

We should have our own mantra to be successful: Tamim

Tamim Iqbal has big shoes to fill after replacing Mashrafe Bin Mortaza as Bangladesh's ODI captain. With the coronavirus pandemic currently halting cricket, Tamim is quietly looking forward to better times. The opener spoke to The Daily Star's Abdullah Al Mehdi over phone on his batting role, struggles and his understanding of the challenges going forward. The excerpts of the exclusive interview are as follows:

The Daily Star (TDS): Spending time at home during coronavirus outbreak?

Tamim Iqbal (TI): Truth be told, I am not facing any big issues. I am not getting annoyed, bored or anything else. Normally I do my running in the morning and after that I spend time with the kids. Maybe I'll watch a movie and time passes. If you think about it from the perspective that first you are doing it for yourself as well as the safety of others, life becomes easier.

There is nothing bigger than life and to that end, if I have to spend time at home for one or two months, I should not be upset. I am not thinking about cricket at the moment given the situation that's prevailing. We can see how the situation is in various parts of the world. By Almighty's blessing the situation in Bangladesh is still okay, but if we face something like that, it will be a big disaster. Most important thing is to follow the directives that are coming to us and when it passes, we will have enough time to prepare for our professional life.

TDS: How difficult is it to bat for a side which has seen quite a few batting collapses when top-order doesn't click?

TI: It used to happen regularly four or five years ago, but compared to those times, it's happening lesser now. It was challenging at those times; somebody had to do something differently to stop that. I feel I started playing differently around that time so that we don't lose a flurry of wickets. Before 2015, you would notice that we used to lose two or three more wickets right after a wicket fell.

TDS: Tell us about your anchor role and how much do you enjoy it?

TI: I don't really see it as an anchor role. On days that I get out early, if another one from top three or four stays till the 35th over, it's an added advantage for the side. The thing about the anchor role is, when a set batsman is at the crease, it doesn't matter whether his strike rate is 120 or in the 75-to-80 percentage range. The thing is, with that player at the crease, you can play around him as a team. After all, it is a team sport.

If Bangladesh reach 160 to 170 in 30 overs but lose six wickets, you have very little chance of winning the match even though your run rate is close to six. But if you reach 140-145 in 30 overs for only two wickets, you have a very good chance of scoring 280-300 and your chances of winning the match improve. The beauty of ODI cricket is that you will start in one way, build another way in the middle and finish it a different way.

Whether I like my role or not, what's

Wimbledon cancelled

AFP, London

Wimbledon chiefs on Wednesday cancelled the Grand Slam for the first time since World War II as the coronavirus wreaks further havoc on the global sporting calendar.

"It is with great regret that the main board of the All England Club (AELTC) and the committee of management have today decided that The Championships 2020 will be cancelled due to public health concerns linked to the coronavirus epidemic," the organisers said in a statement.

The cancellation of the only grasscourt Grand Slam tournament leaves the tennis season in disarray and also prompted the ATP and WTA to cancel the grasscourt swing in the build-up to Wimbledon meaning the tennis season will not now recommence until July 13 at the earliest.

'No chance of resuming BPL before July'

SPORTS REPORTER



Bangladesh Football Federation's (BFF) senior vice-president Abdus Salam Murschedy sees no possibility of resuming the Bangladesh Premier League before July, that too subject to rapid improvement in the coronavirus situation.

Murschedy, also chairman of the professional football league committee, made the comment to The Daily Star yesterday, a day after the deadline of suspension of all types of sports activities following the youth and sports ministry's directives on March 16 ended. Even though there has not been any further directive in this regard from the ministry, it is understood that under the current circumstances the halt in sporting activities is likely to be extended for indefinite period.

"As per news I'm getting from media as a member of parliament and as a businessman involved internationally, I think no football competition can restart by June. The month of Ramadan will start in the latter part of this month with the thus Eid-ul-Fitr on May 25 or 26, which will also follow another seven-day holiday. Then we have to give at least one month's notice to the clubs for their

preparation because all clubs have released their players," Murschedy said while on his way back from a high-level meeting of the government yesterday.

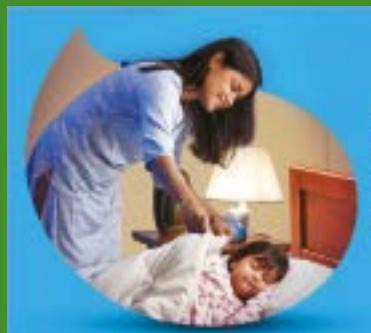
"I think if the situation improves rapidly, the league can resume on the first week of July. If the situation improves slowly, then it won't be easy to get the ball rolling by that time," Murschedy added.

The former footballer even believes resuming the league amid slow improvement of the situation will not be wise. Even in the best-possible scenario, Murschedy wants to judge the situation across the country before allowing teams to go to their home venues to play home-and-away matches of the league, which has only had six out of 25 rounds of matches completed.

Before the postponement of the league, the clubs requested the game's local governing body to find a way about the payment of foreign players, who are supposed to get monthly salaries as per contract. However, Murschedy said that this issue depends primarily on the clubs. "If any club faces any problem and seek our help, then we can come forward to help settle the matter," said the BFF vice-president, who has been at the helm of the league committee for the last 12 years.



Homeless people have been afforded shelter at the Pretoria West Rugby Stadium in South Africa as part of the measures taken under a national lockdown to curb the spread of coronavirus. But it is not all gloom there as people were spotted playing cricket on the field yesterday.



সত্তানের যত্নে আপনি যেমন

তোমনি নিখিল যত্নে বাজারের নামা পরীক্ষায়

প্রক্রিয়াজাত বয় আড়ত ডেইনি মণি



যাত্রু শুসা
গোলিবাসা

Reminiscence: My first match

In these times of social distancing, we must be safe while remembering that we do not get too used to the world being at a standstill.

We were meant to go watch matches together, agree with a few of our neighbours and disagree with the rest. So, we are taking turns at The Daily Star Sport talking about our first live experience at a sports venue.

Atique Anam, from 1988

The first match I people very early in the morning. For me it felt like a picnic, except for the fact the weather was truly unforgiving. And except for the fact that there was a battle going on out in the middle -- a battle between men in whites from two neighbouring rivals, with bat and ball in their hands and pads and gloves for armour.

Sat on one of the upper tiers of the general gallery, with a sideways view of the pitch, we watched the game for long hours and immersed ourselves in the Mexican waves that made it round the galleries every now and then.

We were baked in the scorching heat for hours, which was only a small sacrifice for watching live sports in those days. People from that generation would surely remember the lengths they would go to get the grainiest of TV signals for matches played across the border.

There must have been good strokes played, great bowling and fielding efforts made during the course of that game, but I can hardly recall any of those as I was too overwhelmed by the whole atmosphere.

Now when asked about writing for



every penny. Digging memory cells, I realise how excited I was about the prospect of watching the biggest cricket stars of that time.

We had taken full-fledged preparations beforehand, tickets bought days ahead, food prepared for the outing, and last but not least, placards drawn showing our allegiance to a certain team, with one particular placard screaming about a top-order batsman who was in murderous form in those days.

I, along with my father, one elder brother and a cricket-crazy neighbour, made it into the Dhaka Stadium (the present day BNS) through throngs of