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5 facts

Bangladesh's 146-run win against Scotland at Dhaka in 2006 was their second largest run-margin ODI win. They have won all three completed ODIs between the teams

That match was notable for being leading Scottish ODI wicket-taker Majid Haq's debut and Mashrafe Bin Mortaza's unbeaten 51 from 27 balls

Preston Mommsen is in line to become the player to captain Scotland the most times in ODIs -- he, Gordon Drummond and Ryan Watson have led Scotland 16 times

Tamim Iqbal needs 10 runs to become the second Bangladesh player to reach 4,000 ODI runs, in what will be his 137th innings. Shakib Al Hasan reached the landmark in 136 innings

72 per cent of shots played by Shakib in the tournament have been attacking, the highest percentage of any batsman facing at least 100 balls



The Tigers are led off the field by Shakib Al Hasan (L) at the end of their last training session at the Saxton Oval yesterday ahead of today's game against Scotland.

PHOTO: BCB

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SRT calls for 25-team WC

AFP, Sydney

Indian superstar Sachin Tendulkar on Wednesday blasted proposals to slash the 2019 World Cup to just 10 nations, describing it as "a backward step" and suggesting the tournament be expanded to 25 teams.

Tendulkar, an ambassador for the World Cup on behalf of the International Cricket Council said the ICC should be expanding the frontiers of the game with Test teams encouraged to pit their 'A' sides against Associate nations such as Afghanistan and Ireland.

"I found out the next World Cup would only be ten teams which is disappointing because as a cricketer I want the game to be globalised as much as possible and, according to me, this is a backwards step," Tendulkar told a private dinner in Sydney in remarks reported by www.espn.com.

"We've got to find ways of encouraging the lesser teams." He added: "Why not get Australia A, England A, New Zealand A, South Africa A, New Zealand A, India A, everyone, to go and visit these countries and play them on a regular basis?"

"And see, not just 14 teams, but how can we get to 25 teams participating in the next World Cup?"

"It is not just about the top six or seven sides. If we are to globalise this game we have to get more and more people excited about cricket and the fan following only follows the result."

Tendulkar argued that it was impossible for second-tier Associate nations to be consistently competitive throughout a World Cup under the current system because they are not exposed to top-level experience in the four years between tournaments.



Tigers is about red and green

BISHWAJIT ROY from Nelson

It appears that two schools of thought exist in the Bangladesh cricket team regarding the fans' interest and enthusiasm. The idea sprang to mind after differing responses from captain Mashrafe Bin Mortaza and superstar Shakib Al Hasan about the almost non-existence of Tigers supporters in this calm and quiet city of Nelson. While Shakib welcomed the serene settings, Mashrafe rued the unavailability of fans, saying their presence has always inspired them.

This is now history that fans played a huge role in Bangladesh

cricket's progress in the international scenario. There is no secret that the interest, love and excitement of the people of Bangladesh towards the sport lent a big hand behind the country's elevation to top-flight cricket. The supporters are a very much integral part of Bangladesh's cricket and it is their passion and enthusiasm which have improved the commercial value of the game in the country. Shakib probably is the highest earner in Bangladesh cricket and it probably was made possible due to the supporters.

One can't forget the way the nation celebrated the 1997 ICC Trophy success which took the

Tigers to the ICC Cricket World Cup in 1999 for the first time in their history and cricket has gradually become a symbol of national pride ever since.

It's not only at home but almost all over the world Bangladesh cricket team is followed by their supporters like the other sub-continental giants India, Pakistan and Sri Lanka and in this World Cup this has reached new heights.

Mashrafe very correctly said: "I think our fans take this game very close to their heart and had they not supported us, we would not have any inspiration. And you see Australia won the World Cup four

times but this is not their number one game. In our country, we haven't been able to do anything but still people come and support us and even after losing badly they continue their support."

He did admit that playing in front of supporters is a pressure, but he believed one should enjoy this pressure.

However this might have not been the sentiment for most of his teammates, especially those who have yet to learn the craft of handling the pressure; which is a part of modern day cricket.

As cricket is an important part of the culture in Bangladesh, the players tend to get the centre-

stage in almost every forum and one will have to accept that all the discussions may always not go your way. As a player one cannot avoid this reality and one has to accept in sportingly like Mashrafe does.

