

# Star SPORT

DHAKA FRIDAY DECEMBER 16, 2011, E-MAIL: sports@thedailystar.net

## Already a cricketer!

At the age of six and a half years, Musheer Khan, a student of Anjuman Islam High School in Mumbai became India's youngest cricketer when he took part in inter-school cricket. Musheer debuted for his school against Shaileendra Education Society this week for the Giles Shield Under-14 inter-school tournament. The left-arm spinner had an impressive first match. He picked up six wickets for just 11 runs, that helped his team inflict an innings defeat on the opposition. Musheer is the younger brother of Sarfaraz Khan who made the headlines two years ago when he went past Sachin Tendulkar's score of 326 not out in the Harris Shield tournament at the age of 12. — INTERNET



## Squad announced after much ado

SPORTS REPORTER

The Bangladesh squad for the second Test against Pakistan due to start in Mirpur tomorrow was announced late last night after much drama surrounding Mohammad Ashraful's place and reportedly a standoff between the Akram Khan-led selection panel and the Bangladesh Cricket Board (BCB) high-ups.

Ashraful, eventually not picked, was not in a 14-man squad that the selectors submitted to the board on Wednesday. Curiously, however, Ashraful had checked into the team hotel on Wednesday along with the other members of the squad and trained properly yesterday morning.

Adding to the confusion was coach Stuart Law's belief that Ashraful was in the squad. "As far as I know, he [Ashraful] is in the squad. That's why he's here and practising. We haven't been told anything different. Maybe it is speculation and that sort of thing goes on in this part of the world," said Law while talking to reporters after training on Thursday.

Ashraful, meanwhile, said during the Dhaka Premier Division League players' transfer at the Bangabandhu National Stadium yesterday that the board informed him of his exclusion yesterday evening.

**SQUAD**  
Mushfiqur Rahim (captain), Mahmudullah (vice-captain), Tamim Iqbal, Nazimuddin, Shahriar Nafees, Shakib Al Hasan, Naeem Islam, Nasir Hossain, Shafiqul Islam, Nazmul Hossain, Elias Sunny, Shahadat Hossain, Sohrwardi Shuvo, Robiul Islam.

The rumoured standoff between the selection committee and BCB bigwigs was probably the reason behind this delay to name the squad with less than a day and a half

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Bangladesh batsman Tamim Iqbal looks on as national all-rounder Shakib Al Hasan speaks to the press following the inter-club players' transfer for the Dhaka Premier Division League at a local hotel yesterday. PHOTO: STAR

## Nikola to go on leave

SPORTS REPORTER

Football coach Nikola Ilievski has been granted a 20-day vacation after the Bangladesh football team head coach sought a one-month break to travel to Macedonia following the national side's failure in the seventh SAFF Football Championship in India early this month.

"He has been given a vacation for 15 to 20 days and he may leave here on the first or second working day of the next week, subject to the availability of air tickets," said Bangladesh Football Federation acting general secretary Abu Nayeem Shohag yesterday adding

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## Asia Cup confirmed

Chances of Indo-Pak series slim

Cricket

CRICINFO, Dubai

The Asian Cricket Council (ACC) has confirmed that the Asia Cup 2012 will go ahead as scheduled, from March 12 to 22 in Dhaka, Bangladesh, all but ruling out the possibility of Pakistan touring India as outlined in the Future Tours Programme.

The decision was taken at the ACC's meeting in Singapore earlier this week; it also endorsed, pending a fuller discussion and satisfaction with security and other issues, a proposal by Pakistan to host the 2014 tournament.

"It was agreed that the Asia Cup 2012 would go ahead on the proposed dates," Subhan Ahmed, Pakistan Cricket Board's (PCB) chief operating officer, told

ESPNcricinfo. "There was discussion of the ACC postponing the Asia Cup if both India and Pakistan agreed to play their series within that slot but that idea has faded out for many reasons."

The PCB was hoping at the meeting to get some confirmation from the Board of Control for Cricket in India (BCCI) on the resumption of bilateral series but Subhan said that the Indian board representative, Ratnakar Shetty, was unable to give any assurance in the absence of president N Srinivasan.

