



LET'S GIVE IT ONE LAST TRY: The Bangladesh team warming up during a practice session recently.

PHOTO: STAR FILE

Minnows' Cup final

AFP, Johannesburg

Before the World Cup began, most experts would have said Saturday's Pool B encounter between Bangladesh and Kenya here at the Wanderers was a 'meaningless match'.

It is now anything but.

Kenya's sensational 53-run win over 1996 champions Sri Lanka in Nairobi on Monday catapulted the East Africans to the top of the group table.

Following New Zealand's boycott of its match in Nairobi, Monday's victory left Kenya on 12 points and with a real chance of going through to the Super Sixes.

Collins Obuya, a 21-year-old leg-spinner, was Kenya's hero against Sri Lanka, taking five for 21 at Nairobi Gymkhana and is likely to be a big threat again this weekend.

"He has a lion heart, walks like a lion and has the strength of a lion," said Kenya captain Steve Tikolo of Obuya.

"The boy has come of age, he will definitely go places," said Kenya's former international fast bowler Edward Odumbe.

"I will not be surprised if he does

continue with his form against Bangladesh in Johannesburg on Saturday," Odumbe added.

Adding spice to the encounter is the fact that Bangladesh were promoted ahead of Kenya to be become cricket's 10th Test nation.

Kenya, who many thought had a better claim on cricketing grounds, currently enjoy one-day international status only.

Unfortunately for Kenya, Bangladesh's international record is so poor that the chances of them or indeed anyone else, being welcomed into the elite in the foreseeable future are all but non-existent.

Bangladesh have lost 16 of their 17 Tests, 11 by an innings. Only rain, which denied Zimbabwe a certain away win, prevented a 100 percent loss record.

The tiny South Asian nation have also been defeated in 28 of their last 30 one-dayers, the other two games being rain-affected washouts.

At this tournament only a downpour against the West Indies in Benoni has prevented five straight defeats.

And their dreadful record prompted Kenya coach Sandeep

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FORM GUIDE
Bangladesh v Kenya

Kenya

| Form guide for Kenya and Bangladesh ahead of their World Cup Group B clash at the Wanderers here on Saturday: | |
|---|------------------------------------|
| Kenya (won 3 lost 6 NR1) | |
| Feb242003 | beat Sri Lanka by 53 runs |
| Feb212003 | beat New Zealand (match forfeited) |
| Feb 15 2003 | beat Canada by 4 wickets |
| Feb 12 2003 | lost to South Africa by 10 wickets |
| Dec 15 2002 | lost to Zimbabwe by 9 wickets |
| Dec 11 2002 | lost to Zimbabwe by 47 runs |
| Dec 8 2002 | No Result |
| Sept 17 2002 | lost to West Indies by 29 runs |
| Sept 20 2002 | lost to South Africa by 176 runs |
| Sept 5 2002 | lost to Australia by 5 wickets |
| Bangladesh (won 0 lost 8 NR2) | |
| Feb 26 2003 | lost to New Zealand by 7 wickets |
| Feb 22 2003 | lost to South Africa by 10 wickets |
| Feb 18 2003 | v West Indies NR |
| Feb 14 2003 | lost to Sri Lanka by 10 wickets |
| Feb 11 2003 | lost to Canada by 60 runs |
| Dec 3 2002 | lost to West Indies by 86 runs |
| Dec 2 2002 | lost to West Indies by 84 runs |
| Nov 29 2002 | v West Indies NR |
| Oct 9 2002 | lost to South Africa by 7 wickets |
| Oct 3 2002 | lost to South Africa by 168 runs |

Nairobi
Nairobi
Cape Town
Potchefstroom
Bulawayo
Kwakwe
Harare
Colombo
Colombo
Nairobi
Kimberley
Bloemfontein
Benoni
Pietermaritzburg
Durban
Dhaka
Dhaka
Chittagong
Kimberley
Potchefstroom

One last chance to salvage pride

AL-AMIN from Johannesburg

Bangladesh captain Khaled Mashud wants to return home in some dignity with a victory over Kenya at the Wanderers on Saturday after a largely forgettable World Cup campaign.

His sentiment was echoed by the other players including former national captain Akram Khan who wants to remember his last World Cup appearance for the right reasons.

Even manager ASM Faruque was bullish in predicting Bangladesh's chances against the East Africans despite the bare fact that Kenya have beaten Bangladesh five times in six meetings and are fresh from a sensational victory over Sri Lanka in their last match.

"We will show that we are a

better team than Kenya in all aspects of the game and I don't see any reason why we can't beat them," said Faruque at the Sandton Hotel on Friday morning.

Mashud too was equally optimistic of a win and dismissed suggestions that Kenya were proving a point or two with their World Cup exploits.

"Kenya have got some good players but we are better as a team. We have proved it by playing good cricket against topsides. I just pray that we play to our potential at least for one day and return home with some amount of pride," said Mashud.

Mashud however pointed out that to do well against Kenya his team's batting had to click.

"Our batting has remained a

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