I met Nahid Rana a couple of years ago in Chattogram where he was part of a young group that came to play against Sri Lanka. I was really excited about watching him. I'm glad he has now got a role.

former Bangladesh pace bowling coach ALLAN DONALD



The path behind Nahid Rana's emergence

Nahid Rana stunned the cricketing world with his raw pace during Bangladesh's historic 2-0 Test series triumph over hosts Pakistan, clocking over 150 kmph while also claiming his career-best figures in the second Test. Even though Bangladesh cricket has been reaping the benefits of forming a potent pace group across formats in recent years, the factors behind the emergence of talented quicks have not been focused on a large scale. The Test series triumph against Pakistan in Rawalpindi would not have materialised if pacers like Hasan Mahmud, Nahid, Shoriful Islam, and Taskin Ahmed had not outshone the quicks of Pakistan — a country historically known as the 'land of pacers'. What comes as a hopeful sign for fans and a sweet headache for the team management is that these four aforementioned pacers are not the only ones available in the Tigers' pace tank. Khaled Ahmed, who was also part of this Pakistan series, Ebadot Hossain, currently rehabilitating from an ACL injury that saw him out of action for more than a year, and white-ball regulars Tanzim Hasan Sakib and Mustafizur Rahman are all part of the Tigers' current pace battery. While they gel together in the national team under the guidance of foreign coaches, the story of their emergence began under local coaches to whom they turn to whenever needed. In this special issue of The Daily Star Sports, we look at one such local coach, Alamgir Kabir, and one of his disciples, Nahid, who came to the fore through the recent Pakistan series. The Daily Star's Samsul Arefin Khan reached out to both Nahid and Alamgir, and the excerpts of their interviews are provided below:

'Coaches should not compromise with raw pace'

The Daily Star (DS): Your students, as well. He is still a young kid and his enough remuneration in your job, Nahid Rana and Shoriful Islam, muscles will improve and the bones you can't give full concentration. You have done exceptionally well during Bangladesh's maiden Test series win DS: We know local coaches contribute of income. So, the focus on your job

Alamgir Kabir (AK): It's obviously a great feeling. When your children do well, as a guardian, you obviously feel well. When I see them doing well for Bangladesh, happiness comes automatically. I hope that they will serve Bangladesh cricket for a long time and remain injury-free.

DS: Can you enlighten us regarding Nahid as you were his direct coach at Clemon Cricket Academy?

AK: I found him at Clemon Rajshahi Cricket Academy when he got admitted all by himself. We have eight to nine coaches and there are few groups. He was initially in a different group. We arranged tapedtennis matches for the players and they played these matches divided into groups. While playing in such a match, we needed a bowler, where he was picked. My first impression of him was that he was bowling too fast with a taped-tennis ball. I asked him whether he could bowl fast only with a taped-tennis ball or with a cricket ball as well. He replied in the affirmative. He bowled so fast that will get stronger further.

over Pakistan. How satisfying is that massively in preparing players for becomes 50-50. The district coaches the national-team level, where some might do well instantly. But often financial situation, they have to work those players fail to deliver similar at different academies. In my home performances consistently. How do you see that in case of Nahid Rana?

> AK: As Shoriful Islam [another student of Clemon Cricket Academy] had already played for the U-19, A team and national team by the time, he gave us the updated details that helped me groom Nahid well. When he provided me with the details or sent me videos, I instantly showed him those and told him to be in touch with Shoriful. If Nahid didn't understand sometime, I was there to help him out. He is always willing to learn and I continue to give him guidance.

