



Mustafizur Rahman lives not far away from the home of cricket in Mirpur. So, he took a rickshaw ride yesterday after attending the ongoing fitness camp at the BCB Academy ground, where he was also working with Tigers' bowling coach Courtney Walsh. He was particularly working on landing on his delivery stride, which is something he needs to align. It has been observed that the young left-arm quick has deviated from bowling close to the stumps after recovering from a shoulder injury and that might be one of the reasons he was not effective in the ICC Champions Trophy, where he took only two wickets and conceded a lot of runs considering the lofty standards he set after making his debut in 2015.

PHOTO: STAR

Riverside stadium on the cards

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Manikganj

As part of the government's plan to build an international cricket stadium close to the River Padma, a team comprised of experts from the National Sports Council and BUET visited Dhurrabri, near Patuaria Ferry Ghat, yesterday. Dhurrabri, which is located in the Shibhalaya upazila of Manikganj district, lies very close to the mighty river.

After visiting the spot, Bangladesh's first Test captain Naimur Rahman, who is also a lawmaker from the district, told news men that the visit was a part of Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina's desire that an international cricket stadium be built near the river.

"For this reason, the area adjacent to the Patuaria Ferry Ghat has been primarily selected. Apart from the Ferry Ghat, there is beautiful nature around it. If the stadium is built here, the tourism industry will also be developed in this region," said Naimur Rahman.

NSC secretary Ashok Kumar Biswas and engineers Hedayetullah Haque Mirz and Sukumar Saha along with Professors Dr. Badruzzaman, Dr. Itanmul Haque and Dr. Mahfuzur Rahman of the BUET Engineering Department visited the area.

"We need 25 acres of land for constructing an international standard cricket stadium. The required land is there and the acquisition will be started if the representatives of BUET give a positive response. The construction of the stadium will start within the tenure of the present government," said Ashok.

WI top guns set to return

REUTERS, Port of Spain

The West Indies board has reached an agreement with the players' union for a temporary amnesty, paving the way for Chris Gayle, Sunil Narine and their other leading cricketers to return to the national one-day international side.

Players have been embroiled in contractual disputes with Cricket West Indies (CWI) for several years, with the team even abandoning a tour of India midway through their 2014 series of

a payment structure row.

CWI currently only selects players for the international sides if they feature in the same format in domestic competitions. This policy has led to many high-profile players being absent from the ODI side as they skipped the domestic 50-over tournament in order to take part in lucrative overseas Twenty20 leagues.

CWI said in a statement the agreement formed 'part of a wider strategy to be more inclusive and to improve player relations aimed at re-engaging all players within our system so that they can perform at their best for the Windies teams.'

The agreement could see players like Gayle, Narine, Dwayne Bravo, Kieron Pollard and Samuel Badree, who feature regularly in T20 leagues across the world, returning to the West Indies 50-overs side.

West Indies have had little success outside the shortest format and their weakened 50-overs side missed out on qualification for the recent Champions Trophy, played among the top eight teams in world cricket.

They are ranked ninth in ODIs and could also miss out on automatic qualification for the 2019 World Cup in England and Wales.

The top eight sides in the rankings at the Sept. 30 cutoff, including hosts England, earn automatic berths, with the rest required to go through a qualification tournament to make up the 10-team event.

"We recognise that it is highly unlikely that we will now automatically qualify for the 2019 World Cup," CWI Chief Executive Johnny Grave said in a statement.

"So whilst the qualifying tournament has yet to be confirmed by ICC, we may only have eight ODIs against England and New Zealand in the next six months to prepare."

'We can beat Australia 2-0'

SPORTS REPORTER



When it is time for the Tigers to gear up for the Test series, one little dynamo's name must not be missed - left-handed batsman Mominul Haque. The 25-year-old southpaw has somehow got the tag of a Test specialist, which is why he has more idle time compared to his teammates who are also considered for limited-version games.

However, not much time has passed since the batsman from Cox's Bazar played the Galle Test in March this year. Yet, as it happens every time Test cricket comes to the fore, Mominul had to face the recurring question of how it felt to play international cricket after a long break.

"Initially it was difficult but now it's okay. I always try to keep this issue out of my mind and it only comes to mind when you people remind me. If you don't mind it would be nice if you didn't remind me," Mominul, who last played an ODI in February 2015 during the ICC World Cup, told reporters at the Sher-e-Bangla National Stadium in Mirpur yesterday.

Like his other teammates, Mominul

also talked about next month's two-match Test series against Australia at home and he had high hopes with regards to the Tigers' chances in the series.

"The way we have been playing Test cricket for the past few years has given me the confidence that we can win the Test series against Australia. We are even capable of winning it by a 2-0 margin. But it would also not be bad if we can make it 1-1," said a confident Mominul.

However, he added that the challenge against Australia would be tougher than the last home series against England.

"I think the challenge will be little bit more than England. Australia recently played in India while England went to India after playing against us. If you see the overall scenario then you can understand my point. And most importantly Australia can adjust to any conditions," the veteran of 22 Tests and 26 ODIs opined. "Their pace and spin bowling departments are equally good, so we need to prepare accordingly."

Regarding his personal target, Mominul said, "A score of 50-60 is not enough in Test cricket. Only a hundred or more runs can contribute to the team and I am keeping this in mind while practicing. My main target is to play a big knock."

'We need stronger bodies'

SPORTS REPORTER



BCB High Performance team coach Simon Helmot was excited about the outcome of the just-concluded tour to Australia, where the team won all five of their one-day matches and the lone three-day match. The HP team returned home from their trip to Darwin last Monday but questions remain about who actually played for the Northern Territory Invitational XI.

"The tour was excellent. There were fantastic facilities and great conditions. We have had some good performances and most importantly, some good learning about where the player and the team need to improve to develop some of these players into national players," responded Helmot when asked how the tour was.

