

SPORT

TIGERS to be based in Brisbane

SPORTS REPORTER

Bangladesh will play a total of four practice matches in Australia before they begin their 50-over World Cup campaign, set to begin in Australia and New Zealand from February 14 next year.

The Bangladesh Cricket Board (BCB) has decided to send the national team 12 days ahead of the start of the mega event. The Tigers will leave on January 26 next year for Brisbane.

"The official practice matches for the World Cup will begin on February 6. But we are sending them 12 days ahead in order to help them acclimatise to the conditions early," BCB Director Jalal Yunus told reporters at Mirpur yesterday.

According to Yunus, Bangladesh will kick-start their campaign with two 50-over games against a 'tough' invitational Australian eleven. Both these games will take place at the Allan Border Field, a cricket ground at the suburb of Brisbane where the Australian Cricket Academy is based.

The Tigers will then play two official ODIs against international teams. The board, which had received an offer to play two more 50-over games, however, declined in a bid to avoid overstretching the players.

The board had initially planned to send the Bangladesh team for a camp much before the World Cup. However, that plan was cancelled as the BCB wanted the players to participate in the Dhaka Premier League which is expected to begin in the first week of October.

The Tigers will take part in two bilateral series -- against the West Indies in August-September and Zimbabwe in October -- before the mega event. The Tiger are in for a long series against Zimbabwe with three Tests and five ODIs.

Bangladesh, who will begin their World Cup campaign on February 18 against Afghanistan and will play three group-stage matches in Australia and two in New Zealand.

Apart from Afghanistan, the Tigers will face Australia, New Zealand, Sri Lanka and Scotland in the group stages.



PHOTO: AFP

Sri Lanka's master batsman Kumar Sangakkara works the ball on the on side on the fourth day of the first Test against South Africa at the Galle International Stadium on Saturday.

SCOREBOARD

INDIA: First innings 295 (Rahane 103; Anderson 4-60)				
ENGLAND: First innings (overnight 219-6)				
Cook c Dhoni b Kumar	10			
Robson c Dhoni b Kumar	7			
Balance c Dhoni b Kumar	110			
Bell c Jadeja b Kumar	16			
Root lbw b Jadeja	13			
All lbw b Vijay	32			
Plunkett not out	55			
Prior (Dhawan) b Shami	23			
Stokes c Kumar	0			
Broad c Dhawan b Kumar	4			
Anderson c Babane b Jadeja	19			
Extras: (lb-5, lb-10, w-2, nb-3)	20			
Total (All out in 105.5 overs)	319			
Fall of wickets: 1-22, 2-31, 3-70, 4-113, 5-211, 6-214, 7-265, 8-276, 9-280				
Bowler	O	M	R	W
Kumar	31	10	82	6
Shami	19	5	58	1
Sharma	24	5	61	0
Binnor	10	0	45	0
Jadeja	18.5	1	46	2
Vijay	3	0	12	1
INDIA: Second innings				
Vijay not out	21			
Dhawan c Root b Stokes	31			
Pujara not out	25			
Extras: (lb-4, lb-3)	7			
Total: (For 1 wkts in 31 overs)	84			
Fall of wicket: 1-40				
Bowler	O	M	R	W
Anderson	9	4	20	0
Broad	8	3	23	0
Stokes	5	1	12	1
Plunkett	4	2	12	0
Ali	5	1	10	0

India steady in 2nd knock

AFP, London



Murali Vijay and Cheteshwar Pujara batted in contrasting styles as India built a slender lead in the third Test against England at Lord's on Saturday.

India were 84 for one in their second innings -- 60 runs ahead -- at tea on the third day.

Vijay, in an 'old-fashioned' opener's innings, was 21 not out off 89 balls in two-and-a-quarter hours at the crease.

By contrast, Pujara's unbeaten 25 had come off just 52 balls.

While Vijay was becalmed, opening partner Shikhar Dhawan made a brisk 31.

But, having struck four fours, the left-hander failed to get over the top of a cut shot off Ben Stokes and was well caught by a diving Joe Root at backward point for 31 to leave India 40 for one.

It was to be the only wicket India lost in the session.

Earlier, Bhuveshwar Kumar took six for 82 as he recorded his Test-best figures for the second time in as many matches.

