

# SPORT

## The proof is in the paya

MAZHAR UDDIN



Tamim Iqbal has developed into a good chef with the help of Youtube and the evidence of that was a delicious paya curry for a dinner he hosted at his place on Wednesday when his wife Ayesha Siddiqua was out of town.

Much like necessity dictated his eagerness to learn the art of cooking, Tamim the batsman has matured and evolved over the years -- starting his international career as a flamboyant batsman and gradually developing into one of the most assured and technically sound batsmen in the Bangladesh team.

A perfectionist, Tamim has kept pushing his limits, be it with his approach or the improvement in technique to deal

Caribbean conditions in mind, and maybe I was unable to score in the Test series but I can say that I tried my best. I am not giving any excuses over the poor performance and maybe I should prepare myself even better than before for Tests," Tamim said on Wednesday night.

His hard work and tendency to keep himself updated with the need of the hour eventually paid off in the limited over series where Tamim went on to score two hundreds and a fifty in the three ODIs and was named player of the series.

Tamim's unbeaten 130 in the first ODI may have been the slowest hundred -- reached off his 146th delivery -- by a Bangladeshi batsman in ODIs but his next thirty runs came off just 14 deliveries, showing that he can apply the mantra of adaptability to individual innings too. He was well accompanied by Shakib Al



with the world's best bowlers in any condition -- the best example of which came in the just-concluded tour of West Indies.

Before the tour, Tamim chose to prepare himself with the pace-friendly Caribbean conditions in mind and studied videos of Sri Lanka's tour of West Indies which preceded Bangladesh's voyage.

The videos contained dos and don'ts for the batsman when facing the West Indies pacers. He imbibed those lessons and worked accordingly even during the Eid-ul-Fitr break.

It was not the best of starts in the first Test in Antigua as he scored just four and 13 in the two innings, the first of which saw Bangladesh bowled out for their lowest Test score of 43. The left-hander then corrected course and prepared in a manner so as not to repeat mistakes, and the proof was in a patient 47 in the first innings of the second Test before being bowled by a brilliant Paul delivery.

He was trapped leg-before in the second innings by Jason Holder for a duck but at least he continued to set the example of learning from mistakes -- a rare highlight in an otherwise sordid match as Bangladesh crumbled to a 2-0 Test series defeat.

"I tried to prepare myself keeping the

Hasan, who fell three runs short of his hundred during Bangladesh's highest second-wicket partnership of 207.

"The partnership was very crucial after the Test series. It was not an easy wicket to bat on and if Shakib or I had thrown our wickets away it would have become difficult. With that in mind, we kept concentrating without looking at the scoreboard and took our time -- it was the only option for us to score runs," he said after training in Mirpur yesterday.

That game awareness and responsibility was not seen in most of the junior members of the side, nor is there much evidence of the youngsters learning from the preparations of the side's senior batsmen. While backing the juniors to come good, Tamim said that players have to be honest with themselves to rectify mistakes.

"If cricketers don't take up the challenge then there is no point. It's important to be thirsty. For example, it won't do to give the excuse that the wicket was difficult in the Test series; instead we should have taken that as a challenge, which we were unable to do," Tamim added.

Tamim's thirst for improvement is now well documented, and it can be hoped that he will continue finding new ways to score runs, and some recipes too.



Bangladesh forward Mahbubur Rahman Sufil (C), who scored their only goal in a 1-1 draw, attempts to squeeze past two Thailand defenders in their second Group B match of the 2018 Asian Games at the Pakansari Stadium in Bogor yesterday.

PHOTO: AFP

## Booters stay alive after draw against Thailand

ATIQUÉ ANAM from Bogor



The Bangladesh under-23 football team kept their hopes of securing qualification for the second round of the Asian Games alive with a 1-1 draw against Thailand in their second Group B match at the Pakansari Stadium yesterday.

Mahbubur Rahman Sufil gave Bangladesh the lead in the 52nd minute of the game, but a mistake from goalkeeper Ashraful Islam Rana in the 80th minute condemned them to leaving the field with a share of the spoils.

Bangladesh when right after the break goalkeeper Rana was stretched to make a parry at the far post, but Thailand forward Saringkan Sarachat could only poke the rebound wide off target.

Sufil, however, made amends four minutes later as he found acres of space inside the box to stab one home after Tapu Barman headed a throw-in from Bishwanath Ghosh right into the middle of the box.

