

Star SPORT

DHAKA SUNDAY MARCH 6, 2011, E-MAIL: sports@thedailystar.net

Fan tries to stab Jose

A fan tried to stab Real Madrid coach Jose Mourinho at a Spanish airport but ended up injuring his bodyguard instead, Spain's Cadena Ser radio network reported Friday. The attack at the A Coruna airport in northwestern Spain occurred when Mourinho was signing autographs last Friday. The bodyguard only became aware of the four-inch stab wound when he boarded the bus. According to El Mundo newspaper, the attacker had targeted the Portuguese coach. Real Madrid meanwhile decided to beef up security for the former Chelsea boss, Cadena Ser added.



- AFP

MS tells fans to control emotions

AFP, Bangalore

Captain Mahendra Singh Dhoni, whose house was attacked after India's exit from the last World Cup, Saturday criticised Bangladeshi fans for stoning the West Indies bus.

The vehicle came under attack in Dhaka on Friday as it was heading back to the West Indies' team hotel after the match, in what police said was a case of mistaken identity, with fans thinking it was the home team's bus.

"It is unfortunate, but that is how the fans react. You should remember that players are not living at home, but their families are and families don't have anything to do with cricket," said Dhoni.

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A group of cricket lovers make a conciliatory gesture on behalf of the nation to the West Indies team in front of the Sheraton Hotel yesterday for the unsavoury incident caused by a few on the previous night.

PHOTO: COURTESY

Tamed Tigers reach Ctg

SPORTS REPORTER



The Bangladesh cricket team flew into Chittagong yesterday amidst tight security to play their two Group B matches of the ICC Cricket World Cup at the Zohur Ahmed Chowdhury Stadium on Friday and next Monday.

The security was beefed up following some sporadic incidents which took place after the Tigers' meek surrender against West Indies at the Sher-e-Bangla National Stadium in Mirpur on Friday.

For security reasons the Bangladesh team boarded into a different coach instead of the regular bus while on their way to the Hazrat Shahjalal International Airport from Hotel Sheraton.

Understandably the cricketers were in a sombre mood on Saturday after the heartbreaking nine-wicket defeat to the West Indies and they kept firmly to their hotel rooms before leaving Dhaka.

The Tigers hit their lowest ODI total in the match when they were bundled out for just 58 runs.

The defeat made the equation difficult for Shakib Al Hasan's

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Keep your feet on the ground

SAKEB SUBHAN

Very rarely do a team's actions and words combine to paint as clear a picture as Bangladesh's performance against Ireland and their captain Shakib Al Hasan's words did at the post-match briefing on the Friday before their debacle against the West Indies.

In truth, that picture could only be seen in full after their capitulation against a focused Caribbean team two days ago.

At the press conference following the Ireland match, when asked, perhaps a bit naively, why they had gotten out to bad shots in their innings, Shakib's answer had some of the assembled press, who were only too relieved with the win in stitches, and others gobsmacked. "Because we wanted to get out. Because we felt it would be good for the team if we got out, and because we heard the lurch was good and we wanted to have a bite," said the Bangladesh captain.

It was obviously said in jest, but it betrayed a lack of respect, not just for the inquirer or the assembled press, but most worryingly for the game. Bangladesh had after all been bundled out for 205 on their home pitch against an attack that was at best disciplined, and it was only natural that

questions would be asked of their performance at the end.

Another revealing quote from that press conference came when he was asked whether the batting was a cause for concern. "We are not too worried. In the first match we scored 283 against India, and they are the No. 1 or 2 ranked side in the world," came the reply.

After their defeat to the West Indies, when asked if he thought it was the saddest day in his career Shakib came out with a similarly bewildering answer, "It was a bad day for our cricket as we played poor cricket in the middle. It was definitely the worst day in my cricket career also, but you never know things can get even worse in future." When saying these things, he should remember that he is not only representing a nation, but also that he is one in a long line of cricketers, many of whom have been greater and far more humble after both victory and defeat.

There is also a case to be made for the Tigers getting carried away by all the hype surrounding their World Cup chances -- carried away to the extent that they have abandoned the processes that brought about famous victories, such as the 4-0 whitewash of New Zealand last October.

