

Forward-thinking approach in Asia Cup squad-selection

SPORTS REPORTER

Bangladesh's Asia Cup squad was named yesterday with youngster Tanzid Hasan Tamim the only new face. There were some interesting picks by Bangladesh Cricket Board (BCB) and, by and large, the selection was based on forward-thinking, done after discussions with both the team management, head coach Chandika Hathurusingha, and newly appointed ODI skipper Shakib Al Hasan. The squad left little room for controversy, with due process maintained, and not many options were left outside the 17 members picked for the Asia Cup. The selectors yesterday clarified the team was only being announced for the Asia Cup and not the coming series against New Zealand or the World Cup. The most interesting part of the selection was the inclusion of the trio: Afif Hossain, Shamim Hossain and all-rounder Mahedi Hasan. Shamim, yet to make his ODI debut, came up with an adequate performance in the first T20I against Afghanistan during a pressure situation and was rewarded. Mahedi last featured for the Tigers last year in the previous Asia Cup, played in the T20 format. He had struggled since then but his performance in the recently concluded Emerging Teams Asia Cup in Sri Lanka, and his profile as an off-spinner who can bat, meant the team management wanted his versatility. Afif, meanwhile, did not perform up to expectation and his inclusion was the most discussed by selectors. He was picked on potential. "We have discussed a lot about all the players. We discussed a lot about Afif and on why the team management wanted him. There were also some considerations on what the captain and the



Tanzid Hasan Tamim, called up to the national team for the first time for the upcoming Asia Cup, wears a broad smile as he speaks with head coach Chandika Hathurusingha during Bangladesh's ongoing training camp at the Sher-e-Bangla National Stadium in Mirpur yesterday.

PHOTO: STAR

Tanzid comes prepared for adventure

ABDULLAH AL MEHDI

Yesterday morning, youngster Tanzid Hasan Tamim got a taste of the national team's atmosphere in more ways than one. Facing Taskin Ahmed, albeit in a match-scenario training, is a difficult prospect even for someone playing international cricket. When the 22-year-old picked Taskin off for six over square-leg, with what could best be described as something in between a front foot and a flick, it showed his potential for havoc; an x-factor perhaps. Chandika Hathurusingha was watching closely from the sidelines. Tanzid got his call for a very important Asia Cup tournament with the World Cup looming in the horizon. His namesake Tamim Iqbal's injury had put him in the squad and, going by current form, he may well be the main opener alongside Liton Das in the upcoming tournament in Pakistan and Sri Lanka. Taskin bowled with venom, often getting the ball to tail in viciously at the left-hander. He got Tanzid's scalp as well, although the youngster had pointed to his bat after pace-bowling coach Allan Donald, standing in as the umpire, raised his finger for a leg-before decision. Before that, Tanzid looked unnerved against Taskin and Hasan Mahmud's short stuff. A glorious cover-drive off Hasan, a few lofted shots for four against Mustafizur Rahman showed he was not out of place amongst the big boys. Adventure was part of his strength and struggle through to his national team journey. Tanzid is a product of Bangla Trac academy, under former Bangladesh team director Khaled Mahmud Sujon who remembered the criticism he once faced when picking Tanzid for Dhaka Dynamites in 2020. "When Tanzid called me this morning and said he was picked, I started remembering that day and the manner of criticism I faced for having

picked him. "I knew he had potential. He is good at playing the cut and pull shots. He is also good at drives and over the top shots. This morning I told him that you have to play your own natural game when you get the opportunity. If he tries to change his natural game, curb his aggressive instinct, it will only cause him hardship," Mahmud told The Daily Star yesterday. Tawhid Hridoy also hails from the same Bangla Trac batch as Tanzid. "Hridoy was more disciplined while Tanzid was more adventurous," Mahmud recalled. Having first entered the limelight for Uttara Sporting Club in the Dhaka First Division Cricket League in 2017-18, his two tons that season saw his prospects improve with U-17 selection. Tanzid would then make the U-19s side after scoring 371 runs in the next season for Uttara. A lean patch, too, came in 2022 as he suffered a shoulder injury following the tournament. 474 runs for Brothers Union in the last DPL showed he can suffer and rise. "He had a lean patch in between, after the initial burst, but it only made him stronger," Mahmud felt. Mahmud, as manager of the U-19 World Cup-winning side in 2020, saw Tanzid's potential early. "We knew that he had ability to play shots and also had power. He had innings which did not get too long but the starts were aggressive like Tamim's [Iqbal] and he had variety of shots. During the World Cup, he was getting out after scoring 40-50 quickly and coaches have worked on it. At Potchefstroom, he was sending deliveries out of the park," U-19 game development Abu Emam Mohammad Kawsar recalls. The team management are banking on that potential. Judging by Hathurusingha's discussion with the opener, he may just be given the licence to go with the natural game he possesses.

