

SPORTS



After Alex Hales and Alastair Cook were dismissed, Joe Root manned the fort for England with an innings of 80 on the first day of the second Test against Sri Lanka at the Riverside in Chester-le-Street yesterday.

PHOTO: REUTERS

Selection revamp causes a storm

SPORTS REPORTER



The Bangladesh Cricket Board (BCB) working committee's proposal to revamp the selection panel has created a chaotic scenario. After coming to know about the new proposal for the selection committee, chief selector Faruque Ahmed did not hesitate to say on Friday morning that he would resign if the new proposal is passed. Under the proposal, the current three-member committee comprising former national cricketers Faruque, Habibul Bashar and Minhajul Abedin will be expanded to seven members.

The working committee members held a meeting last night with the three selectors as a result of the chief selector's reaction to the proposal. After the meeting Faruque stood firm on his decision to quit if the recommendations were adopted, and added: "We expressed our opinion at the meeting about what we believe is best for Bangladesh cricket. Let us see what happens."

"They told us that what has come out in the media is perhaps not the complete picture. They have expressed their opinions and we have expressed ours, let's see what happens and depending on that I will take my decision," said Minhajul.

Bashar, speaking before the meeting, wanted to work under the new system to see how it works ultimately.

"I think if this recommendation is passed it will bring to an end a good system of selection that we have been following for a long time. If this new system is adopted by the board, I won't stay," Faruque responded earlier yesterday to the working committee's recommendation of expanding the panel to include four selectors, the national team's head coach and manager, and the chairman of the BCB cricket operations committee.

"It's not all about any individual but the

current system is working nicely. If the board has any complaints and feels that the selection committee fails to do their job efficiently then they can dissolve it or take any kind of action. I cannot understand why suddenly we are going to break a good system," continued Faruque while talking to the Daily Star over phone yesterday morning.

"You have to understand clearly that a healthy debate always help your cause but don't mix the debate with the words controversy, lack of understanding, lack of coordination," he said.

When asked, Bashar said: "I have to know first what actually is going to happen. But the freedom is very important for a selection committee. Anyway, even if the new system is adopted I want to see how it works."

A BCB high-up on condition of anonymity however said that this situation has arisen because of the selectors as they blamed each other to the board. "It is the selectors who blamed their colleague for not watching matches outside Dhaka. There were also many other issues where they had blamed each other while the coach expressed disappointment on some selections previously. So these were the issues for which the board thought that it would be better if the selection panel is revamped."

A selector, on condition of anonymity, dismissed all the rumours. "It is often argued that if the coach selects the final team, what's wrong if he takes part during the main selection process. My question is then why not also our board president who has the final say. Okay, if even I accept all the blame my question is why there is need to include the team manager. If you can go deep you will get the real answer and motive behind the change and you can also understand why someone like Shipon's [age-group selector Sajjad Ahmed's] name is proposed for the senior selection panel."

NZC reveals itinerary for Tigers' tour

SPORTS REPORTER

Bangladesh are set to play three ODIs, three T20Is and two Tests in New Zealand at the end of the year. The itinerary was released on a website run by New Zealand Cricket (NZC) yesterday. The tour will begin at Christchurch with an ODI on December 26 and end at the same venue with a Test on January 20.

The last time the Tigers played in New Zealand was during the World Cup on March 13, 2015.

However, the last time they played a complete series in New Zealand was six years ago, back in February 2010.

The two teams have faced each other in eleven Tests and New Zealand have won eight of them while the remaining three were drawn. Bangladesh have won eight out of the 25 ODIs played against the Black Caps.

Seven of those wins have come in the last 10 encounters. In the T20Is, New Zealand have won all four encounters.

BD TOUR OF NZ 2016-17

- Dec 26: 1st ODI, Christchurch
- Dec 29: 2nd ODI, Nelson
- Dec 31: 3rd ODI, Nelson
- Jan 3: 1st T20, Napier
- Jan 6: 2nd T20, Mt Maunganui
- Jan 8: 3rd T20, Mt Maunganui
- Jan 12-16: 1st Test, Wellington
- Jan 20-24: 2nd Test, Christchurch

Cook misses out again

AFP, Chester-le-Street



England captain Alastair Cook was still left searching for his 10,000th run in Test cricket as fellow opener Alex Hales, Joe Root and Jonny Bairstow all missed out on contrasting landmarks at the Riverside on Friday.

Yet for all those setbacks, England still ended the first day of the second Test against Sri Lanka on 310 for six.

Moeen Ali was 28 not out and Chris Woakes eight not out, with Sri Lanka pacesman Nuwan Pradeep taking three for 69 from 19 overs.

Cook, who won the toss in overcast conditions that offered some swing movement, failed to score the 20 runs he needed to become the first England batsman to reach 10,000 in Tests, falling for 15 when pacesman Suranga Lakmal had him well-taken low down by diving second slip Dimuth

Karunaratne as the left-hander carelessly pushed away from his body.

And for the second time in as many innings, Hales fell in the 80s when in sight of a maiden Test century.

