

SPORT

Time is ripe for Mosaddek

SPORTS REPORTER

At the end of the Dhaka Premier League two months ago, Abahani skipper Tamim Iqbal described Mosaddek Hossain as a '20-year-old who has a brain of a 45-year-old'. Soon after, selectors dubbed him as a player who can push the batting all-rounders of the national team in both Test and ODI cricket.

Two months on and Mosaddek seems to be on the brink of an ODI debut, having been included in the 20-member ODI pool for the Afghanistan and England series earlier this week.

So what's so special about this 20-year-old? After all, the selectors have been compelled to include him in the best 20 despite the fact that there are already a number of batsmen in the side who can turn the ball as well. Mahmudullah Riyad, Sabbir Rahman and Nasir Hossain are already regulars in the ODI outfit and along with Shakib Al Hasan, complete a seemingly fine-tuned spin department.

There could be a number of reasons. For starters, his domestic batting record is currently one of the best in Bangladesh cricket.

Take for instance, his first-class batting average which stands tall at 70.89. His first prominent first-class score was not just a half-century or a century; it was 250, a score he posted against Dhaka Metropolis on February 16, 2015. A week later, he hammered 282 against Chittagong. He managed to score two successive double centuries in his first six first-class games. The youngster carried on the momentum from there. He recorded 50-plus scores in 11 consecutive first-class games.

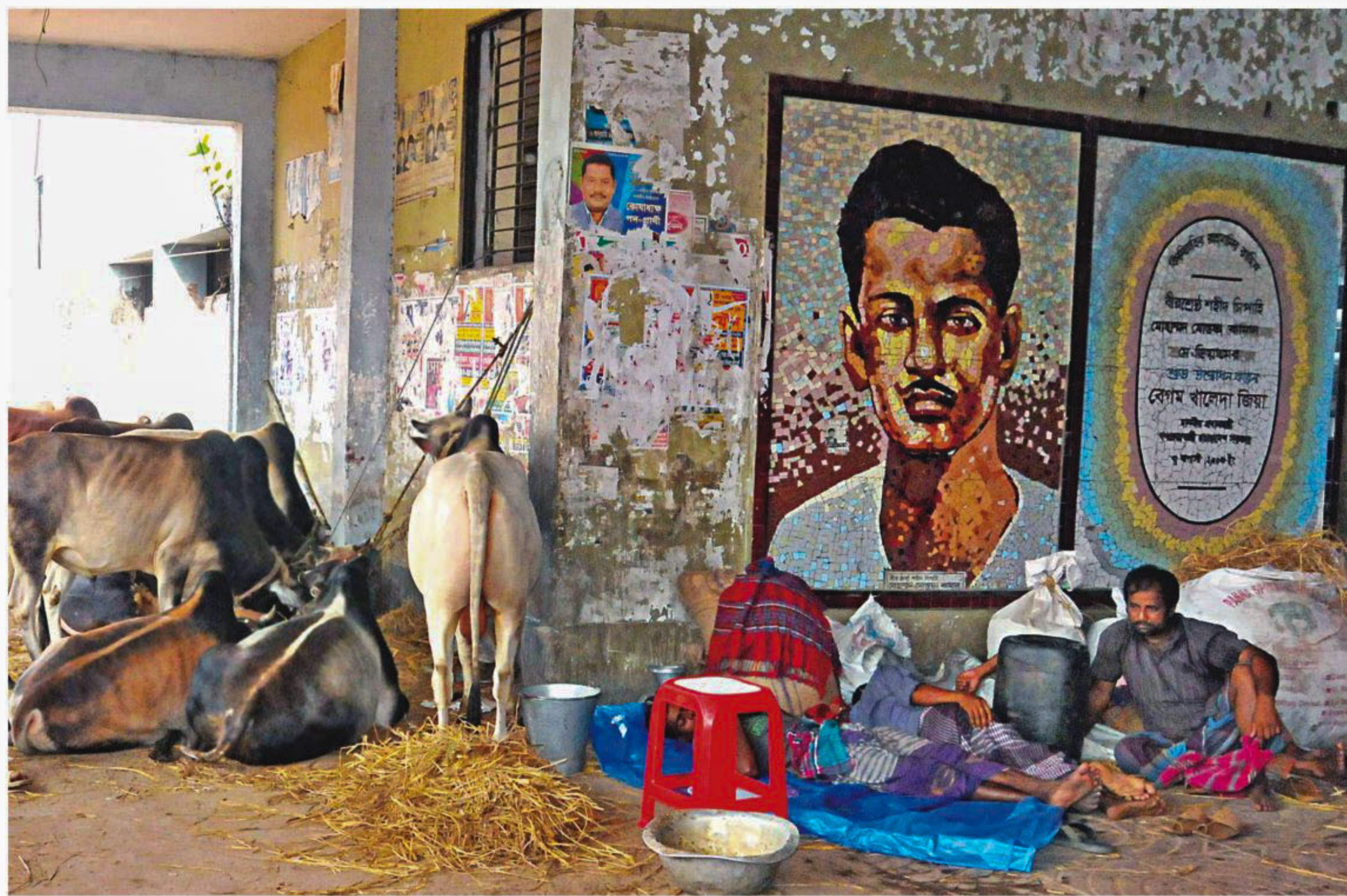
On the whole, he has posted seven hundreds -- the latest of which was scored in his most recent first-class game -- and six half-centuries in 18 four-day matches.

