



India batsman Sachin Tendulkar displays a different type of footwork before a practice session at Trent Bridge in Nottingham yesterday, ahead of the second Test against England starting tomorrow. PHOTO: AFP

# Mukund wants to be his own opener

**Cricket**

AFP, Nottingham

India opener Abhinav Mukund has admitted replacing Virender Sehwag is an almost impossible task but insisted he could serve his side well against England by playing his own game.

Sehwag, whose aggressive approach at the top of the order has turned on its head the notion of 'seeing off the new ball', is currently sidelined with an elbow injury.

He missed the first Test at Lord's, which England won by 196 runs, and is not expected to be fit in time for the second of a four-match series starting at Trent Bridge here on Friday.

In his absence Mukund, playing only his fourth Test and first in England, made 49 off 88 balls in tricky conditions during a stay of nearly two hours in the first innings at Lord's before falling for 12 -- the same score as India great Sachin Tendulkar made in the tourists' second innings.

"It's big boots to fill but I want to play my own game," the 21-year-old Mukund told reporters at Trent Bridge on Wednesday.

"I don't want to replace Sehwag. I just want to play how I want to play. If it comes off it's going to help the team."

And the left-hander added: "To be part of this set-up, anyone who comes in as a new batsman will learn every day. Even in the nets, there are so many people you look up to."

"A pat on the back from someone like Sachin does anyone's confidence the world of good."

"I've definitely improved over the last few months and I'm looking forward to keeping improving."

England will replace India at the top of the ICC's Test Championship table if they win this series by 2-0 or better but Mukund said India had the resilience to bounce back from a comprehensive defeat at Lord's.

"We're all disappointed but there's a lot of good things we can take from the

previous game," he said. "It's a four-match series."

"Being the world number one team, the India team has conquered a lot of challenges on the way here. We're experienced enough. We've come here to take on this challenge."

India hope Sehwag, who has so far scored 7,694 runs in 87 Tests with 22 centuries since making his debut in 2001, will be available in time for the third Test at Edgbaston starting on August 10.

Before this series, former Australia captain Ian Chappell highlighted Sehwag's absence from the opening encounters as a huge blow to India's hopes.

"There's no batsman in the world who can disrupt bowling plans quicker than Sehwag," Chappell wrote in his column on the ESPN Cricinfo website.

"This is where Sehwag's absence hurts India; being at the top of the order, he's likely to gain the upper hand in the series just by batting normally in the first session."

## 2014 World Cup starts June 12

AFP, Sao Paulo

The 2014 World Cup in Brazil will take place between June 12 and July 13, FIFA general secretary Jerome Valcke announced in Rio on Wednesday.

"The World Cup in 2014 will start on June 12 and finish on July 13. I know everyone wants to know the city that will host the opening game of the tournament, but that will be decided in October," he said.

Five-times champions Brazil will host the tournament for the second time after 1950, when they lost the final at the Maracana stadium to neighbouring Uruguay.

The last South American hosts were Argentina in 1978.

Valcke also confirmed that the Confederations Cup would be held in Brazil between June 15 and June 30, 2013.

The preliminary World Cup draw takes place Saturday in Rio.

## Haas sent packing

AFP, Los Angeles

Seventh-seeded Bulgarian Grigor Dimitrov and US teenager Ryan Harrison led the youth movement in evidence on Tuesday at the ATP Los Angeles hardcourt tournament.

Dimitrov, 20, made short work of two-time Los Angeles champion Tommy Haas, downing the 33-year-old German veteran 6-3, 6-2 in 66 minutes.

## Hosts win

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Maldive's assistant coach Ibrahim Nahid was satisfied with his boys' work. "I'm happy with the way we performed. You see this is only the second international tournament for us and we see this as a preparation for the upcoming Indian Ocean Games a few days later," said Nahid.

However Nahid, who runs his own design business in Male, was less than satisfied with the organising of the tournament, echoing the disgruntled sentiment by other foreign team staff.

"We were only told about the draw a day before the tournament. Then a team even did not make it in the end. Furthermore, the turf is a bit sticky which makes it hard for players to perform."

## Boycott no

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"not good enough to worry England".

Zaheer Khan, India's strike bowler, broke down early on at Lord's with a hamstring strain and is struggling to be fit for the second Test.

Former England opener Boycott was not surprised, saying: "Zaheer Khan is a quality bowler but even before the series started I never expected him to survive bowling in four Test matches in five weeks."

"His ability has never been in doubt but his fitness has always been a worry," he added.

# Jimmy expecting stronger India

**Cricket**

AFP, Nottingham

England seamer James Anderson expects India to be a stronger side when the second Test starts at Trent Bridge here on Friday after bowling the hosts to victory in the series opener.

