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CRICKET

WORLD CUP SP

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DHAKA FRID e-mail: sport

7, 20 et

6s

144

4s

801

WHACK 0 METER

SHAH CEMENT

Most 6s hit by a player

Chris Gayle

West Indies

17

Most 4s hit by a player

T Dilshan

Sri Lanka

24



Tillakaratne Dilshan (L) and Kumar Sangakkara combined together to torment the Tigers at the MCG yesterday. The pair added 210 runs for the unbroken second wicket.

PHOTO: AFP



CLEAR MEN

NOTHING TO HIDE

TODAY'S MATCH

South Africa v West Indies

Time: 9:30am

Venue: Sydney

SATURDAY'S MATCHES

New Zealand v Australia

Time: 7:00am

Venue: Auckland

India v UAE

Time: 12:30pm

Venue: Perth

Loss no big deal

SPORTS REPORTER from Melbourne

In the 90,000-capacity stadium, more than half was vacant as only 30,000 fans turned up to watch the Bangladesh-Sri Lanka match of the ICC World Cup yesterday, but there was no shortage of festivity in and around the MCG -- the iconic Melbourne Cricket Ground.

Sri Lankan supporters' popular musical instruments - Papare bands - dominated the stands and their celebrations continued even after the match justifiably as Sri Lanka posted a 92-run victory, but the red and green flags also made their presence felt as it was an occasion for the Bangladeshi fans to celebrate, no matter whether their beloved Tigers had lost the match or not. For them, their long-cherished dream to see the Tigers playing at

the famous MCG finally came true. They have been waiting for this day for so long. Many had taken leave from their jobs to be part of this occasion. Many came with their little babies and many defied their old age to be part of it.

A young team arrived in the stadium with a car-rally of two hundred vehicles. To cheer up the team Bangladeshi fans did their best



Lankans after Colombo. And in the end, the Tigers fans were not disheartened at all though their team failed to rise to the occasion.

"Yes, little bit frustrated with the performance, but we are not disheartened at all. It was a long-cherished dream for me to see our team playing in this ground and today was the day," said Nazrul Hossain.

'We didn't play well'

BISHWAJIT ROY from Melbourne

"Like batting, bowling also needs partnerships to become successful."

This was the way how Mashrafe Bin Mortaza expressed his frustration when he was asked about his brilliant bowling effort after his side's 92-run defeat against Sri Lanka at the Melbourne Cricket Ground (MCG) yesterday.

The Bangladesh captain's bowling was the only silver lining in the Tigers' poor showing in the much-anticipated game and he was unlucky to finish his first spell at 6-0-20-0 without any success as Anamul Haque dropped a regulation catch in the slips in the very first over. He however didn't get any support from the other end and as a result Sri Lanka piled up 332 runs for the loss of just one wicket, which Mashrafe thought was a difficult task to achieve.

"It was frustrating," were the words from the skipper when he summed up his team's performance in the match. The sloppy fielding apparently seemed to be one of the main reasons behind the defeat as three catches were dropped and one easy stumping chance was wasted, but Mashrafe blamed all three departments for the poor outcome in the match.

"We can't look for excuses. We failed

to play good cricket which is why we suffered the heavy defeat," said the brave-heart cricketer.

Regarding the talking point of dropped catches, he said: "Yeah, definitely catch-dropping is costing us, but it happens in cricket. At the same time I think as a bowling group we have not been up to the mark today. We need to work it out, and hopefully, the next game, we'll come up with good things."

Mashrafe also denied that the expectation regarding the match and the big



ground played any part behind this defeat.

"There was no pressure. I think the boys didn't take any pressure. Of course the expectation was there, but at the same time our focus was to play good cricket, but we couldn't do that; can't hold the big ground for an excuse, but yes, it was disappointing with the fielding today. It's very difficult to explain, but as I said we couldn't play well and that's it," said Mashrafe.

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Shakib Al Hasan (C) grimaces after yet another sloppy finding during Bangladesh's World Cup match against Sri Lankan at the MCG yesterday.

