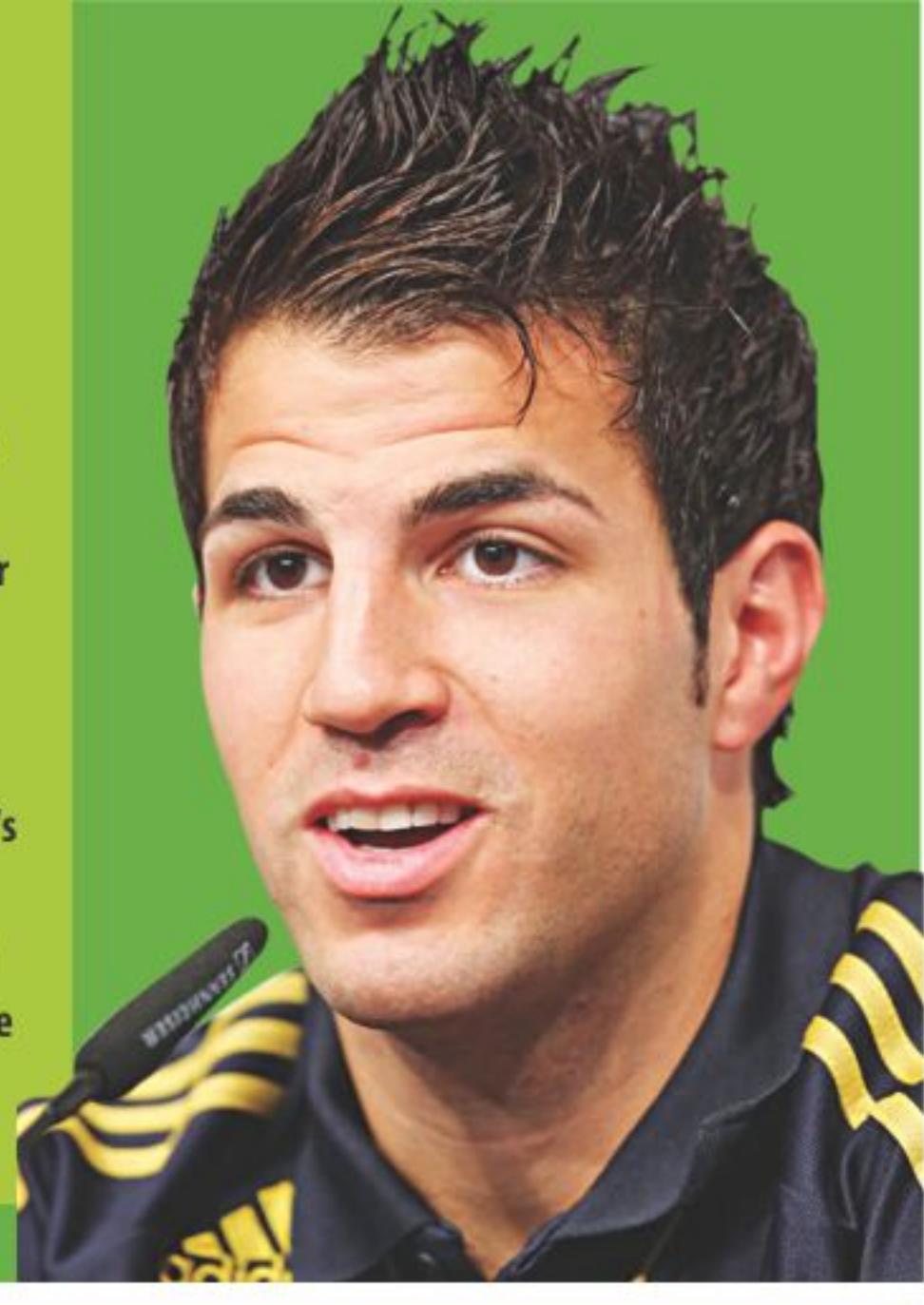


Fabregas out for weeks

Barcelona midfielder Cesc Fabregas could be out of action for up to four weeks after tearing a thigh muscle in Sunday's 2-1 win at Real Betis. The former Arsenal star came off after just nine minutes of the match in Seville. "He'll be sidelined for three to four weeks. Therefore, he'll miss the team's last three games in 2012 -- the two Liga matches against Atletico Madrid and Valladolid and the away leg of the Copa del Rey against Cordoba," said a Barcelona statement.



