

SPORTS

BANGLADESH V PAKISTAN PCB
NEW ERA BEGINS HERE

The Export Leader

CROWN CEMENT
FOR SOLID FOUNDATION



Imrul Kayes (L) and Tamim Iqbal snatch a quick single on their way to a marvellous 312-run stand for the first wicket at Khulna yesterday. They scored the highest ever opening stand in the second innings of a Test, overcoming a 55-year-old record.

PHOTO: FIROZ AHMED

'Our biggest achievement'

SPORTS REPORTER from Khulna

"That was a typical Tamim Iqbal way of reaching a double century," tweeted one of the many fans of the left-hander, soon after he danced down the track and smacked Junaid Khan straight back for six. It was perhaps the most risky and audacious way to reach one's double hundred and yet that's Tamim for you.

It has been a while since Tamim's fans have been able to use these catchphrases; his last two centuries after all were the slowest in his career. As a result, when the left-hander danced down the track thrice to leap towards his double-century, it left almost everyone on the edge of their seats for the Tamim they all knew was back.

"I started thinking about the double on 169 and then those three sixes happened. When I was on 195, I knew he [Junaid] was going to bowl there. I was setting him up. I enjoyed reaching the target that way," smiled the left-hander.

It was a shot that not only took him to his first double hundred, but also made him the highest run-getter in an innings for Bangladesh.

"I had set high standards for myself and I couldn't achieve that. By scoring a double hundred I have fulfilled one of my dreams and I am really happy. I want to steadily



- The highest stand for any wicket by a Bangladeshi pair
- The first ever 300-plus run opening stand in the second innings of a Test
- Tamim Iqbal's 206 is the highest score by a Bangladeshi, beating Mushfiqur Rahim's 200
- Tamim hit seven sixes in the innings, the highest for a Bangladeshi batsman

- Imrul Kayes is the fifth Bangladeshi to score 150 in Tests
- Tamim and Kayes faced 454 deliveries, the third-highest by an opening pair against Pakistan
- This was Bangladesh's first 300-plus stand in Test cricket
- Tamim is now 53 runs away from becoming Bangladesh's highest run-getter in Tests

- Tamim scored his third consecutive hundred in this Test, the first Bangladeshi to do so
- In the last three Tests, Tamim's batting average increased from 35.88 to 40.18
- 555 for 6 is Bangladesh's third highest team total overall and is the fifth time they crossed 500
- The first time that a team has scored 500-plus

- runs against Pakistan in the second innings
- This was the first triple century stand for the opening wicket against Pakistan since 2006
- This was the highest first-innings deficit (294 runs) overcome by an opening stand
- Bangladesh scored 887 runs in this Test, eclipsing their record 822 scored against Zimbabwe last year

WORLD WILL SEE WHEN SILK ADORNS YOUR LIFE

BERGER Trained Worksheds

Lovingly Khulna

AL-AMIN From Khulna

If you are in Khulna and wishing to enjoy a cricket match, you are perhaps in the best place of Bangladesh. The venue Sheikh Abu Naser Stadium, located on the Khan A Sabur Road, may not be as big as that of Dhaka's Sher-e-Bangla National Stadium, but it's not just a concrete structure in the middle of a locality.

It you look beyond the greens in the middle, you will still find yourself surrounded by bigger greens with a lot of trees winking above the one-storey public stands. The wicket is a batting paradise and it is considered one of the luckiest grounds for the Tigers, who have created a small piece of history by winning a draw against Pakistan in the first Test on Saturday.

But the biggest strength of Khulna is that it helps people, sick and tired of living in those bustling cities of Dhaka or Chittagong, to enjoy a refreshingly laid-back life in a tranquil environment. For someone who wants to go to Mirpur to enjoy a cricket game, the biggest concern is how early he has to start from home to get there on time. But if you are anywhere in Khulna

and want to watch a game, you will never be late because it's a city where traffic jam is almost non-existent. It took 10 minutes for this yours truly to reach the stadium from Royal Hotel on the first day of the Bangladesh-Pakistan Test. And believe it or not the time-frame never varied till the fifth and final day.

People here are never in a hurry. You will hardly find a rickshaw-puller paddling fast or riding down the wrong lane. During the last five days of the Test match, festivity gripped the city and everybody looked enjoying even after the day's proceedings have finished. A concert has been arranged at the Royal intersection where a lot of family with their children turned up to enjoy their time at night. But not a single unwanted incident took place there. The kitchen markets in Dhaka sell frozen fish at night. But pay a visit to the famous sandho bazar (dusk market) in Khulna and you will be amazed to see fresh fishes all around.

