

# SPORT



## Sunrisers coach joins BCB's HP

SPORTS REPORTER

Simon Helmot has joined the Bangladesh Cricket Board (BCB) as the Head Coach of the High Performance programme. The 44-year old Australian is currently the Head Coach of the Trinidad and Tobago Red Steel T20 team in the Caribbean Premier League and assistant coach for Indian Premier League side Sunrisers Hyderabad and Big Bash League's Hobart Hurricanes.

According to a BCB press release, Helmot will be in charge of the High Performance camp which will run from August to October 2016.

Helmot will start working on the High Performance programme after the end of the Dhaka Premier League. According to BCB CEO, Nizamuddin Chowdhury, the duration of Helmot's stay in Bangladesh will depend upon his performance and may be extended past October.

A career coach with nearly two decades of experience, Helmot had been employed in various coaching positions at State and National levels. He had previously worked as an assistant coach of Australia's World Twenty20 side and was also head coach of Australia A.

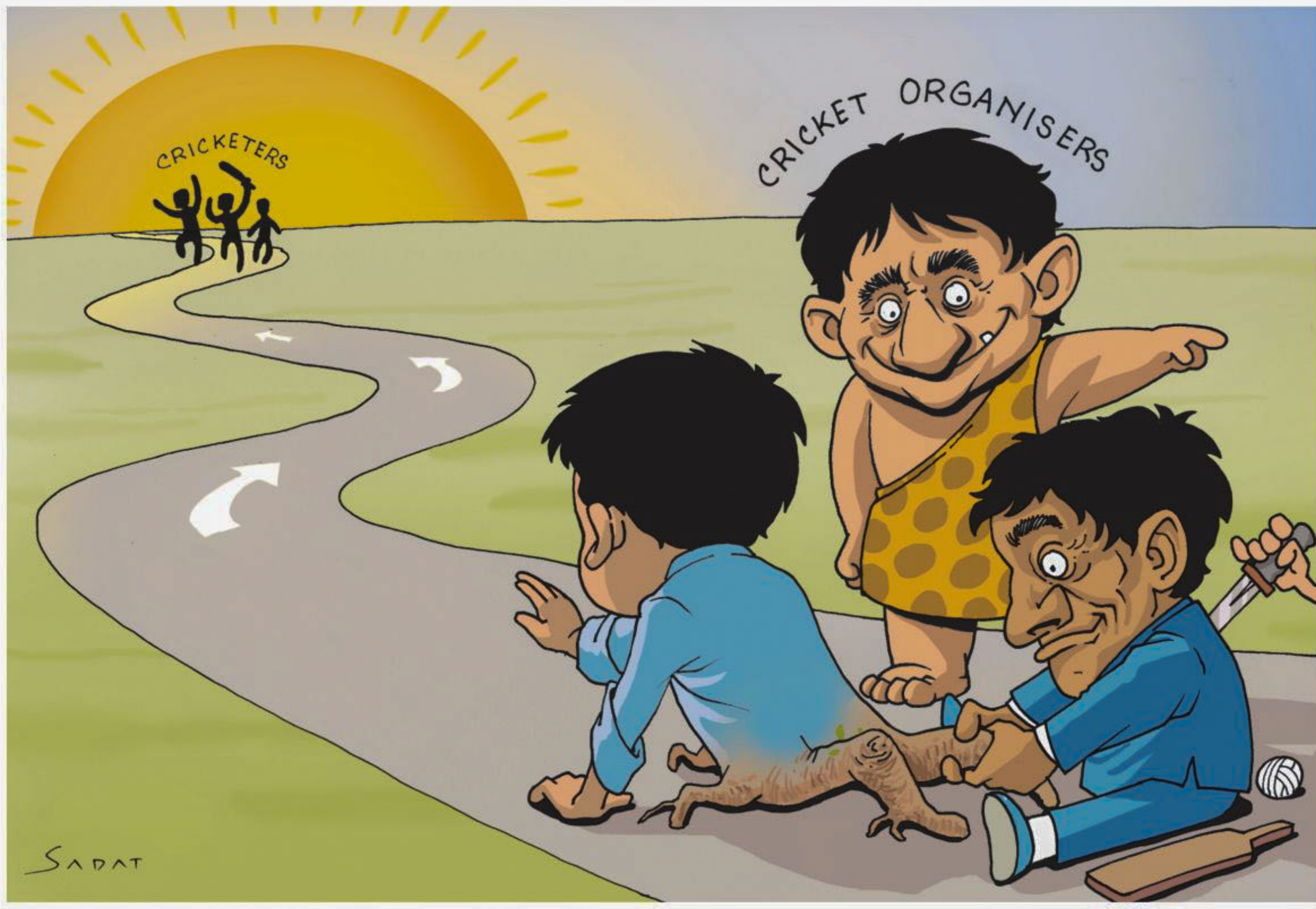
## Mariners move to third

SPORTS REPORTER

Mariner Youngs Club moved to the third position in the Green Delta Premier Division Hockey League with a 6-2 victory over Wanderers Club yesterday. Waqas Sharif, Mamunur Rahman Chayan, Ashraf Islam and Shafiqul Alam scored one goal each as the Motijheel outfit took a 4-0 lead in the first half at the Maulana Bhasani Hockey Stadium.

Although Wanderers hit back with two goals early in the second half, strikes from Fazle Rabbi and Mohammad Mohsin ensured that Mariners would leave the field with a big victory, which took them to 22 points from nine matches, just three points behind leaders Usha KC and one behind Abahani. Wanderers remain in fifth with 14 points.

In the day's other match, Sonali Bank beat Azad SC by 2-1.



## Players excite, officials don't

BISHWAJIT ROY



One can identify the real state of Bangladesh Cricket simply by observing what has happened in the first round of the country's most coveted 50-over competition; the Dhaka Premier League (DPL).

In an interview recently, a young local coach categorically said that it was the players who changed the complexion of Bangladesh in world cricket. The ongoing league might be the best stake to those claims.

Were there any signs of the players being disheartened after a controversial 'players-by-choice' system scrapped their freedom of choice and bargaining rights? Not quite. From Mashrafe Bin Mortaza to young Al-Amin, everyone showed their professionalism. The hunger, dedication and sincerity that majority of players demonstrated only reflected why Bangladesh cricket is moving forward.

Coming off a gruelling Indian Premier League season, Shakib Al Hasan showed no signs of slacking to make it clear that the players were true professionals. There will not be many who can argue with the competitiveness of the league.

