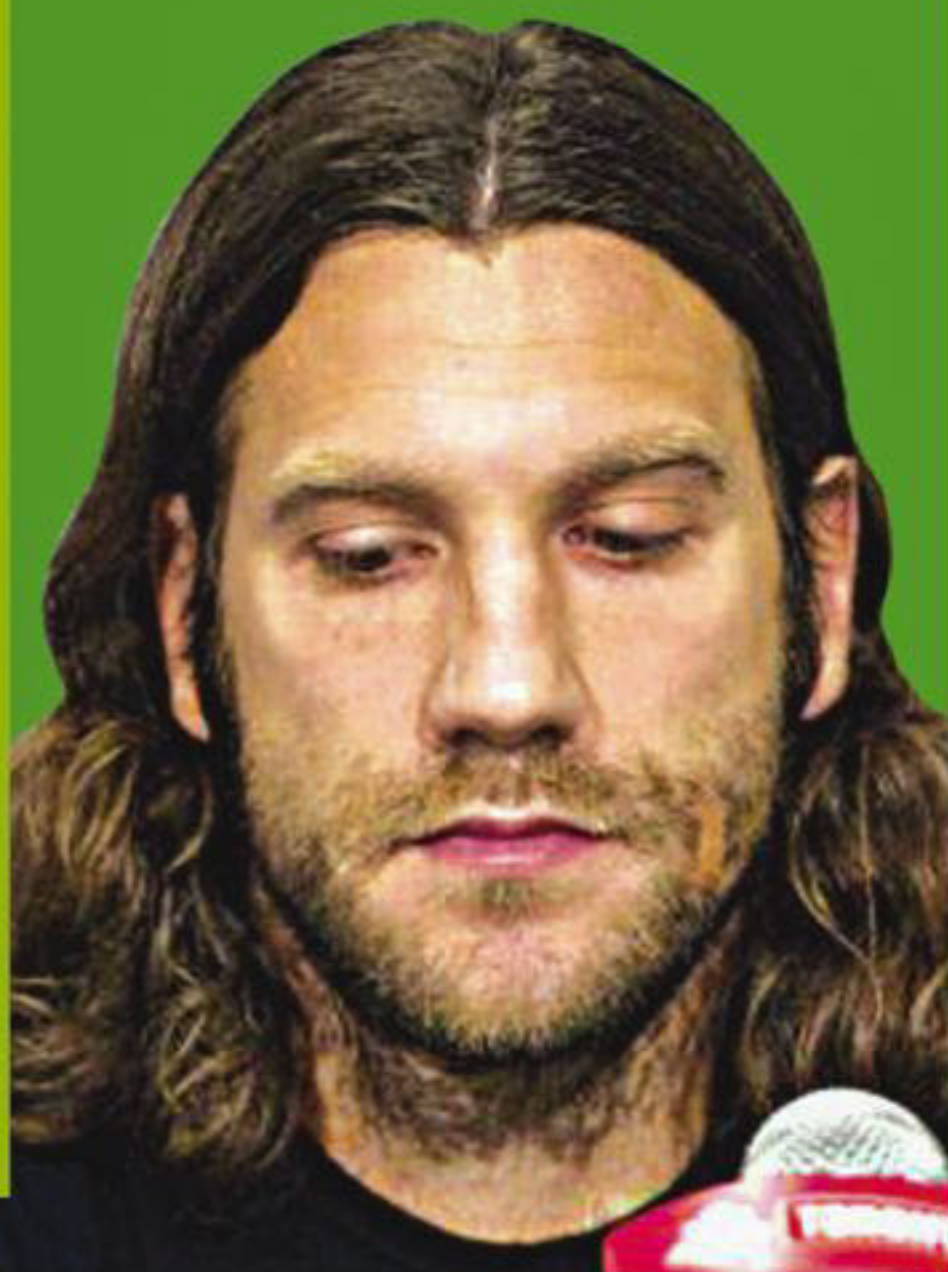


# Star SPORT

DHAKA THURSDAY FEBRUARY 28, 2013, E-MAIL: sports@thedailystar.net

## Frings hangs up his boots

Former Germany international and Toronto FC captain Torsten Frings announced his retirement on Tuesday, saying he was unable to return to fitness following off-season hip surgery. Frings, who won 79 caps for Germany and played in two World Cups including a run to the 2002 final, spent one and a half seasons with Toronto after a distinguished career in the German Bundesliga with Bayern Munich, Werder Bremen and Borussia Dortmund. The 36-year-old midfielder was the team's highest paid player, earning a reported \$2.43 million, but his playing



The proud members of the Bangladesh hockey team happily stand in front of cameras at the VIP Lounge of Hazrat Shahjalal International Airport on Wednesday night.