Anderson, 28, took five for 65 in front of a sell-out last day crowd at Lord's on Monday as India were dismissed for 261 to give England a convincing 196-run win and a 1-0 lead in the four-match series.

"When any team gets beaten they generally come back stronger and have more fire in their belly," Anderson told Sky Sports on Wednesday.

"All we can do is concentrate on our game, prepare well the next couple of days and concentrate on that first hour on Friday," added the Lancashire paceman, whose second innings haul at Lord's included India's star batting trio of Rahul Dravid, Venkatesh Laxman and Sachin Tendulkar.

Victory at Lord's left England on course to replace India at the top of the ICC's Test Cham-

pionship table, something they will achieve if they win this series by a margin of two matches or better.

However, Anderson warned past efforts were no guarantee of future successes.

"It was a great performance, a great team effort. We did really well to get the win. But that's gone now," said Anderson. "We've got to hit the re-set button and focus on Friday now."

"Each game is different. We can't rely on what's gone on in the past," explained the Ashes-winner.

"It's a different game completely and we've got to just prepare well the next couple of days and hopefully hit the ground running on Friday."

"We've got to try to improve if we can. That's something we've prided ourselves on in the last couple of years -- not resting on our laurels but trying to improve and be as good as we possibly can be."

As for leapfrogging India at the top of the Test rankings, Anderson said: "It's our end goal, but we've got to concentrate on each game and play as well as we can in each game and hope that will be the end product."

## Fight for a lost

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I gave Mamun Khan two chances and he is going to play the second-leg match tomorrow," said the coach.

The former Macedonian national coach believes there is no problem with the goalkeeper rather he has problems in the midfield and attacking zone where there is no good cooperation and composition in between two departments.

However, former Bangladesh national Golam Sarwar Tipu believes the boys would play better than the Beirut match as they have three days to be refreshed.

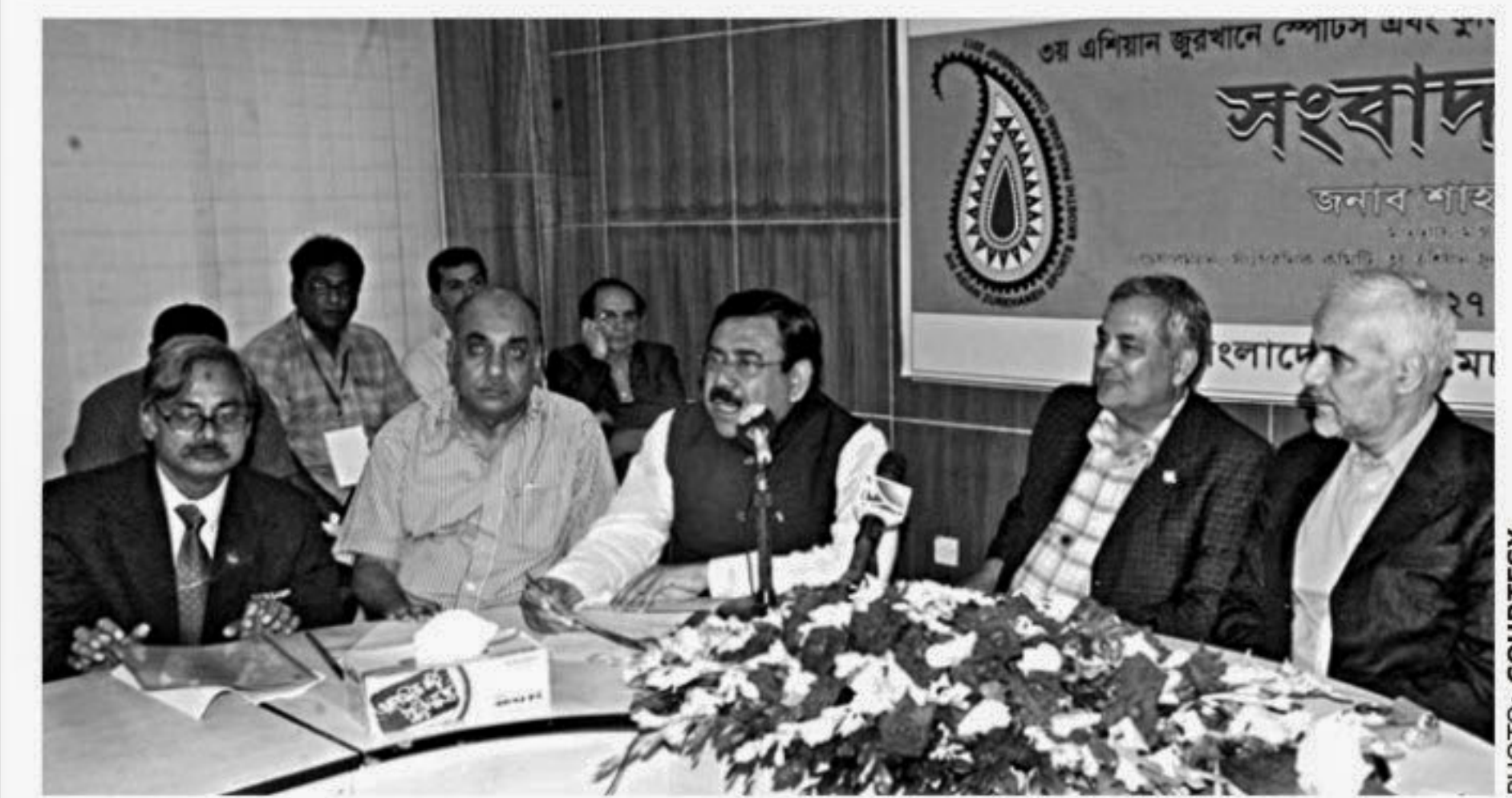
"No miracle will happen, but I believe Bangladesh will play better than the first-leg match in front of the home crowd though the opponents may feel relaxed after their 4-0 home win."

