

## SPORT



An unbeaten 139-ball 101 from Mosaddek Hossain (R) could not avert Abahani's second consecutive defeat as the Sky Blues succumbed to a three-wicket loss against Sheikh Jamal in a Dhaka Premier League encounter in Savar yesterday. However, with team selection for the World Cup squad underway, the middle-order batsman could not have hit his ton at a better time.

PHOTO: BCB

## Mosaddek's timely ton

SPORTS REPORTER

With Bangladesh yet to announce the squad for the upcoming World Cup, Mosaddek Hossain might just have given the selectors a sweet headache. The right-hander's name has been on the selectors' minds for quite a while and with a timely unbeaten century in the Dhaka Premier League (DPL) yesterday, Mosaddek made his case to be considered for a place in the Tigers' squad even stronger. However, despite the skipper's valiant knock, Abahani fell to a three-wicket defeat against Sheikh Jamal at the BKSP-4 ground.

Meanwhile at the Sher-e-Bangla National Stadium, all eyes were on pacer Taskin Ahmed returned to cricket following an injury suffered during a Bangladesh Premier League match in February. Although the right-arm pacer struggled in Mirpur, his Legends of Rugganj team strolled to a nine-wicket victory over Uttara Sporting to remain on top of the league table.

In the other game, Brothers Union edged Prime Doleshwar Sporting Club with a one-wicket victory at the Khan Shaheb Osman Ali Stadium in Fatullah. Mosaddek played a captain's knock after Abahani suffered a batting collapse that saw them reeling on four for 14 in the sixth over. The 23-year-old remained unbeaten on a 139-ball 101 but kept losing partners at the other end. However, a 60-run fifth-wicket stand with Mohammad Mithun was followed

by a 50-run seventh-wicket partnership with Mashrafe Bin Mortaza. Another 57-run stand with Abdullah Al Mamun for the eighth-wicket helped Abahani post 211 for nine.

After the exchange, Anustup Majumdar's 56 and all-rounder Nasir Hossain's 45 saw Sheikh Jamal reach the target with seven balls to spare. Nasir had also proven instrumental with the ball earlier, returning econom-

ical figures of three for 24.

In Mirpur, Taskin's wayward bowling proved how injuries can ruin the rhythm of a bowler -- especially a pacer. Maybe if Taskin had not gone down with an ankle injury, it would have been a different day for the pacer on the back of a brilliant BPL campaign. However, his expensive wicketless figures of 36 runs from five overs did not affect his team.

Openers Mehedi Maruf (62 not out) and Mohammad Naim (63 off 77) had set the tone with a 96-run opening stand that helped Rugganj chase down 180 for eight posted by Uttara Sporting with 56 balls to spare.

Elsewhere, Fazle Mahmud continued his good run of form as his 74 runs off 91 balls ensured Brothers Union chase down Doleshwar's 250 for five in the penultimate ball of the match.

## SCORES IN BRIEF

## ABAHANI v SHEIKH JAMAL

Abahani: 211 for 9 in 50 overs (Mosaddek 101 not out, Mithun 33; Nasir 3-24)

Sheikh Jamal: 215 for 7 in 48.5 overs (Majumdar 56, Nasir 45; Saifuddin 2-39, Nazmul 1-33)

Result: Sheikh Jamal won by three wickets.

Player-of-the-match: Nasir Hossain.

## UTTARA SPORTING v RUGGANJ

Uttara Sporting: 180 for 8 in 50 overs (Anisul 55, Minhajul 37; Nabil 3-29)

Rugganj: 181 for 1 in 40.4 overs (Mehedi 62 not out, Naim 63; Mohimenul 1-34)

Result: Rugganj won by nine wickets.

Player-of-the-match: Nabil Samad.

## DOLESHWAR v BROTHERS UNION

Doleshwar: 250 for 5 in 50 overs (Taibur 70 not out, Ayub 50; Haldar 2-45)

Brothers Union: 251 for 9 in 49.5 overs (Fazle 74, Mizanur 42; Sunny 4-62, Enamul 3-46)

Result: Brothers Union won by one wicket.

