

Tigers look ahead to life without Tamim, Shakib

SPORTS REPORTER from Sylhet

With Tamim Iqbal retiring from international cricket and Shakib Al Hasan yet to reverse his bowling ban, Bangladesh are preparing for the fast-approaching ICC Champions Trophy without two of their biggest stars.

For the mega event -- scheduled to be held in Pakistan and the UAE from February 19 -- the selectors will announce a 15-member squad today.

Speculation about the inclusion of Tamim and Shakib had been building in recent weeks, especially after Bangladesh Cricket Board president Faruque Ahmed expressed interest in having Shakib in the team. Selectors also met Tamim in Sylhet to discuss a possible return.

The fact remains that neither has played an ODI since late 2023, and while skipper Najmul Hossain Shanto was open to their inclusion, Tamim's retirement announcement has now shifted focus towards Shakib. However, as it appears, Shakib's recent struggles as a batter, compounded by his failed bowling action test in Chennai, have all but ruled out his return for the event.

With the question of the duo's selection seemingly resolved, the selectors can now focus on forming a younger squad, making some last minute adjustments to a few positions. Most of the players from the recent tour to the West Indies are likely to be retained.

Skipper Najmul Hossain Shanto, Mushfiqur Rahim, Towhid Hridoy, and Mustafizur



The indelible legacy of TAMIM IQBAL

ASHEFAQ-UL-ALAM

"I have just one request to you all, please remember me, don't forget about me."

These were the parting words from Tamim Iqbal in a video he posted on September 27, 2023, a day after he was left out of the ODI World Cup squad for being unfit.

In that video, Tamim shared his side of the story, rubbing claims that he was fit for only five games in the World Cup and disclosed that a heated exchange over the phone with a top Bangladesh Cricket Board (BCB) official prompted him to make himself unavailable for the tournament.

Although Tamim did not expressly announce his retirement in that clip, his parting words implied exactly that.

Earlier that year, on July 6, Tamim had announced his shock retirement, which he retracted in less than 24 hours at the behest of then prime minister Sheikh Hasina.

Tamim played just one more game after coming out of retirement, an ODI against New Zealand in Mirpur where he made 44 off 58 balls,

which will now go down as his final knock for Bangladesh as on Friday night, Tamim again announced his retirement from international cricket on social media.

Unlike his previous retirement announcement, this was not a sudden decision as the 35-year-old had over a year to think before deciding to call time on an illustrious career -- one that has earned him the title of a living legend in Bangladesh cricket.

The southpaw finished his career as Bangladesh's greatest ever run accumulator in ODIs (8357), has

country's cricket.

Still, Tamim felt the need to ask the fans not to forget about him in 2023, why?

Perhaps the batter was worried that all the drama of his final active year in international cricket would taint his legacy forever and the people would forget his cricketing accomplishments and only remember the bitter ending.

Tamim had a chance to rewrite the ending by taking part in the ICC Champions Trophy, starting next month, but eventually chose not to.

Since getting axed from the

Tamim Iqbal is the first ever Bangladeshi to accumulate 15,000 runs in international cricket and is also the only Tiger batter to have a century in every format.

struck the highest number of centuries across formats (25), is the first ever Bangladeshi to accumulate 15,000 runs in international cricket and is also the only Tiger batter to have a century in every format.

In spite of the long list of accomplishments, considering the immense talent Tamim showcased at the start of his career, there lingers a sense of him failing to reach the heights he could have.

But there is no doubt that Tamim has set the benchmark for Bangladesh batters and has done more than enough to be always remembered as an icon of the

World Cup squad in 2023, Tamim had not been with the national team in any capacity. Had the selectors named him for the tournament, it would have surely caused a fresh uproar.

As the event drew closer, these speculations were swirling around with renewed zest till Tamim nipped it all in the bud with his retirement announcement. Tamim chose not to go for a fairytale ending but instead opted to step away quietly, as perhaps he has realised he does not need to do anything anymore, he has done enough to be remembered in Bangladesh cricket forever.

Butler to return in Feb for women's camp

SPORTS REPORTER



SAFF Championship winning coach Peter Butler will stay on, for the time being, as the head coach of Bangladesh national women's football team, confirmed Bangladesh Football Federation's (BFF) women's wing chairman Mahfuza Akter Kiron.

The Englishman, who arrived in Bangladesh as coach of BFF Elite Academy before taking over as women's team coach in March last year, saw his contract run out at the end of last year. Butler had been embroiled in controversy during the triumphant SAFF campaign in October last year over his prejudice against senior players.

Butler, who left for England following the tournament, had said he was open to talks over contract extension but Kiron had maintained that she wanted to keep the Englishman in charge, reportedly against the wish of a majority of the players.

While there has been no official contract extension with the federation as yet, Kiron informed that Butler will stay on as the coach of the team and will return to Bangladesh in February.