PHOTO: REUTERS

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Men of Steel



TILLAKARATNE DILSHAN

Did you by any chance call him old? Well, that stirred him up didn't it? Tillakaratne Dilshan smashed away Sri Lanka's early woes in the tournament with a punishing 161 off 146

balls. The way he sprinted those doubles and consistently shifted to drive those switch hits, made him seem half his age. There were no sixes in his innings and yet it seemed as exciting as some of the other more aggressive knocks in the World Cup. Perhaps the best aspect of his game was that unlike the other two batsmen who got a chance to play, Dilshan didn't provide the Tigers with any opportunities. It's a new beginning for Dilshan in the mega event and can perhaps propel the Lankans to a fresh start as well.



SAMIULLAH SHENWARI

Shenwari came on to bat after fall of two quick wickets. Scotland had the Afghanis on the mat and were looking poised to break their 10-match duck before his knock took the team across the line. Samiullah Shenwari waged a lone battle with the tail and stood firm and with the help of the tail enders, took the game by the scruff of its neck. He chewed up a lot of deliveries but once he came into his own, played a gem of a knock to almost take his team through and nearly scored a hundred .He smashed seven fours and five sixes in his 147-ball 96 before he was caught by Davey.

THIRD EYE Tigers overwhelmed

NAIMUL KARIM

At the end of Sri Lanka's tour of Bangladesh last year Mominul Haque was asked what he learnt from the series. He animatedly talked about Kumar Sangakkara's patience and the manner in which the veteran planned his innings.

In fact most of the other players did the same thing. Mushfiqur Rahim, during the post and pre-match press conferences, consistently identified Sri Lanka's senior pair -- Sangakkara and Mahela Jayawardene -- as a big threat. Imrul Kayes, after scoring a century back then, had a long chat with Sangakkara, looking for words of wisdom at the end of the series.

These players after all are legends of the game and their advice could be crucial for some of the younger Bangladeshi cricketers.

However, the problem with that is that players tend to get overawed on the field. Sangakkara had bludgeoned the Tigers with a triple century and a hundred in the same Test last year.

And yesterday it seemed as though some of the Bangladeshi players didn't believe that they could actually get these champions out, despite several attempts.

Sangakkara was dropped twice; while the first one, a caught-and-bowled opportunity off Taskin Ahmed, was difficult, Mominul Haque should have grasped the second with

both hands at point.

Mushfiqur had a torrid time behind the wickets. Apart from missing a stumping chance, he also gave a series of byes. It was perhaps Anamul Haque's dropped-catch in the first over that set the tone on the field. He also missed a run-out opportunity which Dilshan had practically given up on.

It definitely wasn't a case of lack of skill; the Tigers have held on to more difficult catches in the past. It was just the case of belief. It therefore is not a surprise that Sangakkara and Dilshan have the highest number of hundreds against the Tigers.

The additional pressure of playing at the Melbourne Cricket Ground for the first time



ever also could have been a factor that the players found difficult to deal with; but for most parts of

the game it seemed as though they were overwhelmed with their opposition.

It's not as though the Tigers weren't aware of this problem. A glance at the stats would immediately make it clear how much the Sri Lankans, especially the seniors, have enjoyed playing against Bangladesh.

Mashrafe even brought in the field to Sangakkara, with an aggressive aim to get him out early instead of just trying to keep him quiet. However, while the skipper had the right idea, the fielders unfortunately failed to execute the plan.

Bangladesh's horrible ODI-run last year began after they lost to Sri Lanka in bizarre

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'Win gives back our confidence'

SPORTS REPORTER from Melbourne

On way to making an unbeaten 161, Tillakaratne Dilshan overtook Aravinda de Silva as Sri Lanka's highest individual scorer in a World Cup match. De Silva hit 145 against Kenya in the 1996 World Cup which the in-form Dilshan erased from the record books yesterday in style, but the right-hander said he did not know about the record until the post-match conference.

"I don't know. I came to know only now that I broke the record [of Aravinda]. I'm not thinking of records, I just try to bat as long as possible for the country. But it's great creating records as well. I will try to do a lot more in this tournament," Dilshan said when his attention was drawn about the mark.

He however refused to label Bangladesh's bowling as his happy hunting attack as this was his fourth hundred in last nine innings against the Tigers.

