

Tigers given grand reception

SPORTS REPORTER from London

Less than 24 hours after a hard-fought loss to New Zealand at The Oval, the Bangladesh High Commission did their best to ensure that the national team's spirits were lifted sufficiently for tomorrow's World Cup match against hosts England at the Cardiff Wales Stadium by welcoming the team in a ceremony at The National Assembly for Wales on Thursday evening.

At around 6:20pm on a sunlit evening, the sharply dressed Bangladesh players arrived at the picturesque Cardiff Bay where the National Assembly is located. Bangladesh's high commissioner to the United Kingdom Saida Muna Tasneem hosted the event, where Bangladesh's State Minister for Foreign Affairs Md Shahriar Alam was the guest of honour.

Julie Morgan AM, deputy minister for health and social services, Cardiff North, Fergus Auld, representative of UK foreign and commonwealth office, Noim Uddin Riaz, BCC UK president, and Eluned Morgan, minister for international relations and the Welsh language, also spoke at the ceremony. The overarching theme of the speakers was a celebration of the friendship between Bangladesh and Wales, as well as the United Kingdom.

In the absence of Bangladesh Cricket Board (BCB) president Nazmul Hassan -- who had to leave the UK yesterday because of an emergency -- Bangladesh team manager Khaled Mahmud spoke at the event, as did skipper Mashrafe Bin Mortaza,

who talked about having good memories of the region as Bangladesh had won both their matches here, in 2005 against Australia and then against New Zealand in the 2017 Champions Trophy.

Before the speeches, the Tigers were treated to a traditional Bangladeshi dance performance and as the event ended,

a video package of Bangladesh's best moments on the field of cricket were played, accompanied by a live sitar and tabla performance.

Shahriar Alam also talked about the upcoming World Cup for parliamentarians, in which eight countries will participate from July 8 to 15. With Mashrafe now an

elected member of parliament -- which the high commissioner mentioned in her speech -- the state minister for foreign affairs said that he hoped that the Bangladesh skipper would not be available for the tournament, as it would mean that Bangladesh would have exited before the semifinals.



After a defeat to New Zealand had somewhat dampened the mood in the Bangladesh camp, the Tigers were picked up by a reception hosted by Bangladesh's high commissioner to the UK, Saida Muna Tasneem, on Thursday.

PHOTO: SAKIB SUBHAN

FACTS

Tamim Iqbal has scored 469 runs -- the most by any player among the either team's current World Cup squad -- in the 13 matches he played against England. Tamim's 128 back in 2017 is also the highest individual score by any Bangladeshi player against the hosts.

Mushfiqur Rahim has an average of 44.10 against England. This is the highest by any batsmen in Bangladesh's World Cup squad.

Skipper Mashrafe Bin Mortaza has scalped the most wickets against England. He has taken 16 wickets in the 13 matches against England. His four for 29 in 8.4 overs in 2016 in Mirpur still remain the best bowling figures in an innings among all players in either side's current World Cup squad.

Adil Rashid is England's highest wicket-taker against Bangladesh. He has scalped 10 wickets in three matches against the Tigers.

England skipper Eoin Morgan has scored 342 runs in the nine games he has played against the Tigers. It is the highest among the English players that are currently playing in the World Cup squad.

INFO ZONE

HEAD TO HEAD IN WORLD CUP

BANGLADESH	ENGLAND
2	WIN 1
1	LOST 2
0	TIE 0
0	NR 0

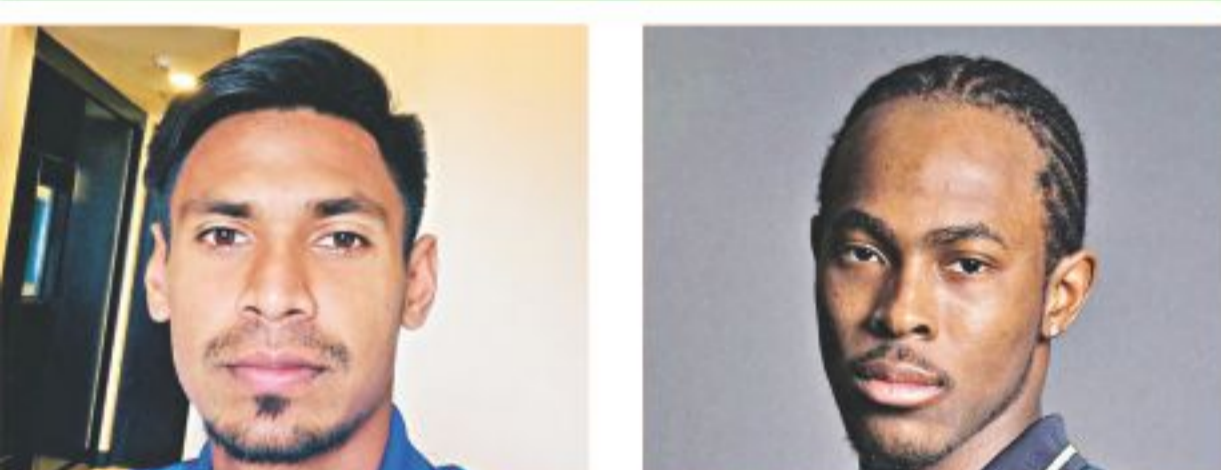
HEAD TO HEAD IN ODIS

BANGLADESH	ENGLAND
4	WIN 16
16	LOST 4
0	TIE 0
0	NR 0

LAST MEETING

June 1 2017 at Kennington Oval in London
England won by 8 wickets (with 16 balls remaining)

