

Day of rest primes Tigers for Lankan showdown

- Sri Lanka hold the overall edge in T20Is against Bangladesh, winning 12 of the 20 encounters, while Bangladesh have eight victories.
- In Asia Cup T20 clashes, the record is level at 1-1. Bangladesh won in Mirpur in 2016, while Sri Lanka triumphed in Dubai in 2022.
- Bangladesh claimed victory in the most recent three-match T20I series between the two sides (2-1).
- Bangladesh captain Litton Das (2,496 runs) is 56 runs away from becoming the country's all-time leading run-scorer in T20Is.



Members of the Bangladesh team pose for a picture following Jumma prayers at the Sheikh Zayed Grand Mosque in Abu Dhabi yesterday.

PHOTO: FACEBOOK

EKUSH TAPADER from Abu Dhabi

The day after a match, Bangladesh players usually avoid practice sessions. Considering the UAE heat and the packed tournament schedule, not heading off to the field on the only gap day between matches against Hong Kong and Sri Lanka in Abu Dhabi made even more sense.

But this time, the Tigers had requested a complete day off on Friday -- no training, no media duties -- which posed a problem as a pre-match press conference is mandatory in Asia Cup.

To keep all parties happy, the Asian Cricket Council (ACC) came up with a unique solution: arranging the press conference at nearly midnight after the Hong Kong game on Thursday.

Pacer Tanzim Hasan Sakib, who attended, admitted the ACC's idea worked in their favour. "This decision was taken so that we could get the whole Friday off. It's definitely a good thing, it's very hot here. This way we can recover without any other worries."

Friday truly turned out to be a day of complete rest for the Tigers as other than

the Muslim members of the team offering Friday prayers at Abu Dhabi's famous Sheikh Zayed Grand Mosque at noon, there were no activities.

The team management instructed players to spend the day stress free, not think about cricket, and go into the Sri

boost their Super Four qualification chances whereas a defeat would drag them into tricky scenarios ahead of the Afghanistan clash.

Before taking the field, Bangladesh believe they have a psychological edge over the Lankans, having won their first

It's [Bangladesh vs Sri Lanka] actually a rivalry for fans. For us, as players, [it is] a good challenge and competition. We just want to give a good game to Bangladesh and also to other nations.

Sri Lanka captain Charith Asalanka



Lanka game refreshed and recharged.

Though Bangladesh started their campaign with an expected win over Hong Kong, their real challenge in the group-stage begins on Saturday with the Sri Lanka game, which would be followed by their final Group B match against Afghanistan on Tuesday.

A victory against the Lankans will

ever T20I series in Sri Lanka back in July. "We beat Sri Lanka in Sri Lanka, that gives us confidence. When you've beaten a team, it always puts you ahead mentally," Tanzim said.

Bangladesh also beat Sri Lanka in the last ICC T20 World Cup and again in the 2023 ICC World Cup. But in the Asia Cup, the story is different as in both the latest

ODI and T20 editions, the Tigers lost to Sri Lanka.

In Asia Cup T20s, the two teams are level with one win each while in the UAE, Bangladesh are yet to beat the islanders in a T20I, having lost to them in the previous two encounters.

Tanzim, however, preferred to only think about the recent sweet memories. "We'll go in with extra confidence against Sri Lanka. We won against them in the World Cup, we won the last series too. We've played them so many times that we know every player well. We'll be fully prepared."

Since the Nidahas Trophy in 2018, the Bangladesh-Sri Lanka rivalry has kicked up a few notches, and Tanzim admitted that the heat of the rivalry will inevitably be felt in Saturday's game as well. "Rivalry will always be there. But for me, rivalry isn't the main thing. Winning is very important."

Bangladesh are unlikely to make changes from the XI that beat Hong Kong. Tawhid Hridoy, who has been struggling with poor form, couldn't quite spread his wings against Hong Kong either, making an unbeaten 35 off 36. A big test awaits him against Sri Lanka.

Arsenal eye top spot, Real seek to stay perfect

AGENCIES

With the first international break of the season coming to a close, club football roars back into action this weekend. From England to Italy, Spain to Germany, several high-stakes fixtures headline Saturday's schedule, featuring managerial debuts, unbeaten runs, and one of Europe's most iconic rivalries.

