

# SPORT

## Waller too reported

REUTERS, Dubai

Zimbabwe off-spinner Malcolm Waller has been reported for a suspected bowling action, joining a fast-growing list of spinners to have fallen foul of the International Cricket Council's (ICC) rules against throwing.

The 30-year-old part-time bowler, whose action was reported after Zimbabwe's defeat in the second Test against Bangladesh in Khulna on Friday, had 21 days to undergo testing, the ICC said on Saturday.

Off-spinners Sachithra Senanayake of Sri Lanka, Kane Williamson of New Zealand, Prosper Utseya of Zimbabwe, Shohag Gazi of Bangladesh and Saeed Ajmal of Pakistan have all been reported for suspect bowling actions in recent months.

Three of them -- Ajmal, Senanayake and Williamson -- were subsequently banned from bowling.

## Federation Cup from Dec 19

SPORTS REPORTER

The 2014-15 football season will start with the Federation Cup in mid-December this year, decided a meeting of the Professional League Committee of Bangladesh Football Federation yesterday.

11 teams from the Bangladesh Premier League along with one invited team will take part in the season's curtain-raiser, which will kick off on December 19, while the eighth edition of the BPL will kick off in the first week of February.

The registration window for foreign players has been extended to January 15.

Meanwhile, Team BJMC has verbally proposed the name of Netrokona District Stadium as their home venue in BPL for the next season.



ALL SMILES: Shakib Al Hasan, who has just joined two cricket greats with Friday's feat in Khulna, arrives at Hotel Peninsula in Chittagong last night, ahead of the third and final Test against Zimbabwe in the port city.

PHOTO: ANURUP KANTI DAS

## On the right path or not right there?

NAIMUL KARIM



Bangladesh's first Test series win since 2009 brought along with it a number of individual records for the Tigers members. Shakib Al Hasan etched his name alongside Ian Botham and Imran Khan, Tamim Iqbal's century ended a four-year drought and Taijul Islam's eight-wicket haul broke Bangladesh's best bowling record.

The question however remains whether all these positives point towards an overall improvement for the Tigers in the Test scenario. A number of former national cricketers shared their views with The Daily Star regarding the issue.

With spin dominating the series, former national spinners Enamul Haque and Wahidul Gani said that they were pleased with the way the home-side's three-man spin attack performed. However they pointed to a number of areas that still needed plenty of attention.

"So far I have honestly not seen anything extraordinary in Taijul's bowling. I have seen the likes of Enamul Junior, Elias Sunny and many others in the domestic circuit and they are equally good. But what's special about him is his mentality. He knows that he needs to work hard to stay in this team and I have a feeling that he is hungry for success," said Enamul, who once led Bangladesh's bowling attack with his left-arm spin.

"New players have come for a number of times for Bangladesh and performed. So Taijul is not new. What he needs to know is that the sun has not risen for him yet. Many players have come and gone. He needs to continue to learn from Shakib and Raj [Abdur Razzak] and develop himself," he added.

Apart from the slow left-armers, Jubair Hossain also seemed to cause trouble for the visitors with his legbreaks. Former leg-spinner Gani, who now works with an age-level spin unit of the BCB, thinks that Jubair can only be judged once he performs against 'top-teams'.

"He bowled okay. He flighted the deliveries and looked good. But the fact remains that Zimbabwe is a weak team against spin. For now he can work on supporting Shakib and Taijul, but in order to be able to do something alone, he still needs time," said Gani.

The 58-year-old had a similar notion on Bangladesh's overall performance. "Yes we have won this series. But we can't really say if we have improved in Test cricket. We will be able to judge that only after we play another series, perhaps against Pakistan."

"On the other hand, our batsmen have continued to struggle against Zimbabwe's pacers and our fielding has been poor, so there are a number of areas that we still need to improve a lot on. But since we needed to win something this year, we did well to achieve that," explained Gani.

Shakib's performance was vital to Bangladesh's comeback from despair. It's something, according to Enamul, that should encourage the other players.

"It's not a big deal for him [Shakib] to take a five-for in Mirpur, but to achieve the rare feat of scoring a century and taking ten wickets, that just shows us once again the calibre and hunger for success that he has. It shows that with hard work one can break new grounds," said Enamul.

## Siddikur in contention

SPORTS REPORTER



Bangladesh's premier golfer Siddikur Rahman surged to joint-second position, one shot off the lead, with an aggregate of 10-under (210) at the end of the third round of the Panasonic Open India yesterday. The two-time Asian Tour winner, who started the day at seven-under (137), fired five birdies against two bogeys at the Delhi Golf Club yesterday to share the second position.