KEY PLAYERS



BANGLADESH	ENGLAND
Mustafizur Rahman	Jofra Archer
22.83	Bowl Avg 35.66
27.6	Bowl Strike rate 39.00
4.96	Econ 5.48
6/43	BBM 3/27
0*, 0/48	Last Match 0/79, 1

We're ready for Afghan spin, says Taylor

AFP, Taunton

Ross Taylor insists New Zealand are ready for a trial by spin against Afghanistan on Saturday as they look to keep their winning momentum going in the World Cup.

The Kiwis edged out Bangladesh by two wickets on Wednesday, with Taylor hitting 82 in his team's tense chase at the Oval to record their second straight win in as many matches.

New Zealand, who were finalists in the 2015 edition, have relied on their paceman to get favourable results, but Taylor believes tackling spin will be key against the Asian minnows at Taunton.

"I think against Afghanistan, they have a lot of spin there, so something to factor in," said Taylor, who has recorded three 40 plus scores in his last four ODI innings.

"But two from two, that was what we wanted to do and we were able to do it."

While Taylor and skipper Kane Williamson got the runs during their 105-run partnership in London, it was their pace attack led by Matt Henry that ran through the Bangladesh batting.

Henry claimed four wickets to take his tally

to seven in two games.

He is well supported by Trent Boult and Lockie Ferguson, who can clock speeds up to 96 mph.

Taylor believes that Ferguson, with his express pace, is the key man for the Black Caps.

"Lockie, he just gives you that X-factor. Obviously our fastest bowler. He is going to be a key factor for us if we're going to feature in



this tournament," said Taylor.

"I think he's creating pressure for the guy at the other end (to take wickets)," he added.

Ferguson's pace partner Henry said that Afghanistan are a "dangerous side" and New Zealand will treat them with "utmost respect".

Afghanistan, who are playing just their second 50-over World Cup, have lost their two

games in the tournament so far but not without a fight.

Leg-spinner Rashid Khan leads the charge with Mohammed Nabi, who returned figures of 4-30 with his off spin in their previous loss against Sri Lanka.

But it's their batting that has let them down as they were dismissed for 152 in their revised chase of 187 in a rain-hit game Cardiff on Tuesday.

"We need some improvement in the batting, we need more partnerships," Afghanistan skipper Gulbadin Naib said after the Sri Lanka loss.

Afghanistan medium-pace bowler Mirwais Ashraf, who was part of the team's campaign in the previous World Cup, said the senior batsmen need to step up or give way to youngsters.

"We've seen the same things play out in both of the matches so far. There have been too many mistakes and some players aren't batting very responsibly," he said.

"I think it's time to give a chance to some of the other seamers and batsmen in the squad now as we look to turn things around, starting with the game against New Zealand."

Adam Zampa reprimanded for abuse

AGENCIES, London

Leg-spinner Adam Zampa has earned a slap on the wrist from the ICC after a code of conduct breach was levelled against him in Australia's victory over West Indies on Thursday.

Zampa was charged with using "audible obscenity" while bowling during a tense period of the Windies' run chase at Trent Bridge.

He admitted the offence, meaning there was no need for a formal hearing, and the ICC issued him with one demerit point. Players are banned when they reach four or more demerit points within a 24-month period.

Zampa took 1-58 from 10 overs. The ICC confirmed the incident took place at the end of the 29th over. Having broken through for the key wicket of Nicholas Pooran for 40, Zampa endured a frustrating few overs as Australia pressed for another decisive breakthrough.

The 27-year-old had an lbw shout against Shai Hope turned down before near-misses from both Hope and Shimron Hetmyer. Hetmyer and Jason Holder then hit him for consecutive fours as he switched bowling ends in the lead-in to the outburst.



Ahead of training yesterday, some of the players of the England team, including all-rounder Ben Stokes and bowlers Jofra Archer and Mark Wood, helped run a coaching clinic for Cricket for Good -- the ICC's global community outreach programme. Here, Stokes keeps wickets and comments on a little girl's impressive batting technique.

PHOTO: JEFFREY MUMFORD

MR EFFICIENT



Australia left-arm fast bowler Mitchell Starc devastated West Indies' innings in defence of their 288-run total. The tall pacer remained instrumental for the Aussies, removing big man Chris Gayle cheaply before going on to decimate West Indies' middle and lower order. He registering his sixth five-wicket haul in ODIs in the process, ending with figures of five for 46 from his ten overs, which included a maiden. It was also the first five-for in the ongoing ICC Cricket World Cup.