

# SPORT

## Made only in Korea

SPORTS REPORTER

Lee Yookyoo had no idea about the game of cricket before being appointed as the chief of the Yeonhui Cricket Ground, the first purpose-built cricket ground on South Korean soil. The venue in Incheon will be used during the cricket competition of the 17th Asian Games. Like Lee, the game is also an unknown quantity for many Koreans.

But in a country where football and baseball are two major sports, the chief promoter of cricket in South Korea, Lee Hwayeen, dreams big with a set of home-grown players who love to grip a cricket bat like a baseball one.

"Within the next five years, we aim to play the cricket World Cup and that's why this game is very important for us," said Hwayeen, the executive director of Korean Cricket Association, at the Yeonhui Cricket Ground on Tuesday.

Is it realistic dream for an affiliated member of the ICC?

"You can see our potential if you see us play in the Asian Games," said a smiling Hwayeen, who claims to be an off-spinner.

Hwayeen, a former national captain and coach, said that cricket has been popular among the expatriates from Pakistan, India, Australia and New Zealand and games are usually played on weekends. But he said that they have not drafted any expatriates in the Korean team like Hong Kong and United Arab Emirates.

He also confirmed that both the men's and women's team taking part in the ASIAD, feature only South Koreans.

"And this is the only way we can make the game popular in our country," said a confident Hwayeen, adding that they have planned to start inter-city cricket tournaments soon.

South Korea started its preparation for Asian Games' cricket in December, 2012.

"We have picked players who have basically no idea about cricket and most of them are former baseball players at university level," said Lee Hwayeen, adding that their expertise in baseball would help them do well in the slam-bang T20 format of cricket.

## Nafees takes Liton's place

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Former national opener Shahriar Nafees has been included in the side for Bangladesh A's second four-day encounter against Zimbabwe A, set to start at the Khan Saheb Osman Ali Stadium at Fatullah from September 21.

Nafees replaces Liton Kumar on the squad as per the selectors' rotation policy that was named for the first four-day match.

The inclusion of Dewan Sabbir in place of Sabbir Rahman is the other change in the side.

Once the national vice-captain, Nafees has been struggling to regain his form ever since he was dropped. He last featured for Bangladesh in the first Test of the Tigers' tour of Zimbabwe in April 2013.

**BANGLADESH A** Naeem Islam (captain), Shahriar Nafees Ahmed, Sadman Islam, Marshall Ayub, Farhad Hossain, Rokibul Hasan, Dewan Sabbir, Nurul Hasan (wicketkeeper), Kamrul Islam Rabbi, Zubaer Hossain, Saqlain Sajib, Shahadat Hossain, Md Shohid, Mohammad Mithun.



Bangladesh U-23 booters do some stretching before the practice session at the Goyang Stadium practice ground in Incheon yesterday, ahead of their today's Group B match against Uzbekistan.

PHOTO: ANISUR RAHMAN

## Booters' Uzbek mission

Bangladesh may employ five-man defence today

ANISUR RAHMAN from Incheon



Bangladesh coach Lodewijk de Kruif is likely to field a five-man defence against Group B favourites Uzbekistan when the two sides meet in their second match of the Asian Games group stages at the Ansan Wa Stadium in Incheon, South Korea at 5:00pm Bangladesh time today.

Sitting top of the group with three points after their 'surprise' 1-0 win against Afghanistan followed by Uzbekistan's 1-1 draw against Hong Kong, the Bangladesh coach wants to utilise his opposition's desperation for a win by resorting to a counter-attacking strategy.

"Despite the draw Uzbekistan are the best team in the group and they need full three points against us to keep their chances alive," said De Kruif yesterday, explaining his side's possible strategy against the 51st ranked side in the world.

"I expect a tornado from them and we have to go back, we have to defend to manage them. Don't think we are Chelsea," quipped De Kruif.