CLEAR MEN

Today's Score Card

| WEST INDIES | | | |
|--|-----|---|----|
| Smith b Rubel | 24 | | |
| Gayle b Rubel | 6 | | |
| Samuels not out | 85 | | |
| Bravo st Mushfiqur Shohag | 41 | | |
| Pollard b Ziaur | 15 | | |
| Simmons not out | 18 | | |
| Extras: (lb-1, w-7) | 8 | | |
| Total: (For 4 wkt in 20 overs) | 197 | | |
| Did not bat: Sammy, Thomas, Russell, Narine, Roach. | | | |
| Fall of wickets: 1-25, 2-30, 3-96, 4-121. | | | |
| Bowler | O | M | R |
| Shohag | 4 | 0 | 44 |
| Shaiful | 4 | 0 | 26 |
| Rubel | 4 | 0 | 63 |
| Razzak | 3 | 0 | 32 |
| Mahmudullah | 1 | 0 | 15 |
| Ziaur | 4 | 0 | 16 |
| BANGLADESH | | | |
| Tamim not out | 88 | | |
| Anamul c Sammy b Roach | 22 | | |
| Mahmudullah not out | 64 | | |
| Extras: (b-1, lb-2, w-1, nb-1) | 5 | | |
| Total: (For 1 wkt in 20 overs) | 179 | | |
| Did not bat: Monimul, Mushfiqur, Nasir, Shohag, Razzak, Shaiful, Rubel, Ziaur. | | | |
| Fall of wickets: 1-47. | | | |
| Bowler | O | M | R |
| Sammy | 2 | 0 | 30 |
| Roach | 3.6 | 0 | 36 |
| Russell | 1 | 0 | 17 |
| Samuels | 4 | 0 | 32 |
| Narine | 3 | 0 | 27 |
| Gayle | 4 | 0 | 18 |
| Smith | 2 | 0 | 16 |

Result: West Indies won by 18 runs.
Player-of-the-match: Marlon Samuels.

'We did our best today'

BISHWAJIT ROY

SAHARA CUP 2012 Bangladesh signed off their memorable home series against the visiting West Indies with an 18-run defeat in the lone T20 International at the Sher-e-Bangla National Stadium in Mirpur last night. The Tigers might have lost their last match but undoubtedly the fans got their money's worth after the way Mushfiqur Rahim's men fought against the world champions in the shortest format of the game.

There was no shortage of entertainment and excitement in the match for the capacity crowd, who braved the chilly weather to encourage their beloved team, as the home team continued their impressive form even in defeat. Dashing opener Tamim Iqbal, who entertained the crowd the most after Marlon Samuels's explosive knock, believed that his side and their fans should in no way be disappointed with the outcome of the last match of the series, in which the Caribbean side were the favourites but the Tigers also showed their character.

"I think we did our best in the match and Bangladesh played their best match. I believe that we can in no way be disappointed with the result and even the fans should not be disappointed with the result," said the Chittagongian, who spoke highly of Bangladesh's overall performance in the series during the post-match press conference.

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Bangladesh's wicketkeeper and captain Mushfiqur Rahim fluffs an edge off West Indies batsman Marlon Samuels during yesterday's T20I at the Sher-e-Bangla National Stadium. Mushfiqur later grassed another chance to dismiss the batsman off the same bowler. The missed chances proved crucial in the end as Samuels went on to hit an unbeaten 85 off 43 balls to take the game away from the Tigers.

PHOTO: FIROZ AHMED

Sammy satisfied

SPORTS REPORTER

SAHARA CUP 2012 Having ended the month-long tour with an 18-run victory over Bangladesh yesterday, the West Indies captain Darren Sammy stated that he was satisfied with his team's overall performance in Bangladesh. Apart from winning the only T20, the visitors also won the Test series 2-0. Sandwiched between their two successes however was a 3-2 loss in the five-match ODI series.

"On the whole we won two series out of three, which is good. We achieved what we came here to do. With that said I thought Bangladesh played really well, especially in limited-overs cricket. We are disappointed that we didn't win the one-day series too, but we have achieved good things in 2012," said Sammy yesterday, at the end of the T20 tie, their last game on the tour. "We won four Tests in a row this year and that has not been done since Richie Richardson was captain," added Sammy at the post-match press conference at the Sher-e-Bangla National Stadium in Mirpur.

The T20 world champions rode on Marlon Samuels's career best score of 85, an innings which included nine sixes, four of which came in the last over against Rubel Hossain. "When Marlon was playing that innings, it reminded me of his

innings against [Lasith] Malinga in Sri Lanka earlier this year," said Sammy. "It's good to see Marlon performing even though he was out of international cricket for two years. The run that he has had, he has been brilliant for us. That's the kind of performances you want," he added.

