



After having started the Asian Cup Qualifiers campaign with a 2-0 defeat to Bahrain, Bangladesh will look to put up a better performance when they face Turkmenistan in Kuala Lumpur today.

PHOTO: BFF

2nd Youth Games in Oct-Nov

SPORTS REPORTER

The Bangladesh Olympic Association (BOA) is planning to hold the 2nd Youth Games in October-November this year, almost four-and-a-half year since the first edition in 2018.

"We decided to form a steering committee to hold the Sheikh Kamal 2nd Youth Games. Considering the curriculum and activities of schools and colleges, the Games will start in October/November before coming to an end in February-March next year," read a press release yesterday following a BOA EC meeting on Thursday.

The first edition held in March, 2018, with the participation of around 25,000 athletes across the country, featured 21 disciplines.

It was also decided at the meeting to form nine more sub-committees to operate daily activities. The BOA had before formed six sub-committees.

Booters look for improvement against Turkmenistan

SPORTS REPORTER

Bangladesh will look to improve their performance in the Asian Cup Qualifiers in their second Group E match against Turkmenistan at the Bukit Jalil National Stadium in Kuala Lumpur today.

The match will get underway at 3:15pm (Bangladesh Standard Time) with private satellite channel T Sports broadcasting live from the venue.

After a creditable performance against Bahrain in the group opener, Javier Cabrera's charges are upbeat about putting up an improved performance against Turkmenistan, a side that is 54 places ahead of Bangladesh in the FIFA Rankings.

Bangladesh's coaching staff and players watched Thursday's Turkmenistan-Malaysia match from the gallery and Cabrera tried to provide information to his charges after analysing the way Turkmenistan played against Malaysia.

"I think we are going to improve our performance in the next match. Ready for research and ready for tomorrow's challenge. It is an important chance for us to get something against Turkmenistan," Cabrera told the reporters at a pre-match conference yesterday.

Cabrera informed that his charges would take to the ground to win the match but their main objective was to be

competitive in every match.

"Our aim is always to win, but the main objective is to be competitive. We were very competitive in our last match and the main goal is that we are able to keep that line of discipline and game sense. I am convinced that we have a chance tomorrow," Cabrera said when he was asked whether it



possible to beat Uzbekistan.

Surprisingly, Turkmenistan suffered a 1-3 defeat to hosts Malaysia, who were leading 2-0 within the first 15 minutes. Cabrera believed that performance from Turkmenistan did not reflect their real character.

"Turkmenistan are a very strong side in terms of FIFA Ranking. I think they had some problems in the beginning

because Malaysia started impressively, so they were surprised. Barring the first 15 to 20 minutes, Turkmenistan were able to control the game, which was an even match. They also created some chances," Cabrera said. "I don't expect that type of beginning from Turkmenistan again because they are a really strong team and have experienced players and are a physical side. I think it is big challenge for us."

Captain Jamal Bhuiyan was also looking forward to the Turkmenistan match.

"The first game was very tight but we tried our best. I think we did all right. We conceded two goals from set-pieces, so we have to prepare better for the next match. I think the squad is also alright with the result although we wanted to win the match. After the first match, we look forward to the next match," said Jamal, who believes a change has come over the squad under new coach Javier Cabrera, who prefers to having meetings and video sessions with the players regularly.

Asked if he had belief of a win over Turkmenistan, who beat Bangladesh 3-1 in 2002 Asian Games in Seoul, Jamal said: "Of course. I believe we can win but we can't win it by saying it. We have to work hard, have to have courage, confidence. By doing this, we have good chance against Turkmenistan."

Liton leads in Shakib's absence

SPORTS REPORTER

In absence of regular skipper Shakib Al Hasan, Bangladesh Test side's vice-captain Liton Das led the Tigers on the opening day of their three-day warm-up match against the CWI President's XI at the Coolidge Cricket Ground in Antigua yesterday.

Bangladesh, after electing to bat, lost opener Mahmudul Hasan Joy early as the youngster departed without troubling the scorers. Joy was dismissed by Jeremiah Louis in just the second over of the morning.

However, experienced Tamim Iqbal and Najmul Hossain Shanto, who came in at number three, started the rebuilding work.

