

# SPORT

## BCB still working on High Performance!

SPORTS REPORTER



It has been four months gone since the matter was discussed, but the Bangladesh Cricket Board (BCB) is still working to revive its High Performance Unit.

"It is taking time as we are looking to appoint a head coach for the national academy. We are hopeful that it will take shape very soon as we are closing in on appointing an academy head coach," said BCB CEO Nizamuddin Chowdhury yesterday.

"We are yet to finalise the formation of the unit," he added.

The name of highly respected former India coach John Wright came to the media for the position and Nizamuddin said that they were in touch with the former New Zealand batsman as well as some others.

"Actually we are looking for a high-profile coach who has vast knowledge about the development of the game and we also want to see him run the High Performance

Unit. Rather than going for full time appointment we are preferring a programme-based appointment," informed Nizamuddin.

The importance of reviving the High Performance Unit (HP) was raised once again in order to make sure that enough players are ready in the pipeline. Head coach Chandika Hathurusingha emphasised the need for the programme as he wanted the discarded national players, who do not have any programme, to remain fit and stay in contention for the national side.

The once-successful programme had collapsed following Richard McInnes's departure in 2005 and in the last few years the board often said that they were going to revive it, but that is yet to happen.

"Right at this moment we might not feel the need of it due to the Premier League but we desperately need it. As per my knowledge our local coach Sarwar Imran was already appointed for this programme and I hope everything will take shape within a short time," said chief selector Faruque Ahmed.



Abahani players celebrate after taking over the top spot of the Dhaka Premier League yesterday. They beat Prime Bank Cricket Club by 33 runs at the Fatullah Cricket Stadium in a crucial battle between the table toppers.

PHOTO: FIROZ AHMED

## Shakib's Big Bash team confirmed

SPORTS REPORTER

Shakib Al Hasan yesterday said that he has confirmed a team to play for in the Twenty20 Big Bash League in Australia, which commences on December 18.

The talismanic all-rounder however said that he will disclose the name of his team only after he puts pen to paper, a process expected to be completed in two days time.

"The team is confirmed but I am yet to sign with them," said Shakib yesterday. Shakib previously played in the league for Adelaide Strikers.

The confirmation means that Legends of Rugganj will miss his service in the Super-Six round of the Dhaka Premier League, which is scheduled to begin on December 24.

## V-Day Sports

SPORTS REPORTER

Border Guard Bangladesh (BGB) made a flying start in the Walton Victory Day Handball Tournament beating Bangladesh Ansar by 36-19 goals in the opening match at the Shaheed M Mansur Ali Handball Stadium yesterday. The winners led the first half by 19-6 goals.

**AIR FORCE LIFT KABADDI TITLE**  
Bangladesh Air Force clinched the Victory Day Kabaddi title beating Bangladesh Army by 25-22 points in the final at the Kabaddi Stadium yesterday. Deputy Minister for Youth and Sports Arif Khan Joy distributed prizes among the winners, where general secretary of Bangladesh Kabaddi Federation M Nazrul Islam was also present.

## 'Most important event of 2014'

SPORTS REPORTER



Leandro Negre, president of the International Hockey Federation (FIH), termed the foundation of a sand-turf at the BAF Shaheen College ground yesterday as the most important event for him in 2014, a year which also featured some big hockey tournaments around the world.

"The year 2014 has been a very important year for hockey as we staged the World Cup in Netherlands, a successful five-a-side event in the Youth Games in Nanjing and the Champions Trophy in Bhubaneswar recently. But to me the most important event is the inauguration of the sand-turf in this school in Dhaka," Negre said in his welcome speech after laying the foundation stone of the turf.

"I say that because the FIH has to run all these tournaments, but our priority is always to promote hockey, to see from the beginning, to give opportunities."

The Spaniard, who is visiting Bangladesh for the third in two years, will also lay foundation stone of a first-ever blue turf in Bangladesh, at the Maulana Bhasani National Hockey Stadium on Thursday and will inaugurate national school hockey championship on Wednesday.

The sand turf, manufactured by Australian sports turf manufacturers Sports Technology International, is being provided free of cost while the blue turf at the national hockey stadium is being installed jointly by FIH, Bangladesh Hockey Federation (BHF) and Olympic Committee of Asia.