Bayern move a 'right step' for Kane

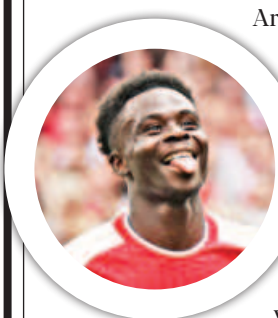
REUTERS, MUNICH



England captain Harry Kane has joined Bundesliga champions Bayern Munich from Premier League club Tottenham Hotspur on a four-year deal, the German club said on Saturday. Bayern, who kick off their season later on Saturday in the Super Cup against RB Leipzig, said the 30-year-old striker was signed until 2027 after protracted talks between the two clubs. They did not disclose the transfer fee, which media reports have put at around 100 million euros (\$109 million). That would be a Bundesliga record, smashing the 80 million euros paid by Bayern to sign Lucas Hernandez from Atletico Madrid in 2019. Kane, who passed his medical late on Friday, has spent most of his career at Tottenham after joining their academy as an 11-year-old, scoring a club record 280 goals in over 430 appearances in all competitions. He is also the second-highest Premier League scorer of all time with 213 goals - 47 behind Alan Shearer - and with 58 goals for his country in 84 games, Kane is England's all-time leading marksman. "I am happy to be here," Kane said in club interview. I felt it was the right step in my career. (Bayern have) a good winning culture year-on-year," he added. Signing Kane, who also brings a wealth of experience and leadership qualities, means Bayern have finally landed a striker to replace Robert Lewandowski who left for Barcelona in 2022.

Arsenal clinch nervy win over Forest

REUTERS



Arsenal began their new Premier League campaign with a nervy 2-1 home win over Nottingham Forest on Saturday after first-half goals from Eddie Nketiah and Bukayo Saka. Forest's Taiwo Awoniyi gave Arsenal a heart-in-mouth moment with a late goal but victory moved last year's runners-up level with leaders Manchester City on three points but behind on goal difference after the champions beat Burnley 3-0 on Friday. Kickoff was delayed by 30 minutes due to turnstile issues at Emirates Stadium which prevented fans from getting in on time. But once the game kicked off Arsenal shot out of the blocks, dominating possession and cutting through Forest's defence. Arsenal's persistence paid off and they put an end to Forest's stubborn resistance when a sublime pirouette from Gabriel Martinelli put two defenders in a spin and set up Nketiah, who fired home past former Arsenal keeper Matt Turner. They doubled the lead six minutes later when 21-year-old Saka received the ball at the edge of the box and curled in his shot from distance, giving Turner no chance to make a save.

Gustavsson hails 'leave it all out there' attitude

REUTERS, Brisbane

Australia coach Tony Gustavsson expressed his pride in his team for the dramatic penalty shootout victory over France on Saturday that, he felt, meant much more than just a place in the semi-finals of the Women's World Cup. As the nation celebrated, Cortnee Vine's winning penalty was already being compared in its impact to the one John Aloisi converted against Uruguay in 2005 to send Australia's men to their first World Cup for more than three decades. The Matildas have now exceeded anything the Socceroos have managed at a global level and the significance of being one of the best four teams in the world for the first time was not lost on an emotional Gustavsson. "The amount of heart and soul and passion that this team showed tonight," the Swede told reporters. "There's different ways of defining success but, for me, success is when you leave it all out there, no matter the result, you play with your heart and give it your best with the crest on your chest and the players did that tonight." That represents so much more than 90 minutes of football," he continued.



England's Alessia Russo celebrates with teammates after scoring the winning goal in a 2-1 victory over Colombia during their FIFA Women's World Cup quarterfinal fixture in Sydney yesterday. The Lionesses will play their semifinal against cohosts Australia (Inset), who beat France in penalty shootout in the other quarterfinal of the day in Brisbane.

PHOTO: REUTERS