

ZIMBABWE'S TOUR OF BD Three Tests after 7 years

SPORTS REPORTER



Bangladesh will begin their home series against Zimbabwe on October 26 this year with the first Test to be played at the Zahur Ahmed Chowdhury Stadium in Chittagong. The two teams will face off in three Tests and two ODIs during the month-long tour.

The second Test will take place at the same venue from November 4. After that, the teams will travel to Dhaka to play the last Test at the Sher-e-Bangla National Stadium. The SBNS will then host the first three ODIs on November 19, 21 and 23 respectively. For the last two ODIs the teams will return to Chittagong.

This is only the third time that Bangladesh will feature in a series involving three Tests. The first was against Pakistan in 2003 and the second against Sri Lanka back in 2007.

It will be an interesting series considering the fact that the Zimbabweans will be up against their former captain Heath Streak, currently contracted as Bangladesh's bowling consultant.

The series is also expected to be the first of at least six meetings between the two sides until 2022, as per the ICC's new Future Tours Programme schedule.

Each Test series is important for Bangladesh, the lowest-ranked Test team in the 10-team table, as they endeavour to rise up the ranking ladder, and they will have few better chances to win Test matches than hosting Zimbabwe.

Of the 11 Tests that the Tigers played against Zimbabwe they have won two, drawn three and lost six. Bangladesh are slightly ahead in the ODIs though, winning 31 out of the 58 matches played; at home the Tigers have won 17 and lost 11 ODIs.

Bangladesh is expected to play a number of three-Test series against New Zealand by 2022 as well. According to ESPNcricinfo Bangladesh will host New Zealand three times while they are scheduled to tour New Zealand in 2016-17, 2019, 2021 and 2022-23. The Tigers are also expected to play South Africa and Pakistan twice according to the new FTP.

The scheduling of the series means that the Tigers will get a month-long gap after they return from their tour of the West Indies, which will take place between August 20 and September 17.

ITINERARY	
Oct 26-30:	First Test in Chittagong
Nov 3-7:	Second Test in Chittagong
Nov 11-15:	Third Test in Dhaka
Nov 19:	First ODI, Dhaka
Nov 21:	Second ODI, Dhaka
Nov 23:	Third ODI, Dhaka
Nov 26:	Fourth ODI, Chittagong
Nov 28:	Fifth ODI, Chittagong



Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina is seen with members of the Bangladesh Cricket Association for the Physically Challenged who were rewarded yesterday for winning a T20 series in India last month. The PM handed over cheques of TK one lakh to each of the 17 member and also announced a donation of TK one crore to the association. Held in three different cities, the Bangladeshi contingent beat their Indian counterparts 2-1 to clinch the Taj Mahal trophy.

PHOTO: BSS

Just Dhaka and Ctg?

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The Bangladesh Cricket Board's decision to host the entire Zimbabwe series in only two cities -- Dhaka and Chittagong -- has brought to the fore an alarming question. With eight internationally recognised stadiums in the country and with a total of eight international games to be played, why is it that only a small portion of the nation gets the pie?

Of the six remaining -- Dhaka and Chittagong will host the matches -- there are at least three

cities which could easily have been a part of the series in October.

The Shaheed Chandu Stadium in Bogra made a great beginning in 2006 when it hosted Zimbabwe, Kenya and Sri Lanka that year. However, in terms of international success that was as far as Bogra went. The last international match played there was an ODI in December 2006.

The Sheikh Abu Naser Stadium in Khulna saw Abul Hasan create history by scoring a century after coming in to bat at number 10 in Test cricket and also witnessed Bangladesh notch two ODI wins against the West Indies back in

2012. The people of Khulna however, don't know when they can witness such feats again.

The Sylhet Divisional Stadium was renovated in quick time ahead of the ICC World T20. However, after the main event the remaining work at the picturesque ground seems to have slowed down. According to the board the stadium is still undergoing work with regards to its drainage system and hence will not be able to host matches there.

"We are hosting the series in only two cities because of logistical difficulties. We did think about Sylhet but the drainage system is

undergoing work. The match referees had a few observations regarding the hotels in Khulna because of which it was outside our plans.

