

SPORT



'We can score 600 and take 20 scalps'

AL-AMIN from Khulna

By the looks of it Bangladesh Cricket Board (BCB) president Nazmul Hasan Papon is the most advertised person in Khulna. If you move along the Jessore Road (Khan A Sabur Road) or the KDA Road, the two most prominent roads in Khulna, you will find life-size pictures of the BCB boss from arches and billboards to the posters.

He is a lawmaker but not from Khulna. However, had there been an election in this part of Bangladesh, he probably could have scored a landslide victory.

But he is actually aware of the fact that his popularity hinges on how the Tigers perform on the field. It has been so far so good against Pakistan. And ahead of the first Test both his coach Chandika Hathurusingha and captain Mushfiqur Rahim said that they want to start with a victory at the back of their mind.

They might not sound as pragmatic as Shakib Al Hasan the other day, but they were certainly ambitious in a format that needs discipline in the mental make-up of the players and a good set of bowlers to take 20 wickets against a side that have recently beaten Australia and New Zealand.

"Pakistan are really strong with experienced players in their Test

squad. They beat Australia recently, they are ranked four. It is good for us to play a strong opposition at this stage because we are also doing well," Hathurusingha told reporters yesterday.

"It is a different format but still, when you do well you get confident. You trust your preparation. That's the confidence that we are taking to the game. It doesn't mean we are overconfident. It is all about first session tomorrow (Tuesday).

"Our expectation is to win every series. We don't take the opposition for granted or be overconfident. We try to do our best and if we do that, I think we have the ability to beat any team," said the confident Sri Lankan.

Hathurusingha, who apparently preferred Shuvagata Hom ahead of left-arm spinner Taijul Islam, said, "I am very happy with the selection. These players were involved in the last



Test series. Imrul Kayes scored a hundred in the last Test while Shuvagata played a role in the series win. They deserved to be in the squad."

"The three new guys are in the squad on merit. Few of them will get a chance immediately even though the team is doing well. One thing I want to cultivate is to give a player a decent run. In that way the players have a lot of stability. They have to bide their time since the team is doing well. They are all talented, from what I have seen," he added.

The coach also said that the wicket seemed the same from November last year, when Bangladesh played Zimbabwe.

Captain Mushfiqur hit back at the notion that their ODI opponents in the series were soft. "We know how difficult it was in the middle," blurted Mushfiqur.

The captain also said that he has got a unit that is not only playing good cricket but also has the ability to "score 600 runs and take 20 wickets."

"We have been playing good cricket for quite some time. We beat Zimbabwe in the last session of a Test, which is something very inspiring for us. I hope we will be able to play good cricket in the next five days," said Mushfiqur, adding that if his side starts with a mindset of a draw then it will limit the area of thinking for both bowlers and batsmen.

TIGERS IN RECORDS

HIGHEST BATTING AVERAGE*					
	M	INNS	RUNS	HS	AVG
MOMINUL HAQUE	12	23	1198	181	63.05
SHAKIB AL HASAN	37	71	2529	144	38.31
TAMIM IQBAL	37	72	2743	151	38.09
NASIR HOSSAIN	16	27	958	100	36.84
MUSHFIQUR RAHIM	43	81	2511	200	33.48

*MINIMUM OF 10 MATCHES PLAYED

HIGHEST WICKET-TAKERS					
	M	INNS	W	BBF	AVG
SHAKIB AL HASAN	37	62	140	7/36	31.45
MOHAMMAD RAFIQUE	33	48	100	6/77	40.76
MASHRAFE BIN MORTAZA	36	51	78	4/60	41.52
SHAHADAT HOSSAIN	37	59	72	6/27	51.76
ENAMUL HAQUE JR	15	26	44	7/95	40.61

BATTING AVG V PAK					
	M	INNS	RUNS	HS	AVG
SHAKIB AL HASAN	2	4	209	144	52.25
HABIBUL BASHAR	6	12	554	108	50.36
MUSHFIQUR RAHIM	2	4	146	53	36.50