However, while the performance of the players is a good sign, the ugly part was the alleged malpractice behind the scenes. With players doing their best to take cricket ahead, it seems like the old-fashioned and narrow-minded administrators are doing their best to hold back its development.

Fifteen years after being recognised as a Test nation, how could the question of trickery from the organisers of a competition which has attained List A status even arise?

It is hard to believe that in days such as now, when cricket reflects the hopes of the country, someone could even think about seeping water onto the pitch in order to manage a point for one team and deprive a targeted team of a point.

Alas! Nobody seems ashamed for changing the venue or shifting the match without any valid reason.

Why should a situation arise where one could raise questions about biased umpiring or appointing a favoured official to preside over a match?

The repeated promises to look into the controversies from the BCB boss are more frustrating. If the BCB president is sincere in his fight to stop the malpractice in order to save the country's cricket, then he should first put a proper system in place and take action without delays.

The incumbent president, Nazmul Hassan Papon, did not hesitate to take a strong stand against match-fixing in the Bangladesh Premier League, he hardly took time before taking stern and exemplary action against Shakib on disciplinary grounds, he showed a lot of mature diplomacy to handle the crisis with his Pakistani counterparts soon after he took over the country's most prominent sports body.

Surprisingly, more than two months have passed since the board officials stressed the importance of reviving the bowling review committee following Taskin Ahmed and Arafat Sunny's suspension from the T20 World Cup to ensure that there would be no further embarrassments on the international stage. This begs the question: how long can an issue be under process?

According to BCB sources 12 to 13 bowlers were reported for illegal actions several times during the first phase of the DPL. However, no action has been taken and it seems that they are waiting for another international embarrassment before raising their voices again.

With the players striving so hard to take the game ahead, it's a shame that the administrators are not on the same page.

## High voltage phase begins today

SPORTS REPORTER



The first round of the Super League matches, which will see the top six teams of the Dhaka Premier League take on each other, will begin today with a series of promising encounters. Mushfiqur Rahim's Mohammedan, who are placed second with 14 points, will take on Soumya Sarkar's Legends of Rugganj, who also have 14 points, at the Sher-e-Bangla National Stadium in Mirpur.