"But, it will be better for the boys if they could avoid their losing mentality but I think it is something that is tough to overcome for our players," said Tipu.

Bangladesh have brought one change in the striking position with Touhidul Alam coming into the side in place of injured hitman Mohammad Robin and new-cap Touhid has a good chance to make his debut tomorrow.

On the other hand, Lebanon coach Emile Rustom said, "Like all coaches over the world I will also love to win the game but in football, everything is possible and we wish to a good result like in the first leg. Bangladesh will also wish to win but we will defiantly also try to win."

**Bangladesh probable:** Mamun Khan (GK), Razaur Karim/Nasirul Islam, Mohammad Sujon, Ariful Islam, Wali Faisal/Atiqur Rahman Mishu, Prantosh Kumar, Mamunul Islam, Abdul Baten/Monaem Khan Raju, Zahdi Hossain, Zahid Hasan Emily/Touhidul Alam, Raju/Shakil Ahmed.



Bangladesh Amateur Wrestling Federation president and Shipping Minister Shahjahan Khan speaks during a press conference at the Bangabandhu National Stadium yesterday regarding the 3rd Asian Zurkhaneh Sports and Koshti Pehlevani Championship which will start tomorrow at the newly-built Wooden Floor Stadium. PHOTO: COURTESY

## Flower finds

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series Flower admitted: "Yes, I am actually. We almost saw it happen in this Test match."

"It would have been wrong if the outcome of the game had been seriously affected by a couple of those decisions and it was quite right that, luckily, we did continue to create chances. It's unsatisfactory the way it is, there is no doubt about that."

Flower pointed the finger at ICC chiefs for allowing the current situation to arise, where UDRS is used in some Test series but not in others.

"I don't think there's anything we can do, but I think the ICC should be stronger in taking a lead on these issues," said Flower.

"They are the world governing body and they should lead. I don't think it's unfair to say they haven't led on this topic."

"We all know that it is not going to be 100 per cent accurate, but we also know you get more right decisions using it, so let's not quibble about millimetres here when we know you get more right than wrong. That's why most Test-playing nations want to use it."

"[Umpiring] is a very difficult job. We all know that, and I think they would be happier with it too."

## Zurkhaneh

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The IZSF president also said that they would build a complex for Zurkhaneh Sports if the Bangladesh government allots a piece of land for it.

Bangladesh Amateur Wrestling Federation general secretary Tabiur Rahman said that athletes of the hosts would try to do better in the sport as it is a new sport for them.

## Serena wins on return

AFP, Stanford

Serena Williams, playing her first WTA Tour match on US soil since the 2009 US Open, made her return a victorious one with a 6-0, 6-0 victory over Australian Anastasia Rodionova Tuesday.

Williams, a 13-time Grand Slam champion and former world number one, was unfazed by her unseeded status as she battles to raise a ranking that has plummeted in the wake of a layoff of 11 months with injuries and illness.

The hardcourt tournament in Stanford is her third event since she won Wimbledon in 2010 and she's hoping it's a stepping stone to good things at the last Grand Slam of the season, the US Open in New York starting August 29.

Williams, now ranked 169th, encountered little resistance from 105th-ranked Rodionova, who has lost five straight matches.