His batting record in one-day cricket is not too far behind. Generally a batsman who plays at the top, he was forced to play down the order in the last Dhaka Premier League for Abahani, for the sake of the team. His performance, despite the move, did not waver.

He scored 622 runs in the tournament at an average of 77.75, which was the highest in the league. However, the numbers do not really reflect the crucial role that Mosaddek played for Abahani. The one thing that was clear after the league is that Mosaddek has the ability to remain calm during tense situations. And that is perhaps another aspect that impressed the selectors.

There were a number of games in the Dhaka Premier League where Abahani seemed done and dusted. However, Mosaddek managed to come in towards the end and finish the game for his side. He played the inside-out drives, one of the tougher strokes to master, almost at will and seemed to calculate each of his knocks to perfection.

Mosaddek's first tryst with international cricket was not a successful one. He was removed for just 15 against Zimbabwe in January this year in the only T20I that he has played. With the England series due next month, this could be his chance to make amends and even better stamp his authority.



The legacy of Birshreshtha Shaheed Mustafa Kamal is being defaced as the entrance to the stadium named after him in the capital's Kamalapur has been turned into a makeshift venue for a cattle market ahead of Eid-UI-Azha.

PHOTO: STAR

Morgan unsure despite clearance

AGENCIES, Manchester



In the aftermath of the July 1 militant attack on Dhaka's Holy Artisan Bakery that claimed the lives of 20 civilians, it was England's ODI captain Eoin Morgan who first expressed doubts over their scheduled tour of Bangladesh in October. More than two months later, with the England and Wales Cricket Board (ECB) green-lighting the tour and, more recently on Wednesday, ECB director Andrew Strauss issuing a Saturday deadline for players to commit to the tour, it is still Morgan who remains one of the few England players expressing doubts over the tour.

Morgan said that two previous security scares in the sub-continent made him wary of ever again jeopardising his personal safety, as he outlined why he remains deeply concerned about touring Bangladesh.

The ECB's decision to go ahead with the tour came after a three-man security delegation led by head of security Reg Dickason conducted a security inspection of the relevant venues for the three-ODI, two-Test tour.

Test skipper Alastair Cook reportedly gave



private assurances of his intention to tour, while Moeen Ali and Chris Jordan publicly stated their intention to tour if selected in the squad to be announced on September 16. Meanwhile Strauss, coach Trevor Bayliss -- who was on the Sri Lanka team bus that came under attack in Lahore in 2009 -- and assistant coach Paul Farbrace have also confirmed that they will be touring.

Morgan said his thinking had been influenced by a bomb exploding at a 2010 Indian Premier League match and the violent background to a brief spell in the 2013/14 Dhaka Premier Division.

"In 2010 we played an IPL game in Bangalore

and a bomb went off in the ground. We immediately left for the airport. So that was an instance. Another one was [in] Bangladesh playing domestic cricket during political elections when things were incredibly violent."

The Irishman added: "I think ultimately, as I've said before, as an individual you need to be comfortable within yourself to focus on cricket."

