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## England haven't 'lost faith' as India challenge looms

AGENCIES

England face unbeaten hosts India in Lucknow on Sunday, coming in the contest with four defeats from five matches to languish ninth in the 10-team table and with their hopes of making the semifinals almost over.

The defending champions are feeling the heat of a lacklustre World Cup campaign but assistant coach Marcus Trescothick insisted Saturday that they haven't "lost faith" in the under-pressure 50-over format.

"We're all feeling the heat. But what can you do? We prepared the same," Trescothick told reporters. Critics have targeted England's approach to the 50-over format after they won the crown in 2019.

They played just 13 ODI matches in the build-up to their title defence.

"Forgive me, I don't want to be blunt here, but we haven't lost faith in what it is," said Trescothick.

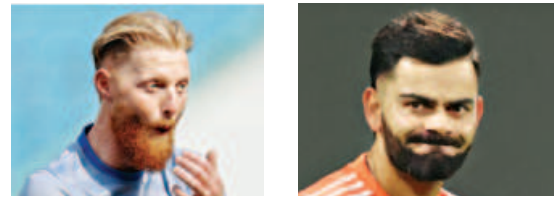
"We love playing any form of cricket, any form of the game that we play. And we were desperate to come here and try and win back-to-back 50-over competitions. So, we're still very much focused on all formats."

Oozing in confidence, India remain on the opposite end of the spectrum than England.

India have mostly looked irrepressible as they brushed aside each of their five opponents so far but will still be wary of a defending champion now well and truly on the ropes.

A well-balanced attack has been a key to India's bright start with 46 of a possible 50 batters dismissed thus far, including the full allotment against Australia, Pakistan, and New Zealand.

That will rightly concern an England outfit



- India hold a commanding lead with 56 victories to England's 44 after 106 ODIs. At home, India won 33 times against England's 17 in the format.
- In eight ICC World Cup matches between the two, England have a marginal edge with four wins. Three of the matches saw victories for India, and one ended in a tie in 2011.
- England are yet to lose to India in a World Cup fixture since 2003. England earned a 31-run victory the last time the two collided in the apex event.

that has failed to pass 200 in their two outings since scoring 215 to fall 69 runs short in the loss to Afghanistan that in hindsight exposed a range of deficiencies.

Trescothick said the team is looking forward to playing India and make the occasion their own.

"I think playing against India in a World Cup in their own country is a special part of the game, you get these opportunities that come around - you know there'll be a big crowd, there'll be a wonderful occasion," he said.

"We're looking forward to that chance. I think there's nothing more that we can offer apart from going out and playing that performance. And then hopefully you come out on top at the end of it. So, really excited for it."

England's latest loss was to Sri Lanka by eight wickets in a match their batting folded for 156 to leave their semifinal hopes in tatters.



### SCORES IN BRIEF

**Netherlands:** 229 all out in 50 overs (Barresi 41, Edwards 68, Engelbrecht 35; Shoriful 2-51, Taskin 2-43, Mustafizur 2-36, Mahedi 2-40)

**Bangladesh:** 142 all out in 42.2 overs (Tanzid 15, Miraz 35, Shakib 5, Mahmudullah 20, Mahedi 17, Mustafizur 20; Meekeren 4-23, Bas de Leede 2-25)

**Result:** Netherlands won by 87 runs.

**Player-of-the-match:** Paul van Meekeren

Shakib Al Hasan's sudden trip to Dhaka mid-tournament didn't work out as the all-rounder got caught for just five after another poorly executed cut shot as Bangladesh suffered an 87-run defeat against the Netherlands at the Eden Gardens in Kolkata yesterday.

PHOTO: AFP

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## Fervent Bangladesh fans 'expect better'

MAZHAR UDDIN from Kolkata

Bangladesh fans may not have completely filled the 66-thousand capacity Eden Gardens stadium but around 15 thousand of them made their presence known during Bangladesh's World Cup game against the Netherlands yesterday.

