

Meaningful shuffle or change for change's sake?

ABDULLAH AL MEHDI



The Bangladesh Cricket Board's (BCB) revamp of the T20 side following the World Cup debacle in UAE involved quite a few changes, with the experienced Mushfiqur Rahim along with openers Liton Das and Soumya Sarkar making way for relatively new faces.

A total of six changes were made to the side that played the T20 World Cup, with Shakib Al Hasan and Mohammad Saifuddin still recovering from injuries suffered at the World Cup.

The shake-up involved calling up players such as Saif Hassan, Najmul Hossain and Aminul Islam, who have mostly featured irregularly in the national team over the past few years. Batsman Yasir Ali, pacer Shahidul Islam and wicketkeeper-batter and U-19 World Cup-winner Akbar Ali and Saif were called up for their debut T20 series.

Rumours had been bubbling over the past week that Mushfiqur may not feature in the Pakistan T20 series and the veteran of 99 T20Is was left out of the squad yesterday with selectors feeling the need to rebuild the side for the format.

"There are a number of changes from the World Cup squad. We've made six changes. We finished a World Cup of disappointment. This is a new journey," chief selector Minhajul Abedin reflected.

He clarified that Mushfiqur did not ask to be rested but that the upcoming Test assignments were factored in to leave Mushfiqur out of the Pakistan T20Is.

"I have talked to the management about Mushfiqur. We have four consecutive Tests. The Test Championship will start with the Pakistan series. It will be immediately followed by a Test series in New Zealand. Mushfiqur is one of our best and most important cricketers. Senior cricketers like Tamim have an injury and there are doubts over his participation in the Test series. We want Mushfiqur to give his best. That's why we rested him in the T20 series."



PHOTO: FIROZ AHMED

"Mushfiqur didn't ask to be rested," he reiterated even as doubts remain whether the revamp includes removing veteran stars from the T20 lineup or whether Mushfiqur's exclusion came due to other factors. Whether performance was an issue the selection of the side could not be ascertained straightaway.

The likes of Afif Hossain and Nurul Hasan did not capitalise on chances at the World Cup but have been named for the T20 series while the new faces such as Saif Hassan -- initially earmarked as a Test opener -- come into the side without having performed significantly.

The changes leave a lot of questions and chief selector Minhajul's answer

regarding the thought process left a lot to be desired. "We all know there have been disappointing performances in the World Cup. We have to see some new players if we want to go towards a new path. This format is the place to bring quick changes. So let's see the new players. Hopefully, those we have taken are fully prepared for the international arena. They have been training with the HP team. We are also optimistic that they will do well."

Asked whether the likes of Liton and Soumya will remain in consideration, Minhajul hinted that everyone would be under a 'system'. "We have BPL and domestic cricket upcoming. Everyone will perform. No

one will go unnoticed. You have to keep an eye on those who are outside, you have to keep an eye on the system. After the national team, the 'A' team programme is going on, then there is HP. Wherever a player is needed, he will be kept over there and prepared," he said.

A culture of a lack of accountability has prevailed in Bangladesh cricket for a long time. It remains to be seen whether the current thought process can bring sustainability in the T20 format and provide a new bunch of promising performers or whether players keep circling back into the side like they have done in the past due to change for change's sake.



SQUAD

Mahmudullah Riyad (captain), Naim Sheikh, Najmul Hossain Shanto, Afif Hossain, Nurul Hasan Sohan, Sheikh Mahedi Hasan, Aminul Islam Biplob, Mustafizur Rahman, Shoriful Islam, Taskin Ahmed, Shamim Hossain, Nasum Ahmed, Saif Hassan, Yasir Ali Chowdhury, Shohidul Islam and Akbar Ali.

IN

***Batsman Najmul Hossain Shanto and leg-spinner Aminul Islam Biplob made a comeback to the side while batsman Saif Hassan, batsman Yasir Ali Chowdhury, pacer Shohidul Islam and wicketkeeper-batsman Akbar Ali were called up for the first time.

OUT

***All-rounders Shakib Al Hasan and Mohammad Saifuddin were unavailable due to injuries while Liton Das, Soumya Sarkar and Rubel Hossain were left out. Veteran batsman Mushfiqur Rahim was rested.

"TILL NOW, I KNOW SHAKIB [AL HASAN] IS NOT IN THE T20 SQUAD. I WILL GET AN UPDATE IN A COUPLE OF DAYS. AFTER THAT, I WILL LET YOU KNOW IF HE WILL BE AVAILABLE FOR THE TEST SQUAD OR NOT."

MINHAJUL ABEDIN
CHIEF SELECTOR

Venues confirmed for 2022 T20 WC in Australia

AGENCIES

Next year's Twenty20 World Cup will be held across seven venues in Australia, officials confirmed Tuesday, with Sri Lanka and the West Indies forced to play for a place in the Super 12.

The tournament, which was supposed to be held Down Under in 2020 but was pushed back two years due to coronavirus, will take place between October 16 and November 13.

A total of 45 matches will be contested across Adelaide, Brisbane, Geelong, Hobart, Melbourne, Perth and Sydney, with the final under lights at the Melbourne Cricket Ground. Sydney and Adelaide will host the semis.

Australia has never previously staged the men's Twenty20 World Cup but the MCG has twice been the venue of the 50-overs World Cup final, most recently in 2015 when the hosts thrashed New Zealand in front of 93,013 fans.

"Following the success of the ICC Women's T20 World Cup in 2020 (in Australia) and a two-year postponement, our sights are now firmly set on planning for the 2022 event," said International Cricket Council head of events Chris Tetley.

