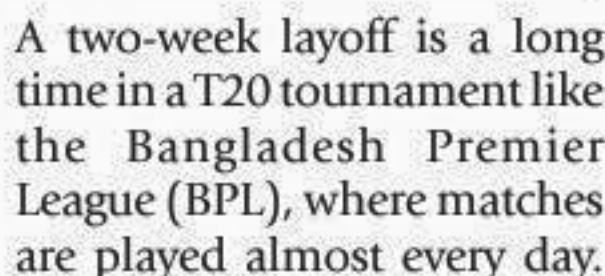




PHOTO: FIROZ AHMED

ABDULLAH AL MEHDI *from Chattogram*



His innings continued the streak of foreign players being the only ones to score tons this season. Laurie Evans, Alex Hales and Rilee Rossouw were the three others who attained this feat. Lewis's domination resulted in Comilla posting the second-highest total in BPL history and portrayed the steely determination needed to perform when the going gets tough. It was not easy for Lewis at the beginning and he limped off at the end but remained unbeaten on a magnificent 49-ball 109 -- his second BPL ton at the

COMILLA VICTORIANS v KHULNA TITANS
COMILLA: 237 for 5 in 20 overs (Lewis 109 not out, Imrul 39, Shamsur 28 not out; Mahmudullah 2-32, Brathwaite 2-42, Shoriful 1-53)
KHULNA: 157 all out in 18.5 overs (Taylor 50, Junaid 27; Wahab 3-14, Afridi 3-27, Perera 1-28)
Result: Comilla won by 80 runs.
Player-of-the-match: Evin Lewis.

It also raised questions why local batsmen, with more experience in these conditions, did not reach the magical mark of a T20 ton. Some have gotten close -- Tamim Iqbal, Lewis's opening partner, hit a vital 73 in this edition while Mushfiqur Rahim's 41-ball 75 took Chittagong Vikings to an impressive win in Dhaka. Yasir Ali too scored 78 against Rangpur Riders, who were also at the receiving end of the highest score by a local batsman -- Sabbir Rahman's 85.

Having suffered an injury scare after he jarred

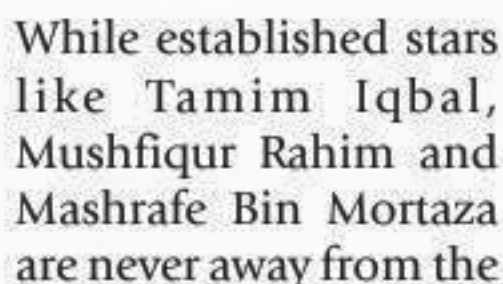
That kind of T20 instinct is yet to be shown by some of the local batsmen as quick runs are needed but so is awareness. Having gotten starts, they did not capitalise even though the talent is there. Of the 15 tons scored in six editions, only three were by Bangladeshis -- Shahriar Nafees, Mohammad Ashraful and Sabbir Rahman.

Lewis demonstrated what the next level is by drowning Khulna in sorrow in a 80-run win after a hat-trick from Pakistan paceman Wahab Riaz -- the second of this season and only the third in BPL--saw the Titans bundled out for 157 in 18.5 overs.

NAZMUL HASSAN

AB de Villiers, dubbed as Mr. 360, authored an unbeaten 50-ball 100 and established a record third-wicket 184-run partnership with Alex Hales (85) in Rangpur Riders' BPL match against Dhaka Dynamites in Chattogram yesterday. The Riders won the encounter by eight wickets.

PHOTO: STAR

SPORTS REPORTER *from Chattogram*

22-year-olds Afif Hossain for Sylhet Sixers and Yasir Ali in Chittagong Vikings have made steady progress during this year's Bangladesh Premier League and have authored classy knocks of their own. Both have played in local cricket and are not unknown entities in international cricket. Afif and Yasir were both part of the Bangladesh Under-19 World Cup squad and the former was the vice-captain in the 2016 U-19 Asia Cup.

This season, he has shown his ability with the bat, playing freely and giving his side momentum. Although yet to strike a fifty, Afif's 28-ball 45 -- one where he took pressure off a star like David Warner -- against Chittagong Vikings and his 49 against Khulna Titans both contributed to his side's cause.

Yasir started off as a burly young man, which made it difficult. He always had power-hitting ability but lacked the fitness to play long innings. Coming off the back of two BPL seasons where he warmed the bench, this time around he has grabbed his chance in place of the out-of-form Mohammad Ashraful in the Chittagong Vikings lineup. He created the impact needed in T20s with a 34-ball 41 against

"When I first met him [Yasir] in the academy he was just a young player in the Academy squad who probably needed to do some work in conditioning. He has some skills, he had to improve on his fielding and fitness and he has done that. Now see what happened -- his batting has now gone to another level," said Chittagong coach and head coach of BCB's performance unit Simon Helmot, who worked with both Afif and Yasir in age-group teams.