When his attention was drawn to the strength of the opponents and whether it was up to the mark, the Australian

said: "I think their depth wasn't as strong as we had hoped. The first game we should have lost. We put on 20 runs for the last partnership to win the game. So the first three 50-over matches were very competitive. Game 4 and 5 weren't as competitive. They missed a couple of players through injuries. The three-day game was terrific. Hopefully in England the opposition can be even better. It is what I am looking for, next time."

He also spoke about what kind of improvement he was looking for after the tour.

"I think we can improve our general fitness and fielding. I think that's the theme in the coming fortnight before we have a week's break in the academy. We need to get some stronger bodies who can bowl for longer periods of time. We need to get some batsmen who can be strong physically and mentally to bat for long periods of time. We need to make sure that we develop our bodies to be agile and strong enough and have strong throwing arms to be excellent in the field," he explained.



SIMON HELMOT

SL edge Zim in record chase

Cremer rues 'tough' reprieve

AFP, Colombo



Zimbabwe captain Graeme Cremer bemoaned a third umpire decision to reprieve Niroshan Dickwella, a move which eased Sri Lanka's record chase in the one-off Test on Tuesday.

The decision was "tough," said Cremer, whose spin bowling had the hosts in early trouble on the final day before a 121-run partnership between Dickwella and Asela Gunaratne secured Sri Lanka's best-ever run chase of 388.

Dickwella rescued Sri Lanka from a precarious 203-5, but the left-handed batsman's gritty 81 needed plenty of luck.

The wicketkeeper-batsman survived a stumping from Sikandar Raza's off-spin on 37 and was then dropped by wicketkeeper Regis Chakabva on 63.

The stumping reprieve cost Zimbabwe dearly. It was referred to Indian third umpire Chettithod Shamsuddin, who ruled him not out despite replays showing his toe

was on the crease -- a case where the batsman can be given out.

"From what I saw, I honestly didn't see any doubt why it should be not out, but it's just one of those things," Cremer, who led his side to victory in the one-day series, told reporters.

"I suppose you have technology

and it clearly shows ... it's tough when those things go against you when you are trying to win a Test match on the last day," said Cremer who took four for 150.

Left-arm spinner Sean Williams finally got Dickwella caught behind but his prolonged stay was key in the hosts' victory.



Sri Lanka's Asela Gunaratne (R) and Dilruwan Perera celebrate their record run-chase win against Zimbabwe on the final day of a one-off Test in Colombo yesterday.

PHOTO: AFP

Gunaratne (80) put on an unbeaten 67-run partnership with Dilruwan Perera (29) to dash Zimbabwe's hopes of a first Test win over Sri Lanka.

"We tried hard. We have missed a few opportunities, but I am very proud about the way the guys played," said Cremer, who got nine wickets in the match including his maiden five-wicket haul in Sri Lanka's first innings.

"To win the ODI series and to push them in the Test match taking it to the last day was a very good effort from the boys."

SCORES IN BRIEF

ZIMBABWE: First innings 356

SRI LANKA: First innings 346

ZIMBABWE: Second innings 377

SRI LANKA: Second innings 391 for 6 (Kumaratne 49, Sikandar 27, Mendis 66, Mathews 25, Dickwella 81, Gunaratne 80 not out, Perera 29 not out; Williams 2-146, Cremer 4-150)

Result: Sri Lanka won by four wickets.

Player-of-the-match: Asela Gunaratne.

Du Plessis hails Philander

AFP, Nottingham



South Africa captain Faf du Plessis said Vernon Philander was on the way to becoming the 'new Jacques Kallis' after his player-of-the-match winning display in a crushing 340-run win over England in the second Test at Trent Bridge.

Philander was in fine form with both bat and ball as South Africa won with more than a day to spare. He made valuable scores of 54 and 42 at number seven before taking three wickets for 24 in 10 overs as England, chasing a huge 474 in victory, collapsed to 133 all out in what was their heaviest Test defeat, in terms of runs, at Trent Bridge.

Now retired South Africa great Kallis was an outstanding all-rounder, scoring 45 Test hundreds and averaging more than 55.

The lively paceman also took 292 wickets at 32.65, and held 200 catches as well.

Philander, primarily a fast-medium bowler with a priceless ability to reverse the ball late, is some way off matching those figures - his highest score in 45 Tests is 74.

But 169 wickets at an average of 22.21 are proof of his potency as a bowler.

"He's becoming the new Jacques Kallis the way he's batting," said Du Plessis of Philander after the Proteas levelled this four-match series at 1-1.

"He's a fantastic cricketer. When there's something there (in the pitch), he's probably the best in the world at doing something with it."

Shastri gets his men

PTI, Mumbai



According to newly-appointed chief coach Ravi Shastri's demand, the BCCI on Tuesday appointed Bhatkar Anun as the Indian cricket team's bowling coach, ending days of drama surrounding the position.

Anun was Anil's bowling coach during Shastri's previous tenure as Team Director and the latter had insisted on his appointment in his soon-to-start second stint with the Indian team.

The decision to appoint Anun, on a two-year contract, was taken after Shastri met the Committee of Administrators (CoA) and

BCCI officials, including acting President CK Khanna and Secretary Amitabh Chaudhary.

"I was very clear in my mind what my core team would be and you have just heard that," Shastri said after Chaudhary announced the appointment in a press conference.

Besides, the BCCI also decided to retain Sarfraz Bangar as assistant coach and R. Sridhar as fielding coach till the 2019 ODI World Cup.

His appointment marks a complete turnaround for the BCCI, which had named Zaheer Khan as bowling consultant initially before clarifying that it was for specific overseas tours.

There is also, no clarity on Rahul Dravid's position as batting consultant either.