



Whether Shakib Al Hasan, who takes a breather from training in Mirpur yesterday, will get an opportunity to scalp a five-wicket haul against Australia -- the only Test nation the left-armer hasn't taken a five-for against -- remains a question.

PHOTO: STAR

'Disappointing if Aussies don't come'

SPORTS REPORTER



Bangladesh Cricket Board (BCB) president Nazmul Hasan Papon has said that it would be disappointing if Australia does not tour Bangladesh, considering the high level of security that the government has promised the Aussies.

He also added that the BCB would get to know about Cricket Australia's final decision in a day's time.

Speaking to reporters at his residence yesterday evening, Papon admitted that the killing of an Italian national in Dhaka and the subsequent alerts from the foreign ministries of the United States, the United Kingdom and Canada, could have left the Australian security officials a bit concerned.

However, he said that a foolproof security plan, which includes input from the Prime Minister's security advisor, has been arranged for the Australian team and that the visitors wouldn't have any reason to worry.

"After the murder of the Italian citizen, the security team might have been a little concerned since these instances are very rare in Dhaka. But you can't compare this incident to a scenario where a team will get full protection. I don't see any reason for them to be scared.

"We have assured them the highest level of security and I don't think any other country has ever offered a team such a level

of security. If they don't come despite all of that it will be disappointing.

"It will be hard to accept as well, since three teams toured here a few months ago. Even Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi came here for a visit recently," said Papon.

"When it comes to cricket, as a nation we are all united. I don't think anybody wants to spoil that image here. Today the BNP issued a press release in support of the tour. These are things that you can't even imagine in the country; but it's taking place because of cricket," he added.

Furthermore, the BCB president emphasised on the support this tour has received from the government.

"Within a day, we made them [Australian security team] meet the highest possible security officials. The DGFI, RAB and even the PM's security advisor, and everyone gave their assurances.

"This would not have been possible for me to arrange in a day's time without the PM's involvement. It shows the amount of attention that the government is giving to this series," said Papon.

Despite the negativity surrounding the tour, Papon believes there is still hope.

"The Australian team which left here will present the security details back home and we should know their response within two days time. They still haven't said no... we can only after take any steps after they respond," concluded the BCB president.

Dismal tour ends on a low

SPORTS REPORTER

Bangladesh A ended their tour of India with an innings and 32-run defeat to India A in their three-dayer at the M Chinnaswamy Stadium in Bangalore yesterday.

Poor batting was the reason behind the massive defeat, as the visitors were dismissed for 151 in their second innings, losing their final eight wickets in only 28.3 overs on the final day's morning session.

The second-string Bangladesh side went to India with high hopes as everyone, barring Saqlain Sajib, had played for the national side. However, under the leadership of Mominul Haque, they failed to rise to the expectations.

Bangladesh A bounced back from a defeat in the first one-dayer through a magnificent all-round performance from Nasir Hossain to clinch the second match, but they ultimately surrendered the third match and the

series. That was followed by successive defeats in three-dayers against Karnataka and India A.

"Yes, the tour could have been much better, but unfortunately our team failed to deliver their best. I think we played against a very strong India A side in the three-match one-day series and winning a game against them was in itself an achievement. However, the performance in the three-dayers was really frustrating," said chief selector Faruque Ahmed, who travelled to India as team manager.

"There was nothing in the pitches to explain the batting debacle in the three-day matches. Our batsmen failed to apply themselves properly. This series once again showed that we need to go a long way in longer-version cricket. We can take a lesson from this series," he added.

Captain Mominul also echoed those sentiments as he rued his team's approach towards the longer form of the game.

"In our team most of the guys are ODI players. One-days and Tests are

very different. That is the main problem. We played these as ODI matches. We were chasing the ball too early in the innings," Mominul was quoted on Cricinfo.

Mominul finally got back among runs as he hit a half-century in his team's otherwise sordid batting performance in the second innings, but overall the little left-hander failed to capitalise on the opportunity. Mominul failed to give any message to the selectors which would indicate that he has the potential to fit into the current ODI side.

