



PHOTO: FIROZ AHMED

AFRIDI AND CO GET INTO TEST MODE

Pakistan pacer Shaheen Shah Afridi goes through fielding drills at the Mirpur Academy Ground yesterday, following the arrival of the first batch of the Test squad on Sunday. Their first of two Tests against Bangladesh will get underway at the Sher-e-Bangla National Cricket Stadium on Friday.

Leopards upset Abahani on rain-hit opening day

SPORTS REPORTER



Overnight rain and bad light dominated the opening day of the Dhaka Premier League (DPL), with five of six matches disrupted and delayed starts across multiple venues yesterday.

The biggest upset came as newly-promoted Dhaka Leopards beat defending champions Abahani by five wickets. Abahani made 181 for 8 in 30 overs, but Zakir Hasan's 74 guided Leopards to a statement win at Bashundhara Sports City.

Prime Bank defeated Agrani Bank by four wickets at BKSP-4, with Tanzid Tamim striking a quick 44 off 32 balls. At Cricketers Academy, Legends of Rupganj posted 283 for 3 in 34 overs, powered by Ashikur Rahman's unbeaten 99 and Shak Mahedi's 49 off 16 balls, leading to a 22-run win over Rupganj Tigers.

Gazi Group crushed Brothers Union by nine wickets after bowling them out for 82 at ULAB. Meanwhile, Mohammedan beat City Club by five wickets at BKSP-3, thanks to Anamul Haque's 80. In the only full-overs match, Bashundhara Strikers defeated Gulshan Cricket Club by 26 runs, led by Saif Hassan's 96.

Most games started after 11:30am due to unsafe run-ups, drizzle and poor light, especially at Bashundhara Sports City.

Ad hoc committee president Tamim Iqbal acknowledged that such issues would have to be accepted for now. "If we wanted to start perfectly, we wouldn't be able to organise matches outside of the two venues," Tamim said on Monday.

BCB approves formation of EC

SPORTS REPORTER

The Bangladesh Cricket Board (BCB), led by its ad hoc committee under Tamim Iqbal, has initiated the process for the next board elections by approving the formation of a three-member Election Commission.

According to a BCB press release issued on Monday, one member of the commission will be nominated from either the Ministry of Youth and Sports or the National Sports Council (NSC), while the remaining two members will be appointed by the board.

The board also announced that a notice inviting nominations of councillors from all categories, including Category 1, will be issued shortly in accordance with Article 12.7 of the BCB constitution.

The previous board, led by Aminul Islam, had formed Regional Cricket Associations in several divisions before its tenure ended on April 7 amid allegations of irregularities during the October 6 elections last year.

The BCB has now decided to dissolve the ad hoc committees of the Regional Cricket Associations in Chattogram, Sylhet and Barishal with immediate effect.

Rana's rise gathers pace with 'presence of mind'

ABDULLAH AL MEHDI

Nahid Rana's stars are rising as he continues to push his pace threshold. The six-foot-five fast bowler, wiry and full of fire, carried that surge into the Pakistan Super League (PSL) yesterday, helping Peshawar Zalmi clinch the title while impressing a legend of the game, Wasim Akram.

Rana took little time to make his presence felt at Lahore's Gaddafi Stadium, dismissing Hyderabad Kingsmen's Glenn Maxwell with the first delivery of his second over, a short ball targeting the body of the explosive batter. The veteran Australian could only manage a mistimed pull, resulting in an easy catch at mid-on. Later, a rapid yorker saw the Bangladesh pace sensation dismantle Hunain Shah's stumps.

In particular, it was the mixing and matching of lengths that Wasim talked about. "I have been following his performances recently," the former Pakistan captain said on commentary. "He has good short deliveries and a very good bouncer, so he bowled those length deliveries to push the batter onto the back foot and then slipped in the fuller delivery."

The fuller delivery, like the short ones, created surprise, with some deliveries striking the bat rather than the bat meeting it. "He showed that he has good presence of mind, which is important. He has a bright



future ahead of him," Wasim added.

Rana finished with figures of two for 22, setting the stage for a comfortable five-wicket win as Hyderabad were bundled out for 129. "I was able to do what the team expected of me, and that's the biggest thing for me," Rana told The Daily Star yesterday, adding that he is "ready for the Pakistan Test series" fitness-wise.

Barring a few players involved in the PSL final, Pakistan began their practice sessions at the Mirpur Academy Ground yesterday. Interestingly, just four days ahead of the first Test, the pitch wore a viper green colour. Although the grass

will be trimmed before the match, a team management source indicated there would still be assistance for fast bowlers, similar to the recent ODIs against Pakistan.

On the back of 15 ODI wickets against Pakistan and New Zealand of late, featuring a five-wicket haul in each series, and nine wickets overall in the PSL, Rana will be licking his lips at the prospect of pace-friendly conditions.

However, his control of length has been the key. In the second ODI against New Zealand in the hostile Dhaka heat, he bowled 33 per cent short deliveries and 27 per cent on a good length. Team management sources claimed they were astounded by the accuracy of line and length.

"Tests and T20s are different propositions. I will try to stay within my process and do what I have been doing in Tests," Rana said upon returning to Dhaka yesterday.