Bangladesh started the game defending pretty deep and they drew themselves deeper right after taking the lead, allowing the Thai players to manoeuvre the ball inside the Bangladesh half. Although Jamie Day's charges defended man-

fully, it looked like a matter of time until they would concede the lead, and they did in the 80th minute. Rana, who was outstanding against Uzbekistan, was a little too casual as he tried to bounce the ball into the ground after failing to grip a floating attempt from a Thailand winger, but the ball went too far out where substitute forward Supachai Chaidee was free, and he slotted the ball home with ease.

Things could have been worse had a shot from Chaiyawat Buran not ricocheted off the post in the 89th minute, but Bangladesh probably feel that they let a great opportunity to grab all three points from this game slip.

**BANGLADESH 1 - 1 THAILAND**  
SUFIL 52' CHAIDEE 80'

This draw, coming on the back of the opening game 3-0 defeat against Uzbekistan, means that Bangladesh are third in the four-team group with a single point, ahead of Qatar on goal difference while Thailand, who had scored a stoppage-time equaliser against Qatar the other day, are in second position with two points. Uzbekistan moved through to the knock-out rounds following a 6-0 demolition of Qatar in the second match of the day.

Two teams from each of the six groups plus the four best third-placed teams will qualify for the second round, a stage which Bangladesh last reached in the Doha Asian Games in 2006.

Bangladesh started the game with one change from the first match, with Shushanto Tripua coming in place of left-back Rahmat Mia; however, Bangladesh's defence was hardly troubled by the slow-paced build-up from the Thais.

The best chances of the first half came from Bangladesh and Sufil in particular, who saw his weak effort on a well-played through-ball from Saad Uddin deflect off a Thailand defender in the eighth minute before having his shot scuffed away from inside the box with the goalkeeper out of position and a couple of defenders on the goal line.

It looked like those missed chances would bite

## Goalscorer Sufil rues missed chances

SPORTS REPORTER from Bogor

Bangladesh coach Jamie Day admitted that his side should have come out with all three points against Thailand, but said he was happy with the performance of his charges. The 38-year-old coach claimed his players did not allow Thailand, a technically better side according to him, to play their natural game.

"I am extremely pleased with today's performance. The shape and work rate of my boys was fantastic," Day said after the 1-1 draw against Thailand at the Pakansari Stadium yesterday. "We deserved to go one-up early in the game, but you could see the players were tired. Thailand are technically better than us, but we showed character and desire and we were unlucky not to get three points."

The coach felt the mistakes made by his charges -- two great opportunities spurned by goalscorer Mahbubur Rahman Sufil and the

fumble by goalkeeper Ashraful Islam Rana which allowed Thailand the equaliser -- are a part of the game.

"We don't criticize people for making mistakes. Our work rate has been brilliant," Day said.

"Thailand played as well as we let them. If they did not play well, it was because my boys did not let them. I'm disappointed with the goal [we conceded], but that's a part of the game. If I was given this result at the start of the game, I would have taken it," said the Englishman.

The goalscorer though, lamented his missed opportunities, which he felt could have killed the game in the first half.

"I'm happy with scoring for the country in my first Asian Games," Sufil, the former under-19 striker, said. "I got two chances in the first half. Had I scored those, we would have won the game. I would definitely try to score more if I get such scoring chances next time," he added.

## Indonesia planning for 2032 Olympics

SPORTS REPORTER from Jakarta



Olympic Council of Asia's (OCA) honorary life vice-president Wei Jizhong expressed his satisfaction at the preparation of Indonesia in hosting the 18th Asian Games, which will get underway in Jakarta and Palembang on Saturday.

Jizhong, who has been with the OCA for decades, said that despite the challenges, Indonesia has done a very good job of hosting these games. He was speaking to the media during a visit to the main press centre in Jakarta yesterday morning.

"I have organised seven Asian Games before this one and each one is different. One cannot be compared to the other. However, I can say this one will be a very good games," Jizhong said. "Things started slowly in the beginning, but gathered pace towards the end. There was little time, and we had to plan things from scratch. But except for minor things, everything is going very well."

The octogenarian was accompanied by other high-officials, including the head of the local organising

committee. They were greeted with Kambung, a traditional Javanese dance performance, on their arrival at the MMC.

Meanwhile, the media and PR director of the Indonesia Asian Games Organising Committee, Muhammad Buldanyah, informed that they are planning to bid for the 2032 Olympic Games.

"The International Olympic Committee [IOC] president Thomas Bach will be here for the closing ceremony. Other IOC representatives

will be here for the games and they will see for themselves the infrastructure and arrangement. We hope they will be impressed because these games will definitely be better than Incheon 2014," the official said during a conversation.