An air of anticipation of a victory enveloped the iconic stadium as supporters from all around Bangladesh started gathering, creating an exhilarating environment. Chants of 'Bangladesh, Bangladesh' could be heard throughout the game, transforming Kolkata into a mini Mirpur.

There was a lot at stake for the demoralised Bangladesh side after four consecutive defeats. Bangladesh supporters made sure they played the role of the twelfth man, fully backing the team once.

Bangladesh introduced two changes to their lineup, with pacer Taskin Ahmed and Mahedi Hasan returning. The changes in personnel worked well as the bowlers did their part in bundling out the Dutch for 229.

Pacers Shoriful Islam and Taskin struck early, dismissing both Dutch openers. Bangladesh, though, were made to pay for two dropped catches when Liton Das and Mushfiqur

Rahim handed reprieve to Dutch skipper Scott Edwards in the 16th over, leaving Mustafizur a frustrated figure. Edwards went on to score team-high 68 runs off 89 balls.

"I think we played average cricket because we dropped Dutch captain Edwards twice before he even opened his account," Ershad Alam, who traveled from Narayanganj to see the game, told The Daily Star. "We are pleased that the Tigers were able to bundle out the opponent for 229, but we expect better."

Despite Bangladesh's efforts in the middle overs, Netherlands gained momentum and scored 36 runs in the final three overs. In response, Bangladesh's top order once again failed and slumped to 70 for six, while enthusiastic Tigers fans fell mute in dismay.

"We expected a better performance from the top order because we were chasing a low target. It's quite disheartening if we can't beat a team like the Netherlands with authority. Whatever happens, we will support our team, but the players must take responsibility," said Shahed Ahmed, a businessman who travelled to Kolkata with his family to watch the Tigers in action.

Bangladesh team boast one of the most passionate fanbase, as Eden Gardens witnessed yesterday. However, also on display was that having a twelfth man counts little to nothing if majority of the ones in playing eleven are incapable of rising to the occasion, like they could not in their 87-run defeat yesterday.



## 'Awesome', 'fantastic', but Kiwis again at the wrong end

AGENCIES

Both Australia and New Zealand skippers talked highly of the edge-of-the-seat World Cup thriller that transpired in Dharamshala yesterday even though Kiwis once again had to endure an agonising defeat in the mega event.

The five-time champions Australia made 388 and then saw the Black Caps come agonisingly close to pulling off the second-highest chase in one day internationals.

They finished on 383-9 having started the final over needing 19 to win and then seven off the last two deliveries before key batter Jimmy Neesham was run out. Neesham, like the entire nation, was devastated when New Zealand lost the final of the last editions World Cup just by boundary counts against England four years ago at Lord's.

"You need to play the perfect game when you are chasing near 400," said stand-in New Zealand skipper Tom Latham, adding that losing such a

game "obviously hurts".

"It was a fantastic game of cricket. There were ebbs and flows throughout the 100 overs. Obviously to get so close hurts," Latham added.

New Zealand battled hard with Rachin Ravindra making 116, Daryl

this tournament.

"It was a fantastic knock from Rachin, one of the better ones you'll see in a chase. It was pretty special to get close. I'm proud of the guys," added Latham.

Australia's win had been set up by a 175-run opening partnership between Travis Head, who top scored with 109 on his return to the team after breaking his hand, and fellow opener David Warner (81).

"That was awesome," said Cummins. "Sometimes I have to remember I'm out in the field, not a spectator. A fantastic game, they kept coming at us."

"I love the openers, especially Travis who's been away for five weeks," added Cummins.

"It was a good wicket. In patches we bowled really well, sometimes we gave too much width away. Some really good partnerships, it was tough to get into them."

Both Australia and New Zealand, with four wins and two defeats apiece, are well-placed to make the semifinals.



### WHAT TO WATCH

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Australia played the long game with Travis Head. The opener had fractured his hand in September, which made him unavailable for the first few weeks of the World Cup. Still, Australia named him in the squad, gave him time to recover and brought him in once he was fit. The opener repaid that faith yesterday with a scintillating century on World Cup debut that powered Australia to 388 against New Zealand, a match they won by just five runs in Dharamshala.

PHOTO: AFP