



Team BJMC players celebrate their record-equalling 7-0 victory over Uttar Baridhara Club in their Bangladesh Premier League match at the Bangabandhu National Stadium yesterday.

PHOTO: STAR

'All quite happy with security plan'

SPORTS REPORTER

Representatives from five nations and the Federation of International Cricketers' Association (FICA) attended a forum organised by the Bangladesh Cricket Board (BCB) at a city hotel to discuss the BCB's security plans for the upcoming ICC World Twenty20, scheduled to begin in March.

The BCB had earlier sent its security plan for the extravaganza to the International Cricket Council (ICC). The forum was an opportunity for the nations to express their opinions with regards to the plan.

According to BCB president Nazmul Hassan Papon, all participants of the forum expressed their satisfaction about the plan.

"The ICC sent our security plan to all participating nations and those nations who wanted to discuss it further were given an opportunity to do so today (Monday)," said Papon.

"We presented the entire plan to them after which there was a question-and-answer session. They gave us certain suggestions and we told them we would incorporate them," he added.

The president further stated that none of the participants had asked for any 'major modifications'.

"Because there was a political instability, something which has drastically reduced now, we had created a very strong security plan. I thought they were all quite happy," said Papon.

Tendulkar's new role

PTI, New Delhi

Indian cricket icon Sachin Tendulkar will mentor 11 emerging players, including Parvez Rasool and Unmukt Chand, as part of an initiative by a sports apparel giant.

Tendulkar would be sharing his experience with Unmukt Chand, Parvez Rasool, Vijay Zol, Manan Vohra, Manpreet Juneja, Rush Kalaria, Chirag Khurana, Akshdeep Nath, Vikas Mishra, Sarfaraz Khan and Aparajith Baba.

"This is a great initiative to support the future of this sport, which encourages aspiring athletes to follow their passion and be part of an extraordinary league. Mentoring these talented young cricketers will let me be close to what I love and give back to the sport," Tendulkar, who retired from international cricket last year, said at an event.

DHAKA TUESDAY JANUARY 27, 2014, e-mail: sports@thedailystar.net

Seven-star BJMC

SPORTS REPORTER



Team BJMC equalled the biggest margin victory in the history of professional football league when they handed ten-man Uttar Baridhara Club a 7-0 defeat in the Bangladesh Premier League encounter at the Bangabandhu National Stadium yesterday.

With the second win in four matches, BJMC leapfrogged to fourth position of the ten-team table with six points while Uttar Baridhara remained at eighth position with two creditable draws against Mohammedan SC and Chittagong Abahani.

Before yesterday's match, the biggest 7-0 margin victory belonged to

Mohammedan (4 times), Abahani and Farashganj SC one time each. Mohammedan defeated Chittagong 7-0 in 2007, and they beat Muktiyoddha Sangsad in 2009, Arambagh KS and Shukhtara Jubo Sangsad in 2010 by the same scoreline. Abahani notched a 7-0 win over Rahmatganj SC in 2007 while Farashganj SC defeated Khulna Abahani by 7-0 goals in 2009.

BJMC were bolstered by the return of Guinean hitman Ismael Bangoura and they caused havoc in Baridhara defence. Things got worse for the promoted side when defender Saeedur Rahman picked up his second yellow card in the 19th minute.

With a man advantage Team BJMC took the lead in the 25th minute with a strike

from Samson Iliasu before Bangoura doubled the lead in the 34th minute.

Former national midfielder Abdullah Parvez put on a commanding performance in the midfield by setting up two goals and scoring the third goal. Parvez, who last played for national team in 2006, nicely curled from 25 yards with his favourite left foot to make it 3-0 in the 34th minute while Aminur Rahman Sajib widened margin with a header five minutes before the break.

After resumption, Bangoura struck his second goal in the 57th minute and BJMC looked relaxed the rest of time before Iliasu, availing a fumble from the opposition defence, made it 6-0 in the 90th minute while Sajib sealed the biggest win in the stoppage-time with a neat volley.