The BHF took this opportunity to accord reception to the U-21 national team and the senior national hockey team for their recent success in the AHF U-21 Championship and World Hockey League (Round-1) respectively.



International Hockey Federation (FIH) president Leandro Negre (4th from R) is being apprised by the head of the board of directors of BAF Shaheen College, Air Vice Marshal Nayeem Hassan, during the foundation laying of the sand turf at the college premises yesterday.

PHOTO: COURTESY

## Abahani take top spot

SPORTS REPORTER



Abahani Limited will go into the super six round of the Dhaka Premier League as league leaders as they beat Prime Bank Cricket Club by 33 runs in a low-scoring encounter at Fatullah yesterday. Prime Bank, on their part, will begin the super six round in the second spot. Both the teams though have 18 points each. The other teams joining the top two are Kalabagan Cricket Academy, Prime Doleshwar Sporting Club, Legends of Rugganj and Mohammedan Sporting Club, all of who have 14 points each.

In the day's other games, a half-century from Marshall Ayub saw Victoria Sporting Club beat Kalabagan Cricket Academy by 48 runs at the BKSP while Brothers Union beat Old DOHS by 93 runs at the Sher-e-Bangla National stadium. Old DOHS lost eleven consecutive matches and will now battle Kalabagan Krira Chakra and Partex Sporting Club in the relegation round.

The battle between the top two sides promised to be a tensed encounter and it did not disappoint. Batting

POINTS TABLE				
TEAM	M	W	L	P
Abahani	11	9	2	18
Prime Bank	11	9	2	18
Kalabagan CA	11	7	4	14
Prime Doleshwar	11	7	4	14
Legends	11	7	4	14
Mohammedan	11	7	4	14
Victoria	11	7	4	14
Brothers	11	5	6	10
Jamal	11	4	7	8
Kalabagan KC	11	2	9	4
Partex	11	2	9	4

first Abahani, led by opener Abdul Majid's 58 posted 169. They were rattled by Taskin Ahmed and Forhad Reza, both of who took three wickets each. At the face of it, the total looked below-par, however, Prime Bank suffered a similar collapse and ended up getting bundled out for 136 in 39.2 overs. Skipper Mahmudullah Riyad was the only player to provide resistance as he scored a gritty 51. However, that was not enough to prevent Abahani from taking the number one spot.

At the BKSP, Marshall's 54 helped Victoria post 237 after they were put into bat. Third-placed Kalabagan CA crumbled under pressure and even-

tually got bundled out for 189. Bowlers Saqlain Sajib and Mohammad Al-Amin, who took six wickets between were the chief destroyers. While the win helped Victoria finish on level with the four teams above them, in terms of points, they finished seventh due to a poorer head-to-head record.

Brothers finished their campaign this season at number eight. They posted 195 in their last game. In reply, Old DOHS were bowled out for a 102 in 36.3 overs.

### SCORES IN BRIEF

**VICTORIA SC:** 237 for 6 in 47 overs (Marshall 54, Enamul 44; Mehedi 2-25)

**KALABAGAN CA:** 189 all out in 44 overs (Nafees 48; Kamrul 3-37, Abu 3-44)

**Result:** Victoria SC won by 48 runs.

**ABAHANI:** 169 all out in 41.1 overs (Abdul 58; Taskin 3-29, Forhad 3-30)

**PRIME BANK CC:** 136 all out in 39.2 overs (Mahmudullah 51; Saqlain 3-15, Mohd Al-Amin 3-25)

**Result:** Abahani won by 33 runs.

**BROTHERS:** 195 all out in 49.4 overs (Ahmed 42; Raihan 4-38, Abu 3-40)

**OLD DOHS SC:** 102 all out in 36.3 overs (Raihan 28; Shahajada 3-22)

**Result:** Brothers won by 93 runs.

## Japan U-21s arrive today

SPORTS REPORTER

A 35-member contingent of Japan U-21 football team is scheduled to arrive here today at 12:40pm to play an international friendly match against Bangladesh national team on Thursday.

The visiting team, who beat their Thai counterparts by 2-0 goals in Bangkok on Sunday, are coming in Dhaka as part of their preparation for the 2016 Olympic Games qualifiers. The 23-member squad, most of whom ply their trade for different J League clubs, is also being groomed for the 2018 FIFA World Cup in Russia.

Japan U-21s are to have their first training session at the BUET ground in the afternoon and will have their last training session on at the match venue, the Bangabandhu National Stadium, on Wednesday.

