



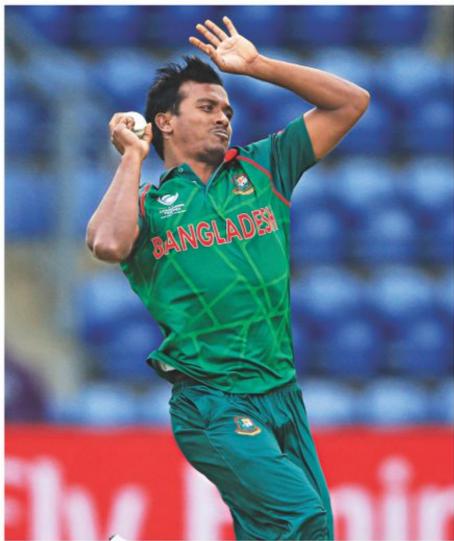
## First-class negligence brings ODI mess

SAKEB SUBHAN from Paarl

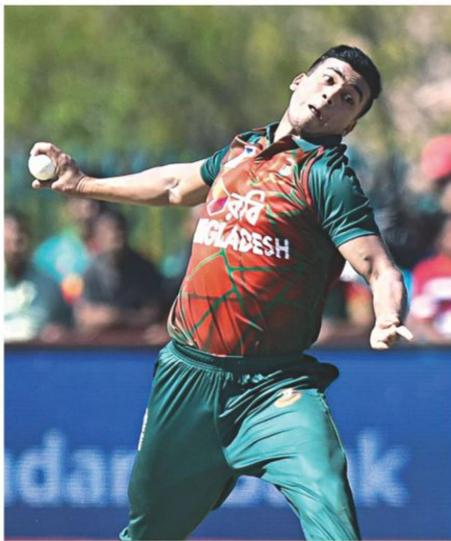
South Africa's record of chasing the highest total in ODIs without losing a wicket against Bangladesh on Sunday is an ignominious result for the Tigers, but if it surprised the team and supporters, they may want to take their heads out of the sand. In the 21 ODIs at away or neutral venues since the start of the 2015 World Cup, which was one of Bangladesh cricket's seminal moments, the Tigers have conceded more than 200 and failed to take more than three wickets in five matches.

Even during the period when they have universally been acknowledged to have taken a big developmental step, the period that has led to South Africa skipper Faf du Plessis to say that they are now proven performers overseas, Bangladesh's bowlers have basically failed to turn up virtually once every four matches away from home. Even more alarmingly, that number goes up to once in every three overseas matches in 2017, and three times in the last five ODIs.

The semifinal finish in the Champions Trophy may be taken as a triumph, but in two of the four matches played there Bangladesh conceded 308 for two against England and 265 for one against India in unsuccessful defences. In light of this track record overseas, Sunday's performance does not seem surprising and Du Plessis's generous words seem like an overestimation. The bowlers' one-day inefficacy is not much different from their weakness in Tests -- when the opposition start going like South Africa did while



Bangladesh pacers Rubel Hossain (L) and Taskin Ahmed failed to deliver the goods in the first ODI against South Africa on Sunday.



PHOTOS: AFP FILE

scoring 496 for three and 573 for four in the Tests, for instance, the Bangladesh bowlers, especially pacers, are often clueless. They have proven utterly unable to work out on the field how to get set batsmen out, and that showed on Sunday and throughout this tour.

**Why blame Walsh for a cultural shortcoming?**

While many may satisfy themselves by pointing the finger at pace bowling coach Courtney Walsh, the finger could justifiably be pointed straight back at the bowlers. It will be an epic failure of the bowling group and the cricketing culture at large if the tenure

of a legend like Walsh's ends without there being some noticeable improvement. If international bowlers cannot get the basics -- like spot bowling to frustrate set batsmen, a tactic that any youngster who has watched even one spell of Walsh's bowling should be aware of -- then what hope do they have of learning the higher skills of pace bowling that Walsh is steeped in?

The reality of the matter is that Bangladesh's current crop of pacers have not grown up in a culture that values the longer form. Rubel Hossain, in a cricket career dating back to 2007, has played just 48 first-class matches and 25 of those were Tests -- which

works out to an average of just over two domestic first-class matches a year. Taskin Ahmed has played 10 domestic first-class matches in six years of being a professional cricketer. Mustafizur Rahman may be a slight exception as he has played 15 domestic first-class games in a little over three years. Sunday's ODI debutant Mohammad Saifuddin, meanwhile, is an outlier as he has played 24 first-class games and 23 List A games in three years, but as a complete newcomer, his trend is not yet possible to determine.

