

Focus on finishing

SPORTS REPORTER



Bangladesh captain Jamal Bhuiyan is optimistic that his side can make it hard for India in the World Cup qualifying fixture at the Salt Lake Stadium in Kolkata on Tuesday.

The Bangladesh team, who lost their first game of the qualifying campaign 1-0 against Afghanistan last month before going down 2-0 against Qatar at home on Thursday, reached Kolkata on Friday and wasted little time in starting preparation for the crucial match.

"We will have to be mentally and physically ready for the match against India because India will play at home and they will come hundred percent for a win. But we will also go for the win. It's going to be a tough match. We have not lost to India in the last two matches -- 1-1 and 2-2 -- but since then India have developed a lot. It's going to be a big match for my team, but we will go for the win,"

Jamal told local reporters on reaching Kolkata.

Although statistics favours India heavily in matches between the two neighbouring countries, Bangladesh would want to take encouragement from their spirited display against Qatar where Jamie Day's charges had more shots on target than the reigning Asian champions. However, the Red and Greens could not convert those shots into goals, thanks to some excellent defending from the Qataris as well as some wayward shooting from the Bangladesh forwards.

Hence the focus on yesterday's two-hour practice session at the Salt Lake Stadium practice ground was mostly on finishing.

"The coach stressed on tactical aspects as well as finishing during today's practice session. He worked separately with the



The Bangladesh national football team players take part in a practice session at the outer ground of the Salt Lake Stadium in Kolkata yesterday ahead of their World Cup and Asian Cup qualifying game against India on Tuesday.

PHOTO: BFF

forwards," team manager Satyajid Das Rupu told reporters after yesterday's practice session.

"Our finishing was not good against Qatar. We created a number of scoring opportunities, but could not score from those. That's why the coach gave special attention to finishing," Rupu added.

While Bangladesh are sitting at the bottom of Group E with zero points from two matches, India have one point, thanks to their valiant goalless draw against Qatar following a 2-1 defeat against Oman. The India players and coach are eager to get their qualification campaign running with a victory over Bangladesh. Home crowd could be a big advantage for India at the 85,000-capacity stadium, but former

Bangladesh captain Mamunul Islam hopes Bangladesh will also enjoy the crowd rather than get overwhelmed by it.

"We know there will be a lot of people at the stadium to watch the match. The crowd will be an encouragement for us too and we will definitely try to capitalise on the chances we might get," said the midfielder, who was an unused member of ISL franchise Atletico de Kolkata in the 2015 season.

The coach, later in the video analysis session, got the message through to his charges that they should not become complacent by their performance against Qatar, rather they should try to rectify their mistakes in front of goal so that they do not have to leave the field again with regrets.

Saif unlocks a milestone

SPORTS REPORTER



If anything, Sri Lanka are difficult to beat at home. However, Bangladesh A team opener Saif Hassan took charge and scripted a small piece of history for the visitors' second-string side as his blazing hundred clinched the three-match one-day series yesterday.

Bangladesh rode on Saif's 110-ball 117 to win the series against their Sri Lankan counterparts 2-1, beating the hosts by 98 runs in the DLS method in the final game at the R Premadasa Stadium in Colombo.

Bangladesh fought back in the series with a thrilling one-wicket victory in the second game after losing the opener and went hard at the hosts in the series-deciding game courtesy of Saif and Naim Sheikh, who lay the foundation by stitching together a 120-run opening stand.

"Saif played a brilliant knock while Naim missed a deserving hundred because of an unfortunate dismissal. The boys played good cricket here. It's always a tough task to beat any Sri Lankan side on their home soil," chief selector Minhajul Abedin told The Daily Star over phone from Colombo.

"If I am not wrong then it's the first time any senior team from Bangladesh won a series in Sri Lanka. It will give lot of confidence to our cricketers," he added.

Saif smote 12 fours and three sixes during his 110-ball innings as Bangladesh posted a mammoth 322 for nine after being sent in to bat.

In reply, Sri Lanka A scored 130 for six in 24.4 overs before bad light stopped play. The fate of the match was decided by the DLS method. Saif took two wickets for 25 runs while Ebadat Hossain also claimed two scalps in exchange for 26 runs.

