

HOCKEY CAMP Players bent on boycotting

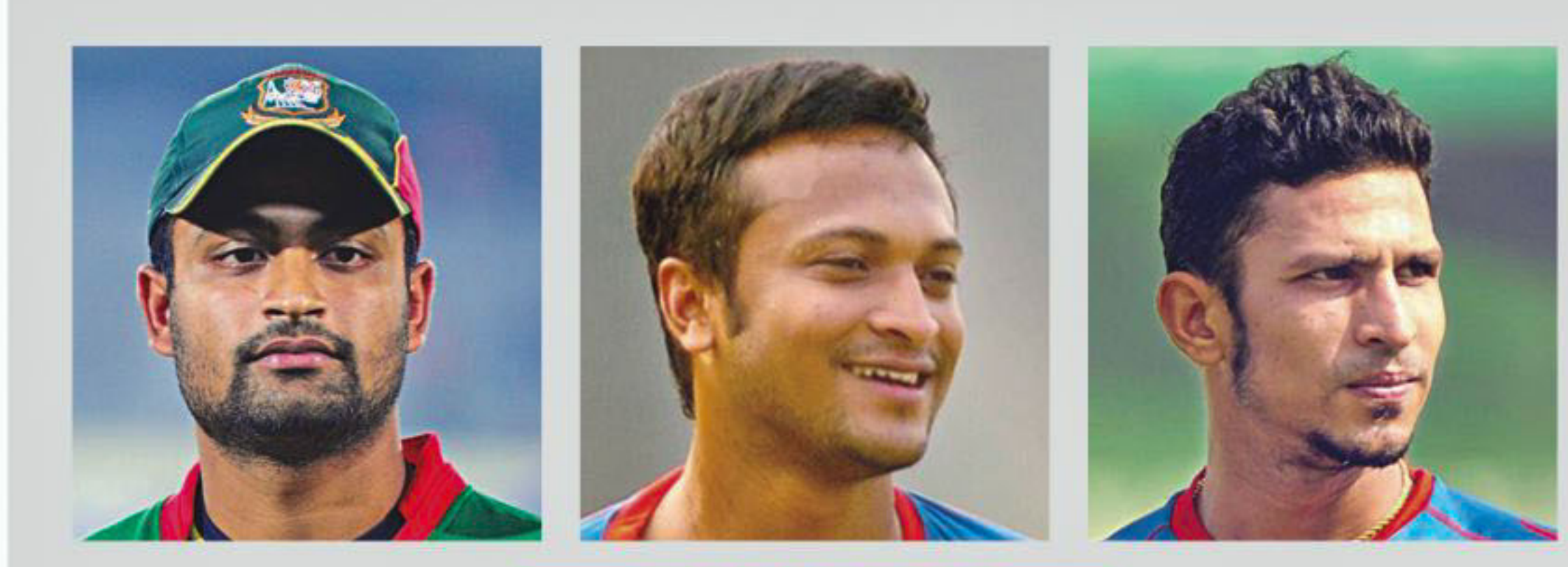
A number of players of the national hockey team yesterday reiterated their stance of not joining the training camp for the upcoming South Asian Games until a schedule of the inter-club players' transfer window is announced by the Bangladesh Hockey Federation.

The residential training camp, under the supervision of Mahub Harun, is scheduled to get underway today at the BKSP. National team's striker Pushkor Khisha Mimo read out an unsigned statement at the Abahani Ground, claiming the statement was on behalf of all hockey players. The statement demanded an immediate transfer schedule and a resolution to the ongoing crisis with the involvement of all stakeholders.

Mabia wins 3 medals

Mabia Akter Simanta won a gold medal and two silver medals in the Commonwealth Weightlifting Championship in Pune yesterday, said a press release from the Bangladesh Weightlifting Federation. Mabia won the gold in the 63kg category in youth section while winning the two silver medals in senior and junior categories, according to the press release. Meanwhile, Mustain Billah won a silver medal in the 62kg category in men's youth section.