"Peter butler will stay on as our head coach. He will join the team's training camp in February," Kiron told reporters at the BFF House on Saturday.

The women's wing chairman further informed that the players will return to the camp on January 15 for the Asian Cup Qualifiers in June.

"The national women's team's camp will resume on January 15... They would start the camp with the March window in sight. We also have AFC Asian Cup Qualifiers in June," Kiron added.

Ibrahim on a roll as Abahani move second

SPORTS REPORTER

In-form forward Mohammad Ibrahim scored twice as Abahani moved into second position of the Bangladesh Premier League with a 4-0 thrashing of basement club Chittagong Abahani at the Shaheed Rafique Uddin Bhuiyan Stadium in Mymensingh on Saturday.

Ibrahim, who scored the all-important goal in their Federation Cup fixture against archrivals Mohammedan on Tuesday, opened the scoring with a clinical finish from the spot in the 42nd minute after his darting run was cut short just inside the box by Chittagong Abahani midfielder Fazlay Rabbi.

Enamul Gazi, who missed a glorious opportunity early in the first half, doubled Abahani's lead six minutes after restart when he poked home a low cross following a driving run down the right flank by the tireless Shahriar Emon.

Emon set up the third goal for Ibrahim in the 66th minute with a defence splitting through ball, which the latter finished off with a placing shot.

Substitute midfielder Asadul Molla put the icing on Abahani's cake with a fourth goal five minutes later with his first touch of the match following a corner as the Sky Blues took their goals tally in the league to 10 from seven games.

The win lifted Abahani to second position on 16 points from seven matches, one ahead of third-placed Rahmatganj MFS and five behind league leaders Mohammedan.

'Tamim's talent wasn't fully harnessed'

With Tamim Iqbal announcing his retirement on Friday, another chapter in the legacy of Chattogram's renowned 'Khan Family' in Bangladesh cricket has closed. Akram Khan, Tamim's uncle, was the family's first representative in the national team, playing for the Tigers from 1988 to 2003.

He was followed by Nafees Iqbal, Tamim's elder brother, who represented Bangladesh from 2003 to 2006. Tamim, the longest-serving family member in the national side and one of the country's greatest batters, debuted in 2007 and called it quits after an illustrious career filled with highs and lows. On Saturday, Akram, a former captain and current Bangladesh Cricket Board (BCB) director, shared his reflections with The Daily Star's Samsul Arefin Khan. He spoke about the family's emotions following Tamim's decision, his mixed feelings about Tamim's career, and thoughts on his nephew's future plans. The excerpts from the interview are as follows:

The Daily Star (DS): How do you view Tamim's retirement as both a former captain and his uncle?

Akram Khan (AK): It's quite normal, and it's part of life. I will miss him because Bangladesh achieved so many successes during his playing time, but at the same time, I would like to thank him because he was an extraordinary batsman.

When we began playing international cricket, bowlers had the upper hand against us. However, Tamim was the first Bangladeshi batsman to dominate them. And the proof is the 2007 World Cup when he went down the wicket to hit [India pacer] Zaheer Khan for a six. He was very young at that time. I think his fearless approach has taken Bangladesh cricket to new heights.

DS: Do you regret not seeing him in national colours for longer, especially post-2019?

AK: Definitely. After 2019, he was unable to play a lot of matches. I won't only blame Tamim or the others, as it was a collective fault of all people involved in the matter. We failed to fully harness his talent, merit, and

experience.

DS: With Tamim's retirement, how do you feel about the end of your family's representation in the national team?

AK: I was thinking the same thing from the morning. I made my national team debut in 1988, and since then, there was at least someone from the Khan family until yesterday [Friday]. Hopefully, the next generation can carry the legacy of the family.

I'm really missing my elder brother [Iqbal Khan] at this time. Tamim is the favourite son of our whole family. I think, along with me, all my family members are upset about it.

DS: What are your thoughts on his future plans, such as commentary or administration?

AK: I think he has an interest in commentary, and he has received a lot of praise so far. A businessman starts his business from zero. But a good player who gets involved in a similar type of profession will be fifty percent ahead. It's absolutely his call, though.

[About being in administration] It's his call, as I said before. Whatever he does, my support and prayers will always be with him.



Rahman are all set to return after missing the West Indies tour for various reasons. However, Parvez Hossain Emon, Alif Hossain, Hasan Mahmud, and Shoriful Islam might lose their places in the Champions Trophy squad.

The selectors will also monitor Soumya Sarkar's recovery from a finger injury before deciding whether to include him as one of three opening options alongside Liton Das and Tanzid Hasan. In the spin department, left arm spinner Nasum Ahmed is a likely choice in Shakib's absence, while spin-bowling all-rounder Mehedi Hasan Miraz and leg-spinner Rishad Hossain remain automatic choices.

