

# SPORT

## No joy even for the best

BISHWAJIT ROY

All-rounder Taibur Parvez was adjudged the best player in the just concluded 33rd National Cricket Championship, a tournament which garnered hardly any attention despite featuring all the district teams of the country. Therefore the 23-year old left-handed top-order batsman cum left-arm spinner, who came away with the highest earnings from the tournament which was played across the country, is almost an unknown commodity.

On the surface it should be a happy moment for the player who has taken this game as a profession, but that was not the case as his prize money will hardly meet his family's demands.

"I got Tk 50,000 by playing this tournament. It was possible to earn this money as I became man-of-the-tournament (Tk 30,000) and the best player in the final (Tk 10,000)," said the young cricketer, who was born and brought up in Narayanganj.

"I am passing anxious moments. It's not a huge amount these days and it's hardly meeting my family's needs. Actually my main source of income is the Premier Division Cricket League but I don't know whether this season's league will take place."

"We have five members in the family and my father is a mason but for the last few years my family has depended on my income from cricket. I am the eldest among two brothers and sisters. Earlier, I had

entered negotiations with a club and was supposed to get near Tk 5 lakhs but because of the new payment system that is unlikely to happen," added Parvez, who picked up eight wickets with his off-spin and scored 277 runs in six matches.

"I can't think anything other than cricket because I quit studying after passing SSC, so you can understand my position," continued Parvez, who played for OLD DOHS, Orient Sporting Club and Surjo Torun Club.

And that's the reason the cricketer was looking forward to receive a percentage of the prize money of Tk 5 lakhs which champions Narayanganj received.

Parvez was however impressed with this year's competitiveness, even though 22 matches out of a total 121 matches were abandoned due to rain and little more than fifty matches went the distance of 50 overs a side in the near Tk 2.25 crore tournament which started on June 7 and ended on July 19.

"I played the first round matches in Shariatpur and the second round matches at Bogra. I must say the ground was okay. This year the tournament was competitive as some good teams like Rajshahi, Khulna, Dhaka and Chittagong were knocked out in the first round. But there were some problems with traveling and accommodation," opined Parvez.

Being the best player in the National Cricket Championship has given Parvez some satisfaction, but unlike fairytale stories panning out in Twenty20 leagues around the world, it was not enough to drive away his worries.



