

Dual demands of Shamim's No. 6 role



- Rain threat looms over the second T20I, with Chattogram experiencing heavy to moderate showers on Tuesday, leaving parts of the city waterlogged.
- New Zealand skipper Tom Latham remains uncertain for this game as well, having missed the opener due to injury.
- Bangladesh are expected to retain their winning combination.

immediate impact, as seen in the first T20I in Chattogram where his 13 ball 31 contributed to a convincing six-wicket win.

"I adjust my stance myself, what feels comfortable... not because of the bowler," he said, citing South Africa great AB de Villiers as an influence for his straighter setup. Asked if he stands at an angle when playing behind the wicket, he said: "Yes, that's when I can do that."

The bouncer he dispatched over the wicket-keeper's head for six in the first T20I came from the angular stance, in just the third delivery he faced -- a rare trait in Bangladesh cricket for a volatile position.

"We don't have many players for this position," chief selector Habibul Bashar told The Daily Star yesterday. "It can decide games... those batting here must go at 130-140 strike rate. It's the reality, and the batters have to accept that."

"A day would come when, in a One-Day [Internationals], there is lots of time and he has to bat differently. He has that ability [to play in the V], and it's all about the mindset... If he understands that, he will be big for the team," he added.

For now, Shamim's game carries that duality -- control and chaos -- shaped to meet the demands of a role where time is scarce but impact is everything.

ABDULLAH AL MEHDI, from Chattogram

Players like Shamim Hossain are a rarity in Bangladesh cricket. Batting at number six in T20Is, a position long unsettled in the country's cricketing culture, he has brought a degree of continuity where no one had been able to hold down the position for long.

At Mirpur Academy Ground last month, ahead of the ongoing New Zealand series, Shamim spent over an hour facing throwdowns. Strangely enough, instead of rehearsing the all-out hitting his role demands, he focused on basics: playing straight in the V. He relayed that it was not only because it was early days in his preparations after a gap.

"Yes [just beginning preparations], but when I will actually bat in matches, this is how I should begin, in a V. Only in the last two-three overs do I experiment with my side shots, so I'm preparing accordingly," Shamim had told this reporter.

When it was pointed out that it was not the norm for him, he laughed. "I try most of the time because sometimes you have to play slow if early wickets fall... and this routine comes from experience."

Asked how difficult this adjustment was, he remarked, "Everything is easy if you want [but] it's a little tough for me. Actually, for those who go and hit, it's difficult for them. The more control I have, the better it will be for

me."

There were subtle tweaks too. His stance was straighter during that session, his bat coming down more directly rather than from the slip-cordon angle. But he downplayed it: "It just comes from practice... not much of a change."

In the last two years, Shamim has featured in all 29 T20Is the Tigers played. He has appeared at number six the second-most times (18) over the last five years, surpassing Mahmudullah Riyad, who has 17 appearances in that

position. Going down that list, Jaker Ali (18), Afif Hossain (18) and Nurul Hasan Sohan (19) also have a similar number of appearances, and two of those three are out of the T20I side while Sohan is still looking for game time. In this bunch, Shamim boasts the highest strike-rate, 135.44.

The reason Shamim needed these routines was to find more continuity. In his last 10 innings, Shamim only faced more than 20 deliveries thrice and fewer than 10 on five occasions. Yet the demand remains for

"Riya is a bit impulsive. But I gave her freedom so that she could feel at home at BKSP and that I could bring the best out of her. And she has delivered on my faith."

Coach Zahid Hossain Raju on Airin Riya



Riya puts Bangladesh in final

Striker Airin Riya scored a superb hatrick as Bangladesh stormed into the final of the Asian Games Qualifiers with a 3-1 win over Singapore in Tuesday's first semifinal in Jakarta. The BKSP student from Jhenaidah, who skipped her SSC exams to feature in the tournament, struck twice in the final four minutes to seal victory, sending Bangladesh into the title-decider in their debut senior international campaign. Speaking to The Daily Star from Jakarta later that night, coach Zahid Hossain Raju credited his side's fitness and technical edge for the result. "It was an exciting match, even though we had 60 percent control. We unlocked the game in the fourth quarter, which has been our trademark," he said. Bangladesh will face Chinese Taipei in the final, scheduled to kick off at 7:00 pm today.

PHOTO: AHF

SLC quits at govt's request

AFP, Colombo

Sri Lanka's cricket board stepped down on Tuesday after the government asked the sporting body's executive committee to make way for a new administration, officials said.

Sri Lanka Cricket (SLC) is the country's richest sporting body but it has been plagued by allegations of corruption and mismanagement.

A board official said that its president, Shammi Silva, convened a special meeting to announce his resignation, with 11 months remaining in his fourth two-year term.

"The committee resigned to make way for an interim management team headed by a former investment banker, who is also an opposition politician," the official told AFP, asking not to be named.

A government official said Sri Lanka's President Anura Kumara Dissanayake had met with Silva over the weekend to discuss the future of the board under a new management.

Sri Lanka made an early exit from the T20 World Cup, which it co-hosted with India in February-March.

The International Cricket Council (ICC), the sport's world governing body, suspended Sri Lanka's membership in November 2023, citing political interference in the running of the national board. That suspension had been lifted at the end of January 2024, and Silva's committee was restored. He subsequently won a fourth term uncontested as president.



