

SPORT

'Hope to play Test this year'

BISHWAJIT ROY



Taskin Ahmed's burst in international cricket left many at the edge of their seats. The tall 20-year-old pace bowler has already added a flair to the Bangladesh pace attack under the leadership of Mashrafe Bin Mortaza. However, his success has been limited to the shorter versions.

When Bangladesh's Test team has been crying for a quality pace bowler in their lineup, many have been curious to know why this exciting bowler doesn't get the nod for Test.

"Test cricket is the ultimate goal for any cricketer. I have started my ODI and T20I career, but I am looking forward to Test cricket, but I have some fitness issues," Taskin told The Daily Star yesterday.

"I am working hard to improve my strength in my knees so that I can make my dream come true this year. If not this year then next year is a must," the confident pacer added.

Chief selector Faruque Ahmed said that his selection panel will meet with the concerned people regarding Taskin's fitness very soon to get an exact picture.

"Obviously it would be fantastic for us if

he is available for Test selection, but we should be careful and make sure that Bangladesh gets his service from for a long period of time," said Faruque.

"Initially I had a problem with tendon in my left knee and then the same problem occurred in my right knee. I have been in a rehabilitation programme under the supervision of our development trainer Stuart Karppinen and physio Brett Harropp for a long time and I have a system to follow.

"For example, I have to take a day's rest after every one-day game, but that would not be the case in Tests," Taskin said, explaining the reason behind the delay of his Test debut.

"I have a dream but I don't want to be over excited and I am fortunate that my hero Mashrafe [Bin Mortaza] bhai is there to advice me. He knows better than anybody as to what an injury-prone pace bowler should do. My long term dream is to serve my country for at least 15 years, so I have to be careful as I have been living with injuries from a very early stage of my career," added the pacer.

With a Test line-up that's struggling to find effective pacers, it would be a blessing for the Tigers if they can receive a fit Taskin any time in the future, even if not next year as per the bowler's target.



Young pace bowler Taskin Ahmed is currently working very hard to improve his strength to fulfil his dream of playing Test cricket by the end of this year.

PHOTO: STAR FILE

'Virat should play the lone Tigers Test'

INTERNET, Mumbai

Indian batting great Sunil Gavaskar has said that Test captain Virat Kohli should not skip the one-off Test match against Bangladesh after reports emerged that the 26-year-old has asked the Board of Control for Cricket in India (BCCI) for rest for the Bangladesh tour in order to recharge his batteries after a gruelling few months of cricket.

Gavaskar added that Kohli could be rested for the subsequent 3-match ODI series. "I would want him to play in the Test match and then be rested for the three-match one-day series. Actually, the likes of Virat, Ravichandran Ashwin, Umesh Yadav, who has bowled a lot can be rested. Ideally as a player, I would want some rest as the kind of workload they have had playing for last four and half months," Gavaskar said.

Kohli took over as Test captain on a full-time basis after Mahendra Singh Dhoni's sudden decision to retire from Test cricket following the Boxing Day Test against Australia in Melbourne. If the star batsman's wish to be rested is granted, India would need a new captain for their solitary Test of the tour at Fatullah.

Gavaskar added that he would like a strong Indian team to be sent to Bangladesh, considering the fact that they comprehensively beat Pakistan recently and are looking like a team constantly on the rise. He would have no problem with Kohli being rested for the ODIs, however, with Dhoni undoubtedly being available as a consequence of his decision to only play limited-overs cricket for India from now onwards.

"Dhoni obviously will get a little bit of break. Last year during this time, India sent an A team virtually and yet won the series. But that was one year back and Bangladesh have done well in recent times. They have beaten Pakistan 3-0 in the ODI series and we need to send a strong team. I believe we will see a strong ODI team being sent," he concluded.

BCB to probe fixing claim

SPORTS REPORTER



Bangladesh Cricket Board president Nazmul Hassan Papon has said that the board will appoint a probe committee to investigate match-fixing claims during the last National Cricket League.