TAIBUR PARVEZ

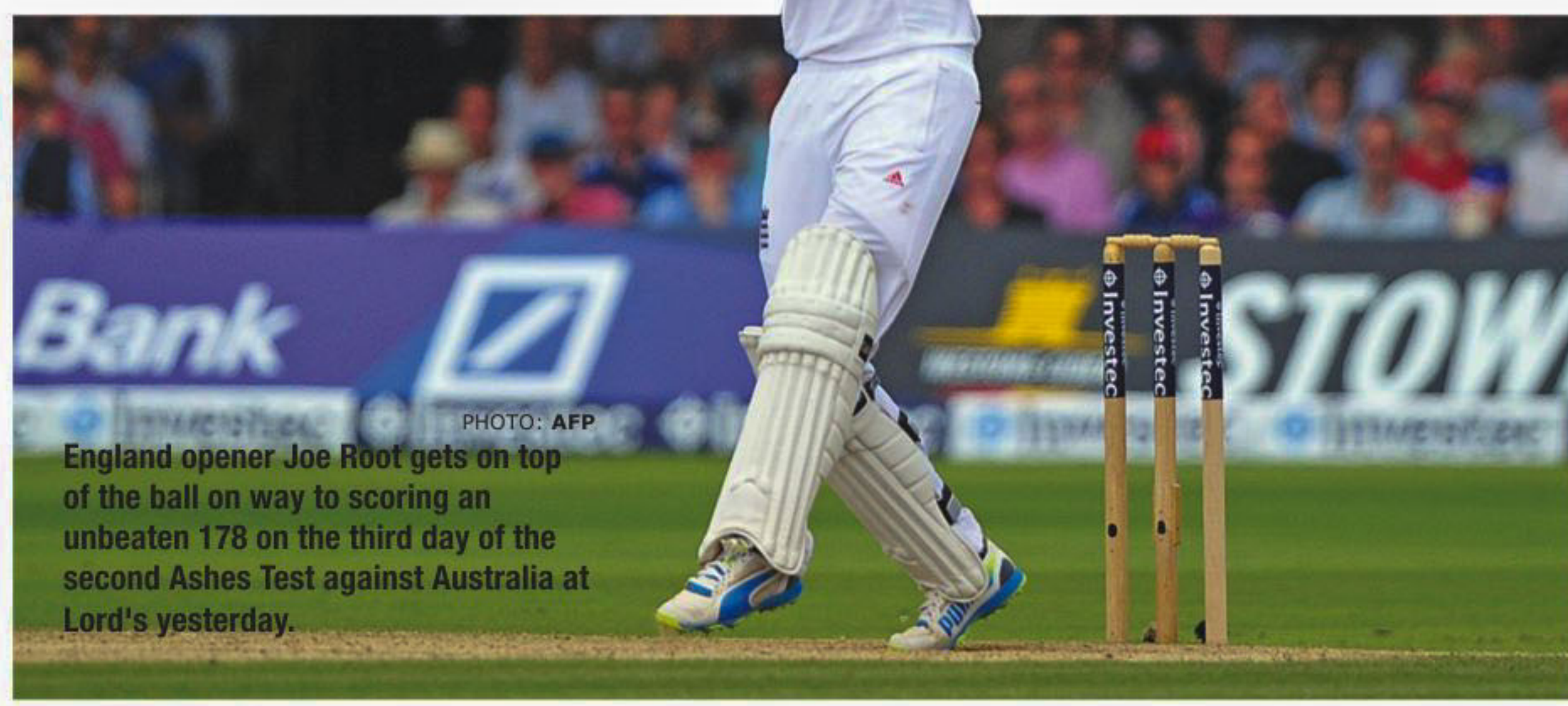
## Clubs agree conditionally

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The professional football league clubs have agreed in principle to play in the Professional League Committee's proposed neutral venue matches, but on the condition that the Bangladesh Football Federation (BFF) increase the amount of financial assistance from Tk 10 lakh each for the upcoming season. The clubs made the suggestion during a meeting of the committee at the BFF yesterday, which sought more time in chalking up the calendar for the league.

"We [BFF] listened to their [clubs'] demands and will discuss it on Monday in the emergency executive meeting," said Abu Nayeem Shohag, BFF general secretary.

Meanwhile, all the BPL clubs agreed in principle to retain Arambagh in the top tier but left the final decision for the executive committee. The committee also approved the recently-concluded Bangladesh Championship League points table, which meant that Uttar Baridhara and Chittagong Abahani will be promoted to the BPL as champions and runners-up respectively. The committee also imposed a binding obligation on ten players each from the two clubs to remain with the clubs in the upcoming season.



England opener Joe Root gets on top of the ball on way to scoring an unbeaten 178 on the third day of the second Ashes Test against Australia at Lord's yesterday.

## Deep-Rooted England

AFP, London

Joe Root's unbeaten 178 left Australia needing to pull off a Test-record run chase if they were to prevent England going 2-0 up with three to play in the Ashes. England were 333 for five in their second innings, a colossal lead of 566 runs, at stumps on the third day of the second Test at Lord's on Saturday.

Ashes-holders England lost just two wickets in a near-ideal day for the hosts.

This was the 22-year-old Root's first Test hundred as an opener after the Yorkshireman made 104 against New Zealand as a middle-order batsman on his Headingley home ground in May.

Root's innings spanned 110 overs and nearly eight hours at the crease -- a lesson in Test-match batting to Australia's fallible batting order that folded for 128 in the first innings.

From 30 for three, he put on 99 with Yorkshire colleague Tim Bresnan before

sharing a fifth-wicket stand of 153 with first-innings centurion Ian Bell. Jonny Bairstow, another Yorkshireman, was 11 not out at stumps after helping Root add an unbroken 51 for the sixth wicket.

England, 1-0 up in the five-match series after last week's 14-run victory at Trent Bridge, resumed Saturday on 31 for three, already 264 runs in front.

