



**THE PACE TEST:** Bangladesh A coach Heath Streak (L) will hope his four-man pace attack, which includes Al-Amin Hossain (R), can do wonders in Bangalore during their tour of India, which starts on Wednesday.

## 'Win will be huge'

### Bangladesh A team leave for India today

SPORTS REPORTER



Bangladesh A captain Mominul Haque and coach Heath Streak exuded confidence ahead of their tour of India.

Talking to reporters at the Sher-e-Bangla National Stadium in Mirpur yesterday, a day before their departure, Mominul and Streak said they can give the Indians a 'run for their money.'

"They (India A) are not a weak team. In fact, I think they are a really good side and are playing very well. It will be difficult especially in their conditions. But we can beat them. We have ten Test players in this side. Keeping that in mind, if we play well, I am sure we can win," said Mominul at the pre-tour press meet.

The left-hander reckoned that the players would have an extra motivation to perform keeping in mind the Australia series next month and the T20 World Cup next year, which will be played in India.

Bangladesh have had a decent run in both Tests and ODIs this year. The team surpassed expectations in each of their home series' against Pakistan, India and South Africa. The important thing, according to Mominul, is to stick to the habit of winning.

"The expectations are really high since we have done so well this year. And that's why everybody wants us to win this series... the cricketers, the fans the media... everybody. It's important for us to maintain the winning habit. We can't lose this habit," said Mominul.

Echoing Mominul's sentiments, coach Streak believed that it would be a 'huge achievement' if Bangladesh A go on to win matches on this tour.

"It's a great opportunity for a lot of our young guys to get more experience. But we also want to continue the winning culture. Hopefully in doing so, some of these guys can take the confidence into the Australian series. We are not using this series just for practice; we are going there to play hard cricket and give India a good run for their money," said Streak.

"We want to try and win every game. That's our goal. There is no better feeling than winning, especially against such a big team like India. Any victory will be a huge achievement for us," he added.

Streak also applauded the board's decision to make Mominul the captain of the A team. According to the Zimbabwean, the left-hander has the ability to lead the Tigers in the future.

"Mini [Mominul] has got a very good cricketing mind. He has got a very good temperament, which is important for a leader. Hopefully this can be a start for him as one of the leaders in the Bangladesh team," said Streak.

Bangladesh will play three one-day matches on September 16, 18 and 20 in Bangalore. The teams will then travel to Mysore to play a three-day match against Ranji trophy champions Karnataka. After that they will return to Bangalore to play a three-day match against India A starting on September 27.

PHOTO: STAR

## Challenge for pacers

SPORTS REPORTER

Rubel Hossain, Al-Amin Hossain, Taskin Ahmed and Shafiqul Islam; if this were the year 2014 then the four-man combination would have probably been leading Bangladesh's pace attack.

However, the dynamics of Bangladesh's bowling attack has changed quite a bit now with the arrival of Mustafizur Rahman and Mohammad Shahid and Mashrafe Bin Mortaza keeping fit.

And that's the reason why Bangladesh A's tour of India is crucial for the pacers in the squad; each of them, it seems, has something to prove.

The last time Al-Amin played an international match was during the Zimbabwe series in November 2014. The player, who was one of the leading wicket-takers for the Tigers that year, witnessed a dramatic fall in his career. He was first barred because of his suspect bowling action and then while he was a member of Bangladesh's World Cup squad, he was sent back on disciplinary grounds. The lanky pacer will hope he can utilise this series to change the selectors' minds.

Shafiqul, on the other hand, has been out due to his tryst with injuries. He is a bowler

that the selectors prefer using in the longer format because of his ability to swing the ball. However, he hasn't played a single match this year. While he was on the cards for making a comeback against India, his lack of game-time compelled the selectors not to include him in the squad.

While Rubel has been a regular in the ODIs, he missed out on Bangladesh's last four Tests. Against Pakistan and India, he had injury issues; against South Africa, the selectors preferred Mustafizur and Shahid to him. The pacer could be looking to earn his spot back for the upcoming Tests against Australia.

And then there's the young and fierce Taskin Ahmed. He was Bangladesh's highest wicket-taker in the World Cup and enjoyed a great spell against Pakistan and India. But he missed the South Africa series due to a side-strain.

The tall fast bowler, who has played just ten first-class matches—the last one being in 2013—will also be an option for the three-day matches. Considering his inability to take massive workload, that is required in the longer version, due to his troubled tendons, the management is still cautious of introducing Taskin to Test cricket.

However, if he does get an opportunity in the three-dayers in India, it could well be the base of a dream that the player has longed to achieve.

## Chess World Cup Zia loses in tie-break

SPORTS REPORTER

Grandmaster Ziaur Rahman was eliminated from the Chess World Cup in Baku, Azerbaijan yesterday after losing the first round tie-break against Russian Grandmaster Evgeny Tomashevsky. Zia, the 117th seed with a rating of 2509, lost the first two boards of the tie-break, playing with white and black pieces once apiece, to concede defeat.

Zia had taken the Russian to the tie-break by drawing both the first round games on Friday and Saturday. The Bangladesh grandmaster was eliminated from the first round of last year's world cup, too, conceding a 0.5-1.5 point defeat against Boris Gelfand of Israel.



Feni players run for joy at the long whistle of the Sailor-BFF U-15 National Championship final that they won 2-0 against Narayanganj at the Bangabandhu National Stadium yesterday.

PHOTO: STAR

## Feni champions

SPORTS REPORTER



Feni clinched the title of the Sailor-BFF U-15 National Football Championship by beating Narayanganj 2-0 in the final at the Bangabandhu National Stadium yesterday.

Nurul Absar put the boys from the south-eastern district ahead four minutes before the break and Sarwar Hossain confirmed the victory, striking ten minutes after restart.