Peshawar's Australian recruit Aaron Hardie had talked about Rana's 151 kph deliveries being a disaster for batters and even joked that captain Babar Azam would not relish facing him in the nets ahead of Pakistan's tour of Bangladesh.

"I know he has got Test cricket in a week, and Babar is not looking forward to facing him. There's a friendly rivalry there," Aaron had said.

With improved accuracy and growing tactical nous, Rana's hostility is only set to heighten.

Semifinal on a knife-edge as Arsenal host Atletico

AGENCIES

Arsenal and Atletico Madrid meet at the Emirates with their Champions League semifinal finely balanced at 1-1, setting up a decisive night with a place in the Budapest final at stake. Both sides arrive in strong form: Arsenal's 3-0 win over Fulham boosted their domestic title push, while Atletico eased past Valencia 2-0, allowing key players to rest. Bukayo Saka's timely return has revitalised Mikel Arteta's attack, adding sharpness and creativity just when it matters most. The Gunners, chasing a rare league and European double, are eyeing only their second Champions League final. Atletico, led by Diego Simeone, will rely on resilience and big-game experience, with Julian Alvarez under particular focus amid transfer speculation.

➤ Arsenal have lost only one of their last 15 UEFA home matches against Spanish clubs (W9 D5), winning their last three without conceding, including a 4-0 victory over Atlético Madrid.

➤ The Gunners have won five and lost four of their nine previous Champions League two-legged ties against Spanish opposition. This is their second semi-final against a La Liga side, having previously beaten Villarreal 1-0 on aggregate in 2005-06.

➤ Arsenal remain the only unbeaten team in this season's Champions League (W10 D3), matching their longest unbeaten European run from March 2005 to April 2006.

➤ Atletico have won just two of their last 13 UEFA matches against English sides (D3 L8), and have lost their last four UEFA away games against Premier League opposition.

➤ However, Atlético have an excellent semi-final record, winning all three of their previous UEFA semi-final ties against English teams, and six of their last seven UEFA semi-final ties overall.



37 DAYS TO GO



A goalkeeping benchmark

In World Cups, Gordon Banks conceded just four goals while saving 33 of the 37 shots he faced. Since the 1966 FIFA World Cup (earlier reliable data is unavailable), he holds the highest save percentage - 89.19% - among goalkeepers who have faced at least 30 shots.

Visit The Daily Star's website to also read: "The tears of a crownless king"

SINNER GALLOPS FROM ONE RECORD TO ANOTHER

➤ Jannik Sinner claimed the Madrid Masters title in dominant fashion on Sunday, defeating Alexander Zverev 6-1, 6-2 in just 57 minutes.

➤ The Italian became the first player to win five consecutive Masters 1000 titles, adding Madrid to victories in Paris, Indian Wells, Miami and Monte Carlo.

➤ The 24-year-old is now one title away from completing the 'Golden Masters' -- winning all nine Masters 1000 events -- with Rome the only missing piece.

➤ On a 23-match winning streak, the Italian heads to Rome. If he wins in Rome, he will join Novak Djokovic as the only men to achieve the feat.

"I'll never be able to compare myself to Rafa, Novak and Roger, what they've achieved is incredible -- over 10 or 15 years. I'm trying to make my own mark, but I'm doing it for myself, I don't play for the records, I'm just putting myself in a position to succeed."

-- Jannik Sinner after his Madrid success



Inter Milan players and coaching staff celebrate their 21st 'scudetto' following their 3-0 Serie A win against Parma at San Siro on Sunday. Marcus Thuram's side-footed finish just before half-time set Inter on their way before Henrikh Mkhitaryan's second-half goal put the Scudetto beyond doubt. With three matches left, Inter have a 12-point lead over reigning champions Napoli and 15 more points than third-placed AC Milan. Cristian Chivu's side can complete the third league and cup double in their history if they beat Lazio in the Coppa Italia final on May 13 in Rome.

PHOTO: AFP

Eastern Bank PLC.

HEAD OFFICE, 100 GULSHAN AVENUE, DHAKA-1212

Tender Notice

Eastern Bank PLC. (EBL) invites sealed bids from eligible, experienced, and competent bidders for the following services/items:

Lot 1: Storage (2nd call) | Lot 2: Servers (2nd call)

Interested bidders are requested to collect the RFP document electronically by sending an email from their official email address to bidit@ebi-bd.com mentioning the name of the company and the authorized contact person, mailing address, telephone and mobile phone numbers on or before **Thursday, 7 May 2026**.

Queries are to be mailed by **Thursday, 14 May 2026**.

Bids should be prepared in accordance with the instructions contained in the RFP document and submitted as per the process described therein, bearing official authorized personnel's seal and signature in two separate sealed envelopes clearly marked 'Technical Offer' (hardcopy and softcopy both) and 'Financial Offer' (hardcopy only) on the envelopes.

Bids should be dropped in the Tender Box, addressed to the Office of the President, Purchase Committee, Head Office, Eastern Bank PLC., 100 Gulshan Avenue, Dhaka-1212 (Basement-1, Tender Box) on or before **Thursday, 4 June 2026**.

Tenderers are allowed to bid for all lots or any lot separately. However, common documents need not be submitted for multiple lots, a single submission covering one lot is sufficient.