Kamindo Mendis scored a team-high 65-ball 55 that featured two fours and three sixes.

Earlier, Bangladesh got off to a good start



SAIF HASSAN ... 117

courtesy of openers Saif and Mohammad Naim, who made 66 off 76 balls with the help of five fours and two sixes. The 120-run opening stand was broken when Naim was dismissed for obstructing the field.

"He was unlucky. We saw nothing wrong but we had to accept the umpire's decision," Minhajul said regarding Naim's dismissal.

Captain Mohammad Mithun was the other notable scorer with a 35-ball 32, featuring one four and two sixes. Pacer Shiran Fernando was the most successful bowler for the hosts, taking four for 50 runs.

India tighten grip on second Test

AFP, Pune



India bowled out South Africa for 275 despite a battling half-century by ailing tailender Keshav Maharaj in the second Test yesterday.

Maharaj, who hit a career-best 72 with an injured shoulder, and Vernon Philander, unbeaten on 44, put on 109 for the ninth wicket to frustrate the Indian bowlers in Pune.

Ravichandran Ashwin broke the stand by taking number 10 Maharaj in the final overs and then claimed last man Kagiso Rabada, for two, to wrap up the innings with figures of 4-69.

India, who scored 601-5 declared, have until the start of play on Sunday to decide whether to enforce the follow-on. South Africa still trail India by 326 runs.

The Proteas, who resumed on 36-3, slipped to 162-8 after skipper Faf du Plessis fell for 64 to Ashwin's off spin.

Maharaj, who injured his shoulder while fielding on Friday and went off the pitch for scans, came out to join Philander to make a last stand.

Maharaj passed his previous Test best of 45 with a boundary off Ashwin and completed his fifty to an ovation from the crowd.

Philander, a pace-bowling all-rounder, also played a patient innings. He stayed on for 192 balls before running out of partners.

Fast bowler Mohammed Shami struck early to remove nightwatchman Anrich

It's (shoulder) very sore. Yesterday (Friday) I dived on it so lot of bruising. But hopefully I'll be fine for the rest of the series. Vernon and I said to ourselves that we'll just get through to tea and see after that. Being a lower order batsman your fingers do itch to play a big shot but Vernon kept me in a good mind space.

KESHAV MAHARAJ
SOUTH AFRICA SPINNER

Nortje for three when he edged a delivery to Virat Kohli at fourth slip.

Theunis de Bruyn was caught behind off Yadav for 30 as the tourists slipped to 53 for five.

Wicketkeeper-batsman Quinton de Kock put on a 75-run fourth wicket stand with du Plessis to offer some resistance before Ashwin's off spin bowled him for 31.

Kohli hit a career-best 254 not out to surpass Don Bradman's Test tally of 6,996 runs on Friday as India tightened the screws on the tourists.

A victory for India, already one up in the three Tests, will see them beat the record of 10 straight home series wins they share with Australia.



India's Rohit Sharma may be appearing to tackle a fan, but he simply lost his balance when an overenthusiastic supporter attempted to touch his feet on the third day of the second Test against South Africa in Pune yesterday.

PHOTO: AFP

Kamrul gives Barishal sight of a win

SPORTS REPORTER



Despite no play being possible on the majority of the first two days due to rain and a wet outfield, Barishal managed to take control against Sylhet -- who are trailing by 118 runs with eight wickets in hand in their second innings after being bundled out for just 86 in their first innings.

National discard Kamrul Islam bagged six wickets with his fiery pace bowling yesterday to leave Barishal eyeing a win on the fourth and final day of the National Cricket League game at the Shaheed Kamruzzaman Stadium in Rajshahi.

Sylhet ended the day on 27 for 2 after Barishal took a first-innings lead and declared for 231 for eight, riding on fifties from skipper Fazle Mahmud (70) and Shahriar Nafees (63).

After resuming the third day on 68 for three in their first innings, Sylhet faced the music from



Sumon Khan ... 27-09-50-5



KAMRUL ISLAM ... 16.1-05-24-6

Abu Naser Stadium in Khulna was heading for a draw as the hosts ended the third day on 192 for three in their first innings.

Resuming the day on 169 for five, Rangpur were bowled out for 227 in their first innings. Tanbir Hayder top-scored with 64 and Sohrwardi Shuvo scored fifty. Left-arm spinner Abdur Razzak bagged four wickets.

