

Star SPORT

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Claude regrets Jose problems

Paris Saint-Germain captain Claude Makelele said on Wednesday that he regretted criticising Jose Mourinho, his former coach at Chelsea, in his autobiography. "There were lots of misunderstandings," said 38-year-old Makelele, who worked under Mourinho between 2004 and 2007 at the Premier League club. "Before I left (Chelsea), there was a disagreement with Mourinho, but that happens between a player and his coach. "At the beginning, we drank together. The problem is that in the third year, he wanted to get all the credit for himself. No-one could be more famous than him."



PHOTO: ANISUR RAHMAN

TAKING AIM: Bangladesh captain Shikib Al Hasan (R) and left-arm spinner Abdur Razzak practise their fielding at the Sher-e-Bangla National Stadium yesterday.

Tamim makes a promise

BISHWAJIT ROY



As Bangladesh prepare for Saturday's last group match against formidable South Africa, vice-captain Tamim Iqbal issued a warning that the Tigers are yet to play their best cricket in this ICC Cricket World Cup.

"We are on the right track and moving forward to our target as we already have won three matches out of five as per our expectation. Everything is okay with the team, but still we believe that we are yet to play our best cricket in the tournament," stated Tamim while talking with reporters at the indoor facility of the Sher-e-Bangla National Stadium in Mirpur yesterday.

Many might fear the South African attack as the Proteas have a lot of variety in their bowling that has two fast bowlers like Dale Steyn and Morne Morkel and everybody is waiting eagerly to see how the Tigers take the challenge against them in their last Group B match.

"I think it's a good opportunity for us to show the world how good we are," said the dashing left-hander when asked whether they were scared about Steyn and Morkel.

Tamim however said that they were not reluctant after their two consecutive victo-

ries against England and Netherlands in Chittagong, rather everybody was hungry to improve the performance graph.

"The environment is really fantastic after those two wins but we are not reluctant. Yes, as per our target we won three matches but nobody is thinking that the job is done because we have also a target of qualifying for the quarterfinals stage. Honestly speaking, everybody is hungry for how they can improve their performance," informed Tamim.

"We want to finish our World Cup campaign in style. We are hopeful about doing that because we are now on the winning path," he added.

Bangladesh played four World Cups since 1999 but none of the Bangladeshi batsmen could achieve a three-digit, and interestingly even a hundred-run partnership didn't come their way, but the confident Tamim promised that at least a hundred-run partnership would be seen in this World Cup to break the jinx.

"For the last two days I heard about this matters many times. And I also want to make it happen. You know I also dream of a hundred. I can promise you that at least you will see a hundred-run partnership in this World Cup," promised Tamim.

Tamim was confident because he was hardly bothered about his form.

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SA at full strength

CRICINFO, Dhaka



South Africa expect to be back to full strength for their final group match against Bangladesh on Saturday.

AB de Villiers, Imran Tahir and Dale Steyn have recovered from their respective injuries and will undergo fitness tests on Friday to confirm their availability.

"We will have a fully fit 15-man squad to choose from," Mohammed Moosajee, the team manager, said in Dhaka. "It's been a busy couple of days managing everyone but they're all fine now."

De Villiers strained a muscle in his left thigh during the match against India in Nagpur five days ago and was rested for the

game against Ireland on Tuesday. Moosajee said his rehabilitation was "progressing well," and he should be able to take to the field on Saturday. There is no update on his stiff back, which has prevented him from wicketkeeping in the last three matches he played. South Africa used Morne van Wyk behind the stumps and it's likely that he will continue in that role with De Villiers returning as a specialist batsman.

Leg-spinner Tahir fractured his left thumb while taking a catch of his own bowling against England two weeks ago. Although the injury was not on his bowling hand, he was advised ten days rest and the selection committee decided to enforce the period immediately after the diagnosis was made. They could have risked playing Tahir against India and left him out of the matches against Ireland and Bangladesh.

"Strictly speaking, ten days would be tomorrow, so there is no reason why he shouldn't be considered for the Bangladesh match," Moosajee said. Tahir's fitness test will also include fielding drills and batting in the nets to ensure that he is not in any danger of aggravating the injury.

Steyn sustained a small niggle on his side while bowling against Ireland. He completed four overs in his first

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Tigers to tweak against Proteas

MOHAMMAD ISAM



It will be 'horses for courses' for the Tigers in their last World Cup group B game as head coach Jamie Siddons has said that the South Africa team combination will play a role in the Bangladesh team selection.

Bangladesh have won back-to-back games against England and the Netherlands over the past week, but the think-tank used two different line-ups. Shahrar Nafees and Sohrwardi Shuvo came in to replace Rokibul Hasan and Naeem Islam but while the first was due to form, the latter was to make sure the Dutch right-handed batsmen were given the full left-arm spin treatment.

Siddons said yesterday that the only change in the team will come up when they sit to envisage the opposition's batting line-up.

"They (South Africa) have all-round strength. They have a very good fielding team and a very strong batting line-up. In their bowling, they have two great quicks and some excellent young all-rounders. But so are we, we have got a good balanced team," said Siddons during training at the Sher-e-Bangla National Stadium in Mirpur.

"We'll look at their make-up, try and predict what they pick and pick our spinners according to that. Whether we pick two lefties and two righties or three left-arm spinners yet I'm not sure but definitely two fast bowlers and the batting line-up will stay the same," added the Australian coach, who also confirmed that the team won't change if West Indies end up beating England, thus ensuring Bangladesh's quarterfinal qualification.

He said that he would keep an eye on the game at Chennai, promising to party if it goes his team's

way. "Definitely I will keep an eye on it. I have a party to go and I'm sure the players will also watch the game. But we need to stay focused for the next game, that's the most important thing," he said.

"If the West Indies win, we will party tonight

and focus on the next day. I don't really care how we go through. Everyone is relying on other results in some way or the other, so why not us?"

Siddons also pointed out that the Tigers are

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TODAY'S MATCHES

Match	Time	Venue
Ireland v Netherlands	10:00am	Kolkata
Sri Lanka v New Zealand	3:00pm	Mumbai



WEST INDIANS FOR A DAY: A large crowd watch the England-West Indies match on a giant screen at the TSC junction yesterday, in the hope of a Caribbean victory that will take Bangladesh through to the quarters. (R) Nearby, a young boy blows a vuvuzela while leaning on the iconic Swadheenata sculpture.

PHOTOS: STAR



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New Zealand - Sri Lanka

Today's match seems unimportant for both the teams as they already qualified for quarterfinal. New Zealand leads the Group-A points table with eight points as a result of four wins and a loss from five matches. Whereas Sri Lanka are third in the points table with seven points having won three of their five matches. In World Cups, the two sides have met on seven occasions. Sri Lanka lead New Zealand 4-3. The co-hosts possess the best Net Run Rate in their group (+2.705) leading up to their final group clash.

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