



Young Bangladesh cricketers (From L-R) Liton Das, Mosaddek Hossain, Mohammad Mithun and team performance analyst Srinivasan Chandrasekaran are on their way to the Leicester City centre in an attempt to break the monotony of a rest day at the Leicester Hilton yesterday.

PHOTO: SAKEB SUBHAN

## Tigers enjoying the calm before the storm

SAKEB SUBHAN from Leicester



After a high-intensity, yet fun-filled, day of training on Monday, the Bangladesh team were in full rest mode yesterday at the Hilton Leicester, the hotels the Tigers are calling home during their six-day stay in England's East Midlands region.

The good mood that has permeated the 13 members of Bangladesh's 15-member World Cup squad -- skipper Mashrafe Bin Mortaza and Tamim Iqbal were granted a rest -- since they won their first multi-team event in Ireland last Friday, has persisted. There were 12 members of the squad in Leicester till Monday, and the 13th -- pacer Abu Jayed -- arrived yesterday at around noon from London, where he was granted a break to be with extended family.

Jayed, who took a five-wicket haul in only his second ODI in Ireland, was greeted warmly at the hotel lobby by Mahmudullah Riyad.

Mosaddek Hossain, Liton Das and Mohammad Mithun and team performance analyst Srinivasan Chandrasekaran were trying to break the tedium of a rest day at the hotel. The quartet were seen standing in front of the main gate waiting for a taxi to Leicester city centre, the liveliest destination of an otherwise sleepy city.

The Tigers may as well enjoy the downtime because, after a full training session today, they will depart tomorrow for Cardiff, where World Cup preparations will begin in earnest.

## Archer earns Eng call-up

AFP, London



Jofra Archer's late bid for an World Cup place was rewarded when the Sussex fast bowler was named in hosts England's 15-man squad for the tournament announced Tuesday.

Barbados-born Archer only became qualified for England in March and has played just three one-day internationals.

He edged out left-arm quick David Willey, a veteran of 46 ODIs, after both pacemen featured during England's 4-0 series win at home to Pakistan which concluded Sunday.

There was no place also in a squad, again captained by Eoin Morgan, for back-up spinner and batsman Joe Denly, with Hampshire slow left-armer Liam Dawson -- who did not feature against Pakistan -- recalled as cover for Adil Rashid, who is nursing a shoulder problem.

Both Denly and Willey were named in England's provisional squad, as was opener Alex Hales.

James Vince came in after England decided against selecting Hales following the Nottinghamshire batsman's ban for recreational drug use.

England reduced their qualification period from seven years to three, a move they insisted was solely to bring them into line with the rest of the world rather than advance the selection of paceman Archer -- whose father is English.

Even though Willey offered a different angle of attack as the only left-arm quick in contention, Archer's ability to bowl at 90 mph -- and his variety of slower balls -- has seen him get the nod.

Willey, who has helped England climb to the top of the ODI rankings following

their first-round exit at the 2015 World Cup, was among those who questioned the prospect of Archer playing for England at this year's edition when the Sussex quick



I'd quite like to get Virat Kohli out because I wasn't able to in the IPL. Chris Gayle as well.

JOFRA ARCHER  
ENGLAND ALL-ROUNDER

became eligible in March.

"It's a group of players that have been together for three or four years that have got us to number one," said Willey, the son of former England batsman Peter Willey.

**Squad:** Eoin Morgan (capt), Moeen Ali, Jofra Archer, Jonny Bairstow, Jos Buttler (wkt), Tom Curran, Liam Dawson, Liam Plunkett, Adil Rashid, Joe Root, Jason Roy, Ben Stokes, James Vince, Chris Woakes, Mark Wood.

## 'Can't take Tigers lightly'

AGENCIES, New Delhi

Bangladesh led by Mashrafe Bin Mortaza is brimming with confidence following a tri-nation series victory recently in Ireland as the other team included West Indies.