"There are similar travelling and hotel issues in Bogra as well. We are expecting to develop the infrastructures of these venues soon," said Nizamuddin Chowdhury, BCB's acting CEO.

While television broadcasters no doubt have managed to take the game to far corners of the country, international games taking place in one's own backyard is a point of special pride for most people.

After the completion of the

stadium at Cox's Bazar, local hero and national top order Mominul Haque said that, because of the development, he believed that many more people would be encouraged to take up the sport in the coastal town.

Yes, the stadiums in questions do have problems but none of them are unsolvable, considering the fact that they did receive international recognition, which in itself suggests that the logistical facilities were up the mark. If such a trend does continue these venues will be remembered as mere structures which once stood as landmarks of Bangladesh's cricket.

Jimmy-Ravi row spices up Test

2nd match starts today
AFP, London

Tensions in the second Test that begins at Lord's on Thursday are set to be increased after the International Cricket Council charged England's James Anderson with allegedly "abusing and pushing" India's Ravindra Jadeja just two days before the match.

The incident is alleged to have happened after the players left the field for lunch on Thursday's second day of last week's drawn first Test in Nottingham when all-rounder Jadeja was batting.

India, cricket's financial powerhouse, and England may be two of the 'Big Three' nations now effectively running the ICC but that relationship is sure to be put under strain in the coming days and weeks.

Indeed, even before the ICC confirmed the charges against Anderson which, if proved, could see the Lancashire seamer banned for up to four Tests, the England and Wales Cricket Board issued a statement of its own saying the bowler had their "total support" and warning they would report Jadeja for breaches of the ICC's code of conduct should the global governing body pursue action against the pacesman.

Both Anderson and Jadeja are free to play at Lord's as it is highly unlikely a disciplinary hearing overseen by an ICC judicial commissioner will be underway by the time the match starts on Thursday.

However, Anderson could now miss some part of what is India's first five-Test tour of England for 55 years.



PHOTO: STAR

Bangladesh's likely opening pair of Tamim Iqbal (L) and Imrul Kayes walk out onto the Sher-e-Bangla National Stadium yesterday for a session of the Tigers' preparatory camp for the tour of West Indies in August.

Feni almost clear of relegation zone

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A treble from Gambian Landing Darboe all but rescued Feni Soccer Club from the relegation zone in the Nitol Tata Bangladesh Premier League, helping his ninth-placed side to an emphatic 4-1 win over lowest-placed Uttar Baridhara Club at the Bangabandhu National Stadium yesterday.

Their second win in 25 outings pushed Feni Soccer six points clear of Uttar Baridhara who, with 12 points from 25 matches, are on the brink of relegation having played just one season in the top flight.

Feni Soccer now need only one point from their remaining two matches to be averted relegation, but a single point drop by Uttar Baridhara in their next two matches will automatically take Feni to safety.

The match was a battle to avert demotion and Feni Soccer, who have been playing in the top flight for the last four seasons, emerged victorious thanks partly to Uttar Baridhara being down to 10 men for the last 40 minutes.

Availing a defensive fumble, Ali Hasan put Feni Soccer ahead in the 10th minute

after dodging past two defenders while Uttar Baridhara came close twice to levelling the margin but their forwards squandered both opportunities.

The situation got worse when Baridhara were reduced to 10 men following the send-off of defender Ahsanul Kabir in the 51st minute and Feni utilised the man advantage to the full to add three more goals in the second half.

Gambian Landing doubled the lead from a 35-yard stunner in the 59th minute before Dulal Hasan reduced the margin with a header in the 69th minute. But Landing scored again in the 76th minute, converting a spot kick. He completed his hat-trick and sealed Feni's second triumph in the league six minutes from time with a low angular drive inside the box.

Away at Sheikh Fazlul Haque Moni Stadium, Muktiyoddha Sangsad beat visitors Brothers Union 1-0, thanks to a 61st-minute strike from Nkowcha Kingsley.

With their 12th win in 25 matches, Muktiyoddha Sangsad toppled Mohammedan to take third position with 43 points, two points ahead of Mohammedan while Brothers remained in fifth spot with 37 points from 25 outings.

