

# SPORT



Bangladesh's young midfielder Hemanta Vincent Biswas soars above all to negotiate the ball during their AFC U-23 Championship qualifying match against India at the Bangabandhu National Stadium yesterday. The game which ended in a 0-0 draw also witnessed a total blackout (inset) due to power failure. PHOTOS: STAR



## Hosts held by India

**SPORTS REPORTER**

Bangladesh finished fourth in Group-E of the AFC U-23 Championship Qualifiers after being held to a goalless draw by perennial rivals India at the Bangabandhu National Stadium yesterday.

The hosts, who came into the final fixture on the back of two heavy defeats against Syria and Uzbekistan like their opponents, dominated the game in terms of possession and attacking intent, but never really looked like getting the goal throughout this game. India, on the other hand, failed to replicate the spirit they had shown in their two previous matches, but had the consolation of ending above their hosts, thanks to conceding lesser goals in the qualification campaign.

Bangladesh coach Lodewijk de Kruif was satisfied with the performance from his charges in this game, conceding that the other two teams in the group belonged to a different class.

"I'm not satisfied with finishing bottom of the group, but I'm satisfied with today's performance," said the Dutch in his post-match reaction. "We didn't have much chance against Syria and Uzbekistan because of the difference in quality. We will have to admit that this is our level."

POINTS TABLE						
Team	P	W	L	D	GD	Pts
Syria	3	3	0	0	+9	9(Qualified)
Uzbekistan	3	2	1	0	+5	6(Waiting)
India	3	0	2	1	-6	1
Bangladesh	3	0	2	1	-8	1

De Kruif had brought four changes in the starting eleven from the match against Uzbekistan. Striker Aminur Rahman Shajib replaced Wahed Ahmed, defender Nurul Naim Faisal came in place of suspended skipper Raihan Hasan while midfielder Shahedul Alam replaced Nahidul

### BANGLADESH 0 - 0 INDIA

Islam as the team reverted to a 4-2-3-1. The hosts held the lion's share of possession in the opening half, yet failed to make any penetrative movement inside the Indian defence. The two notable chances in this period fell to the Indians somewhat against the run of play. The first one chance came in the 33rd minute when a lapse in concentration from Faisal gifted India

forward Charan Narzary with possession on the edge of the box, but the stand-in centre-back managed to get his side out of trouble just in time. Nine minutes later, Nazary was on the end of a looping cross but his bouncing header was efficiently parried away by the Bangladesh goalkeeper Rasel Mahmud Liton.

The hosts continued their dominance into second half - which started with a 21-minute delay due to a power failure at the nearest substation - and kept the Indians confined mostly in their own half. The stand-out performer, attacking midfielder Hemanta Vincent Biswas, unsettled the India backline with galloping speed and a couple of perfectly-weighted crosses, but unfortunately the Bangladesh frontmen failed to be on the same page as their inspirational midfielder. The best chance, though, came on the hour-mark on a corner from Sohel Rana which Yeasin Khan failed to keep on target. Twelve minutes later, Shajib failed to get on the end of a beautiful cross from Hemanta.

The hosts kept going into offensive but hardly threatened the India goal as the visitors were content with bidding out time for a goalless draw. The match that was an opportunity for both sides to salvage some pride ended up offering little solace to either at the end of a forgettable campaign.

## PM castigates ICC for Kamal snub

**UNB, Dhaka**

Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina on Tuesday termed it unfortunate and odd that the International Cricket Council (ICC) president AHM Mustafiz Kamal was not allowed onto

trophy to the winning captain. But in an aberration of the rules, ICC chairman Narayanswami Srinivasan handed the trophy to Aussie captain Michael Clarke amidst boos from the MCG stands and uproar back in Bangladesh.

She opined that instead of controversial Indian cricket administrator Srinivasan, if the honour had gone to the Australian Prime Minister, no questions would have been raised.

the stage for the purpose of handing over the World Cup trophy to champions Australia after the March 29 final at the Melbourne Cricket Ground.



The Prime Minister made the comments during a meeting of the Executive Committee of the National Economic Council (ECNEC) at the NEC conference room in the city's Sher-e-Bangla Nagar area yesterday.

According to sources the PM, right at the outset of the meeting, noted how it looked really odd that Kamal was barred from his rightful responsibility. The PM termed the incident - that breached the ICC's own constitution - "unacceptable in the civilised world" and "unfortunate".

