Star SPORT
e-mail: sports@thedailystar.net
DHAKA FRIDAY OCTOBER 13, 2017, *ASHWIN 28, 1424 BS*
ASIA CUP BANGLADESH 2017

GOODness Everyday

India challenge without tune-up

SPORTS REPORTER

Following the cancellation of yesterday's practice due to dry turf, Bangladesh were forced to prepare inside the concrete rooms of the Pan Pacific Sonargaon Hotel before facing the might India in their second match of the Hero Asia Cup at the Maulana Bhasani Hockey Stadium today.

On the back of a disappointing 7-0 drubbing at the hands of Pakistan, the men in red and green desperately needed a training session to rectify their mistakes before taking on the world's number six side today. However, Mahbub Harun's charges spent nearly two hours in the scoring heat at the Big Bowl yesterday before leaving without any practice as the groundstaff could not water the turf due to a four-hour power outage at the stadium.

The players only had a 15-minute stretching session after turning up nearly 40 minutes after their training session was scheduled to begin as they looked to work on rectifying their mistakes. The situation was exacerbated as manager Rafiqul Islam Kamal -- who is supposed to deal with any problems -- did not turn up and could not be reached via phone either.

With no officials of the Bangladesh Hockey Federation (BHF) at the ground, peon Babul Mia tried to communicate with different officials in a bid to fix the problem before ground committee chairman Hazi Manwar Hossain turned up 15 minutes before the end of Bangladesh's scheduled training and told reporters that they were looking into the matter.

Bangladesh coach Mahbub Harun (3rd from L) briefs his players following the cancelation of yesterday's scheduled training session due to dry turf at the Maulana Bhasani Hockey Stadium, ahead of their second match of the Hero Asia Cup against India today. PHOTO: STAR

Coach Harun believed that the lack of training would not affect the boys much but believed it would have been beneficial for the players to see the mistakes they had made in the first match in practical training.

"It is not possible to improve with one day of training. We came here to rectify our mistakes but we could not practise due to lack of water on the turf," said Harun, who left the field with a dejected face.

The former national player was also a bit worried about another thrashing in the second match if the players failed to implement his instructions.

"If the boys can't follow instructions and can't hold the ball, then another disastrous result is expected," said Harun. "However, our aim is to play positively. If we can play systematically -- with crisp passing, building from the back, back-tracking and also defend well -- then we can expect a positive result against India."

Harun also expressed disappointment with the performance of the senior players, who made most of the mistakes and awarded goals to Pakistan. The seniors will need to put up their best performance to avoid repeating Bangladesh's 9-1 loss to India in the last edition of the Asia Cup in 2013.

On the other hand India's Dutch coach Sjoerd Marijne was not concerned about the home team. Instead he was focusing on his own players and hoping to get a positive result against Bangladesh.

"To be honest, we are not watching Bangladesh. We really want to focus on ourselves and that is important for us. If we do our own things really very good, then we will get the result and we are focusing on that," said Marijne after conducting training on water-soaked turf.

S Korea, Malaysia romp to big wins

SPORTS REPORTER

Holders South Korea and title contenders Malaysia made blistering starts to the Asia Cup, romping to wins in their first matches at the Maulana Bhasani Hockey Stadium yesterday.

Four-time champions South Korea came from a goal down to inflict a massive 7-2 defeat to Oman under floodlights before Malaysia handed an empathic 7-1 defeat to China, thanks to a treble from Saari Faizal. Tajuddin Tenku struck twice while Saabah Shahril and Rosli Ramadan netted once each for Malaysia in the one-sided affair.

Though the final score between South Korea and Oman may give an impression of a one-sided affair, the fact was that Oman gave their superior opponents a run for their money in the first two quarters. They fought on equal footing with South Korea, who came here with the intention to lift a hattrick of titles as well as confirm their berth for next year's Hockey World Cup.

South Korea and Malaysia are considered the better sides in Pool B and are expected to qualify for the Super Fours but it was Oman who delivered a clear message to hosts Bangladesh that they would not be an easy opponent in the place-deciding matches if the teams square off.

Oman held Korea in the first quarter before stunning them in the 18th minute with a strike from Al Fazari Rashed. However, Korea hit back and levelled the margin in the 22nd minute and left for the lemon break at 1-1.

However, the well-built Omanis could not keep the momentum in the third and fourth quarters while also failing to cope with the speed of the Koreans, resulting in them conceding six more goals. But the Omanis had another, ultimately futile, highlight as Al Qasmi Asaad Mubarak a brilliantly struck goal over the head of the South Korean goalkeeper in the fourth quarter to reduce the margin.

