



## 900 A GOOD TARGET!

Zimbabwe pacer Tinashe Panyangara seems to have taken the proverb 'sky is the limit' a little too seriously as he reckons that the visitors would need to set a target of 900 to win this Test match. "900 runs would be good enough to put them under pressure," the 29-year-old, who also claimed his first five-wicket

# Batters ruin good works of bowlers

BISHWAJIT ROY



Test cricket hardly lures fans to the ground these days. Pakistan won their first Test in four years against Australia in Dubai yesterday in front of almost empty stands. But the Sher-e-Bangla National Stadium in Mirpur was a study of stark contrast where almost a full house of Tigers fans were rooting for their beloved team, which is still struggling to win a game this year.

It was only the second day of the opening Test against Zimbabwe and the crowd, inspired by Shakib Al Hasan's magical bowling display on the first day, expected the home side to take a considerable lead, but had to leave the field with a burning question in mind: how can professionals be so casual in their approach?

Run-outs are very much part of the game but three run outs, including two at crucial stages in the Tigers' chase of Zimbabwe's first innings total of 240, raise eyebrows not because of the cruelty of those dismissals, but for the manner in which Mominul Haque, Shakib Al Hasan and Shahadat Hossain got out.

Mominul was extremely callous in dragging his bat and he gave the impression that he never even tried to catch the train which was just leaving the platform. A stranded Shakib was caught in two minds and took a fraction of a second more before a futile diving attempt. Shahadat felt comfortably at home only to discover afterwards that he did not place his bat behind the white line before a direct hit dislodged the bails.

And those comical run outs played a big part in the Tigers' stop-start chase.

There is no way one can take away the achievement of Zimbabwe pacer Tinashe Panyangara, who claimed his maiden five-for, but it was the poor batting from the home side which ensured that they could manage only a 14-run first innings lead, after being dismissed for 254 despite the fact that three batsmen scored half-centuries.

Mominul (53), Mahmudullah Riyad (63) and Mushfiqur Rahim (64) made half-centuries and looked mostly untroubled by the Zimbabwe bowlers. The overcast condition also didn't favour the bowlers but still none of them could carry on with their innings to put Bangladesh on top.

The day started with the early loss of Shamsur Rahman, who gave an easy catch at mid-off.

Riyad joined Mominul to steady the ship and the good-looking 63-run partnership was broken following the latter's unbelievably laidback approach.

After lunch, the home side received the Shakib blow. Although Shakib was not quick enough to regain his crease after Riyad refused a sharp single, his dismissal was an eye-pleasing display of how athletic the Zimbabweans were on the field with an off-balanced Chatara picking the ball with one hand and dislodging the bails in a flash.

Despite the hiccup, another partnership grew between Riyad and skipper Mushfiqur but the 64-run fifth wicket stand ended following the former's judgemental error of sweeping an occasional bowler, actually used by the shrewd Zimbabwe captain as bait.

And the shot the last recognised batsman Shuvagoto Hom played after Riyad's departure left a serious question of whether he was ready for the highest level of the game. Panyangara then quickly mopped up the fragile tail, leaving the home bowlers to try and wrest back the initiative.



PHOTOS: FIROZ AHMED

**COMEDY OF RUN-OUTS:** Bangladesh's first innings on the second day of the first Test against Zimbabwe never got the desired pace due to some inexplicable run-outs at Mirpur yesterday. Mominul Haque (top) was the first to go after failing to drag his bat; a diving Shakib Al Hasan (below, L) makes a belated attempt to regain his crease and Shahadat Hossain trudges back to the dressing room after nonchalantly planting his bat outside the line.

# Mushy should bat higher

NAIMUL KARIM



Midway through lunch yesterday Bangladesh had stumbled from a smooth sail to a nervy 114 for 4. It was then that Mushfiqur Rahim entered the fray. While the pair of Mushfiqur and Mahmudullah Riyad did help the hosts to partially recover with a half-century stand, Riyad was soon sent back to the pavilion, leaving Mushfiqur with the tail yet again.

The innings fizzled out soon after. While he did well to score 64, it was quite evident that he had extra pressure on himself to perform while batting with the unpredictable Shuvagata Hom and an unstable tail.

In addition, he must have been tired from keeping the previous day. The pressure to score runs eventually seemed to have had caught up with him and compelled him to play an unnecessary pull against a bouncer that was travelling way over his head, which got him caught.

