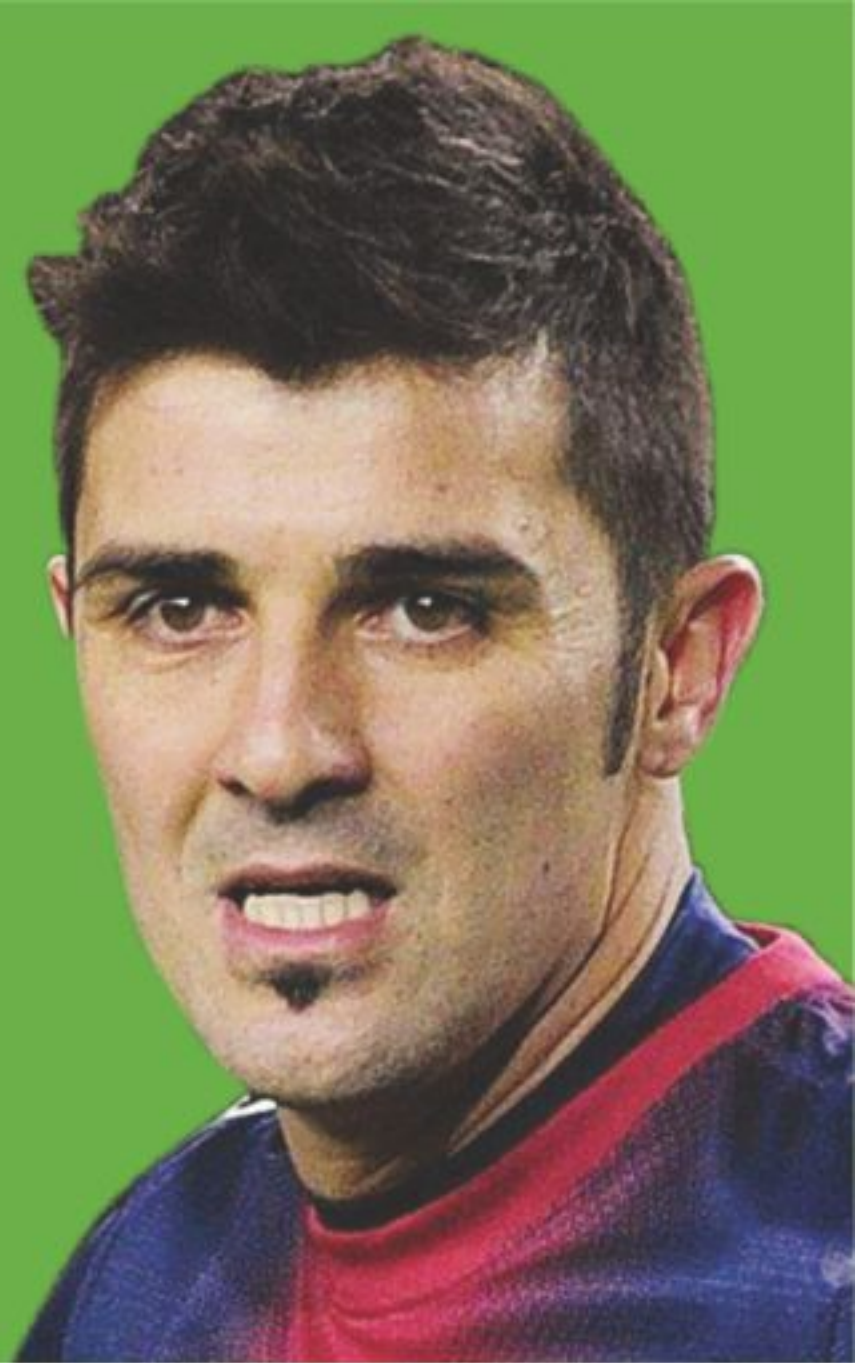


Star SPORT

DHAKA FRIDAY NOVEMBER 30, 2012, E-MAIL: sports@thedailystar.net

Villa passes 300 goals

David Villa took his career goal tally to 301 when he netted twice as holders Barcelona eliminated third-tier Alaves 6-1 on aggregate to qualify for the last 16 of the King's Cup on Wednesday. The Spain striker clipped a sumptuous free kick into the top corner in the 56th minute at the Nou Camp and smashed home Cristian Tello's unselfish layoff three minutes later as Barca came from behind to win the second leg clash 3-1 to set up a meeting with second-division Cordoba.



