

Risky ladder

SHAHIDUL ISLAM, Chittagong

The iron ladder that connects the two parts (second floor and rooftop) of the media centre at Chittagong Divisional Stadium has been a matter of both discussion and displeasure for local sports reporters since the second Test between Bangladesh and South Africa began on February 29.

The BCB prior to the Test turned the open rooftop as an addition of the media centre and allocated it exclusively for local sports reporters and journalists who work for different national and local newspapers and electronic media. On the other hand, the main air-conditioned media centre (second floor) was given to journalists from Dhaka and foreign media.

Although a few Chittagong journalists pointed fingers to this discriminatory treatment, they never placed a formal complaint as of yet. But they found it trying and felt offended at the bizarre appearance of the ladder leading to the rooftop from the second floor this time.

The real hassle for Chittagong journalists who sits on the rooftop usually comes when they intend to meet their fellow Dhaka colleagues on the second floor or use the Internet facility on the first floor, located just beneath them. The similar problem happens on their return from those two floors.

And the only way to do this is to use the risky but shortcut way through the ladder.

But if any Chittagong-journo chose to avoid this risk and use the normal stairs, he had to take long walk to and from the rooftop. First he must come down to the ground floor and get out of the media centre gate, and then he should make his entry to the adjoining gate and go up through the normal stairs to the second or first floor of the main air-conditioned media centre.

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Did U Know?

The Japanese won all the men's titles except the 400-metre freestyle in the 1932 Los Angeles Olympics.



What to WATCH

BTV & Super Sport 2

Bangladesh v South Africa
Second Test, Day Four
Live from 10:00am

STAR Sports

Bangalore Open
First Round
Live from 5:30pm

ESPN

Sportscentre India
Sports News
Live at 8:30pm



Bangladesh v South Africa
Second Test, Day Four
Venue: Chittagong Divisional Stadium



TALK TURKEY



Mario Balotelli

(Inter Milan's teenaged footballer)
"He's always been my hero, no matter what team he played for."
On Ronaldo.

'We bounced them out'

BISHWAJIT ROY from Chittagong

WARID Cricket Series

One may question whether the Tigers batsmen have got the ability to sustain themselves against a quality pace attack like South Africa's after the way they capitulated against the fiery quick bowling led by young sensation Dale Steyn.

Anybody could be forgiven for doubt when even the country's best batsman Mohammad

Ashrafu had no answers against the short delivery of Steyn in both innings.

But it was not all about ability or technique but also the lack of patience and application that was also the issue behind yet another batting debacle on the third day of the second Test match at the Chittagong Divisional Stadium yesterday.

It was amazing to see that when even the world-class batsmen like Graeme Smith and Jacques Kallis showed every respect to their

opponents bowlers and kept their cool to build up a partnership, the Bangladesh batsmen were completely out of it against a much superior bowling attack.

Were they scared, especially after the incident of Aftab Ahmed, to face the array of short balls? You would get a positive answer from any South African but if you ask the same question to any Bangladeshi players you would get a negative answer.

"We were never scared to face this kind of attack rather we were prepared to face this. I don't think that fear was any factor behind our dismissals," said Shahriar Nafees, who made highest 69 runs in the first innings and then 31 in the second essay.

But Makhaya Ntini didn't believe that.

"The bouncer is one of our weapons. We have got a pace behind it. So, for us it doesn't matter where we played. If you bowl a bouncer, it will definitely dig in, that's why things came to our way. We definitely scared them (Bangladesh batsmen)," said Ntini, who took four wickets in the Bangladesh first innings to become second highest wicket-taker for his country with 334 after Shaun Pollock (421).

The South African leading pace bowler however was all-praise for his young fellow Dale Steyn, who actually destroyed the Bangladesh batting by claiming seven wickets.

"He (Steyn) is a brilliant bowler, you know, and he is still on his learning curve. He is still 24 years old. The moment he grows up at this stage and goes out there having

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PHOTO: STAR

Bangladesh middle-order batsman Aftab Ahmed is being carried off the ground after having been struck by a Jacques Kallis bouncer during Bangladesh's first innings on the third day of the second Test at the Chittagong Divisional Stadium yesterday. He was later admitted to the Chittagong Combined Military Hospital.