"This kind of series is always an opportunity for the players. Unfortunately only a few could make the most of it," Faruque responded when asked about Mominul's performance.

The second-string side will return to Bangladesh today.

SCORES IN BRIEF

BANGLADESH A: 228 and 151 all out in 39.3 overs (Mominul 54, Liton 38, Saqlain 21; Pandey 3-28, Mithun 2-23, Yadav 3-48)

INDIA A: 411 for 5 dec.

Result: India A won by an innings and

ASIAN AIRGUN C'SHIP Shakil wins bronze

SPORTS REPORTER

Young Shakil Ahmed saved the blushes of his senior teammates with a bronze-medal winning performance in the 8th Asian Airgun Championship in New Delhi yesterday. After two days of disappointing performances from his teammates, the 20-year-old shooter grabbed the bronze in his favourite 10m air pistol event in the men's junior category.

Shakil scored 175.2 points in the finals after scoring 552 points in the six-shot qualification round. Having qualified in the fourth position, Shakil managed to finish third out of five competitors. India's Sumedh Kumar won the gold medal while his compatriot Hemendra Kushwah grabbed the silver.

No scare for football yet

SPORTS REPORTER

Bangladesh Football Federation (BFF) general secretary Abu Nayeem Shohag has said that they have advised the national team's head coach Fabio Lopez and his two Italian assistants to keep the federation aware of their movements in the wake of the killing of an Italian citizen in Dhaka on Monday night.

The BFF spokesman said the same message had been relayed to national team goalkeeping coach, German national Christian Schweichler, who is in Dhaka with the under-19 team, even though no security alert or general directive from either the Italian or German embassy was issued.

"The Italian embassy in Dhaka has not contacted us thus far. However, we have spoken to the head coach and his two assistants, who are in BKSP now with the team. We have requested them to keep us informed about their movements. We have also requested the BKSP authorities to ensure the security of these coaches and the others of the national team," said Shohag.

The comments came after Cesare Tavella, a 50-year-old Italian development worker, was killed in Gulshan and that subsequently led to alerts being issued from the foreign ministries of USA, UK and Canada for their citizens in Bangladesh.

The BFF official also downplayed the possibility of any negative impact of the recent incidents on the scheduled FIFA World Cup qualifying fixture between Bangladesh and Australia in Dhaka on November 17.

"The manager of the Australia team, Joel Freeman, visited Bangladesh a few weeks ago and he had a very good impression of everything here. Whenever any foreign team comes here, we provide VIP protocol to them. If needed, the Australia team will be provided with special security," said Shohag.

An Australian sports portal earlier quoted an unnamed official of the Football Federation of Australia saying, "FFA has been closely monitoring the current security situation in Bangladesh ahead of the planned World Cup Qualifier in November. FFA has been in discussions with DFAT and other related federal government agencies, security experts and the AFC to ensure we have a clear picture of the situation in Bangladesh."

Meanwhile, amid all the security concerns of the westerners, Uzbekistan under-19 team had their practice session at the Dhanmondi Club Ground in the evening after arriving here in the afternoon for the AFC U-19 Championship Qualifiers, which kick off on Friday. Bhutan have been here

Manohar set to succeed Dalmiya

AFP, Mumbai

The Board of Control for Cricket in India (BCCI) will meet at the weekend to elect a new president following the death of Jagmohan Dalmiya, its secretary said Tuesday.

Anurag Thakur said the BCCI was expected to pick former supremo Shashank Manohar as its new chief at a special meeting on Sunday.

"Shashank Manohar is our consensus candidate," he told local media.

Anurag Thakur and Narayanaswami Srinivasan, who are bitter rivals, were thought to be gearing up for a battle to lead the BCCI but Manohar's elevation appears designed to make an election contest less likely.

The meeting is expected to be held in Mumbai.

Kaushal can't bowl doosra

AFP, Colombo

Sri Lankan off-spinner Tharindu Kaushal has been cleared to resume playing provided he does not bowl the "doosra", the ICC said on Tuesday.

