

SPORT



Pace bowler Kamrul Islam relishes the prospect of playing a good part when Bangladesh embark on a full series in South Africa later this month.

PHOTO: STAR

Mosaddek unlikely for South Africa

SPORTS REPORTER



Mosaddek Hossain has very slim chances of playing any matches in the Tigers' upcoming tour of South Africa

as the 21-year old all-rounder is yet to recover from an eye infection.

The Bangladesh Cricket Board (BCB) has decided to send Mosaddek, along with left-arm spinner Sanjamul Islam, who is also suffering from the same eye infection, to Bangkok for a check-up.

"We have scheduled [an appointment] with an eye specialist in Bangkok for Tuesday and we are expecting that Mosaddek will get his visa tomorrow [Sunday]. We also have another appointment on Thursday," informed BCB physician Dr. Debashish Chowdhury yesterday.

"We are sending him there as per the advice of our local eye specialists. This is not a dangerous infection but it will take time for him to fully recover. The treatment most likely will be the same as our eye specialists advised but we are still sending him to get a second opinion," he added.

Mosaddek was initially included in the squad for the first Test against Australia but after only 24 hours the selectors dropped him to make way for Mominul Haque after a lot of controversy over the latter's exclusion.

Now it is also unlikely that the national selectors will include Mosaddek, who has played only one Test so far, when they announce the Test squad for the two-match series against South

Africa. However, there was also good news as X-ray reports showed nothing wrong with off-spinner Mehedi Hasan's finger.

Meanwhile, it is expected that changes will be made to the squad that played against Australia at home, with chief selector Minhajul Abedin already announcing that they will pick five pacers.

There is little doubt that 25-year-old pacer Kamrul Islam will be a strong contender to feature in the pace-heavy attack. Kamrul was not considered for the home series against Australia, but he was included for the Sri Lanka tour, although he did not feature in any matches.

However, the selectors could consider his performances during the trip to New Zealand, where he played both Tests and impressed many. Whether he gets a chance or not, Kamrul was optimistic about the Bangladesh pacers' success in South African conditions.

"There will more pace and bounce on the wickets but other things will be the same and I believe if someone has the capability then he can be good in any condition. So, there is no point in being worried about the bouncy track. We can now compete with any team in the world and don't forget Shakib bhai [Shakib Al Hasan] scored a double hundred in New Zealand on a bouncy wicket," said Kamrul.

The team is scheduled to fly for South Africa on September 16 and will play their tour-opening three-day warm-up match in Benoni from September 21 before playing the two-match Test series which will be followed by three ODIs and two T20Is.

Tamim off to Lahore

SPORTS REPORTER



Bangladesh opener Tamim Iqbal was scheduled to fly for Pakistan last night to represent Bangladesh in a World XI team against the hosts.

The World XI will play three Twenty20Is for the Independence Cup against Pakistan in Lahore on September 12, 13 and 15.

The matches are being staged with the aim of ending Pakistan's isolation in international cricket, triggered after militants attacked the visiting Sri Lankan team's bus in Lahore in 2009. Last March out-of-favour Bangladesh opener Anamul Haque visited the country to play the Pakistan Cricket League final.

Pakistan captain Sarfraz Ahmed was excited about the arrival of international cricketers in Pakistan.

"It's very good news for Pakistan cricket that the World XI will be coming to Pakistan and I have the full belief that they will come to Pakistan and play cricket in front of these fans. It's a very good sign that the World XI, and maybe even Sri Lanka, will be coming here and it shows that they are also recognising Pakistan for winning the Champions Trophy. I expect that it will be a very successful tour and after this tour the doors for world cricket in Pakistan will be opened," Sarfraz told local media yesterday.

"My message to them is that it will be the same as when they play anywhere else in the world. Pakistan is a safe country for cricket and they will also be accorded full security and hopefully they will enjoy their time here," he added.

Pakistan paceman Mohammad Amir echoed his captain's sentiments.

