

SPORT

World on his mind, Tetulia in his heart

BISHWAJIT ROY

Tetulia is next to heaven for him. Nothing is more pleasing for Mustafizur Rahman than spending time in the tranquil village with his beloved family members and friends. He is now an emerging star in the global cricket arena and the success has come to his life like a bolt of lightning. A lot of changes have come into his external life but inside he is as emotional as any other ordinary Bengali man and he is as homesick as any young man venturing out into the world. That is why leisure means spending time in his dearly loved village, playing cricket on an open field, having fun with old friends. But the whole world is now open to him and he dreams of becoming a world-beater, so whatever opportunity comes his way, he has to accept it even if it means leaving home comforts for some time.

"There (Tetulia) it is a lot of fun. I enjoy every moment I spend there. Many people come to meet me when I go to my village and that is the only change; otherwise everything is as it was before. But I have to do my duty also," Mustafizur, voice wavering with the emotion of farewells said to loved ones, said while talking to this reporter on way to the Hazrat Shahjalal International Airport yesterday afternoon to catch the Kolkata flight to play in the Indian Premier League (IPL)

for Sunrisers Hyderabad.

He started from the BCB Cricket Academy after a short press meet which began with him asking: "What do I need to say?" Mustafizur's bowling speaks in many ways but when it comes to answering questions, he prefers dealing in one-word answers wherever possible. In his words: "I love addas but don't like media conversations. Let me play, then there will be something to tell you people."

It was no different even when his uncle, who was accompanying him to the airport, advised him on many things. "It will not be a problem," he responded when advised to call at any time whenever he feels lonely. "It will not be a problem," he responded when he was advised to take care of his health. "It will not be a problem," was his response to almost every piece of advice, even when he received calls from near and dear ones, but his voice continued to falter. It was the first time in his career that he was going alone to play cricket abroad.

Is he a bit nervous? "No, nothing like that," was his answer.

He has plans to go to England after the IPL to play county cricket for Sussex, which means he will be away for a long time. But those close to him suspect that he will manage to squeeze a short trip home in between.

When it comes to cricket issues, Mustafizur is not someone who tells you anything elaborately but even in his

brief statements you can find wisdom and character. What would be more interesting, IPL or county cricket?

"Same. Only difference is I will get much more breaks between matches in England. Conditions... I hardly think about that because I love to bowl in any conditions."

Many fear that tough days are ahead for Mustafizur as everyone is working to break down the mystery of his cutters. "Let me enjoy the moment. Definitely I will not sit idle when the new challenge comes," said Mustafizur, whose cricketing brain has been widely lauded.

Is he developing anything new in his bowling?

"I am not delivering the cutters and slower in the nets but definitely I practise these two deliveries. Yes, I need to develop the swinging deliveries for more success but I am hardly getting any time right now."

"You know the grip is most important. How you can use the seam depends on you. No one but you can develop your skills," he said when asked about taking tips from former greats.

How would he tackle it if bad times do befall him?

"I already have the experience of how difficult it is to sit idle when the team is playing, though it was for injury. I don't think anything beyond this moment."

Thus ended the conversation during a short trip with a bowler who is as simple and emotional as any other Bengali, but much more crafty with the cherry in hand.



Goodbye! Mustafizur Rahman left the country yesterday and embarked upon a long journey. For now, he is going to India to take part in the Indian Premier League. After his stint with the Sunrisers Hyderabad, he is scheduled to go to the UK to play for Sussex.

PHOTO: STAR

Siddle, Starc take aim at Samuels

AGENCIES, Melbourne

Australian pace bowlers Mitchell Starc and Peter Siddle may be sidelined due to injury, but they showed their involvement in the game by reportedly commenting on the re-ignited fiasco between Marlon Samuels and Shane Warne on Tuesday.

Samuels tore into Shane Warne at a press conference after having led West Indies to their second World Twenty20 title on Sunday.

Siddle did not seem to be too impressed with the West Indies batsman. "I enjoy it at times from blokes that perform a bit more frequently than he does," he said.

"If you look at a Chris Gayle doing it, or an Andre Russell, they probably have the performances to back it up," the pacer added.

Starc, on the other hand, was slightly more empathetic in his opinion about the Samuels reaction.

