

Dhaka, June 19: The national football coach Andrew Ord said he would work keeping in mind both the present and future needs of Bangladesh football.

The newly appointed English born Australian who is also in charge of the U23 men's team, said he had one eye on the present and another on the future as he announced a 36-member U23 squad slated to feature in the AFC U23 Qualifiers in Palestine in July.

The squad begins its residential camp at BKSP on Monday.

Ord said there had been five days of trials so far. "Then, in the second phase I will try to see more players. Unfortunately I am still to see a number of players play."

He emphasised on building a team for the future and pointed out that the nine out of the 36 were U19 players. "That is 25 percent. It will be the future of Bangladesh football. They will gain more experience with the U23 team."

The new national coach has also become involved with U16, U19 selection as he said, he was interested to see the new crop players.

But Ord sounded his concern with the fitness level of the players. He said he was surprised at the lack of fitness of these players at the trials. "One month should be good enough for the players. We need to train hard with intensity."

Ord thought there were tough challenges ahead of the team. "We have got to be organised. We need to make sure we are solid at the base. They (Jordan, Palestine) are all strong."

Having started on the job about two weeks ago, Ord cautioned that in Palestine, the ground will be big. "It will not be easy. Tajikistan will be strong. We just have to get fit, organised and get

some team spirit going.” He stressed that the team has to get some experience too.

Asked a specific goal, Ord was quick to pull the reins back on high expectations. “You have to be realistic. I have no expectation from this tournament.”

He said this campaign would give the team some experience and it would also give Ord an opportunity to observe the players, which he intends to use for building up the team for the upcoming Bangabandhu Cup and the SAFF championship. “I can’t guarantee anything,” said Ord.

Team manager Satyajit Das Rupu, BFF general secretary Abu Naeem Shohag, BFF members Fazlur Rahman Babul and Amit Khan Shuvro were also present at the press briefing.