PHOTO: FIROZ AHMED

## Skipper pledges 'extra effort'

Cricket

SPORTS REPORTER

After a chaotic last week, which saw the Bangladesh team management install four last-minute replacements for key first-choice players, a raw 15-member contingent featuring three possible debutants, two recalls and two players with fledgling Test careers, will leave for Sri Lanka today afternoon.

While the odds of beating Sri Lanka in their own den are long at best, national captain Mushfiqur Rahim and head coach Shane Jurgensen were confident of putting up a good show. "The injuries have definitely had a negative effect on us. The situation requires us to put in an extra effort," said Mushfiqur at a press conference in Mirpur yesterday.

"Rather than being tense about our opponents I am concentrating more on my team and our strengths. Their bowling attack is very good but not extraordinary. After the departure of Murali (Muttiah Muralidaran) and (Chaminda) Vaas, they have won fewer Tests, so they must be under pressure as well. We basically don't have much to lose in this series," he added.

Jurgensen, who had conducted a week-long training camp for the players following the Bangladesh Premier League (BPL) T20, echoed Mushfiqur's sentiments. "The last week we did a lot of different things for our preparation. We worked on a lot more match simulations. We had two middle wickets, lots of nets so the guys have done a lot more batting," said Jurgensen.

Despite the injuries, Jurgensen believed that his young side were capable of taking the match to the Sri Lankans. "I'll still go with the attitude that we have got to win. If we walk onto the field to try to survive, in international cricket, that's not going to work out. We need to walk onto that field believing that we can win. If we can execute our plans in the different departments then we are going to have a good series. We must believe in that," said Jurgensen.

Shakib Al Hasan, Enamul Haque Jr and Naeem Islam, who had carried injuries



Bangladesh captain Mushfiqur Rahim (L) and coach Shane Jurgensen speak to reporters at the Sher-e-Bangla National Stadium in Mirpur yesterday.

throughout the BPL, had to drop out of the national team at the last moment.

When asked if the players' decision to play in the BPL despite the injury concerns was a 'careless' move, Mushfiqur replied, "One can't term it as careless. The deal in the BPL is as such that the injury factor does not affect your payment. The players were dedicated, they overcame their small injuries and played."

"If we had a bit more gap between now and the tour then the players would have

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## Jahurul fined

SPORTS REPORTER

The Bangladesh Cricket Board (BCB) took disciplinary action against Jahurul Islam for breaching the code of conduct. The right-handed batsman has been fined fifty per cent of his Bangladesh Cricket League (BCL) final match fee for breach of his contract terms as a

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## Clemon's last day today

SPORTS REPORTER

The curtain will fall on the Clemon Indoor Uni Cricket Tournament at the Shaheed Sohwardi Indoor Stadium in Mirpur this evening.

In today's morning event, Sylhet Metropolitan University take on IUBAT, Jahangirnagar University

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## Heroes return

SPORTS REPORTER

The Bangladesh national hockey team returned home yesterday following an excellent campaign of the World Hockey League Qualifiers (Round 2) in New Delhi. The team were accorded a warm reception by the awaiting officials of the Bangladesh Hockey Federation on their arrival at the Hazrat Shahjalal International Airport last night.

However, the players and the team officials were not too buoyant, as they realised that they had come close to qualifying but not managed it at the end. The long train journey

from Delhi to Kolkata before the flight back home also seemed to have taken its toll.

The team's coach Mahub Haroon said that their good performance was a result of team spirit and eagerness to do well.