Ton-up Tendulkar takes India into the lead

AFP, Sydney



A historic Sachin Tendulkar century ensured India claimed first blood in the tri-series finals with a stunning six-wicket win over Australia

at the SCG here on Sunday. With Tendulkar making an unbeaten 117 from 120 balls and youngster Rohit Sharma offering wonderful support, India made 242 for six in 45.5 overs in reply to the home side's 239 for eight to take a 1-0 lead in the best-of-three finals.

After a war of words between the sides in the lead-up to the match, the Indians had extra reason to celebrate when they notched their

first ever one-day international win at the SCG and just their third win in their past 20 matches against the home side in Australia.

The result followed a tense week since their last encounter, with Matthew Hayden calling Harbhajan Singh an "obnoxious weed," the Indian spinner responding by saying the opener was one of the last liked players in world cricket.

And the Indians lodged an official complaint about provocative behaviour by the Australians on the field.

Criticised for not batting well in run chases recently, Tendulkar had a point to prove and did it emphatically, placing the ball exquisitely to score his first one-day international century in 39 matches in Australia, and 42nd overall, to lead

his side to victory.

Tendulkar praised Sharma and was thrilled to finally break his one-day drought in Australia.

"It was a terrific effort by the team and I thought Rohit Sharma batted really well, the partnership was crucial," he said.

"In the last series I missed a few (hundreds), but there is no better moment than today to score a hundred here. It came at the right time and I am extremely pleased."

Australian captain Ricky Ponting was disappointed with his team's performance.

"We were 20 or 30 runs short and the wicket held together well," he said.

"Another sloppy performance, not only from our batters. I thought

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PHOTO: AFP

HERE HE GOES OVER THE COVERS: Master Indian batsman Sachin Tendulkar is perfectly balanced as he plays a lofted cover drive during his sublime unbeaten 117, his first one-day century on Australian soil, in the first of the three-match VB series finals against Australia in Sydney yesterday.

Victoria, Biman cruise

Pegasus upset DOHS

Cricket

SPORTS REPORTER

Big guns Victoria Sporting Club and Bangladesh Biman comfortably won in the Premier Cricket League but Young Pegasus upset Old DOHS as the first round of the competition concluded yesterday.

Half-centuries by Farhad Hossain and skipper Ehsanul Haque steered Victoria to a massive 89-run win over Kalabagan Krira Chakra at BKSP while Biman rode on Mosharraf Hossain's all-round display to down a stubborn Partex SC by 26 runs at the Dhanmondi

Cricket Stadium.

The most exciting match of the day, however, was at the Fatullah Stadium where Pegasus defended a moderate total to snatch an eight-run victory against fallen giants Old DOHS, who won successive league titles before the previous season.

Defending 217 shaped around Ashiqur Rahman's 58 and an undefeated cameo 44 off 26 balls by Sabbir Rahman, paceman Muktar Ali inspired Pegasus with a first-ball wicket and the scalp of the other rival opener in his second over.

DOHS ran so deep into trouble at 60-5 after losing star batsmen Fohad Reza and Mehrab Hossain Jr that even a 97-run stand between

Anisur Rahman Sanchay (61 off 103 balls) and Hamidul Islam (44 off 77 balls) was not enough to salvage the match.

Number 10 Shafiqul Islam's 20-ball 25 raised hopes but their innings halted on 209 in the penultimate delivery.

Muktar, who claimed 4-35, was adjudged man-of-the-match.

The inserted Biman got off to a slow start with opener Javed Omar contributing 29 off 56 balls but Mosharraf (86 off 126 balls) and Pakistani recruit Asif Hossain (65 off 70 balls) gave them a handy total of 260-8.

The pair put on 129 runs for the

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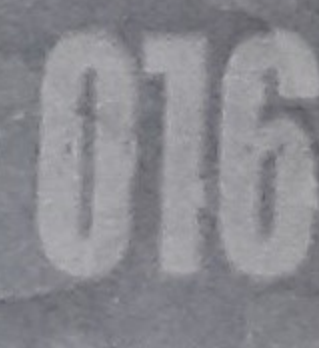


PHOTO: ZOBAER HOSSAIN SIDDIQI

DALE DEMON STEYN: Fiery South African fast bowler Dale Steyn (C) celebrates the wicket of Shahriar Nafees (R) during Bangladesh's first innings on the third day of the second Test at the Chittagong Divisional Stadium yesterday. Steyn has already taken seven wickets in the match including three of Bangladesh's five second-innings wickets.



