

Recurve archers leaving for France

SPORTS REPORTER

A 10-member Bangladesh archery team will leave for France today to take part in the Archery World Cup – Stage 3.

The Bangladesh team will participate in five events in the meet, which will be held from June 21 to 26. The five events are: men's recurve individual, men's recurve team, women's recurve team, women's recurve individual, women's recurve team and mixed recurve team.

The Bangladesh contingent will feature seven archers and four officials. The archers are: Ruman Sana, Hakim Ahmed Rubel, Abdur Rahman Alif, Sagor Islam, Diya Siddique, Nasrin Akter and Fahmida Sultana Nishi.

Head coach Martin Frederick will travel with the team alongside team manager Rashiduzzaman Serniabat and Rubaiyat Ahmed, representative of sponsors City Group.

India, South Africa eye series victory

AGENCIES

After making an emphatic comeback in the series, India will take on South Africa in the fifth and final T20I match at the M Chinnaswamy Stadium, Bengaluru today.

India won the fourth T20I by 82 runs to take the series to the decider.

Both teams are chasing history heading into the fifth T20I. India have never lost a bilateral T20I series at home since 2019, while the South Africans have never lost a series in India since 2011 across formats.

The series hasn't been one of India's best but somehow, just like top teams do, the 'Men In Blue' have found their way out to win matches under pressure.

If Temba Bavuma is unable to recover, South Africa will miss a leader more than the batter. And suddenly in the last two games, the batting has looked iffy on tracks that have variable bounce, which has made this Indian attack look way more lethal.



Bangladesh batter Najmul Hossain Shanto cut a sorry figure again as the left-hander became the first casualty on the third morning of the first Test against the West Indies at the Sir Vivian Richards Stadium in Antigua yesterday.

PHOTO: AFP

SHANTO STRUGGLING to justify his No. 3 position

SPORTS REPORTER

Eyes were on Najmul Hossain Shanto after he failed to open his account in the first innings, but the left-hander disappointed once again as he was unable to make an impact in the second innings as Bangladesh were left to stave off yet another batting failure on the third day of the first Test in Antigua yesterday.

Resuming the third day on 50 for two and trailing by 112 runs, Shanto and young Mahmudul Hasan Joy started off confidently.

Shanto looked solid against the seamers until he fell to a Kyle Mayers delivery that came in and kicked a bit off the surface, taking an outside edge to the slip cordon. It was not the first time he was dismissed in such fashion and showed that he had not learnt from previous mistakes.

Shanto's departure reduced the visitors to 64 for three, before out-of-form skipper Mominul Haque departed with the Tigers still 86 runs behind the West Indies' first-innings total of 265.

Shanto has been given a fair amount of opportunities in recent times and, more importantly, he has been assigned the number three position, which plays a key role in shaping the direction of a batting unit.

Even the 23-year-old realised that and stated that he wants to become the best batter in the side and be more consistent but added that things were not working out for him and that could cost him his place in the playing eleven.

"Test cricket is tough cricket. You need to be on your toes and keep improving every day. As a number three batter, it's



important to quickly adapt to different conditions," Shanto told The Daily Star during an interview recently.

"During training sessions, we try to simulate scenarios while keeping the conditions and the nature of surfaces in mind. Against Sri Lanka, I think spin could be a big challenge, so I have started working on it already. Since I'm playing Tests regularly, it's gradually becoming easier for me to cope."

Bangladesh batting coach Jamie Siddons had huge expectations from Shanto and termed him a talented cricketer. But if the left-hander keeps repeating the same mistakes, things may

become difficult.

Like Shanto, Mominul – who had just resigned from Test captaincy to focus on his batting performances – also failed miserably in the two innings against the West Indies.

Mominul was also dismissed for a duck in the first innings while chasing a delivery going away from his body from Jayden Seales before being trapped leg before by Kyle Mayers.

Scores of 0, 2, 6, 5, 2, 9, 0, 0 and 4 in his last nine innings reflects the horrible time Mominul has been enduring and also show why it has become such a major issue in Tigers batting department.