"The World XI is coming and people in Pakistan love cricket a lot. We haven't been getting international cricket so this is a big opportunity for the fans to come and see their stars, world stars and national stars, and come to the ground and support both teams. I am very excited because I will play my first international match in front of my fans. I think it will be the best moment of my life," said Amir.

Opponents showing respect to Bangladesh

ANISUR RAHMAN from Thailand

Even though there is not much razzmatazz regarding the final round of the AFC U-16 Women's Championship, which starts today in Thailand's coastal city of Chonburi, the importance of this tournament can hardly be overemphasised.

The apex regional competition for the age-group women, which offers three places for next year's FIFA U-17 Women's World Cup, will get underway at two separate venues of the city with eight of the continent's best teams participating. For Bangladesh, this is a special occasion as the girls in red and green have earned their rightful place among Asia's best, and are all set to take on women's football powerhouses such as Australia, Japan and North Korea.

Even though on the ride to Chonburi from Suvarnabhumi Airport, no banner, festoon or placards regarding the tournament came to notice; there was enough festivity surrounding the three hotels where the players, match officials and organisers are staying.

There was something to cheer about for Bangladesh as the other teams are taking them seriously and exclaimed their respect for the

Bangladesh team during the official press conference yesterday.

"Our first and prime target is to stay in the top two positions," said defending champions North Korea coach Song Sung Gwon, implying that his team wants to ensure their sixth successive final out of seven editions.

"We don't have any idea about Bangladesh but they are definitely a good team as they came this far and we have to be careful about them," was Song's reply about Bangladesh, who will begin their campaign against North Korea before taking on Japan and Australia in Group B.

Australia coach Roy Dower echoed the same sentiment and praised Bangladesh.

"There is nothing to talk about North Korea and Japan, but I will say that Bangladeshi girls are really playing good football and that is why we want to take all opponents equally," said Dower.

One team that does have good idea about Bangladesh are Japan. The Bangladesh team toured Japan twice as part of their one-year-long preparation and played some 10 matches against Japanese academies and school teams.

"There are some talented players in the Bangladesh squad and they can make the difference. They have taken a lot preparation for

this championship and I think they have the opportunity to do something good," said Kusnose Naoki, the coach of Japan, who are the most successful team in the competition's history with three titles and five final appearances.

While the other teams are showing a tremendous amount of respect,

the Bangladesh squad are keeping their feet firmly on the ground with the resolve of showing the progress they made on the pitch.

"We want to be competitive and play good football every match. I think our girls will gather a lot of experience from this tournament and that will help develop

women's football in Bangladesh," opined Bangladesh coach Golam Rabbani Choton.

In the opening day, China will play against South Korea while hosts Thailand will take on Laos. Bangladesh will play their first match against North Korea tomorrow.



Assistant coach Mahbur Rahman Litu takes the Bangladesh team through a drill session at the beachside in Chonburi, Thailand yesterday. The Bangladesh team will begin their AFC U-16 Championship campaign tomorrow by taking on defending champions North Korea.

PHOTO: BFF

4 awarded in BSPA Night

SPORTS REPORTER

The second edition of the Max-BSPA Night, a programme where sportswriters, journalists and other stakeholders congregate, was held at the FARS hotel in Paltan yesterday.

At the programme, the Bangladesh Sports Press Association (BSPA) awarded journalists for their work in 2016 under five different categories.

Noman Mohammad was awarded under the Shabatkar category, while Masud Alam won the prize for the Best Series Report and Evan Akram won the Best Feature/Documentary Award. Riasat Ajim was given the prize in the Exclusive Report category, and also swooped up the award for Best Journalist.

Bangladesh Cricket Board president Nazmul Hassan attended as chief guest, while Max Group chairman and sports organiser Engr Janab Golam Mohammad was the special guest.

Anderson bowls Eng to series win

AFP, London



James Anderson took the best innings figures of his Test career as England completed a nine-wicket and series-clinching victory against West Indies at Lord's on Saturday.

Anderson followed up his Friday feat of becoming the first England bowler and only sixth in history to take 500 Test wickets by finishing with a return of seven for 42 in 20.1 overs as West Indies were dismissed for 177 in their second innings on the third day of the third Test.