WICKETS V PAK					
	M	INNS	W	BBF	AVG
MOHAMMAD RAFIQUE	3	6	17	5/36	23.82
KHALED MAHMUD	3	6	11	4/37	23.36
MOHAMMAD SHARIF	3	3	8	4/98	37.87
SHAKIB AL HASAN	2	3	7	6/82	35.71

BANGLADESH'S TEST RECORD				
MATCHES	WON	LOST	DRAW	
88	7	70	11	

HEAD-TO-HEAD	
BANGLADESH	PAKISTAN
0	8



Step up or step down, says Afridi

THE DAWN, Karachi

Pakistan's T20 captain and seasoned all-rounder Shahid Afridi has said that senior members of the national cricket team should either step up their game or step down themselves to give a chance to new budding players.

Following an unimpressive performance during the World Cup and the sole T20 International match played between Pakistan and Bangladesh, the mercurial all-rounder offered to retire from all formats of the game saying he 'did not want to be a burden for the team'.

The 34-year-old had recently bowled out of ODIs with his dreams unfulfilled as Pakistan crashed out in the 2015 World Cup quarterfinals against Australia.

His comments follow Pakistan's 0-3 ODI whitewash, and a loss in the only T20 international played during the ongoing tour of Bangladesh.

He had earlier called upon fans to be patient during the team's 'rebuilding' phase.

Following the drubbing of the Green-shirts at the hands of Bangladesh, Pakistan cricket has been said to be at its lowest ebb in international history with Chairman of the Pakistan Cricket Board (PCB) Shahryar Khan admitting that the country's entire cricketing structure was flawed.



DEBUTANTS AWAIT: Top order batsman Soumya Sarkar (R) and pacer Mohammad Shahid are expected to make their Test debut against Pakistan at the Sheikh Abu Naser Stadium in Khulna today.

BKSP crowned youth hockey champions

SPORTS REPORTER

Bangladesh Krira Shiksha Protishtan (BKSP) clinched the title of the Agrani Bank 25th National Youth Hockey Championship with 6-0 victory over Dhaka in the final at Maulana Bhasani Hockey Stadium yesterday.

Arshad Hossain struck twice while Raju Ahmed, Mohammad Mohsin, Mahbub Hossain, Fazole Hossain Rabbi scored one each for BKSP, who did not participate in this championship last year due to an overseas engagement.

Earlier in the day, Rajshahi beat Dinajpur by 3-1 goals to finish third.

Ashraf Islam of BKSP was adjudged the best player of the tournament while Deen Islam of Dhaka became the highest scorer for the 22 goals he scored.

Kings humbled in Punjab

STAR DESK

A quickfire half-century from David Warner and a brilliant bowling performance from Sunrisers Hyderabad led them to a comfortable 20-run victory over Kings XI Punjab at the Punjab Cricket Association Stadium in Chandigarh yesterday.

Batting first, Warner hammered 58 off 41 deliveries and didn't let Shikhar Dhawan's early departure bother the side. He hit ten fours and a six and batted at a splendid strike-rate of 141.46. Warner though was caught in the tenth over. Following his wicket Hyderabad suddenly found themselves in a precarious 76 for 3.

That's when Moises Henriques and Naman Ojha began to rebuild the innings. They both played cautious knocks and took Hyderabad past the 120-mark in 17 overs.

However, they couldn't make the most of their cautious approach as both batsmen departed by the 18th over. At 123 for 5 and barely 15 balls remaining, Hyderabad needed someone to charge and that's when Ashish Reddy stepped in. He hammered 22 runs off 8 deliveries, including two sixes and a four to take the visitors to 150.

After the exchange, Hyderabad held on to the momentum they gained from Reddy's little burst and reduced Punjab to 53 for 4 after nine overs. Their pacers, Trent Boult and Bhuvaneshwar Kumar bowled brilliantly, took key wickets and tilted the game towards their favour halfway through the innings.