'It'll be strength v skill'

SAKEB SUBHAN from Khulna

SAHARA CUP 2012
The West Indies' tour of Bangladesh has so far highlighted the chasm between the two teams. In the two Tests, Bangladesh were competitive for some time before the tourists' superior strength decided the matter beyond all doubt. But when Bangladesh skipper Mushfiquir Rahim and his opposite number Darren Sammy meet for the toss today at the Sheikh Abu Naser Stadium here for the first of five ODIs, both will know that they have reached their comfort zones. Even so, the home skipper will likely be in the less comfortable one of the two.

That was the impression he gave during his pre-match press conference yesterday, and understandably so. His team was after all taking on the might of batsmen Chris Gayle, Marlon Samuels, Kieron Pollard, Darren Bravo,

Dwayne Smith and bowlers Kumar Roach, Ravi Rampaul and Sunil Narine.

On top of that Bangladesh will be without the one man who has evened the odds against stronger opponents with astonishing consistency over the last four years, Shakib Al Hasan. If that was not enough, the new ODI rules that allow a maximum of four fielders outside the thirty-yard circle stands to severely hamper the Tigers' spinners, their traditional strength.

"It's not that we are disadvantaged [by the new ODI rules], but it is a challenge. It's a bit difficult for the spinners and also for the pace bowlers at times, because five fielders in the circle when a set batsman is batting is a difficult prospect. But we are working on it, and we have planned for it. If we can execute that plan out in the middle then hopefully it will not be a big problem," hoped Mushfiquir.

"Yes, West Indies have a lot of power-hitters, so it will be a game between their strength and

our skill. If we can build up pressure from both ends they are bound to make mistakes. Hopefully we can get early wickets and execute plans against particular batsman and bowl in the areas that we discussed. Naturally, we don't have many power-hitters which is obviously a disadvantage for us, but at the same time we have a few players who can play long innings and rotate the strike. Hopefully, we will play to our strength," he added.

Although from the home perspective the word 'hopefully' made an appearance far too many times for comfort during the question-and-answer session, Mushfiquir sought to draw confidence from the last time they played in the format, during the Asia Cup in March when they beat 2011 World Cup finalists India and Sri Lanka before narrowly losing to Pakistan in the final.

"We played well in the Asia Cup where there

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Bangladesh cricketers play a game of soccer at the Sheikh Abu Naser Stadium in Khulna yesterday ahead of their opening one-day international against the West Indies today. The match will start at 9am.

PHOTO: FIROZ AHMED



PHOTO: AFP

Australia's Ricky Ponting announces his retirement during a press conference yesterday on the eve of the third Test against South Africa in Perth.

Tearful Ricky says bye

His last Test is Perth where it all began in 1995

Cricket

AFP, Perth

Australia's Ricky Ponting called time Thursday on a 17-year Test career that made him the world's second-highest run-scorer, announcing this week's clash with South Africa will be his last.

"I know I have given cricket my all, it's been my life for 20 years. There's not much more I could give," he said at a hastily-called press conference at the WACA ground in Perth ahead of Friday's match.

Ponting, who turns 38 next month, has failed in three innings against the Proteas during draws in Brisbane and Adelaide and pressure has been building on the veteran ahead of the crucial series decider.

He will continue to play for Tasmania in the domestic competition this summer.