In a series already full of Decision Review System controversies, there was one more added Saturday when Bell, on three, edged Ryan Harris low towards Steven Smith at gully, but replays proved inconclusive and Bell went on to add 71 more. He fell when he pulled Smith straight to Chris Rogers at midwicket.

97 not out at tea, Root reached a chanceless 274-ball hundred soon after the interval by cutting left-arm spinner Ashton Agar for four. Root, in a perfectly paced innings, then upped the tempo with a succession of stylish boundaries, including two sixes off Smith in three balls.

### SCOREBOARD

<b>ENGLAND:</b> First innings 361 (Bell 109, Bairstow 67, Trott 58; Harris 5-72, Smith 3-18)				
<b>AUSTRALIA:</b> First innings 128 (Watson 30, Clarke 28; Swann 5-44, Bresnan 2-28)				
<b>ENGLAND:</b> Second innings (overnight 31-3)				
Cook b Siddle	8			
Root not out	178			
Trott b Siddle	0			
Pietersen c Rogers b Siddle	5			
Bresnan c Rogers b Pattinson	38			
Bell c Rogers b Smith	74			
Bairstow not out	11			
Extras (b-11, lb-8)	19			
Total: (For 5 wickets in 110 overs)	333			
Fall of wickets: 1-22, 2-22, 3-30, 4-129, 5-282				
To bat: Prior, Broad, Swann, Anderson				
<b>Bowler</b>	<b>O</b>	<b>M</b>	<b>R</b>	<b>W</b>
Harris	16	4	28	0
Watson	12	5	25	0
Siddle	21	6	65	3
Pattinson	20	8	42	1
Smith	14	0	65	1
Agar	27	4	89	0

## Sangakkara slaughters SA

AFP, Colombo

Kumar Sangakkara smashed his highest one-day score of 169 off 137 balls as Sri Lanka thrashed South Africa by 180 runs in the first one-day international in Colombo on Saturday.

The veteran left-hander's 16th one-day century steered Sri Lanka to a commanding 320-5 after the hosts were sent in to bat in the day-night game at the Premadasa stadium.

South Africa were shot out for 140 in reply to leave Sri Lanka with a 1-0 lead in the five-match series. Rangana Herath and Thisara Perera picked up three wickets each.

Sangakkara, playing his 350th ODI, put on 70 for the second wicket with opener Upul Tharanga, 74 for the third with Mahela Jayawardene and 123 for the fourth in which Lahiru Thirimanne's contribution was just 17.

South Africa are without three frontline players -- fast bowler Dale Steyn, all-rounder Jacques Kallis and former captain Graeme Smith -- for the tour which also includes three Twenty20 matches. Premier batsman Hashim Amla was also unavailable for the first match due to a strained neck.

### SCORES IN BRIEF

**SRI LANKA:** 320 for 5 in 50 overs (Sangakkara 169, Tharanga 43, Jayawardene 42; Morkel 2-34)

**SOUTH AFRICA:** 140 all out in 31.5 overs (Pietersen 29, Peterson 29, de Villiers 23; Herath 3-25, Perera 3-31; Dilshan 2-11)

Player-of-the-match: Kumar Sangakkara.



Synchronised swimming is always a treat to watch. Here North Korea's synchronised swimming team perform yesterday during the preliminary rounds in the FINA World Championships, which will run till August 4 in Barcelona.

## Teams tie third ODI

AFP, Gros Islet

Pakistan wicketkeeper Umar Akmal missed a run-out opportunity and the West Indies last-wicket pair of Kemar Roach and Jason Holder scrambled two runs off the final ball to tie the third one-day international Friday.

Responding to the tourists' total of 229 for six, and requiring 15 off the final over to win, Holder smashed a four and a six over cover off medium-pacer Wahab Riaz to keep the home side's unlikely prospects alive, resulting in the last ball drama that leaves the series level at 1-1 going into the fourth match at the same venue on Sunday.

West Indies middle-order batsman Lendl Simmons and Pakistan captain Misbahul Haq, the joint top-scorers with 75 runs each in the thrilling encounter, also shared the player-of-the-match award.

However, Misbah found it difficult to accept how his team could not have won the match after reducing the Caribbean side to 205 for nine in the 49th over.

"It's really, really disappointing, but I have to say the way Holder played at the end he took the game away from us," said an incredulous Misbah.

