

# SPORTS



HE RAISED THE BAR FOR THE GAME: This photo taken on January 25, 2010 at Mirpur shows Indian batting maestro Sachin Tendulkar upper-cutting a delivery on way to scoring 143 in his last Test appearance in Bangladesh.

PHOTO: STAR FILE

## FACTFILE

**Full name:** Sachin Ramesh Tendulkar  
**Date of birth:** April 24, 1973; in Mumbai  
**Nick names:** Little Master, Master Blaster, Tendlyla  
**Style:** Right-hand batsman, right-arm spinner  
**Major teams:** India, Mumbai  
**Height:** 5 feet, 5 inches  
**TEST CAREER**  
**Matches:** 198  
**Runs:** 15,837  
**Highest:** 248 not out  
**Average:** 53.86  
**Centuries:** 51  
**Half-centuries:** 67  
**Test debut:** November 15, 1989; v Pakistan, Karachi  
**WORLD RECORDS**  
 ● Most Test runs and centuries  
 ● Only batsman to score 100 international centuries  
 ● Most appearances in Tests and one-day internationals  
 ● 1,000 or more Test runs in a calendar year six times:

# THE MASTER calls time

AFP, New Delhi



India's record-breaking batsman Sachin Tendulkar announced Thursday that he would retire after playing his 200th Test match next month, calling time on a career stretching nearly a quarter of a century.

Tendulkar, the highest run-scorer in Test cricket history and the only player to make 100 centuries in international cricket, said he had been "living a dream" since making his debut in 1989 but recognised it was now time to call it quits.

"It's been a huge honour to have represented my country and played all over the world," the batsman said in a statement. "I look forward to playing my 200th Test Match on home soil, as I call it a day."

India are to play a two-Test series against the West Indies next month which would enable Tendulkar, who has already made 198 appearances, to become the first player to reach the 200 landmark.

Tendulkar, 40, said he found it hard to imagine life without cricket "because it's all I have ever done since I was 11 years old."

"All my life, I have had a dream of playing cricket for India. I have been living this dream every day for the last 24 years," he said.

The right-handed batsman has scored 15,837 runs since his debut against Pakistan in Karachi in November 1989, although he

has struggled for form in recent times. His 100 centuries in international cricket includes 51 Test tons.

His last Test match century came in January 2011 when India played South Africa and he retired from one-day internationals late last year.

He also played his last Twenty20 match earlier this month in an appearance for the Mumbai Indians.

Tendulkar captained India for several years but the high point of his career came in 2011 when he was part of the Indian team to win the World Cup. He was carried from the field by his teammates after the final in his hometown of Mumbai.

Known as the 'Little Master', Tendulkar has been widely hailed by his contemporaries as second only to the Australian legend Sir Donald Bradman in the pantheon of batting greats.

Tendulkar, who is an honorary member of parliament, has sometimes struggled to cope with his iconic status, but he made a point of praising his fans in his retirement statement.

"Most of all, I thank my fans and well-wishers who through their prayers and wishes have given me the strength to go out and perform at my best," he said.

Tendulkar first hit the headlines as a 14-year-old when he shared a then world record partnership of 664 runs in a school match with Vinod Kambli, who would also go on to play for India.

## U-19s edge out Kuwait

SPORTS REPORTER

Smarting from a humiliating 0-6 drubbing at the hands of Iraq, ten-man Bangladesh bounced back to notch up a 1-0 win over Kuwait in their second match of the AFC U-19 Championship Qualifiers at the Franso Hariri Stadium in Iraq yesterday.

Availing a pass from Faisal inside the danger zone, Rubel Mia drove a powerful shot to beat Kuwait goalkeeper Khaled in the 66th minute to keep Bangladesh's chances of qualifying for the 16-team final round alive as one of six best runners-up among nine groups.

Bangladesh and Kuwait are on equal three points while Iraq lead the way with six points. They now need another outright victory in their Saturday's final match against Pakistan to finish second in Group C, subject to leaders Iraq beat Kuwait on the same day.

Bangladesh fought equally against Kuwait before captain Hemanto Vincent Biswas was sent off in the 35th minute.

## Tigers bow to tail

NAIMUL KARIM from Chittagong



The usual excitement generally seen on Mushfiqur Rahim's face, upon getting a wicket, was missing yesterday after he whisked off the bails to stump Bradley-John Watling and bring an end to New Zealand's first innings. It was not just Mushfiqur, but almost the entire team looked slightly dazed while walking back to the pavilion.