"I've been to places before where things have become a distraction and it's only been once or twice when security's been a distraction and I've told myself I'd never put myself in that situation again."

Morgan has continued to play in the Indian Premier League, most recently for Sunrisers Hyderabad this season.

Former England captain Mike Atherton urged all those selected to tour Bangladesh.

"Every cricketer has always had the right not to tour if he so wishes, although it is impossible to say there will be no consequences," he wrote in The Times. "Once you give up your place in the team, things are out of your control."

He added: "But if security is the main issue, the rational thing to do is to try to cut out the noise and the nonsense and show some faith in the experts."

"Dickason has done his job; it's time for England's cricketers to do theirs."

42ND CHESS OLYMPIAD Women win, men draw

SPORTS REPORTER

Bangladesh men's chess team drew against United Arab Emirates by 2-2 points in the sixth round of the 42nd Chess Olympiad in Baku, Azerbaijan on Thursday. The result means the men's team, who were scheduled to play against 24th seed Serbia on Friday night, were in 52nd position.

GM Enamul Hossain Razib and GM Abdullah Al Rakib lost their boards while GM Ziaur Rahman and GM Niaz Murshed won their boards in the sixth round. Niaz, the first Grandmaster of South Asia, has been the best performer for Bangladesh so far, earning 4.5 points from the five games he has played.

The women's team, however, won by 4-0 points against Morocco, after having lost in consecutive rounds. The women's team, who were in 66th position after sixth round, were scheduled to play against Jordan on Friday night.

ICC to give Test mace to Pakistan

IANIS, Dubai

The International Cricket Council (ICC) will present the Test Championship mace to Pakistan captain Misbah-ul-Haq at the Gaddafi Stadium in Lahore on September 21.

Pakistan achieved the No.1 Test ranking for the first time since the current rankings system was introduced in 2003 after it played a two-all draw against England.

Pakistan's cause was also helped by Sri Lanka, which defeated Australia 3-0, while a wet ground in Port of Spain denied India the opportunity to defend the top spot as they won their four-Test series against the West Indies by 2-0.

Pakistan are currently sitting on 111 points, one ahead of India, while Australia and England are on 108 points each.

The top seven Test sides are separated by just 16 points.

Akmal recalled for WI T20Is

AFP, Karachi

Pakistan on Friday recalled explosive middle-order batsman Umar Akmal for its forthcoming Twenty20 series against the West Indies, five months after axing him on disciplinary grounds.

The 26-year-old has taken on the mantle of Pakistan's enfant terrible and has been involved in a number of on and off-field disciplinary breaches, the latest being a scuffle with a traffic policeman in Lahore last year.

He was dropped after being heavily criticised in a post-mortem report written by head coach Waqar Yousif in the aftermath of the World Twenty20 held in India in April this year, where Pakistan crashed out in the first round.

He was recalled after assuring the Pakistan Cricket Board he would mend his ways, and after a string of whirlwind knocks including a 48-ball 115 not out, an 81 and a 75 in the ongoing National Twenty20 event in Faisalabad.

But there were no recalls for opener Ahmed Shahzad, also dropped on disciplinary grounds who suffered a back problem in the tournament.

Another opener Mohammad Hafeez was also left out after he returned home mid-way through the one-day series in England with calf and knee injuries.



Ahead of his final game for his country, Sri Lankan stalwart Tillakaratne Dilshan was given a guard of honour as he made his way onto the pitch in the second and final T20I against Australia in Colombo yesterday.

PHOTO: AFP

Aus crash Dilshan's farewell

AFP, Colombo

Australian bowlers set up a four-wicket victory over Sri Lanka to spoil veteran batsman Tillakaratne Dilshan's farewell and sweep the two-match Twenty20 series in Colombo on Friday.

The visitors, who won the first match after scoring a world record 263, rode on opener Glenn Maxwell's 29-ball 66 to chase down their 129-run target with 13 balls to spare.

Earlier Aussie bowlers James Faulkner and Adam Zampa claimed three wickets each to restrict the hosts to 128 for nine despite Dhananjaya de Silva's fighting half-century.

