



The Bangladesh team departed from Kolkata yesterday with their next stop at Bangalore, where they will face the mighty Australia. However, amidst all the festivities of the ICC World Twenty20, the Tigers painted a sombre portrait -- all of them looked dejected as they came and went after their crushing defeat to Pakistan.

The Mustafizur question adds to Tigers' woes

AL-AMIN from Bangalore

The Pakistan defeat at the Eden Gardens in Kolkata served a big blow to the Tigers on Wednesday. And it was quite evident as they waited at the Netaji Subhas Chandra Bose International Airport for a flight to Bangalore to play their next ICC World T20 match against Australia on March 21.

They were not in a mood to talk. They might have had fun among themselves while embarking on a two-hour-fifteen-minute Jet Airways flight and had also clapped (for the captain) the moment the plane touched down on the runway of the Kempegowda International Airport, named after the founding father of Bangalore. But they were certainly licking the wounds of that 55-run defeat, which not only upset their rhythm but also put them in a very dicey situation in a group that also features Australia, hosts India and a very competitive New Zealand.

Former Bangladesh captain Akram Khan, now chairman of the Bangladesh Cricket Board's (BCB's) cricket operations committee, told this reporter yesterday that the players looked a bit tired in Wednesday's game. According to him, it was reflected in the fielding. Besides, he said that the bowlers also did not bowl well.

especially Afridi, to score heavily," said Akram while travelling with the team to Bangalore.

Bangladesh opener Tamim Iqbal also accepted that 200 was too big a total for them to chase down.

It is true that it was one of those bad days; nothing clicked for Bangladesh starting from the toss. But are we not missing a vital point amidst the tiring issues of misreading the wicket and

world will carry even their best bowler or batsman so long in the hope that he might be able to play some part of a tournament of this magnitude. Still, why did we carry him? It is because he is a future asset for Bangladesh and capable of turning a match on its head. And many feel Bangladesh should have risked him against Pakistan, a team that not only lost against Bangladesh in their previous five games, but also were on a



bowling not so well?

Let's talk about the last-minute decision to drop Mustafizur Rahman on fitness grounds. It is understood that the young pace bowler was not 100 per cent fit. But then the obvious question is why they are carrying him that long with the knowledge that he might not be fit for the Pakistan game, which is perhaps the most important and one of their easier Super 10 fixtures.

We are not sure if any team in the

bit of a low going into the Eden contest.

It might have been the case that Pakistan could still have won that game. But we are not convinced that they would have scored 200 runs. The Bangladesh team management is confident that he will be fit for the Australia game and may play against hosts India. But it would be hard to blame someone who thinks that it is too late for Bangladesh to play a game of catch-up.

Soumya happy to have caught Jonty's eye

SPORTS REPORTER from Bangalore

Soumya Sarkar might have been struggling with the bat for quite some time and he might have scored a duck against Pakistan at the Eden Gardens on Wednesday.

But the left-handed opener mesmerised fans and cricketers around the world with his outstanding ground fielding, including Jonty Rhodes, who tweeted yesterday: "Saw some gr8 stuff in the field from both teams last night; but what an effort

30 yards in the Asia Cup match against Sri Lanka, he said both are different.

"This one is all about balance and the other one was all about running," Soumya explains.

"It's not that I feel comfortable fielding in the deep. In a T20 match after six overs the players play a lot of shots in that area and the coach has worked with me a lot and I feel a bit comfortable fielding in the deep," he said when asked if he finds it comfortable fielding in the deep instead of inside the circle.

Asked how disappointing the defeat to Pakistan is, he said: "It was the first match for Pakistan, but for us it was our fourth game. We have actually won three and lost one. We played badly and we have lost against them. We have three more games in the tournament; we will try to do well in our remaining games."

Regarding his personal form, the left-hander said that he has been working very hard to get his rhythm back.

"I'm trying to overcome that. I'm practising hard to correct those mistakes I'm committing. I have played only two balls before getting out. So, I could not tell how good a wicket it was. But I have seen them batting and the way Shakib [Al Hasan] bhai batted later, I think it tells how good a wicket it was," explained the southpaw.

Asked if he was trying to be a bit more forceful and in the process getting things wrong he said that he was also working on that mental aspect.