The captain also had good words for the hosts, who according to him, had put up a much better show than when the West Indies last toured the country a year ago. "I guess whatever the new coach is doing, you could see them play together as a unit, especially in the one day format. They also kept Chris Gayle quiet. That's one thing that not many teams can do," said Sammy.

"It was eleven months since they played a Test match and to come up in your first innings to score a 500-plus total is an achievement in itself. So, yeah they have definitely improved," he added.

The T20 match on Monday officially brought the curtain down on the month-long tour. The visiting captain stated that while they enjoyed the Bangladesh hospitality, he was quite keen on going back home, something that was reflected in his last statement of the press conference.

"We won and now I am just looking forward to go home to my beautiful wife and kids and spend a nice Christmas with the family."

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'Won't take any credit for Gazi'

Former Pakistani off-spinner Saqlain Mushtaq, who joined the Bangladesh team as their spin bowling coach in August this year has gotten much of the credit for the spinners' excellent performance against the West Indies. The former Pakistan off-spinner, who will be leaving the country tomorrow after the end of his four-month contract, talked to The Daily Star Sport's Naimul Karim yesterday, regarding his short stint in Bangladesh.

Daily Star Sport (DSS): How much credit do you take for Shohag Gazi's performance?

Saqlain Mushtaq (SM): I won't take any credit. Yes, I was in the middle trying to observe the game plan and help him mentally. But the credit goes to him. He showed some guts. We must look after him. He is in the cricketing world now. Different brains will plan against him, they will come up with new strategies to work against him. So this is the time for us to look after him.

DSS: Akram Khan had earlier said that the selection committee had taken your advice on Gazi. What made you him ahead of the others?

SM: Before Eid, we had a coaching camp and Gazi was in that. On the third day we had a session called 'free expression'. And in that session I asked the spinners, to show me whatever they could do with the ball. The boys tried bowling the doosra, carom ball, drifter, off-spin, arm ball, etc. And Gazi that day was bowling beautifully. He was drifting and spinning



SAQLAIN MUSHTAQ

the ball as well. He tried to bowl the doosra with good control and landed the ball in the right areas. After a few drills, Gazi was dominating everyone in the nets. He was quite passionate too and almost never got tired. As a spinner you have to be able to bowl as much as possible. Those five days I think he bowled for around two and a half hours to three hours every day.

DSS: How did you advise your spinners to bowl against the likes of

Gayle and co?

SM: To be honest I didn't say anything to the spinners. If you do, it means that there is something [to be worried about]. Not even once did I mention about Gayle to Gazi, Sunny or anyone. I just told them to trust their skills, believe in their plan and stick to it.

DSS: What did you think about Shakib Al Hasan's performance in the series?

SM: Shakib is young, he is 25. He has had a lot of load on him. He is the best man in our team. Somebody has to share that load with him. He bowled beautifully in the first Test. But he played throughout with a niggle. During the T20 world cup when I arrived, he was complaining about his shin and ankle, so all that might have affected his bowling. He is very passionate, he was ignoring the injury and giving hundred percent to the country. But he is an intelligent player and he knows his game.

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BKSP keep winning

SPORTS REPORTER

Khorshedur Rahman slammed four goals including a hatrick to power Bangladesh Krira Shikkha Protishthan (BKSP) to an emphatic 4-1 win over Rajshahi in the Super League match of the Agrani Bank 23rd National Youth Hockey Championship at the Maulana Bhasani Hockey Stadium yesterday.

Khorshedur struck all four goals converting penalty corners in the 14th, 18th, 41st and 48th minutes respectively while Rubel pulled one goal back for Rajshahi on the half-hour mark.

In the day's other matches, Chittagong defeated Joypurhat 3-0 with Raihan Chowdhury, Saddam Hossain and

Messi makes history

AFP, Madrid

Lionel Messi insists that his record-breaking 86-goal haul in 2012 will count for nothing if Barcelona miss out on La Liga and Champions League titles.

The Argentine star wrote his name into the history books by overhauling German legend Gerd Mueller's 1972 record of 85 goals in a calendar year with a first-half double that helped his side to an important 2-1 win at Real Betis.

But the 25-year-old was happier to highlight the win more than the record as his team eye a domestic and European double.

"I've said it a lot, it's nice to beat records but the win for the team is what is important and the points

titles with the team, the

Spanish league, Spanish Cup or Champions League is more important than any personal records."

It did not take long for Messi to equal Mueller's record with his side's first real attack on 16 minutes in Seville, making a diagonal run across the Betis defence before hitting a left footed shot into the right-hand corner.

