



(L) Bangladesh all-rounder Shakib Al Hasan enjoys possession as the players warm up with a game of football at the Zahur Ahmed Chowdhury Stadium yesterday, on the eve of the third and final ODI against the West Indies (R), who were hard in training with the bat and ball following defeats in the first two matches.

PHOTO: STAR

## Wholesale changes unlikely for third match

SPORTS REPORTER from Chattogram



Since Bangladesh have already won their three-match ODI series against the West Indies with a game in hand, there was curiosity about whether the team management would tinker with the playing eleven for today's third and final match.

However, ODI captain Tamim Iqbal said that the Tigers would make very few changes for the third match, with an eye on the 10 points that are up for grabs in the ICC ODI Super League, the pathway for qualification to the 2023 World Cup.

The playing eleven was unchanged for the first two ODIs and the hosts dominated proceedings by bundling out the West Indies below 150 runs on either occasion.

However, there are high chances that pacer Taskin Ahmed, Mohammad Saifuddin will appear and that one of the two uncapped players in off-spinning all-rounder Mahedi Hasan and left-arm seamer Shoriful Islam will ODI debut.

The day-night game is scheduled to be started from 11:30am at the Zahur Ahmed Chowdhury Stadium in Chattogram, although the port city's atmosphere was not as filled with as much excitement as it usually is before an international game.

The reason for that is probably because spectators are not allowed into the ground and another reason may be the upcoming Chattogram City Corporation elections scheduled to start on January 27.

The third and final ODI will be a great opportunity for Bangladesh to grab another ten points for the ODI Super League but at the same time the team management will also want some players to get into the groove ahead of a tough assignment against New Zealand in March.

Head coach Russell Domingo will definitely want to see opener Liton Das, who missed out with the bat in the first two ODIs despite getting starts, get going in the third game. Young Nazmul Hossain Shanto is also under pressure after failing in both the games at his new number three position.

On the other hand, the West Indies have found it difficult to cope with a relatively inexperienced side and coach Phill Simmons believes it is their batting department which is the biggest area of concern.

Skipper Jason Mohammed and his troops are yet to bat the full fifty overs of an innings this series and will be hoping for a better show on a relatively flat Chattogram pitch.

## West Indies debutants prove tricky for video team

MAZHAR UDDIN from Chattogram

In modern-day cricket, video analysis has become the most essential tool in scouting opposition and strategising for any team in world cricket as it provides a detailed idea of their opponents.

Whether it is a bowler's action or a batsman's strong areas, international teams and players spend a lot of time with video analysts scoping out opponents and rectifying their own mistakes during training sessions, knowing that even the slightest bit of foot movement can make a huge difference in a game.

The West Indies side touring Bangladesh has been labelled as weaker opponents made up of unknown players, most of whom made their debut in the three-match ODI series. And although Bangladesh managed to win the series quite comfortably, the Tigers' team management were keen to analyse the players before they arrived in the country.

But while it is relatively easy to collect footage of players who have already made their international debut, this young and unknown West Indies side, which featured 10 new faces in their line-up after top cricketers opted to sit out the tour, proved to be difficult to plan for.

Video analyst Srinivas

Chandrasekar, who also works for the Sunrisers Hyderabad in the Indian Premier League, has become a vital member of the Bangladesh team with his work with players off the field and he spoke of the challenge of tracking down the footage.

"It was a huge challenge. I had to start collecting footage of those players a couple of months prior to the series during the Indian Premier League. I had a chat with Jason Holder and got an idea of whether the West Indies might come up with a bunch of unknown cricketers for the tour," Srinivas told The Daily Star yesterday.

"I looked for the footage and collected it gradually. In some

cases I could only manage to find front and back views from their recent domestic fifty over competition. Players like Akeal Hosen, Nkrumah Bonner and even Kyle Mayers, our players had already done their homework on them by analysing videos well before the series."

Teams all around the world struggled against Mustafizur Rahman when he started his international career, but as time progressed they have analysed each and every movement of Mustafizur's bowling action and how he bowls his cutters.

Cricketers need to work continuously on their game to sustain a career at the international level and members

of the Bangladesh team also understand that. There was a lot of discussion about left-handed batsman Nazmul Hossain Shanto's new role at number three although the youngster failed to utilise the opportunities he got and was dismissed in a soft fashion in both games.

Srinivas said the youngster had been in constant touch with him and had asked for footage of his batting to rectify mistakes.

"I must say all the players of our team are very keen to improve their game and constantly ask for the video footages to me. Many are now talking about Shanto recently but I must say that young guy has been working really hard on his game," he said.

## Sk Russel maintain unbeaten streak against MSC

SPORTS REPORTER

Sheikh Russel continued their eight-year streak of not losing to Mohammedan SC in the Bangladesh Premier League as the visiting Black and Whites surrendered a lead to play out a 1-1 draw at the Bangabandhu National Stadium yesterday.

Sheikh Russel last lost to Mohammedan in 2013 during the sixth edition of the league and since then the 2012 champions defeated Mohammedan eight times and drew three times before playing out another stalemate yesterday in their 24th league meeting.

Smarting from a 1-2 drubbing at the hands of Saif SC in their home match in Cumilla, Mohammedan looked determined to secure full points and they had the lion's share of possession but lacked bite in the attacking third after taking the lead from a spot kick.