At the BKSP in Savar, Tamim Iqbal-led Abahani will face off against Nasir Hossain's Prime Doleshwar Sporting Club. And finally, league leaders Victoria Sporting will play Sabbir Rahman's Prime Bank Cricket Club, who with 12 points are placed in sixth place.

With just one point separating

the top five teams, it shows just how competitive the tournament has been so far. And every team in the Super League has a point to prove.

Mushfiqur's Mohammedan seemed comfortable during most parts of the first phase of the league. However, a series of unexpected defeats towards the end meant that they had to win their last game in order to seal a spot in the final six. They managed to do that thanks to their skipper and foreign recruit Bipul Sharma, who has impressed both with the bat and the ball.

They will take on the Legends of Rugganj who probably feel as though they should have begun on top, rather than a disappointing fifth. Their last game before the Super League was scheduled to take place at the BKSP against Brothers Union. However, that particular game, to the surprise of many,

turned out to be the only match of the competition that was washed out, despite the fact that there was a back-up day. Rugganj officials weren't happy and many of them blamed the reportedly shoddy approach of the groundsmen behind the cancellation of the match.

And so, when they take on Mohammedan at Mirpur today, they will be looking to prove their worth. More so because the last time these two teams met, Mohammedan won by seven wickets.

The game at the BKSP is bound to have similar levels of excitement. There was quite a bit of controversy stirred up the last time Prime Doleshwar and Abahani faced each other. It was a nail-biting finish with the young Mosaddek Hossain standing tall till the end. He smacked a six and a four off the last two deliveries of

the game and took Abahani home against the tide. There was however, a clear run-out that wasn't given in the last over of that match, which ended up tainting the exciting chase to an extent. While Abahani will be looking to live up to the potential its star-studded squad promises, Prime Doleshwar may be looking to set the record straight after the painful defeat in the sides' last meeting.

The game at Fatullah is expected to be more one-sided than the rest of the matches. Mominul's Victoria are expected to extend their lead at the top with a win over Prime Bank. However, the latter have shown glimpses of brilliance throughout the tournament and they have got powerful batsmen who can change the game if they hit form.

At the moment, it seems like the only force that can spoil the league's excitement today is Mother Nature.

## 'A historic deal'

### BPL rights officially sold

SPORTS REPORTER



The Bangladesh Football Federation (BFF) yesterday signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) with Saif Global Sports Limited, a sister concern of Saif Powertec Limited, for the organising rights of the Bangladesh Premier League (BPL) for the next five years.

Saif Global Sports Limited will provide the BFF with Tk 4 crore each year for the marketing and branding rights. BFF president Kazi Salahuddin and Saif Powertec Limited's managing director Tarafder Ruhul Amin signed the contract on behalf of their respective organisations.

The BFF president termed it as a historical deal.

"Today is a historical day for Bangladesh's football," Salahuddin said during the ceremony held at a hotel in the capital. "This is the first time that we sold all the rights of the

BPL. This is a new concept as we are trying to decentralise football across the country. Developing the game is not possible if it is held in only one stadium."

The league is scheduled to kick off from July 15 at six different venues across the country.

A team of officials comprising representatives of BFF, National Sports Council and Saif Powertec recently visited seven venues in Dhaka, Chittagong, Sylhet, Rajshahi, Barisal, Mymensingh and Gopalganj.

"Out of 132 league matches, we are going to hold 110 matches outside the capital which means people from division and district level will get to see the games. We had made a promise on our election manifesto that we would take football to district level and this will be the first step," said Ruhul Amin.

Deputy minister for youth and sports Arif Khan Joy assured that the government would renovate the venues before the start of the league.



Sheikh Jamal's attacking trio of Landing Darboe, Wedson Anselme and Enamul Haque destroyed Uttar Baridhara yesterday, scoring five goals between them to clinch an easy win in their Federation Cup opener.

PHOTO: STAR

## Landing treble drives Sheikh Jamal

SPORTS REPORTER



Landing Darboe scored a hattrick as two-time defending champions Sheikh Jamal Dhanmondi Club cruised to a 6-2 victory over Uttar Baridhara Club in their opening fixture of the Walton Federation Cup at the Bangabandhu National Stadium.

