



India captain Virat Kohli (L) will be looking to lead his side when they start their World Cup campaign on Wednesday. However, the star batsman will be well aware that they will be up against a hungry South Africa, who -- after two losses to start their campaign -- will be desperate for a win.

PHOTO: AFP

## Faf turning to 'Plan B' 'No margin for error'

REUTERS, London

South Africa need a new strategy after an abysmal start to the World Cup because 'Plan A' has already been ruined by injuries to their pace attack, captain Faf du Plessis has said.

Veteran quick Dale Steyn missed the first two matches with a shoulder injury and South Africa were duly thumped by hosts England in their tournament opener before losing to unfancied Bangladesh at the Oval on Sunday.

They suffered another serious setback against Bangladesh when pace bowler Lungi Ngidi went off with a hamstring injury early on and du Plessis said South Africa would only cope if they changed tactics in their remaining games.

"I'm extremely disappointed," the 34-year-old told reporters. "Our plan in both the England game and (the Bangladesh) game was to try and make sure we target them with aggressive bowling."

"Plan A is gone because Plan A was those main bowlers playing together and they haven't played a game together on this tour."

"So now we have to really look at what we can do to try to be effective -- is it playing all-rounders together, do we play two spinners? Now it's reshuffling all our cards to

see how best we can deal with it."

Steyn is expected to be fit for Wednesday's game against India and du Plessis said every member of the squad needed to start living up to their potential.

"I have to believe that we can still win the World Cup," he added. "I won't be South African if I said no."

"Every single player in our dressing room is not playing to their full potential and that's why we're not putting the performances in. As soon as that starts happening, then those things will change. We're playing a strong team in India, and as a team, we know we're not good enough at the moment and we have to turn it around."

Meanwhile, pacer Andile Phehlukwayo said South Africa's dismal start to the World Cup does not have to be fatal to their hopes of winning the tournament.

"There have been some bad days in my career. I've learned, and the team has learned, that it is not the end of the world," Phehlukwayo told reporters.

"We can always bounce back. We are a team that bounces back from situations and we will definitely do it again."

"We haven't had a good start but this is a big tournament and anyone can beat anyone on any given day," he concluded.

### THE EXPERT OPINION

FROM JACQUES KALLIS

It's disappointing and frustrating and there is lots of pressure on the next game, otherwise the tournament could be over before it's really started for South Africa.

The good news is we have another game in just three days, so South Africa can't dwell on this, they will just have move on.

It doesn't get any easier though against India but it's their first game and our third, so maybe that could give us the edge we need.

They've not played for a week and maybe they'll be some first game nerves, where as we are settled. Strange things happen in this sport and if we can get a win then I think we can go on a streak and we are still good enough to be a contender.

There will be no margin for error though. I think you'll need six wins, maybe five with a really good run rate, to finish in the top four, so South Africa almost need to win every game they will play.

I think you've got to give credit



to Bangladesh for the way they performed, it's amazing how far they've come as a team in a very short space of time and the way they batted was particularly impressive.

Hindsight is a wonderful thing, but I understand what Faf du Plessis was doing with the toss and playing the extra pace bowler. However, the wicket just didn't allow it and perhaps he stuck with the tactics a bit too long and should have started

bowling a little fuller and straighter.

Bangladesh got all their partnerships going and once you get over 300 then it always become a tough chase, letting them score 50 or so runs in the final four overs really didn't help either and ultimately proved the difference.

It's great having a game plan but you need to have a back-up when it's not working. I felt we were one step behind the entire match and just tactically a bit off. We need to be a bit smarter.

Bangladesh took it on and were aggressive and the wicket really suited their bowling too. I was really impressed by Shakib Al Hasan, he's a seriously talented and clever cricketer.

The injury to Lungi Ngidi certainly didn't help Faf, he's a world-class player and a big part of our attack. You've got to play Dale Steyn against India now, and hopefully he is close to fitness.

We've got to play all our cards and we can't afford anymore silly mistakes at vital stages - these are the best sides in the world and they'll always punish you.