Williams plans to play in Cincinnati and Toronto before the US Open. Her main goal, she said, is to play her best and let her ranking look after itself.

In other first-round matches, Russian Maria Kirilenko beat sixth-seeded Julia Goerges of Germany 6-2, 6-3.

Kirilenko, who reached the quarterfinals here last year, next faces Williams.

Japan's Ayumi Morita ousted seventh-seeded Ana Ivanovic of Serbia 6-3, 7-5.

Slovakia's Daniela Hantuchova beat Japanese qualifier Rina Fujiwara 6-0, 6-2.

Fujiwara, 19, was playing her first WTA main draw match.

Germany's Sabine Lisicki beat Romania's Simona Halep, 6-1, 6-2.

# Phelps's Shanghai drought ends

**Swimming**

AFP, Shanghai

American great Michael Phelps broke his gold medal drought in Shanghai with a convincing 200m butterfly win Wednesday, claiming his third straight world title in his favourite event.

The Olympic champion and world record-holder stormed ahead over the early stages and had enough left in the tank to fight off a late challenge by Japan's Takeshi Matsuda, clocking a winning time of 1 min 53.34sec.

Matsuda timed 1:54.01 while China's Wu Peng claimed bronze in 1:54.67.

Phelps smiled and shook Wu's hand after his victory, which follows a disappointing third place as part of America's 4x100m freestyle team and silver in the 200m freestyle as his rocky season continued in Shanghai.

"The race felt good. I wanted to do what I usually do when I'm in better shape," Phelps said.

"I wanted to step on it from the get-go. I saw the other swimmers at the 150 and I put my hips into it. I know there's a lot more I can do in that race. I'm feeling back to where I want to be. It feels good."

Phelps arrived in China, scene of his record-breaking eight-title haul at the Beijing Olympics, on the back of a string of defeats, and admitted he had neglected training and spent too much time playing golf.

His slump reached a nadir in May, when Wu beat him in the 200m butterfly for the second time in two months -- ending a nine-year unbeaten streak Phelps had hoped to preserve until retirement.

On a busy night for the American, Phelps also qualified second behind Ryan Lochte for Thursday's 200m individual medley final, where he will try to avenge defeat to his teammate in the 200m freestyle.

Also on Wednesday, Italy's Federica Pellegrini claimed her second successive world freestyle double when she surged from fifth at halfway to win the 200m in 1:55.58 from Australia's Kylie Palmer and Camille Muffat of France.

Olympic champion Pellegrini, who successively defended her world 400m crown on Sunday, appeared in trouble at 100m but she closed emphatically to win it by nearly half-a-second.

