

# SPORT



Rajshahi openers Mizanur Rahman (C) and Nazmul Hossain (R) put the Dhaka Metro bowlers to the sword with the highest opening stand in Bangladesh domestic cricket during the third day of their NCL sixth-round match at the Shaheed Kamruzzaman Stadium in Rajshahi yesterday.

PHOTO: COLLECTED

## Nasir eyeing maiden triple

SPORTS REPORTER



Rangpur's Nasir Hossain, who smashed his first double hundred in first-class cricket during last year's National Cricket League (NCL), is now eyeing a maiden triple hundred as the right-hander remained unbeaten on 270 on the third day of their NCL final-round game against Barisal at the Zahur Ahmed Chowdhury stadium in Chittagong yesterday.

So far Rakibul Hasan is the only Bangladeshi batsman to hit a triple hundred as he scored an unbeaten 313 for Barisal against Sylhet back in 2007. Nasir's 270 is the third highest individual score in domestic cricket, with Marshal Ayub's 289 in second place.

"Obviously I am eyeing the triple hundred," Nasir told The Daily Star after the day's play. "It's a huge milestone for any cricketer to score a triple hundred and I think apart from Rakibul bhai, no one did that. It's going to be a dream come true if I reach the mark."

The 26-year-old resumed the third day on 101 and went on to reach his second double ton before tea.

Nasir, alongside Ariful Haque, added 368 runs for the third wicket and although the latter was dismissed on 162, Rangpur posted reached 570 for five at the end of the day. During Nasir's six-hour stay at the crease he scored 29 fours and three sixes while Ariful struck 10 fours and two sixes.

"I never thought of scoring a double hundred when I resumed the day as my only aim was to survive the first hour. But gradually I was able to time the ball pretty well; however there were a few tough periods where the bowlers kept things tight. I think Ariful gave me good support at the other end but was unlucky to miss his own double century," said Nasir.

Asked whether he hopes for a return to the national Test side after his last Test outing, which was at home against Australia earlier this year, Nasir informed that his focus currently remains on the domestic circuit and not the national team.

"To be honest I don't take extra pressure as these things are beyond my control. What I am focused on at the moment is only my performance and improving my skills whenever I get the opportunity," Nasir concluded.

## Nazmul, Mizanur craft record stand

SPORTS REPORTER



Batsmen across the country ran riot on the third day of the sixth and final round of the National Cricket League, which witnessed a total of two double hundreds and five centuries yesterday.

Rangpur Division's Nasir Hossain smashed his second double hundred and is eyeing his maiden triple as he is set to resume today on a mammoth 270 off 467 balls after six hours of batting yesterday against Barisal in the Tier-1 game at the Zahur Ahmed Chowdhury Stadium in Chittagong. Rakibul Hasan is the only Bangladeshi to score a triple hundred when he hit 313 for Barisal against Sylhet in 2007.

Ariful Haque, who had a good Bangladesh Premier League recently, scored his fifth hundred and was dismissed after scoring 162 off 290 balls with 10 fours and two sixes. The Nasir-Ariful pair added 368 for the third wicket, the third-highest partnership in the NCL, as Rangpur ended the day on 570 for five with a first-innings lead of 235 runs.

Barisal's bowlers had a tough day at the office with left-arm spinner Monir Hossain bagging three wickets.

In the other Tier-1 game between Khulna and Dhaka at BKSP-3, wicketkeeper-batsman Anamul Haque kept reminding the national selectors of his abilities by smashing his second double hundred of the edition. The right-hander was dismissed after scoring 202 off 251 balls, which featured 23 boundaries and four sixes. Young Mahedi Hasan was dismissed on 177 for the second time in the ongoing NCL,

