

# SPORT



Bangladesh opener Tamim Iqbal (L) shows his injured left knee to BCB's High Performance coach Champaka Ramanayake at the Academy ground yesterday.

PHOTO: COLLECTED

## Tamim finally gets the rest he needed

SPORTS REPORTER



"What Tamim [Iqbal] contributed during the tri-nation Nidahas Trophy in Sri Lanka, he did with lot of pain," said Bangladesh Cricket Board (BCB) physician Dr. Debashish Chowdhury, when providing an update on the left-hander's knee injury and rehabilitation programme yesterday.

"Actually Tamim played the Nidahas Trophy bearing the pain as he considered the team's interest first. And because of that the injured left-knee didn't get enough rest for recovery. Now the most important thing is to give the knee proper rest so that he can fully recover within the next four to six weeks," said Debashish.

As Bangladesh's next international series is in June against Afghanistan, followed by a tour of West Indies later in the year, Tamim will have plenty of time to rest and recuperate.

"Recently he went to Bangkok where he personally consulted with a doctor and did an MRI. There was no major problem in the report, but he has been suffering from a few minor injuries on his left knee, which was bruised during a PSL (Pakistan Super League) match. We also took opinions from

Australian experts and our decision not to intervene, rather [we will] follow a conservative approach," he added.

Tamim informed yesterday that he had sustained the injury while playing his last game against the Quetta Qalandars on March 3 before leaving for Sri Lanka to play in the Nidahas Trophy, where he played the tournament by using injections for pain relief. Although the left-hander flew to Lahore afterwards to play the rest of the PSL matches, he could play only the match against Quetta on March 20 before opting out of the final to fly to Bangkok and consult a doctor.

"I sustained the injury during the last match I played before leaving for Sri Lanka and then I played Nidahas Trophy matches. After the tournament I played one PSL match where I felt the pain again and I didn't take any risks because my career is more important than playing the PSL final," said Tamim.

"There are no problems during batting or even while jogging slightly, but I face problems when it comes to sprint or turning. Hopefully I will be able to run after two weeks since the rehab started from Friday," he added.

## Salah for president!

AGENCIES, London

Egyptians voted for Liverpool hero Mohamed Salah to become president as more than one million people spoiled their ballot papers in the presidential election on Friday.

Salah is the top scorer in the Premier League with 28 goals to his name this season and scored the last-minute penalty that secured Egypt's qualification for this summer's World Cup. And now it seems like people from his homeland are desperate for him to turn his hands to politics, too.

Voters crossed out the names of the two candidates on the ballot and instead wrote down Salah's. Abdul Fattah al-Sisi was re-elected for a second four-year term after sweeping up 92 per cent of the vote while Moussa Mustafa Moussa, the only other approved candidate, got just three per cent of the vote.

Spoiled ballot papers accounted for five per cent of the vote, with a chunk of those seemingly belonging to Salah.

## Warner fears end of career

AFP, Sydney

Former Test vice-captain David Warner said he realised he may never play for his country again as he tearfully apologised on Saturday over a ball-tampering scandal which has had repercussions for Australian cricket.

The usually pugnacious batsman, 31, repeatedly struggled to talk and tears ran down his face as he apologised to fans, team-mates, his family and the Australian public.

But he also evaded questions about whether the ball-tampering plot was his idea, whether it was the first time, who else was aware of it and whether he had been made a scapegoat.

Warner, 31, told a media conference in Sydney: "I can honestly say I have only wanted to bring glory to my country through playing cricket."

"In striving to do so I have made the decision which has had the opposite effect and it's one that I will regret for as long as I live."

Warner's appearance comes after similar heartfelt apologies from opening batsman Cameron Bancroft and captain Steve Smith on Thursday.

Smith and Warner were banned from international and domestic cricket for a year and Bancroft was suspended for nine months after the incident during

the third Test in Cape Town.

Warner, a dynamic batsman but a divisive figure in the game, has appeared isolated after he was charged by Cricket Australia with developing the plot and telling Bancroft to carry it out.

"I suppose there is a tiny ray of hope that I may one day be given the privilege of playing for my country again, but I am resigned to the fact that may never happen," Warner said.

He also signalled a possible appeal



when he said: "That's something that I will continue to sit down with my family and weigh up all my considerations before I make any decisions."

A report on Saturday said Bancroft was set to lodge an appeal and had sought legal advice. The deadline for appeals is on Thursday.

Warner stonewalled requests for more details about the incident and his relationship with the team.