Meanwhile, Bangladesh captain Mamunul Islam, who was with Atletico de Kolkata team for the Indian Super League, arrived last night to join the training camp.

## Clarke to undergo surgery

AFP, Sydney

Australian captain Michael Clarke will undergo surgery on his injured right hamstring on Tuesday, Cricket Australia said, as the 33-year-old fights to remain in the game.

Clarke has switched focus to getting fit for the World Cup in Australia and New Zealand, which starts on February 14, after being forced off in the victorious first Test against India at the weekend.

"Michael was assessed by a surgeon in Melbourne early this evening (Monday) and will be undergoing surgery tomorrow to repair his injured right hamstring," team doctor Peter Brukner said.

"Whilst surgery is not always required with hamstring injuries, Michael has substantial damage to a key part of the hamstring tendon and it was felt the best course of action was to surgically repair the damaged area."

"His recovery and the timing of his return to play will be dependent on the surgeon's advice and how well he recovers in the coming weeks."

Injury-jinxed Clarke admitted there was a chance he would never play cricket again after his latest setback.

Cricket Australia said an update on the surgery would be provided in due course.

### 7TH SL-ENG ODI TODAY

## Mahela's last home game

PTI, Colombo



Making it obvious that he will retire after the 2015 World Cup, former Sri Lanka skipper Mahela Jayawardene on Monday revealed on social media that the seventh and final ODI against England on Tuesday will be his last at home turf.

"Going for my last practice session with the boys at home going to have some fun," the 37-year-old tweeted on Monday morning.

His indication of retirement after the World Cup in Australia and New Zealand came just two days after his best friend and teammate Kumar Sangakkara bade farewell to his fans in Kandy the last time he was playing an ODI at his hometown.

In the post match press conference, Sangakkara said he was to retire after the

World Cup.

Jayawardene, who retired from Test cricket in August, is to play in the seven match ODI series in New Zealand leading to the World Cup starting February 14.

Sangakkara however has not made his plans clear for his immediate Test future.

Jayawardene has just two half-centuries in the current series, having skipped the third game on account of his daughter's first birthday.

In the last game he opened the batting, a role he has been urging the selectors to grant him during the 50-over showpiece event.

Despite failing in the last ODI against England, Jayawardene has starred for Sri Lanka in the openers role.

He has led Sri Lanka from the front, scoring heavily at the openers position in the T20 World Cup held in the West Indies and at home ODIs in the past.

## Smith made Test captain

### Promises aggressive approach

AFP, Brisbane



Twenty-five year-old Steven Smith takes over as captain of Australia against India at the Gabba on Wednesday with a promise to pursue an aggressive style of cricket.

Regular skipper Michael Clarke is expected to miss the rest of the four-match Test series due to injury and Cricket Australia (CA) on Monday handed the job to Smith following Australia's first Test victory in Adelaide at the weekend.

"We've been playing some very good cricket and we're going to continue playing that aggressive, positive brand of cricket," Smith, who has

played 23 Tests, told reporters.

"As a captain first and foremost I'll try to lead from the front with my performance on the field."

Smith, who becomes the third youngest man to lead his country, smashed 162 not out in the first innings and was 52 not out in the second in Adelaide.

He vowed Australia's in-your-face attitude will not change. "When we cross the line there are no friends. We're not friends with the opposition," Smith said.

CA looked to the long term and first officially appointed Smith as vice-captain to Clarke on Monday before confirming he would therefore lead the Test side in Clarke's absence.

Veteran wicketkeeper Brad Haddin,

who captained Australia on the final day in Adelaide, will serve as deputy in Brisbane.

National selector Rod Marsh said: "These are difficult circumstances given Michael's injury and the fact that we don't know how long he will be out of the game."

"What we do know is that it won't be an overnight fix so after a lot of thought we have taken the opportunity to appoint an emerging young leader as captain until such time as Michael regains fitness and returns to the side."

"We congratulate Steve on the wonderful honour of leading his country. On Wednesday he will become Australia's 45th Test captain and at the age of 25 will become one of our youngest leaders."



Ace all-rounder Shakib Al Hasan had lunch with children suffering from autism during a special programme arranged by the Society for the Welfare of Autistic Children at its Shyamoli office to celebrate Victory Day.

PHOTO: COURTESY