BPL draws closer



THE ICONS



BPL-3 FACTS

- Will take place from November 20 to December 15
- Venues: Dhaka and Chittagong
- Two matches per day
- Six teams to play a total of 34 matches
- Knockout stages will include an eliminator round akin to IPL
- Players' auction on October 26 (196 foreign players and 123 local players)
- Cost cap for foreign players: USD 70,000
- Cost cap for local players: Tk 35 lakh
- TEAMS: Chittagong Vikings, Dhaka Dynamites, Comilla Victorians, Barisal Bulls, Rangpur Riders, Sylhet Royals.

The Bangladesh Premier League's governing council yesterday declared the six icon players, the list of the registered foreign and local players and the schedule of the third season of the BPL at a press conference in Mirpur. Senior national players Mashrafe Bin Mortaza, Shakib Al Hasan, Tamim Iqbal, Mushfiqur Rahim, Nasir Hossain and Mahmudullah Riyad have been deemed as the icon players of the tournament and will earn the highest, Tk 35 lakh, amongst the local players. Apart from the six of them, the BCB also revealed a list that included the names of the 117 local players that have been registered for the tournament. They have been divided into four grades. Grade A includes 17 players, grade B has 36 players, grade C has 43 and grade D has 21 players.

196 foreign players have also been divided, with players belonging to grade A costing the highest, USD 70,000. On the other hand, players belonging to grades B, C and D will earn USD 50,000, 40,000 and 30,000 respectively. The players' auction will take place on October 26, where the six franchises can buy players as per the player-by-choice system. While local players can only be bought on October 26, when the auction takes place, the foreign players can directly sign deals with the franchises. According to the governing council, franchises have already signed the likes of Shahid Afridi and Chris Gayle. "If a franchise buys a player before-hand, the player's name will be removed from the players' transfer list," said Mallick. "However, if a foreign player is bought directly by a franchise with an amount that

exceeds the price of his grade, then the BCB will not be liable for the additional fee. "For example, if a player who belongs to grade A [with a cost price of USD 70,000] is directly bought by the franchisee for a price more than 70,000, then the BCB will not act as the guarantor for the extra money. We will only be liable for USD 70,000," added Mallick. The tournament will begin on November 20 and end on December 15 with the games taking place in Dhaka and Chittagong. Of the 196 foreign players that have registered, 53 belong to England, 53 from Pakistan, 34 from the West Indies, 25 from Sri Lanka, four players each from South Africa and Australia, six from Zimbabwe and two from New Zealand. The remaining 15 are from the non-full member nations. Surprisingly though, the playing conditions of the competition are yet to be finalised.

A new hurdle to overcome

"I am now focusing on how to quickly cope with different conditions." That was the way Bangladesh's newest batting sensation Soumya Sarkar revealed his new challenge while speaking to The Daily Star yesterday, before leaving for South Africa with the Bangladesh A team.

The 22-year-old left-hander recently toured India with the second string Bangladesh side after enthraling the world's cricket fraternity with his display of fearless cricket in limited-overs matches earlier this year. However, Soumya failed to justify his talent in India, scoring 9, 24 and 1 in three 50-over matches against India A, before scoring 0 and 43 against Karnataka in two innings of the first three-day and 0 and 19 in the second and final three-dayer against India A. But why did he fail to rise to the expectations? When Soumya was asked the question ahead of another challenge in foreign conditions, the soft-spoken batsman said, "Actually, ahead of another challenge I want to forget what happened in India. But what I can briefly say is that there was some swing and the conditions in India were very different from home, so I could not adjust. Consequently, this is the area where I have been working now, although I can't say anything in detail."