PHOTO: BFF/COLLECTED

Mohammad Abdullah celebrates with teammates after scoring a 66th-minute winner in their final group match of the Federation Cup against Abahani at the Bashundhara Kings Arena yesterday. The goal proved decisive, knocking the record 12-time champions out of the race for the qualifiers. Despite the victory, however, PWD -- currently battling relegation in the league -- failed to advance from the five-team group. The qualifying spot instead went to Rahmatganj MFS, who held Young Men's Fakirerpool Club to a goalless draw at the Shaheed Dhirendranath Datta Stadium (inset). The match in Cumilla kicked off nearly an hour late after heavy morning rainfall left parts of the pitch waterlogged. Groundstaff worked extensively to make the surface playable, manually draining water before the game could begin.

43 DAYS TO GO



Two hatricks, one date

The 43rd hatrick in World Cup history was scored by Argentina's Gabriel Batistuta against Greece in the group stage of the 1994 edition. The Argentine striker remains the only footballer to have scored hatricks in two different World Cups. Four years later, in the group stage of the 1998 tournament, he netted another treble against Jamaica. Interestingly, both hatricks came on the same date -- June 21.

**Visit The Daily Star's website to also read: 'A golden goal and the darker aftermath'

Can Gunners breach Simeone's fortress?



STAR SPORTS DESK

Atletico Madrid return to the Metropolitano seeking a response to their Copa del Rey final loss to Athletic Bilbao last week as Diego Simeone's side host Mikel Arteta's Arsenal

➤ Both sides are still hunting a first European crown despite long runs in the competition. Arsenal have played 223 European Cup/Champions League matches without winning it (the most), with Atletico next on 190.

➤ They have already met this season, with Arsenal cruising to a 4-0 win in the league phase last October -- matching Atletico's joint-heaviest defeat in the competition. Their only previous knockout tie came in the 2017-18 Europa League semifinals, when Atletico progressed 2-1 on aggregate.

➤ At home, however, Atletico are unbeaten in Champions League knockout matches against



in the first leg of their Champions League semifinal tonight. Arsenal arrive amid a fierce Premier League title push, chasing their first league crown since 2003-04 and a first major trophy in six years.

English clubs (P6 W3 D3), each against different teams, though none against Arsenal.

➤ Arsenal are in strong European form, one game shy of equalling their longest unbeaten run in the competition (10 wins, two draws in their last 12).

➤ Antoine Griezmann has been involved in 24.2% of Atletico's Champions League goals (56/231 -- 40 goals, 16 assists), the highest share by any player for a team with 100+ goals, just ahead of Lionel Messi's 24.1% for Barcelona.

➤ Julian Alvarez has also starred, with nine goals -- the most by an Atletico player in a single European Cup/Champions League campaign.

'Will try to keep things simple'

Amite Hasan's maiden national team call-up for the first of two Tests against Pakistan next month marks the culmination of seven years of consistent performances in the domestic circuit, with selectors placing their trust in one of the most reliable performers. In a recent conversation with The Daily Star's Samsul Arefin Khan, Amite spoke about maintaining a simple mindset, expressed deep gratitude for his family's unwavering support, and shared his excitement about the prospect of sharing a dressing room with his idol, Mushfiqur Rahim, among other topics. The excerpts are as follows:

The Daily Star (DS): How does it feel to get a maiden Test call-up?

Amite Hasan (AH): I feel like I've come through a process. I played first-class cricket for a long time, then I was in all the [Bangladesh Cricket Board] BCB camps -- HP, Bangla Tigers, and recently the National Team camp.

DS: How significant was your 162-run knock after coming on as a concussion substitute in your last Bangladesh Cricket League (BCL) four-day match?

AH: After Jaker Ali got hurt, I got the chance to come on as a concussion sub. The next day, I had the chance to bat. I

didn't think too much about scoring 100 or 150; I just tried to play, and the rest was Allah's will.

DS: With 49 first-class matches, you are perhaps the second-most experienced cricketer to have gotten a national team call-up after Zakir Hasan, who played around 67 games before his Test debut. How did you keep yourself going?

AH: I didn't think about it too much. I kept my process simple and enjoyed the game. If I hadn't enjoyed it, it might have felt boring.

DS: There are a few wicketkeeper-batters in the national team. How much are you thinking about securing a place in the playing XI?

AH: I'm not thinking about that too much. I am preparing in my own way. Whenever and wherever I get the opportunity, I will try to do well.

DS: Who first gave you the news that you were selected?

AH: Habibul Bashar (chief selector) sir called me first and let me know.

DS: How satisfying was the news for your family?

AH: From the start of my cricket journey, my family has always supported me. Especially my elder brother; he convinced everyone at home to let me play. When I got the news

from Habibul Bashar sir, I told everyone at home, and they were very happy.

DS: What kind of mindset are you taking to translate your domestic success to the international stage?

AH: I will definitely try to keep things simple. As I said, I was in a camp with 37-38 players where we shared a dressing room, so I have that experience. Regarding the difference between domestic and national levels, I'm not overthinking it. I'll just try to adapt as quickly as possible.

DS: You are starting your career as a wicketkeeper-batter just as Mushfiqur Rahim is nearing the end of his. How does it feel to share a dressing room with someone you might eventually replace?

AH: Mushfiqur bhai is my idol. Being able to share a dressing room and have the chance to play with him is very exciting for me.

DS: What are you thinking about the days ahead?

AH: Since the Pakistan series is coming up, I'm thinking about how to prepare and what will lead to a good performance. I haven't been to Pakistan with the 'A' team. I went to Australia and played there. I have experience playing against good bowling attacks on good wickets.

DS: What are your thoughts on the Pakistan bowling attack?

AH: I am watching video analysis and have seen them play on TV. I am preparing myself accordingly.