The left-arm paceman stated, "He's obviously had it on his mind for a while now. He probably hadn't shown much form until last night so he's held it in for a while and then made sure he performed on the big stage and has obviously made it count. Maybe it's off his chest now and he can just get back to his cricket."

Best Windies team since our era: Viv

AGENCIES, St. Johns



How can any West Indies cricket achievement beat the period of dominance in which the Clive Lloyd-led teams won two World Cups (in 1975 and 1979) and were beaten in a Test series only once after 1975-76 (by New Zealand in 1979-80) till the time Lloyd quit the game in 1985?

According to Sir Vivian Richards, the chief batting architect in that glorious period, Sunday's ICC World T20 victories by the women's and men's teams come close. "This is the greatest period ever since that wonderful phase involving Clive's team. Considering the success that West Indies team had on a consistent basis, this is the closest any West Indies team would have got in terms of pride among all nations that make up West Indies cricket," Richards told mid-day from Antigua yesterday.

Richards, who took over the captaincy mantle from Lloyd in 1985 and led the team till his 1991 retirement, didn't lose a Test series. He reckoned self belief played an important part in West Indies' Sunday glory and the quality was aptly epitomised by Carlos Brathwaite, who hit four sixes in the last over to deny England their second World T20 triumph.

Richards didn't appear surprised by Brathwaite's stunning show. "Carlos is a

determined guy. I worked with him in the West Indies 'A' team (Richards was Technical Director in the Brathwaite-led team in Sri Lanka). He is strong, big and took it away from England. If someone has that kind of belief, anything can be achieved.

"Belief is the greatest thing to have as a competitor. You may have talent and ability but the most important thing to have is belief and of course, enough ammunition and personnel to chase down anything that the opposition sets," Richards, who kept abreast of West Indies' progress while playing golf.

He had expressed supreme confidence in the West Indies team before their semi-final clash against India. "I think it's the best opportunity (to win) regardless of the fact that they are playing India at home."

"These guys have got to believe that all things can be accomplished. I believe West Indies have a great chance," Richards told this newspaper before the March 31 game.

Is this best time for the administrators to sort out their differences with the players? Richards is hopeful, but didn't sound optimistic: "Judging from what Darren Sammy said in his post-match comments, it didn't sound all that good. "I am just hoping that the folks who didn't play a huge role on the administrative side of things, are not going to jump and start acclaiming that they have done this and that."



ACE all-rounder Shikib Al Hasan was appointed as the brand ambassador of Huawei, a global company in ICT and telecommunication solutions, following a signing ceremony at a city hotel yesterday.

PHOTO: COLLECTED

Pakistan name Sarfraz new T20 captain

AFP, Islamabad

The Pakistan Cricket Board (PCB) Tuesday announced Sarfraz Ahmed as new captain of the T20 team after Shahid Afridi stepped down following his side's early exit from the World Twenty20.

A statement on the PCB website described Ahmed -- who led the Quetta Gladiators to the final in Pakistan's first-ever franchise-based T20 league in February -- as a "natural choice" for the position.

"I spoke to Sarfraz this morning and conveyed to him that he was our natural choice for this position. His appointment is open-ended. I wish him good luck in his new role," it quoted PCB chairman Shaharyar Khan as saying.

Ahmed, a right-handed wicketkeeper-batsman who has played 21 T20Is said he will invoke the team's fighting spirit.

He also praised outgoing captain Afridi, subject of some of the most scathing criticism in the wake of the team's performance in India.

"I haven't seen a megastar like Afridi in my cricketing career. He has served Pakistan cricket for 20 years," Ahmed said.

St Lucia plan bash for Sammy

AGENCIES, Saint Lucia

The Saint Lucian government is planning to roll-out the red carpet for Darren Sammy, who created history by leading the West Indies to the ICC World Twenty20 for a second time on Sunday.

Darren Sammy and opener Johnson Charles were the St. Lucians in the ramping Windies team who beat England to regain the title they first won in 2012.

A massive homecoming has been planned for Sammy and Charles who are due to return to St. Lucia on Tuesday afternoon.

The homecoming includes meet and greets on the tarmac and outside the airport followed by a mid-afternoon motorcade from the airport through the communities where Sammy and Charles reside, before climaxing at Sir Derek Walcott Square for the main event.

