



e-mail: sports@thecricketstar.net
DHAKA SUNDAY JUNE 2, 2019, JAISHTHA 19, 1426 BS

CITY



Barong
Dairy

cheese

খবর যেটোই হোক
আত্ম চেইরি কিজের সাথে অনুভূতি একটা হি

উমুমময়ম্য...



A strength that comes from within

SAKEB SUBHAN from London

That Mashrafe Bin Mortaza is a special captain is known to all in Bangladesh, but yesterday, during the pre-match press conference ahead of today's World Cup opener against South Africa, the wider world caught a glimpse of why the entire team swears by the battling cricketer and has united under him like no other.

He spent much of the presser fielding questions from the Bangladeshi reporters, and he did his best to douse the flames of expectation that has raged in the build-up to the World Cup. Near the end of the press conference, a question was asked in English about what has driven the team's rise in performances over the last four years -- the expectations from the fans or the expectations within the team.

"We don't have to think about what's going on outside. It's more important to have our own belief," said Mashrafe at the end of a marathon presser. "I'll give you an example. When Mustafizur [Rahman] came in and bowled seriously, people thought that that bowler was something else, but when he got injured everyone doubted him."

"As a team we never doubt ourselves. We always backed Mustafizur -- we knew he is our best bowler and that he can change game. That is more important -- what we are thinking ourselves. Because people do not think about the problems; people only think about winning or

individual performance; which does not help us a lot.

"What helps us is the bond we have had over the last four years and the last month. We know how things have been going, we've been helping each other and we're going the same way, we don't want to change. It is a World Cup match, and again I say it's another international match tomorrow. If anyone gets five wickets, if anyone gets a hundred, when we play on June 5 against New Zealand, it's another international match. We have to look at it very simply and make sure what our family, our team is giving each other, that is more important."

Earlier in the press conference, Mashrafe took a lot of time to ensure that his team do not go out today with the burden of expectations, joking that some back home are thinking that they have already won the World Cup or reached the semifinals.

"I think it was less last time," said Mashrafe, responding to a question about whether there was more pressure during the 2015 World Cup, which saw Bangladesh reach their maiden quarterfinal. "I think that starting from you [the media], everyone is at a level of expectation. Maybe our players are also expecting, which is good -- expectation often brings the best out in players. I just don't want it to create pressure. I would hope that the players stay out of these things and focus on their basic jobs."

Of course, it can be said that Mashrafe is the one under the most pressure because, as captain, he is the one charged with making millions of dreams come true. His strength, as well as the team's, comes from knowing that it is the 'family' members who have to look after themselves and, win or lose today or on June 5, the team will be okay as long as they hold on to that.



For all the talk about Bangladesh's vaunted Big Five, the Tigers will still need their youngsters -- including the pace-bowling duo Mohammad Saifuddin (L) and Mustafizur Rahman (C) and all-rounder Mosaddek Hossain -- to step up if they are to get off to a winning start in the World Cup when they begin their campaign against South Africa today.

PHOTO: BCB

FACTS



has however taken the same number of wickets against South Africa but in 13 matches -- seven more than Rubel.

Mustafizur Rahman's economy rate of 3.20 against South Africa is the best among the players in the current World Cup squad for Bangladesh.

South Africa's Kagiso Rabada has scalped 13 wickets against Bangladesh in six matches. He remains as the highest wicket taker among the players featuring in both teams' current World Cup squads.

Kagiso Rabada's six for 16 against Bangladesh back in 2015 in Mirpur is the best bowling figure by a South African against the Tigers.

Shakib Al Hasan amassed 322 runs in the 13 matches he played against South Africa. This remains as the highest number of runs scored by a Bangladeshi against the Proteas.

Soumya Sarkar's average of 71 runs is the highest by any Bangladeshi against South Africa.

Mushfiqur Rahim became the only Bangladeshi to score a hundred against South Africa when he smashed an unbeaten 110 against Faf du Plessis' side in 2017 at the Diamond Oval in Kimberley.

Shakib Al Hasan is just one wicket shy of achieving a feat of scoring 5000 runs and scalping 250 wickets in ODIs. Only four players -- Abdul Razzaq (234 matches), Jacques Kallis (296 matches), Shahid Afridi (273 matches) and Sanath Jayasuriya (304 matches) -- have achieved this 'double' but if the number one allrounder, who has already scored 5717 runs in ODIs, takes a wicket today, then he will reach the feat in just 199 matches -- faster than any of the other four players.

Rubel Hossain is the highest wicket taker for Bangladesh against South Africa in ODIs. The right-arm quick took 12 wickets in the six matches he played against the Proteas. Shakib Al Hasan

INFO ZONE

HEAD TO HEAD IN WORLD CUP

BANGLADESH	SOUTH AFRICA
1	2
2	1
0	0
0	0

HEAD TO HEAD IN ODIs

BANGLADESH	SOUTH AFRICA
3	17
17	3
0	0
0	0

LAST MEETING

October 22 2017 at Buffalo Park in East London. South Africa won by 200 runs.