"We know the target was a difficult one to attain, but we had great team spirit and a will to give good to the nation, which enabled us to do well," said Haroon, who had guided the team to the AHF Cup triumph and World Hockey League Round 1 triumph last year.

Despite failing to make it to the two qualifying positions, the second-

lowest ranked side Bangladesh played tremendous hockey and finished ahead of the higher-ranked China and Oman as well as the minnows Fiji.

Rasel Mahmud Jimmy was the architect behind the victories against China, Fiji and Oman and he got the reward for his exploits by being adjudged the best midfielder of the tournament. The 25-year old midfielder termed it as the best achievement of his career.

"I had won three man-of-the-match awards in Asia Cup in the past. But this one was special as I think I

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## Ashraful in, Nafees out

Cricket

SPORTS REPORTER

Mohammad Ashraful will replace Shahriar Nafees in Bangladesh's fifteen man squad that leaves for Sri Lanka today. The maverick right-hander found himself drafted back into the national fold following a year-long absence, to fill in the void left by Nafees. The left-hander had earlier pulled himself out of reckoning after picking up a freak injury while cleaning his bat.

Ashraful's last appearance in a Test match was in December 2011 in a tough encounter at home to Pakistan. Understandably then, the top-order batsman was delighted to

find himself back in the national fold for the longest version of the game.

"I am extremely delighted. The fact that the selectors have chosen me outside the preliminary squad shows that they rely on me and for my part I want to perform well in Sri Lanka to give them their due return," he said.

Ashraful also owed his recall partly to Nafees, who could count himself terribly unlucky to be missing out on the tour. The left-hander needed five stitches after cutting his hand on Monday while cleaning his bat at home. Initial physiotherapist reports suggested that he would be fit in time for the first Test, but Nafees, personally, felt otherwise.

"Nafees told me that he needs

more time to prepare," said chief selector Akram Khan. "He said that this was not club cricket and that adjusting to foreign conditions would take some time," added Akram.

Akram also informed that the medical staff had given a similar report for Tamim Iqbal, who had hurt his left wrist during the Bangladesh Premier League.

"There is a 50-50 chance of Tamim playing the practice match. But I talked to him yesterday and he is recovering well. There is a 90 per cent chance of him playing the first Test match," he added.

The chief selector also suggested that Ashraful was only picked into

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Chief selector Akram Khan (L), sitting in the players' dressing room in Mirpur yesterday, seems weighed with worry while Mohammad Ashraful (C) appears in high spirits after a spate of injuries handed him a ticket for the tour of Sri Lanka.

## Sk Jamal's academy opens Friday

Football

SPORTS REPORTER

Sheikh Jamal Dhanmondi Club yesterday announced that they are starting a football academy which will work as a breeding ground for players of the professional league clubs in future.

"To be honest, we are a nation of 16 crore but we don't have 16 quality players like Salahuddin, Enayet, Badal, Chunnun and Helal. There is no alternative but to go to the grassroots if we want to bring back the heyday of our football. Taking the development of football into account, we are all set to start a football academy through hunting the players from the grassroots," said Sheikh Jamal DC president Manjur Kader at a press conference at a city hotel yesterday.

Kader informed that they would initially start the academy with 30 to 100 players aged between 16 to 19 who will be housed at the dormitory of the Birshreshtha Shaheed Mostafa Kamal Stadium, with the consent of the Bangladesh Football Federation. The produces of this academy will, in future, work as a plant for the senior squad of Sheikh Jamal as well as other clubs.

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## Siddikur eyeing Open qualification

SPORTS REPORTER

Siddikur Rahman joins some of the biggest names of Asian Tour in the search of a ticket for the 2013 Open Championship in July as he aims to claim one of the four tickets available at the International Final Qualifying -- Asia which starts today.

The 28-year old golfer failed to qualify last year and hopes to make amends in the two-day qualifying played at the immaculate Amata Spring Country Club. Siddikur is eyeing to be the first Bangladeshi to roam the fairways at The Open Championship. "If I do

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PHOTO: AFP

A Qantas jet takes off from the nearby airport in Queenstown as cricketers of England and a New Zealand XI play on the first day of their four-day warm-up game at the Queenstown Event Center yesterday.