

## 'Can't accept seeing my teammates disrespected'

SPORTS REPORTER

It was on the cards for Harmanpreet Kaur to be penalised after the Indian skipper lost her temper both on and off the field following dissatisfaction over the umpire's decision during the third and series-deciding ODI against Bangladesh last Saturday.

Harmanpreet was suspended for the next two international matches following two separate breaches of the ICC Code of Conduct.

For Bangladesh, it was a huge moment to beat a team like India for the very first time in the ODI format in the first game and then to go on to draw the three-match series 1-1, with the final game tied, in dramatic fashion -- an outcome that could be regarded as a stepping stone for women's cricket in the country.

Despite Harmanpreet's shocking behaviour during and after the game, Bangladesh players expected appreciation from their opponents who are among the top teams in world cricket.

"We expected appreciation from them and some words of encouragement which would have motivated our players," Bangladesh skipper Nigar Sultana Joty told The Daily Star.

Upon hearing an unpleasant comment from Harmanpreet, Joty left the field with her teammates midway through the post-match photo session with the trophy and the Indian players.

"But what they did certainly does not leave a good message. The two teams were standing for the photo session and there was no point saying such a thing in front of the players as they could complain to the match referee according to the rules. Obviously, it felt bad when they were not showing respect. So, I felt there was no point in standing there as I respect my teammates and I can't accept that," Joty added.

According to Joty, Harmanpreet, a seasoned campaigner with a total of 284 international appearances, should have not dragged the matter outside of the field as it only relayed a bad message to the players around the world who look up to the Indian captain as a role model.

"Cricket is a game of discipline and most importantly, whatever we do inspires others. So, we won't do anything that gives a bad message to the others who look up to us. As for the captain of India, whatever happened during the game -- whether it was losing temper or showing frustration -- was normal but it was not right to carry that even after the game. We could have lost the game but in the end, we played better cricket and tied the match," she said.



Opener Abdullah Shafique's maiden double century (201 off 326) and an unbeaten 132 by Agha Salman put Pakistan in the box seat Wednesday on day three of the second Test against Sri Lanka. The tourists reached 563-5 at stumps, leading Sri Lanka by 397 runs in their first innings at Colombo's Sinhalese Sports Club. Another Pakistani middle-order batter, Saud Shakeel, also became the first batter in history to reach fifty in each of his first seven Tests.

PHOTO: AFP



## What to WATCH

Sony Sports 2  
Sri Lanka vs Pakistan  
2nd Test, Day 4  
Live from 10:30 am  
T Sports  
FIFA Women's World Cup  
United States vs

Netherlands  
Live from 7:00 am  
Portugal vs Vietnam  
Live from 1:30 pm  
Australia vs Nigeria  
Live from 4:00 pm  
Argentina vs South Africa  
Live from 4:00 pm

Live from 6:00 am  
(Friday)  
Sony Sports 5  
The Ashes  
England vs Australia  
5th Test, Day 1  
Live from 4:00 pm

## Booters' WC Qualifiers fate to be decided today

SPORTS REPORTER

Bangladesh will get to know their opponents of the first round of joint qualifiers for FIFA World Cup and Asian Cup today when the draw takes place at the headquarters of Asian Football Confederation in Kuala Lumpur.

As the top 27 teams of the AFC region will directly play in the second round of qualifiers, the bottom 18 teams will play in Round 1, on home and away basis on October 12 and 17 respectively. From there, nine winners will qualify for the second round. Bangladesh had beaten Laos 1-0 on aggregate at the same stage in the last edition of the qualifiers for 2022 World Cup after having been beaten 3-1 on aggregate by in 2016 for the 2018 World Cup.

The men in red and green will face one of these nine teams, namely Indonesia (150), Chinese Taipei (153), Maldives (155), Yemen (156), Afghanistan (157), Singapore (158), Myanmar (160), Nepal (175) and Cambodia (176).

## Japan, Spain roll into last 16

AFP, Auckland

Rampant title contenders Spain and former champions Japan became the first teams to reach the Women's World Cup last 16 on Wednesday as both won with ease.

Two-times Ballon d'Or winner Alexia Putellas started for Spain following her serious knee injury and played her part in a 5-0 demolition of Zambia.

Japan had been on the brink of reaching the knockout rounds following their 2-0 win over Costa Rica earlier in the day and the Spain result



## 'A performing Tamim will have everything on his side'

SPORTS REPORTER

While there are lots of question marks regarding Tamim Iqbal's return to the team following his unretirement, however, two of his mentors in former ODI captain Mashrafe Bin Mortaza and Nazmul Abedeen Fahim talked about the most important part of Tamim's return, which is to come back with motive and full fitness.

Tamim had departed for the UK on Tuesday and was set for meetings with doctors, accompanied by the Bangladesh Cricket Board (BCB) chief physician, Debasish Chowdhury. He had held online meetings with doctors at least three to four times and his schedules had been set prior to the visit to the UK.

He has a few MRI reports with him and more scans are to be done in England, according to BCB sources.

Tamim had only overturned his decision to retire following intervention from Bangladesh Prime Minister. Tamim also had requested that Mashrafe Bin Mortaza become the team's mentor for the 2023 ODI World Cup in India. At the moment, though, Mashrafe did not see the point of having a mentor under the current circumstances.