In reply, Khulna openers Robiul Islam and Imran Uzzaman added 136 for the first wicket. Both openers were dismissed in the seventies, leaving Imrul Kayes on 29 to resume on the final day.

Meanwhile, a 148-run eighth-wicket stand between Zabid Hossain and Shahidul Islam helped Dhaka Metropolis take a first innings lead over Chattogram at the Sher-e-Bangla National in Dhaka.

Both were unbeaten in the eighties after Dhaka resumed on

66 for two and were struggling on 201 for seven. Chattogram's young leg-spinner Minhajul Abedin Afridi scalped three wickets.

SCORES IN BRIEF
CHATTOGRAM V DHAKA METRO
CHATTOGRAM: First innings 290 (Tasamul 90; Sunny 6-87.)
DHAKA METRO: First innings 349 for 7 (Shahidul 82 not out, Zabid 81 not out; Afridi 3-103)
DHAKA V RAJSHAHI
DHAKA: First innings 240 and 206 for 6 (Taibur 67 not out; Taijul 3-82)
RAJSHAHI: First innings 197 all out (Mushfiquer 75, Jahurul 64; Sumon 5-50)

RANGPUR V KHULNA
RANGPUR: First innings 227 all out (Tanbir 64, Shuvo 50; Razzak 4-81)
KHULNA: First innings 192 for 3 (Robiul 76, Imran 71; Mahmudul 1-9)
SYLHET V BARISHAL
SYLHET: 86 and 27 for 2 (Imtiaz 14 not out; Tawhidul 1-2)
BARISHAL: First innings 231 for 8 decl (Fazle 70, Shahriar 63; Rejaur 3-74)

HIGHLIGHTS

National discard Kamrul Islam gave Barishal control of their game against Sylhet as the pacer took six wickets for just 24 runs.

Pacer Sumon Khan registered a maiden five-wicket haul to help Dhaka Division take the first innings lead over Rajshahi. The right-arm seamer was instrumental and ended with figures of 5 for 50 from 27 overs.

Flower, ECB part ways

AFP, London

Former England coach Andy Flower has ended his 12-year stay with the England and Wales Cricket Board.

Flower was appointed England assistant coach to Peter Moores in 2007 and took over as head coach two years later.

The Zimbabwean switched to working with the Lions in 2014 and has opted to step down shortly after Chris Silverwood's appointment as England's new head coach.

During his spell as head coach, Flower led England's Test side to number one in the world, victory at the 2010 World Twenty20 and Ashes success in Australia in 2010-11.

FIFA president due on Oct 16

SPORTS REPORTER



FIFA president Gianni Infantino will arrive in Dhaka on Wednesday on a two-day 'goodwill visit', informed

Bangladesh Football Federation (BFF) officials yesterday.

The 49-year-old supremo of world football's governing body will be arriving from Mongolia on Wednesday evening and will leave for Laos on Thursday afternoon, along with his entourage which will include deputy secretary general Matthias Grafstrom, chief of communications Onofre Costa, director of member associations of Asia and Oceania Sanjeevan Balasingam and president's office manager Federico Ravinglione.

BFF president Kazi Salahuddin said, since this is a 'goodwill visit', they will try to highlight the country's footballing status as there will be no



GIANNI INFANTINO

specific agenda for the tour.

"His visit is very important for us. He will see for himself the activities we are undertaking in football development. However, since this is a goodwill trip, it will not be appropriate for us to make any demands to him. However, if things

come up during our discussion, we will talk about it," Salahuddin told reporters.

Kazi Nabil Ahmed, vice-president of BFF, informed that the FIFA president will pay a courtesy call on Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina on Thursday morning.

"FIFA president Gianni Infantino will have discussions with BFF executive members where we will share our status regarding FIFA's vision and goal.

Then on Thursday morning, he will pay a courtesy call on Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina at the Prime Minister's Office on Thursday morning," Nabil said.

This will be the first visit to Bangladesh by the current FIFA president, who took office in February, 2016. Joao Havelange was the first FIFA president to visit Bangladesh in 1980 while Sepp Blatter came here twice, in 2006 and 2012.