"Actually I'm working hard as well thinking whether I'm trying a bit more [that is not helping]. I'm also watching my good knocks. It's not that I'm watching only those innings played against India, South Africa or Pakistan. I'm even watching my good knocks while playing for the U-17s," added the young batsman.

He also admitted that he was a bit surprised to see the Eden crowd was supporting Pakistan.

"We thought that fans in Kolkata will support us. But it was quite the opposite yesterday [laughs]. But those things did not affect me while I was fielding or batting."



from Sarkar". He took an absolutely stunning catch at mid-wicket that dismissed Mohammad Hafeez in the game Bangladesh lost badly.

"When I'm fielding I want to do something that people take notice of. Midwicket is a vital place especially in a T20 game. I got an opportunity yesterday [Wednesday] and grabbed it. I have heard that Jonty Rhodes also commented on that catch and it felt very good," Soumya told reporters while waiting for his luggage at the Bangalore airport.

Asked to compare his two outstanding catches, the other one being the one he took at full-stretch after running back



SCORES IN BRIEF

AFGHANISTAN: 153 for 7 in 20 overs (Noor 20, Asghar 62, Samiullah 31; Herath 2-24, Perea 3-33)
SRI LANKA: 155 for 4 in 18.5 overs (Dilshan 83 not out, Mathews 21 not out; Nabi 1-25)
Result: Sri Lanka won by 6 wickets.
Player-of-the-match: TM Dilshan.

Gayle's book to hit stores

PALLAB BHATTACHARYA from New Delhi

Not many know about Chris Gayle's humble origins as a skinny and shy backstreet boy from a tin-roofed shack in Kingston, stealing empty bottles to buy food. The Gayle story is going to be chronicled by none other than the big man himself in a book titled "Six Machine: I Don't Like Cricket...I Love It" which will hit stores around the world on June 2.

BBC sports writer Tom Fordyce will write the book.

PREDICTOMETER WINNERS	
ROBERT IQBAL	0173-3959056
TANBIR	0151-5212049
	0171-2218416



Record score not enough for Tigresses

SPORTS REPORTER

Nigar Sultana and Salma Khatun hit some good boundaries after an early hiccup to help the Bangladesh women's cricket team score their best T20 total but it was not good enough to avoid a 36-run defeat against England in their second match of the Women's World T20 at the M Chinnaswamy Stadium in Bangalore yesterday.

After a 72-run defeat against India in the opening game, Bangladesh showed some character in the second game and can take a lot of heart from the way they challenged their strong opponents after losing a few early wickets in chase of a 154-run winning target.

Salma and Nigar struck boundaries quite regularly and added a record 64 runs for the fifth wicket. Nigar hit the only six of the innings during her 28-ball 35 that also featured four boundaries while Salma struck

four boundaries in her 30-ball 32 as Bangladesh finished their 20-over quota on 117 for six.

"It's a good score for us, we lost but it's encouraging. We lost some wickets but Salma and Joty [Nigar Sultana] batted well, so it's a good day for us. I have not been in good form, it's good to get some wickets but I'm not happy, next time I'd like to concede fewer runs," said Bangladesh captain Jahanara Alam in post-match presentation, who took three wickets.

For England, Charlotte Edwards led from the front as her 51-ball 60 set up England's easy win. She struck seven fours before her bowlers restricted Bangladesh.

Bangladesh will play their next match against West Indies on March 20.

SCORES IN BRIEF	
ENGLAND:	153 for 7 (Edwards 60, Sciver 27; Jahanara 3-32)
BANGLADESH:	117 for 6 (Nigar 35, Salma 32, Farjana 19, Rumana 19; Shrubsole 2-27)
Result:	England won by 36 runs.

