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Euphoria

From Page 1

As Khaled Mahmud, the hero with three for 31 and a quick-fire 27, was handed the bottle of champagne, streets of Bangladesh were already celebrating the greatest win since being granted one-day status last year. This was Bangladesh's first over Pakistan in seven encounters.

The prime minister was one of the first to come up not only with warm words of congratulations, but also a fat load of money for the performers at Northampton. Her bitter foe in politics, the Leader of the Opposition did not also mince minutes to make her statements.

So did the corporate chiefs, announcing cash rewards following in the footsteps of the nation's chief executive. But the jubilation went far beyond what the big sums of money could express.

Joining the nightlong mirth were the old and young, men and women, boys and girls, rich and poor. They waived the national flags, danced, sang, chanted slogans, exploded firecrackers, beat dongs and blew whistles on the streets of Dhaka and elsewhere.

Some 20,000 gathered on the Dhaka University campus alone in a midnight reveling Monday.

On Mirpur Road, slogan-shouting people marched through the avenue splashing coloured water on passers-by.

In the Old City, in similar fashion, the night lost its usual calm.

At Gulshan — the quiet, posh northern district of Dhaka — cars honked horns as merry-makers sped away to destinations unknown.

At suburban Uttara, jubilant crowds broke the regular mid-night silence, said an excited professor calling The Daily Star Monday night.

In the northern administrative district of Natore, the deputy commissioner made a midnight announcement for cash rewards to the winning cricketers.

Correspondents from across the country called the Star News Desk, so did so many readers, some of them suggesting headline to the story of the day.

It suddenly became difficult for the staff writers at Star to move ahead with their copies despite the late night habit of producing volumes — good or bad. After all, they were citizens of Bangladesh too.

A kid — five-year-old, so said a sports reporter attending the phone at 1:00am — called to say how he was feeling.

But poet Rafique Azad felt younger than ever, calling it the victory fantastic. "Since 1971, nothing has done me so much proud," said a tearful Azad who came to The Daily Star Monday night, accompanied by wife Dr Dilara Hafiz.

The merry-making that went long into early Tuesday morning continued all day — declared a half-day holiday by the government.

At the Secretariat, the seat of government, scene was completely different. Ministers failed to keep appointments. Bureaucrats talked cricket. Employees at canteen sipped tea, had sweets and discussed the victory.

Schools had no classes. At Dhaka University, the vice-chancellor himself led a procession of students, teachers and employees.

At the Teacher-Student Centre, the heart of DU campus, students raised a podium to give everyone around a chance to perform and sing the victory.

Rivals — pro-Awami League Chhatra League and BNP-backed Chhatra Dal — sang the same tune.

At Motiheel, the city's business district, the scenes were far from normal. Stock brokers took a break to brood over the World Cup event.

Businesses had a different day. There was nothing, and there was too much.

Sweets, the most common means of manifesting joyous events, sold more than ever. The shops sweated to meet the mounting demand of customers in long queues. Top makers such as Alauddin, Maran Chand, Ambala and Mahan Chand struggled even after huge extra production.

Biriani, another traditional item for festive occasions, ran out of supply. Star, a famed biryani house, said it cooked 50 dekchis (big bowls) in addition to normal catering but failed to satisfy the demand.

Dwellers in shanties celebrated. The men and women watched their children dance and sing — perhaps without much knowledge what exactly had happened. Rickshaw-paddlers ran faster.

Political adversaries competed with each other in colourful processions and in public pronouncements.

The prime minister ordered a civic reception next Friday. The opposition BNP announced one too.

Even the conservative Jamaat-e-Islami would not lag behind. Jatiya Party had something similar in mind.

It was all because of the history written by the boys from Bangladesh in their first-ever World Cup campaign, first celebrated by the May 24 win against Scotland.

Just for a reminder, Monday's scorecard at Northampton read:

Bangladesh: 223 for nine
Pakistan: 161 all out in 44.3 overs.



Justice Mostafa Kamal is seen with President Shahabuddin Ahmed and Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina after taking oath as Chief Justice at Bangabhaban yesterday. — PID photo



A view from the Gully

From Page 1

who have given us something to cheer about, a precious little to rejoice.

To the history of Northamptonshire is now added the greatest achievement of Bangladesh who convincingly defeated the 1992 world champions Pakistan on Monday 31 May 1991 in a World Cup match. This has been the happy hunting ground for Mushaq Mohammad, a former Pakistan captain, Sarfaraz Nawaz, a Pakistani fast bowler and Bishen Bedi, the classical slow left-arm bowler from India.

Promotion to first class status in 1905 was gained on the persuasive talents of George Thompson, the first from Northamptonshire to be selected by England and regarded as the finest local-born cricketer.