But even Kumar could not prevent England gaining a first-innings lead.

England's tail wagged effectively as they added exactly 100 runs to an overnight 219 for six before the hosts were bowled out for 319.

Fast-medium bowler Kumar's return surpassed his haul of five for 82 in last week's draw at Trent Bridge -- the seamer's first Test outside of India.

But nightwatchman Plunkett's Test-best 55 not out off 79 balls including helped leave England 24 runs ahead on first innings.

Together with No.11 James Anderson, fresh from his Test-best 81 at Nottingham, he added 39 in 43 balls on Saturday.

England resumed on a total owing much to Gary Ballance's 110.

Despite early morning rain play started on time, although the overcast conditions saw the floodlights at Lord's switched on.

Plunkett, who started the day four not out, began with a flurry of boundaries including a back-foot cover-drive off Ishant Sharma and one off the front foot against Kumar.

Matt Prior (23) fell when a top-edged pull off Mohammed Shami was well caught by Dhawan running back from the slip cordon.

Kumar, who overnight had taken four for 46, reduced England to 280 for nine with a burst of two wickets for four runs in three balls.

He secured his place on the Lord's honours board with bowling Stokes for a duck with a fine away-swinging to the left-hander Kumar then had Broad edging to Dhawan at first slip.

But Anderson took England into the lead with a straight-driven four off Kumar.

SL stand a chance with S'kara there

AFP, Galle



Kumar Sangakkara smashed his 49th half-century as Sri Lanka launched a fightback on the fourth day of the first Test against South Africa on Saturday.

The prolific left-hander also shared 96 runs for the unbroken second wicket with Kaushal Silva (37) to take Sri Lanka to 110-1 at stumps.

The hosts need 260 runs with nine wickets in hand to pull off a magical come-from-behind win with three full sessions left in the game.

"In a situation like this where you have 90 overs to bat, a win is not guaranteed but there is a chance," Sri Lanka coach Marvan Atapattu said after the day's play.

Sri Lanka had been forced on the backfoot after they were bowled out for 292 to concede a huge 163-run lead in the first innings.

But a sporting declaration by South Africa's new skipper Hashim Amla at the tea score of 206-6 turned the game on its head.

Although no team has ever scored more than 300 runs in the final innings at Galle, the 36-year-old Sangakkara made a target of 370 look chaseable.

The star batsman hit seven fours and a six in his 58-run knock that came off 89 deliveries.

South Africa began their defence well, with Dale Steyn once again giving his side the early breakthrough by dismissing opener Upul Tharanga for 14.

But Sangakkara stood like a rock at the other end, once despatching a full-toss from Tahir over the mid-wicket fence for a huge six.

He completed his half-century in style, sweeping leg-spinner Imran Tahir through mid-wicket for a four.

Silva also knocked off some easy runs, smacking part-timer Jean-Paul Duminy for two fours in a row.

Earlier, AB de Villiers hit six boundaries in his breezy 58-ball 51 and also shared 62 runs with Quinton de Kock (36) to set up South African second innings.

The Proteas had made 455-9 declared in their first essay.

The second and final Test will be played in Colombo from July 24-28.

SCOREBOARD

SOUTH AFRICA: First innings: 455 for 9 declared (Elgar 103, Duminy 100 not out; Perera 4-162)	Bowler	O	M	R	W	Bowler	O	M	R	W
SRI LANKA: First innings (overnight 283-9)	Phillander	15	6	31	0	Lakmal	9	0	35	0
Silva c Philander b Steyn	Morkel	18.5	9	49	3	Herath	22	2	84	2
Tharanga st de Kock b Duminy	Tahir	26	5	75	1	Perera	19.2	1	79	4
Sangakkara b Morkel	Duminy	15	4	47	1	SRI LANKA: Second innings				
Jayawardene lbw b Steyn	Elgar	7	1	25	0	Tharanga c de Kock b Steyn	14			
Thirimeane c de Kock b Steyn	SOUTH AFRICA: Second innings					Silva not out	37			
Mathews b Tahir	Elgar c Chandimal b Herath	12				Sangakkara not out	58			
Chandimal c Petersen b Steyn	Petersen c Chandimal b Perera	32				Extras: (b-1)	1			
Perera c de Kock b Steyn	0 Du Plessis b Herath	37				Total: (For 1 wkts in 32 overs)	110			
Herath c de Villiers b Morkel	22 Amla c Tharanga b Perera	22				Fall of wicket: 1-14				
Lakmal c de Kock b Morkel	6 De Villiers b Perera	51				Bowler	O	M	R	W
Eranga not out	1 De Kock c and b Perera	36				Steyn	6	2	18	1
Extras: (lb-7, lb-4, w-3, nb-1)	8 Duminy not out	8				Phillander	6	3	13	0
Total: (All out in 104.5 overs)	292					Morkel	4	1	13	0
Fall of wickets: 1-39, 2-98, 3-104, 4-136, 5-190, 6-200, 7-201, 8-272, 9-283						Tahir	10	1	40	0
						Duminy	5	1	24	0
						Elgar	1	0	1	0

