



Debutant England leg-spinner Adil Rashid (C) went for 163 runs without any success in the first innings. But he almost turned the match on its head on the fifth afternoon with a five-for against an imploded Pakistan before darkness denied England victory in the first Test at Abu Dhabi yesterday.

## BCB adjusts to new focus

SPORTS REPORTER



The Bangladesh Cricket Board (BCB) has begun to draw a new set of plans after Zimbabwe confirmed its limited overs tour to Bangladesh next month. The ODIs and T20Is that the Tigers played against South Africa in July this year were supposed to be the last set of limited-overs matches that the national team was scheduled to play. The team management's planning after that, keeping the Tests against Australia in mind, was designed to suit the longer format of the game. That was probably the reason why the BCB had initially planned to host Zimbabwe for two Tests in November. However, time constraints have compelled the two teams to agree to a limited-overs battle. The confirmation of the tour means that certain players, now part of Bangladesh A's tour of South Africa and Zimbabwe, would have to return home halfway in order to join the national team. Players such as Soumya Sarkar, Liton Das and Sabbir Rahman -- who are all expected to make the national team -- may be called back after the South Africa-leg of the tour which ends on October 30. The selectors may also decide to recall pacers Mohammad Shahid and Al-Amin Hossain who could serve as back-up bowlers for Rubel Hossain and Taskin Ahmed, who are both fighting for fitness. "The change in the format of the tour won't affect us negatively at all. In fact everything seems to be falling into place. The

boys from the A team can come back and join the camp probably a week before the first ODI," said chief selector Faruque Ahmed. Apart from that all-rounder Shakib Al Hasan, who is due to become a father in November and is on leave, has reportedly confirmed his availability for the series. The board however has given him the freedom to decide the extent of his participation in the series. The coaching staff, most of which went on leave following the postponement of the Australia series, is expected to be back by the end of this month. The BCB and Zimbabwe Cricket are still in discussion about the number of matches to be played. It's a decision that is expected to be finalised on Monday. As of now, Zimbabwe are expected to arrive in the first week of November. The confirmation of the series has also encouraged pacers Taskin and Rubel to speed up their recovery process. While it's unlikely for the two bowlers to feature in the Zimbabwe series, they are adamant to give it a go. "I still need two weeks to get fit. Let's see what happens after that. Everything will be a lot clearer once I start running. At the moment I am only jogging, and my calf isn't hurting. I'll start bowling and sprinting next week. If everything goes well, then maybe I'll have a chance," Rubel told The Daily Star yesterday. Taskin, who needs around three more weeks to recover, will begin bowling this Thursday. He hopes to play at least one match in the series.

## Dramatic escape for Pakistan

AGENCIES, Abu Dhabi

After 1,121 runs and 17 wickets in the first two innings of an extraordinarily slow-burning contest, the first Test in Abu Dhabi exploded into a Technicolor fireworks finish, as England fell agonisingly short of glory following a Twenty20-style run-chase. In scenes reminiscent of England's last great Asian heist, at Karachi in 2000-01, a staggering and unscripted Pakistan collapse opened the door for a gallop to the finish in rapidly fading light. The nominal target of 99 runs in 19 overs would have been a breeze

for a spirited young line-up featuring many of the men who have revived England's one-day fortunes this summer. But, despite the best efforts of Joe Root, who hustled 33 from 29 balls, and Jonny Bairstow, who clattered an enormous six over midwicket in a Wahab Riaz over that was dispatched for 17 runs, their rage against the dying of the light left them 25 runs short after a gallant 11-over slog. Leg-spinner Adil Rashid took a five wicket haul to trigger a Pakistan collapse when a result looked highly unlikely on the fifth morning as England, replying to Pakistan's 523-8 declared, closed their first innings at 598-9.

Rashid, who had the worst bowling figures on debut in the first innings of 0-163, had an unbelievable change in his fortunes as he grabbed 5-64 to dismiss Pakistan for 173 on a weary fifth day Sheikh Zayed Stadium pitch. It was a lucky escape for Pakistan as there have been 14 previous instances when teams had lost a Test after scoring 500 points or more, the highest by Australia when they lost to England after scoring 586 in Sydney in 1894. It was a lucky escape for Pakistan as there have been 14 previous instances when teams had lost a Test after scoring 500 points or more, the highest by Australia when

they lost to England after scoring 586 in Sydney in 1894. The three-match series will resume in Dubai for October 22 with the final Test in Sharjah from November 1. **SCORES IN BRIEF** PAKISTAN: First innings 523 for 8 decl ENGLAND: First innings 598-9 decl (Cook 263, Root 85, Bell 63; Riaz 3-125) PAKISTAN: Second innings 173 all out (Misbah 51, Younis 45, Hafeez 34; Rashid 5-64, Ali 2-28) ENGLAND: Second innings 74 for 4 (Root 33 not out, Bairstow 15, Bell 5 not out; Babar 2-27, Malik 2-25) **Result:** Match drawn **Player-of-the-match:** Alastair Cook

## Siddikur moves up a bit

SPORTS REPORTER

Siddikur Rahman moved up to joint 22nd position at the end of the third round of Venetian Macao Open as Scott Hend took a three-stroke lead going into the final day. Two-time Asian Tour winner Siddikur, who started the day at 30th position, carded four birdies and two bogeys at the Macau Golf and Country Club yesterday to get to an aggregate of five-under-par (208), 10 strokes behind Hend of Australia. The Aussie hit two eagles for a seven-under-par (64) to move to 15-under-par (198) as he leads defending champion Anirban Lahiri by three strokes, followed by India's Chirag Kumar and Rashid Khan in third and fourth places respectively.