Forest's fresh start meets Arsenal's title push

The Premier League's early kickoff sees Arsenal host Nottingham Forest at the Emirates. The Gunners, who narrowly lost to Liverpool before the break, could return to the summit with a win. For Forest, it's the dawn of a new era under Ange Postecoglou, whose attacking philosophy marks a stark contrast from the departed Nuno Espírito Santo. Yet with Forest conceding in each of their last 11 league matches, the Australian faces a tough baptism against Arteta's men, who boast a 36 year unbeaten home record versus Forest.

Alonso's Madrid target fourth straight win

Over in Spain, Real Madrid will aim for a fourth successive LaLiga victory when they visit Real Sociedad. Xabi Alonso's men sit top with a perfect record, having conceded just once in three games. Sociedad, by contrast, have stumbled to two points from three fixtures and are still adjusting after the loss of Martín Zubimendi. Madrid, unbeaten against Sociedad since 2023, can stretch their early lead ahead of their Champions League opener next week.

Hjulmand's new era begins at Leverkusen

In Germany, Bayer Leverkusen kick off a new chapter under Kasper Hjulmand, who replaced Erik ten Hag after just two league matches. The Dane faces a stern test against in-form Eintracht Frankfurt, who have stormed into the season with back-to-back wins after a DFB Pokal thrashing. With Frankfurt unbeaten so far and Leverkusen eager to steady the ship, the clash promises fireworks at the BayArena.

Derby d'Italia in Turin

Serie A serves up its first Derby d'Italia as Juventus host Inter Milan. Juve, perfect so far under Igor Tudor, carry strong home form into the contest, having lost just once in their last 11 Turin meetings with Inter. The Nerazzurri, however, arrive with pressure after a shock defeat to Udinese cast doubts over new boss Cristian Chivu. With both sides targeting Napoli's crown, this early showdown could prove decisive in shaping the title race.



Bangladesh national football team's goalkeeping coach Xavier Fernando conducts a goalkeeping training clinic at the newly-laid artificial turf at the Bangladesh Football Federation premises on Friday. The Spaniard, who has been given a short contract for September's Nepal friendlies and October's Asian Cup Qualifiers against Hong Kong, conducted the clinic among 18 young goalkeepers from Dhaka District Academy and under-17 women's team.

PHOTO: BFF

Bangladesh eye SAFF U-17 title

SPORTS REPORTER

Bangladesh have set their sights on reclaiming the title at the regional youth championship as they depart for Sri Lanka today to participate in the SAFF Under-17 Championship, scheduled to begin on September 15 at the Racecourse International Stadium in Colombo.

Bangladesh previously won the SAFF U-16 Championship in 2015 and the SAFF U-15 Championship in 2018. However, they have remained without a trophy since, despite reaching the finals of the SAFF U-16 Championship and the SAFF U-17 Championship in 2023 and 2024 respectively.

Coach Golam Rabbani Choton is optimistic about the current squad, which includes five under-19 players, including captain Nazmul Huda Faisal, who recently helped Bangladesh become runners-up in

the SAFF Under-19 Championship in India. The squad also features 14 players from BKSP, who played three international matches in Japan last month.



"I believe the Bangladesh U-17 squad is stronger compared to last time," Choton said at a press conference at the BFF House yesterday.

"We aim to progress match by match. We've prepared thoroughly, taking lessons from our defeat in the SAFF U-19 Championship

final against India," he added. Choton also noted that the team gained significant confidence after managing to take the final into a penalty shootout, despite initially trailing.

Captain Faisal, a BKSP student, has previously captained the Bangladesh U-17 team twice and the U-19 team once but has yet to secure a championship. This time, he is determined to change that.

"As captain, it's disappointing not to have won any trophies so far, but we're hopeful of achieving a good result in Sri Lanka. We've had intense preparations at the Jashore Shams-Ul-Huda Academy, and our focus will be on playing as a team," Faisal said.

Bangladesh have been drawn in Group A alongside hosts Sri Lanka and Nepal. Group B comprises India, Pakistan, Bhutan, and the Maldives. The top two teams from each group will advance to the semifinals.

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- Verification of Applications: 05.10.2025 (Sunday) from 10:00 am to 5:00 pm
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- Admission Test: 11.10.2025 (Sunday)
- Publication of Merit List: 19.10.2025 (Sunday)
- Modification of Program Choice: 19.10.2025 (Sunday) - 31.10.2025 (Tuesday)
- Publication of Merit List with Selected Programs: 22.10.2025 (Wednesday)

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- Candidates passing SSC or O-level or equivalent examinations in 2020 and onwards, and HSC or A-level or equivalent examinations in 2022 and onwards can apply.
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