

Cricket: The year of Bangladesh



PHOTO: ARCHIVE

BISHWAJIT ROY

In this era, success in competitive fields is heavily measured by its commercial value. Sports are no different, and everybody knows that cricket has evolved from a strictly amateur game into a multibillion-dollar industry these days. It is no secret that cricket became the number one sport in our country long ago and it would be no exaggeration to say that all the remaining sports combined cannot equal cricket when considering the generation of revenue.

With their popularity, it's no surprise that cricketers are the most in-demand when it comes to commercial endorsements. That demand has risen hand in

hand with the 'Tigers' performances in 2015. Just ask new pace bowling sensation Mustafizur Rahman -- the best find for Bangladesh this year, if not for world cricket -- how much his account swelled. In just one year, his world changed forever and there's no doubt he has made a lot of changes to his lifestyle and the baby-faced left-arm pacer from Satkhira has probably epitomised best what the Bangladesh cricket team achieved and the big steps they took to be reckoned as a force in world cricket.

Looking at the billboards across the country, you cannot imagine a road which isn't adorned by the posters of cricket stars. All those monetary successes didn't come automatically, to

achieve it the players had to upgrade their brand value and that only happened due to on-field successes. And on the field, 2015 was a year not only worth remembering, but also a year where they achieved something they had never before accomplished; accolades from pundits lauding 2015 as 'a year of Bangladesh'.

We all know the popular phrase "Rome wasn't built in a day". And without a doubt today's success in Bangladesh cricket was not built in a day as various milestones had to be met in the long journey since Bangladesh won their sixth ICC Trophy in Malaysia in 1997, a win that saw them qualify for the 1999 ICC World Cup, which paved the way for

them as they drew the cricketing fraternity's attention by defeating Pakistan for the first time. One cannot forget Bangladesh's defeat of world champions Australia in Cardiff through a now-disgraced Mohammad Ashraful's run-a-ball century. The performances under the leadership of Habibur Bashar in the 2007 World Cup ensured they got a strong footing in the world cricket map.

Bangladesh then whitewashed New Zealand at home twice in 2010 and 2013 which cannot be ignored. Besides that there were numerous individual and team successes which enhanced the gradual improvement of Bangladesh. However, it seemed that a slow-moving Bangladesh suddenly

made a big leap to make sure the 'Tigers' name would be pronounced with respect; especially in the 50-over version of the game.

On March 9, 2015 what Bangladesh achieved at Adelaide was just the beginning of forging a new chapter in the annals of Bangladesh history under the charismatic leadership of Mashrafe Bin Mortaza. Mahmudullah Riyad's century and Rubel Hossain's four-wicket haul took Bangladesh to the quarterfinal of the 2015 ICC World Cup after they had knocked out England by 15 runs. That's not just a statistic, but it showed that they had a new-found belief, which actually led to the historic year

CONTINUED ON PAGE 39

আল-আরাফাহ ইসলামী ব্যাংকের সঙ্গে আপনার ব্যাংকিং হোক বৈচিত্রময়!

এটিএম সার্ভিস	লা-রিবা মাস্টার কার্ড	মাসিক কিস্তি ভিত্তিক হজ্জ একাউন্ট	বৈদেশিক বাণিজ্যিক বিনিয়োগ
শুল স্টুডেন্ট মুদারাবা সঞ্চয়ী হিসাব	যানবাহন খাতে বিনিয়োগ	শিল্প খাতে বিনিয়োগ	দ্বিগুন ও তিনগুন আমানত প্রকল্প
মুদারাবা সঞ্চয়ী হিসাব	মুদারাবা মিলিয়নিয়ার ডিপোজিট স্কীম	এজেন্ট ব্যাংকিং	কৃষি খাতে বিনিয়োগ