Longer-version experience becomes especially relevant when viewing performances like Sunday's because in first-

## Tigers reach Cape Town

Shafiqul in line to replace injured Fizz

SPORTS REPORTER from Paarl

The Bangladesh team took a roundabout route to Cape Town yesterday, taking a flight from Kimberley -- where they lost the first ODI against South Africa by 10 wickets on Sunday -- to Cape Town via a stopover in Johannesburg. The team reached a rainy Cape Town under an injury gloom at around 3:30pm yesterday. The second ODI will take place tomorrow in Paarl's Boland Park -- a 40-minute drive from Cape Town.

Bangladesh will be without pace spearhead Mustafizur Rahman for the rest of the ODI series and very likely for the rest of the tour, which also includes the two-match T20I series after the three-match ODI series. Mustafizur had twisted his ankle badly while warming up the day before the first ODI.

"We will make an appointment with the doctor tomorrow and then do the scan," informed Minhajul Abedin, chief selector and manager for this tour yesterday. That Mustafizur is set to miss the rest of the tour was made almost clear as his replacement has been settled upon.

"Shafiqul will be his replacement," Minhajul said. "We are deciding whether he will come for the ODIs of the T20Is."

The tour has been an accursed one for Bangladesh as far as injuries are concerned. Opener Tamim Iqbal is yet to fully recover from a thigh muscle tear sustained earlier this tour. Mushfiqur Rahim, who scored a century in the otherwise bleak first ODI, tweaked a hamstring and although Minhajul said on Sunday that it was not serious, his condition is not as yet certain. More will be known when he takes part in the team's practice session this afternoon.

## Rajshahi promoted

Khulna made to wait

SPORTS REPORTER



Rajshahi have confirmed their promotion to Tier-1 with a comprehensive innings and 13 run win over Chittagong on the final day of their fifth round match of the 19th National Cricket League at Shaheed Chandu Stadium in Bogra yesterday while they still have a game remaining.

Resuming the day on 109 for 3, Chittagong required another 34 runs to avoid the follow-on but a fiery spell from pacer Delwar Hossain helped bundle out the port city outfit on 130. Chittagong lost their last seven wickets for only 21 runs as Delwar picked up six for the cost of just two runs from his six overs which included four maidens.

Delwar, who bowled three overs on the previous day for the price of 21 runs, came out guns blazing once again to register his fifth five wicket haul in first-class cricket while Forhad Reza took two.

With 23 points from five matches, Rajshahi lead Tier-2 table while Sylhet are in second position with 12 points. The final round of this tournament is set to take place after the fifth edition of the Bangladesh Premier League ends this December.

In the other Tier-2 encounter, at the Zahur Ahmed Chowdhury stadium in Chittagong, left-arm spinner Enamul Haque Jr bagged his second fiver against Dhaka Metro as Sylhet notched their first win of the competition by the huge margin of 190 runs.

After Sylhet posted a target of 324 runs, Dhaka Metro were all-out on 133 as Enamul scalped five wickets for 96 runs during the first innings and went on to pick another five for 63 in the second innings.

It was Enamul's 32nd five wicket haul in first-class cricket while it was also his sixth ten wicket haul. He is now second to only fellow veteran left-arm spinner Abdur Razzak who has eight ten wicket hauls.

Shahanur Rahman also picked up four wickets and put up an all-round performance throughout the game.

Resuming the day on 176 for 8, Shahanur along with Abu Jayed added 102 runs for the ninth wicket, where both batsmen struck fifties, before Sylhet declared their second innings on 263-9.

At the Shaheed Kamruzzaman Stadium, Rajshahi, Barisal managed to survive the fourth day against defending champions Khulna after, riding on a Fazole Rabbi century, following-on their second innings on 296 for 5.

Barisal resumed on 80 for 1 and Rabbi alongside opener Rafsan Al Mahmud added 177 runs for the second wicket before the latter was dismissed after scoring 85 runs off 212

balls with 12 fours and a six.

However, Rabbi went on to smash his sixth first-class hundred as he scored 107 runs off 237 balls, featuring 12 fours, while Shohag Gazi remained unbeaten on 68 to eventually draw the game.

