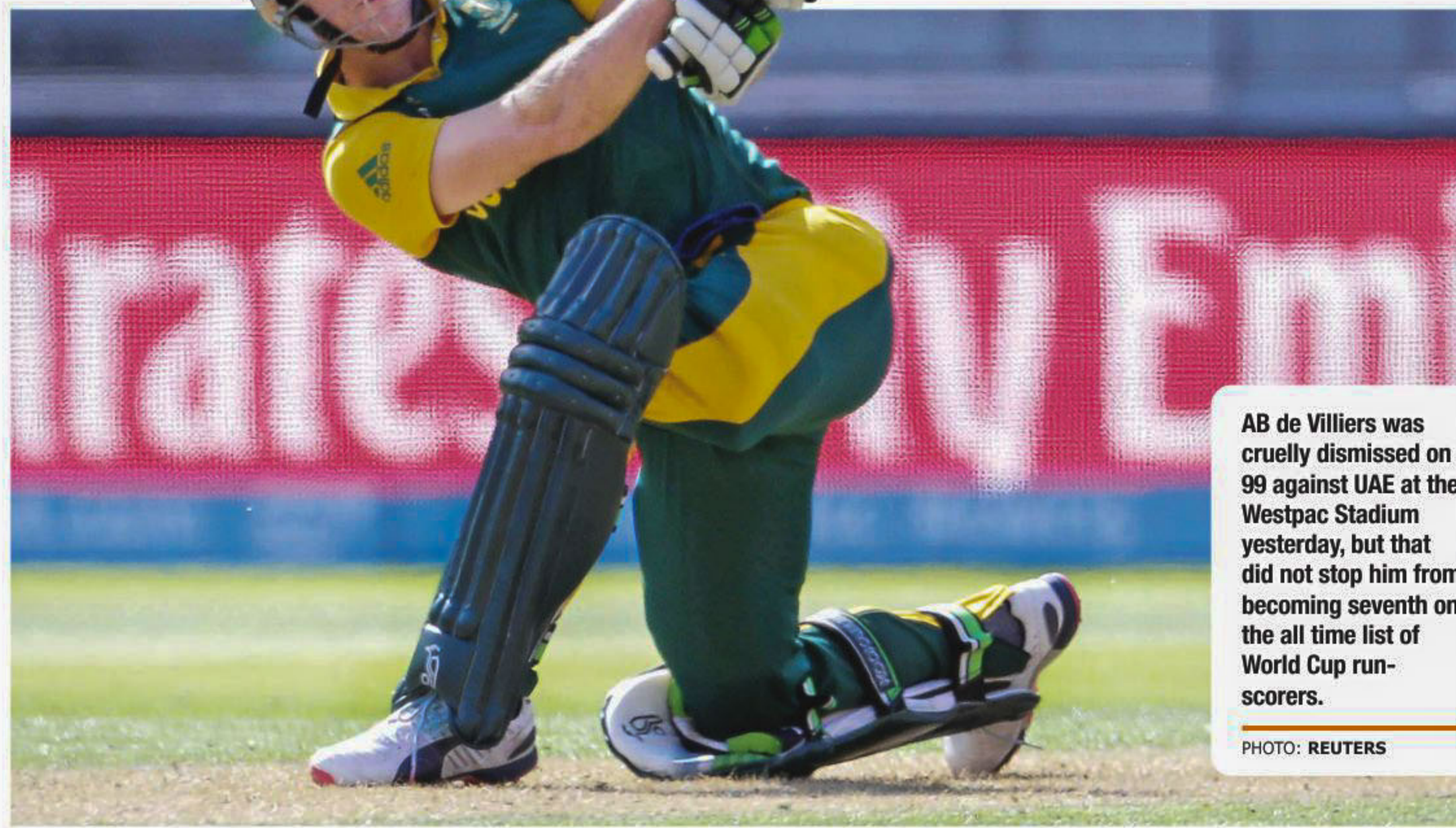


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AB de Villiers was cruelly dismissed on 99 against UAE at the Westpac Stadium yesterday, but that did not stop him from becoming seventh on the all time list of World Cup run-scorers.

PHOTO: REUTERS

Rangpur clinch it on final day

SPORTS REPORTER



In a nail-biting conclusion to the season, Rangpur were crowned with their first title in the country's lone first-class competition as they thrashed Dhaka Metro by 102 runs. Khulna seemed likely to take the trophy home as they sat atop the table with 120 points, leaving both their challengers Rangpur and Dhaka Division with a relatively tough option of taking a considerable lead and then claiming ten opposition wickets on the final day. And both teams have done that but it was Rangpur who

ended Khulna's march towards a fourth title by the barest of margins -- one point.

Dhaka finished just below Khulna in third place, the same position Rangpur claimed last year.

Khulna, who had already won their game against Chittagong on Wednesday by an innings and 24 runs, left Rangpur with a mountain to climb against Dhaka Metro.

Resuming the day on 248-7, Rangpur continued to bat till they establish a lead of 360 before sending Dhaka Metro out to bat at the BKSP Ground 2.

Dhaka Metro batted well, but Mahmudul Hasan claimed five wickets and Suhrawadi Shuvo added three to bowl them out in 79.1 overs in the final session.

Dhaka Division, last year's champions, also had a shot at the title going into the final day. Like Rangpur, they too kept batting until they established a lead of 359 runs. Rajshahi's batsmen save Mizanur Rahman, who hit 41 -- failed to get into any kind of rhythm as Mosharraf Hossain scalped five wickets while Jubair Hossain took two to bundle the team from the northern headquarters out for 225 runs in 68.5 overs. Despite the big win, Dhaka's dreams of a fifth NCL trophy remain unfulfilled, at least for this year.