"I am here today to accept my responsibility for my part and my involvement for what happened in Cape Town," Warner said, using a formulation he repeated several times.

"It's inexcusable, I am deeply sorry. I will do everything I can to earn back the respect of the Australian public."

Warner later took to social media to say: "I know there are unanswered questions and lots of them. I completely understand. In time I will do my best to answer them all. But there is a formal CA process to follow."

Warner, who has played 74 Tests since his debut in 2011, has been described as the Australia's "attack dog".

"In the coming weeks and months I am going to look at what has happened and who I am as a man," he said.

"To be honest, I am not sure right now how I will do this, I will seek out advice and expertise to make serious changes."

The fallout from the crisis has seen Warner dumped by sponsors ASICS and LG, while Cricket Australia has been dropped by its top sponsor, fund manager Magellan.

Along with Smith, Warner has also been ejected from this year's Indian Premier League, losing contracts worth nearly US\$2 million each.

## INDEPENDENCE DAY VOLLEYBALL Army, PDB in final

SPORTS REPORTER

Bangladesh Army and Power Development Board (PDB) set up a final clash in the Independence Cup Volleyball Competition after winning their respective semifinal matches at the National Volleyball Stadium in Paltan yesterday.

Army beat Bangladesh Air Force in straight sets (25-15, 25-23, 26-24) in the first semifinal while PDB beat Bangladesh Navy in five sets (21-25, 25-22, 23-25, 25-23, 15-12) in the second semifinal.

The third-place deciding match will take place at 1:30pm while the final will be held at 3:30pm. Both matches will be held at the same venue.

Bangladesh Cricket Board president Nazmul Hossain is expected to be present at the final as the chief guest.

## Mustafizur departs for Mumbai

SPORTS REPORTER

Bangladesh's fast bowling sensation Mustafizur Rahman left for India to take part in the 11th edition of the Indian Premier League for his new side, the Mumbai Indians, yesterday.

Mustafizur announced himself in grand style on his maiden appearance in the cash-rich T20 tournament for Sunrisers Hyderabad, being adjudged the Emerging Player of the tournament after magnificent performances with the ball.

The left-arm seamer ended up scalping 17 wickets in 16 games at an average of 24.76 with a miserly economy of 6.90 and was instrumental behind Sunrisers maiden IPL title.

Although Mustafizur did not have a memorable outing the following season, managing to play just one game where he gave away 34 runs in 2.4 overs.

He was released with the Sunrisers ahead of this season, giving defending champions Mumbai the opportunity to rope him in. Mustafizur will take the field for his new team for the first time against the Chennai Super Kings in the tournament opener on April 7 at the Wankhede Stadium in Mumbai.

Bangladesh ace Shakib Al Hasan was also released ahead of the season by the Kolkata Knight Riders, who he had represented in



Mustafizur Rahman posted this selfie on his Facebook with a new hairstyle while he was on his way to Mumbai yesterday.

## Hyderabad pick Hales

AFP, New Delhi

Indian Premier League team Sunrisers Hyderabad today picked England batsman Alex Hales to replace Australia's scandal-plagued former vice-captain David Warner.

Warner, 31, has been banned from international cricket for a year over a ball-tampering scandal during the recent third Test against South Africa in Cape Town.

Hales was signed for 10 million rupees (\$153,700) from the available player pool for this year's IPL, the Indian cricket board said in a statement.

A hard-hitting opener, Hales has scored 1,456 runs in Twenty20 internationals.

The 29-year-old is the only England batsman to score a century in T20 internationals and is seventh in the International Cricket Council's batting rankings for the format.

Warner, the former Sunrisers captain, has been charged by Cricket Australia with developing the ball-tampering plot and telling teammate Cameron Bancroft to carry it out during the Cape Town Test.

The Sunrisers have named New Zealand's Kane Williamson as their skipper after Warner stepped down.

## Philander strikes after Bavuma near miss

AFP, Johannesburg

Australia's ball-tampering scandal came back to bite them when three replacement batsmen failed on a disastrous day for the tourists in the fourth Test against South Africa at the Wanderers Stadium on Saturday.

South Africa moved closer to a series win as Australia slumped to 110 for six at the end of the second day in reply to the imposing first-innings total of 488 made by the hosts.

South Africa, leading the series 2-1, need only to draw to beat Australia in a home series for the first time since 1969/70.

Opening batsmen Joe Burns and Matt Renshaw were out for four and eight respectively while Peter Handscomb was out first ball for nought to leave Australia reeling at 38 for three.