Former Team India leg-spinner and coach Anil Kumble believes the Tigers have done significantly well in the recent past. He added the distinct teams should not consider Bangladesh as an easy option during the fast-approaching ICC World Cup.

Indeed, the triumph has an impact as they have had failed in six attempts to win the multi-team event.

"You can't take Bangladesh lightly anymore. They have done really well over the last few years," CricketNext quoted Kumble, as saying.

Kumble has heaped praise on fast bowler Mashrafe. He added the senior Bangladesh campaigner has often taken the decision which benefited Bangladesh.

"Mashrafe is a very good leader. He has rallied around the team and takes the right decisions. When he will be captaining, one will see a different Bangladesh team," he added.

## Kohli expects pressure to curb run-fest at World Cup

AFP, Mumbai



Cricket fans should expect a run bonanza at the ICC World Cup in England and Wales starting this month, India captain Virat Kohli

said Tuesday.

Ahead of India's departure for the tournament, Kohli said local seaming conditions would likely favour batsmen.

"In ICC tournaments the pitches are going to be very good and it's summer in the UK. We expect high-scoring games," Kohli told a press conference in Mumbai.

England beat Pakistan 4-0 in a five-match warmup series with nearly every game seeing innings of 350 plus on grounds that will be used for the World Cup.

Kohli insisted, however, that World Cup pressure will bring down the totals.

"A bilateral series compared to a World Cup is very different, so you might see lot of 260-270 kind of games and teams successfully defending it because of the pressure factor," said the skipper of India -- one the favourites alongside England and Australia.

Two-time winners India, who start against South Africa in Southampton on June 5, feel they have a strong

chance with a potent pace bowling attack led by Jasprit Bumrah.

"We go into the World Cup feeling a very balanced and strong side. You saw in the IPL, all the players that are in the squad are in great form and playing really well," said Kohli.

India have some worries over their spinners Kuldeep Yadav and Yuzvendra Chahal, who were less impressive in the IPL.

Chahal claimed 18 wickets for Kohli's Royal Challengers Bangalore,

"He has time to reflect and correct things and come into the World Cup even stronger. We know the skill set he possesses along with Chahal. They are two pillars of our bowling line-up."

The 10-team World Cup returns to a round-robin format and Kohli said consistency was the only way to make the semi-finals.

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VIRAT KOHLI  
INDIA CAPTAIN



but Yadav struggled with his left-arm wrist spin for Kolkata Knight Riders.

"In hindsight if you look at it, like Kuldeep, who has had so much success, it's important to see a period where things don't go your way. And I am glad it happened during the IPL, rather than the World Cup," said Kohli.

"That's why it's the World Cup, the most important tournament in the world," said Kohli, who compared the "intensity" to competing in football's English Premier League or Spain's La Liga.

England launch the tournament against South Africa at the Oval in London on May 30.

## 'Need to play their best'

In the lead-up to the 2019 World Cup, we take a look back on World Cups past through the eyes of Bangladesh's former World Cup stars. Habibul Bashar played his first World Cup for Bangladesh in 2003 and later led the team in the 2007 World Cup. Bangladesh's first ever Test triumph came under his stewardship back in 2005 against Zimbabwe. The former Bangladesh skipper, who captained Bangladesh in 18 Tests and 69 ODIs, shared some of his World Cup memories in an interview with The Daily Star's Nabil Yasmin.



TIGERS'  
WORLD CUP  
STRIPES

The Daily Star (TDS): Tell us something about the 2007 World Cup, where you captained Bangladesh.

Habibul Bashar (HB): Captaincy was nothing new for me at that time, but to lead your country in a World Cup is a very different thing. I would say that playing in a World Cup is a great honour and to be captain of the team is a greater honour in my opinion. The 2007 World Cup is the biggest highlight of my career.

TDS: You've observed the Bangladesh team very closely as a player and now as a national selector. Can you tell us how the team has changed overall over the years?

