



India lead Bangladesh by a landslide in head-to-head T20I records, leading by 16-1 in 17 overall meetings.

At the Dubai International Cricket Stadium, India's record stands at eight wins and four defeats from 12 matches. Their four losses came when batting first -- twice in the 2021 T20 World Cup (to Pakistan and New Zealand) and twice in the 2022 Asia Cup.

Across those defeats, India averaged 154 in the first innings, with scores of 151-7, 110-7, 181-7, and 173-8.

Bangladesh, meanwhile, have three wins and two losses at the venue. Their victories include a 2-0 series win over the UAE in 2022 and a win against Sri Lanka in this edition of the Asia Cup.

Batting first in four of those matches, Bangladesh managed totals of 73 all out (vs Australia), 183-7 (vs Sri Lanka), 158-5 (vs UAE), and 169-3 (vs UAE). Their lone successful chase at the venue came against Sri Lanka when they overhauled 168-7.



Big names missing as BCB draft voters' list revealed

SPORTS REPORTER

The much anticipated draft voters' list of the upcoming board of directors' election of the Bangladesh Cricket Board (BCB) was revealed on Tuesday after a day's delay, without some of the top and incumbent directors' names.

Among the current board directors, Mahbubul Anam, Akram Khan, Kazi Inam Ahmed, Saiful Alam Swapon Chowdhury and Iftekhar Rahman Mithu were not part of the 171 member councillors' list. Only 14 percent from this draft were part of the previous election's final voters' list in 2021.

BCB president Aminul Islam Bulbul has been nominated as the councillor from the Dhaka Divisional Sports Association, while Nazmul Abedeen Fahim was nominated from Dhaka District Sports Association. Former national captain and presidential aspirant Tamim Iqbal was nominated councillor from Old DOHS Sports Club, while former BCB president Faruque Ahmed received councillorship from Rangers Cricket Academy.

Other notable councillors include Fahim Sinha from Surjo Torun Club, Mohammad Salabuddin Chowdhury from Kakrail Boys' Club and Manzur Alam from Regular Sporting Club.

According to the original schedule, the draft voters' list was expected to be revealed on Monday, but the BCB mentioned they had to send the list to the Election Commission a day later due to some court issues.

On Monday, the Supreme Court chamber judge stayed, until September 28, a High Court order that had suspended the effectiveness of a letter from the BCB president, directing district and divisional sports associations to nominate councillors from ad-hoc committees for the upcoming board election. It was the chamber judge's ruling that saw the election process continue.

Although the delay in announcing the draft voters' list didn't see any change in the election date, which is scheduled on October 6, it has deferred a few earlier schedules by a day. The dates include: taking objection to the draft voters' list, hearing on the objection to it, announcing the final voters' list, and the nomination distribution.

The draft voters' list included 65 of 71 councillors from category 1 (Regional Sports Associations), with councillors' nominations from Narsingdi, Sylhet, Naogaon, Bogura, Pabna, and Sirajganj missing.

"We have not received the councillor nomination from those places [District Sports Associations]," Advocate Mohammad Hossain, Chief Election Commissioner (CEC) of BCB polls 2025, told The Daily Star.

Meanwhile, in category 2 (Dhaka Metropolis Clubs), out of 76 clubs, 61 clubs' councillorships were accepted by the election commission and the remaining 15 clubs' councillorships were denied due to several irregularities, under investigation by the Anti-Corruption Commission (ACC).

"We haven't included them in the draft voters' list for now. They will come to us today [Tuesday] and try to convince us with evidence why they should be allowed to vote. If they can convince us tomorrow [Wednesday], then there will be a hearing after which they will be included in the final voters' list," said CEC Hossain.

BCB director Iftekhar's fate depends on the final verdict scheduled today, as he was expected to be a councillor from Vikings Cricket Academy -- one of the 15 clubs -- who couldn't make it to the draft voters' list.

Interestingly, Md Sibgat Ullah, who is working as one of the three Election Commissioners in the BCB polls, received councillorship from Bangladesh Police Cricket Club. CEC Hossain, however, dismissed any conflict of interest, stating he would not be running in the election.

Meanwhile, category C had 45 councillors, including five former skippers, 10 former national and first-class cricketers, five National Sports Council (NSC) nominated councillors and councillors from universities, educational boards and services. Notable names from this category are: Minhajul Abedin, Khaled Mashud, Gazi Ashraf Hossain Lipu, Mohammad Ashraful, Habibul Bashar, among others.

'Grounded' Tigers' biggest test yet

EKUSH TAPADER from Dubai

After Bangladesh's last-over win against Sri Lanka on Saturday, head coach Phil Simmons cut a calm, almost detached figure. He looked as if nothing remarkable had taken place.

"I try to control my emotions... We're not here to win one game against Sri Lanka; we're here to win the tournament," Simmons explained.

That has been Bangladesh's mantra since before the first ball of this Asia Cup. Qualification for the Super Four is no finish line.

Simmons insists this is not bravado but belief. "Until we get to the stage where we are out or have won the tournament, I have to keep everyone grounded," he said, promising to show emotion only once the

mission is complete.

To reach the final, Bangladesh must first negotiate India and Pakistan. One win from those fixtures could be enough to open the door to the showpiece on September 28. India arrive first, and almost everyone agrees they are the strongest side. Simmons, though, bristles at the suggestion that "strong" means "unbeatable."

The former West Indies all-rounder pointed out that results depend on the day. "It's not about what India have done before; it's about what happens in that three-and-a-half-hour period.

"We will try to play as best as we can and hope to force mistakes in India's armoury. That's the way we win games."

The conviction to upset India has been carefully built within the squad. Players

have discussed where opportunities might arise and how to seize them. If they push themselves to the limit, Simmons believes the improbable can quickly turn possible.

