

# Bangladesh face off Sri Lanka to kick-start T20 World Cup

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Online Desk :

Despite a fragile batting line up, Bangladesh hope to make a winning start to the T20 World Cup when they take on Sri Lanka at Grand Prairie Stadium, Dallas on Saturday. The match starts at 6.30 AM Bangladesh time. Bangladesh though looked high on confidence, their performance ahead of the T20 World Cup was extremely disappointing. The series defeat to associate nation USA sparked a massive uproar back in the country and if it is not enough, they surrendered to India meekly in the practice game.

Overall they looked not a team to move to the next round in the T20 World Cup. However Sri Lanka's below par performance in their opening game against South Africa suddenly gave Bangladesh a ray of hope. Sri Lanka were bowled out for 77 in that match as they failed to cope with the slower nature of the pitch. Bangladesh's main problem lies in their batting but their bowling continued to prosper, giving the opponent batters massive headache. And the slower nature of the pitch further instilled confidence in Bangladesh's tent.

The Dallas and New York's drop in pitch had already given a resemblance of Mirpur Sher-e-Bangla National Cricket Stadium pitch. Bangladesh basically will rely on the pitch to hunt down Sri Lanka which looks to be morally down following the crushing defeat in the first match. But Bangladesh need to rewrite the history. Bangladesh's journey in T20 World Cups had started with a bang in 2007 when they grabbed a convincing win over the West Indies in their opening match of the tournament in South Africa.

However that win against West Indies remains Bangladesh's only victory over a higher-ranked team in the tournament so far. In the last T20 World Cup in Australia, they notched up three victories, highest ever in a single tournament but all of those victories came against lower ranked side. Bangladesh played 16 T20 Internationals against Sri Lanka and won five while lost 11. Amongst the top-ranked team, Bangladesh secured highest number of victories against Sri Lanka. That should be another source of confidence for them.

"We are not thinking about what has happened before. We know how capable we are, we have to be brave and execute our plans," Bangladesh captain Najmul Hossain Shanto said. Bangladesh were drawn in Group D which involved teams like South Africa, Nepal and Netherlands apart from Sri Lanka. Bangladesh need to beat at least a top-ranked team between Sri Lanka and South Africa if they want to move to Super 8. While Shanto urged to be bold in the approach, veteran batter Mahmudullah Riyad believes a good start to the tournament will be a boost for the team.

"Everything relies on how we start the tournament. We need to have a good start. I believe if we make a good start, we'll go long way," he said. Sri Lanka meanwhile will be in some pressure, knowing that if they can't beat Bangladesh, they would have to rely on many ifs and buts. Sri Lanka's captain Wanindu Hasaranga is confident that his team will overcome the pressure to beat Bangladesh in their most important game. Bangladesh might be bolstered by the return of fast bowler Taskin Ahmed who missed series against USA and practice matches due to his side strain injury. But at the same time, they lost their left-arm pacer Shoriful Islam who sustained an injury during his bowling hand in the practice game against India.

Bangladesh squad: Najmul Hossain Shanto (c), Taskin Ahmed, Litton Das, Soumya Sarkar, Tanzid Hasan Tamim, Shakib Al Hasan, Tawhid Hridoy, Mahmud Ullah Riyad, Jaker Ali Anik, Tanvir Islam, Shak Mahedi Hasan, Rishad Hossain, Mustafizur Rahman, Shoriful Islam, Tanzim Hasan Sakib. Travelling reserves: Afif

Hossain, Hasan Mahmud. Sri Lanka squad: Wanindu Hasaranga (c), Charith Asalanka, Kusal Mendis, Pathum Nissanka, Kamindu Mendis, Sadeera Samarawickrama, Angelo Mathews, Dasun Shanaka, Dhananjaya de Silva, Maheesh Theekshana, Dunith Wellalage, Dushmantha Chameera, Matheesha Pathirana, Nuwan Thushara, Dilshan Madushanka.