Player-of-the-match: Fazle Mahmud.



There can be no better way to display the spirit of cricket. Abahani's Mashrafe Bin Mortaza embraces opposition team Sheikh Jamal's match-winner Nasir Hossain despite losing their DPL encounter by three wickets at BKSP yesterday.

PHOTO: BCB

## Kohli's third in a row

REUTERS, New Delhi



India captain Virat Kohli was named the 'Leading Cricketer in the World' for the third time in a row in this year's edition of the Wisden Cricketers' Almanack, the publication said on Wednesday.

Kohli, 30, was also named as one of Wisden's five cricketers of the year along with England's Jos Buttler and Sam Curran, County Championship-winning captain Rory Burns and Tammy Beaumont from the England women's team.

Kohli, who scored only 134 runs during India's previous tour of England in 2014, amassed 593 runs in his side's five-Test series last year at an average of over 59 to book his place on the list.

"Despite finishing on the losing side, India captain Virat Kohli shone with the bat, laying to rest his struggles in England in 2014," Wisden editor Lawrence Booth said.

"His Test batting, especially in England, was magnificent, while his 50-over form moved to a new level, if that was possible."

Kohli, who also won the ICC's cricketer, Test and one-day international player of the year awards in January.



## ICC WORLD CUP 2019 BITES



AFF, Sydney

Former South African captain Graeme Smith has some advice for Australia coach Justin Langer -- make sure David Warner's ego is managed if he starts to "get bigger than everybody else".

The polarising opener, on the comeback trail after a one-year ban for ball-tampering, has been in red-hot form in the Indian Premier League ahead of his expected recall to the national side for the World Cup in England and Wales.

But some commentators believe Warner's return could be disruptive to the team, which is now resurgent after a run of poor results, and that he needs to be managed carefully.

Smith, who skipped his country for more than a decade, said that while he admired Warner's batting, he had "pissed a lot of people off" throughout his career.

"I don't know," he told Fox Sports on Tuesday evening when asked if he would have any issue in welcoming Warner back to the Australian team.

"It's difficult to know what it's like behind the scenes, but he's always been an incredible cricketer," added Smith, who played

## 'Warner needs Aus more than they need him'

117 Tests before retiring in 2014.

"Especially when he bats, he bats with that driven nature, that intensity, ego to perform. And he's an excellent cricketer.

"I think where David has been throughout his career is that he's pissed a lot of people off. He's just that type of guy. I think at the moment he needs Australian cricket more than they need him."

Warner is suspected of instigating a plot to use sandpaper to alter the ball in the now infamous Cape Town Test last year. He has long been a divisive figure.

And Smith believes his behaviour needs to be monitored closely.

"I think he's very driven, I think he wants to do well, he wants to prove his worth again. And I think David Warner in that position is probably a good guy to have in your environment," he said.

"It's when he starts to get bigger than everybody else then probably management needs to be ready for that.

"Guys like Langer and whoever is captaining the side going forward need to ensure they stay on top of that and manage that space and that ego well going forward."

## PCB appoints psychologist

PTI, Karachi

Pakistan cricket authorities have decided to appoint Taimoor Ali Khan as a sports psychologist for the national team prior to their World Cup campaign in England.

Taimoor has been apparently recommended by the national team's bowling coach Azhar Mahmood.

He has been appointed till May 11 to be with the Pakistan team which will be leaving for England on April 23 to play some practice

games against English counties, a T20I and five ODIs against England before World Cup practice games begin.

"Taimoor will be working with the players on the mental aspect of preparing for a mega-event like the World Cup and if required the board can extend his contract for the World Cup but for now he will be with the team until 11th May," a reliable source in the PCB said.

This is not the first time that the PCB has sought the help of a psychologist to work with the players.



and ball, they've been really dynamic in the field," Gillespie said.

Although the 43-year-old praised the hosts, he also elucidated that Australia know how to win World Cups.