Hosts Australia will be defending champions after hammering New Zealand by eight wickets in Dubai on Sunday.

***Australia, New Zealand, Afghanistan, Bangladesh, England, India, Pakistan and South Africa have already qualified for the Super 12 stage of the tournament.

***Namibia, Scotland, Sri Lanka and West Indies will feature in the opening round along with four other teams to be decided at qualifying tournaments in Oman and Zimbabwe next year.

ICC announces 14 hosts for white-ball tournaments

REUTERS



The International Cricket Council (ICC) on Tuesday announced 14 host nations for the upcoming One-Day International (ODI) World Cups, Twenty20 World Cups and Champions Trophy tournaments from 2024 to 2031.

Australia, Bangladesh, England, Ireland, India, New Zealand, Pakistan, Scotland, South Africa, Sri Lanka, West Indies and Zimbabwe have all been named as hosts, while the United States and Namibia are set to stage an ICC event for the first time.

In June 2024, the ICC Men's T20 World Cup will go somewhere it has never been before, with USA hosting the event alongside the West Indies, which staged the tournament in 2010.

Namibia will host the Men's Cricket World Cup for the first time alongside Zimbabwe and South Africa. South Africa and Zimbabwe last staged the event in 2003.

"To have 14 members hosting eight events is a reflection of the truly global nature of our sport and I'd like to thank every member that submitted

HOSTS: FROM 2024 TO 2031



T20 WORLD CUP

2024: USA and West Indies

2026: India and Sri Lanka

2028: Australia and New Zealand

2030: England, Ireland and Scotland

ODI WORLD CUP

2027: South Africa, Zimbabwe and Namibia

2031: India and Bangladesh

CHAMPIONS TROPHY

2025: Pakistan

2029: India

a bid and offer our congratulations to the successful bidders," ICC Chair Greg Barclay said in a statement.

"It's fantastic to be returning to so many previous hosts, but what is really exciting about this process is the

countries who will stage ICC events for the first time including the USA which is a strategic growth market for us.

"This gives us the opportunity to deepen our connection with fans in traditional cricket nations and also reach new fans around the world."

The ICC added that a similar process would be in place next year to identify hosts for women's and Under-19s events for the next cycle.

Pakistan will stage an ICC event for the first time since it co-hosted the 1996 ODI World Cup along with India and Sri Lanka.

Australia, however, announced that they would tour Pakistan next year for the first time since 1998.

International teams have largely refused to tour Pakistan since an attack by Islamist militants on the Sri Lanka team bus in Lahore in 2009 that killed six policemen and two civilians.

"I am pleased no end with the ICC's decision to select Pakistan as a host nation for one of their elite tournaments," PCB Chairman Ramiz Raja said.

"By allocating a major global event to Pakistan, the ICC has expressed complete confidence and faith in our management and operational capabilities and skills."



Pakistan's wicketkeeper-batter Mohammad Rizwan began training yesterday ahead of the three-match T20I series against Bangladesh, starting from November 19. Rizwan recovered from a chest infection that required hospitalisation before their T20 World Cup semifinal against Australia in the UAE.

PHOTO: STAR

Diya and Rubel make history

SPORTS REPORTER



Bangladesh made a small piece of history by moving into the final of an event at the Asian Archery Championships for the first time after a close-run 5-4 win over a strong India in an exciting semifinal of the Recurve Mixed Team event at the Army Stadium in Banani yesterday.

Earlier this year, Bangladesh had also qualified for the final on an even bigger stage as Ruman Sana and Diya Siddique reached the final of the recurve mixed event at the Archery World Cup Stage-2 in Switzerland. On that occasion, Bangladesh had to be satisfied with a silver medal after losing to Netherlands in the final.

This time around, Diya and Hakim Ahmed Rubel proved the winning combination in the prestigious Asian championships. They started on the back foot after losing the first set 37-40 before bouncing back strongly in the next two sets with 37-36 and 38-36 wins.

They could have sealed a spot in the final by winning the fourth set, but a 36-37 defeat saw the four-set



semifinal end with each team on four set points, forcing the match into a tiebreaker.

Diya and Rubel hit the bullseye to score 20 out of 20 in the tiebreaker while India fell short by one point, managing 19, as Bangladesh set up a final against favourites South Korea

on Friday.

Aside from the mixed team, Bangladesh men's and women's teams fell to defeats in semifinals against India and Korea respectively to set up today's bronze-medal battle against Kazakhstan and Vietnam.

Bangladesh will also fight for

bronze against India in the men's compound team event today after losing a semifinal 228-235 to South Korea while Bangladesh women's compound team and compound mixed team lost to Iran 226-227 and 154-157 respectively in the quarterfinals.

New era beckons as India host NZ in T20I series

AGENCIES



India will look to start their preparations for next year's T20 World Cup on the right note after a disappointing show in the recently concluded mega event, when they take on New Zealand in the first T20I of the three-match series at the Saiwaj Mansingh Stadium in Jaipur today.

It will be the start of a new era for the Men in Blue under skipper Rohit Sharma and new head coach Rahul Dravid.

New Zealand captain Kane Williamson will skip the three-game Twenty20 series against India this week to prepare for the Test series that starts this month.

New Zealand Cricket said in a statement that it has decided to allow Williamson to prepare for the two red-ball matches with the test squad.

Tim Southee will captain the T20 side.

Last week, opening batter Sharma was named India's T20I skipper and KL Rahul was appointed his deputy. Virat Kohli had announced before the T20 World Cup that the showpiece event will be his last assignment as skipper in the shortest format of the game.