The PM, a great lover of cricket, again expressed her dissatisfaction over the umpiring decisions during the Bangladesh-India quarterfinal. She found it normal that anyone could be moved to comment on the level of umpiring during that game.

"I don't see anything wrong in Kamal (ICC President) commenting over the issue. But, the way ICC handled the situation, especially not to allow Kamal on to the prize-giving stage is unacceptable," said the sources quoting the Prime Minister.

Since 1999 the standard practice is that the ICC president hands over the World Cup

over the issue. But, the way ICC handled the situation, especially not to allow Kamal on to the prize-giving stage is unacceptable," said the sources quoting the Prime Minister.

Kamal is scheduled to attend a press conference briefing upon his arrival at the airport at noon today.

## BCB objected after QF: CEO

**SPORTS REPORTER**

Ever wondered why Aleem Dar, one of the more experienced umpires of the International Cricket Council's (ICC) Elite Panel wasn't given an opportunity to officiate a single knock-out match after the Bangladesh-India quarterfinal?

## Fawad, Voges get Aussie call up

**AFP, Sydney**

Leg-spinner Fawad Ahmed, batsman Adam Voges and wicketkeeper Peter Nevill were all called up by Australia Tuesday for their upcoming tour of the West Indies and the Ashes campaign in England.

Well, the reason behind that move might just have something to do with a complaint made by the Bangladesh Cricket Board (BCB), soon after their exit from the World Cup.

BCB CEO, Nizamuddin Chowdhury told reporters yesterday that the board had written a letter to the ICC CEO raising a couple of issues following that quarterfinal match and one of those dealt with poor umpiring.

"We had lodged a complaint within 24 hours of the end of the match. We categorically raised a few umpiring issues," said Nizamuddin. He also added that the BCB complained with regards to the phrases, supporting India, displayed on the scorecard during the game. "We requested the ICC to take corrective measures and I feel that it was quite evident that we were successful," Nizamuddin said without elaborating.

It is understood that the complaint was taken seriously; something that was evident in the following games.

The fact that the BCB had lodged a complaint was revealed by the BCB CEO yesterday in response to a legal notice served by a Supreme Court lawyer, Eunos Ali Akond.

The notice was served yesterday on the authorities of the BCB requesting them to file an appeal with the ICC for punishing the umpires for their 'wrong decisions' in the quarterfinal clash. Eunos Ali sent the legal notice to the team manager of the BCB, its president and secretary to the sports ministry, asking them to submit the appeal within 24 hours. He also asked the BCB to seek adequate compensation.

Referring to the legal notice, the lawyer said that there were a number of decisions that the umpires had given against Bangladesh.

According to him the legal notice also brought up the case of the rescheduling of venues prior to the Bangladesh-India game. He claimed that the ICC authorities had illegally rescheduled the match on March 19 from March 21 and that the game was supposed to be held in Wellington in New Zealand instead of the Melbourne Cricket Ground in Australia.

While Eunos Ali did bring the issue up on the legal notice, the fact remains that the ICC had clearly defined its scheduling policy long ago. According to it, the host countries would receive the advantage of playing in their own dens. And since only one out of the four quarterfinal matches was scheduled to take place in New Zealand, that venue was reserved for the Black Caps. As a result, the Tigers played India in Melbourne.

But there was no room in the 17-man squad for all-rounders James Faulkner and Glenn Maxwell, who were a potent part of Australia's one-day World Cup winning side.

Australia will play two Tests in the West Indies from June 5, with their five-Test Ashes series starting in England on July 8.

Pakistan-born Ahmed, who sought asylum in Australia in 2010, got the nod ahead of Ashton Agar as the second spinner behind Nathan Lyon after a stellar Sheffield Shield season in which he took 48 wickets.

Voges won his place on the plane for similar reasons, with the 35-year-old Western Australian captain smashing 1,358 Shield runs to be the season's highest scorer and player of the year with an average of 104.46.

New South Wales keeper Nevill was picked as Brad Haddin's understudy, preferred to Matthew Wade.

Australia depart for the West Indies on May 19.

**SQUAD:** Michael Clarke (capt), Steve Smith, Fawad Ahmed, Brad Haddin, Ryan Harris (Ashes only), Josh Hazlewood, Mitchell Johnson, Nathan Lyon, Mitchell Marsh, Shaun Marsh, Peter Nevill, Chris Rogers, Peter Siddle, Mitchell Starc, Adam Voges, David Warner, Shane Watson.

