



Misbah admits Pakistan's shortcomings despite Bangladesh triumph

KARACHI :The Pakistan head coach-cum-chief selector admitted that the team needed to work on its deficiencies

Pakistan's head coach-cum-chief selector Misbahul Haq has admitted that Pakistan are lagging behind in some aspects of their game, despite their recently concluded Twenty20 International (T20I) series win over Bangladesh on home soil.

"You play to win and you try to perform as well as you can because it's important to give yourself breathing space. But we have to still look at the shortcomings in the team and where we need to strengthen. Under pressure, you keep running after things and sometimes it's difficult to catch up. So it's good for the team and for me, and for the young players that we have a confidence booster and we can relax a bit and think about the future," said Misbah.

"We will keep everything in mind when we are making a team for the T20 World Cup. Obviously,

PSL will be very important for us. The hitters who were in the team previously couldn't perform that well. We then brought Khushdil and Iftikhar in the team. We have these options," he said.

"The point of looking at PSL is that you get to see the performances and you can analyse where players fit in and where we need players in the team. Then we grind further in the matches we will play, then decide on the squad. In domestic cricket, there is lesser pressure. In PSL, at some level you can say that with media and international players, the standard comes a bit closer to international cricket. The temperament of a player can be checked there and then finally, the requirement of the team. Then you can pick the player and ready them," he added. The former Pakistan captain also shed light on the team's selection policy and brushed aside the notion that he was against the inclusion of senior players in the squad.



Tokyo prepares foreigners for potential disasters

TOKYO (REUTERS): Tokyo 2020 organisers are putting the final touches to preparations less than six months out from the start of the Olympics but the area they are most concerned about remains readiness for any natural disaster striking during the Games.

With thousands of foreigners expected to descend on Tokyo for the July 24 to Aug. 9 event, organisers are acutely aware of the need to provide clear instructions in English and raise awareness of what to do in case of an earthquake or tsunami.

On Tuesday, over 200 of Tokyo's approximately 570,000 foreign residents gathered at Musashino Forest Sports Plaza, which will stage events during the Olympics, to run through drills aimed at making them more disaster-savvy.

As well as testing earthquake simulators, the participants were also taught how to use fire extinguishers, walk through smoke-filled rooms, phone the police in case of emergency and even what exercises to do if stuck in an evacuation shelter.

Japan is one of the most vulnerable countries in the world to typhoons and earthquakes, and experiences an average of 1,500 temblors a year, although few cause any damage, let alone loss of life.

However, experts believe there is a 70% chance of a major earthquake striking the Japanese capital in the next 30 years.

Because of this, the foreign residents welcomed all the advice they could get.

"For the Japanese government to hold an event like this, it really helps foreigners like me because kids in Japan are already taught in school but we have no idea," said Vietnamese student Hoa Nguyen, who has lived in Japan for over a year.

Over 30 interpreters, speaking six different languages, were on hand to help the participants, who hailed from 44 countries.

"I actually think it is amazing the effort they tell you ... to prepare, prepare, prepare because it is easy to go through daily life and not worry about it," said Rodrigo Coronel, the Nicaraguan ambassador to Japan.

"So, the Tokyo government has done a fantastic job with these kinds of events." Last year, Tokyo 2020 organisers held an earthquake drill at the Ariake Gymnastics Centre, a newly built venue for the Olympics, as part of their growing contingency plan ahead of the Games.

Olympics organisers will also want to learn from the Rugby World Cup last year, when a powerful typhoon struck, prompting the unprecedented cancellation of three matches.

use his senior stars for that match because he doesn't want to deny them a much-needed rest.

To earn a trip to Stamford Bridge, Liverpool may play the youngsters who were beaten by Aston Villa in the



ENGLAND THUMP SA TO WIN SERIES 3-1

CAPE TOWN : Ben Stokes and Mark Wood made a double strike shortly before tea, breaking stubborn South African resistance and setting up a 191-run win for England on the fourth day of the fourth and final Test at the Wanderers Stadium on Monday.

The win clinched a 3-1 series victory for England.

Set to make a world record 466 to win, South Africa reached 181 for two before Stokes bowled home captain Faf du Plessis for 35.

In the next over man-of-the-match Wood dismissed Rassie van der Dussen for 98. He went on to claim four for 54 to finish with match figures of nine for 100.

Quinton de Kock and Temba Bavuma shone briefly but South Africa were bowled out for 274.

Van der Dussen and Du Plessis batted for all but 13 minutes of an extended two-and-a-half hour afternoon session to give South Africa some hope, making the England bowlers toil on a hot afternoon.

But Stokes bowled a ball which hit a crack and kept low, deflecting off the toe of Du Plessis' bat into the stumps. Van der Dussen looked set for a maiden Test century but in the next over he fell to Wood two short of the landmark.

