, who won a 1500m silver medal at the recent World Championships.

"It's a great moment," said organising committee president Sebastian Coe, himself a former elite middle-distance runner.

The 80,000-capacity stadium, situated in London's East End, is expected to have cost 486 million pound (753 million dollars) to build when completed.

It will host the opening and closing ceremonies at the 2012 Games, on July 27 and August 12.

SQUAD FOR SL TESTS NAMED

Pakistan recall Gul and Riaz

Cricket

PTI, Karachi

Seasoned pace bowlers Umar Gul and Wahab Riaz were on Sunday recalled to the Pakistan squad for the Test series against Sri Lanka but the national selectors dropped young batsman Umar Akmal for the three matches.

"We have picked the Test squad keeping in mind the climate and strength of the opposition," chief selector Mohsin Khan told a press conference on Sunday.

"The squad has been picked basically on basis of the players performance in international and domestic cricket," he said. Except for the omission of Umar Akmal, the younger brother of discarded wicketkeeper Kamran Akmal, there were no real surprises in the squad announced after a meeting of the selection committee at the National Stadium.

The selectors had rested the three senior bowlers, Gul, Riaz and left-arm spinner Abdul Rehman for the recent tour to Zimbabwe but Mohsin said keeping in mind that Sri Lanka were a stronger opposition, the trio had been included in the side to strengthen the bowling attack.

The selectors apparently omitted the talented Umar Akmal to retain former captain Shoaib Malik in the Test squad.

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Shuttlers off to Japan

SPORTS REPORTER

A four-member Bangladesh team left for Japan last night to take part in the ANA Badminton U-17 and U-15 Championship. The two shuttlers are Tushar and Ayman who will take part in the U-15 category. The other members of the team are coach Nikhil Chandra Dhar and manager Kamruzzaman Ratan. Bangladesh are taking part in the event for the first time. The meet starts on October 7 where shuttlers from 20 Asian countries will take part.

Pak chief selector is the coach

AFP, Karachi

Pakistan appointed on Monday chief selector Mohsin Khan as interim coach for this month's Test and limited-over series against Sri Lanka, a day after he unveiled the Test squad.

The 56-year-old will replace Waqar Younis, who left the post on medical grounds after Pakistan's tour of Zimbabwe last month.

The Pakistan Cricket Board (PCB) said Khan will be in charge for the Sri Lanka series only, adding it was "in the process of appointing a full-time coach".

Pakistan play three Tests, five one-dayers and a Twenty20 against the islanders in the United Arab Emirates (UAE), after Sri Lanka refused to tour Pakistan, where they were attacked in 2009.

The attack, which killed eight Pakistanis and wounded seven visiting players and their assistant coach, saw all international cricket in Pakistan suspended, forcing them to play at neutral venues.

Khan, a charismatic opener who played 46 Tests and 75 one-day matches between 1977 and 1986,

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