In his usual calm, unruffled manner, Misbah had compiled his runs to steady the Pakistan innings after the early loss of both openers.

Pakistan's left-arm seamers made early inroads into the West Indies batting lineup and it took Simmons's effort together with a pain-taking 46 from Samuels go keep the home side within reach of the target.

### SCORES IN BRIEF

**PAKISTAN:** 229 for 6 in 50 overs (Misbah 75, Akmal 40 not out, Sohail 26, Jamshed 20; Holder 2-40, Dwayne Bravo 2-50)

**WEST INDIES:** 229 for 9 in 50 overs (Simmons 75, Samuels 46; Ajmal 3-16, Junaid 3-54, Irfan 2-34)

**Result:** Match tied.  
**Player-of-the-match:** Misbahul Haq and Lendl Simmons.

## De Kruif's special duo

SPORTS REPORTER



The national football team's head coach Lodewijk de Kruif is apparently keen on accommodating both Mobarak Hossain and Zahid Hossain in his starting eleven, even if one has to play out of position. Both the players usually play through the right wing for their respective clubs, but the coach seemingly does not want to sacrifice any of them as he thinks both of them are 'special players'.

"A player of the level of Mobarak or Zahid is nowhere to be seen in Bangladesh," said de Kruif after yesterday's practice match against BFF XI at the Bangabandhu National Stadium where the national team won 2-1.

"There is no typical number 11 here, like we have Arjen Robben in my country. But we want to teach them. I want to give them the feeling of playing on both sides and see how they behave on the area. If they can adopt, we may continue," said de Kruif about the chances of fielding both players together.

It was the pace and burst of Mobarak that teed up the opening goal for substitute striker Toklis Ahmed, who scored a second a few minutes later with a left-footed drive.

De Kruif, who fielded a different starting

eleven from the one that played in the previous practice match including fit-again winger Zahid Hossain and striker Sakhawat Rony, was satisfied with the overall effort of the players. The soggy pitch at the big bowl made it hard for players to show their skills, but de Kruif was happy that his charges were in much better shape physically.

"I am satisfied that we were much better shaped physically than the opponents, which is the most important thing in practice matches. The difference between the two teams was there for everyone to see," said de Kruif.

However, worries remained with the defence and the lapses in concentration towards the end, which once again resulted in a soft goal conceded.

"We lost concentration in the last 10-15 minutes which resulted in the goal. It was [Yeamin] Munna's mistake to let that player in while Linkon was standing too far," said the Dutchman who fielded 22 players out of the now 27-member squad in yesterday's match.

Reasat Khaton, the Germany-based midfielder who joined the camp yesterday with a one-and-a-half hour practice session in the morning, got 15 minutes of playtime in the match. He is nursing a knee injury and the coach will take time to finally decide whether to keep him for the long haul.

## BCB to introduce home dope tests

SPORTS REPORTER



In the wake of the doping scandals that have hit a number of international athletes this week, the Bangladesh Cricket Board (BCB) revealed its plans of introducing anti-doping tests in domestic cricket from the start of the National Cricket League in the next season.

While these tests routinely take place during international series, this will be the first time that the BCB will employ a similar strategy in one of its competitions at home.

"We plan to start these anti-doping tests in domestic cricket from the NCL onwards. A portion of the BCB's budget has already been allocated for this purpose," said BCB's sports physician Debasish Chowdhury.

The unavailability of testing facilities in the country compels the BCB to send the players' medical samples to an accredited laboratory of the World Anti Doping Agency (WADA) in a nearby country during international tournaments. If a player tests positive, WADA informs the his or her governing body. A similar strategy is expected to be followed for the tests in the domestic tournaments.

While the motive is noble, it comes at a high a cost. According to the sports physician, the tests will come up to 700 dollars each.

"It is expensive but what it does is it adds more value to our first-class cricket. Almost every other Test nation has included this process and competitions like the BPL will be rated higher if it has a scanning process," said Debasish.



PHOTO: AFP

Sublime Sri Lanka batsman Kumar Sangakkara struck an imperious 169 against South Africa during the first ODI at the Premadasa Stadium in Colombo yesterday.