De Kruif knows the best chance against Uzbekistan - whose senior side beat Bangladesh by 5-0, 4-0, and 6-0 margins in the three meetings so far while the U-23 team beat Bangladesh U-23s by 3-0 in the last Asian Games -- to man out the defence while looking for any opportunities for a counter-attack. Hence, he is likely to revert to a 5-4-1 formation from the 4-5-1 he used against Afghanistan.

Two changes are expected in the starting eleven, with Atiqur Rahman Farhad making the extra defender as midfielder Yousuf Sifat is likely to drop out. Striker Toklish Ahmed is also likely to get into the starting eleven place of Wahed Ahmed, considering the former is more of a support striker who can fall back and as well as move, rather than play as a boxstriker.

Captain Mamunul Islam, Jamal Bhuiyan, Sohel Rana and Hemanta Vincent

Biswas will likely remain in the midfield while Farhad will join Tapu barman, Raihan Hasan, Yeamin Munna and Yeasin Ahmed in defence. Rasel Mahmud Liton's excellent show in the first match ensures he remains the coach's first choice.

However, it will be the defenders

who will have to do an admirable job if they are to keep the Uzbeks at bay. And they are mindful of the task at hand.

"No doubt Uzbekistan are a very strong team and have a good attacking line-up. It means we, the defenders, will have to take extra responsibility. We have learnt from whatever mistakes we made against Afghanistan and we are ready not to concede any goals against Uzbekistan," said Raihan after the training session at the Goyang Stadium practice ground yesterday.

"I think we will be able to stick to our game plan like we did against Afghanistan and if the day belongs to us, then we can leave the field with points," said the 23-year old defender.

Echoing Raihan's sentiment, midfielder Sohel Rana said that their target is to hold Uzbekistan by giving their hundred per cent effort.

"A single player can lead the team to win in cricket but it is not possible in football and we, all 11 players, have to give our best to earn something against Uzbekistan," said Sohel.

Before Bangladesh take the field, Afghanistan and Hong Kong will slug it out to stay alive in the tournament.

## Sk Russel leave for Colombo today

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A 19-member Sheikh Russel KC squad will leave here for Colombo this morning to play in the final round of AFC President's Cup, which begins on September 20.

The treble-winners of 2012-13 season, who qualified for the final round of Asia's third-tier club competition as the first team from Bangladesh are targeting a final berth, according to team officials and captain during a press conference at the Bangladesh Football Federation house yesterday.

"I believe if the players can follow the instructions I gave in the month-long training, we can play in the final," said Jakaria Babu, the recently appointed coach of Sheikh Russel.

"We have had some obstacles (regarding bringing players from Mohammedan and Abahani) which have been resolved. The players that we have now are capable of overcoming any obstacles and playing in the final," added Babu.

Sheikh Russel will play their first match of Group B against Erchim FC of Mongolia on September 20 before taking on Rimyongsu Club of North Korea September 24, both at the Sugathadasa Stadium in Colombo, where the qualifying matches were held too. The group champions will play against champions of Group A -- comprising Sri Lanka Air Force, FC HTTU of

Turkmenistan and Manang Mashyangdi of Nepal -- in the final on September 26.

Skipper Mithun Chowdhury, who will be captaining a side at the senior level for the first time, believes the known conditions in Colombo will help them playing well in the competition.

"Since we have played there before and became champions in qualifying, I believe we can do it again. No other Bangladeshi club have ever qualified for the final round which gives us extra motivation to do well," said the striker who scored four goals during the qualifying campaign in March.

Even though the team management does not have a whole lot of information about their opponents available, the coach believes the North Korean team could be a tricky one.

"I have watched videos of both clubs. The club from North Korea seems to be a bit better than us while the club from Mongolia is similar to us" said Babu.

Since emerging champions in the qualifying round, Sheikh Russel reinforced their squad by bringing in quite a few national players including striker Zahid Hasan Emily, goalkeeper Mamun Khan, defenders Wali Faisal, Nahidul Islam and winger Zahid Hossain. However, Zahid will be unavailable as he is currently with national team for the Asian Games in Korea. The two eligible foreign players are striker Nkowncha Kingsley and defender Bojan Petric.