The duo brought the momentum back, stitching together a fifty-run partnership to help the Tigers recover from the early hiccup.

Following the three-day practice match, Bangladesh will take on West Indies in the first of the two-match Test series on June 16 at the Sir Vivian Richards Stadium.

Shakib, who is enjoying a short vacation with his family in the United States, is yet to join his teammates at the Caribbean where the Tigers have already started their mission without their skipper.



England claw back at Nottingham

AFP, London

England clawed their way back into the second Test against New Zealand with two wickets late in the opening session to leave the tourists on 195-4 at Tea at Trent Bridge on Friday.

Under a cloudy Nottingham sky and with the strip showing a tinge of green, England captain Stokes opted to bowl after winning the toss.

But the pitch was flatter than Stokes might have expected and New Zealand took advantage of some wayward England bowling as Tom Latham and Will Young put on 84 for the first wicket. Stokes dragged England back into it when he dismissed Young for 47 and moments later stand-in skipper Latham fell to James Anderson for 26.

Devon Conway (46) became Anderson's second victim while Henry Nicholls (30) fell to Stokes as the visitors slipped from 84 no loss to 169 for four before Tea.

Daryl Mitchell, the centurion from the first Test, was unbeaten on 20 while Tom Blundell was batting on six at Tea.

Ignore the Hungary whistles, says Flick

AFP, Berlin

Germany coach Hansi Flick has told his side to keep their composure in Budapest during Saturday's Nations League match against Hungary, where the home crowd is expected to give the Germans a hostile reception.

"Everyone of us has played so many games where the atmosphere was heated," Flick said Friday.

"There may be whistles (from Hungary fans) but once the (referee's) whistle goes, the focus is on the game."

There is history between the German team and Hungarian fans from last June's 2-2 draw in Munich during the Euro 2020 group stages.

After scoring the equaliser, Germany midfielder Leon Goretzka made a heart gesture with his hands to Hungarian fans, who had turned their backs to the pitch before kick off during the German national anthem.

Thomas Mueller said Goretzka's gesture reflected the team's feelings towards visiting fans, who provoked the Germans throughout the game.

"Leon's action was spontaneous and a great reaction to what happened," Mueller said Friday.

"The Hungarian fan block didn't show its best side. His (gesture) spoke from our hearts."

Hungary pulled off a shock 1-0 home win over England last Saturday, when visiting English players

were booed by the Budapest crowd for taking a knee to promote anti-racism - before kick-off.

Both the German and English teams took a knee before Tuesday's 1-1 draw in Munich, but Mueller said there are no plans for the Germany team to repeat the gesture in Budapest.

"The English kneeled as part of their campaign. We think it's a good thing, that's why we took part," Mueller explained.

"We're open to campaigns that represent our values, but nothing is planned (before the game in Budapest)."

After draws against both Italy and England, Flick is set to name his strongest team having ruled out resting Germany captain Manuel Neuer in goal.

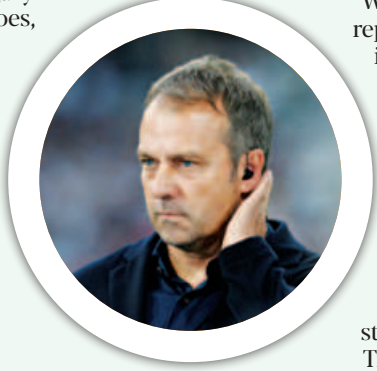
Five months before the World Cup kicks off in Qatar, Flick still needs to settle on his first-choice striker.

Timo Werner started against Italy in Bologna, then his Chelsea team-mate Kai Havertz was used up front against England.

Flick hinted that Werner will start in Budapest.

"We need players who are in form, which is crucial for Qatar. We don't have time to make any adjustments," said Flick.

"It is quite possible that he (Werner) will play from the start. He can score goals, which always gives him confidence."



Harry Kane looks on as Jack Grealish volleys one during a training session at St George's Park on Friday on the eve of their Nations League match against Italy. The England captain, who scored his 50th international goal against Germany three days ago, would want to see his side move off the bottom of the group and avenge their Euro 2020 final defeat with a win over the Azzurri.

PHOTO: AFP