YASIR ALI

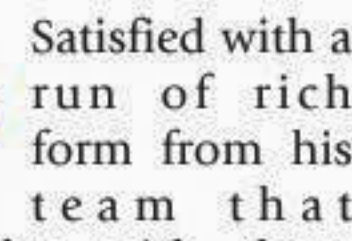


AFIF HOSSAIN

"We have a T20 world cup in Australia, October 2020. So this competition is very important for us because it gives us a look at the talent that is going to represent our country in a year's time."

The duo were a part of the same U-19 squad in the 2014 World Cup that featured the likes of Mustafizur Rahman, Liton Das and Mehedi Hasan Miraz. It would be hard to bet against these young Tigers reaching their former teammates' heights.

AGENCIES, Wellington



India, who clinically chased down a 247-run target in 43 overs, are runaway favourites for the 50-over global tournament after dominating series wins in Australia and New Zealand.

It put India 3-0 up and world player of the year Kohli said with the series wrapped up early it was time for him to step aside for the remaining two matches and the following Twenty20 series.

"I couldn't have asked for a better performance after the first two clinical performances and just the relent-

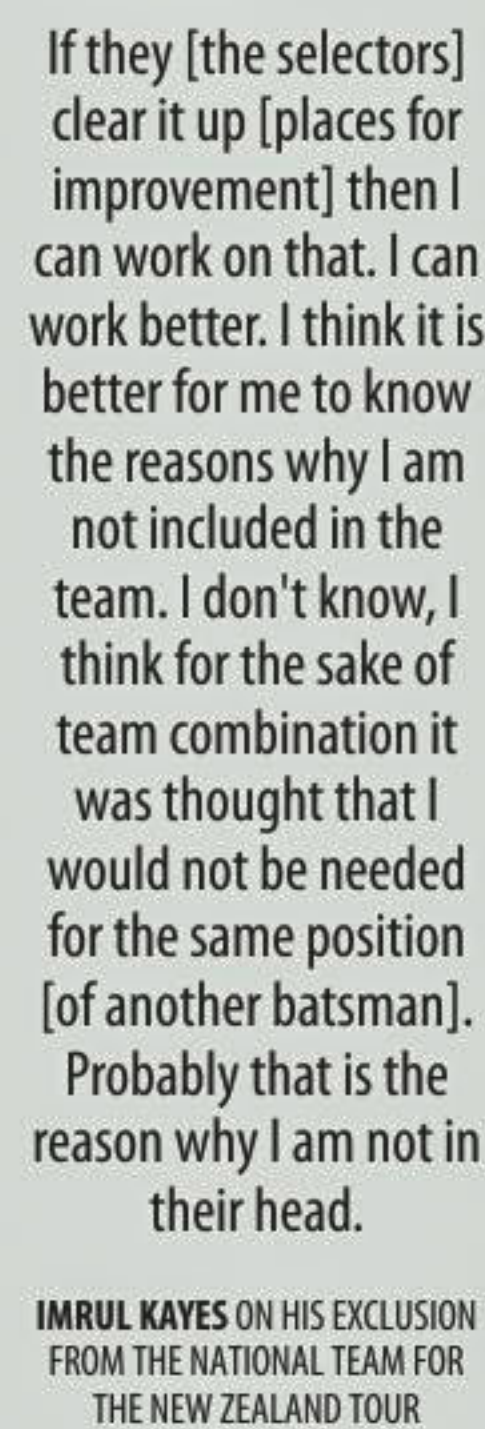
VIRAT KOHLI
INDIA CAPTAIN

Kohli's 60 off 74 deliveries and a 113-run partnership with Rohit Sharma formed the backbone of India's run chase. Sharma top-scored with 62 while Ambati Rayudu was unbeaten on 40 and



India captain Virat Kohli added 60 runs, laced with six boundaries and a six, as the side chased down New Zealand's 243-run total with seven wickets to spare in the third ODI at Mount Maunganui yesterday.

PHOTO: AFP



If they [the selectors] clear it up [places for improvement] then I can work on that. I can work better. I think it is better for me to know the reasons why I am not included in the team. I don't know, I think for the sake of team combination it was thought that I would not be needed for the same position [of another batsman]. Probably that is the reason why I am not in their head.

IMRUL KAYES ON HIS EXCLUSION FROM THE NATIONAL TEAM FOR THE NEW ZEALAND TOUR

AFP, New Delhi

India's Ambati Rayudu has been suspended from international bowling two weeks after being reported for a suspect action, the International Cricket Council said Monday.

The part-time spinner's action was flagged by match officials, citing concerns over its legality, a day after the first one-day international against Australia in Sydney on January 12.