Meanwhile China's Sun Yang won the men's

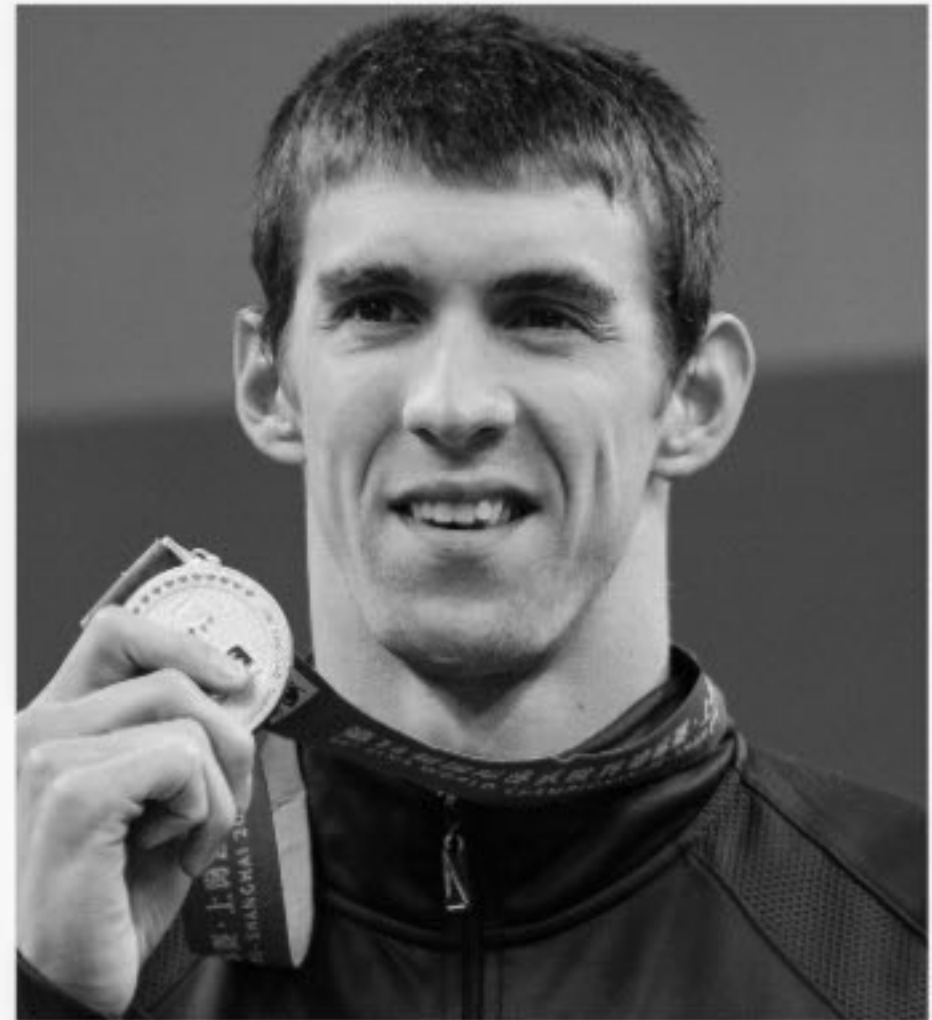


PHOTO: AFP

World record holder US swimmer Michael Phelps shows his gold medal on the podium after winning the 200-metre butterfly event in the FINA World Championships in Shanghai yesterday.

800m freestyle title ahead of Canada's Ryan Cochrane with Gergo Kis of Hungary third, delighting a packed Sea Crown stadium which has now witnessed three gold medals for the hosts.

Sun, 19, who led throughout, was never seriously troubled despite Cochrane's best efforts and won by a healthy margin of 3.29sec, setting him up for an expected assault on Grant Hackett's 10-year-old 1500m record on Sunday.

Brazil's Felipe Franca da Silva won the 50m breaststroke, ahead of Italian Fabio Scozzoli and defending champion Cameron van der Burgh of South Africa, in a time of 27.01sec.

And Australia's "Port Maquarie Missile" James Magnussen swam 47.90sec to top the 100m freestyle semifinal timings, reinforcing his status as favourite for Thursday's decider.

The 20-year-old Magnussen, who destroyed Phelps on the way to Australia's famous 4x100m victory on the opening night, was followed by America's Nathan Adrian with reigning champion Cesar Cielo fifth.

"I'm very happy that I am a little bit fast again. It's good. The biggest thing is to be patient -- it's practice for the Olympic Games," Magnussen said.

## CROSSWORD By Eugene Sheffer

- ACROSS**
- 1 Pale
  - 4 Cornfield invader
  - 8 Send forth
  - 12 Comedian
  - 13 "That hurts!"
  - 14 Disarray
  - 15 Annual celebration
  - 17 Entangling weapon
  - 18 Genealogy chart
  - 19 Not so high
  - 20 Pale
  - 22 Null and —
  - 24 Optimistic
  - 25 Pretend to sing, maybe
  - 29 Larry's pal
  - 30 Raise a price at auction
  - 31 Water (Fr.)
  - 32 Laws
  - 34 Pierce
  - 35 Reverberate
- DOWN**
- 2 Parisian pal
  - 3 Arm of the Atlantic
  - 4 Actor
  - 5 Discourteous
  - 6 Goose, in Guadaluara
  - 7 "What for?"
  - 8 Personify
  - 9 Catcall?
  - 10 Capri, e.g.
  - 11 Despot
  - 16 Deuce
  - 19 Speech impediment
  - 20 Weaponry
  - 21 Chimney dust
  - 22 YouTube offering
  - 23 Piece of work
  - 25 Rock Baron — (Suff.)
  - 26 Assets minus liabilities
  - 27 He played
  - 28 Wheel centers
  - 30 Dollar
  - 33 One of a group standing in an alley
  - 34 Un-accompanied item
  - 36 Lovers' quarrels
  - 37 Envelope part
  - 38 Diane or Nathan
  - 39 Doing
  - 40 Pack away
  - 42 Agent
  - 43 Before
  - 44 Ball-bearing item
  - 45 Hem's partner
- Solution time: 25 mins.**
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## CRYPTOQUIP

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J B Z F P M B J L H P M D A F L B E M Y  
H P Y Z I L H I C , K E Y S B C D Z V L I I  
B S L B L N Z F F E M Y H D K L M V P ?

Yesterday's Cryptoquip: IF YOU'RE READING SOME NOVEL FOR THE FIRST TIME, WOULD YOU SAY THAT'S TURNING OVER A NEW LEAF?

Today's Cryptoquip Clue: B equals T