After David Miller got out in the 13th over, Wriddhiman Saha and Akshar Patel tried their best to bring back Punjab into the game. Together the pair shared 44 runs in 4.5 overs and reduced the asking rate by a huge margin. However, with 28 runs required of the last 13 balls, Saha succumbed to Boult and the game ended there for Punjab.

Misbah looks to break Tigers' confidence

SPORTS REPORTER from Khulna

Cometh a new series, cometh a new captain. Misbahul Haq is the third Pakistani skipper to have been grilled with questions regarding Pakistan's unexpected failure in as many weeks.

The most successful of the lot, Misbah, too was repeatedly bombarded with questions regarding Pakistan's confidence levels. As opposed to his generally calm demeanour in press conferences, the 40-year-old looked slightly perturbed with the questions.

Despite the barrage of queries related to the ODI debacle, Misbah managed to remain focused on his main agenda: the first Test set to begin at Khulna today.

"There is always pressure in international cricket and obviously when the opposition is playing good you have to be at your best. We are aware of them and we have to respect the opposition as they are good at their



IN A NUTSHELL

Sunny seeks Rs 1.90 cr from BCCI

PTI, New Delhi

Former India captain Sunil Gavaskar has asked for an amount of Rs 1.90 crore as remuneration for rendering his services as president BCCI-IPL during the seventh edition of the cash-rich league last year, which was held in UAE and India.

Gavaskar was appointed 'President, BCCI-IPL' on directive of Supreme Court of India and the apex court had directed the BCCI to pay him adequate compensation as he put his various media commitments (commentary and writing columns) on hold during that period.

According to reliable source in the Working Committee, Gavaskar had written to the board about the compensation.

When asked whether the amount that he has sought has already been approved, the official said, "Not as of now. But obviously, he needs to be compensated as there is a SC directive and we need to follow that. But this letter will be placed before the finance committee, which will approve an amount."

SL to probe corruption charges

PTI, Colombo

Sports Minister Navin Dissanayake is all set to appoint a probe committee on corruption in Sri Lankan cricket administration.

"An investigation is to be launched next week to probe all corruption issues in cricket administration," Dissanayake told reporters on Monday.

The Sports Minister's comments came after a month since he dissolved the Sri Lanka Cricket (SLC) administration and appointed an interim committee.

The appointment was in conflict with the ICC rules, which stipulates governing bodies appointed independently.

The ICC at its governing body meeting this month decided to withhold the finances until Sri Lanka fell in line with ICC rules on governing bodies.

Dissanayake said the ICC had agreed to release 300,000 dollars due to SLC.

Tendulkar annoyed with daughter's movie rumours

AGENCIES, Mumbai

Cricket legend Sachin Tendulkar is annoyed by reports that his daughter Sara is joining the movie industry, terming the speculation baseless.



There was a report that Sara was gearing up to enter Bollywood and would be seen romancing Shahid Kapoor in a film.

A furious Tendulkar set the record straight on Twitter.

"My daughter Sara is enjoying her academic pursuits. Annoyed at all the baseless speculation about her joining films," he wrote.

Sara, 17, is the eldest among the two children Tendulkar and his wife Anjali have.

Nishikori's 2nd in a row

AFP, Barcelona

Japan's Kei Nishikori claimed his second consecutive Barcelona Open title on Sunday with a hard-fought 6-4, 6-4 over Spaniard Pablo Andujar.

Andujar had upset Rafael Nadal's conqueror Fabio Fognini and David Ferrer on his route to the final and made the perfect start by breaking the world number five's serve in the first game.

However, Nishikori broke straight back and then sealed the set by breaking once more in the 10th game.

SCORES IN BRIEF
HYDERABAD: 150 for 6 (Warner 58, Henriques 30; Patel 2-25, Johnson 2-39)
PUNJAB: 130 for 9 (Saha 42; Boult 3-19, Kumar 2-23)
Result: Hyderabad won by 20 runs