



Why is Nasir not in Sylhet?

SPORTS REPORTER from Sylhet



Yesterday, during Sylhet Sixers' practice at the Sylhet District Stadium, the ever-popular Nasir Hossain -- who captained the franchise in their debut season in 2017 -- was nowhere to be seen and upon further inquiry, it was learnt from their media manager that he had not made the trip to Sylhet.

"Nasir is carrying an injury and the coach [Waqar Younis] said that it was global practice not to travel with players who would not play, and just to travel with 15 players," Sylhet Sixers media manager Tamzidul Islam told The Daily Star over phone yesterday.

The injury in question turned out to be the torn right knee ligament for which he underwent surgery in Australia last year. When pointed out that the injury was thought to be a thing of the past, Tamzidul said that his lack of form -- Nasir scored just four runs in the first two matches and was dropped for the third -- was another reason and that it was thought that having a senior player missing out and sitting on the dugout would not look good.



A few other franchises, when contacted, seemed unaware of the policy to travel with just 15 of the squad. Also, Waqar was the coach last season as well and there were certainly more than 15 Sixers when they travelled to Chattogram. They used 14 players in two matches in 2017 in Chattogram, presumably to correct course, having fallen upon hard times after a bright start. With a poor start this time around, it stands to reason that they would want as many options as possible. Tamzidul added that Nasir was the only squad member left back in Dhaka.

All signs seemed to point to a deeper reason than that stated, but it seems for now that it will have to wait.

Lewis suffers hamstring tear

SPORTS REPORTER

Comilla Victorians' opener Evin Lewis underwent an MRI yesterday and it was revealed that the left-hander

is suffering from a grade one hamstring tear. The West Indian left the field in some discomfort during his side's Bangladesh Premier League

match against Chittagong Vikings on Sunday at the Sher-e-Bangla National Stadium in Mirpur.

In the 12th over, the 27-year old seemed to have

pulled his hamstring while running between the wickets and eventually left the field on a stretcher after having received treatments on the ground. He retired hurt after scoring 38 runs off 34 balls.

However the left-hander travelled to Sylhet with his team, where he underwent the MRI. While Lewis will be

missing Comilla's first game in Sylhet against Sylhet Sixers, he is expected to return for their next fixture of the tournament's Sylhet

phase against Khulna Titans on January 18.



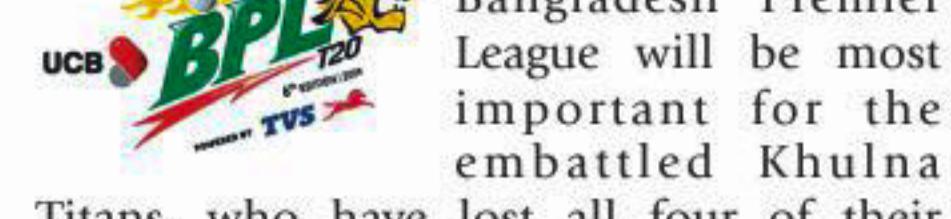
Chris Gayle practises his Nagin Dance with Rangpur Riders teammate Nazmul Islam after the team reached Sylhet yesterday. While Gayle's bat did not smile in the Dhaka phase, the fans will be hoping the 'Universe Boss' can make it rain sixes in scenic Sylhet.

PHOTO: BCB

Make or break for Titans against Kings

Malinga joins Khulna; Sylhet take on Comilla

SAKEB SUBHAN from Sylhet



The Sylhet leg of the Bangladesh Premier League will be most important for the embattled Khulna Titans, who have lost all four of their matches so far and will be hoping to start a turnaround like the one Rajshahi Kings, their opponents today, seem to be staging.

Two wins in their last two matches have lifted Mehedi Hasan Miraz's Rajshahi to fifth in the table, and they will be looking to continue the upward graph in the first match of the Sylhet leg at 1:30 pm at the picturesque Sylhet International Stadium. In the second match of the day, home team Sylhet Sixers, placed just above Khulna with one win from three matches, will take on Comilla Victorians.

For fans of Bangladesh cricket in general, the match between Khulna and Rajshahi is one to keep an eye out for because these two

POINTS TABLE

Team	M	W	L	PT	NRR
Dhaka	4	4	0	8	2.775
Chittagong	4	3	1	6	0.111
Rangpur	5	2	3	4	0.527
Comilla	4	2	2	4	-0.574
Rajshahi	4	2	2	4	-1.068
Sylhet	3	1	2	2	-0.522
Khulna	4	0	4	0	-1.542

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the group stage, they will have to get their batting in order and the onus will be on the captain as well as other local names like Ariful Haque, Jahurul Islam and Nazmul Hossain Shanto.

One of the few boons for Khulna has been the starts provided by Paul Stirling and Junaid Siddique, who was looking at the positives while practising at the Sylhet District Stadium yesterday.

"We still have eight matches to come," the former national opener said. "There have been instances when a team bounced back after starting poorly. We have good players. It is very important to win one match, then the combination will seem better."

Both sides have batting problems with Rajshahi's highest score being 135 for eight and Khulna's 161 for five in a losing cause. Rajshahi, as seen when Mustafizur won the match against Rangpur by allowing just three runs in the last over, may have the edge in bowling but Malinga may have something to say about that, if he does play today. They have also beaten Khulna when the sides met on January 9.

Meanwhile, the pitch in Sylhet, according to Mustafizur's partner in crime Isuru Udana, should see higher scores than the slow ones in Dhaka.

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