KEY PLAYERS



BANGLADESH

Mustafizur Rahman

22.27	Bat Avg	24.29
27.3	Bat Strike Rate	31.3
4.88	Econ	4.64
6/43	BBM	7/45
83	wickets	164
0/50	Last Match	2/61

SOUTH AFRICA

Imran Tahir

Bat Avg	24.29
Bat Strike Rate	31.3
Econ	4.64
BBM	7/45
wickets	164
Last Match	2/61

Let's stick to our strengths: Mash

SPORTS REPORTER from London

To do as Romans do when in Rome may be the received wisdom, but Bangladeshi skipper Mashrafe Bin Mortaza insisted that doing as Englishmen do in England is not the way to success in their World Cup campaign, which they will kick off today with a match against South Africa at The Oval. Mashrafe had a simple outlook: be it in batting, bowling or team selection, Bangladesh would have to march to the beat of their own drum.

Top-ranked England have led the way in pushing run boundaries and in recent summers, and matches in England have regularly produced totals in excess of 350. In the first four World Cup matches so far, South Africa were shot out for 207, Pakistan for 105, Sri Lanka for 136 and Afghanistan for 207. Mashrafe opined that it was the ghost of scorecards past that drove such batting failures and wanted his team to follow the formula they have been adhering to at home and abroad over a largely successful four years.

"Every team is thinking that they can't win here if they don't score 350. With that mentality, they are charging from the start, and they lose wickets," Mashrafe said. "So for us it is important not to lose early wickets. We have to fight with what we can do, by sticking to a plan that we had success with in Bangladesh. If we just look at the wicket, charge early and lose wickets in fear of not scoring big runs -- I don't think there is a need to take that pressure. We have to make sure that we create

partnerships, that the one who gets set is able to play the maximum overs."

For Mashrafe, homegrown solutions extend to the bowling as well.

"The wicket here won't play like in Bangladesh; it won't break as much or become as slow. If there is help it will be minimal, but that won't mean that they [spinners] will get three-four wickets; if they do then that would be very good. The important thing is to bowl well as a group with the five or six bowlers that we have, which is difficult because one bowler can be expensive -- that's part of the game. But if we can hold on to our positions and create pressure, maybe we will get breakthroughs -- normally that is our strength. I don't think we can do well in this tournament if we stray outside our area of strength."

With even bench players performing in the victorious tri-series campaign in Ireland, there are calls for some last-minute inclusions, but Mashrafe was having none of that.

"Players have played well after getting a chance, but that doesn't mean that you have to throw your plans out the window. There is no sense unsettling the team. It is important to create the eleven according to the plans that we had. One of our problems is that we want to push whoever did well into the eleven without considering the position. It is important to maintain the mindset with which we came. If those we were thinking of for the first eleven are in form, I don't think there is much to think about."

Amla doubtful

AGENCIES, London

Hashim Amla is a doubt for South Africa's Cricket World Cup clash against Bangladesh on Sunday.

The 36-year-old suffered a sickening blow to the grille of his helmet when he was late on a venomous Jofra Archer bouncer.

The incident happened in the fourth over of South Africa's run chase against tournament hosts England when Amla was 5 not out.

He left the field immediately, underwent a series of concussion tests, and returned in the 32nd over when the Proteas were 167/6 and already out of the match.

Amla was eventually out for 12.

News out of the Proteas camp on Saturday, where Amla was nowhere to be seen, was that a decision on his availability will only be taken on Sunday ahead of the toss.

Amla is stationed at the team hotel, where he is working through the post-concussion procedures with team doctor Mohammed Moosajee.

It is standard procedure, but it is looking unlikely that Amla will play.

If he does miss out, as expected, then David Miller will almost certainly come into the side and Aiden Markram will move to the top of the order.

In other fitness news, Dale Steyn was back bowling in the nets on Friday as he continues to recover from a shoulder injury.

He will almost certainly remain unavailable for Sunday's match, while the June 5 clash against India in Southampton is the date Proteas management are targeting for his return.



MR EFFICIENT



Matt Henry has been hailed as one of the biggest prospects in the New Zealand bowling department and the 27-year-old made good on that tag by showing a glimpse of his talent in their tournament opener against Sri Lanka. The right-arm seamer dismissed the top three Sri Lankan batsman -- Lahiru Thirimanne, Kusal Perera and Kusal Perera up front -- and ended with figures of three for 29 from his seven overs. Sri Lanka were unable to recover from the early damage and were eventually all out on just 136.

PHOTO: STAR