HB: Back in 1992, when Pakistan won the World Cup, I still remember watching the final of that World Cup at a friend's place with some of my cricketer friends. Even at that time, we never thought we would feature in a World Cup someday. We never even discussed Bangladesh's chances of playing in a World Cup. From never even thinking about it, we actually went on to play our maiden World Cup in 1999. However, at that time for us, participating

in a World Cup was a very big thing. And then we participated in the ICC 2000 Championship Trophy, where we played with the likes of India's Rahul Dravid. After that, we dreamt of someday reaching the same level as India -- one of the big names in cricket. Now the reality is that Bangladesh have actually reached that level where they can fearlessly compete with any team in the world. I am very happy that what I once dreamt of has come true and it feels great to see my team in this position while I have been acting as one of the national selectors.

TDS: Would you relate the 2007 World Cup achievements to the emergence of the Big Five -- Tamim Iqbal, Mushfiqur Rahim, Mashrafe Bin Mortaza, Mahmudullah Riyad and Shakib Al Hasan?

HB: Actually Mashrafe [Bin Mortaza] had started playing in 2000 and he has been one of the top bowlers since then. In 2007 World Cup, Shakib [Al Hasan], Tamim [Iqbal] and Mushfiqur [Rahim] were raw and young talents in the team, which was much needed at that time. But the thing is that they did not get a chance in the team just because they were young but also due to their performances. If any group of players play for a long time then they naturally get better and start playing well. If you see the Australia team that played from 2003 to 2007, you can see that almost the same players played for the team in every match during that period with only few changes. And this can only happen if the



players perform consistently. So these five players have actually performed well over the years and of course they have a huge impact on taking Bangladesh where they are today in world cricket.

TDS: You played in the 2003 and 2007 World Cups for Bangladesh. What is your best World Cup memory?

HB: The 2003 World Cup was not very

good for us. Whenever I think about that World Cup, I can only recall bad memories. However, there are lots of sweet memories of the 2007 World Cup. Starting from defeating New Zealand in a practice match to winning against India and also defeating South Africa in the second round, everything was memorable. I think that, in that World Cup, most of our second round matches were in Barbados. The pitches in Barbados are usually very fast and bouncy and had our fixtures been on any other island, then I think we could have had even more success.

TDS: What do you think will be the biggest challenge for Bangladesh in the upcoming World Cup in England?

HB: In this World Cup, not only Bangladesh but all the teams participating in it will have to play their best cricket according to their ability and every team will have equal opportunities due to the format. Now if you look at all the teams then you will notice that there isn't much difference between the sides. This time, there are at least four to five teams who possess the ability to lift the trophy while the remaining teams are not very far away from these teams in terms of strength or ability. So since there is very less difference between the sides, the competition has intensified this time. Bangladesh need to play very good cricket and all the players need to play their best and only then we can hope for something good.



## Must be prepared for anything: Taylor

ICC

Ross Taylor, the New Zealand middle-order batsman, has said that being prepared for all conditions would be important for teams at the upcoming ICC World Cup.

Reflecting on the much-talked about batting-friendly conditions in England, saying that there weren't too many big scores then, adding that it's the mindset that matters.

"You don't have to go too far back to the Champions Trophy, when a lot of people talked about big scores and there weren't a lot at that tournament," he said. "You've just got to be flexible, there will be times when the bowlers dominate and the batters will dominate as well. You've got to be prepared for anything and adapt accordingly."

## I've returned stronger, faster and fitter: Shami

ICC

Mohammed Shami, the India fast bowler, is confident of once again excelling at the ICC World Cup, when the 2019 edition of the tournament gets underway on May 30.

Shami was one of the driving forces behind India's excellent run to the semifinal of the previous edition, in 2015, in Australia and New Zealand.

He has since made a strong comeback, with 19 wickets in 11 matches, at an average of 26.42.

"I worked on my game during the time I was away from the field and didn't lose focus of my aim: to get back into the national reckoning," he told IANS. "I have returned stronger, faster and fitter."