## Crowe's cancer comes back

AFP, Wellington

Former New Zealand cricket great Martin Crowe revealed Wednesday his cancer has returned, 15 months after announcing it was under control.

"After a brilliant year of self discovery and recovery I have more work to do," he tweeted.

"My friend & tough taskmaster Lymphoma is back to teach me."

The 51-year-old was first diagnosed with lymphoma in 2012, but after months of chemotherapy he said doctors had told him the cancer had shrunk to safe levels, although there was always the possibility of a relapse.

Crowe said he will now have to undergo further treatment.

A cousin of Hollywood star Russell Crowe, Martin is widely regarded as the best batsman to have represented New Zealand.

He averaged 45.36 in his 77-Test career, which included 17 centuries.

In 1991, he scored a New Zealand record for the most runs in a single Test innings when he was dismissed for 299 playing at Wellington's Basin Reserve against Sri Lanka.

## Win didn't come easy

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Hosts Bangladesh A beat their Zimbabwean counterparts by six wickets in the first four-day encounter at the Sheikh Kamal International Cricket Stadium in Cox's Bazar yesterday.

The hosts, chasing a target of 104, finished the game before lunch on the final day of the match.

On an overnight score of 43 for 1, the second-stringed Bangladesh side required another 61 runs on

the final day. As easy as their task may have been the hosts suffered a jolt early on when they lost three quick wickets.

Liton Kumar, who has been the mainstay for the hosts in this match, was caught five overs into the day's play and was sent back for 42. Three overs later Marshall Ayub was trapped in front for 13, by leg-spinner Wellington Masakadza, who took his total tally to eight wickets in the match.

Rakibul Hasan was the next to depart. He looked good initially as he drove two fours. However,

in the 27th over he was caught off slow left-armed Tinotenda Mutombodzi for 10.

At 72 for 4, there were fears of a collapse similar to the first innings, which saw the hosts lose their last seven wickets for just 17 runs on a slow and turning wicket. However, captain Naeem Islam and Forhad Hossain eased the nerves with a 33-run stand and took their side home.

## Adithiya, Shuchona in final

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Top seed Adithiya Karunaratne of Sri Lanka and Bangladesh's Fabiha Lamisa Shuchona moved into the final of the Bengal Group Asian U-14 Tennis Series.

Adithiya blanked Popy Akter of Bangladesh 6-0, 6-0 while Shuchona defeated Iti Akter 6-2, 6-1 in the two semifinals at the National tennis Complex in Ramna at the National tennis Complex in Ramna yesterday.

In the boys' singles, top seed Ali Dewani of Bahrain, Mohammad Ishiak of Bangladesh Swadhin Hossain of Bangladesh and Michael Francis Ila of Philippines moved into the semifinals.

## Everyone knows what the answers will be

BISHWAJIT ROY



Bangladesh finished their Caribbean trip with a 296-run defeat on the fourth day of the second and final Test at St. Lucia on Tuesday. But unlike the first two full series, the Tigers are returning home empty handed.

It can be debated whether the performance of the Tigers in the series declined or remained stagnant, but one certainty is that it was the age-old problems that led Bangladesh to the disappointing end.

The series began with a missed opportunity and ended with another. Tamim Iqbal's madness on the fourth day of the second Test might be depicted as the real sordid picture of the series, where unplanned batting, wrong approach and application of the batters saw the visitors meekly succumb to a 3-0 defeat in the ODI series and 2-0 in the Test series.

Why did Tamim play that slog sweep to spoil all his hard work? Did his body betray his mind or was he not able to understand the value of a good partnership? Whatever the answer is, his departure caused a dramatic collapse and the opportunity to finish the series with some solace ended with the same old question: When will we solve the problems we have been facing over the past decade?

If we genuinely believe that this tour was embarrassing for us, then who will take the responsibility for it? From past experiences one can predict the reactions of the players, the officials and others related to the game for this disastrous trip.