It was not always thus. In the fourth match of their famous whitewash of New Zealand in October 2010, Shakib came in at 44-3, and started slowly to score a brilliant hundred that carried the team to a match-winning 241.

Also worthy of note were his comments after winning the fourth straight match against the Kiwis, arguably Bangladesh's greatest triumph. "We did not bat according to how we planned. But our spirit made sure we pulled through," he said.

The problem with believing the hype is that a team starts playing in a manner that really does not suit them. At 24 for three against a bowling attack that is executing its plans, the logical thing to do is grind out a partnership. On Friday, each of the middle-order batsmen only knew one way -- hit out. With that mindset, 58 all out should not be a surprise.

Also, to be as accepting of mediocrity as Shakib was after the Ireland game is a sure way to stunt growth. In October, against New Zealand, Shakib was critical of performances even after victory. That showed that he wanted to keep improving. It does not seem so now.

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Stand by them

AL-AMIN



What transpired after the Bangladesh cricket team's meek surrender to the West Indies at the Sher-e-Bangla National Stadium in Mirpur on Friday was nothing less than mayhem.

Knives were out from every quarter to savage each and every member of the failed brigade whom they affectionately call Tigers.

The whole nation was devastated after the Tigers were bundled out for 58, their lowest total ever in a one-day match. The dream was shattered and the party of 160 million people was spoiled in the most stunning fashion. Fans who turned up to watch the game cried and then cursed after feeling betrayed by their trusted ones.

These emotional outbursts from the die-hard loyal bands were quite understandable and acceptable. But going overboard with those emotions and pelting stones at the team buses of both the winners and the vanquished was hardly acceptable, much like the way Bangladesh batted on a 'Black Friday'.

That unholy act can be best described as someone spitting up in the air, with the projectile crashing heavily on the Red and Green face, allowing the cynics to take the opportunity of belittling a cricket-crazy nation.

There is a thin line between frustration and that frustration boiling over into violence or anger. And as for the fans, they will have to choose wisely for the sake of the game they follow so passionately.

After the defeat, the Tigers were pressed by the press heavily. Perhaps no words in the dictionary were left to

portray how badly they played and how morbidly it affected the whole nation.

True, that a total of 58 is totally unacceptable. More unacceptable though, was the amount of overs they occupied at the crease. True, there was a tinge of arrogance in the batting. More importantly however, the players lacked the mental discipline and application in the middle when the going was getting tough. True that nothing went right from the mindless flashing blade of Tamim Iqbal to the fragile resistance of the tail. But more importantly it was one of those days when everything goes awry.

Bangladesh captain Shakib Al Hasan was right to say that it was one of those days 'we played badly'. But at the same time the nation is owed an apology from the captain. And many believe he should have done it during the post-match briefing.

