

# Star

DHAKA SUNDAY JUNE 26, 2022, ASHAR 12, 1429 BS

# SPORT

## What to WATCH

### T SPORTS

BPL (Football)  
Bashundhara Kings vs Sheikh Russel KC  
Live from 04:00 pm  
FIFA Women's Friendlies  
Bangladesh vs Malaysia

Live from 06:00 pm  
West Indies vs Bangladesh  
2nd Test, Day 3  
Live from 08:00 pm  
**TEN 2**  
England vs New Zealand

3rd Test, Day 4  
Live from 04:00 pm  
**SONY SIX**  
Ireland vs India  
1st T20I  
Live from 09:30 pm

## A dream taken from Bangladesh to Portugal

MAZHAR UDDIN

While there are those who are tempted to abandon their dreams after a major hurdle, the story of Siraj Ullah Khadem illustrates the possibilities that can be found when an individual never stops chasing their dreams despite the cruel twists of fate.

Sirajullah, better known as Nipu in the cricketing fraternity, was one of the brightest young cricketers in Bangladesh and touted as a prospect for the national team. A left-handed middle-order batsman who could also come in handy with his medium pace deliveries, he was considered one of the best young all-rounders in the country and played in all national age-level teams, the Dhaka Premier League and first-class competitions in Bangladesh.

He even played for Bangladesh in the ICC Under-19 World Cup in Sri Lanka in 2006, alongside stalwarts of Bangladesh cricket like Shakib Al Hasan, Tamim Iqbal and Mushfiqur Rahim.

But Nipu crash landed after suffering an injury to his left eye in 2009, which eventually saw him having to give up professional cricket. "It happened in 2009, when I was practicing in Habiganj to prepare for the upcoming Dhaka league. A ball hit my left eye while I was batting in the nets and I had to rush to hospital. I did whatever I could to overcome the injury. I desperately wanted to return to the field, but I also had some limitations at that time," Nipu said.

The period that followed was probably the toughest of Nipu's life and, in 2014, the cricketer from Brahmanbaria decided to take his fortunes into his own hands and seek a new beginning in Portugal.

But, like they say, you can leave a place but not your passion. Despite moving to Portugal, Nipu found a way



to reconnect with cricket and, after recovering from his injury, began to live his dream of becoming an international cricketer again.

Nipu began to play the domestic T20 competition organised by the Portugal Cricket Board and also began the process to become a Portuguese national, which he became in 2020.

By that time, Nipu, who had switched from medium pace to left-arm spin, caught the eyes with his all-round performances.

Last year, Nipu was selected for the Portugal national cricket team. He will represent the European country in the upcoming 2024 ICC T20 World Cup qualifiers in Belgium.

"It was a tough decision for me to leave the country and move to Portugal because I was not sure whether I would be able to play this game ever again. I used to dream of representing Bangladesh in international cricket, but that was brutally shattered. Once I came to Portugal, I began to dream of playing international cricket again, even if it is for Portugal," Nipu said over phone.

"I am very proud to be representing a national team. I hope Portugal will play against Bangladesh in international cricket one day and I will be able to compete with my friends Shakib, Tamim and Mushfiqur."

Nipu, who is currently playing for Alexandra Cricket Club in the Middlesex County League in the United Kingdom, can serve as an inspiration for youngsters to continue chasing their dreams despite the setbacks of life.



Bangladesh pacer Shoriful Islam broke the West Indies' 100-run opening partnership by dismissing John Campbell on the second day of the second Test at Darren Sammy Cricket Ground in Gros Islet, Saint Lucia yesterday.

PHOTO: AFP



**Tamim [Iqbal] and Liton [Das] were fantastic, but fifties and forties won't give you enough runs. They need to go on when they get their starts. Couple of the younger players were really impressive but again, they got out. We just need to bat longer. In Test cricket, you have to bat for a long time. You have to be there at the end of the day.**

Bangladesh batting consultant  
**Jamie Siddons**

## Tigers find right ideas but hosts reply in kind

SPORTS REPORTER

Bangladesh's bowlers were able to find the right ideas after the West Indies' openers got off to a solid start on the second day of the second Test, continuing to pile up runs quickly. When it looked like the chips were down, the pacers responded by following in the footsteps of the home side's bowlers on a surface where runs were on offer along with some uneven bounce.

While there was steep bounce on a few deliveries, there were quite a few that kept quite low, creating doubt in the batter's mind during Bangladesh's first innings.

The new Duke ball hardly did anything for the Tigers on the first day and the hosts piled on 67 runs for no loss. Attacking intent from John Campbell and Kraigg Brathwaite had put the hosts on top and they continued in the same vein yesterday on the second day, putting up a 100-run stand.

Tamim Iqbal had spoken about the cracks on the surface after the first day and hoped they would get bigger as the match progressed. The invariable bounce on offer was more pronounced when bowlers hit certain areas of the pitch. The home side's bowlers had hit the surface hard after the good start from Bangladesh on the first day. There were more leg before and bowled dismissals in this Test compared to the last one in Antigua. Tamim believed that was down to the pitch, not technical deficiencies from batters. "It's proof that oppositions bowl into the wicket when there is not a lot of help from the wicket. When the wicket has invariable bounce, they bowl into the wicket," Tamim had remarked.