The ground was formed from land in the Abingdon district on the east side of Northampton and laid out by the Northampton County Cricket and Recreation Grounds Co Ltd in 1885 for £2000 under the guidance of H H Stephenson, an old Surrey cricketer who captained the first ever England team to visit Australia, according to Wisden. In 1968, a new stand was built for members, which provides a press box. In 1979 a new pavilion was erected in place of the old ladies pavilion.

On Monday it was a different game, a different proposition. For Pakistan this was almost a practice match, having booked a place in the Super Six; for Bangladesh it was their last chance to redeem themselves in this tournament after their poor show against New Zealand and two more losses to West Indies and Australia. So as they strode into the middle they had hardly anything to lose against a stronger opponent and that gave them the strength to play their shots without any pressure involved. Akram's logic of putting Bangladesh in suited

It was a day for Bangladesh, a rare one, when everything went their way and the boys accepted them with both hands. It was the finest hour in our cricketing, nay, sporting history and will remain so till the day of resurrection.

The Kiwis beat the Aussie calculators and booked their berth in the Super Six ahead of Australia with two crucial points. Scots were beaten comprehensively at Edinburgh by New Zealand on Monday by six wickets in their allotted 20 overs.

The whole GDP estimation process now puts the BBS before questions. How authentic is the Planning Commission figures is now being asked by many.

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the latter well because they would have done so had they won the toss. Naturally, it did matter little who won the toss. The decision also meant that Pakistan were expecting a reasonable total from Bangladesh for a chase.

- Bangladesh more than obliged Akram and his team. The fearsome trio of Akram, Yunis and Shoaib had little impact on Shahriar and Mehrab and at past fifty the Pakistanis panicked a bit and despite two quick wickets the middle order reasonably held out the challenge and with sloppy fielding and a generous dose of wides and nos Bangladesh crossed the 200 mark for the first time in the tournament. Akram Khan found his touch quite late in the day and held the innings together. Even a five wicket match have by Saqlain could not halt the progress of Bangladesh.

Pakistan appeared to be a hobble horse in a steeple chase. As Bangladesh medium pacers Mahmood and Shafiqullah ran through the Pakistan top order without much fuss and when Azhar was brilliantly run out by Aminul, the end was in sight. Mahmood, who until then had a bad tournament made it up with the bat and ball to become the man-of-the-match, the second Bangladeshi to achieve this honour in their first World Cup.

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Mostafa Kamal takes oath as Chief Justice

President Shahabuddin Ahmed administered the oath to the newly appointed Chief Justice Mostafa Kamal at a simple ceremony at Bangabhaban yesterday morning.

Cabinet secretary Qazi Shamsul Alam conducted the oath-taking ceremony.

Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina was present on the occasion.

Among others, Speaker Humayun Rashid Chowdhury, former Chief Justices ATM Afzal, Habibur Rahman, cabinet ministers, Deputy leader of the Opposition in Parliament attended the ceremony.

10 revellers hurt in city

At least 10 revellers, celebrating the country's massive victory against Pakistan in the World Cup Cricket, were injured in different parts of the city yesterday, reports UNB.

Of the injured, Saiful Islam, 26, of Mirpur was admitted to Dhaka Medical College Hospital with stab wounds.

Mystery

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corrected once again and the growth rate was increased to 5 per cent.

But in the press briefing following the NEC meeting, the growth figure that was revealed to the press was 5.2 per cent.

According to sources, the BBS has now been asked to 'back calculate' the other figures to match the 5.2 growth rate and the *boro* output has been revised at over 10 MT.

Meanwhile, Food and Agriculture Minister Matia Chowdhury has come out with a new set of figures. According to her, this year's *boro* output is 10.03 MT and the growth in agriculture is five per cent. The growth rate directly contradicts with what had been given in a Wednesday's NEC meeting. The summary paper of the meeting said agriculture would post a three per cent growth.

The latest GDP figure of 5.2 per cent has certainly surprised all including the donors and the business community. Country Director of the World Bank Frederic Temple in a lunch meeting with the Foreign Investors Chamber of Commerce and Industry (FICCI) Sunday has termed the growth 'miraculous' and mentioned that both exports and industrial output are down this year.

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President congratulates Bangladesh team

President Shahabuddin Ahmed congratulated the Bangladesh cricket team for their remarkable victory against Pakistan, reports UNB.

In a message of warm greetings yesterday which was read out by the Cabinet Secretary Qazi Shamsul Alam at the beginning of oath-taking ceremony of Chief Justice Mostafa Kamal, the President said the remarkable success of the Bangladesh team is a glorious occasion for the whole nation.

