

SPORT

HP team head down under

Sports Reporter

The Bangladesh Cricket Board (BCB) announced a 16-member BCB High Performance squad yesterday, the day the team was scheduled to leave for Australia.

Wicketkeeper batsman Liton Das has been named captain for the tour which is basically a two-week long training camp in Darwin arranged to get the back-up cricketers ready for the national team.

During the tour the team will play five one day matches and one three-day game against local selections at the Marrara Cricket Ground (MCG).

When the first-class season in Australia ends, players come to Darwin and continue playing since the weather in Darwin's tropical climate is different from the rest of the country. And the Bangladesh HP team will only try to play matches against those players who will be there for training during the off-season.

It was arranged mainly by the HP team's Australian coach Simon Helmut as part of the HP squad's training in different conditions, but still it has come as an opportunity for out-of-favour players like Anamul Haque, Liton and Abu Hider to push the selectors and at least get a place in the A team. According to board officials, the BCB is trying their utmost to arrange a tour for the A team within the next two-three months.

SQUAD

Anamul Haque, Mohammad Sarfuddin, Liton Das (captain), Tamvir Haider, Mehdi Hasan Siddiqui, Imitiaz Hossain, Abu Hider, Abu Jeyed, Nazmul Hossain (vice-captain), Ebadot Hossain, Tasamul Haque, Abul Hasan, Irfan Shukkur, Yasir Ali, Mithazuzzaman and Jubair Hossain.

STAND BY: Shadman Islam, Hosen Ali, Emran Ali and Al Amin.



The 16 members of the Bangladesh HP team will pose for a selfie outside the BCB Academy yesterday. The team was scheduled to leave for Australia, where they will undergo a training camp and play practice matches, last night.

PHOTO: STAR

Malinga to miss second ODI

Afp, Colombo

Sri Lanka's controversial fast bowler Lasith Malinga has been diagnosed with a viral influenza and will sit out the second one-day international against Zimbabwe on Sunday, the cricket board said.

Malinga, who was slapped with a suspended six-month ban earlier this week, has been told to take two days of rest after coming down with the bug.

"Medical reports have ruled him out of the next game and recommended a rest period of 48 hours," Sri Lanka Cricket said in a statement.

It added that Lakshan Sandakan did not play in the first ODI on Friday because he had the same virus.

Malinga took one wicket on Friday, giving away 51 runs in the game which Zimbabwe won by six wickets.

The bowler was disciplined after he pleaded guilty to comparing sports minister Dadasiri Jayasekera to a monkey for saying national cricket players were too fat and unfit.

ACA considering SA tour boycott

Afp, Sydney

The Australian Cricketers' Association executive meets on Sunday to decide whether players will boycott this month's Australia A tour to South Africa after a failure to strike a new pay deal with Cricket Australia.

CA and the players' union both confirmed they had failed to reach an agreement on a new Memorandum of Understanding before Friday's deadline, leaving players unemployed and threatening fixtures including this year's Ashes series.

The ACA likened the rancorous split in Australian cricket as the worst since the tempestuous days of Key

Packer's World Series Cricket revolution of the 1970s.

Leading fast bowler Josh Hazlewood said the breakdown in pay negotiations has left a bitter taste with the players, adding "we are obviously willing to do what we need to."

The players' union said it will meet on Sunday to discuss a more detailed response to the contract standoff.

Among the issues that will be canvassed will be the availability of players for the Australia A tour to South Africa to begin on July 8 and the employment rights for the more than 200 players now out of contract and unemployed as of Saturday.

ACA Chief Executive Alistair Nicholson said the union had planned for the possibility that no deal would

be reached and had put in place a number of measures to deal with the associated contingencies.

Among them have been the establishment of a players' support fund to lend financial assistance to those out-of-contract men and women.

Nicholson said the availability of players for the upcoming Australia A Tour of South Africa would also be discussed at the meeting.

Hazlewood said waking up, effectively unemployed on Saturday was "a different feel".

"To be contracted for the best part of 10 years, it's going to be a different stage and we'll see how it pans out," Hazlewood told Fairfax Media.

Along with the players, fixtures are

also at risk including Australia's Test tour to Bangladesh from August, the one-day international series in India in September and the home Ashes series against England later this year.

CA and the players' union have hit an impasse after the board attempted to scrap the 20-year-old arrangement of giving players a fixed share of revenues, in favour of dividing surpluses amongst elite players and offering a pay rise.

Following the missed deadline, players who are on multi-year contracts that go beyond June 30 will continue to be paid, and will be required to play and train as before.

Commonwealth Chess Championship A platform for the youngsters

Sports Reporter



Bangladeshi chess players have had limited success in the Commonwealth Chess Championship since its inception in the early 1980s and nothing of note is expected this time around either. Instead, the Delhi Commonwealth Chess Championship, which begins today, is being considered a platform for the country's youngsters, who have been training for the past three months.

