



Plans chalked out on Shakib's return

SPORTS REPORTER



Following a well-deserved break after completing an outstanding World Cup campaign, star all-rounder Shakib Al Hasan joined the Tigers' ongoing training camp at the Sher-e-Bangla National Stadium in Mirpur yesterday.

The Test and T20I skipper, who returned from the United States at midnight, immediately joined the skills camp and was greeted by teammates. Shakib spent some time working on his fitness and later batted in the nets.

The Bangladesh team's new head coach Russell Domingo and new bowling coach Charl Langeveldt were also present, having overseen the camp since August 19 ahead of the one-off Test against Afghanistan scheduled for next month.

Bangladesh Cricket Board (BCB) cricket operations committee chairman Akram Khan sat in a meeting with selectors, the coach and captain yesterday and informed that it was a fruitful meeting.

"There have been a lot of changes in our coaching staff since the World Cup so we spoke to the captain, coach and selectors today [Saturday]. We also discussed the home series next month -- what the

strengths of the side would be and the conditions. We also chalked out our plans," Akram told reporters yesterday.

According to Akram, the emphasis of the meeting was about doing well not just at home, but abroad as well. The former captain also expressed satisfaction over the plans made by Domingo.

"We have pressed the issue of doing well both at home and away whereas previously we only emphasised on playing well at home. Now we are looking to do well both home and away so we discussed the role of the selectors and the demands of the captain. There are some aspects we can't realise, but only feel the importance of when we go abroad. We planned to keep the standard of our game the same, both at home and away. And we are looking to play the way we play at home when we go abroad as well," he said.

Akram added that it was high time to start providing pace-friendly pitches at home to help the team perform well on overseas tours, where the Bangladesh seamers often fail to prove their worth.

"We have to start [offering pace friendly pitches at home]. We can't just sit and watch. We have got a new head coach and pace bowling coach after the World Cup, so we have to start," Akram concluded.



Bangladesh's ace all-rounder Shakib Al Hasan joined the Tigers' training camp yesterday following an extended break after his imperious World Cup campaign.

PHOTO: BCB

Abahani leave for Pyongyang with slender advantage

SPORTS REPORTER



Six-time Bangladesh Premier League champions Abahani were scheduled to depart for North Korea in the early hours of Sunday to play the away leg of their AFC Cup inter-zone semifinal play-offs against April 25 SC.

After an incredible 4-3 win over April 25 in the home game, Abahani need at least a draw on August 28 to advance to the inter-zone playoff final, an unprecedented step for a club from Bangladesh.

It will definitely not be an easy task for the Sky Blues -- especially on the fast-paced astro turf ground in Pyongyang -- but they will be bolstered by the fact that Nigerian striker Sunday Chizoba, who scored a brace in the first match, and midfielder Mamunul Islam are traveling with the team.

Chizoba's entrance to North Korea via China was thrown into uncertainty



MARIO LEMOS

after difficulties obtaining a Chinese visa. He will now travel to North Korea via Thailand and China, said manager Satyajit Das Rupu, adding that they were also taking the injured Mamunul with hopes of fielding him if possible.

Getting the services of newly-signed Egyptian defender Alaeldin Nasr Elmagraby Eissa, who missed the first leg due to suspension, is another boost.

"I think it is possible [to reach the

inter-zone play-off final]. We know it is going to be very hard because April 25 will come back strong. We made some mistakes in the first game that we want to fix; we always have room to improve. It will be very important for us to score," Abahani coach Mario Lemos told The Daily Star yesterday.

The Portuguese tactician's charges played against April 25 on the counter-attack in the first match. And given that hosts April 25 are expected to play more aggressively given their need to score at home, Abahani will likely want to avail advantages on the counter like in the first game.

"The strategy will be similar, maybe more cautious and less risky because we have a slight advantage going into the match. We still believe we cannot just defend. We also need to be attack and create chances through the counter attack and hopefully get a goal. The attitude of the players must be the same. We are just one step away of the final," the 33-year-old coach added.



Bangladesh Cricket Board operations committee chairman Akram Khan (C), head coach Russell Domingo (R), captain Shakib Al Hasan (L) and the selectors discuss their plans for the upcoming challenges at home.