Shoriful Islam drew first blood for the Tigers when Campbell played a rash shot to a rising delivery and was caught behind. The extra bounce

did the trick as Bangladesh opened up one end in the 26th over of the Windies innings.

While Brathwaite applied himself astoundingly once more for his fifty, spinner Mehedi Hasan Miraz then opened up both ends as he removed the Windies skipper with a delivery that went straight on and clipped the off stump in the 38th over. From 131 for two, Windies then went to 32 for four within the space of six deliveries.

That bowling into the wicket was going to serve the biggest challenge to the batters was shown by Khaled Ahmed in the 39th over. Raymon Reifer was looking good on 22 when Khaled's length delivery zipped off the surface just a bit more than expected along with some extra bounce.

Reifer, trying to play it away from his body, saw the delivery deflect just a tad off the surface before taking the inside edge to shatter his stumps.

Khaled would then get the right-handed Nkrumah Bonner with a similar delivery, the ball once again skidding through from a length and hitting the bat high. Bonner, caught off guard by the sharp incoming delivery, could only manage to keep the ball away from his body but the inside edge would also disturb his stumps as the Tigers produced four wickets before lunch. Windies went to lunch at 137 for four.

Kyle Mayers came out with a different approach after lunch while the wicket was still good for quick runs. With Bangladesh's total of 234 relatively small, the Windies left-hander chanced his arms.

The ball would go through the vacant second or third slip region on a few occasions but he kept trading in boundaries while Jermaine Blackwood held up one end. The duo put on a fifty-run stand for the fourth wicket as the hosts closed in on Bangladesh's score.

LAST UPDATE

**BANGLADESH:** First Innings-234.  
**West Indies:** First Innings- 248-4 in 72 overs (Mayers 57 not out, Blackwood 35 not out)

## 'I will need a brand new Baggy Green'

REUTERS

The "baggy green" cap awarded to Australian cricketer Glenn Maxwell on his Test debut has completely fallen apart after an extended spell in his closet, the all-rounder said ahead of a potential Test return in the series against Sri Lanka.

The 33-year-old, who played the last of his seven Tests against Bangladesh five years ago, was added to Australia's Test squad as injury cover for middle order batsman Travis Head.

The baggy green is presented to Australian players when they make their Test debut and they receive just one for their entire career.

"I took it out last year and had a look at it and it was deteriorating and I thought 'that's not a good sign'," Maxwell told reporters. "My wife took it out yesterday and it had completely fallen apart. She said 'I don't think I can bring this,' it looked terrible. So I'm going to need a new one over here. It's happened to a few of the boys."

"I'm probably going to have to put it in a glass case and leave it there I reckon. I'll see if I can get it fixed when I get home but at the moment, it's probably a bit too late for that."

The first of two Tests in Galle begins on Wednesday.



The Tigers celebrated the inauguration of the historic Padma Bridge from ten thousand miles away from home in the Caribbean by cutting a huge cake.

PHOTO: COLLECTED

## England strike late to seize control

REUTERS, LEEDS

England's bowlers struck three times in quick succession late on day three to take control of the final Test against New Zealand at Headingley on Saturday and stay on course for a 3-0 series sweep.

The tourists were on 168-5 and led England by 137 runs when rain brought a premature halt to the day's play. New Zealand got off to a promising start in their second innings thanks to a fluent half-century from Tom Latham (76) but lost their way after the opener was dismissed by debutant Jamie Overton (1-34) off the first ball after Tea.

Devon Conway (11) was soon to follow, succumbing to Joe Root's part-time off-spin before England landed the big scalp of opposition skipper Kane Williamson, who perished for 48 after edging behind to Matthew Potts (2-20).

Jack Leach (1-26) also got in on the act after Henry Nicholls (7) chipped one straight back to him as New Zealand collapsed from 125-1 to 161-5.

Earlier, Jonny Bairstow smashed a magnificent 162 while Overton fell three runs short of a century as England were dismissed for 360 in their first innings for a 31-run lead.



## Choton aims to give fans more 'beautiful football'

SPORTS REPORTER

Despite a historic 6-0 victory over Malaysia in the first of two FIFA-sanctioned international friendlies on Thursday, Bangladesh women's football team head coach Golam Rabbani Choton wanted his charges to come out with even more ferocity in the second game. "The players' mindset will not change," Choton told The Daily Star. "Our focus is solely on the next match. It is equally as important as the first. We need to flex our muscles and go for the win," he added.

Bangladesh lag well behind Malaysia in the FIFA Women's Rankings, with the former 145th and the latter 85th. But on the field, it appeared completely the opposite in the first match. When asked about the dressing room environment after the game, the head coach immediately replied that their intent would not wane.

"We have been preparing for these two matches for a while. After winning the first match, the girls shifted their focus to the next one. So, our team meeting and training catered to the next game," Choton said.

He concluded that he wanted to give the fans another display of delightful football. "Similar to the last match, our goal is to execute all the plans in the next game and play another beautiful football match." The match will be held at the Bishreshtha Shaheed Mostafa Kamal Stadium in Kamalapur at 06:00pm (Bangladesh Standard Time) today.