The Gambian forward opened the scoring in the 23rd minute with a simple tap-in before doubling his tally two minutes after restart with a perfect stabbed attempt. The Lanky forward completed his hattrick on 64 minutes with a delectable lob, while his strike partners Wedson Anselme and Enamul Haque and defender Yeasin Khan scored the other goals for the Dhanmondi giants.

Meanwhile the day's second match, a clash between heavyweights Chittagong Abahani

and Sheikh Russel KC, ended in a 1-1 draw.

Chittagong Abahani could finally avail the services of five new players, who were cleared to play by the High Court yesterday, and they fielded three of them-- including Bangladesh captain Mamunul Islam.

Young forward Mohammad Ibrahim gave Chittagong Abahani, the Independence Cup champions, a fifth minute lead with a placed shot from the left side of the box. The lead lasted around 41 minutes before Jean Jules Ikanga's header on a perfectly-weighted cross from Sheikh Russel right-back Nasirul Islam ended the half all square.

Chances came at either end in the second half but the decisive goal never came, keeping Group B -- billed as Group of Death-- as intriguing as ever. With Muktijoddha Sangsad, the runners-up of the last two editions being the other side in the group, the race for a quarterfinal berth is likely to go down the wire.

## Long-term shooting camp starts

SPORTS REPORTER

A long-term 'advanced training camp' for shooters ahead of the 2018 Youth Olympic Games and 2020 Summer Olympic Games was officially inaugurated at the Bangladesh Shooting Sports Federation (BSSF) yesterday.

The first phase of the camp, which started on June 1 and will continue till August 31, will involve 88 shooters selected from different clubs. The camp will be run under direct supervision of Danish coach Klavs Christensen and will be overseen by six other coaches, including three coaches from South Korea.

The camp was inaugurated yesterday by BSSF president Nazimuddin Chowdhury.

## Rahul ton lifts India

AFP, Harare

Jasprit Bumrah led the way with four wickets before KL Rahul marked his one-day international debut with an unbeaten century to take India to a nine-wicket victory over Zimbabwe in the first ODI at Harare yesterday.

Zimbabwe were dismissed for 168 and Rahul and Ambati Rayudu made light work of the target, with a 162-run stand. SCORES IN BRIEF: ZIMBABWE: 168 all out in 49.5 overs (Chigumbura 41, Ervine 21, Bumrah 4-28) INDIA: 169 for 1 (Rahul 100 not out, Rayudu 62) Result: India won by 9 wickets

## Sri Lanka fight back

AFP, London

Nuwan Pradeep took three wickets and did some serious damage to a couple of England careers as Sri Lanka fought hard to avoid a series whitewash in the third Test at Lord's on Saturday.

England in their second innings were 109 for four at the close of the third day, a healthy but not impregnable lead of 237 runs.

Alex Hales was 41 not out, having been dropped on 19 and 39, with night watchman Steven Finn, missed on an unbeaten on six.

England, 2-0 up in the three-match series, were rocking at 50 for

three on Saturday before first-innings century-maker Jonny Bairstow helped Hales add 52 for the fourth wicket.

Hales launched the innings with two fours in as many balls off Suranga Lakmal. But he was dropped on 19 when Dimuth Karunaratne failed to hold a one-handed slip chance off pacesman Pradeep.

However, it wasn't long before Pradeep had Nick Compton out for 19 instead.

Compton had been promoted to open in place of England captain Alastair Cook, after the left-hander suffered a knee injury fielding close in earlier on Saturday.

But on his Middlesex home ground and one where a stand is named after

his grandfather Denis Compton he was caught behind tamely pushing at Shaminda Eranga.

England were now 45 for one and that quickly became 50 for three.

Joe Root (four) was bowled by an absolute shooter from Pradeep.

And Vince was out for a golden duck as he deliberately played no shot to a Pradeep delivery that nipped back down the Lord's slope and knocked over his off stump.

SCORES IN BRIEF

ENGLAND: First innings 416

SRI LANKA: First innings 288 all out (Karunaratne 50, Silva 79; Woakes 3-31, Finn 3-59)

ENGLAND: Second innings 109 for 4 (Hales 41 not out, Bairstow 32; Pradeep 3-25)