Soumya has already proven his abilities in the shorter-version of cricket and the team management also have the southpaw in their plans for longer-version cricket, which is why he has been given chances to tour with the A team. "I am lucky that I was given the opportunity to play in different conditions and I want to utilise that opportunity properly. Like many other players I also dream of Test cricket. And the more I play, the more I learn how to switch over from limited-over to longer-version cricket. I want to continue with my natural game, but I realise that my batting needs to be adjusted a little when it comes to longer-version cricket and conditions away from home," said Soumya. Chief selector Faruque Ahmed, who toured India with Bangladesh A as team manager, closely watched Soumya's batting in India but he was not ready to elaborate on where the problem lay with the left-hander during that tour. "He is young and talented player. I don't think there are any doubts about his ability, but he needs to play more and more longer-version matches. That's the reason we are giving him as many chances as possible. I don't think he needs to curb his shots in order to be successful in longer-version cricket, instead he needs to make some slight adjustments to his batting." And Soumya is well-aware that only through hard work can he show that he is here to stay. "I think this is not the time for me to think about success or failure. It's time to work hard and I doing exactly that."

Malik's return to glory

pantheon of remarkable comebacks and quizzical selections, this one is quite something. Malik is not the first Pakistan player to make a surprise comeback, but the 33-year-old allrounder's latest recall has proved his most successful. Malik put in a number of impressive performances during Pakistan's limited-overs tour of Zimbabwe and, less than 24 hours after Malik hastened Pakistan's series win with an unbeaten 34 from 28 balls, the PCB announced that he had been added to an existing 15-man Test squad to face England "given his present form in T20Is and ODIs". With Azhar Ali injured and Mohammad Hafeez -- incidentally an almost like-for-like allrounder who had taken Malik's place in the Test squad five years ago -- unable to bowl because of action issues,

England batsmen will have to bat out of their skins to thwart Pakistan's pace-cum-spin attack on a pitch which did not help the bowlers on the first two days but can change its nature as the game progresses. **SCORES IN BRIEF** PAKISTAN: First innings 523 for 8 decl (Hafeez 98, Malik 245, Younis 38, Shafiq 107; Anderson 2-42, Stokes 4-57) ENGLAND: First innings 56 for no loss (Cook 39 not out, Moeen 15 not out)

Malik was drafted into the XI for the Abu Dhabi opener. And in his first Test match since August 2010 - and 33rd overall since his debut in 2001 - he produced a career-best 245 from the No 3 spot. Asad Shafiq, who scored 107 for his ninth hundred, added 248 runs with Malik -- a new record in Pakistan-England Tests. England batsmen will have to bat out of their skins to thwart Pakistan's pace-cum-spin attack on a pitch which did not help the bowlers on the first two days but can change its nature as the game progresses. **SCORES IN BRIEF** PAKISTAN: First innings 523 for 8 decl (Hafeez 98, Malik 245, Younis 38, Shafiq 107; Anderson 2-42, Stokes 4-57) ENGLAND: First innings 56 for no loss (Cook 39 not out, Moeen 15 not out)



Bangladesh A players share a joke during a photo-shoot at Mirpur yesterday prior to their departure for South Africa, where they are scheduled to play a three-day game and three one-dayers against their counterparts. After that, they will travel to Zimbabwe and face the hosts in three one-dayers and two four-day matches. PHOTO: STAR



Shoaib Malik arose like a phoenix from its ashes yesterday, when he turned his 100 into a maiden double-hundred on the second day of the first Test against England in Abu Dhabi. PHOTO: AFP