"What's to gain from a mentor? Can someone tell me? I don't know why he [Tamim] asked. I don't know what a mentor does. When a situation [team's requirement] like that comes, then something can be said. At this moment I don't have an answer," Mashrafe said while attending a programme for a university yesterday.

He further clarified that if the Prime Minister asks him too, there will be no objections from Mashrafe's side. However, his main issue at the moment in Tamim's retirement saga is not what caused the player to retire in the first place. Rather he wanted Tamim to hold his

end of the bargain in terms of fitness and performance.

"I don't know exactly [what happened]. He didn't share much with me. I was more upset seeing Tamim vulnerable. I feel that Tamim should return with a hundred per cent fitness. We won't hope that he will be thinking about who is on his side or not. We will be thinking that he is a performer who will perform and automatically everything will be on his side," Mashrafe said.

The upcoming World Cup is also a golden opportunity for Tamim, having served the national team for a long time. At the twilight of his career, veteran coach Fahim believes that all his focus needs to be on getting the best out of what probably would be his last appearance in the showpiece event.

"The World Cup is a big occasion and, of course, he would want to perform very well. He is still the captain, as the BCB president said. If there had been criticism of him, what would be best is for him to reply to those criticisms with performances. He is capable of that. If he focuses on other issues, it will make him more vulnerable.

"What's most important right now is to be free of injury so he can play. To be able to answer criticism with performances is the most satisfying. Another thing is to play well because he may not have that opportunity again, so it has to be seen from the view that it's the best opportunity of his life," Fahim told The Daily Star yesterday.

"Lot of people support him and want him to do well, so he has to borrow strength from within himself, not outside. Injuries have long term and short-term solutions, and maybe he will discuss the short-term solutions with doctors keeping the World Cup in mind. What will be key now is how much he can focus on his physical fitness."



## 'My idol is Ronaldo'

AFP, Auckland

Argentina's Women's World Cup striker Yamil Rodriguez has defended having a tattoo of Cristiano Ronaldo on her leg, saying: "I don't hate Messi."

The 25-year-old faced flak on social media from fans back home after they spotted the ink on her left shin of Portugal's Ronaldo -- the great rival of Argentina captain Lionel Messi.

"Please, enough, I'm not doing well. At what point did I say I'm anti-Méssi?" Rodriguez wrote on social media in response.

"Messi is our great captain in the national team, but the fact that I say that my inspiration and my idol is CR7 (Ronaldo) does not mean that I hate Messi. Enough, it's time and it hurts."

Rodriguez, who came on as a substitute in Monday's 1-0 World Cup defeat to Italy, has numerous other tattoos, including one of Argentina legend Diego Maradona.



## Australia eye to end 22-year wait

AFP, London

Australia may have retained the Ashes but a chance to win a Test series in England will spur them on after they "got away" with a draw in Manchester.

Ashes-holders Australia have arrived in London for a series finale at The Oval starting Thursday with the urn secured at 2-1 up with one to play after England dominated the fourth Test at Old Trafford, only for rain to ensure the match ended in a draw.

Australia also led 2-1 in 2019 only for England to win at The Oval and end the series all square at 2-2.

Pat Cummins's squad, which contains several survivors from that trip, are determined to avoid a repeat as they bid to end Australia's 22 year wait for an Ashes series win in England.

Australia will consider recalling specialist spinner Todd Murphy, omitted from an attack plundered for 592 at Old Trafford -- a total featuring Zak Crawley's 189.

It was less than two months ago that now injured off-spinner Nathan Lyon helped

bowl Australia to victory at The Oval in the World Test Championship final against India, taking 4-41 in the second innings.

All-rounder Mitchell Marsh, who returned to Test cricket after a four-year absence with a hundred in England's win in the third Test at Headingley, is struggling with "soreness", while fast bowler Mitchell Starc has a shoulder problem.

As a result, fellow paceman Michael Neser could make his first appearances of the series after a successful stint with Glamorgan in the English County Championship.

England, meanwhile, named an

unchanged team for the match on Wednesday.

Fast bowler James Anderson, 40, has retained his place in the side despite struggling to make an impact in the series with just four wickets in three matches.

Anderson said he has "no thoughts about retirement" in his Telegraph column on Tuesday.

Pace bowler Stuart Broad, who captured his 600th test wicket when he dismissed Australian Travis Head in the fourth test, will play his fifth match of the series.

England have sometimes inadvertently annoyed the rest of the cricket world with



a self-proclaimed mission to "save" the Test format, making it sound as if their wins are to be celebrated and any defeats don't matter provided the public are entertained.

That opinion is unlikely to be changed by England batsman Harry Brook saying Tuesday: "If we can win this week, it almost makes it a moral victory."

England's aggressive 'Bazball' style, however, has yielded 12 wins from 17 Tests since England captain Ben Stokes and coach Brendon McCullum joined forces last year.

In this series, Stokes was arguably too bold when least required by declaring on the opening day of the first Test at Edgbaston before England had scored 400 in a match Australia eventually won by two wickets and insufficiently bold by not declaring at Old Trafford in a match forecast to be interrupted severely by rain.

Not that he seemed overly concerned, with the all-rounder saying after the Manchester washout: "As much as I would love to be an Ashes winning captain, I want this to be a legacy team. Regardless of how the series ends up, people will always talk about us."