Perth will be a fitting place for Ponting to end a remarkable international career: it is where he debuted against Sri Lanka in 1995.

By playing Friday, he will equal Steve Waugh's mark of 168 Test matches, the most in the history of

Australian cricket.

After being made captain in 2004, right-hander Ponting went on to become one of the country's greatest cricketers, winning more Tests as skipper (48) than any other Australian.

The Tasmanian has 13,366 Test runs to his name, including 41 centuries at an average of 52.21, with only Indian legend Sachin Tendulkar scoring more. But he said he knew it was time

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FACTFILE

Name: Ricky Thomas Ponting

Right-hand batsman, right-arm medium

Date of birth: December 19, 1974

Major teams: Australia, Tasmania, Somerset

Test debut: v Sri Lanka, Perth, December 8, 1995

ODI debut: v South Africa, Wellington, February 15, 1995

CAREER STATS

Tests						
Matches	Runs	Highest	Avg	SR	100s	40s
167	13,366	257	52.21	58.74	41	101
ODIs						
Matches	Runs	Highest	Avg	SR	100s	40s
375	13,704	164	42.03	80.39	30	130
T20Is						
Matches	Runs	Highest	Avg	SR	100s	40s

BCB members given duties

SPORTS REPORTER

Bangladesh Cricket Board (BCB) president Nazmul Hassan Papon has distributed the responsibilities among the newly-appointed ad-hoc committee members during its first meeting at the Sher-e-Bangla National Stadium office in Mirpur yesterday.

In another major decision the board replaced Gazi Ashraf Hossain with Afzalur Rahman Sinha as the governing council chairman of the Bangladesh Premier League (BPL).

The National Sports Council (NSC) formed a 13-member ad-hoc committee on Tuesday, the day after the expiry of the BCB's elected executive committee, and asked them to hand over the reign to an elected body within the next three months.

"The board discussed some urgent issues. The responsibilities of different standing committees have been distributed for the time being. It can be changed anytime, if required," informed Ahmed Sajjadul Alam

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Sammy's eyes on rankings

SPORTS REPORTER from Khulna

SAHARA CUP 2012
One could have been forgiven for thinking that it was back to the halcyon days of West Indies cricket as Darren Sammy -- their tall, ever-smiling captain -- swaggered through the halls of the Sheikh Abu Naser Stadium towards the conference room for the pre-match briefing yesterday.

True, cricketers from the Caribbean seem to have flair built in whatever their fortunes on the field are, but this time the impression was strengthened by their recent resurgence -- most recently the Test series whitewash of New Zealand at home and the World Twenty20 victory in Sri Lanka -- and their utter superiority, on paper at least, over their opponents in the five-match ODI series which begins here today.

His first answer, when asked what he expected from the ODI series against Bangladesh, made it clear that here was a West Indies side focused on living up to their proud heritage. "First of all we want to win the series. If we go by the goal we were trying to achieve before the series, 5-0 gives us five ranking points, 4-1 gives us one, 3-2 might lose us ranking points," said Sammy eyeing a climb up the rankings ladder through this series. "If we play to our potential, it is possible. We will take one thing at a time now."

The new ODI rules, particularly the one stating that there have to be a minimum of five fielders inside the 30-yard circle at all times, has been one of the talking points ahead of the series.

"It is becoming more of a batsman's game. Teams were scoring 300-plus with five guys outside the circle. Now it is only four. I feel sorry for the spinners, they have to find an extra way to bowl and be economical. We have to find one person in the ring which could put more pressure on the batsmen, and no easy singles to get," Sammy said.

The other change, two blocks of Powerplay overs

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FEATURING:
NAGAR BAUL
WARFAZE
MAQSOOD 'O DHAKA
FEEDBACK
PROMETHUES
DALCHHUT
LALON
SHIRONAMHIN
NEMESIS
MECHANIX
BEDUIN
DREEK

VENUE
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