Meanwhile Root's exit for 80 meant he had failed to convert seven of his last eight Test fifties into a hundred.

Nick Compton was out for nine when he top-edged a hook off Pradeep and Lakmal held a brilliant two-handed catch at long leg that left him facing the boundary and just inches from the rope.

Having made 86 at Headingley, Hales went into the 80s on Friday with a straight six off Milinda Siriwardana's fourth delivery of the day.

But next ball, the left-arm spinner had his revenge when Hales's fiercely-edged cut was brilliantly caught one-handed by Sri Lanka captain Angelo Mathews at slip.

Root, like Compton, was surprised

by a Pradeep bouncer.

Root could neither pull nor cut as the ball got 'big' on him and spooned a simple catch to cover which ended a stand of 59 with James Vince.

Sri Lanka did not have long to wait until England's 219 for four became 227 for five.

Vince had struck four fours on his way to 35. But he was out when his hard-hit drive off Siriwardana was superbly held by a diving Lahiru Thirimanne at short cover.

Bairstow ran Sri Lanka ragged with his speed between the wickets, but just two runs away from a fifty, fell to the new ball when he bottom-edged an intended cut off Pradeep to opposing wicket-keeper Dinesh Chandimal.

SCORES IN BRIEF

ENGLAND: First innings 310 for 6 in 90 overs (Hales 83, Root 80, Bairstow 48, Vince 35; Pradeep 3-69, Siriwardana 2-35)

Usha maintain winning spree

SPORTS REPORTER



Usha Krira Chakra retained the lead in the Green Delta Insurance Premier Division Hockey League with a massive 8-2 win over Dhaka Wanderers Club at the Maulana Bhasani Hockey Stadium yesterday.

The fifth successive win took the Old Dhaka outfit to maximum 15 points and they sit three points above Mohammedan SC, who have played four matches so far.

Usha dominated the show from the beginning and took a 4-1 lead in the first half before repeating the same dose in the second half on their opposition, who had come into this match in second position with 10 points.

Pukhkor Khisa Mimo struck three goals while Krishna Kumar, Aleem Belal, Mohammad Irfan, Ali Shaan and Hasan Jubair Niloy scored one goal each for Usha. Al Nahian Shuvo and Khalilur Rahman netted one goal each for Wanderers.

In the day's other match, Dhaka Mariner Youngs Club recorded a 4-1 win over Bangladesh SC to raise their tally to seven points from four matches. Mamunur Rahman Chayan, Mohammad Toufiq, Sharifullah Alam and Moinal Islam Koushik scored one goal each for Mariners while Shabaz Ali struck the only goal for Bangladesh SC.

'Not satisfied with my performance'

SPORTS REPORTER



Upon returning to Dhaka from his Indian Premier League stint, ace all-rounder Shakib Al Hasan said that he was not too happy with his performance in the T20 league this season.

Shakib, whose side Kolkata Knight Riders were eliminated by the Sunrisers Hyderabad, averaged 19 with the bat and 48.60 with the ball.

Speaking to reporters at the Hazrat Shahjalal International Airport in Dhaka earlier in the evening today he said: "The team performed well, but personally speaking, I think I could have done a lot better considering the opportunities I received. But things don't always go according to plan. Our first target was to make it to the last four and we

did that. Unfortunately we couldn't make it to the final."

When asked if he was satisfied with his performance, Shakib said: "Players are not generally satisfied no matter how well they play. But still I feel that I didn't manage to put in a very satisfying performance."

Much to the disappointment of the country's cricketing fraternity Shakib was left out of Kolkata Knight Riders' last game against Hyderabad, an Eliminator, on Wednesday. Bangladesh fans were hoping to see a duel between Shakib and Hyderabad's Mustafizur Rahman.

Shakib however said that he was



SHAKIB AL HASAN

not disappointed to miss out on the last game.

"The team takes the decision that it feels is right. They select the ideal combination. And there's really nothing much to dwell about over here. I always try to do my best whenever I get the chance and on that day I didn't get a

chance," said Shakib.

He also said that it was a big deal to see two Bangladeshis, him and Mustafizur, play in the final stages of such a tournament.

The allrounder's next assignment will be to take part in the ongoing Dhaka Premier League, Bangladesh's premier 50-over domestic tournament. He will be

playing alongside Tamim Iqbal for Abahani.

Currently placed seventh with eight points in eight games, Abahani will need to do well in the remaining three games to make it to the Super League and they will hope Shakib's inclusion can give them the boost.

Abahani has an important game against second-placed Prime Doleshwar Sporting Club at the BKSP today. While Abahani's management had earlier revealed that they were confident of Shakib playing tomorrow's game, the player himself seems a bit unsure.

When asked as to whether he would feature in tomorrow's crucial fixture he said: "I really don't know what the situation Abahani is in right now. At the moment all I am going to do is go home and take rest. The remaining things can be sorted out later," he said.