Nevertheless, Khulna will have to wait for the final round in order to secure the title as they currently sit on top of the Tier-1 table with 16 points while Dhaka Division are close behind on 10 points.

Meanwhile in the Tier-1 at the Sheikh Abu Naser Stadium in Khulna, Dhaka Division continued their defen-

sive approach and managed a draw after Rangpur posted 560-8 in their first innings where Naeem Islam struck his maiden double hundred.

Dhaka, resuming on a first innings 295-6, were all-out after adding another 26 runs to their overnight total and were forced to follow-on. Abdur Rahman and Mahmudul Hasan then bagged four and three wickets respectively for Rangpur before Dhaka scored 85 for 1 in 49 overs of their second innings, at the run rate of 1.73, where Abdul Majid faced 154 balls for his unbeaten 52 runs.

### SCORES IN BRIEF

**BARISAL VS KHULNA DIV**

**KHULNA:** 511 for 8 declared in 140.4 overs (Ziaur 152, Robiul 114; Shohag 4-148)

**BARISAL:** 296 and 296 for 5 in 110 overs (Fazole 107, Rafsan 85; Anamul 1-14)

**Result:** Match drawn.

**SYLHET VS DHAKA METRO**

**SYLHET:** 319 and 263 for 9 declared (Shahanur 58, Jayed 53; Nihad 4-96, Sunny 3-63)

**Dhaka Metro:** 259 and 130 all-out (Saykat 31; Enamul 5-63, Shahanur 4-30)

**Result:** Sylhet won by 190 runs.

**RANGPUR VS DHAKA DIV**

**RANGPUR:** 560 for 8 declared in 147.2 overs (Naeem 216, Suhrawardi 145, Ariful 100; Shuvagata 3-125)

**DHAKA:** 321 and 85 for 1 in 49 overs (Majid 52 not out, Minhaj 23 not out; Mahmudul 1-28)

**Result:** Match drawn.

**RAJSHAHI VS CHITTAGONG**

**CHITTAGONG:** 260 and 130 all-out (Sadikur 48, Tasamul 32; Delwar 6-23, Forhad 2-44)

**RAJSHAHI:** 403 all-out in 134.5 overs (Mizanur 102, Hamidul 73 not out, Delwar 62; Wahidul 2-27, Hasan 2-77)

**Result:** Rajshahi won by an innings and 13 runs.

## 'Interest shifted to off-spin'

SPORTS REPORTER

Out of the five rounds played in the National Cricket League so far, only two were able to see left-arm spinner Enamul Haque Jr bowl for Sylhet as there was not a single ball bowled throughout the first two rounds while the third saw only one and a half day's play competed due to inclement weather.

Despite a wicketless fourth round, he finished the fifth with a match haul of ten wickets against Dhaka Metro at Zahur Ahmed Chowdhury Stadium in Chittagong yesterday.

Veterans such as Abdur Razzak and Enamul have been carrying the flag of left-arm spin bowling in the domestic circuit for awhile now as newcomers have yet to make a mark, although, young Nihaduzzaman has had an impressive run in the competition with 17 wickets from four games.

"If I am not wrong, young guys are now more interested in bowling off-spin rather than left-arm spin and I even see some young leg-spinners. It may happen as there is a demand for good off-spinners and leg-spinners from the national team management," said Enamul.

Enamul, who was ecstatic with his ten wicket haul, believes that, these days, taking wickets is not so

easy anymore. "I began my first-class career in 2003, so I have good experience and what I see is that a lot has changed in the NCL. True, the wickets were flat but I must say batting wise we improved a lot as the batsmen showed lot of patience to play big knocks and that's why it's not easy to claim ten wickets," he explained.

One cannot forget his bowling



ENAMUL ... 5 for 63

heroics during Bangladesh's maiden Test victory over Zimbabwe in 2005 but he failed to live up to expectations in his international career. "Now I am 32-years old but you never know what will happen in life. At this moment my main objective is to play good cricket for the next five years in domestic cricket," said Enamul, who has played 15 Tests and ten ODIs.

## Draft voters' list announced

SPORTS REPORTER

A five member election commission announced 167 names in the draft voters' list yesterday for the upcoming Bangladesh Cricket Board election scheduled for October 31st.

Among the total 172 voters, five were unable to submit the councillors' form in time and subsequently were not named.