Aussies chase elusive crown

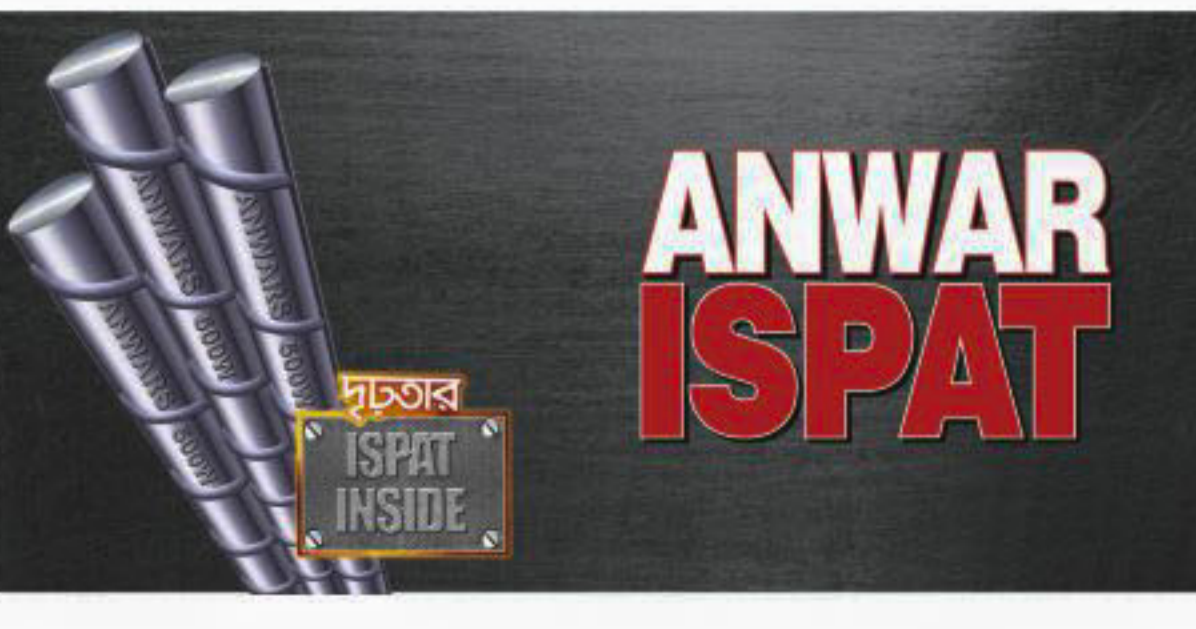
AFP, Dharamsala

Australia begin their latest quest Friday to clinch the elusive crown of World Twenty20 champions against a New Zealand side who are on a high after their stunning victory over tournament hosts India.

Steve Smith's side top the Test rankings and won their fifth 50 over World Cup last year by crushing New Zealand in the final in the Melbourne Cricket Ground.

But for all their dominance in the older formats, Australia have struggled in 20 over cricket and have only once made the final of the World T20, back in 2010 when they lost to England.

Veteran all-rounder Shane Watson said Australia would not hold back from reminding their trans-Tasman rivals about the outcome of last year's World Cup when they meet again in Friday's match in Dharamsala.



HEAD-TO-HEAD IN T20is

Played	Australia	New Zealand
5	4	0

LAST MEETING
28 February 2010 in Christchurch: Match tied

But he acknowledged the Black Caps would be no pushovers this time and would be full of confidence after their shock 47-run victory over red-hot favourites India on Tuesday.

"We are going to have to play very well because they are going to be very confident leading into this game," Watson told reporters in the Himalayan hill town which is home to the Dalai Lama.

A 3-0 home defeat to India in January underlined Australia's frailties in T20 cricket although there were encouraging signs earlier last month when they beat South Africa 2-1 away.

In Johannesburg, Glenn Maxwell spanked a career best 75 off 43 balls in a world record fourth wicket stand of 161 with David Warner, highlighting the all rounder's growing importance to the team.

"Glenn Maxwell is a huge player in our team," said Watson.

LOBATT
THE DRIVE WITHIN

Sealed Maintenance Free Batteries

PERFORMER OF THE DAY

DOMINANT DILSHAN

In the two warm-up games preceding the World Twenty20, Tillakaratne Dilshan had been dismissed for ducks, leading to people questioning his form. However against Afghanistan yesterday, he silenced any doubters with a destructive 83 off 56 balls. Dilshan dispatched 8 fours and 3 sixes with utter disdain as he led his side to victory.

Aus Vs Nz Eng Vs SA

Apex PRESENTS

PREDICTOMETER

Who Will Win?

GET A GIFT VOUCHER WORTH **2000**tk

Type Apex<space>Your Name<space>Your answer/s and SMS to **01730336665**

*Send your sms before 2PM today
*See tomorrow's newspaper for winners