Warner powers Sunrisers to final

STAR SPORT DESK



Skipper David Warner stood tall as his batsmen faltered around him and guided Sunrisers Hyderabad to the Indian Premier League final through a tense four-wicket victory over Gujarat Lions in the qualifier at the Feroz Shah Kotla in Delhi yesterday.

Warner hit an ice-cool, unbeaten 93 off 58 balls with three sixes and 11 fours, the last of which tied the game off the first ball of the last over bowled by Praveen Kumar. The second was threaded through a packed off-side infield for the winning run as Hyderabad overtook the target of 162 with four balls to spare.

Hyderabad were reduced to 84 for five in the 13th over after some incisive bowling from left-arm chinaman bowler Shivil Kaushik, who got rid of Yuvraj Singh and Ben Cutting. But Warner was there to ensure that his team went through and was helped massively by Bipul Sharma's 11-ball 27 with three sixes, one of which brought the equation down from a difficult 11 from seven to an easy five from the last over.

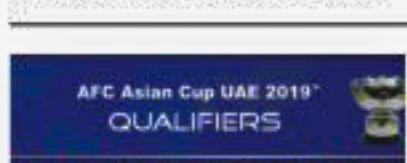
Earlier, Hyderabad won the toss and took the field without one of their main bowlers, Bangladeshi pacer Mustafizur Rahman, who sat the match out with an injury. Gujarat, riding on Aaron Finch's 32-ball 50, posted 162 for seven even though Hyderabad pacer Bhuvneshwar Kumar was again excellent with figures of two for 27 in four overs.

SCORES IN BRIEF

GUJARAT: 162 for 7 (Finch 50, McCullum 32, Karthik 26; Cutting 2-20, Kumar 2-27)
HYDERABAD: 163 for 6 in 19.2 overs (Warner 93 not out, Sharma 27 not out; Kaushik 2-22, Bravo 2-32)
Result: Hyderabad won by 4 wickets.

Booters fail to impress

SPORTS REPORTER



Bangladesh national football team played out a goalless draw against Sheikh Russel KC in their lone practice match, ahead of their Asian Cup qualifying play-offs against Tajikistan, at the Bishreshtha Shaheed Motafa Kamal Stadium in Kamalapur yesterday.

As it was the only chance to fine tune the squad ahead of the crucial fixtures, coach Lodewijk de Kruif made sure he carried out a number of experiments.

The Dutchman played winger Faisal Mahmud in left-back position with Nasiruddin Chowdhury and Tapu Barman as the two centre-backs while Raihan Hasan played as the right back. However, the defence seemingly disappointed the coach, who is focusing on a solid defensive organisation against Tajikistan in Dushanbe on June 2. The four-man defence failed to hold its line as Faisal hardly ever retreated to his position after going on overlapping attacks.

Most of the attacks in the match came from a second-string Sheikh Russel side, who did not field their regular striking pair of Fikru Teferra and Zahid Hasan Emily. Many of those attacks came on the side of



National squad's defender Faisal Mahmud (R) tries to make a sliding tackle on Sheikh Russel's Fazole Rabbi (C) during a practice match at the Bishreshtha Shaheed Motafa Kamal Stadium yesterday.

PHOTO: COLLECTED

Faisal, who was replaced by Wali Faisal after half an hour. Wali, too, was also replaced by Nasirul Islam in the second half. The backline was exposed on a few occasions in the first half but Sheikh Russel failed to capitalise on those opportunities.

"The defensive organisation was very poor, but it seemed to me that the players are too tired. They should take proper rest before facing Tajikistan and I think their per-

formance may increase by 50 percent from what they performed today [Friday]," opined Abahani coach George Kottan, who watched the match from the gallery along with some other coaches, club organisers and spectators, even though it was a 'closed-door' affair.

De Kruif also tested new striker Syed Rashed Ahmed Turzo till the last minute, but the youngster hardly impressed with his movements and

hardly penetrated the opposition backline. Left-winger Sohel Rana also failed to impress and was replaced by Nabib Newaj Jibon.

However, the national team looked better in the second half as they played some pressing football and came close to breaking the deadlock a couple of times, but both Jibon and Jewel failed to make things count.

The national team will leave for Tajikistan tomorrow.

Fizz rested for 'slight injury'

SPORTS REPORTER

Mustafizur Rahman was rested by the Sunrisers Hyderabad for their crucial qualifier against the Gujarat Lions in the Indian Premier League yesterday. According to Gujarat captain David Warner, Mustafizur was rested since he had suffered from a 'slight hamstring' injury.

Not only was it a surprise for Bangladesh's cricket fraternity but the move also surprised Bangladesh's national physio Bayjedul Islam who has been in constant touch with his counterpart in Hyderabad.

Speaking to The Daily Star yesterday Bayjedul said: "I am surprised that he hasn't been picked. I had spoken to Hyderabad's physio on Thursday afternoon and there were no complaints regarding Mustafizur. Maybe it's just a small thing and they are taking extra precaution. If that is the case then I must thank the franchise for taking such a step. He is very valuable to us after all."

The left-armed was replaced by Trent Boult.