SC blasts lax BCCI

TIMES OF INDIA



The Supreme Court of India on Tuesday slammed the Board of Control for Cricket in India (BCCI) and accused it of doing nothing to develop cricket in the country.

The BCCI came in for sharp criticism after it informed the apex court that allocation of funds to eleven states was zero.

In a scathing attack on the activities of the cricket board, the apex court said, "BCCI has created a mutually beneficial society."

Questioning why eleven states were penniless, the court observed that the BCCI must have distributive justice. "Why should these states go begging?" the top court asked.

The Supreme Court had earlier slammed the BCCI over allocation of funds to state cricket boards for development of cricket infrastructure without any "credible monitoring mechanism".

It had asked the board to submit a chart detailing how much funds it had extended to them in the last five years.

"You (BCCI) have allocated Rs 480 crore in one year to state cricket associations for the development of cricketing infrastructure. In the past 20 years, more than Rs 2000 crore have been given approximately.

"Have you monitored these funds and how they are being utilised? There is no monitoring mechanism to look at whether infrastructure has been created or not," a bench headed by Chief Justice of India TS Thakur said.

The bench, also comprising Justice FM Kalifulla, sought to know the details of funds the Board of Control for Cricket in India has allocated to states like Nagaland, Manipur and Tripura in the past five years.

The Supreme Court's observations came after senior advocate KK Venugopal submitted that BCCI has already implemented some of the recommendations of Justice RM Lodha panel appointed by the apex court to suggest structural reforms in the BCCI.

He said BCCI has already appointed an ombudsman and put in place rules on conflict of interest. Venugopal said the cricket board has put out advertisements for a chief executive officer, a chief financial officer and other top management.

Venugopal also listed some of the recommendations of the panel with which the board does not agree and sought that it be allowed to go back to the Lodha Committee to sort out the issues. The bench, however, had said it would hear and examine the issues raised by the BCCI and, if the need arises, only then it will send the list of unresolved and restricted issues back to the Lodha panel.

SLC selectors take responsibility

De Silva fires at Malinga

PTI, Colombo



Sri Lanka Cricket's selection committee chairman Aravinda de Silva on Tuesday stood by his panel and took full responsibility for making last-minute changes to the team for the ICC World Twenty20.

"All decisions were taken in the best interest of the team and we take responsibility," de Silva, the hero of Sri Lanka's 1996 World Cup win, said.

He replaced the committee headed by Kapila Wijegoonawardana.

Wijegoonawardana's committee was sacked by the Sports Ministry just a few days before the team departed.

De Silva's committee, which also included Kumar Sangakkara, made changes to the squad picked by the previous committee.

Sri Lanka fared poorly and failed to make it to the semifinals in a woeful defence of their title won in 2014.

De Silva defended the decision to include Lahiru Thirimanne in the squad after he had been overlooked by the previous committee for poor form.

"Thirimanne is the most technically sound batsman we have right now. He needs to be backed. Marvan Atapattu was still kept in the team after making six ducks, Sanath Jayasuriya was brought up the order after his repeated failures in the middle order," de Silva said.

On Lasith Malinga's spat with the selectors, de Silva said all decisions on the pacer was taken in consultation with him.

Malinga resigned as captain just before the original team was selected.

He was named in the final squad and travelled with the team before withdrawing on fitness grounds.

"His fitness will be proved soon when he plays in the IPL," de Silva said.

Brown, Katrina headline IPL opening ceremony

PTI, Mumbai

American singer Chris Brown is all set to enthral Indian fans for the first time at the opening of the ninth edition of Indian Premier League.

American dancehall reggae trio Major Lazer along with English rapper Fuse ODG and Jamaican-American recording artist Nialah Thorbourne will join Brown, 26, at NSCI Dome on April 8.

Adding Bollywood spice on the stage will be celebrities like Ranveer Singh, Jacqueline Fernandes and Katrina Kaif.

Mumbai Indians will put the trophy back in play, signalling the start of the 2016 season of the competition.

PREDICTOMETER WINNERS

Due to an oversight on the day of the ICC World Twenty20 final on April 3, The Daily Star Sport did not publish the three winners of the Predictometer contest that ran throughout the tournament. We apologise for any inconvenience this may have caused, and provide the names of the three lucky winners below:

Predictometer results	
PULLOK	0167-61689XX
RAKIB	0167-57029XX
SAIFUL ISLAM	0191-37351XX