COMMONWEALTH GAMES

2nd wave of BD athletes leaves for Glasgow

SPORTS REPORTER

Five weightlifters and three cyclists of the Bangladesh contingent left here for Scotland yesterday morning to take part in the XX Commonwealth Games to be held in Glasgow from July 23 to September 3.

Bangladeshi shooters had earlier flown out of here for Glasgow with hopes of bagging medals in the 10m air rifle event but weightlifters and cyclists have no such big aspirations; rather they want to improve their individual records and prepare for next year's South Asian Games.

Athletes for the swimming, boxing, table tennis and badminton events are scheduled to leave here today morning while the remaining athletes in gymnastics, wrestling and athletics are supposed to fly out on July 24.

Bangladesh will be taking part in 10 disciplines with hopes of winning medals in only shooting and gymnastics.



PHOTO: AFP

England batsman Gary Ballance celebrates his century against India on the second day of the second Test at Lord's in London on Friday.

Zia back on track

SPORTS REPORTER

Grand Master Ziara Rahman returned to winning ways in Group A of XVI Obert International Sant Marti when he beat Australian Sardana Rishi in the sixth round held in Barcelona, Spain on Friday.

Zia now has four points from six outings, said a press release from the Bangladesh Chess Federation.



Abahani all but confirmed their second-place finish in the Nitul Tata Bangladesh Premier League when they notched an easy 5-2 win over holders Sheikh Russel KC at the Bangabandhu National Stadium yesterday.

Four-time champions Abahani, who last season finished a miserable fourth, now need only a single point in their last match against Chittagong Abahani to complete their runners-up finish as Sheikh Jamal have already clinched the most coveted domestic football title with two matches in hand.

Abahani now have 49 points from 26 matches and their nearest rivals Muktiyoddha Sangsadd have 43 points from 25 outings.

The Sky Blues struggled to string

together consistent performances in the third leg of the professional football league and wasted a lot of chances to return to the title race offered by Sheikh Jamal's continuous-point dropping.

However, they have started to put in steady performances in the last few matches as the last season's top scorer, Osei Morison from Ghana, regained his form to strike a treble to guide Abahani to an empathic 5-2 win after two goalless draws against Sheikh Russel in their first two meetings of the league.

Abahani just took 10 minutes to go ahead with a header from Morison but seven minutes later Shakil Ahmed levelled the margin to raise hopes of a competitive game but Abahani made it a one-sided affair after Ibrahim made it 2-1 in the 23rd minute before Morison struck his second goal in the 38th minute.

Five minutes into resumption,

Shahedul Alam widened the margin before Morison completed his hat-trick in the 61st minute to kill off the game, though Sheikh Russel pulled another goal back two minutes from time.

With only the top six teams of the professional football league to qualify for the Super Cup, the defeat may have placed Sheikh Russel, who will face Sheikh Jamal in the last match, in danger of losing their sixth position had Team BJMC not suffered a lone-goal defeat to Chittagong Abahani at the MA Aziz Stadium in Chittagong yesterday.

BJMC had a good opportunity to topple Sheikh Russel with two straight wins in the last two matches but BJMC's defeat to Chittagong Abahani meant they remained at seventh position with 27 points, five behind Sheikh Russel, while Chittagong Abahani raised their tally to 25 from 26 matches.