CAREER STATS						
	Mts	Runs	HS	Ave	SR	100 50
ODIs	330	10290	161*	39.27	86.23	22 47
T20Is	80	1889	104*	28.19	120.54	1 13

balls in his final international game but took two wickets to add drama to Australia's chase.

"He [Dilshan] was my first one-day and Test captain, lucky to captain him in his last game. Thank you Dilshan. My team and I wish you all the best for the future," Sri Lankan skipper Dinesh Chandimal said.

Maxwell, fresh from his unbeaten 145 off 65 deliveries on Tuesday, once again turned the spotlight on himself, equaling an Australian record for the fastest

T20 fifty in 18 balls before being bowled by leg-spinner Seekkuge Prasanna that put an end to a 93-run opening stand with skipper David Warner.

Australia then slipped from 93 for no loss to 120 for six courtesy of a double-wicket over from Sachith Pathirana and Dilshan's two wickets in two overs. Travis Head hit the winning runs to help Australia finish the tour on a high after being whitewashed in the Tests.

SCORES IN BRIEF

SRI LANKA: 128 for 9 in 20 overs (Perera 22, De Silva 62; Hastings 2-23, Faulkner 3-19, Zampa 3-16)
AUSTRALIA: 130 for 6 in 17.5 overs (Maxwell 66, Warner 25; Dilshan 2-8, Pathirana 2-23)
Result: Australia won by 6 wickets
Player-of-the-match: Glenn Maxwell

Richardson hails Dilshan

AGENCIES, Dubai

The International Cricket Council has congratulated former Sri Lanka captain Tillakaratne Dilshan for an impressive international career, with ICC Chief Executive David Richardson saying in a statement today that Dilshan was the epitome of the modern-day cricketer with his ability to adapt.

"Dilshan's accomplishments across all three formats are fantastic. He started as a solid batsman but adjusted to the demands of the faster-paced game and came to be known as one of the best in ODI and T20 Internationals."

"He will be remembered for his innovative strokes and as a destructive opener. He was also a useful spin bowler and an outstanding fielder. We congratulate Dilshan for a fine career and wish him every success in the future."

Mr. Richardson said of Dilshan, who is one of only 11 players to have scored a century in each format of the game. Dilshan was selected in the ICC's ODI team of the year four times -- in 2009, 2011, 2013 and 2015 -- and won the 2009 Twenty20 International Performance of the Year for his 96 off 57 balls against the West Indies in the semifinal of the ICC World Twenty20 in 2009.

ICC mulls Test C'ship playoff, ODI league

CRICINFO



A Test Championship playoff along with ODI and Twenty20 league structures may be adopted by member countries at the next ICC Board meeting in October, after the two-tier Test system was abandoned this week.

Alternate plans to keep afloat bilateral cricket were the main focus for the chief executives of member countries, who met in Dubai earlier this week where support for the two-tier model collapsed under BCCI pressure.

According to Haroon Lorgat, CEO of Cricket South Africa and former ICC CEO, all boards are trying to develop context for international cricket, with the best solution being a Test Championship. "That was the belief of many bearing in mind that everyone supports the primacy of international cricket," Lorgat told ESPNcricinfo.

Lorgat said discussions will continue with the next round of ICC meetings when the Chief Executives Committee (CEC) and the Board would formally meet in Cape Town in the second week of October. "What is clear is that a few members do not support the two-tier system, so we will need to find another way to develop a Test champion using the existing rankings table."

Lorgat also said it was the members, and not the ICC, that had taken responsibility to ensure bilateral cricket was in good health. "Media have got it wrong. Bilateral cricket is not the responsibility of the ICC. They are facilitating a process to assist the member countries to sustain fan interest by developing context."

During his ICC tenure, Lorgat was a firm supporter of a World Test Championship to create context, and he believes it is needed to ensure that fans' interest in bilateral cricket is sustained. "The best we might be able to do now is to build a championship model using the existing Test-rankings table to play a final between the top two teams, say every two years."

CHANGES TO BE CONSIDERED

- ODI league structure to be implemented in time to feature qualifying for 2023 World Cup
- League to be played out over three years with 13 countries to play each other in at least one series in that time
- Final year of cycle to feature World Cup qualification playoffs for teams that do not automatically qualify
- Similar T20 league structure to be introduced
- Limited-overs series lengths to be standardised as three ODIs and three T20s