He had batted impressively, hitting 15 fours and two sixes in a 133-ball innings but both he and Du Plessis were given a torrid time by Wood, bowling at express pace on a pitch where the bounce was gradually becoming more unpredictable.

With tea looming, England set a field which suggested a short-pitched barrage was likely. But Wood then bowled a full-length delivery which Van der Dussen drove awkwardly to short cover where Stuart Broad held a good diving catch.

It was the second wicket for Stokes — both which came at crucial times shortly before an interval. His first victim was opening batsman Dean Elgar, who was caught and bowled playing an awkward pull shot in the penultimate over before lunch. Stokes finished

with two for 47.

De Kock and Bavuma batted brightly in a fifth wicket stand of 48 before Broad bowled a vicious bouncer which Bavuma gloved to wicketkeeper Jos Buttler. Broad had Dwaine Pretorius caught at fine leg in his next over and the rest followed. Vernon Philander, playing in his last Test, struck a couple of beefy blows before falling to Wood who supplied the coup de grace, another lifting ball flicking Anrich Nortje's glove on its way through to Buttler down the legside.

Series victory in SA a template for Ashes: Root



CAPE TOWN : The series win over South Africa had given England a template for the next Ashes series, captain Joe Root said after another emphatic test win on Monday.

England's team, with a mix of experience and promising youngsters, beat South Africa by 191 runs in the fourth test on Monday to complete a 3-1 series triumph.

After failing to prise back the Ashes last year, when they drew 2-2 in the five test series at home, Root said the win in South Africa provided a timely boost.

"There is a huge amount of test cricket still to be played between now and then but it gives us confidence and knowledge of how to perform on wickets that might be

slightly similar," he said referring to the series that will begin in November 2021.

"We have got to look to keep getting better and keep developing. We still feel the sky is the limit for this team and that we've got to keep looking to improve.

"We've obviously performed extremely well in these last three games but as a side, over the last couple of years, we've not been consistent enough. We are very open about that and we have an opportunity now to build on this tour."

England are next in Sri Lanka in March and then host the West Indies and Pakistan later this year.

Root said the six home tests will give the team an opportunity to string together positive performances in completely different conditions.

"We'll try not to look too far ahead but we've got a great template to work around and it's nice to see it falling into place," he said.

The England captain said one of the most satisfying aspects of the South African series was that they took the full haul of 20 opposition wickets in all four tests.

"That's something we've struggled with in the past when we've been abroad."

Federer saves seven match points in 'miracle' escape



LONDON: Swiss great Roger Federer said that "I believe in miracles" after he saved seven match points in a five-set nail-biter against 100th-ranked Tennyis Sandgren to labour into the Australian Open semi-finals on Tuesday.

The six-time champion, struggling

physically, saved three match points at 4-5 in the fourth set and four more in the tie-breaker to win 6-3, 2-6, 2-6, 7-6 (10/8), 6-3 and set up a clash against either titleholder Novak Djokovic or Milos Raonic.

Federer received a rare warning for an audible obscenity before going off-court for treatment on a groin injury in the third set, but still looked hampered as he forced a fifth set against the big-serving American.

"I believe in miracles," Federer said, revealing that he thought his groin strain had ended his chances. "There could be rain, there could be all kinds of stuff."

"(I thought) just let him finish me off in style, and he didn't do that. I'm incredibly lucky tonight, today -- I don't even know what time it is."

Sandgren, achingly close to becoming the lowest-ranked player to beat Federer at the Australian Open, can count himself unlucky especially after a ball girl accidentally collided with him during the pivotal tie-breaker, which he lost.

Federer has made heavy weather of reaching his 46th Major semi-final. He was two points from defeat by John Millman in a fifth-set tie-breaker in round three, and dropped a set against 67th-ranked Marton Fucsovics in round four.

LONDON: Premier League leaders Liverpool will face Chelsea in the FA Cup fifth round if Jurgen Klopp's underdogs win their replay against Shrewsbury.

Third-tier Shrewsbury fought back to draw 2-2 with Liverpool on Sun-

day, earning a replay at Anfield that falls during the Premier League winter break.

Reids boss Klopp insists he will not

play victory over top-flight Newcastle would be a trip to Championship leaders West Brom.

League One side Portsmouth will

face Premier League opposition at Fratton Park after being drawn against Bournemouth or Arsenal.

Southampton or Tottenham will play host to struggling Norwich, while either Coventry or Birmingham face a

short trip to Leicester.

Championship sides Reading and Cardiff will battle it out in a replay for the chance to host Sheffield United.

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CHELSEA HANDED POTENTIAL LIVERPOOL CLASH IN FA CUP

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