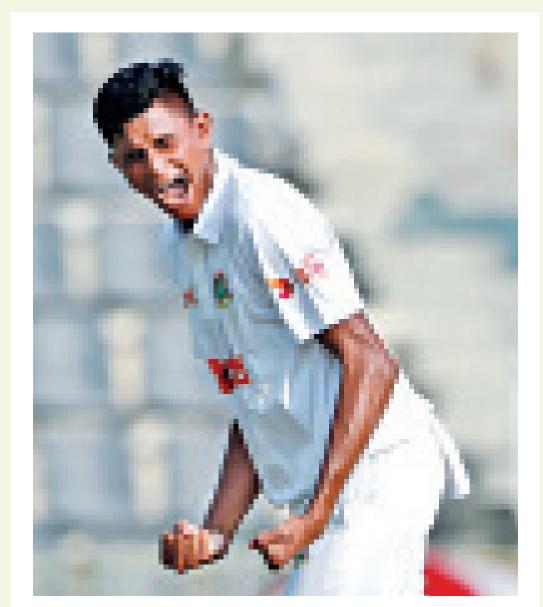
> **DS:** You have been in coaching profession for a long time. How do you see the interest growing in players to become a genuine fast bowler?

AK: We get many pace bowlers in district and divisional level matches. When we do the selection, we count more on their performances. If we don't analyse someone's performance only but also focus on their pace, I AK: I have spoken personally about think we would find more players for the issue. Khaled Mahmud Sujon,

will definitely look for other avenues want to work properly, but due to their district in Chapainawabganj, I have a mango-selling business in the mango season while I also sell paddy during harvesting season. My question is why I should think about such things if I earn decent money from coaching. So you can understand how much remuneration we are getting. I want to take cricket to a new high but at the same time, I have to give attention to my financial well-being.

The kind of salary that they have increased is okay. But if you consider the inflation and cost of living since when I joined till now, is minimal. As a former national team player, the kind of remuneration I get as a districtlevel coach, I will say is zero. Since I love cricket and want new players to be in a good place, I'm still doing it for the sake of cricket.

DS: Haven't you and your colleagues, as coaches, raised your voices regarding remuneration?



Easy for local coaches to identify shortcomings'

introduction with Alamgir sir at the Clemon Cricket Academy.

Nahid Rana (NR): When I got into the Clemon Academy, I had the first chance to talk with him [local coach Alamgir Kabir]. One day, he saw my bowling and took me to his group. At that time, I had no spikes (sports shoes) and he managed one for me. The journey actually started from there. Since then, whether it's guiding me or looking after me, he took care of everything until I got picked by the Bangladesh Cricket Board (BCB).

DS: You had a different bowling action when you started bowling. You had to change your action and although initially your pace reduced, it gradually went up. Can you enlighten us regarding the matter?

NR: I had a different run-up action. He told me that anywhere I go, they will change my run-up. He said if I change it initially, it will be good for me as I won't face any problems. He was the one who changed my run-up and bowling action. He has seen me since childhood and understood a lot of things really well. He realised much earlier what would be good for me in the future.

DS: Even though you are in the early stages of your career, how do you rate Alamgir sir's influence on it?

NR: I can't express it in words. This is huge. He has made an immense contribution to my growth as a cricketer. He is like a parent to me. He guides me like a father in my cricketing journey.

DS: Coming to the Pakistan Test series, was it an expected performance to all of you guys after going into the series with a very good preparation?

NR: Of course, the preparation was good. I had a plan that if I get an opportunity, I will deliver my best. I had an ambition of doing well for the country. Alhamdulillah, everything went fine.

DS: Pakistani batters negotiated you well in the first Test. But you made a brilliant turnaround in the second one. Did you have different plans for the two Tests?

NR: It was part of the plan for the first Test to well and they scored runs against me. In the second Test, I was allowed to bowl as per my overthink.

The Daily Star (DS): Tell us about your plan. In that game, I tried to bowl according to my plan and the captain also gave me some insights during the match and that's how I succeeded.

DS: Can you tell us about the spell during

the fourth day of the second Test in which you took three wickets in the space of a few NR: Before that spell, they scored a few

extra runs. I had the plan to bowl at a good length so that I would not leak runs, creating chances for taking wickets.

DS: When did you feel that you could touch or break the 150kmph barrier?