BD-CSA XI SCOREBOARD

BANGLADESH	R/B	4s/6s
Imrul c Klaasen b Frylinck	27/31	6/0
Soumya c Siboto b Frylinck	3/13	0/0
Liton c Klaasen b Siboto	8/13	1/0
Mushfiqur c Zondo b Phangiso	22/29	3/0
Shakib c Duminy b Phangiso	68/67	9/0
Mahmudullah lbw b Mulder	21/27	2/1
Sabbir c Klaasen b Budaza	52/54	2/3
Nasir c Klaasen b Budaza	12/23	0/0
Saifuddin not out	13/19	0/0
Mashrafe c Phangiso b Siboto	17/13	1/1
Mustafizur b Hendricks	0/1	0/0
Extras: (lb-3, nb-1, w-8)	12	
Total: (All out in 48.1 overs)	255	

Fall of wickets: 1-31, 2-31, 3-61, 4-63, 5-120, 6-196, 7-219, 8-226, 9-253, 10-255.

Bowler	O	M	R	W
Hendricks	7.1	0	40	1
Frylinck	6	2	25	2
Siboto	8	0	49	2
Budaza	7	0	41	2
Phangiso	10	0	46	2
Duminy	4	0	26	0
Mulder	6	0	25	1

CSA XI	R/B	4s/6s
Markram c & b Nasir	82/68	8/1
Breetzke b Mashrafe	71/100	9/0
Duminy st Mushfiqur b Mahmudullah	34/42	2/0
De Villiers c Mushfiqur b Mahmudullah	43/50	2/1
Zondo not out	10/15	0/0
Klaasen not out	5/5	1/0
Extras: (lb-4, nb-1, w-7)	12	
Total: (For 4 wkts in 46.3 overs)	257	

Did not bat: Frylinck, Phangiso, Siboto, Mulder, Hendricks, Budaza.

Fall of wickets: 1-147, 2-174, 3-236, 4-252.

Bowler	O	M	R	W
Mashrafe	9	0	47	1
Mustafizur	7	0	43	0
Shakib	5	0	30	0
Saifuddin	4.3	0	27	0
Rubel	8	0	41	0
Nasir	9	0	52	1
Mahmudullah	4	0	13	2

Result: CSA XI won by 6 wickets.

Tigers outclassed in practice

SAKEB SUBHAN *from Bloemfontein*

Although practice matches are relatively relaxed affairs where the touring team experiment with their lineup and strategies to settle on a final version for the international matches to follow, it is highly doubtful that ODI skipper Mashrafe Bin Mortaza can draw anything positive or constructive from a six-wicket loss to a South Africa Invitational XI side that had only four international players in AB de Villiers, JP Duminy, Aaron Phangiso and Aiden Markram. The only thing to take away from this match is that Bangladesh need to improve a lot to put up a fight in the three-ODI series against South Africa starting in Kimberley on Sunday.

The only two members of the South Africa ODI squad playing yesterday -- skipper Duminy (34) and batting maestro de Villiers -- took the side to within 20 runs of the 256-run target before Duminy was stumped off the bowling of Mahmudullah Riyad in the 42nd over. Mahmudullah also had de Villiers caught behind in the 46th over for 43. Khaya Zondo and Heinrich Klaasen then took the side home without further fuss and with 3.3 overs to spare. Markram had earlier top-scored with a 68-ball 82 before being caught and bowled by Nasir Hossain.

On a flat wicket at the Mangaung Oval, Bangladesh's bowlers needed 22.1 overs to draw the first false shot when Mustafizur Rahman dropped a return catch from opener Matthew Breetzke on 51. However, Bangladesh could not last the full fifty overs and were out for just 255 in 48.1 overs.

While Bangladesh's batsmen fell to the old habit of playing shots at the wrong time, their bowlers stuck to their old failing of bowling both sides of the wicket and not displaying enough patience to stick to a good line and length to frustrate the batsmen, with the 18-year old Breetzke and two-Test rookie Markram striking an opening partnership of 147 in just 25.4 overs that all but settled the outcome.

It could be said that the batsmen fared worse because it was not as if the South Africa XI bowlers bowled unplayable deliveries. One could even say that Mashrafe's ball to bowl Breetzke for 71, a ball that seamed in and crashed into the stumps, was as good a ball as was bowled yesterday. But after Mashrafe won the toss and batted first, his batsmen failed him as all except one were out playing shots of whimsy rather than responding to any sort of pressure created by the bowlers.