PHOTO: BCB

Day pleased by fitness levels

SPORTS REPORTER



Bangladesh coach Jamie Day was happy with the fitness levels of the national booters after the first day of training for the Joint Qualifiers of the 2022 World Cup and 2023 Asian Cup concluded at Bangabandhu National Stadium yesterday.

Day previously said he would emphasise the players' fitness at home before the team flies for Tajikistan on September 1 as the players returned to business after a three-week gap following the completion of the Bangladesh Premier League.

"Fitness is good. Everyone came back the way they left. They followed the programme for off-season training. They also worked hard at the club level during the league. I'm pleased to have seen them in the training and there are no problems with fitness. They are looking good and we are hoping to work more over the next two weeks to prepare the boys before the first match," Day said after the training.

Apart from seven Abahani players, the other 19 sweated it out on the ground. Day will pick

his final 23-member squad on August 31, just a day before leaving for Dushanbe to play two practice matches as well as the first match against Afghanistan.

"It is really tough to play the qualifiers of the World Cup and I think we have to give hundred per cent effort for better results," said goalkeeper Mazharul Islam Himel, who was called in at the last moment.

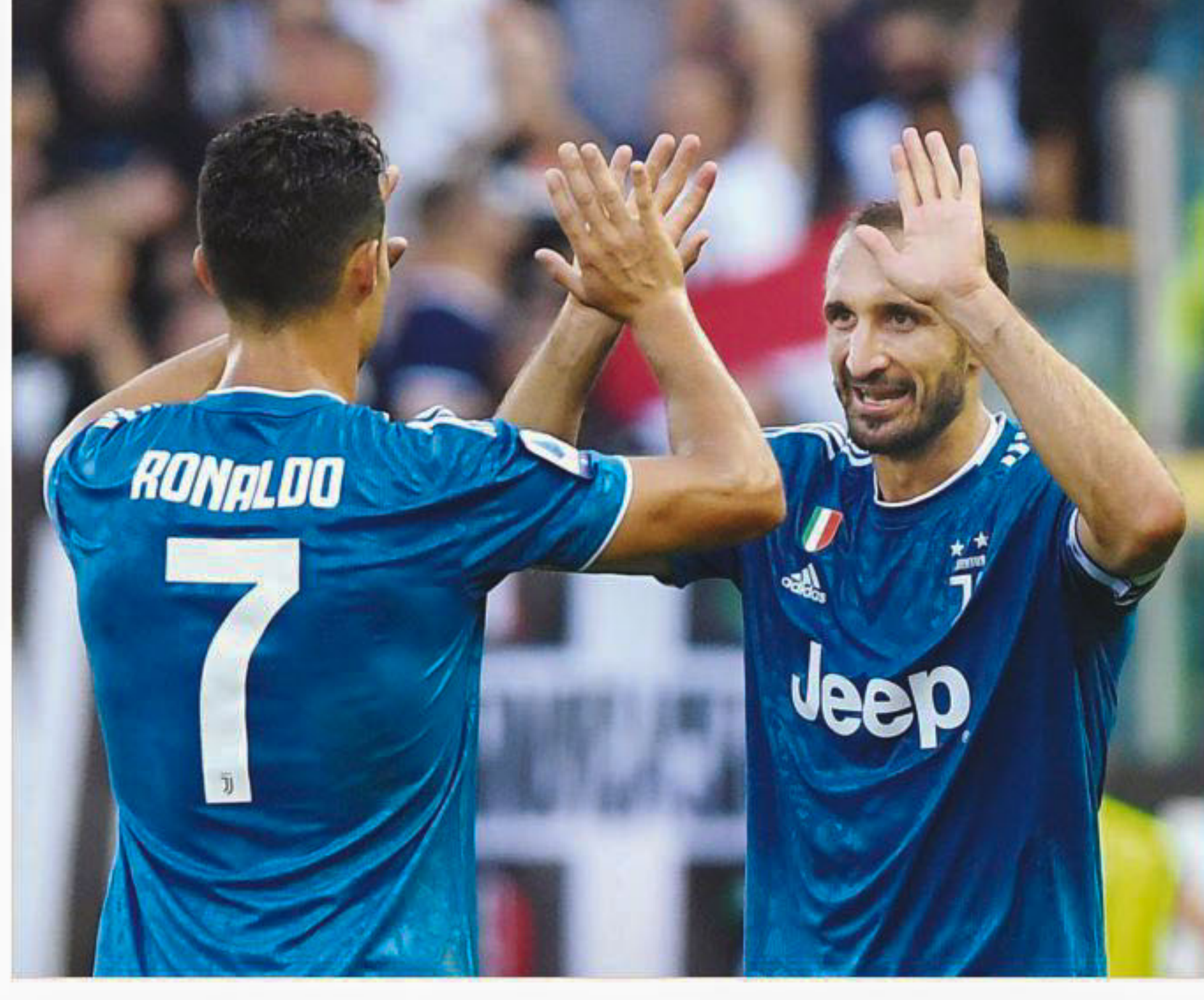
"It is important to take the challenge of big matches and everyone has to take that challenge. If I can take the challenge, I think I can get chances to represent the national team," said defender Yeasin Arafat, the youngest player in the squad.