That left England with a meagre target of 107 and they finished on 107 for one off 28 overs as they took a three-match series 2-1.

Mark Stoneman was 40 not out and Tom Westley 44 not out in an unbroken stand of 72.

Anderson's return just surpassed his previous best in 129 career Tests of seven for 43 against New Zealand at Trent Bridge in 2008.

It was also the fifth time the 35-year-old Lancashire swing bowler had taken five or more wickets in a Test innings at Lord's, with England all-round great Ian Botham's eight such hauls the most anyone has taken in Tests at 'the home of cricket'.

Shai Hope, whose twin hundreds were the backbone of West Indies' series-levelling win at Headingley, top-scored in this innings with 62.

But no other batsman made more than opener Kieran Powell's 45.

West Indies were 153 for six at lunch, with Hope 60 not out.

But Hope's fourth ball after the interval saw him undone by a superb Anderson leg-cutter and

caught behind.

West Indies' tail folded cheaply with Anderson, fittingly, ending the innings when he bowled Kumar Roach.

For the second time in the match, Anderson walked off to a standing ovation from a capacity Lord's crowd.

West Indies needed everything to go their way in the field if they were to record a remarkable win yet the very first ball of England's chase, from

Shannon Gabriel, went for four byes.

Leg-spinner Devendra Bishoo struck first ball to have Alastair Cook (17) lbw but that merely denied England a 10-wicket victory.

Play started Saturday in bright sunshine, a marked contrast to the grey skies that had circled Lord's during the first two days.

But despite the improved batting conditions, it only needed four balls on Saturday for Anderson to take another wicket.

Bowling from the Nursery End, where the eight-foot slope across the ground naturally takes the ball away from a right-handed batsman's off stump, Anderson found Roston Chase's edge and wicket-keeper Jonny Bairstow held a simple catch.

Chase was out for his overnight three and West Indies were 94 for four.

SCORES IN BRIEF

West Indies: First Innings 123
England: First Innings 194

West Indies: Second Innings 177 all out (Powell 45, Hope 62; Anderson 7-42, Broad 2-35)

England: Second Innings 107 for 1 (Stoneman 40 not out, Westley 44 not out)

Result: England won by 9 wickets.
Player-of-the-match: Ben Stokes

Player-of-the-series: James Anderson, Shai Hope.



James Anderson's seven-wicket burst sealed England's convincing nine-wicket win against West Indies on the third day of a dramatic third and final Test at Lord's yesterday.

PHOTO: AFP

PCB announces SL series schedule

AFP, Karachi



Pakistan Saturday announced the itinerary for a full series against Sri Lanka that will be played mainly in neutral venues but features a planned finale in Lahore.

The series will comprise two Tests -- the second a day-night affair -- five ODIs and three T20Is.

The Pakistan Cricket Board (PCB) hopes to host the last T20 in Lahore, depending on whether a three-match series against a World XI team next week passes without incident.

PCB director Haroon Rasheed said he hoped the match would be held as planned.

"We have scheduled the last Twenty20 in Lahore with high hopes and it will follow our series with World XI," Rasheed told AFP.

Pakistan have been forced to play their home games in the UAE since a 2009 terrorist attack on the Sri Lankan team bus in Lahore.

Rasheed said the second Test will be a day-night affair in Dubai.

"Day-night Tests are an innovation worldwide and it is aimed at attracting spectators to the ground after their office timings," said Rasheed, a former Pakistan batsman.

PCB said the Test series commences in Abu Dhabi on September 28 and will be followed by a day-night Test in Dubai beginning October 6.

ITINERARY		
Date	Match	Venue
Sept 28-Oct 2	1st Test	Abu Dhabi
Oct 6-10	2nd Test (D/N)	Dubai
Oct 13	1st ODI	Dubai
Oct 16	2nd ODI	Abu Dhabi
Oct 18	3rd ODI	Abu Dhabi
Oct 20	4th ODI	Sharjah
Oct 23	5th ODI	Sharjah
Oct 26	1st T20I	Abu Dhabi
Oct 27	2nd T20I	Abu Dhabi