The trio were playing in place of Cameron Bancroft, David Warner and captain Steve Smith, who were all banned and sent home in disgrace after the ball-tampering scandal which rocked the third Test in Cape Town last weekend.

Usman Khawaja made a stroke-filled 53 as he and Shaun Marsh delayed South Africa's progress with a fourth-wicket stand of 52.

But wicketkeeper Quinton de Kock, standing up to the wicket, made an outstanding leg-side catch off the bowling of Vernon Philander to dis-

miss Khawaja. Philander finished the day with three for 17 off 12 overs.

Shaun Marsh survived a stumping chance off Keshav Maharaj in the over after Khawaja's dismissal but both Marsh brothers fell before the close to leave Australia with a monumental task over the remaining three days.

Mitchell Marsh edged an extravagant drive against Mome Morkel into his stumps and three balls later Shaun Marsh was caught at slip by AB de Villiers off Maharaj.

It was South Africa's day from the time Temba Bavuma and De Kock weathered a tricky period against a ball that was almost new after resuming at 313 for six.

Bavuma made 95 not out and

shared partnerships of 85 with De Kock (39) and 76 with Maharaj, who hit a cavalier career-best 45 off 51 balls.

Bavuma was within sight of his second Test century when Australian fast bowler Pat Cummins took two wickets with successive balls to finish off the innings. Cummins was easily Australia's most impressive bowler, finishing with five for 83.

**SCORES IN BRIEF**  
**SOUTH AFRICA:** First innings 488 (Markram 152, De Villiers 69, Bavuma 95 not out; Cummins 5-83, Lyon 3-182, Sayers 2-78)  
**AUSTRALIA:** First innings 110 for 6 (Khawaja 53, Paine 5 not out; Philander 3-17, Rabada 1-24, Morkel 1-23)



South Africa batsman Temba Bavuma looks to the heavens after being stranded on 95 not out as last batsman Mome Morkel was out for a first-ball duck on the second day of the fourth Test against Australia at the Wanderers Stadium in Johannesburg yesterday.

PHOTO: AFP

## Watling leads NZ fightback

AFP, Christchurch

BJ Watling and Colin de Grandhomme hauled New Zealand back into the second Test Saturday, cutting England's advantage back to 115 runs with four wickets in hand at stumps on day two in Christchurch.

When bad light stopped play seven overs early, New Zealand had recovered from 36 for five to be 192 for six in reply to England's 307.

Watling was on 77 after sharing a 142-run stand with de Grandhomme which was broken late in the day by England's man of the moment Stuart Broad.

The 31-year-old Broad, who had de Grandhomme caught behind for 72, wound back the clock to finish the day with four for 38.

It was Watling's 14th Test half-century and de Grandhomme's second highest score as they passed New Zealand's previous sixth wicket partnership record against England of 141, set by Martin Crowe and Adam Parore 24 years ago.

De Grandhomme believed New Zealand still had a chance of getting a first innings lead despite the new ball being only five overs away.

In a match of fluctuating fortunes, New Zealand's recovery followed England's own revival from 164 for seven to be all out for 307.

After months of misery on the road, England felt their luck had turned with wicketkeeper-batsman Jonny Bairstow's

fifth Test century before he was out for 101.

Broad and James Anderson then routed the New Zealand top order to have the Black Caps in serious trouble before de Grandhomme joined Watling to steady their innings.

England need to win to level the series while New Zealand require a draw to ensure a rare second home series win over England.

Broad, who felt before the first Test in Auckland that he was in danger of being dropped as a new-ball bowler, justified the faith in him when he had Tom Latham caught behind with the ninth ball of the New Zealand innings.

It was to be the first of four catches by Bairstow who was also instrumental in removing Jeet Raval (five) and Kane Williamson (22) to give Anderson figures of two for 43, and de Grandhomme.

Broad also accounted for Ross Taylor for two and first-Test century-maker Henry Nicholls without scoring.

England had resumed the second day at 290 for eight and added 17 runs, seven from byes, in 41 balls.

Leach added six to be out for 16 while Bairstow moved from 97 to 101 before he was the last man dismissed.

For New Zealand, Tim Southee took six for 62, his third-best Test return, while Trent Boult took four for 87.

**SCORES IN BRIEF**  
**ENGLAND:** First innings 307 (Bairstow 101, Wood 52; Boult 4-87, Southee 6-62)  
**NEW ZEALAND:** First innings 192 for 6 (Watling 77 not out, Grandhomme 72; Anderson 2-43, Broad 4-38)