This was the fourth time this year that the captain arrived at the crease

under a pressure-filled situation and was forced to play with a hint of caution to help his side recover. The trend has almost become a feature of sorts for Bangladesh in recent times.

In the last series against the West Indies, he came in at number six in the first innings of the first Test and had to remain content with an unbeaten 48 while the rest fell around him. In the next innings he had to battle with the tail, right till the very end to get to his century. Against Sri Lanka earlier this year, he had to bail Bangladesh out yet again and did so with an 86-run stand with Shakib Al Hasan.

However, once Shakib got out, he faced the same old music. Nasir Hossain's recent drop in form did not help much either.

With the Tigers ailing from a batting disorder, the question that remains to be asked is whether Mushfiqur needs to bat higher up the order. In the five Tests that Bangladesh have played this year, Mushfiqur has averaged 48.28, which tops the Tigers' list. With 338 runs, he is currently the second highest run-getter in the side this year, eight runs short of Mominul Haque. He is

also the highest run-getter in ODIs this year and he bats higher up the order in the 50-over format. A promotion for Mushfiqur would not only give him more time to get settled, but also give him an opportunity to play pressure-free cricket and in turn give the Tigers a better head-start.

But this would probably have to come at a cost. Mushfiqur has never batted above five in Test cricket, primarily due to the exertion caused due to his keeping. His comparatively poor display behind the wickets recently could well stem from the burden he has been carrying with the bat. However, the fact that Bangladesh's top five batsmen have failed to put on more than 200 runs seven out of nine times this year, is a concern that needs to be addressed in whatever way possible.

Ever since 2011, Mushfiqur has clearly stepped up his game as a batsman. His average in Test cricket since 2011 stands at 45.22; prior to that it was 27.15. And with the sort of dedication that Mushfiqur has shown, the graph is only likely to get better. The potential is clearly visible; but at this point in time he seems to be underused.

## BD-ZIM SCOREBOARD

<b>ZIMBABWE:</b> First innings 240 (Raza 51, Taylor 28, Chigumbura 28, Ervine 34; Shakib 6-59, Jubair 2-58)				
<b>BANGLADESH:</b> First innings (overnight 27-1)				
Tamim c Masakadza b Panyangara	5			
Shamsur c Chigumbura b Panyangara	8			
Mominul run out	53			
Mahmudullah lbw b Raza	63			
Shakib run out	5			
Mushfiqur c Ervine b Panyangara	64			
Shuvagata c Chigumbura				
b Kamungozi	14			
Tajjul b Panyangara	19			
Shahadat run out	0			
Jubair not out	7			
Al-Amin b Panyangara	9			
Extras: (lb-6, w-1)	7			
Total: (All out in 98 overs)	254			
Fall of wickets: 1-10, 2-29, 3-92, 4-114, 5-178, 6-209, 7-226, 8-226, 9-244.				
<b>Bowler</b>	<b>O</b>	<b>M</b>	<b>R</b>	<b>W</b>
Panyangara	23	5	59	5
Chatara	22	11	27	0
Chigumbura	14	6	34	0
Nyumbu	15	1	65	0
Kamungozi	21	5	51	1
Raza	3	0	12	1
<b>ZIMBABWE:</b> Second innings				
Sibanda not out	5			
Chakabva not out	0			
Extras:	0			
Total: (For no loss in 2 overs)	5			
To bat: Raza, Masakadza, Taylor, Ervine, Chigumbura, Panyangara, Nyumbu, Chatara, Kamungozi.				

## Serena's sweet revenge

AFP, Singapore

Serena Williams sealed her fifth WTA Finals title and took sweet revenge for her crushing loss to Simona Halep when she hammered the Romanian 6-3, 6-0 in Singapore on Sunday.

The 18-time Grand Slam-winner was broken early in the match but she reeled off eight games in a row to humiliatingly "bagel" Halep, five days after the Romanian's 6-0, 6-2 win in group play.

The peerless Williams yet again proved she remains on top of women's tennis at the age of 33 after becoming the first player to win the season finale three times in a row since Monica Seles in 1992.

## Home delight for Federer

AFP, Basel

Roger Federer outclassed David Goffin in the Swiss Indoors final on Sunday, winning 6-2, 6-2 to claim a third title from his last four events and sixth in his home event.