The reason behind the lack of excitement at the innings break was simple; Bangladesh had encountered their arch-nemesis yesterday -- the wagging tail. New Zealand's tail added 189 runs in the first innings, which included a 127-run partnership for the last wicket; aspects of the game which nullified the hosts' early morning advantage when they took quick wickets and reduced the visitors to 339 for 8.

With the visitors on the ropes and an aggressive intent announced before the match even started through the selection of five bowlers, the scene was set for the Tigers to go for the jugular, but that skipper Mushfiqur started going on the defensive when the last-wicket pair went on the attack is the manifestation of an old Bangladeshi failing. After all, yesterday's 127-run partnership is not even the highest 10th-wicket stand against the Tigers.

Zaheer Khan and Sachin Tendulkar's 133-run stand, scored in 2004 in Dhaka, tops that list and it took India from 393 for 9 to 526. Also on the list is an unbeaten 223-run stand between Sri Lanka's Prasanna Jayawardene and Chaminda Vaas for the seventh wicket scored at Colombo in 2007, with Vaas registering his only century.

The partnerships in the above-mentioned games may have been overlooked or forgotten in time, mainly because

the Tigers did not stand any chance of winning those games. However, there were a number of matches where partnerships from the tail essentially took the game away from Bangladesh.

Of all those games of course the Test against Pakistan at Multan probably cuts the deepest. Chasing a target of 261, Pakistan were down to 164 for 7 before Inzamamul Haq shepherded the tail and led them to a one-wicket win. The game against Australia in 2006, in Fatullah, where Adam Gilchrist banked on numbers seven and eight to avoid a follow-on is another instance.

More recently, in the Test against Zimbabwe in 2011, Bangladesh allowed the hosts to go from 238 for 6 to post 389. The Kiwis already know how effective late-order partnerships are against Bangladesh. In 2008, Daniel Vettori and Daniel Flynn arrested a seeming slide to chase down 317.

At the post-day press conference, spinner Abdur Razzak mainly blamed the pitch for the partnership.

"The batsmen tried to do nothing. They were cool and just defended most of the deliveries. During this kind of a situation and on this kind of a pitch, playing a straight ball is not that difficult. Once the batsmen get set on this wicket it's difficult to get them out. However, we did lack in some areas as well," he said.

The mindset of the captain and the players often comes into question here. Was it the right decision for the slow left-armers to bowl a predominantly leg-side line for long periods? Should Robuil Islam have deserved another go at the batsmen? Are these failures to go for the jugular when the opposition is on the ropes a sign of an immaturity and a defeatist mindset that Bangladesh are yet to emerge from? All these questions will be raised if this Test follows a similar route to the ones before this.

## WHO HE IS



**Donald Bradman:** "I saw him [Sachin] playing on television and was struck by his technique, so I asked my wife to come look at him. Now I never saw myself play, but I feel that this player is playing much the same as I used to play, and she looked at him on television and said yes, there is a similarity between the two... his compactness, technique, stroke production... it all seemed to gel."

**Shane Warne:** "Sachin Tendulkar is, in my time, the best player without a doubt -- daylight second, Brian Lara third."

**Shakib Al Hasan:** "It was a pleasure to have played against him and

it was the ultimate test bowling to him."

**Viv Richards:** "He has been a genius when it comes to ability, a Trojan when it comes to work ethic and manic when it comes to his focus."

**Rahul Dravid:** "What he has done is set a benchmark for future generations which, probably, would be almost impossible for anyone to emulate."

**Brian Lara:** "Sachin is a genius. I'm a mere mortal."

**Andy Flower:** "There are two kind of batsmen in the world. One, Sachin Tendulkar. Two, all the others."

## A hero to a billion

AFP, New Delhi



Former Australia captain Ricky Ponting once said that he would probably be batting in a wheelchair if he survived in world cricket as long as Sachin Tendulkar.

Fearing and respected by opponents, Tendulkar changed the definition of Indian batting, shrewdly combining orthodox and unorthodox shots to dominate any attack on any surface at home or abroad.

Tendulkar shattered batting records, earned millions of dollars and was revered as a demi-god in India and particularly at home in Mumbai. But in the eyes of many fans, humility remains his prime virtue.

If there was any arrogance, it was in his batting because he loved to dominate bowlers before injuries to his elbow, back and ankle forced him to adapt his game in the latter

years of his career.

"The way he conducts himself and handles fame and everything that goes with being Sachin is a great example for all sportsmen," Australian leg-spin great Shane Warne wrote in his book "Shane Warne's century".

"On the field, he has never put himself before the team."

Technically sound, temperamentally unflappable, quick to adapt to different conditions, Tendulkar came very close to batting perfection in his pomp.