"Every other team in this World Cup knows that Australia know how to win World Cups. That is something that will be in every other country's mind, that Australia - while they might not be seen as favourites - they know how to win World Cups," he said.

## On the road to recovery

SPORTS REPORTER



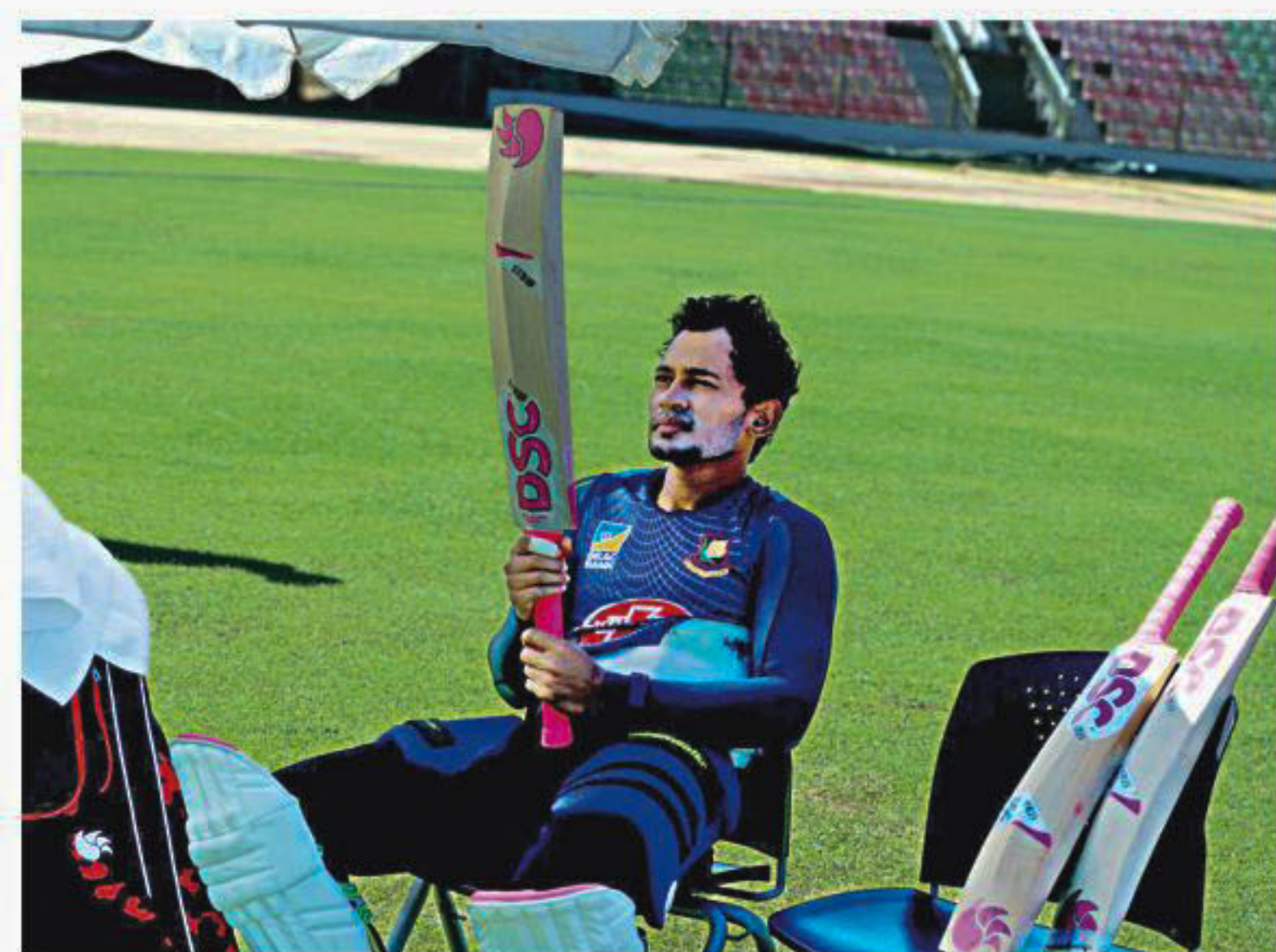
With less than two months to go until the ICC World Cup in England this summer, the selectors are eagerly monitoring the long list of injured Tigers ahead of the mega-event.