Only Shakib Al Hasan and Sabbir Rahman played innings of note after Bangladesh were reduced to 63 for four by the end of the 15th over. They put on 76 runs for the sixth wicket in just 11.3 overs after Shakib and Mahmudullah Riyad had lifted the total to 120 with a 57-run fifth-wicket stand. Shakib, back in the side after opting out of the Test leg of the tour, scored a 67-ball 68 with nine fours before holing out to mid on off Phangiso. Sabbir was out for a 54-ball 52 with two fours and three sixes when he tried to scoop Mbulelo Budaza and only managed to loop the ball to the keeper.

Soumya skied a pull to mid on in the eighth over; Imrul was out wafting outside off stump in the next ball. Mushfiqur Rahim played some attractive shots but pulled Phangiso straight down the throat of deep midwicket for 22 just after Liton Das had poked outside off stump to depart for eight.

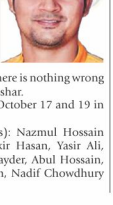
After the Sabbir-Shakib stand, Nasir was caught behind off a hook in the 44th over to leave the score on 226 for eight, leaving the stage clear for Mashrafe to hit a 13-ball 17 and drag the score past 250.

Nadif back from abyss

SPORTS REPORTER

Nadif Chowdhury got a surprise call from the national selectors when the 30-year old all-rounder was picked in the Bangladesh A team for the first two one-day matches of the five-match series against Ireland A.

A middle-order batsman who can also bowl off-break, he had drawn the attention of the selectors at the age of 19 and played for the national team in a T20I match against Zimbabwe in Khulna in 2006. However after playing another T20I against Pakistan in September 2007, the man from Manikganj disappeared from the scene before impressing selectors with domestic performances to enter the A team.



"We noticed his comeback in the domestic circuit. I was especially impressed with his 145-run knock in the National Cricket League. He can bat with a good strike rate, he can bowl and he is a good fielder -- a good package. So there is nothing wrong to see him again," said selector Habibul Bashar.

The first two matches will be held on October 17 and 19 in Cox's Bazar.

SQUAD (for first two one day matches): Nazmul Hossain (captain), Sadman Islam, Al-Amin, Zakir Hasan, Yasir Ali, Nurul Hasan, Sanjamul Islam, Tanbir Hayder, Abul Hossain, Shubhasis Roy, Imran Ali, Mehedi Hasan, Nadif Chowdhury and Abu Hider.

BCB election on Oct 31

SPORTS REPORTER

The election of the Bangladesh Cricket Board (BCB) will be held on October 31 at the Sher-e-Bangla National Stadium in Mirpur.

The schedule for the election of the country's most affluent sports body was announced yesterday.

The draft voter list will be announce on October 16 and, after objections and hearings, the final list will be published on October 17 and the nomination papers will be distributed on October 20. The nomination papers' submission date is fixed on October 24.

One can withdraw nomination papers on October 29 and the final list of the candidates will be put on the board the same day.

The results of the election will be published on November 1.

Earlier, a five-member election commission was formed to oversee the process.

Nehra set to retire

PALLAB BHATTACHARYA *from New Delhi*

Ashish Nehra, the veteran Indian pacer, announced his decision on Thursday to hang up his boots from all forms of cricket, capping an 18-year-old career often marred by injury.

The 38-year-old said he would retire after the first T20I against New Zealand, scheduled to be played at his home ground at the Feroz Shah Kotla Stadium in New Delhi on November 1.

His announcement came a day ahead of India's third and decisive T20I against Australia in Hyderabad, where the bowler is with the team. Both sides are now level 1-1 in the three-match series.

"It is my own decision, I have spoken to the team management as well as the chairman of selection committee. I'm really lucky, it can't get bigger than getting to retire in front of your home crowd," said Nehra.

Shadman puts hosts on top

SPORTS REPORTER

Opener Shadman Islam hit a hundred as Bangladesh A tightened their grip on visitors Ireland A on the second day of the unofficial Test match at the Sylhet International Cricket Stadium yesterday.

The 22-year old left-hander scored 108 runs but what impressed selector Habibul Bashar more was his patience -- he stayed in the middle for more than five hours in scorching heat.

Resuming on 38 for one, the home side finished the day on 322 for six thanks to two left-handers -- Shadman and captain Nazmul Hossain, who scored 69 off 135 balls with the help of seven boundaries -- and took a 67-run lead.

