

Young Tigers to begin 2024 U19 WC against India

ICC
Bangladesh, the winners of the 2020 edition of the ICC U19 Men's Cricket World Cup, will take on defending champions India in their opening fixture of the 2024 edition on January 15.

The match schedule for the tournament was revealed by the ICC on Friday.

The action starts on 13 January with three fixtures taking place on opening day. Hosts Sri Lanka take on Zimbabwe, while 2022 finalists England play Scotland and New Zealand face off against Nepal.

In the group listings, holders India are joined by Bangladesh, Ireland and USA in Group A. Group B consists of England, South Africa, West Indies and Scotland. Group C features Australia, Sri Lanka, Zimbabwe and Namibia while Group D is made up of Afghanistan, Pakistan, New Zealand and Nepal.

Sixteen teams are set to compete for the silverware across 41 matches from 13 January to 4 February.



A woman poses for photographs with the 2022 Asian Games mascots -- Chenchen, Congcong and Lianlian -- along the promenade of Qiantang river in Hangzhou, China yesterday. The 19th edition of the continent's biggest sporting extravaganza -- featuring more than 12 thousand athletes from 45 nations -- kicks off today.

PHOTO: AFP

Kaur, Joty willing to leave past behind

SPORTS REPORTER

Harmanpreet Kaur, captain of India women's team, said she and her squad had moved on from the controversial incidents when they last faced Bangladesh as the two teams lock horns in the Asian Games semifinals in Hangzhou on Sunday.

"What happened has happened, and I think we should move forward," Kaur told reporters on Friday, alluding to the third and final ODI in Bangladesh in July, where her act of dissent after getting out and criticising umpiring during the presentation ceremony cost her a two-match suspension.

Bangladesh's quarter-final match against Hong Kong yesterday was called off due to rain, but the Tigresses proceeded to the next round on virtue of being the higher-ranked team.

India advanced in similar circumstances after their quarterfinals match against Malaysia was abandoned the day before.

Bangladesh skipper Nigar Sultana Joty, meanwhile, was unwilling to linger on the past as well. Asked if Bangladesh will have extra pressure against India, Joty responded, "No, we will treat it as just another match. We have recent experience playing against them [India], having won the previous time we faced them."

If rain plays spoilsport in that match, India will progress to the final due to their superior ranking.

Opportunity to keep gauging missing pieces

SPORTS REPORTER

Bangladesh will continue to gauge their strength in the second and penultimate ODI against New Zealand on Saturday with the Tigers' World Cup squad likely to be named by Monday, a day before the series concludes.

Bad weather forced the first ODI to get called off on Thursday, and chances of rain are in the offing again.

A win today would ensure the Tigers arrive at the showpiece on the back of some momentum. Even though the conditions will unlikely resemble the ones at the World Cup in India in October, the team would still hope for some of their batters -- Tamim Iqbal, Liton Das, Soumya Sarkar and, in particular, Mahmudullah Riyad -- to spend time at the crease.

While the likes of Tamim, Liton, Tanzid Hasan and Soumya will likely slot into the top-order again, the need of the hour would be to assess how Mahmudullah and Mahedi Hasan contribute, with those two possibly vying for similar roles at the showpiece event.

In the series opener, Bangladesh picked two seamers alongside spinner Nasum Ahmed while Mahmudullah, Mahedi and Soumya filled in as options for a 20-over slot.

Asked about the bowling options, given

just four specialist bowlers which also includes Mahedi, Bangladesh assistant coach Nic Pothas said on Thursday: "The squad we have now, we were always going to pick a team that's going to win the game in front of us."

"For that particular pitch [in the first

were picked off him in his last over.

However, late last night BCB added Hasan Mahmud to the squad for the second match.

Nevertheless, the Tigers will relatively be in a comfort zone in terms of their bowling, perhaps wanting to fit the last piece of the puzzle in terms of sixth bowling option. Nasum Ahmed's performances in the first ODI, too, would be a positive in terms of finding the right options in both bowling and lower-order batting areas.

The pitch, given the conditions, would not provide batters the right opportunity to flourish; although the visitors set a good example on Thursday after Will Young and Henry Nicholls produced a 97-run stand, showing the need for perseverance and being set on such wickets.

New Zealand skipper Lockie Ferguson was not sure whether the batting conditions would help, but felt facing spinning tracks was a positive before the World Cup. The Tigers may have to focus on something similar as well.

"The conditions here might be different than in India, but certainly playing on spinning tracks is always helpful. But yeah, from our point of view, we're just taking those learnings and focusing on this series," Ferguson said after the first ODI.



ODI], we felt that was the best makeup for the side... We never know how the game might have turned out but it went pretty well.

"The next pitch may be different in which case there might be a different makeup of the team."

