



AB de VILLIERS

calls time on illustrious career



PHOTOS: STAR & APP FILE



AFP, Johannesburg



South Africa's star batsman AB de Villiers on Wednesday announced his surprise retirement from all international cricket after a glittering 14-year career playing for the Proteas.

De Villiers, 34, was famed for mixing traditional and unorthodox shots, as well as his fast scoring and ability to hit the ball to all parts of the ground.

He holds the world record for the fastest half-century (16 balls), hundred (31 balls) and 150 (64 balls) in ODIs, and is one of the few batsmen to top the Test and 50-over rankings at the same time.

"I have decided to retire from all international cricket with immediate effect," he said in a statement.

"After 114 Test matches, 228 ODIs and 78 T20 Internationals, it is time for others to take over. I have had my turn, and to be honest, I am tired."

The middle-order batsman said it had taken

him a long time to make the "tough" decision and that he decided to quit while still playing "decent cricket".

"After the fantastic series wins against India and Australia, now feels like the right time to step aside," he said.

"It would not be right for me to pick and choose where, when and in what format I play for the Proteas. For me, in the green and gold, it must be everything or nothing."

He added he had no plans to play overseas but would continue in league competitions, saying: "It's not about earning more somewhere else, it's about running out of gas and feeling that it is the right time to move on."

De Villiers retired with a Test average of 50.66 and as the fourth-highest run-scorer for South Africa with 8765 runs, with 22 100s.

In limited overs, he finished as the number two ranked batsman in the world and as the second highest run-scorer behind Jacques Kallis

with 9577 runs at an average of 53.50.

"AB is one of the all-time greats of South African cricket who has thrilled spectators around the world with his sheer brilliance, coupled to his ability to innovate and take modern day batting... to new levels," said Cricket South Africa (CSA) president Chris Nenzani.

"It goes without saying that he is going to be greatly missed wherever international cricket is played."

CSA chief executive Thabang Moroe said De Villiers' decision ahead of the 2019 World Cup in England and Wales was disappointing but respected.

"AB has been a colossus on the world stage for well over a decade," he said.

"His ability to improvise has made him known as Mr. 360 degrees in white ball cricket and we will never ever forget those remarkable innings that earned him the fastest 50, 100 and 150 in ODI cricket."

"I have had my turn, and to be honest, I am tired."

WHAT THEY SAID

So shocked to here @ABdeVilliers17 has decided to call time on his international career. But that's just life and he feels it's time to move on. Thank you great man for your amazing

match winning performances, skill captaincy and most of all your humility.

-- Allan Donald

Like your on-field game, may you have 360-degree success off the field as well. You will definitely be missed, @ABdeVilliers17. My best wishes to you!

-- Sachin Tendulkar

It's a shocking news. It's surprising to hear that AB de Villiers is retiring so early. International cricket, including myself, will greatly miss his game.

--Mushfiqur Rahim

I said in a blog sometime back that @ABdeVilliers17 was the true natural successor to Lara. He too can ask "Did I entertain?" And

the answer would be a resounding "Yes. Yes!"

-- Harsha Bhogle

I remember this young guy on his 1st day out for Proteas... What an inspiration, person and player he turned out to be. Thank you for everything you have done and been for your country, teammates and fans @ABdeVilliers17 #legend.

-- Mark Boucher

AB'S RECORDS

31- AB de Villiers holds the record for the fastest ODI century, reaching the mark in just 31 balls against West Indies in Johannesburg in January 2015. He ended that particular innings on an astonishing 149 off just 44 balls, with nine fours and 16 sixes, which is also the joint-

highest amount of sixes hit in a single ODI innings.

16- In the same innings he reached his 50 off 16 balls -- the fastest ODI half-century.

53.5- His ODI average of 53.5 is the second-highest -- after Virat Kohli -- among batsmen who have scored 9,000 runs

and the fourth-highest among those with at least 20 innings. They are also the only two batsmen to score more than 5,000 runs in both Tests and ODIs at a 50-plus average.

5- He scored five of his ODI hundreds when coming in to bat after the 25th over -- the most by any batsman.

Nasir set to go under the knife

SPORTS REPORTER

Fringe national cricketer Nasir Hossain, who suffered a torn ligament in the beginning of April, is set to undergo surgery on June 5 in Sydney and is expected to fly for Australia in the next couple of days, Bangladesh Cricket Board chief physician Debashish Chowdhury informed yesterday.

The cricketer reportedly tore his right knee ligament while playing football after attending a friend's wedding in Sirajganj after the conclusion of the Dhaka Premier League. The all-rounder had earlier suggested that he injured himself during a running session.

"We took an appointment for his surgery in Sydney on June 5 and Nasir is expected to fly for Australia by May 25 or 26. Normally, it takes around six months to recover from this kind of surgery," Debashish told The Daily Star yesterday.

The injury forced the 26-year-old to miss the last three rounds of the Bangladesh Cricket League and he was subsequently left out of the 31-member preliminary squad for the upcoming series against Afghanistan and the tour of West Indies.