GM Niaz Murshed earning his second Grand Master norm from the Hong Kong Chess Championship in 1984 and GM Enamul Hossain Razi finishing third in Nagpur in 2008 are Bangladesh's only achievements in the Championship. "This time around, organisers are expecting to earn one or two IM norms in the Open Section but their main focus is on how their budding players perform on the big stage."

Four Grand Masters -- Niaz, Ziaur Rahman, Razib and Abdullah Al Rakib -- along with WIM Shamima Akter Liza, WIM Rani Hamid, FM Tayebur Rahman and WFM Sharmin Sulana Shirin will be taking part in the Open Section. Meanwhile, 12 budding players, including four girls, will be playing in different age groups from Under-8 to Under-20. They will fly for Delhi today.

"For the first time we are sending a big 21-player contingent at the expense of the federation -- the players had participated at the Commonwealth Chess Championships before at their own expense," said

Bangladesh Chess Federation general secretary Syed Shahab Uddin Shamim at a press conference at the NSC conference room yesterday.

"Our main target in participating in this championship is to judge our young players, who have been training under three Grand Masters for three months. We want to see how they perform and then take necessary steps in the future for further improvement. If needed we will appoint foreign Grand Masters for this group of boys and girls," said Shamim.

"We are not expecting good results from this group of boys and girls but we want them to gather some valuable experience from the championship so they can evaluate their performances and be more serious," said Shamim. "However, we are hopeful that FM Mohammad Fahad Rahman can win a gold medal in the U-14 category."

Grand Master Ziaur Rahman praised such initiatives and urged the federation to create more opportunities for budding players to take chess ahead.

"It is a good initiative that the federation is sending more juniors than seniors and it will help groom them for the future. Fahad [Rahman] is expected to produce good results while others will also be playing good games," said Zia, whose son Tahsin Tajwar Zia will be participating in the U-12 category.

As for the target of the senior players, Zia said that they would be trying to improve upon the positions where they finished in some recent tournaments.



Australia pacer Mitchell Starc posed this picture of himself playing golf, tweeting: "Thought I'd better give another profession a go... #unemployedCricMancr yet"

WHAT THEY SAID

Alongside a picture playing golf: "Even though we're now unemployed, I thought it would be a good idea to keep working on my slog..."

— Glen Maxwell

I may be unemployed but I still have the support and backing from this amazing lady [his wife]. Family is everything to me. I thought the same about my old workplace but I guess I was wrong. Thanks to our fans for all your support. You can now see first hand what we have to deal with. #Inshere

— David Warner

Alongside a picture of him looking for a job on Seek: "Just checking my options... #seek #unemployed #imavailable"

— Usman Khawaja

India aiming to seal series

Fourth ODI against West Indies today

Pti, North Sound

Foot firmly set on the pedal, a marauding India would be aiming to seal the series yet another resounding performance against a below-par West Indies in the fourth one-day international on Sunday.

With comprehensive back-to-back wins in the second and third ODIs, it seems like a mere formality as Virat Kohli and his men are slowly inching towards a complete rout of their opposition despite the first game being abandoned.

The victory margins of 105 and 93 runs respectively is a testimony to India's complete dominance in the current series.

The West Indies side has looked like a rag tag outfit which has only turned up and failed to put up any semblance of fight.

Ajinkya Rahane, with scores of 62, 103 and 72, has made full use of the opportunities. Shikhar Dhawan despite rare failure in the third game has been in red hot form.

Kohli has been consistent but the middle-order, which wasn't getting much game time, came to the fore during the third game.

There was pressure after Dhawan and Kohli departed early but Mahendra Singh Dhoni anchored the innings with an unbeaten 79. Yuvraj Singh's 39 will give him confidence as well.

Kohli also gave Kedar Jadhav an opportunity to put the ante as he had given Hardik Pandya a go in the second game.

Kedar's unbeaten 40 filled with unorthodox shots went a long way in India getting past the 250-run mark on a difficult track.

Ballance recalled for SA opener

Afp, London

Batsman Gary Ballance has been given a chance to re-enter his England Test career after being named in the squad for next Thursday's first Test against South Africa.

The 27-year-old has battled his way back into contention with a superb season in the County Championship after being dropped following a torrid series against Bangladesh last October.

"Gary Ballance could play his first Test since October," said national selector James Whitaker. "He has been in fantastic touch with the bat in the Championship averaging over 100. He deserves to be included and he will add maturity and experience."

Squad: Joe Root (capt), Moeen Ali, James Anderson, Jonny Bairstow (wkt), Gary Ballance, Stuart Broad, Alastair Cook, Liam Dawson, Keaton Jennings, Toby Roland-Jones, Ben Stokes, Mark Wood.



Taking full advantage of the downtime that the Bangladesh cricket team currently has, wicketkeeper-batsman Nurul Hasan (R) tied the knot with Tasnim Islam Lisa on Friday. National team players Mashrafe Bin Mortaza, Imrul Kayes and Mahmudullah Riyad were in attendance in Khulna.

PHOTO: COLLECTED