Almost all the injured cricketers have started rehabilitation while others are taking rest to recover from their respective injuries, but the Tigers' think tank will want them to be fully-fit for the tri-nation series in Ireland scheduled from May 7 -- which will act as a dress rehearsal of sorts leading up to the mega event.

Bangladesh Cricket Board chief physician Debashish Chowdhury is busy dealing with the various injuries, but he informed that he was confident the players would make a timely recovery.

Mahmudullah Riyad: The experienced cricketer has been suffering from stiffness in his shoulder following non-stop cricket over the past four months. The injury worsened when he dove to stop the ball while fielding against New Zealand in the third ODI on February 20. Scans later revealed that he had suffered a grade 3 tear and there were concerns the cricketer might require surgery. However, much to Riyad's relief, his rehabilitation went well and he has already started batting in the nets without any pain but will need more time to bowl. Yet, the 33-year old is confident that he will be able to recover in time to chip in a few overs with the ball in the World Cup.

Rubel Hossain: Fast bowler Rubel suffered a side strain during a Dhaka Premier League game last month and is currently resting. The hero for the Tigers in the famous win against England in the previous World Cup is



With the World Cup ebbing closer, wicketkeeper-batsman Mushfiqur Rahim was surely relieved to see that his ribs are doing just fine according to the latest scans.

PHOTO: STAR FILE

currently working on his fitness and he is hopeful of recovering within the next few days.

Mushfiqur Rahim: The experienced cricketer has dealt with multiple injuries over the past few months but has yet to recover fully from a broken rib cage which he sustained in the Asia Cup in Dubai last year. The wicketkeeper-batsman and Bangladesh fans will be relieved to hear that his scan showed nothing serious, with Mushfiqur requiring only some rest. On another positive note, the cricketer has recovered from a finger injury which he sustained during the tour of New Zealand.

Taskin Ahmed: The tall pacer showed a glimpse of returning to his full rhythm during the Bangladesh Premier League earlier this year and was rewarded subsequently by making a comeback to the ODI side after two years. Disappointingly, he twisted his ankle while fielding and missed out on the series against New Zealand. The 24-year-old did manage to make a comeback in the ongoing DPL yesterday and although he was unable to shine on his return, the selectors will surely keep a close eye on him before announcing the World Cup squad.

Mohammad Saifuddin: Despite suffering from tennis elbow, young pace bowling all-rounder Saifuddin is continuing playing in the DPL. Apart from long throws from outside the thirty-yard circle, Saifuddin is not facing any difficulties while batting or bowling.

## UAE crumble in first ODI

AGENCIES, Harare

Having been stifled by Zimbabwe's bowlers, the United Arab Emirates succumbed to a crushing seven-wicket defeat against the hosts in the first ODI at Harare yesterday.

Led by a three-wicket haul from Tendai Chatara, the hosts had UAE bowled out for 110 in 44.5 overs. After that, Zimbabwe's top order controlled the chase in relative comfort, reaching their target in 23.1 overs.

Zimbabwe were in control of the proceedings from the get-go as the economical Kyle Jarvis removed Ashfaq Ahmed with the first ball of the third over. After 10 overs, the UAE were perilously positioned on 19 for three.

The one takeaway for the UAE came in the form of Mohammad Boota's 76-ball 36 while skipper Mohammad Naved only able to add nine to the side's total.

## SCORES IN BRIEF

UAE: 110 all out in 44.5 overs (Boota 36; Chatara 3-25, Jarvis 2-11)

Zimbabwe: 111 for 3 in 23.1 overs (Chakabva 38, Ervine 51; Qadeer 1-16)

Result: Zimbabwe won by 7 wickets.

Player-of-the-match: Tendai Chatara.