

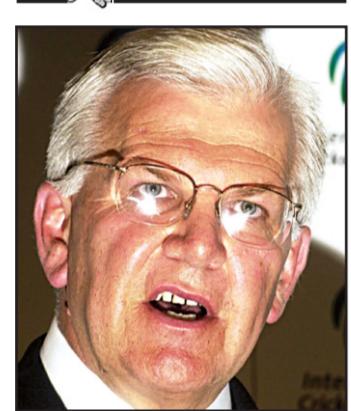


Did U Know?

Basketball was invented in 1891 by James Naismith. He set out to invent a game to occupy students between the football and baseball seasons.

What to WATCH

ESPN & TEN Sports
England v Pakistan
Fourth ODI
Live at 7:30 pm



Malcolm Speed

(ICC chief executive)
"One thing we need to bear in mind is on-field decisions have been made by umpires for 300 years. That is one of the features of the game which has well and truly stood the test of time."
While cautioning against any hasty attempt to strip umpires of their powers following The Oval ball-tampering row last month.

Mehrab in, Javed out



SPORTS REPORTER

As predicted the national selectors excluded veteran opener Javed Omar to make way for young all-rounder Mehrab Hossain in the 14-member Bangladesh squad for next month's ICC Champions Trophy in India.

The 19-year-old Mehrab was the only new face in a team that is desperately looking for some solidity in the opening stand for the second best glamorous one-day event after the World Cup.

Javed apart, all-rounder Alok Kapali, wicketkeeper Mushfiqur Rahim and middle-order batsman Tushar Imran were also omitted from the team that played in the trip to Africa last month.

Chief selector Faruque Ahmed announced the team yesterday outside the Sher-e-Bangla National Stadium indoor facilities where he confirmed that injured skipper Habibul Bashar would be fully fit well

before the start of the tournament to be held on October-November.

All the discussions regarding the team selection, however, centred on Javed Omar as many believed that the time has come to give the opener, who has been in and out of the team for a long time, a clear message about his one-day fate.

But Faruque was not ready to write off the right-hander's career even though he was contradicting his own comments.

"We don't want to look back as we are looking for a genuine opening combination before the next World Cup. The opening (combination) is a real headache for the team," said Faruque who immediately added "his (Javed's) World Cup dream was not shattered as he

is not out of the race".

Since his debut in one-day internationals in 1995 against India at Sharjah, Javed played 53 matches intermittently and was last ignored from the one-day side for the second leg of the Africa trip along with Kapali after a string of poor scores.

The selectors, however, were very confident about the future of Mehrab, a left-handed batsman who also bowls very useful left-arm spin, and were hopeful that he will impress them like the two all-rounders Forhad Reza and Sakib Al Hasan, both of whom debuted in the tours to Zimbabwe and Kenya.

"What attracted us most about Mehrab was his controlled batting. We have a lot of hard-hitting batsmen in the squad and his role would be to play as an anchorman at the top of the order," explained the former national skipper.

"He is only 19 but we are really impressed by his maturity which he has shown in his performance over the last two years in different

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SQUAD

Habibul Bashar (captain), Shahriar Nafees (vice-captain), Khaled Mashud, Mohammad Rafique, Mohammad Ashraful, Aftab Ahmed, Mashrafe Bin Mortaza, Rajin Saleh, Abdur Razzaq, Syed Rasel, Shahadat Hossain, Forhad Reza, Sakib Al Hasan and Mehrab Hossain Jr.



PHOTO: STAR

A WARM WELCOME: Bangladesh captain Habibul Bashar (C) is flanked by young all-rounders Mehrab Hossain (L) and Sakib Al Hasan after Mehrab's inclusion in the ICC Champions Trophy squad at the Mirpur Sher-e-Bangla National Stadium yesterday.

Dravid seeks revenge



PTI, Bangalore

India would seek to avenge its one-day series loss to the West Indies when the two teams meet in the upcoming cricket tri-series in Malaysia, captain Rahul Dravid said on Thursday.

"We haven't done well against the West Indies in the last series. This is a good chance for us to correct that," Dravid said about the tri-series, also involving Australia.

"I think we are confident. I believe if we play some good cricket, we can get some good results".

Dravid said the event, beginning on September 12, is going to be a challenging series.

"Australia is obviously the best team in the world and it's exciting for

us to play against them there. They (Australia) have a very good, proven track record and then they play some very good cricket," he said at the conclusion of a nine-day "rolling camp" for the team here.

"Even though we are playing against two good teams (Australia and the West Indies), I think if we play good cricket, then we can get some good results".

He said the rolling camp had gone well and the boys are looking forward to play some hard cricket after the washed out tri-series in Sri Lanka.