Moreno pens 6-month deal

SS Steel Private Ltd has come forward to sponsor Bangladesh Football Federation's development coach Gonzalo Sanchez Moreno. The sponsorship deal was revealed yesterday after an emergency meeting of the BFF executive committee, which approved of Moreno's six-month contract and SS Steel's sponsorship deal worth 15,000 dollars. "Moreno will start working with the players of the under-16 and under-19 teams within a couple of days," said BFF vice president and development committee chairman Badal Roy. BFF president Kazi Salahuddin had earlier spoke to 16 players of the under-19 team, which recently participated in the AFC U-19 Championship Qualifiers in Dhaka. The BFF boss asked those players to join the training camp under Moreno so that they could ensure a brighter future. However, not all of the members of the team were available yesterday as some of them have already signed up for different clubs of the Bangladesh Championship League already, which might result in them missing the training camp. "Moreno will initially work with the under-16 team and the available players of the under-19 team who have not signed up for the Bangladesh Championship League clubs. The Spanish coach will conduct 70 uninterrupted sessions," informed Roy. Moreno informed that he would emphasise on three things -- power, resistance and speed -- when conducting the trainings sessions, which will be held in Dhaka. The Spaniard also claimed the training regime has been designed after the Barcelona Youth Academy.

The finisher is back

Dhoni's unbeaten 92 helps India level series

Mahendra Singh Dhoni took only three days to hit back at his critics with a sublime unbeaten 92 as India overcame jittery batting to pull off a 22-run win against South Africa in the second one-day international at the Holkar Stadium in Indore yesterday. The India captain was heavily criticised for scoring a rather subdued 33 in their first game in Kanpur that the home side lost in the final over by five runs. The finisher, who struck only one four in that game, returned to his belligerent best -- clubbing seven fours and four sixes including the last one that smashed an advertising board. The effort of captain cool guided India from a precarious 165-7 to a fighting 247-9 before bowling South Africa out for 225 to level the five-match series 1-1. Dhoni marshalled his limited resources astutely as left-arm spinner Axar Patel and seamer Kumar grabbed three wickets each and Virat Kohli took three good catches to fashion the unexpected win. Faf du Plessis was the lone batsman to shine for the tourists with 51 as the rest of the batting succumbed under the pressure applied by Dhoni's men under lights. The Proteas were sailing along at a comfortable 134-2, following a 82-run stand between du Plessis and JP Duminy, when India bounced back with three wickets in the space of 15 deliveries. Patel trapped Duminy leg-before for 36 and had du Plessis offering a catch to Kohli in the covers, before Kumar forced David Miller to edge his first delivery to Dhoni behind the stumps. Kohli then dived to his left in the covers to pick up a superb catch that removed danger man, the South African captain AB de Villiers, for 19 and made South Africa 167-6 in the 33rd over. Farhaan Behardien and Rabada attempted to pull South Africa out of trouble, but India held their nerves in front of a sell-out crowd of 27,000 home fans. Earlier, Dale Steyn claimed 3-49 while Morne Morkel and Imran Tahir chipped in with two wickets each to restrict the Indians to 247. Ajinkya Rahane was the only other batsman besides Dhoni to shine with 51. **SCORES IN BRIEF** INDIA: 247 for 9 in 50 overs (Dhawan 23, Rahane 51, Dhoni 92 not out, Harbhajan 22; Steyn 3-49, Morkel 2-42, Tahir 2-42) SOUTH AFRICA: 225 all out in 43.4 overs (Amla 17, De Kock 34, Du Plessis 51, Duminy 36, De Villiers 19, Behardien 18, Rabada 19 not out; Kumar 3-41, Harbhajan 2-51, Patel 3-39) Result: India won by 22 runs. Player-of-the-match: MS Dhoni.

SL eyeing big score

opener Dimuth Karunaratne scored his third Test century and made the West Indies bowlers toil in sweltering conditions as Sri Lanka finished on 250 for two at stumps on the opening day of the first Test Wednesday. Karunaratne, who hit 10 fours and a six, was unbeaten on 135 along with Dinesh Chandimal who has so far made 72 in an unbroken stand of 149 at the Galle International Stadium on Sri Lanka's south coast. Playing in his 22nd Test match, Karunaratne laid the foundations for a formidable first innings score for the hosts on a pitch which is expected to favour spin in the latter stages of the game. **SCORES IN BRIEF** SRI LANKA: First innings 250 for 2 (Karunaratne 135 not out, Silva 17, Chandimal 72 not out; Roach 1-33, Bishoo 1-78)