

Bumrah returns as captain

ICC

Jasprit Bumrah has been named captain of India's young 15-member squad for the T20I series against Ireland.

Bumrah will make a comeback after nearly a year after he was ruled out of the T20 Asia Cup in September 2022 with a recurring back injury. He last made an appearance in India's T20I bilateral series against Australia at home.

The 29-year-old participated in a few practice games, with the NCA staff led by VVS Laxman satisfied with Bumrah's recovery.

This will not be Bumrah's first stint as captain, having skipped the side in a one-off Test match last summer in England. Ruturaj Gaikwad has been named as Bumrah's deputy, while fast bowler Prasidh Krishna, who himself was being rehabilitated for a lumbar stress fracture also makes a return.

Krishna, who was out of action since the tour of Zimbabwe in August 2022, also underwent surgery in December before working towards making a return.

Jitesh Sharma, Rinku Singh and Shivam Dube have also got their call-ups to the squad based on their impressive performances in the IPL this year.

The majority of the squad selected for the series is the same as the one named for the Asian Games in Hangzhou.

The three-match T20I series will take place from 18 to 23 August in Ireland. All matches will be played in Dublin.

T20I squad: Jasprit Bumrah (c), Ruturaj Gaikwad (vc), Yashasvi Jaiswal, Tilak Varma, Rinku Singh, Sanju Samson (wk), Jitesh Sharma (wk), Shivam Dube, Washington Sundar, Shahbaz Ahmed, Ravi Bishnoi, Prasidh Krishna, Arshdeep Singh, Mukesh Kumar, Avesh Khan



All-rounder Mehedi Hasan Miraz wears a broad smile as he speaks on the phone at the Sher-e-Bangla National Stadium in Mirpur yesterday on the first day of Bangladesh team's fitness camp. (Inset) ODI skipper Tamim Iqbal returned to Dhaka in the evening following health treatment in England.

PHOTO: FIROZ AHMED

Another Red Bull trophy hits the floor

REUTERS, Spa-Francorchamps

Red Bull suffered a second trophy malfunction in a week on Sunday after the one handed to the winning constructor at the Belgian Grand Prix was broken after a celebratory team photograph.

The race marked Red Bull's record 12th win in 12 races this season, making them the first F1 team to achieve such a run in a single year.

In Hungary last Sunday the porcelain race winner's trophy handed to Max Verstappen toppled off the podium and smashed after McLaren's Lando Norris popped his champagne by bashing the bottle on the ground.

"It's broken again, the trophy's broken again," Verstappen, who has now won eight in a row and leads the championship by 125 points, shouted in footage posted by Red Bull on Instagram.

Video showed team members rushing towards the camera and as they ran, a pit board toppled onto the trophy placed in front of it.



Marchand, McKeown lay down the marker

AFP, Fukuoka

Leon Marchand's performances at swimming's world championships gave a tantalising glimpse of what he could achieve at next year's Paris Olympics, while Australia's stars will also be confident after an impressive display.

French sensation Marchand was irresistible in Fukuoka, winning three gold medals and breaking Michael Phelps' long-standing 400m individual medley world record.

The 21-year-old cut a relaxed figure in and out of the pool, rarely looking flustered.

The Paris Olympics will be a different matter, with the expectations of the host nation cranked up to potentially overwhelming levels.

Marchand said he was "super-happy" with what he achieved in Japan, where he was named the competition's top men's swimmer.

"It's not perfect, there are always things to improve," he said. "But I'm super-satisfied with what I've done this year."

Australia's Kaylee McKeown took the women's MVP award after sweeping all three backstroke events. She was one of several outstanding performers in an Australian team that tied their best world championships tally of 13 golds to top the medal table for the first time since 2001.

McKeown said the prize was a reward for "how well we've done as a collective as an Australian team".

'Easy to give up but only fighters emerge as greats'

SPORTS REPORTER

Bangladesh ODI captain Tamim Iqbal returned to the country from the UK on Monday, having undergone treatment for his back pain. The cricketer will begin his rehabilitation process following a week's rest.