Salma's Mohammedan claim seventh title

SPORTS REPORTER

Mohammedan regained the Dhaka Premier Division Women's Cricket League title yesterday, ending an impetuous campaign unbeaten. The last round of matches – featuring Mohammedan versus Indira Road and Rupali Bank vs Khelaghara SKS – was washed out at the BKSP yesterday, meaning both Mohammedan and Rupali finished with 18 points.

However, Mohammedan clinched a seventh league title under the captaincy of experienced campaigner Salma Khatun due to a superior run-rate. The league returned after almost a three-year gap brought on by the Covid-19 pandemic and Salma expressed satisfaction over the standards of the league this season.

"Mohammedan earlier won six league titles under my captaincy and now, after a three-year gap, we regained the title. From personal experience, I must say the overall standards have been improving. We missed a few matches due to rain but we enjoyed the league very much. It would have been much better if there were no rain interruptions," Salma told The Daily Star yesterday.

"The number of teams increased this season



and what impressed me most was that number of newcomers that showed potential this season. A regular league would ultimately benefit our national team. This league also provides financial support to many players. I believe the Bangladesh Cricket Board (BCB) will make it more competitive in future," she added.

Groundhog day at Canadian GP

AFP, Montreal

Ferrari driver Carlos Sainz had to take evasive action at the Canadian Grand Prix on Friday when a groundhog ran out onto the circuit.

Sainz was travelling at high speed during opening practice for Sunday's race when the animal appeared between turns two and three.

"Whether you want to call it a marmot, a groundhog or a beaver, a cute little brown furry animal was very lucky not to be squashed by a Ferrari during F1," said the Sky Sports F1 Twitter feed.



Esteban Ocon had slowed down to avoid a collision but Sainz, just behind the Frenchman, only spotted the groundhog at the last second. It came close to the Ferrari's right wheel before Sainz managed to avoid a messy encounter. Alex Albon in a Williams also had to swerve to avoid the groundhog.

Appearances by groundhogs at the Gilles Villeneuve Circuit on Montreal's Isle Notre Dame, where they are indigenous and protected, have become common on race weekends.

'This camp is about taking yourself TO THE NEXT LEVEL'

MAZHAR UDDIN

With the intent to prepare cricketers for the next step, the Bangladesh Tigers have been specifically polishing the skills of cricketers that are in contention for a place in the national side. The likes of Soumya Sarkar, Nayem Hasan, Nazmul Islam Apu and a batch of promising cricketers – none of whom can be part of the Under-19 or High Performance (Under-23) set-ups – have been engaged in an intense training camp in recent times.

Members of the Bangladesh Tigers unit may also be selected for the Bangladesh A team's tour to the West Indies in August this year for one four-day game and three one-dayers.

For players such as Soumya, who has been out of the national set-up for nearly a year, it presents an opportunity to showcase their ability.

"The main idea is to work specifically on the skills of batters. Since I am working in the batting department, I can only talk about that. But there are other coaches guiding other departments," Mizanur Rahman Babul, the batting coach of the Bangladesh Tigers, said. "These guys have been playing matches for the past seven months. When you play continuously, there are less chances to work specifically on areas that need work. Like working on the shoulder going towards the mid-wicket or mid-off region. We designed this programme to work on and improve these aspects. Then we have the Bangladesh A team's tour to West Indies

in August." Another highly-rated local coach, Sohel Islam, is working as the spin-bowling coach. He also shared his methods.

"This camp is about trying to take yourself to the next level. We even made them fill out a form describing what areas they feel the need to work on. For spinners, it is very important to be able to spin the ball and get turn. We are trying to work on how we can turn the ball using the body."

We have Nayem Hasan, Aminul Islam Biplob and others in the camp and we tried to improve on that aspect," said Sohel.

According to the mentor of Mehedi Hasan Miraz and Tajul Islam, it is important to work with a goal instead of focusing on conventional methods of training.

"It is easy to work with a few cones and bowl at them but, if you want to improve, it is important to get the best of the resources available to you by enhancing the skill level. We will also play a four-day game against the High Performance team and will see improvement," he added.

