

Tamim still not satisfied

BISHWAJIT ROY

Tamim Iqbal punched the air after scoring his fifty, jumped like a real Tiger after reaching his hundred and then saluted the home fans at the Sher-e-Bangla National Stadium after completing 150 against India on the third day of the second Test yesterday. It was all joy for him.

But when he left the ground in fading light he still looked unsatisfied. And it was written on his face. He was reluctant to shake hands with his coach, Jamie Siddons. It was something very good for Bangladesh cricket as a batsman could not be fully satisfied even after smashing 151. It was undoubtedly Tamim's best Test knock against a team he enjoyed his batting most.

"The end did not happen the way I wanted it to be. If I could stay unbeaten, it would have been good for the team and there could be a chance that I get a double century," was the first reaction from the left-hander from Chittagong during a briefing after the third day's play.

Tamim, who firmly announced before the match that the Tigers were no longer mere spectators in the five-day game, played with supreme confidence and ripped the vaunted Indian attack with an array of strokeplay all over the park.

Was it an ideal Test innings?

"First of all, this innings is so far my best. I am sure many more will come. My focus is to play as long as possible. I think this is the way to play Test cricket, but you know every

player has different way to bat like [Virender] Sehwag who has his own style. I think this is my way to bat. But you should take the condition into consideration. It was a good wicket to bat on and there was nothing for the bowlers," said the left-hander after being confronted with the question that his

statement before the match was completely different.

Tamim said before the start of the second Test that it was not runs he was concentrating on hard, rather his focus was on how many balls he played and how much time he spent out in the middle.

"But you should take the

condition into consideration. It was a good wicket to bat on and there was nothing for the bowlers," he said after smashing 18 fours and three sixes during his 183-ball knock which clearly goes with the modern day approach towards the longer-version game.

"I am relatively new to Test

cricket. I am still learning. I was in attacking mood in the first innings which was wrong," he said. "I always said scoring runs against India was different experience for me. I always enjoyed scoring runs against India," said Tamim, only the second Bangladeshi batsman to cross the 150-run

mark after Mohammad Ashraf's unbeaten 158 against the same opponents.

"If we did not lose those two wickets at the end, we would have been on top of the match. Since we lost the wickets and are around 90 runs behind, so I hope at least one batsman will now make a big

score and another at least make 60-70 runs," told Tamim, whose previous century was a match-winning 128 against West Indies last year.

When everybody was fearing of another batting debacle and thinking of early finish of the match after India

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AS SWEET AS A SIX: Bangladesh opener Tamim Iqbal sweeps one over mid-wicket boundary during his magnificent 151 on the third day of the second Test against India at the Sher-e-Bangla National Stadium in Mirpur yesterday.

PHOTO: ANISUR RAHMAN

Confusing pitch

SPORTS REPORTER

At the end of the third day's play it seemed that it was the pitch that bamboozled everybody, as there was hardly anything for the bowlers yesterday.

On the previous day it was none other than master batsman Sachin Tendulkar who declared that the wicket was not so easy to bat on but both ton-maker Tamim Iqbal and India coach Gary Kirsten admitted that there was nothing for the bowlers on the third day.

"They played very well today. We know it's a very good wicket to bat on at the moment. We thought it would take more turn. But it has not done that much. So it's a good performance. They played well under pressure. We got a 300-plus run lead and wanted to get wickets as quickly as possible," said Kirsten when asked about Bangladesh batting.

The former South Africa opener however said that his bowlers were not patient enough to bowl on this kind of surface.

"Maybe we were a little bit impatient. And we did not bowl as well as we can. I am very happy with the two wickets at the end. Zaheer (Khan) is a great exponent of the reverse swing. The ball is reverse swinging at the moment. Hopefully we can make some early in-roads tomorrow," hoped Kirsten.

India's left-arm pacer made sure that Bangladesh would not finish the day on top as he removed both Tamim Iqbal (151) and Zunaed Siddiqui (55) in quick succession at the fag end of the match as Bangladesh finished the day on 228 for 3 in 60 overs. Zaheer claimed all three wickets conceding 64 runs in 14 overs.