Taijul spins North to victory

SPORTS REPORTER



Young slow left-arm Taijul Islam bowled North Zone to their first win of the Bangladesh Cricket League as his side completed a comprehensive seven wicket win over Tamim Iqbal's East Zone on the third day of the second round at the BKSP yesterday.

Taijul, who had taken seven wickets in the first innings of the match, took five for 51 in the third innings yesterday and ended with career-best match figures of 12 for 118.

In the day's other game, Abdur Razzak's South Zone bowled out Mahmudullah Riyad's Central Zone for 374 and were set a target of 310. The Southerners finished on 159 for 3 yesterday, with 151 runs still to get.

EAST ZONE V NORTH ZONE

Tamim Iqbal's East Zone failed to take advantage of their first innings lead. East Zone were pegged back by some good spin bowling from Taijul and could only add 60 runs to their overnight score of 79 for 3 before being bundled out. Taijul continued his good run from the previous innings and ran through East Zone's middle order.

The Northerners were set a comfortable target of 162, which they ambled to with ease. Naeem Islam top-scored with an unbeaten 69. **CENTRAL ZONE V SOUTH ZONE** Central's main run-getter, Marshall Ayub, could add just four runs to his overnight score of 122 before being bowled by Abdur Razzak early in the day. His wicket exposed Central's tail and from their overnight score of 318 for 5 they were bowled out for 374.

South Zone's chase of 310 was powered by Imrul Kayes (74) and Anamul Haque (67), who shared a 113-run stand for the third wicket. The Southerners now face a tricky situation on the final day as they have to chase down 150 runs with seven wickets in hand.

SCORES IN BRIEF

EAST ZONE: 270 and 139 (Nafees 37; Taijul 5-51, Shuvassish 4-37)

NORTH ZONE: 248 and 167 for 3 (Naeem 69 not out; Dhiman Ghosh 2-23)

Result: North Zone won by seven wickets

Player of the match: Taijul Islam

CENTRAL ZONE: 165 and 374 (Marshall 126, Shamsur 65; Abdur Razzak 4-103)

SOUTH ZONE: 230 and 159 for 3 (Imrul 74, Anamul 67; Riyad 2-64)

Azhar scripts dramatic win

AFP, Sharjah



Monday, levelling the series 1-1.

Set a daunting 302 to win in a possible 59 overs, Pakistan owed their successful chase to Ali's fifth Test century (103) as he and Misbahul Haq shared a 109-run stand for the fifth wicket.

Misbah, who finished with 68 not out, hit the winning single with nine balls to spare in fading light.

Ali, ironically dropped for the first two Tests, hit paceman Suranga Lakmal for a boundary, then twice took two to reach his hundred off 133 balls.

He hit six boundaries before falling caught behind with just seven still needed to win.

Pakistan's chances seemed to have faded away at 107-3 at tea, as they needed 195 in the last 35 overs. But Ali upped the tempo during a rapid 89-

run partnership in 14.5 overs with Sarfraz Ahmed (48) which left Sri Lanka on the defensive.

Even when Sarfraz was out, caught behind off paceman Shaminda Eranga, Pakistan needed 116. Sarfraz hit four boundaries and a six off 46 balls.

But Misbah supported Ali as Pakistan achieved their second best chase in all Test cricket, behind the 314 they chased against Australia in Karachi in 1994.

Sri Lanka had won the second Test in Dubai by nine wickets while the first Test ended in a draw in Abu Dhabi.

With the series tied, Pakistan also remained unbeaten in five series in the United Arab Emirates, which has become their home since security fears -- sparked in the wake of attacks on the Sri Lankan team bus in Lahore in 2009 -- forced them to play at neutral venues.

Earlier, Sri Lanka were bowled out for 214 in their second innings, but not before their batsmen had kept Pakistan at bay on the morning of the fifth and final day.