"I'm really fortunate to have been selected for the squad at such an age because I played third division football league last year, before joining Saif SC to play in the Bangladesh Premier League. I believed that I would one day play for the national team but I never thought I could make it to the national squad immediately," said Arafat, who has also been called up for the Bangladesh U-18 team ahead of the SAFF U-18 Championship.



The Bangladesh national football team began their preparatory camp for the joint qualifiers of the 2022 World Cup and 2023 Asian Cup under the guidance of head coach Jamie Day (L) at the Bangabandhu National Stadium yesterday.

PHOTO: COLLECTED



Juventus defender Giorgio Chiellini (R) celebrates his all-important goal with superstar teammate Cristiano Ronaldo during their Serie A encounter at the Ennio-Tardini Stadium yesterday.

PHOTO: REUTERS

Gold Cup in October

SPORTS REPORTER

The Bangladesh Football Federation (BFF) decided to hold the Bangabandhu Gold Cup from October 22 to November 2 with eight nations in participation.

The decision was taken yesterday at a BFF executive committee meeting, where it was also decided to hold the long-awaited annual general meeting on November 16.

At the meeting, the points-table of the recently-concluded Bangladesh Premier League (BPL) was approved. The approval meant that the meeting rejected appeals from six clubs to change the by-laws of the tournament and relegate one club from the BPL rather than two per season.

India stretch lead

AFP, North Sound



India stretched their lead in the afternoon session despite continuing concerns about the consistency of their top-order batting in getting to 98 for three in the second innings at tea on the third day of the first Test against the West Indies on Saturday.

Having dismissed the home side for 222 in the morning period to take a first innings lead of 75 runs, Indian captain Virat Kohli and first innings top scorer Ajinkya Rahane will resume after the break with the visitors seeking to work themselves into an increasingly dominant position.

Roston Chase, whose score of 48 on Friday, was the best effort in the West Indies' first turn at the crease, showed his worth with his off-spin after lunch on day three in removing openers Mayank Agarwal and K.L. Rahul while Kemar Roach produced a superb delivery to breach the defence of Cheteshwar Pujara.

Agarwal was ruled leg-before although television replays showed the decision would have been overturned has it been



India's Ishant Sharma happily completes a catch on the second day of the first Test against West Indies.

PHOTO: AFP

challenged by the batsman.

There was no possibility of a reprieve though for Rahul, bowled round his legs for 38 when he missed an attempted sweep.

SCORES IN BRIEF

INDIA: First innings 297 and second innings 111 for 3 (Rahul 38, Kohli 20 not out; Chase 2-55)

WEST INDIES: First innings 218 for eight (Chase 48, Holder 37 not out; Sharma 5-43)



I provided the World Cup fielding report as well as the series I was involved with so far. You know lots of these things would be really holistic. I break it down in terms of what our percentages were in each game in Tests. Or how many runs we save or lose if its one-day cricket, so those things I included.

RYLAN COOK
BANGLADESH
FIELDING
CONSULTANT



SCAN THE QR
CODE TO READ
THE STORY