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NCL FINAL TABLE					
Team	P	W	L	D	Pts
Rangpur	7	4	0	3	121
Khulna	7	4	1	2	120
Dhaka	7	4	0	3	119
Dhaka Metro	7	2	2	3	83
Rajshahi	7	2	4	1	71
Sylhet	7	1	2	4	61
Barisal	7	0	4	3	39
Chittagong	7	0	4	3	32

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Proteas take 2nd spot

AFP, Wellington

South Africa cruised to a straightforward 146-run win over the United Arab Emirates Thursday to secure a World Cup quarterfinal berth and seal second place in Pool B behind India.

The Proteas never looked troubled against the amateurs, setting a 342-run target after being sent into bat then bowling the UAE out for 195.

Captain AB de Villiers continued his dominant form with a man-of-the-match performance to smash 99 off 82 balls, while Farhaan Behardien contributed a rollicking 64 from 31.

Seamer Vernon Philander (2-34) also made a successful return from injury, with South Africa's only negative the continued poor form of opening bat Quinton de Kock (26).

The win, which sets up a likely quarterfinal clash with Sri Lanka in Sydney next Wednesday, will help erase memories of South Africa's shock loss to Pakistan in their previous group outing.

The result leaves the UAE winless at the tournament, with their final

chance to snatch a victory coming against the West Indies in Napier on Sunday.

UAE captain Mohammad Tauqir surprisingly opted to bowl first on a pitch that appeared perfect for batting, with the decision paying early dividends when Hashim Amla miscued a pull shot to depart on 12.

De Kock and Rilee Rossouw made

Rossouw (43) followed three overs later, deceived by a slower ball from Tauqir that he scooped straight back to the bowler.

South Africa were looking unexpectedly shaky at 96 for three and it could have been worse, with David Miller and de Villiers both surviving early scares.

They made the most of their reprieves to bring up 100 off 99 balls, with de Villiers notching his 45th one-day international half century.

Miller fell just short of his own half century, clean bowled by Mohammad Naveed on 49 attempting a pull shot.

De Villiers stepped up the pace after being dropped on 65, blasting sixes from consecutive deliveries off Amjad Javed.

But Javed had his revenge when he caught de Villiers on 99 as the skipper tried to bring up his century with a flashy boundary.

However Behardien proved just as destructive as South Africa plundered 25 runs off the UAE's final over to set up a total that never looked within reach.

'It's the best we could do'

REUTERS, Wellington

UAE captain Mohammad Tauqir has Thursday dismissed questions his side had done damage to their reputation by refusing to meaningfully chase targets in their last two matches.

"We tried our best. This was the best we could have done," Tauqir said when asked as to why they had appeared to not be interested on Thursday in attempting to chase a victory target.



Rangpur Division celebrate their first National Cricket League triumph, as they won on the last day of the tournament yesterday.

PHOTO: STAR

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the most of some wayward bowling in a 68-run partnership, with Rossouw the aggressor as de Kock tried to play himself into form.

But the youngster's woes continued when he nicked an edge to the keeper on 26, leaving him with an average of under eight from his six innings at the tournament.

POINTS TABLE						
Pool A						
	M	W	L	D	Pts	NRR
New Zealand	5	5	0	0	10	+3.090
Sri Lanka	6	4	2	0	8	+0.371
Australia	5	3	1	1	7	+1.597
Bangladesh	5	3	1	1	7	+0.211
Pool B						
India	5	5	0	0	10	+2.157
South Africa	6	4	2	0	8	+1.707
Pakistan	5	3	2	0	6	-0.194
Ireland	5	3	2	0	6	-1.014
West Indies	5	2	3	0	4	-0.511
Zimbabwe	5	1	4	0	2	-0.595
UAE	5	0	5	0	0	-1.961

Note: Top four in each group qualify for quarterfinals



Managing Director of Triune Group Kazi Wahid UI Alam (2nd from L) holds the coupon of the Mega Winner of the Emirates ICC World Cup Quiz 2015 competition at The Daily Star Centre yesterday. Anwar Hossain from Mirpur won the dream ticket to travel all the way to Melbourne to watch the final with a companion. The Daily Star was the supporting partner of the competition.

PHOTO: STAR

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LAST MEETING: 3rd Nov 2013 at Fatullah. Bangladesh won by 4 wickets.



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IN WORLD CUPS

Never played before

KEY PLAYERS



RUBEL HOSSAIN
32.46
34.5
57
6/26
1
5.63
75
4/53

BOWL AVG.
STRIKE RATE
INNS
BEST FIGURE
5W
ECONOMY
TOTAL WICKETS
LAST MATCH



TIM SOUTHEE
29.54
34.20
88
7/33
2
5.18
129
0/43



NAJIBULLAH ZADRAN
21.50
78.18
14
2
0
83
301
56

BATTING AVG.
STRIKE RATE
INNS
50s
100s
HS
TOTAL RUNS
LAST MATCH

JOSEPH BUTTLER
12.00
111.30
47
7
1
121
1280
65

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Some Protea fans enjoyed yesterday's game, but the highlight in Wellington was a robot that roamed around the streets with its metal cricket bat.



Firdose Moonda: South Africa go into the quarterfinals with four wins - all batting first - and two losses while chasing in the group stage.

Mohandas Menon: A slow fifty by AB de Villiers by his standards... has taken at least 20 more balls than usual to reach it.