SCOREBOARD

SRI LANKA: First innings 428-9 declared (Perera 95, Mathews 91, Sangakkara 52; Junaid 3-81, Talha 3-99)

PAKISTAN: First innings 341 (Manzoor 52, Shehzad 147, Younis 17, Misbah 63, Shafiq 18, Sarfraz 5, Rehman 2, Talha 2, Junaid 16, extras 11; Herath 5-125, Perera 1-71, Eranga 4-60)

SRI LANKA: Second innings 214 (Karunaratne 8, Silva 36, Sangakkara 8, M Jayawardene 46, Chandimal 13, Mathews 31, P Jayawardene 49, extras 10; Talha 3-65, Rehman 4-56, Ajmal 3-53)

Fall of wickets: 1-13, 2-37, 3-66, 4-89, 5-127, 6-189, 7-203, 8-203, 9-209

PAKISTAN: Second innings 302 for 5 (Manzoor 21, Shehzad 21, Azhar 103, Younis 29, Sarfraz 48, Misbah 68 not out, extras 11; : Lakmal 3-79, Eranga 1-68, Mathews 1-48)

Fall of wickets: 1-35, 2-48, 3-97, 4-186, 5-295

Result: Pakistan won by five wickets and drawn 3-match series 1-1. Player-of-the-match: Azhar Ali. Player-of-the-series: Angelo Mathews.

SRI LANKA TESTS

Shamsur blooded, Imrul brought back

SPORTS REPORTER



Frequent changes compromise the stability of a team, and that was the mantra the national selectors seemed to follow when announcing a 14-member squad yesterday for the first Test of the two-match series against Sri Lanka starting from January 27 at the Sher-e-Bangla National Stadium in Mirpur.

There were no big surprises when the Faruque Ahmed-led selection panel declared the team, but there were two necessary changes as they picked the uncapped Shamsur Rahman and one-time regular Imrul Kayes based on their domestic form, thus increasing the competition to be Tamim Iqbal's opening partner. The duo replaced opener Anamul Haque and middle-order batsman Naeem Islam from the previous squad that played New Zealand in October at home.

If just the results of the last series -- a creditable draw -- are taken into consideration it is hard to see justification for change, but the opening position has long been a troublesome one and it compelled Faruque to go searching for a solution ahead of the Lankan challenge.

"Shamsur Rahman's and Imrul Kayes's form over the last six months has certainly been a factor in picking them over Anamul and Naeem and these two are not newcomers. The team management will decide who among these two will play. We have kept a back-up opener. Our input will be there if the management wants to know why we picked them both," explained Faruque, for whom it was the first major assignment in his second term as chief selector.

"I still feel Bijoy [Anamul Haque] has a lot of potential. He was the best option when the selectors last picked a Test team. But over the last six months, some experienced batsmen have done better," he added.

A 267-run knock in the BCL first round definitely played a part in the elevation of Shamsur, who has also performed well in limited-overs cricket. Imrul, who played his last Test

against West Indies in October 2011, might have a poor average of 17.15, but the left-hander has performed consistently in the domestic circuit.

Naeem was justifiably dropped as the selectors favoured Marshall Ayub at number three although the right-hander did not set the world alight in the last series. His retention is a sign of the selectors' commitment to stability.

Naeem effectively lost his place to Mahmudullah Riyad as the selectors considered Riyad's off-spin bowling.

"We considered Riyad ahead of Naeem as we believe these two and Nasir are similar players. Naeem did well in the last ODI series. He is still in our thoughts. We also tried to give the captain an extra off-spin option with Shohag Gazi as you know Sri Lanka have three left-handers in the line-up," said Faruque.

The chief selector said that pace bowling all-rounder Forhad Reza was also a topic of prolonged discussion because of his strong form in domestic cricket. "We have kept three seamers (Rubel Hossain, Robiul Islam and Al Amin Hossain) and two spinners (Shohag Gazi and Abdur Razzak); the team management can make a good combination from these bowlers."

The "experience" and "lack of options" saw Abdur Razzak keep his position in the Test squad though there has been a debate over the left-arm spinner's ability in longer-version cricket.

"There are not many left-arm spinners who we can consider ahead of Abdur Razzak. We have young Taijul Islam who is bowling so well, but he is too young and just started playing first-class cricket. Saqlain Sajib is another prospect. Razzak's experience is a big factor, and he has bowled well in first-class cricket."