Off-spinner Mahedi Hasan, who has been absent from the ODI setup since the 2023 World Cup, could make a surprise return due to his recent T20 performances.

As Bangladesh are set to play their Group A matches in Dubai and Rawalpindi, they are likely to opt for a four-man pace attack featuring Mustafizur, Taskin Ahmed, Nahid Rana, and Tanzim Hasan Sakib. Meanwhile, the inclusion of Jaker Ali Anik and Mahmudullah Riyad as finishers is expected.

Real look to avenge Barca thrashing in Super Cup

AGENCIES

Real Madrid's humiliating 4-0 home loss to Barcelona in October still haunts the club as the rivals prepare for their second Clásico of the season in the Spanish Super Cup final on Sunday.

LaLiga leaders Real recovered from that setback and are on a five-match winning streak ahead of defending the Super Cup in Jeddah, Saudi Arabia, but coach Carlo Ancelotti is cautious.

"We have to think about what happened in the first game because they beat us (in LaLiga)," Ancelotti told reporters on Saturday as he looked forward to Real's second cup final in a month, having won the Intercontinental Cup in December.

Ancelotti said his players could avenge their thrashing earlier this season by Barcelona, if they avoided making the same mistakes.

"We've made a pretty clear assessment, so we'll have to repeat the good things we did and avoid the mistakes. A Clásico is always a Clásico, but a final puts a bit more pressure on you," Ancelotti added.

Ancelotti has all the players who



If Real Madrid are able to defend the Spanish Super Cup against archrivals Barcelona on Sunday night, they will equal the Catalans' record of winning the title 14 times.

However, since the tournament changed to a four-team format since 2020, Real have won three (in 2020, 2022, and 2024) out of the five times. Athletic Bilbao (2021) and Barcelona (2023) won it once each.

Real also have a better record against Barcelona in the Spanish Super Cup -- Los Blancos have won seven times while Barca won twice in the seven occasions they went up against each other in the final.

The Super Cup offers Hansi Flick's first chance of winning a silverware since arriving at Barcelona.

travelled available for the final including England midfielder Jude Bellingham, who experienced some muscle issues during the semifinal where he scored the first goal in a 3-0 win over Mallorca.

The coach said the Super Cup was an important title, and statistically Real had a good season every time they won it.

"When we haven't won it, it hasn't gone well. It's a competition that gives you a lot more motivation," said Ancelotti, whose last two Champions League trophies with Real have coincided with Super Cup wins.

Meanwhile, Barcelona midfielder Dani Olmo will be able to play after the Catalans were controversially granted a temporary licence for him by Spain's national sports council (CSD).

Barcelona coach Hansi Flick said Olmo was ready to play but suggested he might not start after Gavi shone in the semifinal against Athletic Bilbao in the attacking midfield role.

"Gavi had a great performance against Athletic, he's got confidence... I think he's going to play, but I am not 100 percent sure of who will play," said Flick.

Ziska Pharmaceuticals Warns Against Counterfeit Tizaro

Ziska Pharmaceuticals, a global leader in healthcare innovation, has recently identified a concerning issue regarding counterfeit versions of our newly launched weight-reducing medicine, Tizaro.

These fake products, originating from unauthorized sources, pose significant health risks to patients and compromise the trust of our valued customers.

The counterfeit medicines are being distributed by certain individuals who have created fraudulent websites, including www.ziskapharma.cn and www.ziska-pharma.com, to mimic Ziska's official platform (www.ziskapharma.com). These websites have illegally cloned the content of our official website and generated fake codes for product verification, deceiving consumers into believing they are purchasing genuine Tizaro products.

Ziska Pharmaceuticals emphasizes that it has no affiliation with these fake websites or their counterfeit products, and we cannot be held responsible for any adverse effects caused by these fraudulent medicines. The health and safety of our customers are our utmost priorities, and we strongly urge everyone to exercise caution.

To ensure the authenticity of Tizaro:

1. Always purchase Tizaro from authorized pharmacies or distributors.
2. Verify the unique product code exclusively on www.ziskapharma.com.
3. Report any suspicious websites or products to Ziska Pharmaceuticals immediately.

We are actively working with legal authorities and cybersecurity experts to take down these fraudulent websites and hold the responsible parties accountable. Additionally, we are implementing stricter measures to protect our customers from counterfeit products.

Ziska Pharmaceuticals remains committed to delivering safe, effective, and high-quality healthcare solutions. If you have any doubts or concerns, please contact our customer care team.

Stay Safe. Buy Authentic. Protect Your Health.



Ziska Pharmaceuticals Ltd.
Green City Edge (3rd floor), 89 Kakraili C/A, Dhaka-1000
Tel : 88-02-8300667, 88-02-8300668, 88-02-8300669
E-mail: info@ziskapharma.com, Web: www.ziskapharma.com