The last round of the competition, which took place in March and won by Rangpur, witnessed a tricky scenario. Rangpur and Khulna were in contention for the championship. Khulna beat their opponents Chittagong within three days. They would have won the competition had the game between Rangpur and Dhaka Metro, which was simultaneously taking place at the BKSP, ended as a draw.

Rangpur however, managed to bowl Metro out in the last over of the day and received the required number of points to win the championship. At the end of the last round, Rangpur were crowned champions with 121 points, while Khulna finished second with 120.

Officials from Khulna, however, alleged that the game was fixed. They also reportedly submitted certain evidences to the tournament committee for their cause. Khulna captain Abdur Razzak was also vocal regarding the issue.

According to Akram Khan, chairman of BCB's tournament committee, the match referee had filed no such complaints. Regardless, the BCB president told reporters yesterday that the BCB would form a probe committee.

"I wasn't aware of the issue. It was only after a television channel interviewed Akram yesterday; that I asked for the finer details. I feel because a complaint has been lodged, we should investigate it. We will form a probe committee on Sunday," said Papon.

Cricket Committee ponders more tech

AGENCIES, Dubai

The ICC Cricket Committee discussed the possibility of using motion sensors on bowlers with suspect actions on Saturday. Earlier, according to sources, the game's best brains spent the better part of Friday talking about the proposed changes to the ODI playing conditions.

The Cricket Committee was expected to discuss how to attach the sensor to the bowler's arm on match day, who would attach the sensors when, how quickly after each delivery should the results be viewable off the field and what sort of calibration would be acceptable for a bowler to perform on a match day.

The committee also discussed the existing playing conditions over a period of 10 hours on Friday. Sri Lanka superstar Kumar Sangakkara, part of the committee as 'current player representative', submitted his views in writing because he could not be present at the conclave.

The left-handed batsman informed his colleagues that the use of new balls has "not served its purpose" of providing greater balance between bat and ball.

"It is self-evident that the two-ball rule favours countries and teams that have pace-based attacks at the expense of those with

spin-based attacks. Is this not unfair and unhealthy for the diversity of the game?" Sangakkara asked.

He has also urged his colleagues to allow the use of an extra fielder outside the circle in the last 10 overs while also touching upon the inconsistent use of the Decision Review System.

"Clearly, the inconsistent use of technology from series to series, including wide variation of the systems used in different series and tournaments, is a huge problem. That is confusing and unsatisfactory for players and spectators. If we can't organise 'hotspot' for the World Cup, our flagship event, then we have a big problem. This issue is not going to be resolved without the consensus of all cricket boards. And if India remains unwilling to use technology, then this issue can't be resolved by this committee," Sangakkara wrote.

He also talked about the accuracy of the ball tracking technology and the possible removal of 'umpire's call' in the case of a leg-before decision. "If we have an accurate ball-tracking system, then the removal of 'umpire's call' for lbws will most certainly be welcome. We are seeing some umpires become increasingly conservative in their decision-making and that is to the detriment of the game."

Shakib's IPL stint over?

STAR SPORTS DESK



Shakib Al Hasan's IPL stint virtually came to an end yesterday after a blistering century from Shane Watson led Rajasthan Royals to a 9-run win over Kolkata Knight Riders in a must-win encounter for both the sides in Mumbai.

The only way Kolkata can make it to the knock-out stages is if Royal Challengers Bangalore lose by a huge margin.

The defeat means that Shakib, who finished with figures of 0 for 36, and managed just 13 with the bat towards the end, is likely to be able to join the Bangladesh camp for the India series which on May 20.

Batting first, Watson hammered five sixes and nine fours and left Kolkata's bowlers shocked. He clubbed the ball when the bowlers bowled short and then drove them to precision when it was full. He remained not out on 104 and helped his side post 199.

