

Dhaka, July 18: The Bangladesh National U23 Team is on its last leg preparing for the qualifying rounds of 'AFC U-23 Championship 2018' to be held later this month in Palestine.

The team is set to play the Qatar U23 after their tour of Nepal where they played another friendly match.

Head coach Andrew Ord, who is also spearheading the national team, along with assistant coach Mahaboob Hossain Roksy, finalized the team consisting of both experienced veterans and newcomers.

Coach Roksy, during the U23 team's rigorous residency camp at the BKSP, handpicked 6 players that fans might keep an eye out for. "The team is well balanced, and alongside newcomers, the team consists of players that have been participating in international arenas since their U16 days."

### **Md Saad Uddin (Forward)**

Playing for the renowned Abahani Club of Dhaka, Saad has made his name for his power shots on target and scoring ability. As a South Asian, this young man from Sylhet towers above most of his teammates at 5'8" and a solid physique. While playing in the U16 SAFF Championship back in 2015, Saad had emerged as the highest scorer. The forward's ability is something to watch out for in the U23 campaign.

### **Sohel Rana (C) (Midfielder)**

Now leading the U23 team, Soheli Rana has been an indispensable part of Bangladesh football since he made his mark in U16, U17, U19, U23 pools, and is also a member of the national team. He prefers to charge through the central field to break past the opponent's defence in quick strides with his tall stature nearing 5'8". The coach identifies him as a match changer as Rana, with his vast experience, makes quick decisions on the field. Fans can cheer when the ball reaches the skipper, as the highly talented midfielder from Chandpur tries his best to pass perfect through balls. Soheli Rana also plays for Abahani.

**Mashuk Mia Zoni (Central Midfielder)**

A member of Chittagong Abahani, Zoni has been a favourite of the trainers since they identified him at the U19 pool two years back. Standing at 5'6", the midfielder's solid physique packs a punch. Ticking all the boxes of a footballer, the laborious, speedy and challenging midfielder from Sylhet is sure to put up a good show with his first class endurance and stamina.

**Md Tutul Hossain Badsha (Defence)**

Badsha, hailing from Joypurhat and marking nearly 6 feet, is a defender to look out for. His intimidating physique, accompanied by his commanding presence and control of the defence line might just do the trick against the opponents. Currently defending for Abahani Dhaka, Badsha's reliable abilities in the centre and the right back should prove to be an important weapon for the BD U23 arsenal.

**Shushanto Thipura (Defence)**

Guarding the right back, Thipura from the indigenous population of Cox's Bazaar, is a man up for his job. With a height of 5'8" and a strong stature, the Chittagong Abahani player is ready to defend the goal line when needed. Coach Roksy reminds us to watch out for Thipura's ball sense and strength, as they might change the game for the U23.

**SM Monjurur Rahman Manik (Central defender)**

Tallest of the bunch, close to 6 feet, Manik is from Tangail. The Mohammedan footballer has been a renowned face at the age level competitions for Bangladesh. His long experience in the game helps him stay cool and build up gradually. Coach Roksy says his strength and challenging mentality will play a pivotal role in the matches.