## Most popular ever!

**NEW ZEALAND HERALD**

More than 1 million people packed into stadiums across New Zealand and Australia making this year's Cricket World Cup the most popular in the history of the tournament, the International Cricket Council (ICC) says.

A total of 1,016,421 people flocked to 49 matches across the two host nations, and an estimated 1 billion people watched across the globe. The millions of people across the globe who streamed the game on their computers, laptops and tablets were not a part of these figures, as streams are often illegal and the ICC cannot track who is watching streamed games, although that number is also expected to be in the millions.

More than 93,000 fans crammed into Melbourne's MCG stadium last night, setting a new record in Australia for one day international match attendance - surpassing the 87,182 fans who flocked to the last world cup final at the MCG in 1992.

It also set a new record for a single day's cricket in Australia, beating the previous best of 91,112 set at the MCG during the Ashes series in 2013.

The combined figures were topped with "unprecedented social media activity", with the World Cup creating a huge buzz on social websites such as twitter - where people and often ex-cricketers voiced their opinions - and Instagram - where fans shared their pictures directly from the stadiums. These made the tournament the most popular in the Cricket World Cup's 40 year history, ICC local organising committee chief executive John Harnden said.

"When the local organising committee was set up in 2012 our vision was to inspire passion and participation in a celebration of the game, and the fans have responded beyond our expectations," Mr Harnden said.

"Overall, we have sold out 20 of the 49 matches in this World Cup. Perhaps most satisfying of all, eight of those sold out matches did not involve Australia or New Zealand.

"This has been a real bonus for tourism ... but it also shows just how diverse our two countries have become with large numbers of local cricket fans from different backgrounds supporting different teams."

He said: "Cricket has again demonstrated its popularity and its ability to unite people at a local, national and international level."

## VETTORI calls time

**INTERNET, Wellington**

Daniel Vettori exited cricket in the same way he tended to play the game.

As he met the throng of fans at Auckland airport, he was asked if his indication that he had played his last game for New Zealand was an official announcement.

"I suppose it is," he said, almost as if it hadn't occurred to him that he needed to say anything. "It was my last game for New Zealand in the final so it was a lovely way to finish. Obviously it would have been great to win but I'm pretty proud of everyone and the way we have gone about things over the last six weeks.

"You don't plan for anything but as far as finishing on a high and doing it with a really good team is very satisfying."

Vettori's announcement was hardly a surprise. His body has been ailing him for some time and he did well to get back from a series of Achilles injuries for one last fling with a side he has been a part of for the best



*It was my last game for New Zealand and it was a lovely way to finish.*

part of 18 years.

"To be able to get back from a number of injuries and to be here and a part of it, and hopefully a big contributing factor into us making that final, is something I will always treasure," he said.

BATTING & FIELDING										
Mat	Inns	Runs	HS	Ave	100	50	4s	6s	Ct	
Tests	113	174	4531	140	30.00	6	23	556	17	58
ODIs	295	187	2253	83	17.33	0	4	175	15	88
T20is	34	22	205	38	12.81	0	0	14	2	9

BOWLING										
Mat	Inns	Balls	Runs	Wkts	Ave	4w	5w	10		
Tests	113	187	28814	1244	362	34.36	19	20	3	
ODIs	295	277	14060	9674	305	31.71	8	2	0	
T20is	34	34	787	748	38	19.68	1	0	0	

## AB's boycott threat

**INTERNET**

South Africa cricket captain AB de Villiers reportedly threatened to boycott last week's World Cup semifinal against New Zealand at Eden Park after the team's racial quota saw a white player dropped for an injured black player.

Sports minister Fikile Mbalula denied that he influenced the cricket team to drop white bowler Kyle Abbott for Vernon Philander for the match at Eden Park.

Philander is one of the best bowlers in the world but had been out of form and had struggled with injury during the World Cup while Abbott had impressed. Abbott was the Proteas' best bowler in the tournament in terms of

average, economy rate and strike rate.

Philander went for 52 runs from his eight overs.

But South Africa's Rand Daily Mail reported that De Villiers, who had a terrific World Cup and made the official tournament team, threatened to boycott the match over the interference.

A selector said the panel "had to okay four players of colour" for the semifinal, in which Philander played alongside Hashim Amla, Imran Tahir and JP Duminy.

"AB didn't want to play in the semi because of this; it is a clear case of interference by the board - they ordered Philander's selection," a source is quoted as saying. "It was a purely political decision. The players are fuming about it but they won't say so."