In reply, Kolkata's chase were supported by many mini cameos. Yousuf Pathan scored 44, while Andre Russel hammered 37 off 20. Shakib came in at seven, but despite swinging his bat with all his might, he couldn't bring about much of a change. Umesh Yadav hammered 22 off 9 deliveries, 20 off which came off the second last over, gave Kolkata a glimmer of hope as they required 16 off six balls. However, Shakib was caught in the

Team	P	W	L	N/R	Pts
Chennai	14	9	5	0	18
Rajasthan	14	7	5	2	16
Bangalore	13	7	5	1	15
Kolkata	14	7	6	1	15
Hyderabad	13	7	6	0	14
Mumbai	13	7	6	0	14
Delhi	13	5	8	0	10
Punjab	14	3	11	0	6

first ball of the last over and Kolkata were restricted to 190. Chris Morris, who bowled beautifully for his 4 for 23, proved to be the key devastator.



Rajasthan Royals batsman Shane Watson celebrates his century against Kolkata Knight Riders during their IPL encounter yesterday.

PAK-ZIM SERIES Pakistan start selling tickets

AGENCIES, Lahore

Tickets went on sale in Pakistan Saturday for next week's cricket series against Zimbabwe, days after a major militant attack put the visit -- the first by a Test playing nation in six years -- in doubt.

Zimbabwe confirmed Friday that it will go ahead with the tour, including two Twenty20 and three one-day internationals, despite an attack on a Karachi bus on Wednesday that left 45 people dead.

Cricket authorities in the African nation had released a statement on Thursday saying the tour would not go ahead due to the "security risk", but quickly apologised.

Meanwhile, Pakistan legend Javed Miandad has called on the International Cricket Council (ICC) to encourage more teams to visit his nation in order to revive international cricket at home.

Ex-Test fast bowler Sarfraz Nawaz said that Zimbabwe's decision to tour provides a big ray of hope for cricket lovers in Pakistan.

IN A NUTSHELL

Now young boy hit by Miller shot

INTERNET

It looks like David Miller's ill luck keeps chasing him in this year's IPL. Barely after a week since his six hit a police constable in the eye during his side's match against KKR, his shot during Kings XI Punjab's practice session ahead of their match against the Chennai Super Kings hit a young boy on his chest directly causing him to faint.

ESPNcricinfo reported that the incident happened when Miller was practising his pull shot close to the boundary rope. The boy was immediately carried off by a cop to the Punjab Cricket Association premises. Later, it was also confirmed that the boy was fine after receiving some treatment.

It was reported a couple of days back that the 53-year-old constable Alok Aich unfortunately had lost his vision.

Hales fifth to hit six 6s

INTERNET

England batsman Alex Hales smashed six consecutive sixes to help Nottinghamshire crush Birmingham Bears by eight wickets in NatWest T20 Blast at Trent Bridge on Friday.



Hales, who will play for Mumbai Indians in the IPL for injured Corey Anderson, struck an unbeaten 86 from 43 balls with fives fours and eight sixes. Chasing 142 for a win, the explosive batsman's superb knock helped Nottinghamshire win the contest with 33 balls to spare.

He achieved the feat in the 11th and 12th overs against Boyd Rankin and Ateeq Javid, respectively. He is now the fifth batsman to hit six successive sixes. Sir Garfield Sobers, Ravi Shastri, Herschelle Gibbs and Yuvraj Singh share the record for hitting six sixes in the same over.

Sachin-Shane league 'risky'

INTERNET

The Twenty20 league mooted by Indian batting legend Sachin Tendulkar and spin champion Shane Warne could be a risky proposition, feels the Australian's manager James Erskine. He said he remembers having a discussion on the league with Warne but he is not aware of the specifics.

"Shane Warne has lots of ideas about cricket. I haven't spoken to Warne about it for ages. Some time, maybe a year ago or so, he mentioned that this was something of interest to do in America and Tendulkar was interested, but I haven't discussed it with him for months," Erskine was quoted as saying in the Sydney Morning Herald.

Erskine feels there could be a market for this league featuring former greats but he was not sure about the commercial viability of the tournament.

"If you take past greats to countries that normally don't get major cricket then I think it could work. But as we know, most of the money in cricket today is not to do with gate receipts, it's all to do with television rights," he said.

PHOTO: INTERNET