NR: Actually, I didn't think about my pace. When my body gives me the opportunity to bowl with such pace, I always try to bowl with my heart. I didn't bowl with any specific target. My aim is always to do well for the

DS: Did you make specific plans for specific

NR: Of course, when we had a camp, we made plans against them. We saw the videos of their batting and talked about how to bowl

DS: What is the basic difference you see between the foreign coaches and local

NR: If we do badly or have a setback, we often go to local coaches. When we are at our peak or in the national team, we get to work with foreign coaches. They also try their level best to improve our bowling. But one foreign coach can't understand everything about a bowler within a month. Our local coaches have been seeing us from our childhood and it's easy for them to identify our shortcomings. But it takes some time for the foreign coaches.

DS: You guys don't have a long time to prepare for the next assignment against India, beginning with the first of two Tests from September 19. Everyone is expecting a more challenging series over there. Preparation-wise, what will be your plan as they have some outstanding batters on their

bowl in such a way. But the batters judged me NR: I'm not thinking too much – just the usual. It doesn't bode well for you if you

We arranged taped-tennis matches for the players and they played these matches divided into groups. While playing in such a match, we needed a bowler, where he was picked. My first impression of him was that he was powling too fast with a taped-tennis ball. I asked him whether he could bowl fast only with a taped-tennis ball or with a cricket ball as well. He replied in the affirmative. He bowled so fast that the wicketkeeper missed all his first five deliveries. I heard that he was in Group C and then I told everyone that he will be in Group A next week. His journey started from there.

five deliveries. I heard that he was in Group C and then I told everyone that he will be in Group A next week. His journey started from there.

His bowling action and run-up were different at that time. Now he bowls with a good action but at an early stage, he had a peculiar bowling action while releasing the ball. I had to work on these at that time. As he was under-18 at that time, I told him that I would look after him in the next two years. Then we started working together and worked on his bowling and also showed him different bowling videos, so that he didn't have to struggle when he went to a senior level. DS: Do you think the change in his

action helped him increase his pace?

AK: When worked on his accelerator, his pace decreased drastically. told him not to worry about it and work for six months with the new action as it would get adjusted to the muscle. His muscles and bones were growing at that time and day by day he started to grow stronger. I hope his pace will increase in the coming days

the wicketkeeper missed all his first the highest level. I believe coaches our Game Development chairman, should not compromise with raw pace. asked us about our expected salaries If someone wants, they can correct in a meeting six or seven years ago. line and length but can't increase Among all coaches, I raised my hand pace. We lose a lot of pace bowlers at and said about 40 to 50 thousand the screening stage. Whoever is in the taka should be the salary for districtselection team should not consider level coaches in order to ensure our

the top level. **DS:** Recently the ncreased salaries of coaches who are working under the Game Development. Do you think the raise is sufficient? you are n o t

results but also focus on full concentration. He promised that merit in deciding who he would raise the issue in the board can deliver at meeting. Whenever a meeting has been arranged, we have raised our voices. It's only Sujon bhai who can say why we still don't get the amount that we had suggested. Now it's my 10th year in coaching at the board but still I don't get such amount.

DS: Do you see any similarity between your current salary and what you suggested six or seven years ago?

AK: Actually, no. It is probably half of what we had expected.

DS: What is the biggest regret among

the local coaches like you? AK: We often don't get the proper respect. We do the scouting, coach the players and do all the hard work but all the credit goes to the toplevel coaches. We often hear that these players do well during this or that foreign coach's tenure. But where do the foreign coaches get the product? Do they know players from the district-level? We are not paid well and we are not recognised for our work, so where will we get the motivation to work?

> **Al<mark>amgir Kabir is</mark> a former **Bangladesh seamer who played** three Tests for the Tigers. He is currently working a district coach (Chapainawabganj) BCB Development. 43-year-old is currently also working at PKSP and previously worked at Clemon Cricket Academy in Rajshahi.