

# SPORT



Litton Das (L) and Jubair Hossain have both been retained in Bangladesh's Test squad for the India series. Litton may keep wickets if Mushfiqur Rahim doesn't recover, while leg-spinner Jubair has a good chance to play as the team's third spinner.

PHOTO: STAR

## Abbas Pak candidate

AFP, Karachi

Pakistan on Tuesday nominated former captain Zaheer Abbas to become president of the International Cricket Council after the game's world governing body said it was seeking distinguished ex-cricketers.

The announcement comes the day after former Pakistan Cricket Board chairman Najam Sethi withdrew his candidacy in response to the ICC's decision the post would only be open to leading former players from July 2016.

Abbas's nomination will be considered in an ICC board meeting to be held in Barbados from June 22-26. If approved, he will take over on July 1 for one year.

## W Indies in dire straits

AFP, Roseau, Dominica

West Indies' top-order batting failed to capitalise on excellent batting conditions in 121 for seven in 40 overs on the first day of the first Test of the two-match series at the Windsor Park Stadium in Dominica on Wednesday.

Denesh Ramdin's decision to bat first on winning the toss was justified by the benign nature of the track, however Australia's perseverance and Caribbean indiscipline paid off for the visitors.

Kraig Brathwaite looked solid before edging a delivery from Josh Hazlewood to wicketkeeper Brad Haddin after half-an-hour's play. His opening partner, fellow-Barbadian Shai Hope, played fell chasing a wide delivery off Mitchell Johnson to return to pavilion for 36.

**SCORES IN BRIEF**  
WEST INDIES: First Innings 121 for 7 (Hope 36, Bravo 19, Ramdin 19; Hazlewood 3-29, Johnson 2-29)

## De Kruif tired of recurring errors

SPORTS REPORTER



Conceding goals in the dying moments or latter parts of a game has become a recurring problem for Bangladesh national team. It has been happening time and again, and happened most recently on Tuesday when Bangladesh surrendered an early lead in the dying moments during their 1-1 draw against Afghanistan in an international friendly.

During the early part of Lodewijk de Kruif's charge, Bangladesh were forced to concede a 1-1 draw in the 2013 SAFF Championship match against India. The same team later scored a stoppage-time goal to hold Bangladesh to a 2-2 draw in a friendly in Goa last year.

The trend continued in the latter part of 2015 and into this year. Having taken an early lead against Sri Lanka in an international friendly in Jessore last year, Bangladesh had to come out with a 1-1 draw due to conceding a goal from a free-kick in the second half. Then they went on to lose against Malaysia under-23

team through a stoppage time goal in the final of the Bangabandhu Gold Cup earlier this year.

This is a cause for concern for de Kruif as Bangladesh prepare for the Joint Qualifiers for the World Cup and Asian Cup where they will be facing the likes of against Australia, Jordan,

power and created a few chances in the first 26 to 27 minutes and scored a good goal on Tuesday," said the Dutchman after the 1-1 draw against Afghanistan.

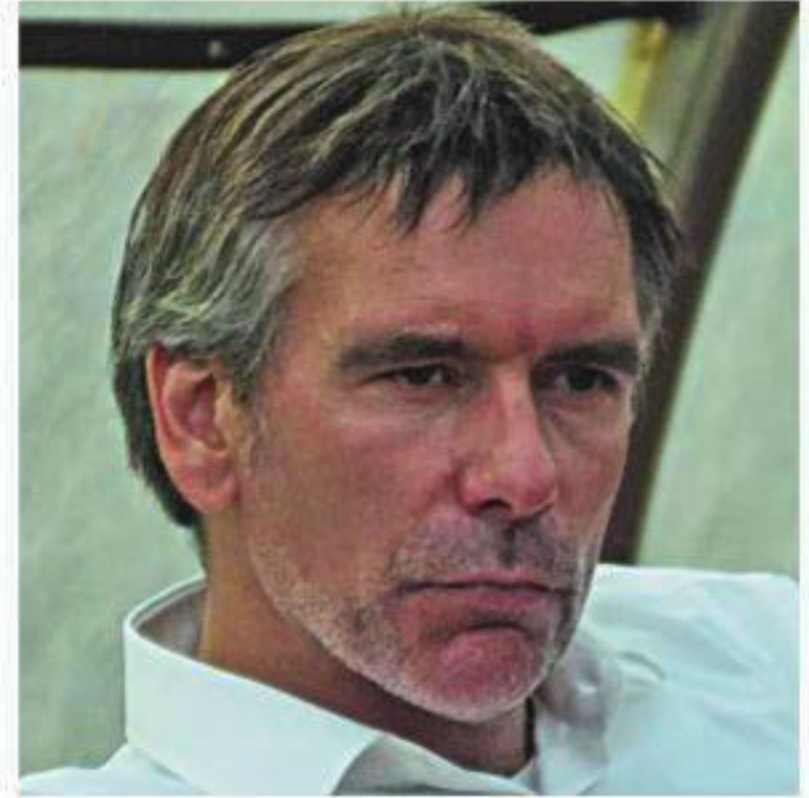
"But then it was again the typical Bengali behaviour. I pointed out to my players yesterday, day before yesterday and in the last two years that when they lead 1-0, they step back to start to defend instead of trying for the second or third. I have instructed them to try and make it two or three and kill the game there, but they are stepping back and making things difficult."