SL come back after Elgar ton

AFP, Galle



Opener Dean Elgar smashed a century before Sri Lanka pegged back South Africa with four key wickets late on the opening day of the first Test in Galle on Wednesday.

The visitors were cruising at one stage after a cracking 103 from Elgar and a sedate 80 from Faf du Plessis. But the hosts fought back in the final session to restrict South Africa to 268-5 at close of play.

Quinton de Kock (17) and Dale Steyn (0) were the not out batsmen.

Elgar, 27, hit 11 fours and three sixes in his 186-ball knock but his dismissal immediately after the tea break triggered a mini-batting collapse that handed the advantage to the hosts.

"I felt our bowlers bowled really well on a batsman-friendly wicket," said Sri Lanka's bowling coach Chaminda Vaas.

"They kept their cool and bowled

extremely well. Hopefully, now we can wrap it [South African innings] up in the first session tomorrow."

Elgar was sent back by paceman Suranga Lakmal (2-29), who had the left-hander caught behind by wicketkeeper Dinesh Chandimal.

Hashim Amla, leading the side for the first time in Test cricket, had a forgettable outing as a batsman and made just 11 after facing 36 balls.

Du Plessis holed out to Kaushal Silva off slow bowler Dilruwan Perera, and the in-form AB de Villiers (21) was bowled by Lakmal with the new ball in the penultimate over of the day.

The day belonged to Elgar, who shared a 70-run opening stand with Alviro Petersen (34) and another of 125 with du Plessis for the second wicket.

Elgar, playing his 10th Test, reached his second century in style, dancing down the track to smack Perera (2-100) for a massive six over the fence.

PCB accepts CL invite

AFP, Karachi

Pakistan will send its domestic Twenty20 champions Lahore Lions to play in the Champions League to be held in India in September, an official said Wednesday.

The Lions, led by former Pakistan Twenty20 captain Mohammad Hafeez, beat Misbahul Haq's Faisalabad Wolves in the final of the event held in February.

The Twenty20 champions of Australia, South Africa, England, New Zealand, Sri Lanka and the West Indies will also take part in the event.

"We have received an invitation to send our Twenty20 champion team so Lahore Lions will be participating in the event in September," a Pakistan Cricket Board (PCB) spokesman told AFP.

Cook calls it an Indian 'tactic'

AFP, London

England captain Alastair Cook said Wednesday he believed India's complaint against James Anderson was a tactic designed to have his spearhead bowler miss some part of the ongoing series.

Anderson was charged by the International Cricket Council (ICC) on Tuesday for allegedly "abusing and pushing" Ravindra Jadeja during last week's drawn first Test at Trent Bridge.

If the charge is upheld by an ICC judicial commissioner, Anderson could be banned for as many as four Tests and England have responded by levelling a charge of their own against Jadeja.

Cook speaking to reporters at Lord's, where the second Test of a five-match series starts on Thursday, accused India of making a "mountain out of a molehill" in an effort to try to get Anderson banned.

SCOREBOARD				
SOUTH AFRICA: First innings				
Petersen lbw b Perera			34	
Elgar c Chandimal b Lakmal			103	
Du Plessis c Silva b Perera			80	
Amla c Perera b Herath			11	
De Villiers b Lakmal			21	
De Kock not out			17	
Steyn not out			0	
Extras: (lb-2)			2	
Total: (For 5 wks in 91 overs)			268	
To bat: Duminy, Philander, Morkel, Tahir				
Fall of wickets: 1-70, 2-195, 3-220, 4-246, 5-266				
Bowler	O	M	R	W
Lakmal	16	6	29	2
Eranga	9	4	32	0
Herath	37	7	95	1
Mathews	2	0	10	0
Perera	27	3	100	2
SRI LANKA: Mathews, Thirimanne, Tharanga, Silva, Sangakkara, Jayawardene, Chandimal, Herath, Perera, Lakmal, Eranga.				
Toss: South Africa.				
Umpires: Billy Bowden (New Zealand) and Richard Kettleborough (England)				