SQUAD

Mushfiqur Rahim (captain), Tamim Iqbal, Marshall Ayub, Shakib Al Hasan, Nasir Hossain, Mominul Haque, Shamsur Rahman, Mahmudullah Riyad, Imrul Kayes, Abdur Razzak, Shohag Gazi, Robiul Islam, Rubel Hossain and Al-Amin Hossain.



Imrul Kayes is back in contention for the contentious opener's slot after more than two years.

PHOTO: STAR

Opening slot in focus again

SPORTS REPORTER



A quality opening pair has long been one of Bangladesh's weakest links in Test cricket. It was evident in the last Test series against New Zealand in which Anamul Haque averaged just 12 runs per innings.

Finding the right partner for Tamim Iqbal was always going to be the major point of contention for the national selectors ahead of the Tests against Sri Lanka. They eventually went for the openers who performed best in domestic cricket -- Imrul Kayes and Shamsur Rahman -- this year.

While both Kayes -- who last played a Test in October 2011 -- and the uncapped Shamsur deserved their respective spots in the 14-member squad, history suggests that they will have to do something special to remain there.

In the last two years Bangladesh have used seven pairs of openers and have seen just two partnerships that crossed the 50-mark. Anamul, Nazimuddin, Shahriar Nafees, Imrul Kayes, Jahurul Islam and Junaed Siddique were all given opportunities alongside Tamim Iqbal at the top, but barely yielded satisfactory results. Tamim, with 221 runs in 58 innings, is the only opener to have shown stability. The partnership graphs paint a sordid picture as well.

Tamim and Imrul's opening pair is the only one to have crossed the thousand-run mark.

The positive aspect this time though is that both Imrul and Shamsur have had to struggle to make the team and have an equal opportunity of making the final eleven, which means that unlike before there will be a sense of competition.

With 655 runs, Imrul was one of the highest run-scorers in the Dhaka Premier League, performed in the longer-version practice games and in the ongoing Bangladesh Cricket League. Shamsur, on the other hand has been on the rise ever since he made his T20I debut in Zimbabwe last year and his brilliant double century in the BCL cemented his call-up. His temperament though is yet to be tested in the elite arena.

Breaking the openers' jinx is no doubt a necessity, but as importantly the Sri Lanka series will be an opportunity for one of these players to cement their spot in a Bangladesh side that is getting increasingly difficult to break through to.

Abahani, Usha win again

SPORTS REPORTER

Title contenders Abahani and Usha KC notched up their second successive wins in the Green Delta Insurance Premier Division Hockey League at the Maulana Bhasani Hockey Stadium yesterday.

Stopper Khorshedur Rahman struck five goals including a hat-trick as Abahani blanked Dhaka Wanderers Club 11-0, after leading the first half 2-0. National forward Pushkor Khisa Mimo and Rummon Sarker scored three and two goals respectively while Musa Miah netted one goal for Abahani, who had beaten Azad SC 5-1 in their first match.

In the second match of the day, Federation Cup champions Usha KC defeated Azad SC 5-1 having held 1-1 in the first half. Penalty corner specialist Mamunur Rahman Chayan struck three goals while Moinul Islam Koushik and Krishna Kumar netted one goal apiece for the Old Dhaka outfit, who came into the match on the back of 9-1 goal win against Wanderers Club.

Mir Mahbub Ali scored the lone goal for Azad.

Australians' T20 exams

AFP, Sydney

Cricket Australia on Monday challenged its Twenty20 squad to use the England series to fight for a place in the side heading to the short format's world championship.

Australia unveiled a 14-man squad for the three matches against England with George Bailey named captain. **SQUAD:** George Bailey (captain), Aaron Finch (vice-captain), Dan Christian, Nathan Coulter-Nile, Ben Cutting, James Faulkner, Josh Hazlewood, Moises Henriques, Glenn Maxwell, James Muirhead, Chris Lynn, Mitchell Starc, Matthew Wade, Cameron White.