



I am not a fan of that [four-day Test]. I played 100 Tests, I mean a few finished in three days, a few in four but five-day Test cricket is the ultimate and to have a four-day Test... I am not a big fan of that. It [five-day Test] has set the trend and it has been there for ages so why go and mess with that? If they give other players a chance to experience that because it can be a life changing experience to play five-day cricket. It is a mental state so that you can cope in life as well.

CHRIS GAYLE, CHATTOGRAM CHALLENGERS PLAYER

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Read Gayle's free-ranging press conference, where he talked about 4-day Tests and how there will never be another 'Universe Boss'

PHOTO: FIROZ AHMED

Pakistan tour decision delayed

SPORTS REPORTER

The Bangladesh Cricket Board (BCB) could not take a clear stance on Bangladesh's upcoming tour of Pakistan later this month, keeping the fate of the originally scheduled tour of two Tests and three T20Is hanging in the balance, despite the BCB president saying on Wednesday that a decision would be reached by yesterday.

After the impromptu board meeting on Wednesday, BCB President Nazmul Hassan said the Pakistan Cricket Board (PCB) had countered the BCB's offer of playing just the three T20Is with an offer of playing the two Tests first and then rescheduling the T20Is for later. PCB was more eager to host Tests with the ongoing World Test Championship in mind.

The BCB was supposed to make a decision regarding the matter -- whether to stick to their original decision of playing just the T20Is or to consider PCB's offer of playing the two Tests first and push the T20Is to a later date -- today.

"We are still working on it. We are considering a number of options now and we are taking a bit of time for that. Hopefully we will be able to make a decision in the board meeting we will have on January 12. After that we can make it public," BCB media committee chairman Jalal Yunus at around 9:00pm told The Daily Star after media personnel waited the whole day for a clear decision from the board.

Meanwhile, it was learned that there were actually three options that the BCB was

pondering. Option one was to stick to playing just the three T20Is, the second option was to play a single Test alongside three T20Is and the last option was to agree to the PCB's offer of playing the two Tests first.

The BCB had earlier mentioned that they would prefer a short tour and hence wanted to play just T20Is, and that too only if the board could form a good squad. However, most of the players were reported

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JALAL YUNUS
BCB MEDIA COMMITTEE
CHAIRMAN

to have consented for the tour -- Mushfiqur Rahim being the exception. For now, the uncertainty regarding the tour continues and it might end only on Sunday if the board can come to a decision just six days before their scheduled date of departure for the tour.

'Tests the best form of the game'

AFP, London

Ben Stokes made an emphatic case for the unique drama of five-day Test cricket this week -- inspiring England to a series-levelling win against South Africa in the final overs of a dramatic contest.

His match-winning performance in Cape Town on Tuesday came at a time of intensifying debate over the future of the longest form of the game, which has been played since 1877.

The International Cricket Council (ICC) will in the coming months discuss reducing Tests to four days.

For a sport so closely linked with tradition, cricket has shown a remarkable ability to innovate in recent decades, introducing multiple forms of limited-overs cricket that have taken firm root.

But the latest proposal, part of an effort to tackle the crowded international cricket calendar and save on costs, has divided players, many of whom consider Test cricket the gold standard.

Stokes and England captain Joe Root spoke out in favour of the longer format, which allows the drama and nuances of the game time to play out.

"It's why five-day cricket should always be around. It's the best form of the game," said Stokes.

MIXED BAG OF A DECADE ENDS WITH UNCERTAINTY

SABBIR HOSSAIN



It would be hard to deny that while the 2010s was an exciting decade for Bangladesh cricket, it has entered the 2020s with a lot of uncertainty. Bangladesh cricket team went through a lot of joy, tears and heartbreak over the last decade on the international stage in a sport that has given an entire generation the courage to dream. Cricketers have been at the forefront of giving Bangladesh a positive identity and have united the country on numerous occasions to celebrate successes.

The image of Shakib Al Hasan unable to hold back tears during the post-match presentation following a heartbreaking three-run defeat in the 2012 Asia Cup final and the two fast, swinging deliveries from Rubel Hossain in Adelaide against England in the 2015 World Cup to deliver one of the country's most seminal wins are just a few of the moments of the last decade that remain etched in the mind's eye.

Many pundits have hailed Bangladesh's rise in white-ball cricket as the Tigers made huge strides in home dominance. And nobody would argue that the 'Big Five' -- Mashrafe Bin Mortaza, Shakib, Mushfiqur Rahim, Mahmudullah Riyad and Tamim Iqbal -- was the biggest advertisement for Bangladesh cricket in the last decade.

What about Test cricket? Yes, on a few occasions they proved how dangerous they could be on home soil, especially with wins over England [2016] and Australia [2017].

But when we go through a statistical review of the decade, the emotions may take a backseat. The winning percentage in Tests was 17.85 against 34.17 in T20I and 43.21 in ODIs. Interestingly, Bangladesh played lesser Tests (56) and ODIs (162) in the last decade compared to the previous one (61 Tests and 174 ODIs).