Federer spent just 51 minutes in delighting his hometown crowd, setting up two match points with a fifth ace and effortlessly piloting over a winning drop shot on his first opportunity to claim the 82nd title of his career.

The Swiss world number two comfortably dominated his baby-faced Belgian opponent just as he had done in their first meeting at the French Open in 2012.

"I'm very pleased with how well I'm playing," said the 17-time Grand Slam champion, who will carry on next week to the Paris Masters, followed by the season finals in London and a Davis Cup final for Switzerland on indoor clay in France.

Federer, 33, also boosted his chances of regaining the world number one ranking from Novak Djokovic by the season's end.

# 'Run-outs are unacceptable'

NAIMUL KARIM



M a h m u d u l l a h Riyad has blamed Bangladesh's poor batting display at Mirpur yesterday on the 'casual approach' of the players. He also reckoned that the hosts would face a difficult time if the Test continued till the fifth day.

"In my personal opinion, none of the run-outs were acceptable, especially at this level of cricket. It may have taken place due to a casual approach. If we were a bit more careful, then these mistakes would not have taken place," said Riyad at the post-day press conference yesterday.

Run-outs were a key feature in yesterday's game as it interfered with Bangladesh's momentum. Mominul Haque failed to ground his bat in a comfortable single; Shakib Al Hasan was involved in a mix-up with Riyad; while Shahadat Hossain surprisingly stood content after placing his bat on the crease line and not inside it.

"I can assure you that Mominul was very upset about the mistake that he made. And with regards to Shakib's, I was more at fault because I made the call. He had started before I managed to understand that the single was not there. It was a little late," explained Riyad.

Apart from the run-outs, the fact

that three of the Bangladesh batsmen gave in after scoring their half-centuries, also hurt the hosts.

"Even though they bowled in good areas, the conditions were good for batting. We should have batted with a lot more patience, especially those who scored the 50s. There were problems in our shot making and decision making. That's when you should ideally be cashing in," said Riyad.

The 28-year-old himself played a risky shot that led to his downfall. He placed his feet across the stumps to sweep a delivery turning in.

"I made a mistake before tea. I should not have played that shot. I was timing the ball well. Playing that shot was not appropriate," said a disappointed Riyad.

Riyad further said that the Tigers were not relieved despite having managed to take a slender lead.

"We are concerned. Everyone knows that if the lead ends up being a lot in the fourth innings, it will be difficult for us. If it goes into the fifth day we may be in trouble so we have to restrict them to as less a score as possible... maybe around 150 to 200."

Riyad also added that the visitors had saved at least 20 to 25 runs through their fielding, something that the hosts will need to replicate if they want to win this Test match.

# Pakistan's record win

AFP, Dubai



Zulfiqar Babar took a maiden five-wicket haul and fellow leg-spinner Yasir Shah took four as Pakistan humiliated Australia by 221 runs in the first Test in

Dubai on Sunday.

Babar finished with 5-74 in only his third Test, while debutant Shah took 4-50 to dismiss a resolute Australia for 216 in their second innings and give Pakistan a 1-0 lead in the two-Test series.

Pakistan, who set Australia a 438-run target, were left frustrated as Mitchell Johnson (61) and Steven Smith (55) fought hard before they succumbed in a tantalising finish with just 21.5 overs left in the day.

Pakistan will now hope they either win or avoid defeat in the second Test in Abu

This is Pakistan's second straight win over Australia in Tests

If Pakistan win this series, it will be their first over Australia since 1994

Dhabi, starting October 30, to clinch their first series win over Australia since 1994.

This was Australia's ninth defeat in Asia in the last 14 Tests, having lost eight to India since 2008. Their only win came in Sri Lanka in 2011 with four draws as they fell to south Asia's specialist spinners.

Babar dismissed number ten Peter Siddle, caught bat-pad in the 92nd over, to seal the victory as Pakistani fielders removed the stumps even before the Australian review was turned down.



The Dhaka-leg participants of 2014 Turkish Airlines World Golf Cup pose for photographs after the day-long event at the Kurmitola Golf Club recently. Two winners from Dhaka have made it to the Grand Finals of the prestigious event for amateur golfers to be held in the south-western Turkish sea resort of Antalaya next month.

PHOTO: COURTESY