Mahmudullah being able to contribute with the ball would help his case. He bowled four overs for 21 runs and kept the away side relatively quiet, except for the 10 runs that

\$4m on offer for World Cup winners

ICC

The 13th edition of the ICC Men's Cricket World Cup will see the winners of the 10-team tournament earn US\$4 million, along with the trophy that they will lift at the Narendra Modi Stadium in Ahmedabad on 19 November.

The runners-up will receive US\$2 million, while the losing semi-finalists will get \$800,000 each from the total prize pot of US\$10 million. The 48-match event will be played across 10 venues from 5 October.

The biggest Cricket World Cup ever will see prizes for each league match won. Teams will play each other once in a round-robin format, with the top four making it to the semi-finals.

The winners of each match in the group stage will receive US\$40,000 and the six teams that do not qualify for the semi-finals will receive a payment of US\$100,000.

STAGE	RATE US\$	TOTAL US\$
Winner	4,000,000	4,000,000
Runner-up	2,000,000	2,000,000
Losing semi-finalists	800,000	1,600,000
Teams eliminated from group-stage	100,000	600,000
Winner of each group-stage match	40,000	1,800,000

Hasan Ali replaces Naseem in WC squad

AFP, Lahore

Pakistan called up experienced paceman Hasan Ali to their World Cup squad on Friday to replace the injured Naseem Shah.

Hasan, 29, was player of the tournament when Pakistan won the ICC Champions Trophy in 2017, but lost his place as Naseem, Haris Rauf and Shaheen Shah Afridi formed the main pace attack.

Chief selector Inzamam-ul-Haq said Hasan was the best choice to replace Naseem in the 15-man squad for the World Cup.

Pakistan axed all-rounder Faheem Ashraf and Mohammad Harris were axed from the squad that crashed out of the Asia Cup this month at the Super Four stage after defeats to India and Sri Lanka.

Opener Fakhr Zaman scored 65 runs in four innings in the Asia Cup, but kept his place in the World Cup squad.

There were questions about leg-spinning allrounder Shadab Khan as well, after he managed six wickets in his last five ODIs.

However, he also made the cut and retained the vice-captaincy of the team.



Bangladesh lost 3-1 against Philippines in their second match of the AFC U-17 Asian Cup Qualifiers in Thailand yesterday. The second defeat in two games means Bangladesh are out of contention for next year's final round to be held in Indonesia.

PHOTO: AFC

Japan women hand Titu's charges a tough lesson

SPORTS REPORTER FROM HANGZHOU

The difference in women's football between Bangladesh and Japan -- one of the best in Asia as well as the world -- has seemingly not reduced over the last few years as the women in red and green were handed an 8-0 thrashing by the former World champions in their debut match of the Asian Games at Wenzhou Olympic Sports Centre yesterday.

Bangladesh's under-16 women's team had suffered a 9-0 defeat against their Japanese counterparts during the 2019 AFC Women's Championship in Thailand. That team had featured the likes of Monica Chakma, Maria Manda, Rupna Chakma, Shamsunnahar and Tahura Khatun. All those players were part of the Bangladesh senior team as they played against the Japanese senior team for the first time yesterday.

Japan dominated throughout the game with four goals coming in either half. Chiba Remina, Tanikawa Momoko and substitute Sakakibara Kotona struck two goals each while Shiokoshi Yuzuho and substitute Hijikata Maya netted one goal apiece for the 2011 world champions.

"We have clearly understood the

difference between two sides and as saw how easily mistakes could be made and punished. Actually the third-player running of Japan in the attacking half destroyed us. Even though our players watched the ball carefully, they could not mark the third-player running properly," Bangladesh coach Saiful Bari Titu said after the match.

"The girls played such a match for the first time and it was their biggest challenge though a lot of World Cup players from Japan did not play in this match," Titu said. "However, sometime the girls tried to resist and exchanged the ball among them but that was not good enough against a team like Japan."

"Japanese players were very quick and physically fit whereas our girls have the mental toughness to do well but they are behind physically, technically and tactically," the veteran coach opined.

Asked whether it was reality check for Bangladesh after becoming SAFF Championship last year, Titu said, "Bangladesh beat India once and drew once and beat Nepal once in the SAFF Championships. So it was a reality check for India and Nepal. Our reality check is the difference between a small team and a top-level team."



Olympique Marseille striker Pierre-Emerick Aubameyang celebrates one of his two goals during a 3-3 draw against Ajax Amsterdam in their Europa League fixture at the Johan Cruyff Arena in Amsterdam yesterday. The Gabonese striker, once one of the hottest properties in European football, will be looking to get his career back on track after difficult times at Chelsea and Barcelona.

PHOTO: REUTERS