The winning percentage has increased and it was most significant in the 50-over format as in the 2000s the winning percentage was 29.89, which means it increased by 13.32 in



Bangladesh players celebrate their 34-run victory against England in the second of a three-match ODI series at the Sher-e-Bangla National Stadium in Mirpur on October 9, 2016. (Bottom) Tigers's fans cheer their team during the match.

PHOTO: STAR FILE

PLAYERS STATISTICS

TEST

Total played: 56
Debuted: 39
Played at least 10 Tests: 10
(Mominul Haque 38, Taijul Islam 27, Mehedi Hasan Miraz 22, Nasir Hossain 19, Liton Das 18, Soumya Sarkar 15, Mustafizur Rahman 13, Shafiu Islam 11, Sabbir Rahman 11, Sohag Gazi 10)

ODI

Total played: 162
Debuted: 36
Played at least 20 ODIs: 14
(Sabbir Rahman 66, Nasir Hossain 65, Shafiu Islam 59, Mustafizur Rahman 56, Soumya Sarkar 55, Mehedi Hasan Miraz 38, Anamul Haque Bijoy 38, Mosaddek Hossain 35, Liton Das 33, Taskin Ahmed 32, Mominul Haque 28, Mohammad Mithun 24, Mohammad Saifuddin 20, Sohag Gazi 20)

T20I

Total played: 79; Debuted: 43
Played at least 10 T20Is: 19
(Soumya Sarkar 46, Sabbir Rahman 44, Mustafizur Rahman 37, Nasir Hossain 31, Al-Amin Hossain 28, Liton Das 25, Taskin Ahmed 19, Shafiu Islam 17, Imrul Kayes 14, Ziaur Rahman 14, Mosaddek Hossain 14, Mohammad Mithun 14, Anamul Haque Bijoy 13, Mohammad Saifuddin 13, Mehedi Hasan Miraz 13, Nazmul Islam Apu 13, Abu Hider Rony 13, Sohag Gazi 10, Arafat Sunny 10)

FROM JANUARY, 2010 TO DECEMBER, 2019 RESULTS SUMMARY

TEST	W	D	L	
Mat	10	10	36	
At home				
33	8	9	16	
Away & Neutral				
23	2	1	20	
ODI	W	L	T	NR
Mat	70	87	0	5
At home				
86	45	40	0	1
Away & Neutral				
76	25	47	0	4
T20I	W	L	T	NR
Mat	27	50	0	2
At home				
36	14	22	0	0
Away & Neutral				
43	13	28	0	2

2019. The Big Five basically played the major role behind all those successes. It would not be an exaggeration to say that the last decade saw the Big Five giving their best fruits after growing in the previous decade, but on the other hand there was no such emergence of young talent who could carry their baton in the new decade.

Many arrived on the scene with a lot of promise and made the headlines on many occasions but they could not harness the consistency that has been the hallmark of the Big Five. Here, we provided the data that shows the think-tank's efficacy in bringing new talent to international cricket.

The current decade started with the reality that the Big Five will no more dictate terms together to take Bangladesh cricket to new levels. 2020 instead dawned with the question about who will do the job as the statistics show that there is still a lot to do to earn respect as a cricketing nation.

the last decade.

The utmost credit for the vibe of ODI success in the last decade must go to a four-year stretch -- from November 2014 to the start of the 2019 World Cup -- when Mashrafe led the side from November 2014 to before the last World Cup in England as Bangladesh won 42 matches, lost 28 during that time with three being abandoned. In this particular period the winning percentage was 57.53, which is 14.32 percent higher compared to the overall decade.

Bangladesh played the finals of the 2012, 2018 Asia Cups and 2016 T20 Asia Cup, they reached the quarterfinal of the 2015 World Cup in Australia-New Zealand, made the semifinal berths in the 2017 ICC Champions Trophy and the final of the 2018 T20I Nidahas Trophy and ended the multinational trophy drought by winning an Ireland tri-series in



THE BIG FIVE			
SHAKIB	TEST	ODI	T20I
	Matches: 42; Runs: 3147; Average: 42.48; Wickets: 162; Average: 31.94	Matches: 131; Runs: 4276; Average: 38.87 Wickets: 177; Average: 30.15	Matches: 131; Runs: 4276; Average: 38.87 Wickets: 177; Average: 30.15
MASHRAFE	Matches: 114; Wickets: 131; Average: 36.13	Matches: 114; Wickets: 131; Average: 36.13	Matches: 43; Wickets: 34; Average: 34.08
MUSHFIQUR	Matches: 53; Runs: 3531; Average: 38.80	Matches: 157; Runs: 5178; Average: 40.77	Matches: 72; Runs: 1208; Average: 21.19
TAMIM	Matches: 46; Runs: 3719; Average: 41.78	Matches: 138; Runs: 5028; Average: 39.28	Matches: 63; Runs: 1453; Average: 25.05
MAHMUDULLAH	Matches: 46; Runs: 2694; Average: 32.85; Wickets: 31; Average: 56.51	Matches: 148; Runs: 3431; Average: 35.37; Wickets: 54; Average: 45.29	Matches: 75; Runs: 1364; Average: 26.23; Wickets: 29; Average: 26.20