## Simanta lifts hope

SPORTS REPORTER

Bangladesh team's excellent performance in the recently-concluded Commonwealth Weightlifting Championship has given the game's governing body and the weightlifters hope of winning a number of medals in the upcoming South Asian (SA) Games, scheduled to be held in India early next year. Bangladesh team returned yesterday having won one gold, three silver and two bronze medals, with Mubia Akter Simanta bagging the lone gold and two silver medals. Mustain Billah won a silver medal while Zahura Akter Reshma bagged two bronze medals. Simanta's gold-winning effort came in the 63kg youth category where she lifted 98 kilos in clean & jerk and 78 kilos in snatch. She also won two silver medals in junior and senior categories of the same weight category. Bangladesh Weightlifting Federation is hopeful that the 17-year-old weightlifter can win a gold medal in that particular event while others can chip in

with a few medals in the SA Games. "I have won the gold with my best performance. This was the first gold medal for any Bangladeshi weightlifter in this competition. I lost in the two other categories against Indian weightlifters, but gave them a fight. So I am hopeful about my SA Games' chances," said Simanta yesterday. "I still have three months in hand and if I can try my level best, hopefully I can beat the Indian competitors." Bangladesh's all-time best weightlifter, Bidyut Kumar Roy, who accompanied the team as a coach for the first time since bringing an end to his illustrious career last year, sees hope of medals from the weightlifters, especially from young Simanta. "We will definitely win gold in the SA Games. If we work hard with Simanta, we can add 5/6 kilos to what she can lift now. There will hopefully be medals from other weightlifters such as Rokeya Akter Sathi, who is doing well in the 69kg category, and last edition's gold-winner Hamidul Islam," said Bidyut.



Khulna pacer Mustafizur Rahman (L), who was rested in the previous round of the NCL, celebrates one of his two wickets against Dhaka on his comeback, at Fatullah yesterday.

PHOTO: STAR

## IN A NUTSHELL

### Herath 10-for dooms WI

AFP, Galle

Sri Lankan spin bowler Rangana Herath's 10-wicket match haul helped the hosts crush the West Indies by an innings and six runs Saturday to decisively win the first Test at Galle with a day to spare. The visitors were bowled out for 227 in the second innings, just an hour and 15 minutes after lunch on the fourth day of a Test which saw Herath wreak havoc throughout. He finished with second innings figures of four for 79, after taking six for 68 in the first innings, in which the tourists were all out for 251 and forced to follow on after Sri Lanka amassed 484 in their first innings. Herath's heroics came after Sri Lanka's domination with the bat on the first two days as Dimuth Karunaratne and Dinesh Chandimal piled the misery on struggling West Indies. **SCORES IN BRIEF** SRI LANKA: 484 all out WEST INDIES: 251 all out WEST INDIES: Second Innings following on Blackwood 92, Brathwaite 34, Bravo 31; Herath 4-79, Prasad 2-28) **Result:** Sri Lanka won by an innings and 6 runs. **Player-of-the-match:** Rangana Herath (Sri Lanka)

### Warne dazzles on return

Shane Warne made a remarkable return to suburban cricket as the champion leg-spinner helped his former junior club to victory inside one day at East Sandringham in Melbourne on Saturday. The 46-year-old played in front of a couple of thousand delighted fans in Melbourne's south-east. He came in at number 3 and smashed a 38-ball 40 before finishing with bowling figures of 4-48.

### Chinese firms to buy F1?

According to a Sky News report on Friday, China Media Capital (CMC) is leading a group of Chinese firms to back a \$8.5 billion takeover bid for Formula One. The group of Chinese media investors are willing to invest roughly 1.5 billion dollars in the offer being assembled by Stephen Ross, owner of the Miami Dolphins reported Xinhua citing Sky News. The proposed takeover of F1 still requires roughly 2 billion dollars in additional equity from other investors.

### Cricket on a glacier

Former New Zealand cricketers, Steven Fleming, Simon Doull and Scott Styris, and Indian actor Sidharth Malhotra took a bat and ball up to a glacier for a game of cricket in the snow at 7,600 feet. A helicopter took them to the Isobel Glacier in Mount Aspiring National Park, where they laid out a makeshift pitch and indulged themselves in a game among the magnificent mountain peaks and a crystal clear lake. It was a new experience for all four.