Khulna may not be a popular destination for the tourists, but anyone who wants to take the trouble of a two-hour bus ride from Jessore, where the nearest airport is located, a full value of pure enjoyment is guaranteed.

Tigers' turning point

SPORTS REPORTER from Khulna

It was not a time and occasion to keep emotions in check. And Bangladesh captain Mushfiqur Rahim and coach Chandika Hathurusingha did not quell their emotions while they were speaking in the post-match briefing regarding the team's fight-back on the way to drawing the first Test against Pakistan; which according to skipper Mushfiqur was no less than a victory.

They were straightforward in saying that it was the biggest achievement in Bangladesh cricket history and that they left their mark on the map of the glorious history of Test cricket.

The amazing effort from Tigers' tent one after another, like Tamim Iqbal and Imrul Kayes' fearless batting, begged the question regarding what had inspired these performances. If you look at the views of Hathurusingha -- who generally has a reserved approach after any success, but could not control his emotion yesterday -- then it came from their skill, while Mushfiqur believed it stemmed from their big dreams.

"We have this belief that the bigger your dream, the more you will strive for it. If Kayes and Tamim thought that they would have a hundred-run partnership, then maybe they would not break the record.

But they didn't think that, they thought that this is the chance, let's see how much we score," said an excited Mushfiqur.

"As I said it's really big. I have never seen a fight-back like that. Pakistan's bowling attack, for me, is arguably one of the best bowling attacks on this type of wicket in Test cricket. So, going against them under pressure, 300 runs behind, it's a hell of an achievement.

"I don't think the wicket helped us draw the game. It was our skill and batters' skill which helped us draw the game. So hats off to all the batters. And even to Taijul, he played that six-wicket hand," said Hathurusingha, adding that he emphasizes on clarity and freedom so the players can make their own decision in the middle.

Both captain and coach understandably poured praise on the Tamim-Imrul record partnership, but the captain had some special words for Imrul as he performed under pressure.

When the coach termed it a turning point in Bangladesh cricket, captain Mushfiqur said that Bangladesh had never dominated a Test against a good team like this before, but he also stressed the importance of holding on to their form, because holding on to anything is very hard, especially when they are dreaming of a win in the second and final Test at Mirpur from May 6.

fulfil the other goals that I have as a cricketer and when I am able to do that, I will be the happiest man," said Tamim.

"I have complete belief that this record [highest Test score] will be broken again in the next one year. I expect Mushfiqur [Rahim] to break it because he is batting splendidly," added the opener.

The left-hander said that he wants to carry on with his good run for as long as possible.

"I am enjoying my batting and I want to continue this feeling and this form. So that when the bad times come, there won't be as much criticism.

"It's a characteristic of good players such as Kumar Sangakkara... they play so well that when they go through a rough patch there's no scope to speak against them. I am going to try to continue this for as long as possible," explained Tamim.

He further added that drawing the match was Bangladesh's 'biggest achievement' in Test cricket. And the success was solely based on a record opening stand between Tamim and Imrul Kayes.

If Tamim's test was to live up to his expectations, Imrul had to prove himself worthy of the opening slot.

"I didn't even know if I was going to be in the playing eleven. I had a bad World Cup and I didn't perform well in the Bangladesh Cricket League either. People were talking about me.

"That's when I told myself that I would give it my all had I gotten another chance and thank God everything went well," said Imrul.

Imrul, who volunteered to keep in place of Mushfiqur Rahim, struggled with muscle cramps on his way to the three-figure mark on Friday. He began fresh yesterday and became only the fifth Bangladeshi player to score 150. His effort displayed just how big a heart the left-hander has.

"I couldn't even sleep properly for five minutes on Friday night, I was really tired. It made me realise how hard Mushfiqur's job is," said Imrul.

The openers broke a series of partnership records in their quest for the draw and praised each other for their respective supportive measures.

SUPERCRETE CEMENT

SUPER PERFORMER OF THE DAY

Lafarge Surma Cement Ltd.