Get Warid Cricket Series updates
Warid Menu > Info Zone > Sports > Cricket



Food tastes bitter for cops

STAFF CORRESPONDENT, Chittagong

Around 100 on-duty police fell sick after taking 'free' meal at the Chittagong Divisional Stadium during the second day's play of the second Test between Bangladesh and South Africa on Saturday.

After that bitter experience, the cops who were tasked to the CDS duty yesterday, refused to accept the lunch packets fearing repeat of the food poisoning. The lunch packets loaded in a truck were found abandoned for hours at a corner of the CDS and was later sent back to supplier named Cafe Mohammadia Kabab & Birani House at the city's Agrabad area.

The food house couldn't be contacted despite repeated attempts. Bangladesh Cricket Board's logistic and facilities committee makes the arrangements of all the catering and its chairman Ahmed Sajjadul Alam confirmed the news.

"We have got the complaint and we are looking into the matter seriously. We have already changed

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Aftab out of danger

SPORTS REPORTER from Chittagong

Things turned bad to worse for the Tigers on the third day of the second Test against South Africa yesterday when middle-order batsman Aftab Ahmed was forced to leave the field after being hit by a bouncer from Jacques Kallis.

Aftab collapsed on the ground after being hit in the face while trying to hook Kallis in the first innings of Bangladesh. With a cut just under the right eye, he was admitted to the Combined Military Hospital in Chittagong.

Everybody was worried about the condition of Aftab in the field but later it was confirmed that he was not out of danger. It was however not sure whether he could be able to bat in the second innings today.

"He (Aftab) got a cut beneath his right eye but the X-ray report confirmed that there was no fracture. But there has been bleeding inside his eye and it swelled. He will be kept under observation all night and will bat again only if he is okay by tomorrow morning," said BCB's media manager Rabeed Imam.

Aftab was batting on 21 and the team total was 176-5 when he got injured.

ATLETICO BANISH BARCA

Real gain initiative

AFP, Madrid



Real Madrid carved out a scrappy 3-2 win at Recreativo Huelva on Saturday to open up a five-point lead at the top of La Liga as rivals Barcelona

crashed to a 4-2 defeat at Atletico Madrid. An indication of the frustration of Real coach Bernd Schuster, despite the win, was that he stormed out of a press conference without answering a question when he was asked his opinion about the referee, who sent off three players.

In a wildly fluctuating game, Real were stunned when Recreativo defender Martin Caceres latched onto a Carlos Martins free kick to give the hosts a dream start after 16 minutes.

However, Recreativo had only themselves to blame for allowing

Real to equalise after 27 minutes.

A poor clearance by Huelva defender Iago Bouzon went straight to the feet of Royston Drenthe and the Dutch winger sent in a high ball into the area for Real captain Raul Gonzalez to head home.

It was the perfect way for Raul to celebrate going equal second, along with club legend Carlos Santillana, on the Real rankings of all-time appearances for the club.

The pair have played for the Spanish giants 643 times and only Raul's former teammate, and captain Manuel Sanchis, is ahead of him with 708 appearances.

Recreativo were then reduced to 10 men just five minutes after the break when their Portuguese international defender Beto was sent off after reacting to a Gabriel Heinze challenge, stabbing a finger in the Argentine's face.

They only stayed at a disadvantage for five minutes before Sergio Ramos got his second yellow card.

The dismissals continued when Recreativo's Quique Alvarez was

shown a direct red card by referee Eduardo Iturralde Gonzalez for a wild tackle on Arjen Robben after 67 minutes.

The Dutch winger sustained a badly sprained left ankle which will probably rule him out of Wednesday's Champions League clash with Roma.

Robinho then put Real ahead after 72 minutes just seconds after coming on the pitch, picking up a loose ball and squeezing it between Recreativo keeper Stefano Sorrentino and his left post, and another a minute before the whistle.

Martins added Recreativo's second goal two minutes into injury time.

"The referee was terrible. I'd have given him a red card," fumed Sorrentino.

Barcelona's Ronaldinho opened the scoring for the visitors with a spectacular overhead kick after Spanish international playmaker Xavi Hernandez had lofted the ball from the right flank.

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PHOTO: AFP

Barcelona star Ronaldinho executes a stunning bicycle kick to score the opening goal against Atletico de Madrid during their Primera Liga match at the Vicente Calderon Stadium on Saturday.