Dravid said the two practice games slated at Chennai on Friday and the day after were aimed at giving the players match-practice and fine-tuning their rhythm, as the team does not expect any warm-up games before the event in Malaysia.

Meanwhile, describing the ball-tampering controversy involving the

Pakistan team as sad and disappointing, Dravid said it was now important that the issue reached a "right conclusion".

"It was a sad and disappointing event," Dravid said responding to a question as the nine-day rolling camp here ahead of the Malaysian tri-series.

"Nobody wants to see a match being forfeited," he said.

Pakistan were deemed to have forfeited the Oval Test after they refused to take the field in protest against the decision of umpire Darrell Hair to charge them with ball-tampering during the fourth day's play last month.

However, Dravid said it was time to move on from the controversy.

"I think we have got to move on from there. What's happened, has happened, we can't change it and

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BOA keeps its words

SPORTS REPORTER

Bangladesh Olympic Association (BOA) acting secretary general Kutubuddin Ahmed yesterday handed over cheques of Tk 60,000 each to the country's gold medallists at the recently concluded 10th South Asian Games.

The BOA had earlier promised to give the three gold medallists -- Shahjahan Ali Rony (50m breaststroke), Mahfuzur Rahman Mithu (110m hurdles) and Mizanur Rahman (taekwondo middle weight) -- Tk 10,000 per month for the next two years.

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Ready since he was nine



BISHWAJIT ROY

His father was his friend, philosopher and guide but unfortunately the man is no more to see son getting the ultimate reward -- a call-up to the Bangladesh squad.

"My father (Mossaddeq Hossain) would have been the happiest man today," was the first reaction of the 19-year-old Mehrab immediately after the national selectors included him in the 14-member squad for the ICC Champions Trophy yesterday.

The young cricketer from Dhaka, who lost his father this April, however was not surprised by his inclu-

sion in the team for the second biggest tournament after the World Cup.

"I was prepared since I have been playing cricket from the age of nine and have crossed one hurdle after the other quite successfully. I think confidence is the key to become successful in any field of work," said Mehrab, tipped as one of the promising players in the country for the last two years.

"For any player it is the ultimate goal to get a place in the national side and I am also not an exception. I know for a fact that performance is the only way to make the dream come true," he added.

Asked whether he loves to play as an opener or in the middle-order, the young man came up with a

tactical answer. "Yes, I love to face the new-ball but to me team interest comes first. I don't mind playing in the middle-order if my team requires," said Mehrab, who is also popular as a singer-composer in his circle.

Former Bangladesh captain Khaled Mahmud heaped praises on the promising player.

"I have never seen such a cool customer like Mehrab and that too at the age of only 19. He is a natural cricketer and can be an asset if we can handle him properly," said an excited Mahmud.

"He is not only a good player but also an honest soul which is very rare in our society," he added.

Qatar blank Bangladesh

Football

AFC.COM, Doha

Qatar maintained their 100 percent record with a 3-0 win over Bangladesh at the Al Gharafa Stadium here on Wednesday to confirm their place in the 2007 Asian Cup finals.

The Gulf side cruised to victory over the Group F whipping boys, taking a two-goal lead into the half-time break thanks to efforts from Hussain Yasser and Adel Lamy.

A third from Saad Al Shammari rounded out the win to give the Qataris a maximum 12 points from four games and leave Hong Kong and Uzbekistan to battle it out for second spot.

In the 52nd minute, Al Shammari

got on the score sheet with a close range shot after latching on to a pass delivered from just outside the Bangladesh box by the tireless Hussain Yasser. After receiving the ball, Al Shammari took a couple of strides before launching a bullet some five metres away from the goalline, giving Aminul no chance.

With no quality strikers up front, Bangladesh relied on a tight defence to quell the attacks of the Qatari forwards and midfielders, especially in the second half.

"I think Bangladesh played better today than what we saw in Chittagong. I hope they can improve themselves and play with commitment like they showed

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Qatar play Hong Kong on October 11 while Bangladesh clash with Uzbekistan on the same day in the fifth and penultimate round.

"I am fairly satisfied with the way we played today. It was not easy to be aggressive in such a warm and extremely humid conditions which made running and sprinting difficult. I think the players of both teams showed quite a bit of fight to play in such tough conditions," said Qatar coach Dzemaluddin Musovic.

"I think Bangladesh played better today than what we saw in Chittagong. I hope they can improve themselves and play with commitment like they showed

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BANG! Bangladesh central defender Rajani Kanta Barman (R) is locked in an aerial battle with Qatar's Sayed Ali al-Bashir during their 2007 Asian Cup qualifying match at the Al Gharafa Stadium in Doha on Wednesday.

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