There still lies a lot of ifs or buts regarding Tamim's return to the side, with regaining fitness being the main challenge for the cricketer. Another important thing for Tamim, the skipper, will be to gain clarity regarding the way he wants to prepare himself and the team for the upcoming Asia Cup and the World Cup.

"First of all, any player, does not matter if it is Tamim or anyone else, it's important that he is fully fit," Khaled Mahmud Sujon, former captain and the Bangladesh Cricket Board (BCB) director, concurred with the notion that fitness would be the key for Tamim now.

"Undoubtedly, Tamim is still one of the best openers for Bangladesh, and we all know his importance in the team. But when you are talking about the World Cup, you cannot afford to have a player who is not fully fit as it's a game of 600 balls and you need to be on your toes all the time. However, I am hopeful that Tamim will be able to recover from his injury and return to his best which will benefit Bangladesh in big events," Sujon added when he

spoke to The Daily Star yesterday.

While Sujon focused on Tamim's fitness, the left-handed opener's mentor and prominent coach Mohammad Salahuddin emphasised more on the mental strength that the cricketer needs to show going forward.

"Look, it's always easy to give up but those who fight in tough situations are the ones who



eventually emerge as greats. Most players around the world struggle both on and off the field, but [a rough patch] doesn't mean you just give up. It is important for Tamim to think about his game, how he will score runs and gain the confidence back," said Salahuddin.

It is not just about Tamim's return as a player as a lot will also depend on his leadership qualities.

His involvement in the team selection for the mega events will also play a very crucial role in the coming days.

"It will be crucial for the selectors, captain, and coach to have a collective plan when it comes to forming the squad. It will be important that they manage to keep the outside noise or influence away from the selection process and base it on facts and strategies," Salahuddin added.

There are quite a few areas on the national side the solutions to which the selectors are yet to figure out. Talks of possible inclusions of Mahmudullah Riyad and Soumya Sarkar are doing the rounds, considering the unsettled number seven position in the batting line-up.

According to both Salahuddin and Sujon, for team management, it would be important to cast aside any outside noise or personal bias and depend solely on the demand of the team, and its strategy in order to pick the best option from the available pool of players for the upcoming major events.

"It is very obvious that there will be arguments and dissatisfaction whenever few people sit together to form the squad. It is like a family where we fight, and argue but in the end, we keep it among us. What I don't like is when such things get leaked in public. That is not good for Bangladesh cricket," Sujon said.



Japan players bow to the crowd following their stunning 4-0 win over Spain in a FIFA Women's World Cup Group C fixture at the Wellington Regional Stadium on Monday. The Japanese enjoyed only 23 per cent possession yet ran riot against the Spaniards to progress to the Round of 16 as group winners, with Spain also advancing from the group.

PHOTO: REUTERS

USA in unfamiliar territory

AFP, Auckland

The United States may need a big win against Portugal at the Women's World Cup on Tuesday to top Group E.

The holders and favourites to win an unprecedented third consecutive World Cup have not yet hit peak form, beating minnows Vietnam 3-0 in their opening game at the tournament and then drawing 1-1 with the Netherlands in a repeat of the 2019 final.

Level on four points with the Dutch at the top of their group, a big win for the Netherlands against a weak Vietnam could relegate the Americans to second place.

But the priority for the record four-time world champions is to avoid defeat against tournament debutants Portugal, who have three points, and prevent a shock first-round exit.



Stokes drops Smith before rain

AFP, London

Ben Stokes gave Australia's Steve Smith a potentially match-changing reprieve after early wickets revived England's hopes of a series-leveling win on the last day of the final Ashes Test at The Oval on Monday.

Australia were 238-3 at lunch, needing 146 more runs to reach a mammoth target of 384, but the rain swept in as the players were taking the field after the interval.

The rain delay led to a mounting sense of frustration for England, who rued missing out on the prized wicket of Smith in the last over before lunch after he gloved off-spinner Moeen Ali.

The ball looped to England captain Stokes at leg gully, who grabbed it one-handed above his head. But as his arm came down, his hand clipped his leg and he dropped the ball.

Star batsman Smith was initially given not out and an England review confirmed Stokes's error.