## Vermeulen banned for life

AGENCIES, Harare

Controversial batsman Mark Vermeulen has been banned from all cricket by Zimbabwe Cricket for engaging in a racist tirade on social media site Facebook in which he denigrated black Zimbabweans by referring them as "apes". In a statement released on Friday, Cricket Zimbabwe said that Vermeulen "owned up to repulsive remarks" which reflects "prejudice and plain ignorance". In an Facebook conversation thread started by former Zimbabwe captain Brendan Taylor over Proper Utseya's claims of racial discrimination by Alistair Campbell, Vermeulen expressed regret at the way blacks had been educated, claiming it was the reason the whites were subjected to racism in the game. The statement added that ZC "find Vermeulen's Facebook comment distasteful and unacceptable particularly for a senior sportsman who should have learnt from playing in Zimbabwe and abroad that there is no place for racism in sport."

## A bowler's day

SPORTS REPORTER



Mustafizur Rahman took two wickets to give Khulna some solace after the league leaders' batting debacle against Dhaka in the rain-affected opening day of the National Cricket League's fourth round match at Fatullah yesterday. Similar stories ensued in the other three venues as bowlers dominated the opening day's proceedings. It was Chittagong's off-break bowler Iftekhar Sajjad who hogged the spotlight with a five-for against Rajshahi at the Zahur Ahmed Chowdhury Stadium yesterday. At the Khan Shaheb Osman Ali Stadium in Fatullah, Khulna batsmen failed to cope with Dhaka's bowlers despite a sporting wicket and got bundled out for 117. Pacer Ali Ahmed Manik started the carnage by removing Mahedi Hasan and Masum Khan then ran through the batting order with his quick off-breaks, taking a haul of four for 11 in 8.4 overs. Manik and Mohammad Sharif captured two wickets each. Mustafizur however denied Dhaka a happy ending as the left-arm pacer claimed two wickets after the exchange to reduce Dhaka to 77-3 at the end of the day. Dhaka's Joyraz Sheik remained unbeaten on 49.

On the other hand, Chittagong finished the day without any hiccups as Tamim Iqbal and Nafees Iqbal took the port city's team to 43 for no loss after Rajshahi were dismissed for 208. Sajjad shattered Rajshahi's batting line-up with figures of 5 for 63 including the prized scalp of Bangladesh Test skipper Mushfiquur Rahman, who scored 24. Left-arm pacer Mehedi Hasan Rana also contributed to the collapse taking the wickets of Mizanur Rahman (7) and Farhad Hossain (0). Opener Nazmul Hossain Shanto was top scorer for Rajshahi with 63 off 130 balls. At the Shaheed Chandu Stadium in Bogra, Barisal were dismissed for 155 by Sylhet. 20-year old left-arm spinner Nasum Ahmed was the most successful Sylhet bowler with a four-wicket haul. Pacer Khaled Ahmed and leg-spinner Alok Kapali contributed significantly by taking two wickets each. Sylhet ended the day on 45 for one before bad light brought an early end to the day. Compared to the rest of the matches, Dhaka Metro's batting line-up fared well as they finished the day on 211 for 7 at the Sheikh Abu Naser Stadium in Khulna. Shamsur Rahman and Asif Ahmed helped Metro across the 200-mark.

## Faf wary of resurgent hosts

AGENCIES, New Delhi

South African batsman Faf du Plessis yesterday said his team has let some of its own momentum pass and allowed India to gain in confidence by committing tactical errors during the second one-day international in Indore. "That's the most disappointing thing from the team's perspective. We had India on the ropes and we had momentum behind us, but now we have given them a sniff," du Plessis said. "One-all in the series and they will be confident again winning." Du Plessis said his team allowed Indian captain Mahendra Singh Dhoni to rescue the hosts out of a precarious position with a blistering knock in Indore. However, there are fears of a protest at the stadium. A quota spearhead in Gujarat has taken offense as tickets were allegedly not sold to his community members. This has caused the police to make elaborate security arrangements to ensure smooth conduct of the match.

### SCORES IN BRIEF

<b>KHULNA V DHAKA</b> Khulna: 117 all out in 39.4 overs (Imrul 27; Masum 4-11, Sharif 2-35, Manik 2-45) Dhaka: 77 for 3 (Joyraz 49; Mustafizur 2-34, Ziaur 1-9)	<b>DHAKA METRO V RANGPUR</b> Dhaka Metro: 211 for 7 (Asif 56, Shamsur 51; Sanjit 3-43, Tanveer 3-73)	<b>BARISAL V SYLHET</b> Barisal: 155 all out in 55 overs (Al-Amin 36; Nasum 4-32, Khaled 2-28) Sylhet: 45 for 1 (Imtiaz 25 not out)	<b>RAJSHAH V CHITTAGONG</b> Rajshahi: 208 all out in 72 overs (Nazmul 63; Iftekhar 5-63) Chittagong: 43 for no loss (Tamim 35 not out)
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