It was Feni's first trophy at the national level in 22 years since their triumph in the Ma O Moni Gold Cup in 1993. They, however, went close to establishing their supremacy twice but had to be content with runners-up trophies in the 2004 JFA U-15 National Championship and the 2008 Club Cup Championship.

Feni put up a brilliant display right from the start on a soggy pitch, with striking duo Absar and Tamim Hossain causing havoc at the opposition backline. Feni came close

to taking the lead twice but Narayanganj goalkeeper Antar Kumar, also the captain, kept his side in the match by thwarting two efforts from Absar in the 21st and 25th minutes.

Absar, who later shared the player of the final award along with Narayanganj's Rony Das, made amends by tapping in from close range to give Feni the lead before Sarwar side-volleyed from the edge of the box to double the lead.

Narayanganj defender Arafat picked up his second yellow card in the latter part of the game to rub salt in the wounds of the losing side.

Feni coach Ashraf Anwar Shimul said that some of his players like Absar, Sarwar and Kounik benefitted from practising with professional league outfit Feni Soccer.

Narayanganj coach Aslam Chowdhury claimed that the BFF did not allow two of their key players, who are in the national under-16 camp, to play in the final (though goalkeeper played) which demoralised the team.

## SCHOOL VOLLEYBALL Scholastica, AISD share titles

SPORTS REPORTER

Scholastica and American International School Dhaka (AISD) won the titles of the boys' and girls' events of the Scholastica Interscholar Volleyball Tournament, which concluded on Saturday, said a press release.

Scholastica beat AISD after stiff competition in the boys' final while the girls from AISD avenged that defeat by beating their Scholastica counterparts in the girls' final.

The tournament was held from September 10 to 12 at the STM Hall, with 12 top schools of Dhaka taking part.

## SCHOOL HANDBALL Viqarunnisa retain title

SPORTS REPORTER

Viqarunnisa Noon School & College retained the girls' title of the Polar Ice Cream 23rd School Handball Tournament after outplaying Sunnydale by 14-1 goals in the final at the Shaheed M Mansur Ali National Handball Stadium yesterday.

This is the second consecutive and 15th overall title for Viqarunnisa since inception of the meet in 1988. Fatema Akhter of the champion team was adjudged the best player of the tournament.

In a third place-deciding match, Scholastica beat Dhanmondi Tutorial 4-0.

## Shastri to continue

PTI, New Delhi

Ravi Shastri was on Sunday retained as the team director of the Indian cricket team till the 2016 T20 World Cup at home, based on the recommendations of the BCCI advisory committee.

Shastri, who was appointed team director in August 2014, has been given another seven-month extension till the completion of the World T20 in April.

## Australia seal series

AGENCIES, Manchester



Australia have completed their near three-month tour of England with a series victory, after crushing the hosts by eight wickets with more than half an innings to spare in the series decider yesterday.

Mitch Marsh (4-27 off six overs) and John Hastings (3-21 off 10) did most of the damage with the ball as England were bowled out for 138 at Old Trafford, easily their lowest after choosing to bat first in a home one-dayer. The previous lowest was 176 in 2001, also against Australia.

England were, admittedly, a batsmen down, due to captain Eoin Morgan having to retire hurt on one after he was concussed when struck on the helmet by a Mitchell Starc bouncer.

Because England were dismissed so promptly, in 33 overs, Australia had to begin their innings before the lunch break, with England marshalled by acting vice-captain James Taylor.

After a slightly nervy start — they were 2-36 from 10 overs — Australia dominated after the interval. Aaron Finch (70 not out off 64) and George Bailey (41 not out off 45) shared an unbeaten century partnership to take their team to 2-140 in the 25th over, with 154 deliveries to spare.

### SCORES IN BRIEF

ENGLAND: 138 all out in 33 overs (Rashid 35 n.o.; Hastings 3-21, Marsh 4-27)  
AUSTRALIA: 140 in 24.2 overs (Finch 70 n.o., Bailey 41 n.o.; Willey 1-13)  
Result: Australia won by eight wickets and clinched the series 3-2

Player-of-the-match: Mitchell Marsh  
Player-of-the-series: Mitchell Marsh



**DOUBLE BLOW:** England captain Eoin Morgan retired hurt after being struck on the helmet by a Mitchell Starc bouncer and saw his side slump to an eight-wicket defeat.

PHOTO: AFP

## Shahadat suspended

SPORTS REPORTER



Pacer Shahadat Hossain, accused of torturing a house-help and currently on the run, has been temporarily suspended by the Bangladesh Cricket Board (BCB).

The BCB made the announcement through a press release yesterday.

"The BCB has temporarily suspended cricketer Kazi Shahadat Hossain from participating in any activity under the Board's jurisdiction including playing in competitions and using facilities for training and rehabilitation.

"The BCB's decision was prompted by recent reports of alleged criminal offences involving the player which are being investigated by the police," stated the press release.

Explaining the BCB's decision, CEO Nizamuddin Chowdhury said, "We have taken the usual route in dealing with such matters. The BCB has a zero tolerance policy on acts of indiscretion by registered cricket players and we have noted the serious allegations against Shahadat."

"We will not try to draw conclusions as this matter is still being investigated. However, he will not be allowed to play in BCB events or train with BCB support until further notice because

the accusations have embarrassed the board," he added.

During a programme in the capital on Saturday, BCB president Nazmul Hassan Papon told the media that the pacer, if guilty, would not receive any support from the board. He further added that he had declined to meet Shahadat when the pacer had come to see him.

Earlier last week, Shahadat's 11-year-old house help alleged that Shahadat and his wife had tortured her. A case has been filed with the Mirpur Police Station against the couple under the Women and Children Repression and Prevention Act.