Debashish also informed that they have decided to administer an injection to another injured national cricketer, pacer Taskin Ahmed, who is suffering from back pain.

'SA experience was crucial'



RUMANA AHMED

SPORTS REPORTER



Bangladesh women's ODI captain Rumana Ahmed was happy about the fact that, despite losing all their matches on the just-concluded South Africa tour, they could at least play five ODIs on the trip.

"We went there (South Africa) to play ODI cricket after a long gap. We played five ODIs this year and don't know when we will next get the chance to play ODI matches. We have the Asia Cup T20 tournament up... not ODIs.

"If you ask me what we gained from this tour, it's the build-up of experience. They [South Africa] are a good team and we learned what kind of preparation we should take before this kind of series," Rumana told reporters at the BCB Academy in Mirpur yesterday after returning home on Tuesday night. The Tigresses will leave today for Sylhet, where there will be a training camp for the Asia Cup.

The team will play the Asia Cup in June in Malaysia, where they will take on Sri Lanka on June 3 in the opening match. India, Pakistan, Malaysia and Thailand are the other teams in the T20 regional competition.

When asked about the difference between the two teams during the tour of South Africa, Rumana said: "I felt that they improved a lot and have gone far ahead from where we are. Their pace attack was marvellous, while we lagged far behind in that department. And the conditions were also a factor."

Rumana also said that they said a tearful goodbye to their outgoing head coach David Capel at the Qatar International Airport.

Former Indian wicketkeeper Anju Jain, who is expected to arrive in Dhaka today, is all set to take over from Capel ahead of the busy international schedule.

KKR eliminate Rajasthan

STAR SPORT DESK

Kolkata Knight Riders moved into the Second Qualifier of the Indian Premier League after a 25-run win against Rajasthan Royals in the Eliminator at the Eden Gardens in Kolkata yesterday.

Despite some early blows, the hosts posted a challenging total of 169 for the loss of seven wickets, thanks to some late power-hitting from skipper Dinesh Karthik and all-rounder Andre Russell. Karthik resurrected the faltering KKR ship with a 38-ball 52 before Russel provided the late flurry with an unbeaten 49 off just 24 deliveries, the knock punctuated with five sixes and three fours.

Rajasthan Royals, in their reply, could only manage 144 runs despite losing only four wickets. Skipper Ajinkya Rahane's 41-ball 46 and Sanju Samson's 38-ball 50 were not enough against the imposing target.

Kolkata Knight Riders will take on Sunrisers Hyderabad in the Second Qualifier at the same venue on Friday.

SCORES IN BRIEF

Kolkata Knight Riders:

169 for 7 in 20 overs

(Karthik 52, Russel 49 not out; Gowtham 2-15)

Rajasthan Royals: 144 for

4 in 20 overs (Rahane 46,

Samson 50; Chawla 2-24)

Result: Kolkata Knight

Riders won by 25 runs

Ariful's chance to capitalise

SPORTS REPORTER



Ever since playing for the Bangladesh Under-19s six years ago, all-rounder Ariful Haque has undergone a tough period and has had work hard to establish himself in the domestic circuit.

Till making his T20I debut earlier this year against Sri Lanka, Ariful experienced the stark difference between being under the guidance of the Bangladesh Cricket Board (BCB) and having to fend for oneself when it came to improving and climbing the ladder to the top.

Blessed with the ability to hit the ball hard, Ariful impressed many during the Bangladesh Premier League for Khulna Titans last season and he was also handy with his medium

pacers and electric on the field -- qualities that the national team management have been seeking for some time.

"I have always wanted to play for the national team, be it as an all-rounder or as a batsman, and I have been preparing myself accordingly. It will take some time as there is a difference between our domestic cricket and the international arena.

"We have a lack of power hitters, although that gap is being filled slowly, and if you look at the practice facilities there is not a wealth of facilities if you are not in the national set-up. I won't get the same facilities if I am not in the national team and then I won't get the confidence and my performance will be hampered. If the facilities improve, we have the ability to step up," Ariful told reporters at the Sher-e-Bangla National Stadium in Mirpur yesterday.

Veteran left-arm spinner Abdur Razzak agreed with Ariful's views on facilities, but added that it is up to an individual to overcome the disadvantage.

"Obviously when I was in the national team I had the facilities, such as the field and other things which were available all the time. But when you are not in the national team it's very difficult as you have to wait for fields to be vacant. But I also think that during the off season a player can work on his fitness, which I did in order to be prepared to play any time," Razzak told The Daily Star yesterday.

Only time will tell whether a matured Ariful, who knows the value of a place in the national team, can establish himself as an all-rounder in the Tigers' ranks, and the upcoming three-match T20I series against Afghanistan can be a great platform for him to prove his credentials.



Captain Dinesh Karthik's (R) 52 off 38 balls helped Kolkata Knight Riders reach 169 in the Eliminator against Rajasthan Royals at the Eden Gardens in Kolkata yesterday.

PHOTO: AFP