SCORES IN BRIEF	
<b>KHULNA DIV VS DHAKA DIV</b>	<b>RAJSHAHI VS DHAKA METRO</b>
<b>DHAKA:</b> 113 all-out and 169 for 4 in 66 overs (Rakibul 58, Taibur 35 not out; Mahedi 1-19, Mustafizur 1-20)	<b>METRO:</b> 328 all-out in 90.3 overs (Sadman 75, Marshal 67; Tajjul 5-105)
<b>KHULNA:</b> 459 for 8 declared in 91 overs (Anamul 202, Mahedi 177; Sharif 3-70, Shuvagata 3-81)	<b>RAJSHAHI:</b> 460 for 5 in 100.2 overs (Nazmul 194, Mizanur 175; Nihad 3-153)
Dhaka trail by 177 runs	Rajshahi lead by 132 runs
<b>RANGPUR VS BARISAL</b>	<b>SYLHET VS CHITTAGONG</b>
<b>BARISAL:</b> 335 all-out in 93.5 overs (Gazi 99, Nuruzzaman 51, Al Amin 50; Subashis 3-54, Tanbir 3-53)	<b>CHITTAGONG:</b> 215 all-out and 380 for 7 declared in 106 overs (Yasir 102 not out, Sayeed 76; Enamul 3-131)
<b>RANGPUR:</b> 570 for 5 in 166 overs (Nasir 270 not out, Ariful 162; Monir 3-151)	<b>SYLHET:</b> 137 and 78 for 2 in 34.1 overs (Sayem 48, Shanaj 18; Saifuddin 1-12)
Rangpur lead by 235 runs	Sylhet trail by 380 runs

### HIGHLIGHTS OF DAY 3

Nasir Hossain is 30 short of his maiden triple hundred. Rakibul Hasan is the only Bangladeshi batsman to achieve the mark

Anamul Haque smashed his second double hundred of the ongoing NCL against Dhaka Division

Mahedi Hasan has been dismissed on 177 -- his highest first-class score -- twice in the ongoing NCL.

Nazmul Hossain and Mizanur Rahman added 341 runs, the highest opening stand in Bangladesh domestic history, beating the 314 put on by Abdul Mazid and Rony Talukdar in 2015



Ariful Haque ... 162

having been dismissed on his highest first-class score earlier in the second round against Barisal.

The right-hander scored a rather quickfire 177 off 160 balls with 21 fours

and two sixes and along with Anamul added 295 for the second wicket. Table-toppers Khulna are inching towards the title and declared the innings on 459 for eight. Dhaka will resume the final day

on 169 for four in their second innings, trailing by 177 runs.

In the Tier 2 game between Rajshahi and Dhaka Metro at the Shaheed Kamruzzaman Stadium in Rajshahi, openers Nazmul Hossain and Mizanur Rahman added 341 runs -- a record opening partnership in Bangladesh domestic cricket as the home team, who have already confirmed their promotion to Tier-1, moved into the driving seat.

Left-hander Nazmul was unlucky to be dismissed just six runs shy of his maiden double hundred, playing 296 balls with 21 fours, while his partner Mizanur struck his third consecutive century of the league before departing for 175 off 210 deliveries with 30 fours and two sixes.

Left-arm spinner Nihad Uz Zaman picked up three wickets for Metro as Rajshahi will resume the final day on 460 for five, leading by 132 runs.

At the Sylhet International Stadium, Yasir Ali smashed his third first-class ton as Chittagong took the first-innings lead over the home side and declared the innings on 380 for seven in the other Tier-2 game. Yasir was not out on 102 off 176 balls while Sayeed Sarkar added 76.

Sylhet who have already lost two wickets, will resume the second innings on 78 and with a deficit of 380.

Khulna have already been confirmed as champions for the second year in a row. With Rajshahi already promoted, Dhaka are under threat of relegation if they lose the ongoing match against Khulna, and that seems a possibility as they have just six wickets in the bank on the last day, which they will start with a deficit of 177.



Only 30 runs stand between Rangpur batsman Nasir Hossain and becoming Bangladesh's second batsman to hit a domestic triple century.

PHOTO: COLLECTED

## 2022 COMMONWEALTH GAMES

### Shooting out, cricket in?

AGENCIES

The 2022 Commonwealth Games, to be held in Birmingham, may see the return of cricket and exclusion of shooting, according to a report published on The Indian Express on Thursday.

As of now, shooting features on Commonwealth Games Federation's (CGF) list of optional sports, with the candidate city eligible to incorporate up to seven sports from that list in its final programme. Birmingham bid officials have so far chosen to include judo, table tennis, wrestling, gymnastics, diving, cycling and 3v3 basketball, apart from the 10 mandatory sports.

