

It's amazing how the likes of Shakib Al Hasan, Tamim Iqbal and Mushfiqur Rahim have consistently performed for Bangladesh over the years. Considered to be the pillars of Bangladesh's present cricketing team, the fact that makes them stand apart from their predecessors, is that they still seem to have that urge to achieve more.

The confidence that Bangladesh's senior trio displayed in the second Test and the first ODI of the ongoing Sri Lanka series was phenomenal to say the least. It just goes on to show that these players still have the hunger to do well, despite each having played more than a decade of international cricket.

In fact, they probably believe that this moment here, is probably the best time for them and team Bangladesh to excel. Last year, Shakib, during an interview with *The Daily Star* had pointed out that Bangladesh possessed some of the most experienced players in the world now—if you were to throw in the likes of Mashrafe Bin Mortaza and Mahmudullah Riyad in to that mix—and that the coming years could witness a golden phase in the history of Bangladesh's cricket.

What Shakib pointed out was true. Shakib, Mashrafe, Tamim, Mushfiqur and Mahmudullah have played almost 50 ODIs each and that's a wealth of experience. And going by the last couple of years, it's beginning to show that the experience is paying off.

After defeating Sri Lanka in the Test, skipper Mushfiqur had described it as a new experience since he, or Bangladesh rather, had never played in such a dominating role before. The same goes, not just for the cricketers, but also the fans and the sports analysts.

Prior to this series, Bangladesh's record against Sri Lanka in Tests was quite despicable. Apart from a couple of draws, Bangladesh was convincingly beaten—either by an innings or by a huge deficit—almost every time the two teams met.

From that perspective, the four-wicket Test win at Colombo could be described as nothing less than mind-blowing. One



HERALDING A GOLDEN ERA OF BANGLADESHI CRICKET?



PHOTO: AFP

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must not forget the fact that prior to the win against Sri Lanka, Bangladesh had managed to beat just one top-level Test team and that was England late last year.

While they did whitewash the West Indies in the past, the fact that they had

competed with a second-string Caribbean team took a lot out of those wins.

In fact, the win against Sri Lanka can be rated ahead of the one against England, considering that the Tigers had the luxury of playing in their own,

turning conditions against the English. Beating Sri Lanka, in the Lions' own den, must have given the players a different sense of satisfaction.

Because Bangladesh has won several ODIs in the last two years, one could perhaps play down the magnanimity of Bangladesh's 90-run win against Sri Lanka in the first ODI.

However, the fact remains, that this was only the second time that Bangladesh had beaten Sri Lanka away from home.

But then again, it's not just experience or a portion of a team that brings the winning mentality. It needs to be a combination of both the veterans and the junior players in the team.

The good news is that Bangladesh seems to have found many talented youngsters who have begun to do the talking. Gone are the days when the Tigers would depend solely on the likes of Tamim, Shakib and Mushfiqur.

Give it a few more years and it won't be a surprise if either of the three's position in the team comes in danger, because some of the youngsters who are trickling in are quite talented.

In Mosaddek Hossain, Bangladesh has found a calm head capable of muscular hits; in Sabbir Rahman, it has discovered a quality stroke-maker; in Soumya Sarkar it has discovered elegance; in Mehedi Hasan Miraz it has found a player who can lead the team one day; and in Mustafizur Rahman and Taskin Ahmed it has got the brutal pacers it was so dearly looking for more than a decade.

It would be too early to state that Bangladesh has already found the upcoming generation's Shakib, Tamim and Mushfiqur—these three have had to go through plenty of struggle; however, the signs are good.

It's the combination that's working out for Bangladesh now and if things continue the way they are now, Shakib's prediction—of that of Bangladesh's golden phase—could come true earlier than expected.

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Sandalina

মান্নেই বিশ্বের সেরা
Sandal Wood Extract এর সর্বোচ্চ নিশ্চয়তা...

ম্যান্ডালিনা

সোপ

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রূপচর্চায় আন্ডিজাত্য...

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