

# Star SPORT

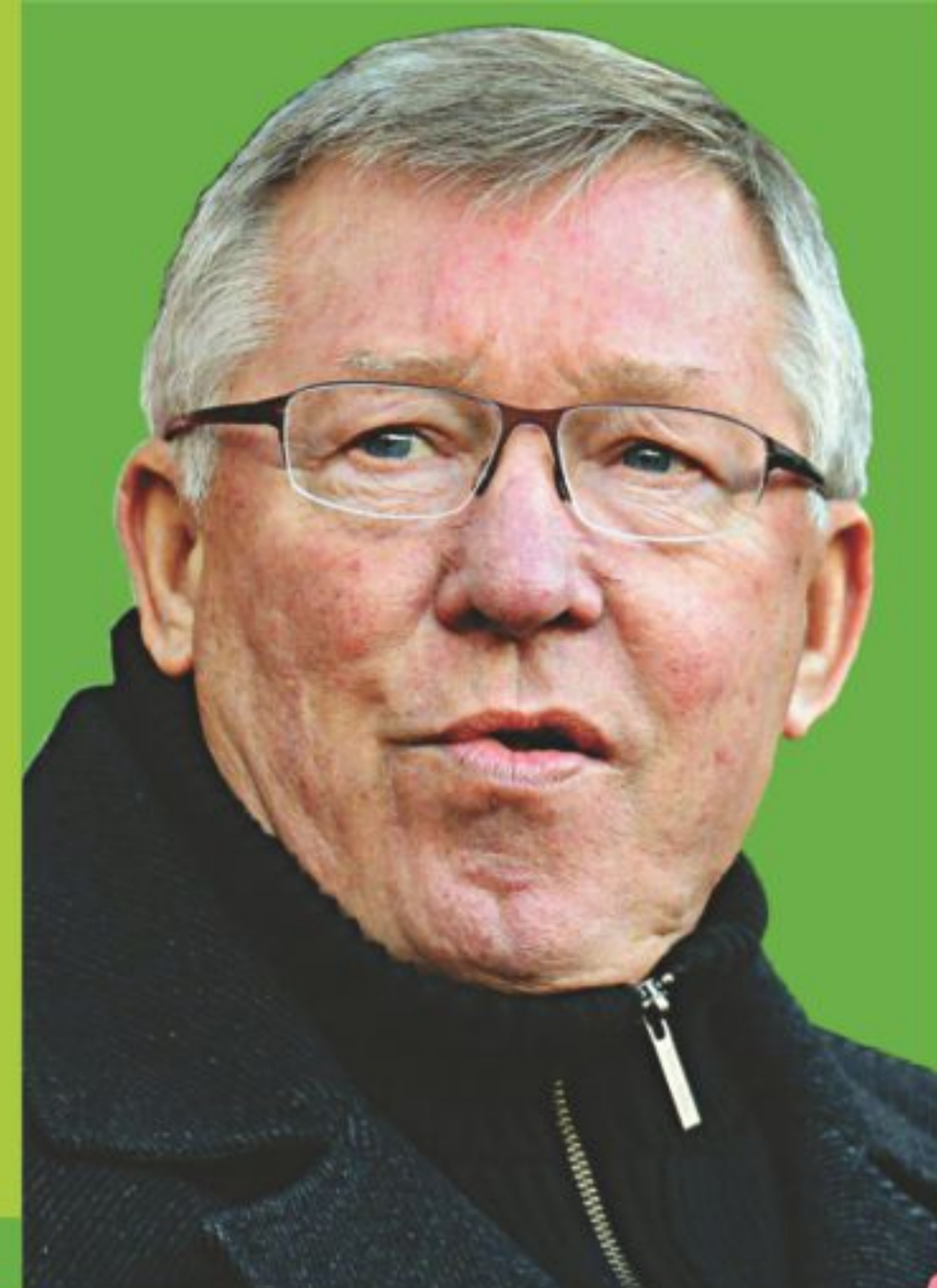
DHAKA WEDNESDAY NOVEMBER 7, 2012, E-MAIL: sports@thedailystar.net

## MU to unveil Fergie statue

Manchester United will commemorate manager Alex Ferguson's 26th year in charge of the team by unveiling a statue of the Scot this month, the Premier League leaders said in a statement.

The statue will be uncovered at Old Trafford on November 23, the day before United play Queens Park Rangers, the same opponents as in the 70-year-old's first home match in charge on November 22, 1986.