The 29-year-old golfer will go into the final day with a realistic chance of winning his third tour title, at the same golf course where he won his second a year ago.

Siddikur, who is playing in his first event since injuring his back in June, was surprised to be in the hunt.

"I don't have any goals and I think that's the reason why I'm playing well. Compared to other tournaments, I would get angry when I hit a bad shot, but this week it is different. I just want to stay healthy and see where it leads me," Siddikur told Asiantour.com, after the day's play.

Indian veteran Rahil Gangjee, despite settling for an even par round, held on to a one stroke lead over Siddikur, Shubhankar Sharma, Wade Ormsby and Mithun Perera. Bangladesh's other golfer, Jamal Hossain Mollah, fired an eagle on the par-five 18th hole to push himself up to joint 18th position, with an aggregate score of three-under (213).



## Agassi was jealous!

INTERNET



Andre Agassi destroyed his Wimbledon and US Open trophies after seeing then girlfriend Brooke Shields lick Joey's fingers in Friends scene.

In her new book, 'There Was A Little Girl: The Real Story of Mother and Me', actress Brooke Shields reveals how former husband Agassi lost his temper and stormed through the Friends set after watching her lick actor Matt Le Blanc's fingers in what is regarded as one of the most iconic scenes in the TV show's history.

Eight-time Grand Slam winner Agassi was dating Shields at the time and verbally attacked the actress following the scene,

telling her that she had "made him look a fool" before getting in his car in Los Angeles and driving all the way home to Las Vegas in a furious rage.

"Upon arrival he systematically smashed and destroyed every single trophy he had won, including Wimbledon and the US Open, never mind all the others," she added.

The 'Blue Lagoon' actress claims that it took her three years to have all of the trophies replaced following the shocking incident in 1995.

The couple eventually wed in 1997, but filed for divorce just weeks before their second anniversary. Shields, however, admitted that she knew she had made a mistake in marrying the tennis star just one day after the ceremony.



When the two were sweethearts!

PHOTO: INTERNET

## Liton here to stay?

ATIQUÉ ANAM



The goalkeeper's position on the Bangladesh national team has been a musical chair in recent times. Ever since the long-serving Aminul Haque took off his national gloves in 2010 and Biplob Bhattacharjee became a less favoured option gradually, the goalkeeping gloves travelled from one's hands to another's. Mamun Khan and Shahidul Alam Sobel emerged as the more preferred choices while Ziaur Rahman, Mazharul Islam Himel and Mostafizur Rahman Mostak stayed in the mix. But unfortunately none of them apparently gave the coaches of the national team enough confidence to become a regular face.

Then Rasel Mahmud Liton entered the scene. The 20-year-old goalkeeper, fast-tracked from the U-19 team in 2011 to the senior side this year, has apparently given the team management one more option, and perhaps a more dependable one, given his recent performances in the Asian Games and the national team's FIFA friendlies against Sri Lanka.

"When we considered Liton for the U-23 team for the Asian Games, the thing about him that impressed us most is his temperament and braveness. Liton doesn't get nervous very often and he shows his alertness to match situations. His performances in the Asian Games made it easy for us to select him for the Sri Lanka friend-

lies," analysed the national team's interim coach Saiful Bari Titu.

The young 'keeper kept a clean sheet against Afghanistan in the opening match of the Asian Games before two excellent performances against Uzbekistan and Hong Kong. In his first two assignments for the senior team against Sri Lanka, Liton only conceded a goal, that too from a free-kick, where the



defence was as much at fault.

"It's true that the goalkeeper has a big role in arranging the wall for free-kicks, but to be honest, it was a collective mistake as a couple of the players in the wall didn't jump at all," explained Titu.

While Liton's foray into the national team has been quite meteoric, he had his fair share of waiting-in-the-wings for a place in the Premier League. Coming off the 2007 Pioneer League, the teenager moved through the lower leagues before being poached by Brothers Union in the 2011-2012 season. Even though Liton never got a chance to get into the All Oranges'

playing eleven, his exploits for the U-19 team in the 2011 AFC Qualifiers in Dhaka made such an impression that Muktijoddha Sangsard's veteran coach Shafikul Islam Manik took him as an understudy to Aminul. Aminul, despite being at the fag end of his career, was head and shoulders above the rest. So Liton had to wait in the wings for one more year.

