



Bangladesh opener Tamim Iqbal drives the ball during his knock of 72 against BCB XI in a practice match at the Sheikh Abu Naser Stadium in Khulna yesterday. Tamim will be looking to do something similar in the upcoming ODIs against the West Indies.

PHOTO: FIROZ AHMED

Shakib-less Tigers fall in warm-up

SAKEB SUBHAN from Khulna

The Bangladesh national team suffered a setback in the lead-up to the five-match ODI series against the West Indies, stumbling to a five-wicket loss to BCB XI in their warm-up match at the Sheikh Abu Naser Stadium in Khulna yesterday.

Worryingly for the Tigers, the match provided a glimpse into what life may be like without star all-rounder Shakib Al Hasan, who will miss the first two ODIs due to a shin injury suffered during the second Test against the West Indies.

Before the match began, both teams observed a one-minute silence to pay homage to the lives lost in the garment factory fire in Ashulia and flyover collapse in Chittagong on Saturday.

The Tigers, who scored 272 for eight after being given an excellent start by Tamim Iqbal, seemed to lack the fire-power in the middle -- a role Shakib has performed consistently over the last five

years -- as most batsmen got starts but failed to convert them into more substantial knocks. Shakib's absence was again felt when Bangladesh were defending a considerable total against a second-string side, and they ended up looking toothless allowing BCB XI to recover from 188 for five in the 38th over to post the win with five balls to spare. Shakib's tidy and incisive left-arm spin and bowling acumen were obviously missed out in the middle.

Chief selector Akram Khan admitted that the Magura all-rounder's absence would obviously be felt. "It is very difficult, because for the past five years or so he has put in the service of two players -- bowling ten overs as well as being a batting performer. So he will obviously be missed. Not many players have performers like him," said Akram.

As for his replacement, Akram said that it is a toss-up between a bowler and an all-rounder.

"We are still thinking about it, and we have talked to the captain about it," Akram revealed. "We saw the match today

and tomorrow (Wednesday) there will be another match against a good team (West Indies), and since all players are here, there will be no problem in selecting a replacement. We will sit again with the captain tomorrow. There are two options -- it might be a batsman or an all-rounder."

There had also been speculation that Shakib might be out of action for more than the first two ODIs. "If he is not medically fit then we will not take risks, whether it's Shakib or any other player. The sooner he is back, the better it will be for us. It depends on what the doctors say."

Back to the match, the BCB XI rode on strong innings from opener Imrul Kayes, young middle-order batsman Mominul Haque and a late, winning burst from Ziaur Rahman and Forhad Reza. Kayes (53 off 69) built a 71-run opening stand with skipper Jahurul Islam and a 41-run third wicket stand with Mominul before being caught behind off Mahmudullah Riyad in the 25th over. Mominul (45 off 56) then shared a 48-run fifth wicket

stand with Asif Ahmed, but the duo's fall within 20 runs of each other opened the window for the Tigers to sneak in.

But then Zia (51 off 54) and Forhad (38 off 29) stepped in with an unbeaten 86-run stand for the sixth wicket to take the second-string side home. They had a slice of luck when Zia was dropped on the square leg fence by Rubel Hossain in the 48th over off Mashrafe Mortaza, and that is all they needed as Forhad flicked Rubel's first delivery of the 50th over away to the square leg fence to seal the win.

Earlier, after being sent in to bat Tamim scored a brilliant 67-ball 72 studded with 13 boundaries, four of which came off consecutive deliveries in the 19th over bowled by Forhad. But after Tamim went trying to cut an Asif Ahmed delivery too close to his body in the 21st over, the rest of his national teammates failed to continue with the impetus, all getting off to starts but not converting them into something more substantial. Naeem Islam (31), captain Mushfiqur Rahim (35) and

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Ole inducted into Hall of Fame

Former Norway and Manchester United striker Ole Gunnar Solskjaer, who enjoyed a glittering career as a player before becoming a successful manager, is the first to be inducted into the country's Hall of Fame, it was announced on Monday.

Solskjaer, best known for winning the Champions League for United with a last-gasp goal against Bayern Munich in the 1999 final, was named manager of the season after his Molde side won their second Norwegian championship



BCB goes ad-hoc

New body has new faces



SPORTS REPORTER

The National Sports Council (NSC) on Tuesday formed a 13-member ad-hoc committee for the Bangladesh Cricket Board (BCB) naming incumbent president Nazmul Hassan Papon as its chief.

The NSC issued the circular a day after the expiry of the BCB's elected executive committee, which completed its four-year term on Monday.

BCB's acting CEO Nizamuddin Chowdhury confirmed yesterday that they received the circular from the ruling body of country's sports, which also asked the ad-hoc body to hand over the reign to an elected body within the next three months.

There had been widespread speculation till Monday that the NSC was going to extend the tenure of the present body. But the scenario changed following a meeting between the BCB president and the sports minister at the latter's office yesterday.

Papon however was not available to make any comment despite repeated attempts from The Daily Star. It was understood that Papon, a selected representative from the government in an otherwise elected body, preferred the ad-hoc committee.