"Not only Bangladesh, I think in the last two months I scored four hundreds; two in New Zealand, just missed one last time by four or something. I'm really enjoying every team, not only Bangladesh, every bowling attack. When I go in to bat I just try to do my things and just go forward and bat as long as possible," Dilshan responded to a question with a smile.

Dilshan said that the game against Bangladesh was important for them after losing the first game against New Zealand and posting a hard-fought victory against Afghanistan and said the win gave back the team its confidence, especially the bowling unit.

Dilshan also highly praised the effort of Kumar Sangakkara, who hammered an aggressive hundred and associated 210 runs in the unbroken second wicket stand to dismiss Bangladesh's any hope of making their first appearance at the famous MCG a memorable one.

Dilshan was however not ready to judge their win against Bangladesh as a turning point for them.

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SCOREBOARD

SRI LANKA V BANGLADESH				
SRI LANKA	R/B		4/6	
Thirimanne c Taskin b Rubel	52/78		3/0	
Dilshan not out	161/146		22/0	
Sangakkara not out	105/76		13/1	
Extras: (b-3, lb-2, w-9)	14			
Total: (For 1 wkt in 50 overs)	332			
Did not bat: Karunaratne, Jayawardene, Mathews, Chandimal, Perera, Herath, Malinga, Lakmal.				
Fall of wickets: 1-122.				
Bowler	O	M	R	W
Mashrafe	10	0	53	0
Rubel	9	0	62	1
Taskin	10	1	82	0
Shakib	10	0	55	0
Mahmudullah	7	0	49	0
Sabbir	4	0	26	0
BANGLADESH				
	R/B		4/6	
Tamim b Malinga	0/2		0/0	
Anamul run out	29/43		1/1	
Soumya c Sangakkara b Mathews	25/15		5/0	
Mominul c Jayawardene b Lakmal	1/3		0/0	
Mahmudullah c Herath b Perera	28/46		3/0	
Shakib c Malinga b Dilshan	46/59		4/1	
Mushfiqur b Lakmal	36/39		2/1	
Sabbir c Sangakkara b Malinga	53/62		7/0	
Mashrafe st Sangakkara b Dilshan	7/7		1/0	
Rubel not out	0/5		0/0	
Taskin lbw b Malinga	0/1		0/0	
Extras: (lb-9, w-6)	15			
Total: (All out in 47 overs)	240			
Fall of wickets: 1-0, 2-40, 3-41, 4-84, 5-100, 6-164, 7-208, 8-228, 9-240.				
Bowler	O	M	R	W
Malinga	9	0	35	3
Lakmal	8	0	49	2
Mathews	5.4	0	36	1
Herath	10	0	43	0
Perera	6.2	0	33	1
Dilshan	8	0	35	2
Result: Sri Lanka won by 92 runs.				
Player-of-the-match: Tillakaratne Dilshan.				
Toss: Sri Lanka				
SCOTLAND V AFGHANISTAN				
SCOTLAND	R/B		A/6	
Coetzee b D Zadrn	25/41		5/0	
MacLeod c N Zadrn b D Zadrn	0/5		0/0	
Gardiner lbw b Hassan	5/20		0/0	
Machan b Nabi	31/28		4/0	
Mommsen c Zazai b Naib	23/36		4/0	
Berrington c Zazai b D Zadrn	25/46		2/0	
Cross c Zazai b S Zadrn	15/26		1/0	
Davey c Nabi b S Zadrn	1/9		0/0	
Haq c Naib b S Zadrn	31/51		3/0	
Evans c Nabi b S Zadrn	28/37		3/0	
Wardlaw not out	1/2		0/0	
Extras: (lb-12, w-12, nb-1)	25			
Total: (For 9 wks in 49.3 overs)	211			
Fall of wickets: 1-42, 2-46, 3-85, 4-88, 5-89, 6-96, 7-97, 8-132, 9-192.				
Bowler	O	M	R	W
Wardlaw	9.3	0	61	0
Davey	10	1	34	2
Evans	10	1	30	2
Haq	10	0	45	1
Berrington	10	0	40	4
Result: Afghanistan won by 1 wicket.				
Player-of-the-match: Samiullah Shenwari.				
Toss: Afghanistan				

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