Sheikh Russel were rather more effective in the attacking third as they troubled the Mohammedan backline on a few occasions but had to drop points in the third match after two consecutive wins due to the poor finishing of their forwards.

Both Mohammedan and Russel came close to taking the lead once each but both goalkeepers stood tall to thwart attacks before Malian striker Souleymane Diabate sent Sheikh Russel goalkeeper Ashraf Islam Rana the wrong way from the spot one minute into first-half stoppage time after defender Sohail



Sheikh Russel forward Giancarlo Lopes Rodrigues celebrates his 56th-minute equaliser against Mohammedan in their Bangladesh Premier League fixture at the Bangabandhu National Stadium yesterday. The match ended in a 1-1 draw.

PHOTO: COLLECTED

Rana handled the ball inside the box.

After resumption, Mohammedan looked intent on doubling the lead but their attacks were in vain in the face of a solid backline but Sheikh Russel took advantage of the transition period by launching quick counterattacks.

Brazilian Lopes Rodrigues did

not hesitate to level the margin with a close-range header in the 56th minute after Mohammedan goalkeeper Ahsan Habib Bipu failed to gather another header from Hemanta Vincent Biswas.

Lopes and Mohammad Elias squandered two good chances to wrap up the third victory for Sheikh Russel, who now have seven points

-- four more than Mohammedan, with each team having played three matches.

### NIXON POWERS CTG ABAHANI

A first-half strike from Brazilian forward Nixon Guylerme powered Chattogram Abahani to a 1-0 win over Federation Cup runners-up Saif Sporting Club in the day's second match at the Bangabandhu National Stadium.

The tie was very important for the clubs after their disappointing start -- Saif SC dropped points against Rahmtganj MFS and Ctg Abahani lost to Sheikh Jamal DC. They staged a comeback to win their respective second matches last week.

Although Saif SC beat Ctg Abahani 3-0 in the Federation Cup semifinals, the port city outfit dominated throughout the match, except the latter parts, after Nixon struck the all-important goal in the 24th minute to ensure Ctg Abahani's second win and Saif's first defeat in their third match.

MUKTIJODDHA TASTE VICTORY Muktioddha Sangsad notched their maiden victory in this year's league when the hosts handed a 1-0 defeat to visiting Arambagh KS at Brishreshtha Flight Lt Motinur Rahman Stadium in Munshiganj yesterday.

Forward Mehdi Hasan Royal, who also struck a goal in their 2-1 defeat to Sheikh Jamal, struck the decisive goal in the 47th minute to sink Arambagh KS, who have suffered three straight defeats to stay at the bottom of the 13-team table.

## Another Root MASTERCLASS

AGENCIES



Joe Root produced another masterpiece of sub-continental batting with a wonderful century that carried the England cause almost single-handedly in the second Test at Galle.

Root became the first England batsman to score over 150 in consecutive Tests in 16 years as he tormented Sri Lanka and led his side to 339 for nine in their first innings at the close of play on day three yesterday.

However, the tired and cramping England captain was dismissed in the final over of the day for 186, run out after clipping the ball to short leg Oshada Fernando.

The England captain had never before hit hundreds in back-to-back matches but there was an air of inevitability about his 19th Test ton, with his team endlessly grateful for his stocks of class and concentration across 309 balls.

Continuing to lay emphasis on sweeps and reverse sweeps, the right-hand batsman taking calculated risks has worked tremendously well in his favour. In between the scoring shots, Root put on display a confident defensive game not



JOE ROOT...186

only the first English batsman to score two centuries in a Test series in Sri Lanka.

Root followed up his 228 in the first Test to match the feat of Marcus Trescothick, who scored 194 and 151 in consecutive tests against Bangladesh in 2005.

He had failed to score a test century in 2020, the first time in his career he went a calendar year without a ton, and his return to form will be welcome as England head into four tests in India straight after this series.

"It was an amazing innings," Root's team mate Jos Buttler told reporters. "To back up his double hundred in the first test was a challenge both physically and mentally, and it has been a masterclass in batting against spin."

"It's a great education for all of us, Not just the tactical and technical aspects, but also the concentration to apply himself for so long. "There were some amazing shots that show the confidence and skill level. He even played a late cut left-handed today. Everybody can learn a lot from watching Joe play spin."

England still trail by 42 runs and will seek to wipe out the deficit with Jack Leach and Stuart Broad at the crease on the fourth morning, although Sri Lanka spinner Lasith Embuldeniya has been excellent with career best figures of 7-132.



Juventus' Weston McKennie celebrates scoring their second goal with Cristiano Ronaldo as Andrea Pirlo's side moved into the top four with a 2-0 home win over Bologna yesterday. Juventus are now seven points behind Serie A leaders AC Milan.

PHOTO: REUTERS

## 'A monumental moment for Pakistan'

AFP, KARACHI



South Africa will play their first Test in Pakistan for 14 years this week, a match being described as a "monumental moment" for the revival of international cricket in the country.

The match in the port city of Karachi starting Tuesday marks a significant vote of confidence for Pakistan where international cricket was suspended following a terrorist attack on the Sri Lanka team's bus in Lahore in 2009.

A tight security cordon has been thrown around the venue and Pakistan Cricket Board chief executive Wasim Khan said South Africa's visit was significant. "These are very exciting times for fans and supporters," said Khan. "I would say that it's a monumental moment that South Africa is here after 14 years and everybody is looking forward to the matches."