The 13-member committee includes five members from the last elected committee. They are Mahbubul Anam, Ahmed Sajjadul Alam, Enayet Hossain Siraj, Jalal Yunus and Gazi Ashraf Hossain.

Afzalur Rahman Sinha, a reputed organiser who was not in the administration scene for quite sometime, returns to the fore along with Mohammedan official Lokman Hossain Bhuiyan, better known for his association with football. The BCB president's close associate and joint secretary of Abahani's cricket committee Dr. Ismail Haider Mallick, chairman of Gazi Tank Cricketers Gazi Golam Mortaza and general secretary of Chittagong Sports Association AJM Nasir are the surprise entrants. The committee also includes two former Bangladesh captains -- Naimur Rahman and Khaled Mahmud.

Dewan Shafiu Arefin Tutul is the most significant name excluded from the list. The youth and sports secretary of the ruling party was the most influential director during the tenure of the last elected body. He was the unofficial leader of the divisional and district councillors and played a vital role in revoking the councillorship of the players from the BCB constitution.

Tutul also headed the BCB's constitution amendment

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'Win will motivate us'

SPORTS REPORTER from Khulna

While Bangladesh and BCB XI were locked in a warm-up battle at the Sheikh Abu Naser Stadium here yesterday, West Indies held a practice session at the nearby indoor facilities, with some players peeping into the ground to catch a slice of the action in the middle.

One of them was talented all-rounder Andre Russell who was

part of the influx of one-day specialists brought in after West Indies won the Test series 2-0.

West Indies are scheduled to play their only warm-up game against the BCB XI today before the ODI series gets underway on Friday. Russell, a fast-bowling all-rounder unlucky not to hold a regular place in a rapidly improving outfit full of stars, fronted up to the press to answer some questions.

"Winning the Test series will motivate us going into the ODI

series," said Russell when asked whether the Test victory would be a boost. "We hope to have a good start, winning the first one or the first two and get the momentum going into the third game. It's going to be a different environment, different type of wickets in Dhaka. The guys coming in, myself and others, when we play tomorrow [Wednesday] in the practice game, we will try and get used to the conditions as soon as possible."

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ANDRE RUSSELL

Siddikur fails in European venture

SPORTS REPORTER

Siddikur Rahman missed out on a European Tour card for the next season as he ended the four day initial qualification at the PGA Catalunya Resort in Spain in 109th position.

Siddikur finished the fourth round with even-par (70) yesterday for an aggregate of 7-over-par 291, missing the qualifying mark by quite a few shots.

The top 70 players and

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Lucky 12 return with lessons, memories



SPORTS REPORTER

After a week-long training stint at the Manchester United Soccer School in England, twelve budding booters from Bangladesh return with a dream of playing for the Bangladesh national team at an international level.

The twelve, who were taken to Manchester as part of the Airtel Rising Stars programme, expressed their desire during the certificate handing ceremony at a city hotel yesterday. They shared their experiences of Old Trafford after being

picked from a nationwide search amongst 60,000 youth footballers over a period of four months. They returned home on Monday afternoon.

All of them spoke of their excitement at having met with Manchester United players like the Brazilian defender Rafael, the English center-back Rio Ferdinand, goalkeeper David de Gea and a number of youth players. They also watched Manchester United take on Queens Park Rangers from the stands at Old Trafford. The twelve also visited a number of sports museums and were given a chance to shop at the United Shopping Mall.

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BFF names 20 for SL tournament



SPORTS REPORTER

The Bangladesh Football Federation (BFF) yesterday announced a 20-member Under-23 national squad for the four-nation Mahinda Rajapaksa International Football Tournament in Sri Lanka.

Coach Saiful Bari Titu almost picked the same squad which played the Safal Pokhra Cup in Nepal last month. Titu brought only one change bringing in winger Towhidul Alam Towhid in place of striker Toklish Ahmed.

Bangladesh will take on Pakistan in the opening match of HE Mahinda Rajapaksa International Football Tournament on December 3 in Nawalapitiya, in Sri Lanka

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Nat'l C'ships start today



SPORTS REPORTER

The Citycell 26th National Swimming Championships gets underway from today at the Syed Nazrul Islam National Swimming Complex in Mirpur. Nearly 500 swimmers will be fighting for 42 gold medals amid the uncertainty of using the electronic scoreboard.

Information minister Hasanul Haque Innu will declare the three-day meet open as chief guest while chief executive of sponsor Citycell Mehbub Chowdhury will be present as special guest.

"A total of 491 competitors including 134 women will be participating in the championship which will feature 19 events each for men and women, three events in diving and one event in water polo," informed Bangladesh Swimming Federation general secretary Mahbubur Rahman at a press conference at the NSC conference-room yesterday.

"Till today (Monday) the electronic board has yet to be functional as the repair works are going on but we expect that we will get it functional before the start of the meet," said Rahman.

He also informed that any swimmer setting a national record, will be awarded Tk 30,000 per record.

CityCell will provide Tk 10 lakh out of an estimated budget of 15 lakh.



Milk for Good