Fortunately for Liton, his patience paid off when Aminul got himself injured during the semifinal of the 2013 Federation Cup against Team BJMC. Coming on as a second-half substitute, Liton proved his worth by saving a spot-kick in tie-breaker and sending his side into the final. Aminul's lengthy lay-off due to injury gave Liton enough opportunity to convince the coach.

"I would not say that Liton has been perfect or flawless. Without getting into technical aspects, I would say the thing about him which pleased me most is his work ethics, which is required to do well and stay at the top," opined Muktijoddha coach Manik about protégé, who is rumoured to be moving to a big-spending club in the upcoming season.

Manik feels that most of the players in our country who rise to the top in a short time also slacken their work ethos and passion once they hit the top. Liton is aware of the possibility and is eager on checking any such outcome.

"Thank God, I'm lucky to be here. But I think I still have a lot to learn and a lot to give to the national team," says Liton.

## 'I'm not happy yet'

SPORTS REPORTER



Bangladesh Football Federation (BFF) president Kazi Salahuddin gave the national team a reality check as he feels they must not get complacent over an 'unimpressive' series victory against Sri Lanka. The BFF boss urged the players to play with more passion and dedication so that they get some attention and real applause from the people. The BFF boss was speaking at a program organised by the BFF yesterday to felicitate the national team for their victory over Sri Lanka in the FIFA Friendly Series held at home last month.

"I congratulate the players for their success but I'm not really happy," said the BFF boss addressing the players. "In fact I am sad because I expect our players to play much better. I know they have the

quality and they should be beating Nepal and Sri Lanka convincingly."

"The players will agree with me that something is lacking somewhere. People are not talking about you (the players). I want you to be the talk of the nation," said Salahuddin, hoping that the team plays much better in the upcoming fixture against Japan U-21 team and in the Bangabandhu Gold Cup.

The national team were handed over 10,000 dollars by Manzur Kader, member of BFF and chairman of Sheikh Jamal DC, who had promised them monetary rewards if they won the series. Bangladesh drew the first match in Jessore 1-1 before beating the visitors 1-0 in Rajshahi to take the two-match series 1-0.

Barring captain Mamunul Islam and midfielder Hemanta Vincent Bishwas, all the team members and the team management, along with high officials of BFF were present at the occasion.

## Sachin writes off Eng

AFP, London



Sachin Tendulkar may have written off England's chances of winning next year's World Cup but that hasn't stopped the India great urging his compatriots to broaden their horizons with a spell in English county cricket.

England have never won the World Cup in nearly 40 years of trying and, having lost five out of their last six one-day international series, few expect them to end that sequence in Australia and New Zealand next year.

Tendulkar, who retired from cricket last year, was among the sceptics when it came to assessing England's chances.

"I think Australia, South Africa, New

Zealand are a dark horse, and India -- these four should be my semifinalists," Tendulkar said at a press conference at London's Lord's Cricket Ground on Friday, where he was promoting his autobiography, 'Playing It My Way'.

"Do England have a chance? Not really. I don't think so. "Anything is possible in this sport but going on current form I don't think England will be that competitive."

"I feel India can surprise a lot of people and I also believe the spinners will come into play."

"People talk about the pitches for fast bowlers but because of the size of the grounds, I think spinners could be important."

## Jimmy's ban to be lifted

SPORTS REPORTER

The Working Committee of Bangladesh Hockey Federation (BHF) has proposed to lift the suspension on former national midfielder Russel Mahmud Jimmy in a meeting yesterday. The ace midfielder has already served one year of his two-year suspension which was handed to him, along with three other players, for 'breaching discipline and deliberately underperforming' during the Asia Cup last year.

"The members of the working committee proposed to the executive committee to lift Jimmy's suspension," confirmed BHF general secretary Khaza Rahmatullah.

The ace midfielder, who was considered to be the best hockey player Bangladesh has produced in the last 15 years, expressed his relief at the news.

"I'm feeling good as I had been waiting for this news for the last few days. I will try to get myself to my former shape, forgetting everything that happened in the past. I hope I will be able to prove my worth and get back into the national team within a short period of time," said Jimmy, when contacted.

If it is approved, Jimmy will be the second person to see his ban lifted after the executive committee lifted the ban on midfielder Kamruzzaman Rana last month.

The BHF general secretary also informed that the cases of the other two suspended players -- goalkeeper Zahid Hossain and defender Imran Hasan Pintu -- will be discussed at a later meeting.