Though many cricketers said that they have hardly noticed any negative talking and publication, but in reality they are given too much attention which may affect their performance on a given day.

But for any modern day cricketer it is a must to cope with the pressure. The truth is that one cannot think of the Tigers without the web of red and green.

The Export Leader



From the 2011 World Cup to the current event, Ireland played only 11 ODIs against Full Member nations.

"Right now, they get up after four years on the cricket world's biggest platform and they're expected to play and compete with the likes of Australia, South Africa, India, New Zealand, West Indies, Sri Lanka, so many top sides. It's unfair to them," said Tendulkar.

While calling for an expansion of the World Cup, Tendulkar also spoke about his concerns for the 50-over format and said he had suggested to the ICC about splitting ODIs into two 25-over innings.

"I think Test cricket definitely will survive and T20 is definitely going to survive," he said. "There is a big question mark over one-day cricket because I think it is getting monotonous."

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GLENN MAXWELL

The hard-hitting lanky right-handed batsman was sent in at number four in place of Michael Clarke for a reason yesterday and he justified the move almost instantaneously. It's hard to get noticed on a day when your colleague plays a blinder at the top, but Maxwell's own magical touch managed to stand out despite Warner's crazy 170-odd. His 88 off 39 deliveries did a lot more damage to the Afghans than what Steven Smith could have done. The highlight of his innings was his gentle whip, against full length delivery, for a six over mid-wicket. He played that shot like it was bread and butter for him.

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WORLD CUP COCKTAIL

BCCI secretary Anurag Thakur on Wednesday said that Virat Kohli abusing a journalist in Perth was a case of misunderstanding and the issue should be put to rest immediately to let the team focus on the World Cup.

"He (Kohli) has clarified on the issue. For India, the ongoing World Cup is very important. We need to put all these issues to rest and indirectly has communicated that he misunderstood the situation. Let's put this matter to an end," Thakur told PTI today when asked about the incident.

"In future I think these kind of incidents should be avoided and taken care of. I have not spoken to players yet, the team management is there, taking care of all the players' needs," said the 40-year-old.

Afridi joins club of 8000

Swashbuckling Pakistani all rounder Shahid Afridi joined the 8,000 one-day run club during his 21 not out against the UAE in the World Cup at Napier on Wednesday.

The 35-year-old became the fourth Pakistani after Inzamam-ul Haq, Mohammad Yousuf and Saeed Anwar to make 8,000 one-day runs and the 27th of all time.

Afridi, who also took 2-35 in the 129-run win, needs five more wickets to complete 400 one-day wickets.

If he takes those five wickets, he will become the only allrounder to score more than 8,000 runs and take 400 wickets.

Warner misses individual record

Australian opener David Warner fell just short of the record individual total for his country in a one-day international in the World Cup Pool B clash with Afghanistan at the WACA Ground on Wednesday.

Warner, who was given a life on 114, eventually fell for 178, leaving him seven short of Shane Watson's record of 185 not out against Bangladesh.

Warner and Steve Smith notched a record ODI partnership for Australia, putting on 260 for the second wicket to eclipse the previous mark of 252 set by Watson and Ricky Ponting in South Africa in 2009

against England.

Warner 6 hits a kid

David Warner was knocking the ball around the ground with some class against Afghanistan at the Cricket World Cup on Wednesday, but it wasn't a pleasurable viewing experience for everybody.

One poor kid got hit by a ball that was smashed into the stands by Warner and the youngster didn't have much help from the guy sitting beside him (who we suspect might be his dad) as he was too busy yap-



ping away on his phone to help protect the poor kid. Thankfully, the child, an Afghanistan fan, wasn't seriously hurt and was able to continue watching the game after getting a makeshift sling.

He didn't look impressed with events, though. However, we're not sure if he was upset with his phone-talking companion or with his team's bowling.

Chigumbura out of Ireland clash

Zimbabwe captain Elton Chigumbura has been ruled out of Saturday's make-or-break World Cup clash against Ireland with a thigh injury, the team announced Wednesday.

The 28-year-old all rounder was hurt in Sunday's 20-run loss to Pakistan in Brisbane when he tripped and fell while chasing a ball in the Gabba outfield.

"A MRI scan showed that Chigumbura suffered a third grade tear of his quadriceps muscle -- a large muscle group on the front of the thigh," said a Zimbabwe team statement. --COMPILED