Kirsten praised Tamim's efforts on the day.

"He [Tamim] played well and it was a good knock. He is a very aggressive player. It's entertaining to watch his batting. We are also pleased

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School children, who allowed free entry, enjoy every bit of Tamim Iqbal's batting on the third day of the second Test against India in Mirpur yesterday.

PHOTO: STAR

Saqlain stuns Dhaka

Cricket

SPORTS REPORTER

Rajshahi left-arm spinner Saqlain Sajib continued his ravaging form as he took seven wickets for 85 runs to bundle out Dhaka for 195 runs in their first innings when the third round matches of the National Cricket League started across the country yesterday.

Saqlain had taken nine wickets in their previous round match against Chittagong and 13 in their first match against Sylhet. His wickets tally from five innings stands at a staggering 29 now.

Saqlain's efforts yesterday at the Zahur Ahmed Chowdhury Stadium in Chittagong were complemented by pacer Mohammad Shahajada who took the other three wickets to squeeze the Dhaka innings. But there were a few notable scores in the Dhaka innings, the only half-century coming from Sharif Ullah

(54) while opener Mehrab Hossain got 45 to give some respectability to the total.

By the end of the day, Rajshahi notched up 70 for the loss of two wickets in their reply. Rajshahi's prolific opener Zahurul Islam remained unbeaten on 34.

Sylhet were bowled out for 207 in their first innings against Chittagong at the Rajshahi Divisional Stadium. Despite a few mediocre knocks, including 48 from Golam Mabud and 42 from his brother Golam Rahman, their innings didn't blossom, courtesy of a four-wicket haul from Chittagong's medium pacer Tareq Aziz Khan.

Sylhet skipper Rajin Saleh managed only 18 runs while Alok Kapali scored 12. Kazi Kamrul, Faisal Hossain and Elius Sunny took two wickets each.

In reply, Chittagong reached 29 for one at the stumps on Day One.

At the Fatullah Cricket Stadium, Khulna

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Dravid to fly home, Yuvraj out too

SPORTS REPORTER

Rahul Dravid was discharged from hospital yesterday and will take no further part in the Dhaka Test as he will fly to India today.

Dravid got a fractured jaw after he was hit by a vicious bouncer from Shahadat Hossain on the second day.

"He has got quite a nasty injury to his face," India coach Gary Kirsten said, "He will consult a specialist to find out what needs to be done and how long he would be out. For Rahul, we don't have the long-term prognosis."

Another injured batsman Yuvraj Singh will also not take the field in the ongoing Test as he suffered a ligament tear in his left wrist.

"He has a torn cartilage on this wrist," Kirsten said. "Yuvraj will be struggling to make it for the first Test against South Africa. He will be out for a while. But he will stay till this game ends."

Master batsman Sachin Tendulkar too injured his shoulder yesterday trying to take a difficult catch off Tamim Iqbal, however his injury was not anything serious.

Kutumb comes to see cricket

SPORTS REPORTER

'Kutumb' (guest), the mascot for the 11th South Asian Games, made a guest appearance in the Mirpur Test at the Sher-e-Bangla National Stadium yesterday.

The mascot, representing national bird Doyel (magpie robin), took a ride on a specially made caravan along the boundary ropes as the cricketers were on the tea break. The Kutumb entertained those present at the gallery spreading its wings, fluttering its tail and moving its head from one way to another.

The mascot, designed by famous painter Moniruzzaman, was unveiled earlier in the day by Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina at the Ganobhaban after the Bangladesh contingent made a courtesy call on her. The 11th SA Games starts on the 29th of this month with around 2,000 sports persons from eight nations of the region taking part.

Premier inspiration

SPORTS REPORTER



Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina yesterday suggested the players not to take pressure in the 11th South Asian (SA) Games that begins here on January 29.

"I am optimistic that you will get exemplary results in the SA Games. I don't want to put any pressure because I have faith in you that you will make the face of the country bright. Don't think that everything is finished with a defeat as it is a part of the game. You participate in your respective event, shrugging off pressure," Hasina asked the athletes in a mass gathering at Ganobhaban yesterday.