The programme is expected to be finalised by the end of next year, although the chances of shooting being reinstated are bleak.

Peter Hannon, spokesperson of Commonwealth Games England, said the organisers were keen to include sports for which Birmingham and the wider West Midlands region had the facilities. The closest Olympic-standard shoot-

ing range to Birmingham is in Surrey, roughly 150 miles away.

"It's a decision that the Birmingham bid as a whole has made rather than just Commonwealth Games England. The Birmingham bid made an assessment of all the optional sports and they picked the sport which were enabled to take place close to Birmingham," Hannon said.

Shooting has been contested at every Commonwealth Games since Kingston 1966, with the exception of Edinburgh 1970.

While shooting's reinstatement remains unlikely, it has been learnt that the CGF is keen on having cricket at the games. While not commenting on the possibility of a mixed-team event, CGF Chief Executive Officer David Grevemberg said they "look forward to suggesting innovative proposals... to include cricket".

"Cricket is an iconic Commonwealth sport, and the CGF would love to partner with the ICC to incorporate it into the medal events programme of a future Games," Grevemberg said.

Cricket last featured in the CWG in the 1998 edition.

## Rohit record steamrolls SL

AFP, Indore



Skipper Rohit Sharma equalled the record for fastest Twenty20 century on Friday to set up India's 88-run series-clinching win over Sri Lanka in the second match.

Sharma's 43-ball 118 steered the hosts to 260-5, their highest ever score and just three short of Australia's 263-5 against Sri Lanka last year, and then dismissed Sri Lanka for 172 in 17.2 overs.

But it was Sharma's 100 off 35 deliveries, matching South African David Miller's century against Bangladesh in October, that stood out. Sharma smashed 12 fours and 10 sixes after India were put into bat. He got his first 50 in 23 balls, and second in just 12.

Lokesh Rahul also came to the party with 89 and was part of a 165-run opening stand with Sharma.

Sri Lanka responded with a 109-run second wicket partnership between Upul Tharanga and Kusal Perera but the ever-increasing run-rate proved too much.

Angelo Mathews, who suffered a hamstring injury while bowling, did not come out to bat and has been ruled out for the final game in Mumbai on Sunday.

**SCORES IN BRIEF**  
INDIA: 260 for 5 (Sharma 118, Rahul 89, Dhoni 28; Perera 2-49, Fernando 2-61)  
SRI LANKA: 172 all out in 17.2 overs (Perera 77, Tharanga 47; Chahal 4-52, Yadav 3-52)  
Result: India won by 88 runs



India captain Rohit Sharma hit the joint fastest T20I century -- off 35 balls -- in the second T20I against Sri Lanka in Indore yesterday.

PHOTO: AFP

### FASTEST T20I HUNDREDS

PLAYER	BALLS FACED	OPPOSITION	VENUE	DATE
RG Sharma (Ind)	35	Sri Lanka	Indore	Dec 2017
DA Miller (SA)	35	Bangladesh	Potchefstroom	Oct 2017
RE Levi (SA)	45	New Zealand	Johannesburg	Jan 2015
KL Rahul (Ind)	46	West Indies	Lauderhill	Aug 2016
AJ Finch (Aus)	47	England	Southampton	Aug 2013

## 'Smith is better than Kohli'

PTI, Melbourne

Spin legend Shane Warne has rated Steve Smith as a better Test batsman than India captain Virat Kohli, saying when it comes to the five-day game the Australia skipper "is the man".

Warne has listed his top 11 batsmen from those he has either seen or played with or against. Smith shares the 10th spot along with Kohli.

"To me Steve Smith is the best Test batsman in the world," he wrote in his News Corp column. "Virat Kohli is the best across all three formats of the game, but across five days, Steve Smith is the man."

Warne feels the only blip in the Indian captain's glorious career so far is his failure to score big in English conditions.

"To me a great batsman has to have made a hundred in three key countries: in England, against the Duke ball on seaming and swinging pitches; in Australia, on our fast-paced, bouncy tracks; and of course, in the dust bowls of India, on pitches that spin and spit," wrote Warne.