TAMIM IQBAL



He hobbled down the track like a dancer, timed those cover drives with the precision of a clockkeeper and countered the pressure built on his side with a brand of aggression little known to Bangladesh's cricketers. This Test belonged to Tamim Iqbal. Not only has he broken a series of records in the last five days, but he also led Bangladesh achieve what many deemed as impossible. The difference that Tamim's form has made for the Tigers is obvious from their records in this series thus far. From scoring two hundreds and a half century to lead them to a historic one day series to hammering Bangladesh's highest Test score and leading them to their first ever draw against Pakistan. One would only hope that Tamim's 206 is a stepping stone for a much bigger platform.

DAN CAKE

THE FINE ART OF BAKING

BANGLADESH-PAKISTAN SCOREBOARD

BANGLADESH: First innings 332 (Tamim 25, Imrul 51, Mominul 80, Mahmudullah 49, Shakib 25, Mushfiqur 32, Soumya 33; Riaz 3-26, Hafeez 2-18, Babar 2-32, Yasir 3-28)				
PAKISTAN: First innings 628 (Hafeez 224, Aslam 20, Azhar 83, Younis 33, Misbahul 59, Shafiq 83, Sarfraz 82; Taijul 6-163, Horn 2-120)				
BANGLADESH: Second innings R/B 4/6 (overnight 273 for no loss)				
Tamim st Sarfraz b Hafeez	206/278	17/7		
Imrul c sub (Azam) b Babar	150/240	16/3		
Mominul b Junaid	21/51	2/1		
Mahmudullah lbw b Junaid	40/71	2/0		
Shakib not out	76/104	6/1		
Mushfiqur lbw b Hafeez	0/5	0/0		
Soumya c Hafeez b Shafiq	33/45	4/0		
Horn not out	20/25	3/0		
Extras: (lb-4, w-2, nb-3)	9			
Total: (For 6 wks in 136 overs)	555			
Did not bat: Taijul, Rubel, Shahid.				
Fall of wickets: 1-312, 2-345, 3-399, 4-463, 5-464, 6-524.				
Bowler	O	M	R	W
Junaid	21	5	88	2
Babar	32	1	125	1
Hafeez	20	0	82	2
Riaz	20	3	75	0
Yasir	30	2	123	0
Azhar	6	1	26	0
Shafiq	7	0	32	1
Result: Match drawn.				
Player-of-the-match: Tamim Iqbal				

'We were outclassed'

SPORTS REPORTER from Khulna

Pakistan skipper Misbahul Haq praised Bangladesh's fightback after the first Test between the two sides in Khulna ended as a draw yesterday. Misbah opined that it was Tamim Iqbal and Imrul Kayes' counter-attack strategy that took the game away from them.

"They put pressure on us right from the start and that shocked our bowlers and made them lose their way. This happens. When bowlers are unexpectedly under pressure they go off line and of course sometimes we didn't have the discipline. They also played extraordinary shots," said Misbah at the post-match press conference yesterday.

While he was disappointed with the draw, he believed that his bowlers didn't make too many mistakes.