He also became an unrivalled source of pride in a country with few international sporting heroes, capitalising on his status with commercial deals to advertise cement, watches, sportswear and apartments among others.

While little is shared about his private life, he is known as a fast-car enthusiast once reported to take his beloved Ferrari out in the early hours of the morning to beat the traffic in his

native Mumbai.

Australia's Don Bradman, widely considered the greatest Test batsman of all time, once said Tendulkar's style of batting reminded him of his own, which was based on dominating and demoralising the opposition.

Under the guidance of his elder brother and to the bemusement of his late father, a college professor, Tendulkar spent hours honing his skills as a boy along with hundreds of others on a busy park known as the Oval Maidan in central Mumbai.

Like West Indian great Brian Lara, who holds the records for highest Test scores, he did not take to captaincy during his career, having had two brief stints which seemed to distract him from his batting.

The last few years have been marked by a steady decline, with commentators openly questioning his eyesight and voicing opinions that would once have been heretical -- that Sachin was no longer worth his place in the team.

## Jamal steals the show

SPORTS REPORTER



Bangladesh's professional golfer Jamal Hossain Bhuiyan raced to a one-stroke victory in the bti International Golf Championship, from under the noses of Indian veteran Shamim Khan, after playing a four-under-par (68) in the last round at the Kurmitola Golf Club yesterday.

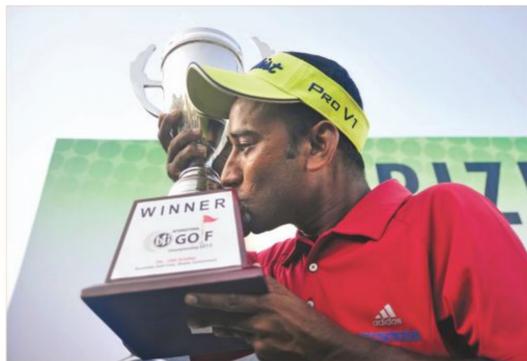
Jamal, who started the day at sixth position and three strokes behind overnight leader Shamim, raced to the joint lead with five birdies on the front nine while Shamim lagged behind after playing a bogey and a double bogey before carding two birdies. Jamal then had a bogey on the 13th which pegged him back to joint lead with Shamim. But a ten-foot birdie putt on the 17th gave the lead back to Jamal, which Shamim could not match, giving the home-boy a much deserved victory.

"I was in the lead after the end of the first round, but then slipped to third after the third round. But I was only three shots off the leader, so I believed that I could turn it around with a good round of golf, especially on a course I know very well," said Jamal with the winner's pay cheque of 653,600 taka.

"I hope this performance will encourage sponsors who patronise me and the likes to come forward more and support us as there are good players around who need that support. Now I won't have to worry about participating in a few of the PGTI (Professional Golfers' Tour of India) events with this prize money,"

said Jamal, who finished inside top ten in six of the eight PGTI events he took part this year.

The presentation party was attended by, among others, major general Mizanur Rahman Khan, FR Khan, the managing director of bti, and Arshi Haider, president of Bangladesh Professional Golfers' Association (BPGA).



Jamal Hossain Bhuiyan kisses the winner's trophy after clinching the bti International Golf Championship at the Kurmitola Golf Club yesterday.

PHOTO: STAR

## BCB ELECTIONS Mahmud wins skippers' battle

SPORTS REPORTER



Khaled Mahmud won many a battles during his long cricketing career, but on Thursday, the former Bangladesh skipper triumphed in a different contest altogether when he beat another former captain Gazi Ashraf Hossain in the elections of the Bangladesh Cricket Board (BCB).

The encounter between the two former captains in Category III was at the centre of attention, but in the end Mahmud had a straight-forward victory, winning 25 votes against 18 of Ashraf. The former skipper however made it clear that he would continue with his coaching stint.

Mahmud is one of the 26 directors - 23 of them elected and three NSC nominated - who will elect the new

board president on Saturday. The incumbent president Nazmul Hassan Papon, who along with Ahmed Sajjadul Alam and IH Mallick have been appointed directors in the NSC quota, is all set to become the first elected president of the cricket board.

Another former national skipper Naimur Rahman also won the hearts of the Dhaka Division voters to become director from the category II as he got 16 votes out of 17. Monjur Kader was the other winner from the division with 13 votes while the other candidate Mirza Zillur Rahman lost the battle with five votes.

From the Rajshahi Division, Saiful Alam Swapan (5 votes) won a close contest against Rafius Shams Paddy (4 votes).

It is not end for Ashraf though as he will have a good chance of fulfilling the vacuum which will be left when the president is elected.