On Monday, the Tigers trained at the ICC Academy ground in Dubai, knowing it could be their last full session of the competition. The atmosphere swung between light-hearted and intense. Warm-up games brought laughter, then came a six-hitting drill that sent balls soaring into adjoining nets and grounds. Journalists ducked nervously, support staff chased down lost balls, and even team physio Dr Debasish Chowdhury joined in the retrieval.

To conserve energy in the UAE heat, players rested the previous day. Captain Litton Das had no choice; a twinge in his

lower back forced him out of nets. A team source later confirmed it was not serious and required only rest.

Quite refreshingly this time, Bangladesh have abandoned the idea of a fixed winning combination. Instead, selection has varied with oppositions and conditions. Leg spinner Rishad Hossain, for instance, dazzled against Afghanistan but made way in their Sri Lanka affair where fast bowler Shoriful Islam was drafted in to test their left-handers. A similar approach is expected against India, with pacer Tanzim Sakib expected to return.

For Simmons, "balance" -- "the most important" aspect of the team -- is more than just a buzzword; it is the lever that can tilt fortune towards the Tigers, perhaps carrying them all the way.

Butler interested in guiding U-17s in Asian mission

SPORTS REPORTER

After successfully guiding Bangladesh's senior women's team and under-20 women's team to their maiden Asian Cup berths, head coach Peter Butler is willing to take on the challenge of leading the under-17 team in next month's AFC Women's U-17 Asian Cup Qualifiers.

The British coach returned to Bangladesh last Thursday following a month long vacation in UK and started training women's teams on Sunday even though he is none too pleased with the training facilities, especially ground conditions, as he feels "BFF standards are greatly different to mine."

Following two successful Asian Cup berths and two triumphant SAFF campaigns, Butler had decided to leave the SAFF U-17 campaign in the hands of his understudy, Mahbubur Rahman Litu. The team, however, failed to emulate their seniors in the South Asian competition, finishing second to India.

Now back in Bangladesh, Butler says he is impressed with the talent within

games from the UK. (There were) many reasons (for the failure -- poor planning and execution in selection. Irrespective of the results), these girls have an exciting future ahead of them if handled with tender loving care."

Currently, Butler is overseeing three groups simultaneously, focusing mostly on the fitness. With nine senior team players playing in the Bhutan National Women's League, he is training the combined batch of under-20s and seniors -- 31 players currently, and also overseeing the under-17s, which features 27 players. The senior team is scheduled to play two FIFA friendlies on October 25 and 28 in Thailand and might also play in a proposed three-nation tournament at home in November.

With these assignments on the horizon, the combined team will likely move to the Korean EPZ in Chattogram for a residential training camp soon, as facilities in Dhaka -- National Stadium and Bashundhara Kings Arena -- are off-limits.

Butler knows he will not have much



Bangladesh women's teams' head coach Peter Butler in deep contemplation as the under-17 players go through a fitness drill at the newly-installed synthetic turf at the Bangladesh Football Federation premises on Tuesday.

PHOTO: FIROZ AHMED

the under-17 team but believes they lack proper guidance and planning. "I'm studying the under-17s. They have many good players, regardless of their poor showing at SAFF," Butler told The Daily Star on Monday.

Although Bangladesh beat eventual champions India in the last match of the double round-robin competition, they had already lost to India in the first meeting and were held by Bhutan, which ultimately cost them a shot at the title. However, players like Sauravi Akanda Prity, Alpi Akter, Mamoni Chakma, and Purnima Marma impressed everyone.

Butler believes there were deficiencies in planning and execution. "I watched the

Dembele: 35 goals in treble-winning season
First French Ballon d'Or winner since Karim Benzema (2022)
Yamal (18) won Kopa Trophy for best U-21 player

"It was an incredible season with PSG... this trophy is for the team." DEMBELE

"I'm here for the third consecutive time because of my teammates." BONMATI



Dembele, Bonmati rule Ballon d'Or night

Paris Saint Germain's Ousmane Dembele won the Ballon d'Or on Monday after firing the club to their first Champions League title, edging Barcelona starlet Lamine Yamal. Spain's Aitana Bonmati claimed the

women's award for the third straight year. PSG also dominated, being named Team of the Season, with Luis Enrique voted Coach of the Year and Gianluigi Donnarumma taking the Yashin Trophy.

Boateng hattrick propels MSC

SPORTS REPORTER

A brilliant hattrick from Samuel Boateng helped Mohammedan come from behind twice to beat Bashundhara Police 3-2 in a Group B encounter on the opening day of the Federation Cup at the Shaheed Dhirendranath Datta Stadium in Cumilla yesterday.

It was a much-needed win for Mohammedan, especially after their 4-1 defeat to Bashundhara Kings in the Challenge Cup last Friday.

Police fielded all six of their foreign recruits, including three SAARC players, and they looked threatening from the start, taking the lead in the ninth minute.

But it was Mohammedan's Ghanaian striker Boateng -- signed from Rahmatganj this season -- who stole the show. He first equalised before adding two more to firmly announce himself as the ideal replacement for Souleymane Diabate, who recently left the club.

Boateng is a genuine striker who can score from opportunities. Today, he converted three out of four chances. I believe he will score more as the tournament progresses," Mohammedan

coach Alfaz Ahmed told The Daily Star.

"Boateng and Diabate are different types of players, but both have scoring ability. Boateng is a young and promising forward, and that's why we brought him in to replace Diabate," Alfaz added.



Meanwhile, at the Bashundhara Kings Arena, defending champions Bashundhara Kings surrendered a lead to draw 1-1 with Fortis FC. Defender Tariq Kazi's own goal cancelled out the 48th-minute strike from Brazilian Dorielton Gomes.