The statue will be positioned near the entrance to the stand named in



## Gayle & co cooped up

SPORTS REPORTER

Incessant rainfall in the city compelled the West Indian contingent to remain indoors at the Pan Pacific Sonargaon Hotel yesterday. According to the original schedule, the visitors were supposed to practice at the Bangladesh Cricket Board's (BCB) National Cricket Academy Ground yesterday.

However, the players from the Caribbean preferred to get adjusted to the different time zone instead.

The players seemed to be suffering jetlag as a majority of them remained in their rooms in the morning, spending their time talking to their families back home. Later, many were seen easing out of their rooms in the afternoon to attend a scheduled workout session at the hotel's gym.

The visitors are scheduled to play a three-day warm-up game against BCB XI beginning on Thursday at the BKSP. However, with heavy

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West Indies batsman Chris Gayle strolls inside the Sonargaon Hotel yesterday.

PHOTO: STAR

## A step towards resolution

SPORTS REPORTER



The three-member fact-finding committee made major headway towards solving the problem surrounding the Bangladesh Premier League (BPL) T20, which has been rocked by claims and counter-claims from different stakeholders regarding payments over the last eight months.

The committee, headed by the Bangladesh Cricket Board's (BCB) senior vice-president Mahbul Anam, completed its job yesterday after talking with the involved parties. It will submit recommendations to the board within the next two days and the committee members believe that it will help the board to clear the air surrounding the money-spinning tournament.

The most important thing the committee has achieved is that they were able to formalise the respective positions of the stakeholders on paper, which was not the case over the last few months -- with all agreements made on a verbal basis -- even though it was a successful tournament on the field.

"Everything had been done verbally but now we have written documents. We talked with all the parties and after that everything had been documented with the agreement and endorsement of all parties," informed Anam after a meeting yesterday at the Sher-e-Bangla National Stadium in Mirpur.

"We will now prepare a list of recommendations based on our findings and submit it to the board within the next two days. We hope after that the problem regarding BPL will be solved," he added.

BCB's new president Nazmul Hassan Papon had formed this fact-finding committee in the last board meeting after he found that there had been a dispute over the claims of the different parties of the BPL. The lack of documentation had created chaos, but the committee now believes that their efforts will bury this problem and allow the board to take clear actions to resolve the issues.

After the meeting officials of Game On, the sports management company that managed the tournament which took place in February this year, confirmed that they do not have any financial disputes with any party of the BPL and hoped that it will be possible to hold the second edition of the tournament with the existing six franchises, unless the board wants to go for any addition.

The major problem has surrounded the non-payment of international and local players, which has also served to tarnish the country's image abroad and forced the Federation of International Cricketers' Associations (FICA) to launch a campaign against the Bangladesh Cricket Board (BCB). FICA has even sent its legal director Ian Smith, who arrived yesterday, to Dhaka to try and get to the bottom of BPL's payment fiasco. It is expected that he will meet with the BCB president today.

Anam said that everything has been settled after an amicable discussion, and clearly documented so that nobody can say or do anything in a way other than by the book.

Owners of Duronto Rajshahi, who failed to clear their dues despite several deadlines, said after the meeting that they have Tk 35 lakh worth of player payment due while owing Tk 2.10 crore to the BCB, who paid for their foreign players. They will clear everything by November 15 according to the settlement with the committee.

On the other hand it was confirmed that the Dhaka Gladiators are owed money by the board in ticketing revenues.

## No Meghe sideshow for Emily, Zahid

SPORTS REPORTER

Sheikh Russel KC have declined to permit its three national players to take part in a tournament in India ahead of the Bangladesh Premier League which gets underway from November 13.

Zahid Hasan Emily, Mamunul Islam and Zahid Hossain -- who were signed by Meghe United in July -- were supposed to take part in a tournament in Nagpur from November 4 to December 4. But with the start of Bangladesh Premier League a week away, Sheikh Russel decided not to release them as they aim to win the professional football league for the first time

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## Rubel return helps pace scenario

Cricket

NAIMUL KARIM

Bangladesh's weakness in the pace bowling department is not a secret. The last five Test matches saw the pacers pick a total of 15 wickets, eight of which came in the match against Zimbabwe last year. The worrisome statistic seemed to have had an effect on the national selectors, who named seven pace bowlers including youngster Taskin Ahmed in the preliminary squad for the series against the West Indies.