From the side of BCB officials, you may get the same old reactions: "We will evaluate the results. There were some mistakes in the team selection. We will examine the team management's report. If needed we will call an emergency meeting to discuss the debacle. We have to take a long-term plan to solve some issues including the improvement of the standard of domestic cricket. We also have some doubts over the commitment of a few players, if needed we will bring changes to the whole team and even the management."

That's all we can expect from the BCB who will then take a break and wait for another series.

### MOST RUNS

Batsmen	Runs	HS	Avg	100	50
KC Brathwaite	324	212	108.00	1	1
S Chanderpaul	270	101*	-	1	2
Mushfiqur Rahim	179	116	59.66	1	0
Tamim Iqbal	166	64	41.50	0	2
Mahmudullah	126	66	31.50	0	2

### MOST WICKETS

Bowlers	W	BBF	Avg	5
S Benn	14	5/39	12.42	2
K Roach	11	5/42	16.36	1
Tajjul	8	5/135	38.62	1
J Taylor	7	3/39	27.14	0

Our expectations from the coaches are similar too: "The boys have the ability to perform much better than what they did in the series."

The selectors themselves are looking for solutions. If we have a chance to meet them we may hear a lot of revolutionary comments but those statements would be made off the record.

Now ask the players including the captain himself and they will not hesitate to say that there were some positives in the embarrassing defeats. They will draw your attention to the centuries of Anamul Haque and Mushfiqur Rahim, the return to form of Tamim and Mahmudullah Riyad and the five-wicket haul of new left-arm spinner Tajjul Islam.

Expressing his frustration over his team's performance, the captain will say 'that the uncertainty over places on the team might have played a role in the poor showing'. It does not matter that Nasir Hossain kept his place in the side despite his continued failure. The captain may say that everybody is working hard and that they need just one win to get out of their lean patch; that they have the ability to do much better.

At the end of this episode we will get a mixture of opinions and promises from a wide range of people. However, all that will be forgotten before the next series. The fact is that everybody knows where the roots of the problems lie; unfortunately rarely does anyone take a step towards solving them.

### SCOREBOARD

<b>WEST INDIES:</b> First innings 380	Mominul c Gabriel b Benn	56	Fall of wickets: 1-47, 2-48, 3-158, 4-160, 5-160, 6-167, 7-173, 8-188, 9-188
<b>BANGLADESH:</b> First innings 161	Mahmudullah lbw Gabriel	0	
<b>WEST INDIES:</b> Second innings 269 for 4 declared (Brathwaite 45, Johnson 41, Chanderpaul 101 not out, Blackwood 66 not out; Mahmudullah 2-64)	Mushfiqur b Taylor	11	<b>Bowler O M R W</b>
<b>BANGLADESH:</b> Second innings	Nasir lbw Benn	2	Taylor 13 4 39 3
Tamim c Gabriel b Benn	Tajjul c & b Benn	4	Roach 15.4 1 43 1
Shamsur c Edwards b Taylor	Shaful b Roach	14	Benn 32 6 72 5
Anamul c Ramdin b Benn	Robiul lbw Taylor	0	Blackwood 2 0 4 0
	Al-Amin not out	0	Gabriel 11 2 24 1
	Extras (lb-1, w-1)	2	Johnson 4 0 9 0
	Total: (All out in 77.4 overs)	192	<b>Result:</b> West Indies won by 296 runs and

Bangladesh's first-class circuit.

The second four-day match will begin on September 21 at the Khan Saheb Osman Ali Stadium at Fatullah. After the four-day, the teams will face off in three 50-over games at the same venue.

### SCORES IN BRIEF

**ZIMBABWE A:** 206 and 108  
**BANGLADESH A:** 211 and 105 for 4 (Liton 42, Naeem 15 not out, Forhad 16 not out; Masakadza 2-46)  
**Result:** Bangladesh A won by six wickets; **Player-of-the-match:** Saqlain Sajib.