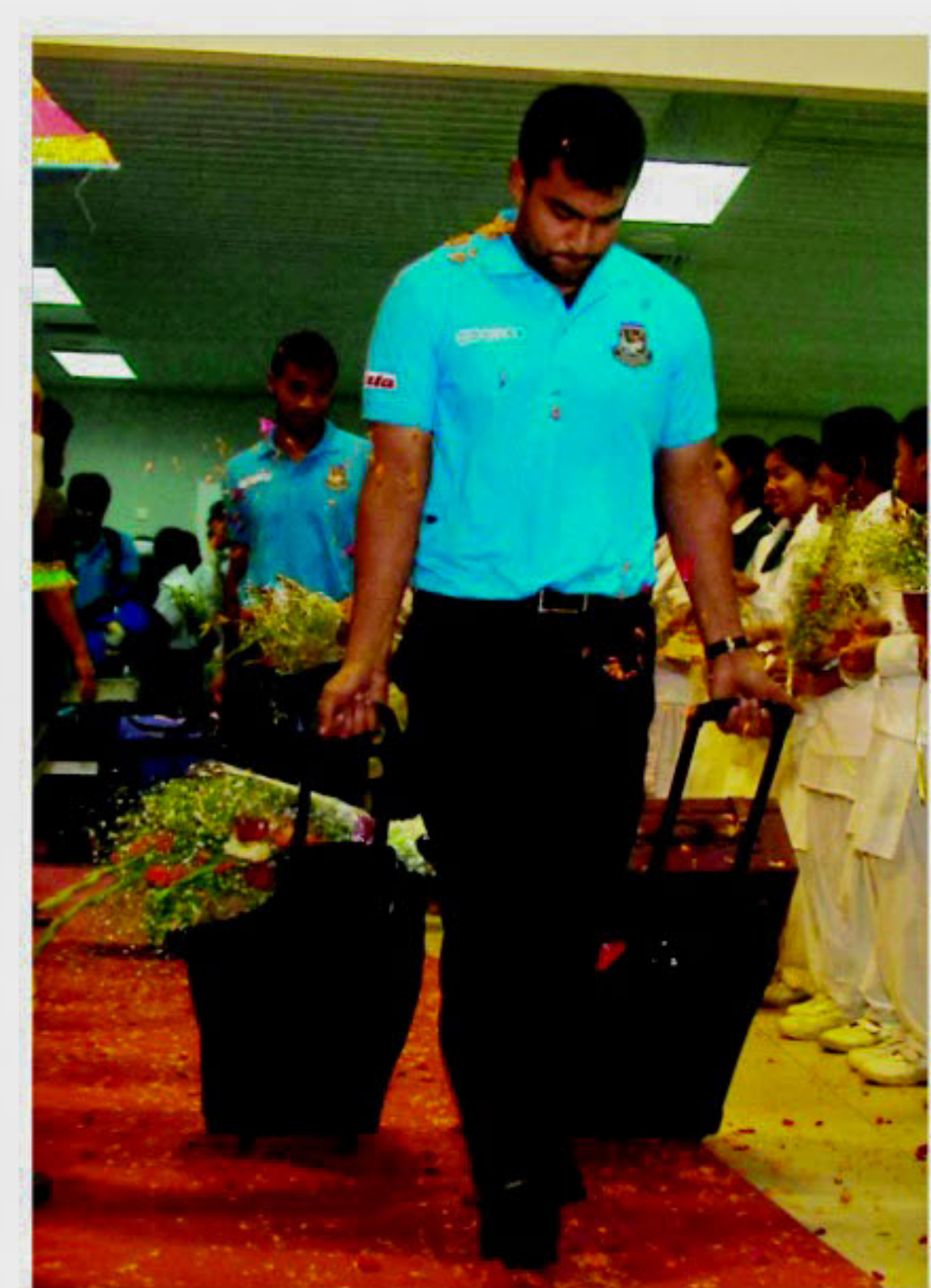
It was an opportunity lost for a beleaguered captain. Sill, it was only a game lost and not the end of the world. The Tigers will live to fight many more days and the next one is exactly a week away. Enough time to think and prepare. To prepare not to win but to stand up and fight like Tigers. And we promise we will be there because we are the fanatic followers of the Tigers.

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TODAY'S MATCHES

Match	Time	Venue
England v South Africa	10:00am	Chennai
India v Ireland	3:00pm	Bangalore



THIS AIN'T NO BURDEN: The expectations of a nation will rest heavy on Chittagong boy Tamim Iqbal in their crucial World Cup encounter against England on Friday. Here he comes out of the Hazrat Shah Amanat International Airport to board the team bus upon their arrival at the city yesterday.

PHOTO: ANURUP KANTI DAS

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India - Ireland

Beating England is the biggest sporting achievement in the history of Ireland. For India, it won't be a Banana peel match for them. Bangladesh suffered a lot to beat the Irish and in last match they thought a lesson to England. India must get ready or the Irish will chase them down! India needs wicket taking bowlers not the spinners to kill the over. Sreesanth could be an option for them. India cannot get complacent, given that the match will be played in Bengaluru again, it will be another high scoring one, especially with the fact that they doesn't have a bowling lineup to take 10 wickets. If India bats first they better score close to 400.

Mayaz Ahmed

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