Kaushal, 22, was reported during the third Test against India this month, but tests at an ICC-accredited centre cleared him partially.

"The assessment revealed that Kaushal's 'doosra' was found to exceed the level of tolerance and it can no longer be bowled in international cricket," read a statement.

Akmal seals Zim's fate

AFP, Harare

Umar Akmal's aggressive innings proved crucial in a low-scoring game as Pakistan beat Zimbabwe by 15 runs to win Tuesday's Twenty20 international at Harare Sports Club and sweep the two-match series.

Akmal scored 38 not out from 28 balls and added 24 runs with Imad Wasim in the last two overs of Pakistan's innings to boost the tourists' total to 136 for six, which proved beyond Zimbabwe despite Sean Williams' fighting 40 not out.

Williams shared a 60-run partnership for the fifth wicket with Sikandar Raza Butt -- the only half-century stand in the series -- but was always playing catch-up after the hosts had slumped to 24 for four at the start of their chase.

Zimbabwe finished on 121 for seven, as left-arm spinner Wasim once again proved the pick of the Pakistani bowlers with figures of 1 for 14 from four overs.

SCORES IN BRIEF

PAKISTAN: 136 for 6 (Maqsood 26, Akmal 38; Panyangara 2-27, Jongwe 2-24)

ZIMBABWE: 121 for 7

(Williams 40 not out, Raza 36; Irfan 2-25, Khan 2-35)

Result: Pakistan won by 15 runs

Player-of-the-series: Imad Wasim



Captains of Bangladesh and Pakistan women's cricket teams, Salma Khatun (L) and Sana Mir pose with the series trophy on the eve of the first T20I in Karachi yesterday.

PHOTO: AFP

Women's team at ease

AFP, Karachi

Bangladesh women's cricket captain Salma Khatun said Tuesday her players feel "comfortable" in Pakistan as they prepare for a series, even though most foreign teams have shunned the conflict-racked country for years.

The series, comprising two Twenty20s and as many one-day matches, was given the green light after a visit by a Bangladeshi security delegation.

Major foreign cricket teams have stayed away since Pakistani militants attacked the Sri Lankan team bus in 2009, killing eight people and injuring several visiting players.

Pakistan's international isolation was overcome earlier this year when Zimbabwe toured for a short limited-over series, but hopes for more cricket remain slim after a bomb went off outside the ground during the last match.

Pakistan hosted non-Test playing

country Nepal in 2011 but the last high-profile teams to play in Pakistan were India and Sri Lanka in 2006.

Khatun said her team was focused on cricket.

"We are here to play cricket and are comfortable," she said at the launch of the series that will be played entirely in the southern city of Karachi.

"It is just like our home and we are fully prepared to play against Pakistan, which is a very strong team."

Bangladesh twice refused to send their men's team to Pakistan, in 2012 and 2013, over security fears after initially agreeing to play short limited-over series.

The first Twenty20 will be played on Thursday followed by the second on October 2. The two one-day matches will be played on October 4 and 6.

The Pakistan Cricket Board (PCB) has promised foolproof security for the Bangladeshi women's team, with players staying at the same club where they will play their matches.

WICB suspends Simmons

IANS, Bridgetown

Phil Simmons has been suspended as West Indies coach, just days after criticising the selection panel over the one-day squad for Sri Lanka.

Simmons slammed the board for omitting Marlon Samuels and Darren Bravo.

Simmons was appointed last March following the World Cup and has overseen home series against England and Australia.



Amid fears of the Australian cricket team's postponement of a scheduled tour to Bangladesh over security concerns, the Bhutan under-19 football team relax in Savar BKSP (L) while the Uzbekistan under-19 team take part in a training session at the Dhanmondi Club Ground after arriving in the afternoon yesterday. Bangladesh will host these countries alongside Sri Lanka in the AFC U-19 Championship Qualifiers, beginning on Friday.

PHOTOS: AFP