

Star SPORT

Sentence served

England manager Fabio Capello restored John Terry as his permanent captain for the third time after saying the Chelsea defender had learned from his off-field mistakes. Terry was stripped of the armband 13 months ago following revelations that he had an alleged affair with a former girlfriend of England teammate Wayne Bridge. Capello said at a Wembley media briefing Saturday: "I have decided that John Terry, after one year of punishment, will again be the permanent captain. I think one year's punishment is enough."



PHOTO: ANISUR RAHMAN

South Africa leg-spinner Imran Tahir takes a walk out of Hotel Sheraton with his wife yesterday.

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Changes underway Sachin's to wait

BISHWAJIT ROY



It is normal practice that the authorities concerned and the cricket pundits will all take a long look into their project every four years. When goals are set, they are usually with one time frame in mind; in this case from one World Cup to another and accordingly a new plan and strategy will take place, so that one can go ahead with a new dream for their country.

The Bangladesh Cricket Board (BCB) is no exception as the game's governing body is all set to review the performances of national team at the ongoing ICC Cricket World Cup as well as the individuals who are related to the team.

The Tigers made an early exit from the showcase event with an ignominious 206-run defeat against South Africa in their last Group B match on Saturday and at the aftermath of the defeat everybody is curious to know the fate of head coach Jamie Siddons who will fulfill his four-year cycle in June this year.

According to sources, there is very little chance for the Australian to get a third time extension from the board, so some changes are on the cards.

It's not only the coaching staff and selectors but there is also a whispering that the changes may be bought to the top post of the board because many believed that the board desperately needs a dynamic leader who can start with a new vision to take the game into new heights.

As per their pre-tournament target Bangladesh won three games but failed to reach the quarterfinals of the mega competition mainly because of the failure of the

batmen. Shakib Al Hasan's men coloured their achievement by hitting their lowest ODI total of 58 against West Indies which was followed by another pathetic batting display against South Africa against whom they were bundled out for 78.

"The board's technical committee will meet tomorrow to discuss on the national team's performance in the World Cup. We must review everybody's performance to make a fresh start. I think our bowling and fielding was not too bad but the batting performance was really a concern for us," said BCB's media committee chairman Jalal Yunus yesterday.

"The board feels that result-wise our performance was not bad and we are satisfied with that. But we must review the performance of our head coach (Jamie Siddons) because our batting was really poor throughout the tournament and we didn't expect such poor batting. But everything is under process to extend the tenure of Julian Fountain (fielding coach) and Ian Pont (bowling coach). But team psychologist (Soumendra Saha) failed to make any impact in the team," he added.

There is also a very slim chance that Rafiqul Alam-led selection panel get another extension.

The technical committee will also discuss the Bangladesh A team which will leave Dhaka on April 4 for a month-long tour to South Africa while Yunus informed that it is all but confirmed that Ross Turner, the Cricket Australia's International Development Program Manager, is all set to take over the charge of the GP-BCB Cricket Academy as the head coach.

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AFP, Chennai



Sachin Tendulkar's hopes of scoring his 100th international hundred in Sunday's World Cup clash against the West Indies ended in disappointment when he was dismissed for just two.

Some 38,000 fans had packed into the Chidambaram Stadium in expectation of seeing the 'Little Master' add to his tally of record achievements.

But his innings lasted only four balls when he clipped fast bowler Ravi Rampaul to wicketkeeper Devon Thomas and Tendulkar walked off to a stunned silence from the crowd.

India captain Mahendra Singh Dhoni won the toss and batted in the Group B clash and there were raucous cheers from fans as it meant they would be guaranteed an early glimpse of Tendulkar.

A trademark clip off his legs for two off his first ball from Rampaul suggested Tendulkar, who moved to 99 hundreds (51 in Tests and 48 in one-day internationals) against South Africa last time out, remained in good form.

He then calmly dealt with the next two deliveries, neither resulting in a run for the batsman.

But then the fourth ball he faced leapt from just short of a length from outside off-stump and straightened a touch.

Tendulkar stabbed at the ball, taking his bottom hand of the bat handle, before it flew through to Thomas.

Rampaul and the West Indies let out frenzied appeals but Australian umpire Steve Davis was unmoved.

However, after a brief pause, Tendulkar walked off with India eight for one in the first over.

Tendulkar's next chance to score his 100th century will come in Thursday's quarterfinal at Ahmedabad where India will face either champions Australia or fellow co-hosts Sri Lanka.

Test Tigers with Tests

SAKEB SUBHAN



Some will say the World Cup was a moderate success for Bangladesh, while others will remember the global event for the ignominy of two sub-100 totals in the same tournament, an unfortunate feat that has been equalled only by Namibia in their only tournament till date. The fact remains, however, that the Cup is over, and the Tigers have missed a golden opportunity to do something special in a World Cup in front of their own crowds.

Bangladesh have won three out of their six matches, an outcome the team management stated that they would be happy with before the tournament started. However, they also said that they were aiming to reach the quarterfinals; something that they have not achieved. Were expectations too high? Head coach Jamie Siddons said as much in a press meet in the dark days following the West Indies defeat.

If hopes were too high, there were certainly reasons behind it. In 2010, Bangladesh repeatedly stretched England both at home and away and beat them for the first time in Bristol, whitewashed New Zealand and dispatched Zimbabwe 3-1 at home. There was, however, a sign hidden away

among all the successes that all was not well with Bangladesh cricket -- their Test results.

All the positives came from limited-overs matches, but in Tests, a format by dint of which they dine at international cricket's top table, the results have been uniformly abysmal. Yes, Tamim Iqbal may have set the grounds of England alight with his luminous strokeplay, but the team still lost all seven of the matches they played last year.

At this point, one might ask why results in Test matches should be any indicator of performances in other formats. The answer is that Test cricket tests players like no other format can. There are rarely any upsets in Test matches, simply because the vast scope of two innings spread across five days of cricket does not allow for a weaker team to upstage a stronger one as the latter will, at one stage or the other, have the opportunity to flex their superior muscles.

Tests provide a clear picture of the standing of a team, and Bangladesh have regularly, even during their best years, come out second-best in Test matches. It should, therefore, come as no surprise that the Tigers have exited the World Cup with tails between legs, while superior Test teams have gone through.

A painful reality that all their supporters must now come to terms with is that Bangladesh do not yet have the skill base, especially in their batting, to consistently beat teams that are playing well. Their bowling, in the right conditions can still deliver victories, as it did against England in Chittagong, but those victories come in spite of woeful batting.

This was brought into clear focus in their two below-100 totals. One-day cricket gives players some very specific roles; Tamim will come and play his shots, Mahmudullah Riyad and Naeem Islam will have to explode in batting Powerplays, Shakib Al Hasan will have to shore up the middle-order. Competence in Tests will make these same players adapt to different situations, learn how to see off bowlers who seem to be on fire instead of surrendering meekly to them, and most importantly, win small battles in order to win the war. Success at Test level requires discipline -- a trait that most observers will say the Tigers lacked over the last month.

The World Cup has come and gone, and now the focus must shift to the longer form of the game. That is not to say that the focus should only be on the international stage; the domestic game is in far worse shape. Domestic first-

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Yuvraj Singh acknowledges the crowd's applause after scoring a hundred against West Indies at the MA Chidambaram Stadium in Chennai yesterday.

PHOTO: AFP

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by: Plusmo

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