## Destabilized SL seek resurgence

### INFO ZONE

#### HEAD TO HEAD IN WORLD CUP

AFGHANISTAN

0	WIN	1
1	LOSS	0
0	TIE	0
0	NR	0

SRI LANKA

ICC

After being comprehensively beaten on all three fronts in their opening game against New Zealand, Sri Lanka will hope for a much improved performance against dark horses Afghanistan on Tuesday.

Sri Lanka did not have the ideal start to their ICC World Cup 2019 campaign, as they lost by 10 wickets to New Zealand.

None of the batsmen could support captain Dimuth Karunaratne, who carried his bat with an unbeaten 52, as Sri Lanka folded for 136.

Their bowlers, despite having very little to play with, also proved ineffective, finishing wicketless as New Zealand sealed the chase in 16 overs.

Sri Lanka's batting unit has now failed to last the full 50 overs on two separate occasions, including once in the warm-ups, and will have to pull itself up against a well-rounded Afghanistan attack.

Likewise, Karunaratne will expect his fast bowlers to exploit the conditions, and the opposition's weakness against the moving white ball early in the innings.

Afghanistan might've gone down to Australia in their opening game in Bristol, but will back themselves to bounce back against Sri Lanka. Their openers both bagged ducks against Australia, but have shown match-winning performances in the past.

Afghanistan were shored up by lower order contributions against Australia, which was a great positive, but skipper Gulbadin Naib would hope someone from the top order can hold the innings together.

On the bowling front, Hamid Hasan, who produced a disciplined opening spell against Australia, will relish the overcast conditions.

"We have to say the first two games are very crucial to give all the players and the team a boost," said 36-year-old Mendis. "We hope we can pull something out of the bag in the next games. The format is good. For all the teams to play each other is great and it gives us lots of chances to get the five wins you need to get to the semifinals."

"As a batting group, we need to at least put scores of 270, 280 on the board. Hopefully the wickets dry up and our pace and spin variation come into play."

"It's all about our confidence and a few batsmen can get in and play an anchor role, we'll be able to bat around them and play well."

His Afghan counterpart, Gulbadin Naib, was hoping for rain. Tomorrow we just see what's the weather. If we can reduce the overs it will be much better for us."

#### LAST MEETING

September 17, 2018 at Sheikh Zayed Stadium in Abu Dhabi. Afghanistan won by 91 runs.

KEY PLAYERS



AFGHANISTAN

Rahmat Shah	Bat Avg	24.54
36.5	50s	3
14	100s	0
4	HS	77
114	Last Match	52

SRI LANKA

Dimuth Karunaratne	Bat Avg	24.54
36.5	50s	3
14	100s	0
4	HS	77
114	Last Match	52

### MR EFFICIENT

## 'Stupid crowds fuel him'

AGENCIES, London

David Warner's manager says English crowds are "stupid" to jeer the Australian batsman and has defended a plan for the opener to take a vow of silence until he scores a century against a major country.

Warner was heckled while he batted in his man-of-the-match effort in Australia's opening Cricket World Cup win over Afghanistan in Bristol, the boos becoming more pronounced when he reached 50.

The jeering escalated and became more consistent when Steve Smith joined him at the crease, the first time the pair had batted together in a meaningful match since completing their year-long bans for the ball-tampering scandal last year.

James Erskine, a prominent player manager who has also looked after Tiger Woods, Shane Warne and Michael Parkinson, said hostile crowds would only fuel Warner through the Word Cup and the Ashes.

"I am English. Where the Poms are



Babar Azam has been a revolution for Pakistan over the past two years or so as the stylish right hander has remained a consistent fixture in the batting line-up. Babar was the top scorer with 22 runs against West Indies in their opening World Cup fixture, where Pakistan were bundled out for just 105. The 24-year-old once again stood firm and scored a 66-ball 63, laced with four boundaries and a six, which guided Pakistan to a massive 348-run total against England in their second World Cup match yesterday.



David Warner is only fuelled by hostile crowds, believes his manager and he showed that with an 89 to silence the boo boys in Australia's World Cup opener.