"Pakistan-India series was not on the agenda at the ACC meeting but we were looking forward to Srinivasan coming across to discuss it," Subhan said. "We had an ideal platform here to talk with our India counterpart but he [Srinivasan] didn't attend the meeting."

"He [Shetty] was not in a position to talk

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## Shakib, Tamim biggest draws

Cricket

SPORTS REPORTER

When the country's two traditionally popular clubs Abahani and Mohammedan completed their formalities in the Premier League's inter-club players' transfers almost silently, Victoria Sporting Club and the newly-promoted Sheikh Jamal Club made their presence felt on the final day bourse at the Bangabandhu National Stadium yesterday.

Victoria, the two times champions, hogged the spotlight by signing the country's two leading players Shakib Al Hasan and Tamim Iqbal. Reportedly, the national pair are the highest paid cricketers this season, while the emerging Sheikh Jamal roped in national captain Mushfiqur Rahim and left-arm spinner Sohrwardi Shuvo from the

national pool.

The mood at the stadium suddenly transformed into one of festivity when Sheikh Jamal turned up with a band party. Victoria, meanwhile, signed their players at a local hotel after a press conference which they called to clear their position regarding Lutfar Rahman Badal's move to the new club from Mohammedan's cricket affair.

Badal made it clear that he moved to the neighbouring club only to keep his commitment towards the players who have lined up with him. Besides the two star players, Victoria also signed players like Jahurul Islam, Rumman Bin Sabbir, Mukter Ali, Tareq Aziz, Mosharruf Rubel, Sharifullah and Sajju Datta.

"I have a very good relationship with Tamim and Shakib and I made a commitment to them. You know Tamim even called me to inquire what would be happen to them as Imrul (Kayes)

and Naeem (Islam), two national pool players, took the money from Mohammedan and also if they would get the promised amount regardless of whether they are playing or not. That's why I moved to Victoria, to keep my commitment," informed Badal.

He confirmed that the national pair are the highest paid players this season, but was not ready to disclose the amount because of income tax issue. Badal also informed that they are trying to bring West Indies great Brian Lara as a coach while they will try their best to hire dashing West Indies batsman Chris Gayle for the second round matches. Pakistani Shoaib Malik, who is now touring the country with the national side, also put pen to paper while two other Pakistan players and India batsman Manoj Tiwary also confirmed their services.

Understandably, Shakib and Tamim were delighted with the signing and

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PHOTO: STAR

HAPPY DAYS: Pakistan captain Misbahul Haq (L) and fast bowler Umar Gul share a light moment while stretching before their practice session at the Sher-e-Bangla National Stadium yesterday, ahead of the second Test against Bangladesh tomorrow.

## BKSP crush Rangers

SPORTS REPORTER

Bangladesh Krira Shikha Protisthan (BKSP) thrashed Rangers 61-30 in the Citycell Federation Cup Basketball Championship at the Dhanmondi Basketball Gymnasium yesterday.

The winners dominated the first half 24-14 as Linkon caged highest 15 scores for BKSP while Sandy scored 17 points for Rangers but his efforts went in vain.

On Wednesday, Gregarious defeated DOHS by 55-21 points after leading the first half 26-12.

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## Football season from Dec 23

SPORTS REPORTER

The football season gets underway from December 23 through the qualifying round of the Federation Cup at two venues with twelve clubs taking part in the knock-out phase.

A total of 12 clubs -- seven clubs from the Bangladesh Championship League and five services teams -- will lock horns to secure places for the 16-team finals, the starting date of which has yet to be decided.

The top five teams from the qualifying round will join 11 Bangladesh Premier League clubs as 16 teams, split into four groups, will play round-robin matches with the top two teams from each group advancing to the quarterfinals.

Participating teams of the qualifying round are Victoria Sporting Club, Wari Club, Uttar Baridhara Club, Agrani Bank Limited SC, Cox City FC, Beanibazar SC and Chittagong

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