The stats in the one day internationals reflect a similar feature. Shafiqul Islam seems to have lost his way following his injury in the Asia Cup earlier this year and any incisive burst from Shahadat Hossain is often limited to his first spell of the match. The absence of the talismanic Mashrafe Bin Mortaza adds to the woes.

Amidst the gloom, however, the return of Rubel Hossain to the

squad has given the national selectors some semblance of relief. Rubel, who sustained a shoulder injury in the first edition of the Bangladesh Premier League (BPL) T20, is expected to return to the national fold after almost a year. Chief selector Akram Khan had earlier stated that Rubel would be an 'automatic entry' into the team if he was fit.

A bowler who has been termed by many in the team management to be a 'game-changer', Rubel was sent to South Africa in May this year for treatment and went through an intensive recovery programme over the last six months.

"Honestly speaking, I felt really disappointed not to have played for the last year or so. It's been a struggle so far and I am really happy to have made it through to the preliminary squad," said Rubel.

Rubel, if selected in the team, will be expected to lead the pace attack in the longer version of the



RUBEL HOSSAIN

game of Mashrafe's absence. The task, however, has never worried the Bagerhat-based bowler. "I don't usually take a lot of pressure. I always try to bend my back and give it my best, no matter what the situation," said Rubel.

While the bowler did acknowledge the strength of the West Indian batting line-up, he was however optimistic about his team's chances. "One has to be in a positive frame of mind while bowl-

ing against the likes of (Chris) Gayle and (Marlon) Samuels," said Rubel.

The bowler, who claims to have changed his daily schedule following the injury, stated that he had learnt a lot regarding fitness issues in the last six months. "My daily time-table is a lot more disciplined now. I make sure to get enough sleep and exercise regularly. I also take a lot more nutrition. I am a lot more cautious now -- obviously don't want to get injured again," said Rubel.

While Rubel's return is a ray of hope for the Tigers' wicket-starved pace stocks, he cannot realistically be expected to successfully shoulder the burden alone. As impressive as he may have been before his injury, any success in the pace department will have to involve all selected pacemen pulling together in the right direction. If selected Rubel must take the lead, but Bangladesh fans will hope that the others follow.

## National chess sans Rajib, Rakib

SPORTS REPORTER

The 38th National Chess Championship is set to get underway from tomorrow at the Bangladesh Olympic Association Media Centre with two of the youngest Grandmasters of the country, Abdullah Al Rakib and Enamul Haque Rajib, deciding to skip due to fatigue following two successive international tournaments in India.

Their decision to pull out has reduced the rating of the championship which otherwise could have easily granted GM and IM norms to the upcoming players if all the five grandmasters had participated.

And it would have been the first national meet with five grandmasters taking part together since the return of Rakib and Rajib following the taking over of an elected committee at the Bangladesh Chess Federation. Both Rakib and Rajib were out of action for two years protesting the ad-hoc committee at the BCF.

There are whispers that Rakib and Rajib skipped the championship due to a row over the selection of manager in December's World Cities Chess Championship in United Arab Emirates even though Rakib refuted the allegation.

"I am really tired after playing 22 successive games in India and not I'm in a position to play another 13 rounds of games. I even fell sick after the seventh round in Vizag. I managed only half a point from the last four rounds whereas I had achieved six points from previous seven rounds," said Rakib after returning from India yesterday.

Echoing the same sentiment, Rajib said that he too was tired having played two tournaments in succession.

"I would have been happy if I could participate in the championship after a gap of two years but I can't due to fatigue," said Rajib, who returned home yesterday after winning the Vizag Grandmasters Chess Tournament.

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Australian Arts Minister Simon Crean (L) points out the fine craftsmanship of a commemorative stump decorated by an aboriginal artist after presenting the membership of the Order of Australia to Indian cricket legend Sachin Tendulkar in Mumbai yesterday.

PHOTO: AFP

## Tendulkar AM

AFP, Mumbai

Superstar batsman Sachin Tendulkar on Tuesday became the first Indian sportsman to be honoured with membership of the Order of Australia (AM).

Arts Minister Simon Crean conferred the award on the cricketer at a ceremony in Mumbai, Tendulkar's home city, after the honour was announced by Prime Minister Julia Gillard during her visit to India last month.

Tendulkar was recognised "for his service to Australia-India relations by promoting goodwill, friendship and sportsmanship through the sport of cricket", said a statement from the Australian consulate-general.

"Mr Tendulkar, as a member and former captain of the Indian cricket

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