

# Eye of the tiger

**W**E, as a nation, are going through a very frustrating time, with the political chaos that is affecting each of our lives. Amidst this turmoil, we are looking forward to the ICC Cricket World Cup 2015. Scheduled to begin on 12 February, 2015, our excitement and hopes for Team Bangladesh is increasing everyday.

Indeed, this is a fascinating time. Arguments about which team is the best, forecasts based on pure logic or undoubting faith and loyalty based on star power or patriotism are flying about. Sales of cricket World cup related items - be it jerseys, World Cup calendars or even bats and balls - have already increased.

And we are an optimistic lot. We will sit in front of the TV - at the edge of our seats and of course with a big bowl of popcorn - and cheer for our favourite team.

For Bangladesh, playing cricket is second nature. In the corridor of your home, in the playground of your school, in the rare, empty plot or street in your neighbourhood: we do not need much to play cricket.

So we keep our fingers crossed and do whatever we can do for a win. We wish that Mushrafee and his team will go a long way -- hopefully no embarrassing defeats and many enthralling wins are waiting for us.

**Flip to the Centre to read our World Cup planner. For related stories, go to Pg12.**



# O Captain!

**D**ESCRIBED as "Bangladesh's solitary cutting edge" after a win against Australia, Mashrafe Mortaza had dismissed Gilchrist for a duck in the same match. His cricket career can best be described as a mixture of consistent genius and sheer hard work despite the unfortunate series of injuries that has left him unable to play at times.

The man leading the Bangladesh team to the ICC Cricket World Cup this year is loved no less for his playing style as his personality. His achievements speak for themselves – Mashrafe became

the first Bangladeshi fast bowler to surpass the landmark of claiming 100 wickets in ODIs.

Although called on late in the batting lineup, the fast bowler has also shown great proficiency when the

need arises to hit big. Despite being a bowler, the captain holds the Bangladeshi records for highest strike rate in Tests and ODIs, and for scoring the most runs in an ODI over.

Mashrafe has come a long way since the under-17 regional tournament in 2001 where his talents were first spotted. He bowled fast, slammed sixes and thus started his journey into the hearts of Bangladeshi cricket lovers. His fiery spells of quick strikes and dedication towards his team makes Mashrafe the ideal captain – great for the team and loved by the supporters.

The eyes and hearts of the country are now towards this man who played a pivotal role in Bangladesh's first win against India.

"O Captain! my Captain! rise up and hear the bells;

Rise up—for you the flag is flung—for you the bugle trills"

– LS Desk

**Photo: Anisur Rahman**