The Dutchman believes the way to overcome this problem is a simple one. "It is very simple. They have to concentrate for full 90 or 90-plus minutes. I'm giving training and information on it but nothing is coming though. There are a lot of things to do and we can keep continuing the work," said de Kruif.

The 45-year-old coach is however hopeful that his charges would do better against Kyrgyzstan on June 11.

"We have started (our warm-up campaign) with a loss and then the second one was draw. Let's hope the third one is a win (against Kyrgyzstan)."

"We played very well with a lot of



Tajikistan and Kyrgyzstan in Group B.

The Dutchman believes his charges might have picked up the bad habit of getting to a defensive mindset during their time orientation at club or youth level as he claimed he has never instructed them to play that way.

## Ravi to coach India in BD

AFP, New Delhi

Former captain Ravi Shastri was on Tuesday named Bangladesh after officials failed to appoint a full-time successor to Duncan Fletcher.

Zimbabwean Fletcher's four-year term ended after the recent World Cup in Australia and New Zealand where Mahendra Singh Dhoni's defending champions were ousted in the semifinals.

Shastri, who was the team director on the bilateral tour of Australia and the World Cup, was announced as a stop-gap arrangement for the short visit to Bangladesh to play one Test and three one-day internationals.

The Indian cricket board added in a statement that Shastri will be assisted by batting coach Sanjay Bangar, bowling coach Bharat Arun and fielding coach R. Sridhar, all of whom served the team in Australia.

## TEST SQUAD ANNOUNCED Jubair, Litton in for a purpose?

SPORTS REPORTER



Bangladesh's 14-member squad for the one-off India Test, due to begin in Fatullah on June 10, saw just one change from the Pakistan series and it was a move that everyone expected. Pacer Rubel Hossain, who was ruled out of the second Test due to a side strain, replaced injured Shahadat Hossain.

While Rubel was the only new inclusion, most of the questions in the press conference in Mirpur yesterday were related to leg-spinner Jubair Hossain. Various reports in the media in the last few days alleged that the selection committee did not want to include Jubair in the squad. The coach (Chandika Hathurusingha) and the captain (Mushfiqur Rahim) though were reportedly in favour of including the 19-year-old.

While chief selector Faruque Ahmed didn't directly state his apparent disinterest in Jubair, he did state that the leg-spinner was selected due to a 'strong recommendation' from the coach and the captain. It looked as if the chief selector was throwing the team management a challenge regarding Jubair.

"They [coach and captain] felt that they would have a better bowling plan with Jubair in the side. The captain and coach have their opinion and we make the team together and that's the reason why Jubair is in the side. They recommended him," said Faruque.

In the last two Tests, Bangladesh fielded eight batsmen in the side including Shuvagata Hom, who bowls off-spin as well. As a result Jubair didn't find a place in the playing eleven.

Faruque, who generally doesn't speak on the make-up of the playing eleven, said yesterday that he hoped the team management could come up with a different strategy against India.

"The playing eleven will depend on the team management. If our strength is batting and we want to draw the match then it [playing eight batsmen] is not a wrong strategy. But if the opponents [bat first and] score more than 600 runs then the pressure is on you.

"I feel that if we can field seven batsmen and four bowlers in the side that will be enough for us. We can have four specialist bowlers in the eleven, excluding Shakib Al Hasan," said Faruque.