She made the call when some 400 athletes and officials of all 23 disciplines, led by chef de mission Minzanur Rahman Manu, called on the prime minister on the eve of the regional sporting gala. Finance Minister and chairman of SA Games Organising Committee Abul Maal Abdul Muhith, State Minister for Youth and Sports Ahad Ali Sarker, Bangladesh Olympic Association president and Army Chief Abdul Mubeen and Bangladesh Olympic Association (BOA) secretary general Kutubuddin Ahmed also spoke on the occasion.

Sheikh Hasina, however, urged the athletes to put in their best effort in the meet to uphold the country's image as her government had always backed the organisers financially to

make the Games a success.

To inspire the athletes, the prime minister also announced cash rewards for all medal winners in individual and team events. She declared that each gold medal winner in individual event will get Tk 5 lakh, silver winner Tk 2 lakh and bronze winner Tk 50,000 while gold medal winners in team events like football, cricket and hockey will receive Tk 15 lakh, silver winners Tk 10 lakh and bronze winners Tk 3 lakh each.

The gold medal winners in team events of kabaddi, basketball, volleyball and handball will be awarded Tk 10 lakh each, Tk 4 lakh for silver and Tk 1.5 lakh for bronze.

The premier also promised rewards for the coaches and officials whose charges would be successful in the meet. Some 2,000 athletes from eight nations will fight for 156 gold in the 12-day meet.

"Our target should be to produce competent athletes who will bring laurels for the nation and I promise you that who will do better in the SA Games will be sent abroad for better training as well as allowed to take part in other international games such as Commonwealth Games and the Asian Games," said Sheikh Hasina.

"I know it very well that culture and sports can't go far without the help of government, and our government, like its previous term, will continue to help these sectors to flourish," told Sheikh Hasina adding that her government would continue the training programmes for

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U-19s pound PNG, thru' to Plate final

SPORTS REPORTER

A fine all-round performance from Noor Hossain helped Bangladesh Under-19s post a massive win against Papua New Guinea in the ninth place play-off semifinal -- the Plate Championship -- in the ICC U-19 World Cup at Palmerston North in New Zealand yesterday.

Noor scored a brisk 66 and then took four wickets with the ball to inflict a huge 168-run defeat on the Pacific islanders. Bangladesh beat the same side in their first group match of the World Cup, that time by five wickets in a rain-curtailed encounter.

After opting to bat, Bangladesh were led by Saikat Ali's 61 but were in a spot of bother at 125 for six. Tasamul Haq and Noor then began the lower-order revival with a stand of 80 for the seventh wicket. Noor hit eight fours and a six in his gusty knock which came off 50 balls. Tasamul scored 43 off 61 deliveries. Eventually they were bowled out in 49.4 overs for 253.

It was a cakewalk when Bangladesh took the field, bundling out PNG just under 33

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Richards in city

SPORTS REPORTER

English Premier League chairman Sir Dave Richards arrived in Dhaka late last night for a four-day visit after the Bangladesh Football Federation (BFF) president Kazi Salahuddin invited him during a friendly football match between England and Brazil in Qatar November last.

The Premiership boss is scheduled to meet journalists today before sitting with the officials of Bangladesh's professional league clubs tomorrow.

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BTV & NEO Cricket

Bangladesh v India
Second Test, Day Four
Live from 9:30am

STAR Sports
Australian Open
Quarterfinals
Live from 6:00am

English Premier League
Aston Villa v Arsenal
Live from 1:40am (Thursday)

STAR Cricket
Sri Lanka v Australia
U-19 Cricket World Cup
Second Semifinal
Live from 3:30am

ESPN
Sportscentre India
Sports News
Live at 8:30pm

English Premier League
Chelsea v Birmingham City
Live from 1:40am (Thursday)



Kutumb, the mascot for the upcoming 11th South Asian Games, is having ride round the Sher-e-Bangla National Stadium in Mirpur during the tea break on the third day of the second Bangladesh-India Test yesterday.

PHOTO: STAR