SHADMAN... 108

"Shadman looked good and showed patience in the scorching heat and Nazmul was fantastic," Bashar said over phone.

Shadman and Nazmul shared 137 runs for the second wicket before the latter was dismissed by Stuart Thompson. The home side lost another wicket quickly when Al Amin returned to the dressing room for a duck.

Yasir Ali then joined Shadman and the duo added 69 runs for the fourth wicket. Yasir made 35 off 86 balls with two fours and as many sixes. Mahedi Hasan was the other notable scorer with 35. Nurul Hasan remained not out at 51.

SCORES IN BRIEF

IRELAND: 255

BANGLADESH: 322 for six in 103 overs (Shadman 108, Nazmul 69, Yasir 35, Nurul 51 not out, Mahedi 35; Smith 2-42, McBrine 2-63)

Ireland's Test debut against Pak in 2018

AFP, *Dublin*

Ireland will play their first ever Test match against Pakistan on home soil next May, the country's cricket chiefs announced Thursday.

Afghanistan and Ireland became full members of the ICC in June, taking the number of countries who play the five-day format from 10 to 12.

Since then Cricket Ireland (CI) has been looking for the right opponent for the historic first match.

"We are excited to welcome Pakistan to Ireland for our inaugural Test match next year," said CI chief executive Warren Deutrom.

"It has been our wish to make our Test debut in front of our own fans within 12 months of becoming a Test nation, and against a big team, so I'm delighted."

Irish captain William Porterfield welcomed confirmation of the match, saying: "It's fantastic news for Irish cricket. It's going to be a bit special and it's always great to be a part of history.

Pakistan hope for better fortunes

First ODI against Sri Lanka today

AFP, *Dubai*

Pakistan are counting on a change in format and players to overcome a resurgent Sri Lanka in the five-match ODI series starting in Dubai from Friday.

Pakistan were upset 2-0 in the preceding Test series but they are hoping to change their fortunes and carry the limited over form which helped them win the eight-nation Champions Trophy held in England in June this year.

They only have skipper Sarfraz Ahmed, batsmen Haris Sohail and Babar Azam and fast bowler Hasan Ali from the Test series, while experienced allrounder Mohammad Hafeez and opener Ahmed Shahzad amongst the 11 who joined the squad.

Ahmed feels the pressure of losing his first Test series but promised a better performance in the limited over matches.

"Obviously, when you have a first Test series as captain, and you lose it, pressure will be there," said Ahmed who played a match winning 61 not out against Sri Lanka in the Champions Trophy group match.

"But we will try and get out of that. Our one-day team is balanced and our record is very good. We will have some senior players returning and I hope we'll play better cricket."

Pakistan also have a young crop of fast emerging players in opener Fakhar Zaman -- who hit a century in the Champions Trophy final against India -- leg-spinner Shadab Khan, allrounders Imad Wasim and Faheem Ashraf, and pacers Rumman Raees, Junaid Khan and Usman Shinwari.

Spearhead Mohammad Amir was ruled out of the series with a shin injury sustained in the second Test in Dubai.

Pakistan's loss in the Test series was their first in United Arab Emirates in 10 attempts.

But their one-day record in UAE has been abysmal, having lost nine of the 12 series since 2009, only winning twice against Sri Lanka and once against the West Indies.

Pakistan skipper Sarfraz Ahmed hopes to do better in the five-match one-day series against Sri Lanka which starts in Dubai from today. PHOTO: AFP FILE

Sri Lanka have come from wretched one-day form, having lost 16 of their last 21 games, winning four with one no result. That included a 5-0 whitewash against South Africa and India and first-ever series defeat against minnows Zimbabwe.

Stokes loses New Balance contract

AFP, *London*

England cricketer Ben Stokes has lost his sponsorship contract with sportswear giant New Balance following his arrest outside a nightclub which also left his Ashes series in doubt.

Stokes, who was arrested on suspicion of causing actual bodily harm, also issued an apology after video emerged of him mimicking the disabled son of British celebrity Katie Price.

New Balance said it "does not condone" behaviour by Stokes, who is also believed to be the subject of a damning video showing a man throwing multiple punches outside the Bristol nightspot.

"New Balance does not condone behaviour by our global athletes that does not match our brand culture and values, and therefore we have ended our relationship with Ben Stokes, effective October 11, 2017," the company said, in a statement which was widely reported by British media.

The talismanic all-rounder's career has been plunged into turmoil following his arrest last month.