Mushfiqur's keeping was the other issue that was talked about.

"I won't say that Mushfiqur won't be able to play [as keeper]. But if there is an option in the team it will be good. Because, if he [Mushfiqur] feels a little uncomfortable, someone else can take his spot," said Faruque, regarding the inclusion of wicketkeeper-batsman Litton Das.

While Faruque admitted that he didn't expect the current bowling line-up to be able to take 20 wickets on a flat Fatullah track, he still hoped the Tigers could draw the Test.

### SQUAD

Tamim Iqbal, Imrul Kayes, Litton Das, Mominul Haque, Mahmudullah, Mushfiqur Rahim, Soumya Sarkar, Shakib Al Hasan, Shuvagata Hom, Taijul Islam, Jubair Hossain, Rubel Hossain, Abul Hasan and Mohammad Shahid.

## IN A NUTSHELL

### Gandhi-Mandela Cricket Series

South Africa and India are in talks to finalise details of a proposed four-Test Gandhi-Mandela series, to be played in both countries within the next two years, announced Cricket South Africa chief executive Haroon Lorgat on Wednesday.

"India has really warmed up to the idea of making a sort of an icon series between South Africa and India. So we will play four Tests in India and they will come back in 2018 and will play the equivalent. We want to style it as the Mandela-Gandhi series," Lorgat said.

### Gayle turns into a barman

West Indies cricketer Chris Gayle turned into barman for a day after participating in a benefit match on Tuesday for Somerset all-rounder Peter Trego.

The Jamaican made a guest appearance for South Devon where he scored a six, following which, he sat behind the bar serving drinks and answering the phone, reported the BBC.

### Li announces baby girl

Retired Chinese tennis star Li Na, who is credited with introducing the game to the country's masses, announced Wednesday that she and her husband have a newborn daughter.

"Jiang Shan and I would like to introduce our Alisa to my lovely 'Na fans'," the 33-year-old wrote in an early morning posting to China's Twitter-like Sina Weibo.

"We are happy and we love her very much," she said, though did not specify when she was born.

A picture of a red baby footprint was attached under the message.

### ICC okays legends' league

Cricketing legends Sachin Tendulkar and Shane Warne's planned Twenty20 league, featuring former stars, got the approval of the ICC on Wednesday. Tendulkar and Warne met the ICC officials in Dubai Wednesday. Warne confirmed the development by posting on Twitter.

The inaugural event will be played at non-cricketing venues in the US.

Earlier, it was reported in the Australian newspaper that Tendulkar and Warne have offered 28 ex-players contracts worth 25,000 dollars a match for the league planned in at least three US cities starting September.

Compiled By Star Sport Desk

## Serena sails into semis

AFP, Paris



Top seed Serena Williams set up a semifinal clash with Timea Bacsinszky at the French Open after defeating Italian 17th seed Sara Errani 6-1, 6-3 on Wednesday.

Williams, who is looking for her third title at Roland Garros and 20th career Grand Slam crown, will face Bacsinszky after the Swiss 23rd seed beat unseeded Belgian Alison Van Uytvanck 6-4, 7-5 in the day's other quarterfinal tie.

The American had lost the first set in each of her last three matches in Paris

but on this occasion she meant business right from the off, breaking immediately to lead 2-0 on the central Court Philippe Chatrier.

The diminutive Errani, who was the runner-up at Roland Garros in 2012 and lost to Williams in the semifinals a year later, broke back straight away but once more she could not hold her own serve and fell 3-1 behind.

Williams then saved another break point against her in the following game with a brilliant cross-court forehand and, with Errani struggling against her opponent's power, she broke again before serving successfully to take the first set in just 27 minutes.

The second set was tighter, going with serve until Williams broke in the seventh game to lead 4-3, and she then went on to clinch victory on her fourth match point in a marathon ninth game as the match concluded in just one hour and five minutes.

Williams was far too powerful for the Italian, producing 39 winners to just nine for her opponent and conjuring 11 return winners against Errani's weak serve.

Bacsinszky is through to her first Grand Slam semifinal after repelling a battling performance by Van Uytvanck on Court Suzanne Lenglen in a match that lasted an hour and three quarters.



Serena Williams roars in celebration after beating Sara Errani in the French Open quarterfinals in Paris yesterday.

PHOTO: AFP

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