For category-1 Bandarban, Bagerhat and Kurigram District Sports Associations did not submit the councillors form while it was the same for Bangladesh Biman Airlines Limited and Secondary and Higher Secondary Education Board for category-2.

According to the EC's chief Ekramul Haque, there is no chance of adding any further names to the list.

"Yesterday (Sunday) was the last day to submit the councillors form and we have already sent all the forms for verification to the EC. We have announced the names today and there is no chance of including anyone else. The complete voter list will be announced on Tuesday and if there is any complain against anyone, the matter will be decided after a hearing," said Ekramul yesterday.

Meanwhile, former BCB president Saber Hossain Chowdhury was not named in the draft voters list.

"We have received the councillors name from Baridhara Dazzlers which was registered into the voters list. There was no name of Saber Hossain Chowdhury as it was someone named Riaz Ahmed in the form," he said.

## Saqlain hits out at PCB

PTI, Karachi

Former Pakistan off-spinner, Saqlain Mushtaq criticised country's cricket system which has denied him a chance to coach the senior national team.

"I just don't know how to work in a system, where 'Sifarish' (recommendation) and political connections get you a job," Saqlain said in an interview to the "Express" newspaper.



Pakistan's Babar Azam celebrates his second consecutive century against Sri Lanka during the second ODI at Sheikh Zayed Stadium in Abu Dhabi yesterday.

## Azam, Shadab steer Pak to win

AFP, Abu Dhabi



Babar Azam scored a successive hundred while Shadab Khan gave his career best bowling and batting performance to help Pakistan thump Sri Lanka by 32 runs in the second day-night international at the Sheikh Zayed Stadium in Abu Dhabi yesterday.

Azam knocked a fighting 133-ball 103 while Shadab scored a career best 52 not out to lift Pakistan from 79-5 before Shadab the returned with his best figures of 3-47 to dismiss Sri Lanka for 187 all out in 48 overs.

Azam and Shadab were engaged in a match-turning 109-run seventh wicket stand.

The victory gives Pakistan a 2-0 lead in the five-match series while this is Sri Lanka's ninth defeat in a row.

Skipper Upul Tharanga became the first Sri Lankan and 11th batsman in the one-day history to carry his bat through a complete innings with a fighting 144-ball 112 not out -- his 15th ODI century.

It was the bowlers who helped Pakistan defend a low total. Once paceman Junaid Khan removed Niroshan Dickwella for three in the third over, spinners Shadab, Shoaib Malik (1-17) and Mohammad Hafeez (1-24) rocked Sri Lanka's batting with regular wickets.

Earlier, Azam followed up his 103 in the first game, to anchor the innings.

Sri Lanka's medium pacer Thisara Perera (2-34) then struck twice, removing Shoaib Malik (11) and Sarfraz Ahmed (five) to leave Pakistan in a spot of bother.

Azam added 22 for the sixth wicket with Imad Wasim (ten) before his stand with Shadab gave Pakistan's total some respectability.

The remaining matches will be played in Abu Dhabi and Sharjah. The two teams will also play three Twenty20 internationals, the first two in Abu Dhabi and the last in Lahore.

### SCORES IN BRIEF

**PAKISTAN:** 219 for 9 in 50 overs (Babar 101, Shadab 52 not out; Gamage 4-57, Perera 2-34)

**SRI LANKA:** 187 all out in 48 overs (Tharanga 112 not out, Vandersay 22; Shadab 3-47, Malik 1-17)

## ODI series starts today

SPORTS REPORTER

Bangladesh A will take on Ireland A in the first one-day fixture of a five-match series at the Sheikh Kamal International Cricket Stadium in Cox's Bazar today.

The home side won the lone unofficial Test against the visitors at the Sylhet International Cricket Stadium.

A 14-member squad was announced for the first two matches. The second one-day will take place at the same venue on Thursday.

## Comilla clinch futsal title

SPORTS REPORTER

Association of Comilla Old Cadets (ACOC) beat Jhenaidah Ex-Cadets Association (JEXCA) 1-0 to clinch the Futsal tournament title, organised by Cadet College Club Ltd at the Bangladesh Handball Stadium, on Saturday.

Rashed Chowdhury, the president of Cadet College Club Ltd, handed over prizes to the winners. Lanka Bangla Securities were the title sponsors of the event alongside MRF, CMUD & Redfine.