The country sincerely wished that the trend of such achievement would continue in future, he said.

'Let us extend our standing ovation to their glorious victory,' the message added.

7 hurt in Nagar Bhaban clash

By Staff Correspondent

At least seven people were injured when employees of Nagar Bhaban attacked some businessmen who went there to protest snapping of power supply lines at noon yesterday.

Witnesses said that some businessmen from City Super Market of Fulbaria had come to Nagar Bhaban to meet the mayor as their power lines had been cut off four days ago. Several fourth class employees attacked them at that time. At least seven people were injured during the clash that followed between the two groups.

Police said that the clash ensued when Nagar Bhaban employees tried to stop some angry people who damaged furniture of a bank in the building. Two of the bank employees Shajahan and Fazlu were injured by the attackers during the clash, police added.

The injured were admitted to the different city clinics.

Police arrested nine people during the clash. They were identified as Delwar Hossain, Noor Mohammad, Montu Islam, Aslam, Nazmul Hossain, Rajendra Chandra Mondal, Shajahan, Zilur Rahman and Suraj.

A case was lodged with Ramna thana in this connection.

All is well

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they'll be ready for Test status in another year or so," he said.

Dhaka, thousands of jubilant fans took the streets and the government declared a national holiday Tuesday. Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina announced a cash reward of 4,000 dollars to each member of the team.

Victory was also sweet for New Zealand, which thumbed a cricketing nose at arch rival Australia.

Australia was keen to see the West Indies progress to the second round instead of New Zealand because under World Cup rules teams carry with them points earned in the qualifying round against other Super Six qualifiers. Since Australia had lost earlier to the Kiwis, their entry into the Super Six deprived Steve Waugh's team of precious two points.

With that in mind, Australia slowed its scoring during a match against the West Indies on Sunday while cruising toward a victory target of 111. That boosted the West Indies, run rate, surpassing New Zealand.

New Zealand had a net run rate of 0.00 compared to the West Indies +0.49 going into the match Monday against Scotland. But New Zealand scored the required 121 in only 17.5 overs, increasing its run rate to +0.58.

Kiwi skipper Stephen Fleming said the team was under tension not knowing what was required to qualify.

'It was a messy couple of days. It was pretty tough mentally as well... especially working out what we needed and then lastly doing it.'

But from now on, 'It is all a new competition,' he said.

In the Super Sixes, which begins with Australia-India match June 4, each team plays three matches with the qualifiers of the other group. Four of the six teams will make it to the semifinals.

Beyond the boundary

From Page 1
Bangladesh Cricket Board must then put into practice, what has been preached by every self-respecting Test playing country over the years. It must formulate without any delay, a format of the longer versions of the game at the domestic level. The acid test of any batsman or bowler at the topmost level of the game, is his ability to perform for protracted periods of time. This is only possible when they have the required temperament, technique and the concentration levels relevant for the purpose. Only the longer version of the game allows them that luxury.

Even at the school level such a programme must be put in place, for this is where the nursery of the game in this country is likely to be. Granted, there will be difficulties in arranging grounds and other logistics. Therefore there has to be governmental effort and assistance in overcoming this problem. It is time indeed for

the government to evolve a national policy for the game, preferably for a period of ten to fifteen years, whereby the BCB in conjunction with the Ministry concerned is able to formulate and implement the necessary actions, that are now the crying need of the hour. For want of a more persuasive exhortation, cricket simply needs protection and patronage from the highest level.

Cricket has, managed more than any other activity so far, to instil a sense of pride and identity in all of us. Achievements on the cricket field have always been non-controversial and above board, unlike many others that we sometimes claim for ourselves. It has been the single most unifying factor of our country's population. Perhaps, cricket could be the vehicle to drive this nation forward. Not quite an unreasonable thought, and certainly more palatable than a host of others that come to mind. Give cricket a chance.

Mbeki set to succeed Mandela as South Africa goes to polls today

By M Anwarul Haq, back from Cape Town.



A poster in favour of Mbeki in Cape Town. — Star photo

Washed by the waters of the Indian and Atlantic oceans, the Cape Peninsula, with hundreds of miles of scenic coastline and a bounty of natural flora and fauna, is straddled by the picturesque Table Mountain.

Cape Town, lying at the tip of the African continent, is home to the Legislative Capital of South Africa. The garden route city is agog with electrifying excitement as it participates with the rest of South Africa in polls today to elect 400 new members of parliament in the country's second all-race elections.

Some thirty parties, ranging from white far right to black socialist left, are set to contest the elections in a country with nearly 41 million people of a variety of races.

Although several parties are in the fray, Nelson Mandela's African National