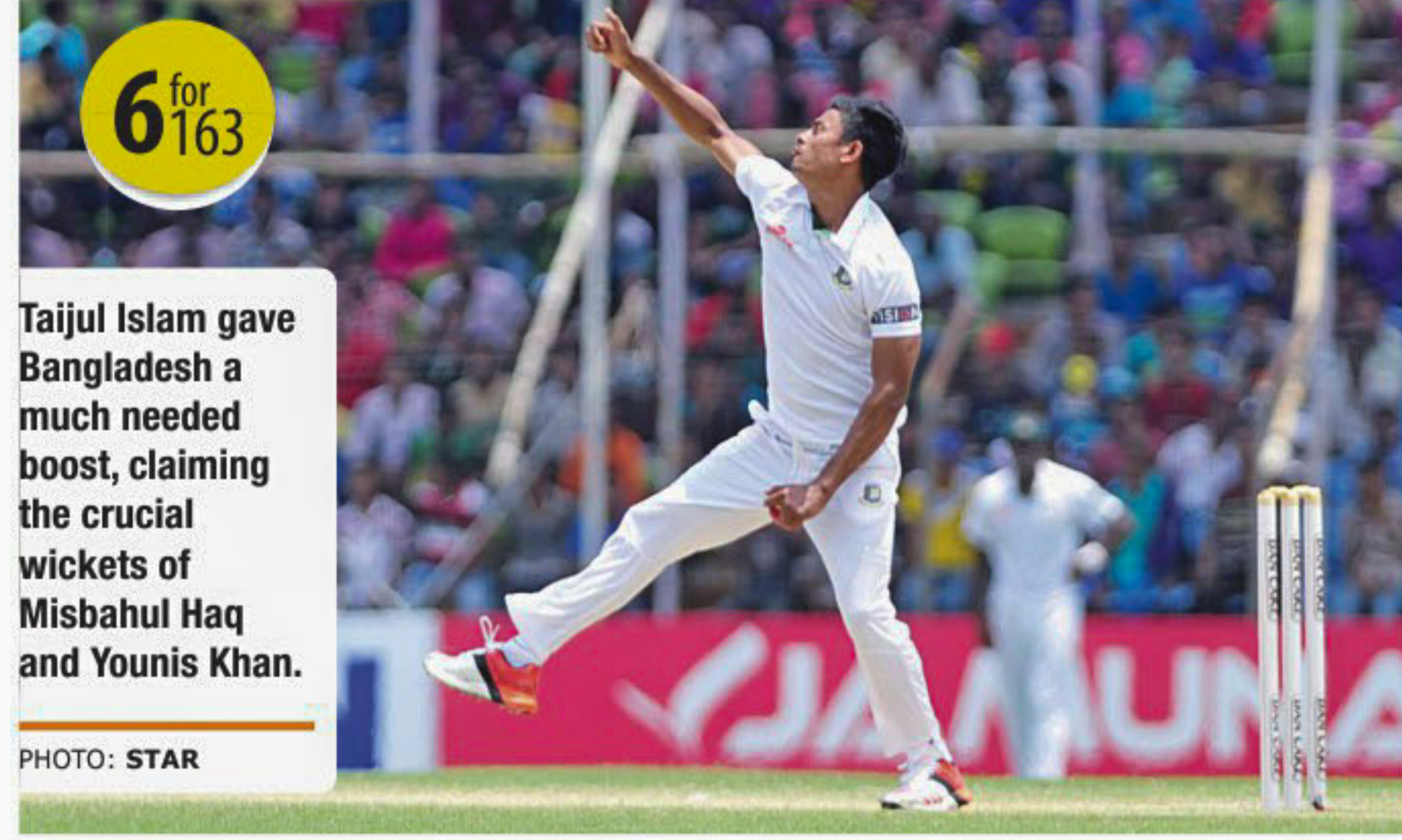
"Obviously with a lead of around 296, you are expected to win. You have got to appreciate the opposition for such a strong comeback. You can't say we made mistakes. The bowlers did whatever was required of them. We could have done better, but that's how it ends.

"The opposition outclassed us and their innings' were special. They didn't give us any chance that we could have grabbed. But it was definitely disappointing that we couldn't produce the result," said the 40-year-old skipper.

"When the lead gets stripped off within 61 overs on such a track it is quite obvious that the match will head towards a draw. Had we broken the stand on day four, the result could have been different," he added.

Misbah further stated that they were surprised by Bangladesh's tactic.

"All credit to the two of them. They saved the Test in those two sessions on the fourth day. It was quite impressive. They took their chances. To score those knocks after fielding for so long... that was surprising for us," said Misbah.



Taijul Islam gave Bangladesh a much needed boost, claiming the crucial wickets of Misbahul Haq and Younis Khan.

PHOTO: STAR

Central Zone fight back

SPORTS REPORTER



Walton Central Zone fought back in their second innings after left-arm spinner Elias Sunny claimed seven wickets on the third day

of the four-day Bangladesh Cricket League match at the Zahur Ahmed Chowdhury Stadium in Chittagong yesterday.

Sunny picked up seven wickets for 124 runs, but Islami Bank East Zone still managed a 125-run first innings lead as they were bundled out for 304 runs in reply to Central Zone's first innings total of 179. Alok Kapali and Tasamul Haque hit half centuries to help East Zone take the first

innings advantage. Openers Abdul Majid and Rony Talukdar once again returned to dressing room cheaply as Central Zone were reduced to 33 for two, but Rokibul Hasan hit 65 off 189 balls and helped his side to finish the third day's play with 90-run lead and five wickets in hand.

SCORES IN BRIEF

WALTON CENTRAL ZONE: 179 and 215-5 in 79 overs (Shamsur 41, Rokibul 65, Marshal 25, Mehrab 38 not out, Jabid 16 not out; Hasan 2-53)
ISLAMI BANK EAST ZONE: 304 all out in 102.3 overs (Shadman 49, Rajin 44, Tasamul 60, Kapali 67, Asif 33; Sharifullah 2-68, Sunny 7-124)