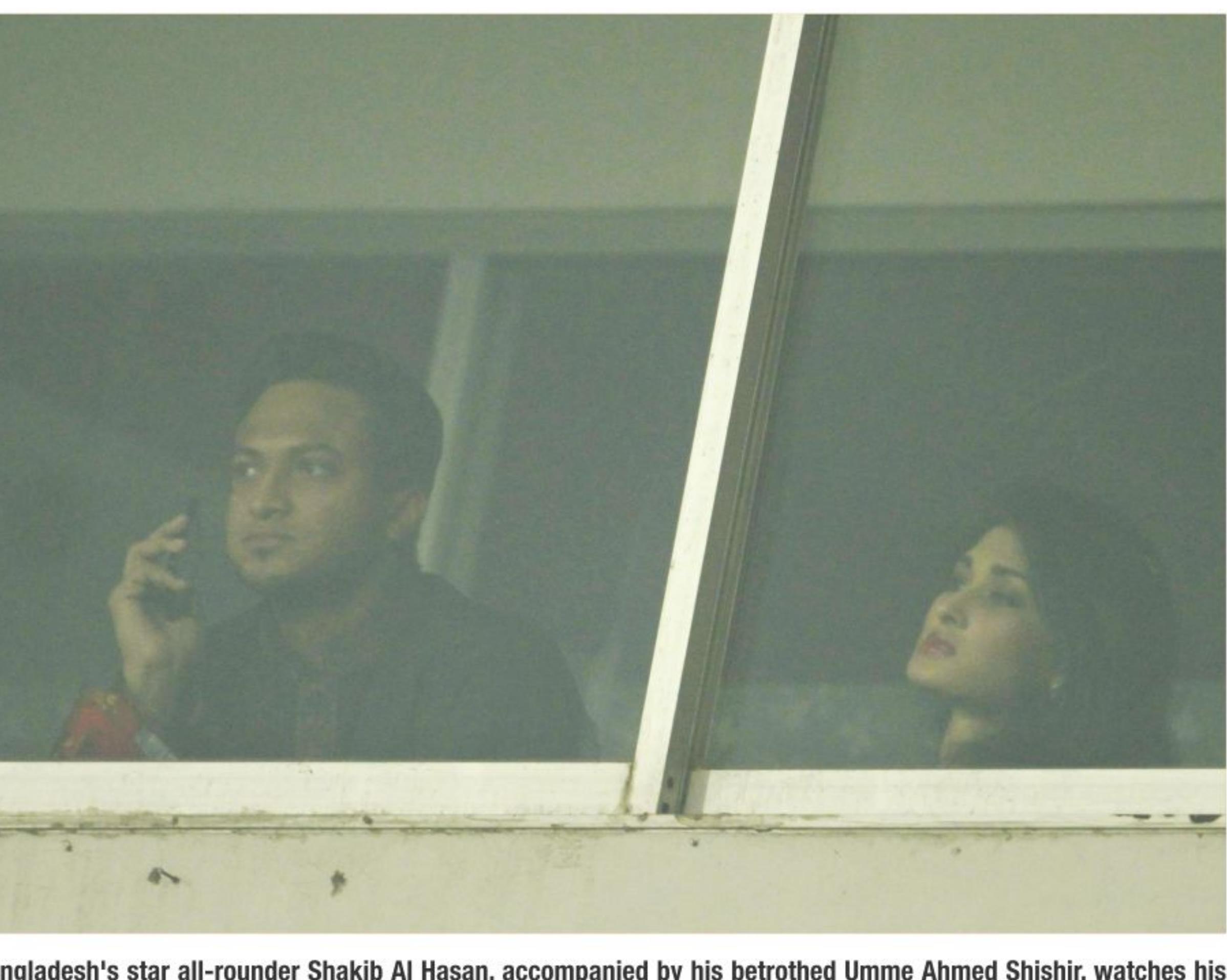
His history-making moment came nine minutes later when he struck from almost an identical position after good play from Adriano and Andres Iniesta.

"My objective at the start of the season was to win another La Liga title," added Messi, who is also in line to win a record fourth successive Ballon d'Or.

For that accolade,

Lionel Messi 2012
Barcelona
La Liga 56
Copa del Rey 3
Champions League 13
Spanish Super Cup 2
Argentina
World Cup Qualifiers 5
Friendlies 7
Country Total 12

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Bangladesh's star all-rounder Shakib Al Hasan, accompanied by his betrothed Umme Ahmed Shishir, watches his teammates in action against West Indies in the T20I at the Sher-e-Bangla National Stadium yesterday.

PHOTO: STAR

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