"We have had to build some infrastructures for these games while we renovated the others that were already there. The infrastructures will be leased out to private companies and they will use it for various commercial purposes, so

that the infrastructures will not stay unused," Buldanyah said.

He also said that time was the biggest challenge in hosting these events, and they had to be on the fast-track to get things done. "We were handed the responsibilities towards the end of 2016. The Games village was started from scratch in early 2017. Another challenge, mostly a budget related one, was to have the games in two host cities. But we took Palembang on board because there were sporting infrastructures which were not in Jakarta."

From a purely sporting perspective, he added that the host country is looking to better their standing on these multi-sport events, which would help bid for bigger things. Indonesia had won one gold and two silver medals from the 2016 Rio Olympic Games while they grabbed 20 medals in the Incheon Asian Games four years ago.

"We would ideally like to be placed within the top 10 nations on the medals table. We would like to have more medals than what we got in Incheon," Buldanyah informed.

This is the second time Indonesia is hosting Asia's biggest multi-sport event, having hosted the Asian Games for the first time back in 1962.

## Big defeat for Bangladesh A

STAR ONLINE REPORT

Bangladesh A suffered a massive 51-run defeat (D/L method) against their Irish counterparts in the second unofficial T20 match in Dublin today.

Chasing the home side's massive 202 for 6, the second string Bangladesh side limped to 104 for 7 in 15 overs before rain intervened. The game was actually pushed into a reserve day after it was abandoned without a ball being bowled on Wednesday due to inclement weather in the Irish capital.

The series is now leveled at 1-1 with the third and final game on Friday turning into the decider.

Bangladesh A wobbled in their chase and lost wickets at regular intervals after both openers Soumya Sarkar (11), who scored a fifty in the first game that they won by four wickets, and Mominul Haque (14) departed cheaply. At one stage Bangladesh A were reeling at 62 for 7.

## India's 'renaissance man' no more

APP, Mumbai

Indian cricket heroes yesterday paid tribute to Ajit Wadekar, who led the country to their first series triumphs in England and the West Indies, following his death at the age of 77 on Wednesday.

"He will always be remembered as the 'renaissance man' of Indian cricket," said Board of Control for Cricket in India chief executive Rahul Johri, after it was announced that Wadekar had died in hospital in Mumbai following a long illness.

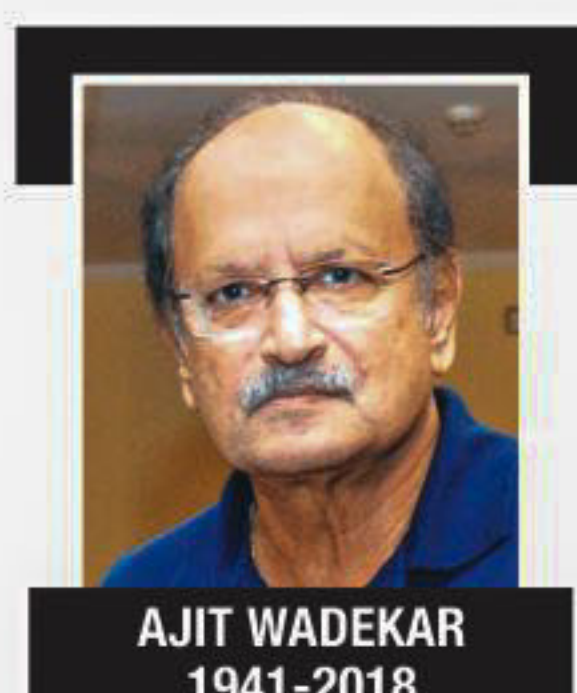
The batsman led India to their famous victories in 1971 and overall scored 2,113 runs in just 37 Test matches, including one century. Wadekar was the first captain of India's one-day team and he went on to become a powerbroker as coach, manager and chairman of the Indian selectors and mentor to future stars.

Indian legends like Sachin Tendulkar, Mohammed Azharuddin and Anil Kumble paid tribute to Wadekar.

"He was someone who was instrumental in bringing out the best in us during the 90s. We'll always be grateful for his advice and guidance," said Tendulkar.

Azharuddin said that Wadekar had been "iconic" and a "father figure for me... May his soul rest in peace."

Kumble, who made his comeback to the Indian team in a 1992-93 tour of South Africa under Wadekar, said he "was more than a coach to the entire team -- a father figure and a shrewd tactician."



AJIT WADEKAR  
1941-2018



Olympic Council of Asia's high officials are greeted with a traditional Jaavanese dance on their arrival at the Main Media Centre in Jakarta yesterday.

PHOTO: ATIQUÉ ANAM