

WELCOME HOME ... A cheerful Sheikh Hasina with her grandchildren and other family members at the Gono Bhaban yesterday. The prime minister returned yesterday after her trips to Canada and the US.

PHOTO: PMO

Host says it's postponed

Saarc chair still silent; Sri Lanka too pulls out of summit

DIPLOMATIC CORRESPONDENT

After five nations pulled out from the Saarc meet, Pakistan yesterday announced the postponement of the 19th South Asian Association for Regional Cooperation summit in Islamabad scheduled for November 9-10.

"A new set of dates for holding of summit in Islamabad will be announced soon, through the chair of Saarc (Nepal)," said a statement of Pakistan Foreign Office.

"Accordingly, we have conveyed the same to the Prime Minister of Nepal, the current Chair of Saarc."

The announcement comes three days after four member countries -- Afghanistan, Bangladesh, Bhutan and India -- expressed their unwillingness to participate in the summit, citing increasing cross-border terrorist attacks in the region and growing interference in the internal affairs of member states by one country.

Latest, Sri Lanka yesterday expressed the same, saying the prevailing environment in the region was not conducive for

Onus mainly on Pakistan

DIPLOMATIC CORRESPONDENT

The ball is now in Pakistan's court to get Saarc back on its track and stop the process of being isolated from the regional body.

Pakistan must address the mutual allegation brought against it by five fellow Saarc members, some diplomats and international relations experts said.

India, Bangladesh, Afghanistan, Bhutan and Sri Lanka have already pulled out of the Islamabad summit in November, accusing Pakistan of harbouring cross-border terrorism and meddling in internal affairs of neighbours.

Diplomatic circles in Dhaka said not only the five South Asian countries, Pakistan has long been accused by western nations

SEE PAGE 2 COL 5

SEE PAGE 2 COL 1

People given Friday shock

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Thousands of people suffered badly on Dhaka streets yesterday, as leaders and workers of Awami League and its front organisations blocked various roads to welcome Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina on her return home after attending the 71st UN General Assembly.

The ruling party and its allies in the 14-party combine, and AL affiliated bodies arranged the reception, as the PM received the "Planet 50-50 Champion" and "Agent of Change Award" for her contributions to women empowerment.

The reception coincided with the admission tests at Dhaka University and Jagannath University and the 37th BCS preliminary examination.

SEE PAGE 2 COL 1

Grand reception on PM's return

UNB, Dhaka

Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina was accorded a rousing reception yesterday as she returned home wrapping up her fortnight-long visits to Canada and the USA.

The Awami League arranged the showdown on her return home after attending the 5th Global Fund Replenishment Conference in Montreal and the 71st UN General Assembly in New York.

In the USA, the PM was honoured with the United Nations "Planet 50-50 Champion" and the "Agent of Change" awards for her able leadership in running the state and her contributions to the country and its people.

The reception was for celebrating her strong role in the international arena, particularly projecting Bangladesh as a dignified country.

An Emirates flight carrying Hasina and her entourage touched down at Hazrat Shahjalal International Airport at 6:42pm.

Cabinet members, senior AL leaders and top civil and military officials received her at the airport.

Leaders and workers of Awami League, Swachhasebok League, Bangladesh Chhatra League, Mohila League, Jubo League, Muktiyoddha League, Sramik League and Krishak League lined up in different points of the capital, including the airport, Khilkhet, Kuril Flyover, Radisson Water Blu and Kakoli points, Banani, Jahangir Gate, PMO, Bijoy Sarani, military museum and Jatiya Sangsad Bhaban to welcome the PM.

SEE PAGE 2 COL 1



"If I could, I would have walked away leaving the bus here. But I cannot do this ... I have to think about my passengers."

SOHEL RANA
A BUS DRIVER
FUMING OVER THE LONG TAILBACK IN THE CAPITAL'S FARMGATE AREA

Our heartiest **FELICITATION & APPRECIATION**

to our Honorable Prime Minister **Sheikh Hasina**

The dearest and successful daughter of Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman
Her remarkable distinction & recognitions of global proportion has ignited the nation in greater aspirations, making all of us so proud of her dynamic leadership and statesmanship.



"Planet 50-50 Champion" & "Agent of Change Award"
You made the Nation Champion.



"Friends of Liberation War Honour"
You made our pride global.



"ICT for Development Award"
The country is celebrating your success.

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The England ODI squad are all smiles after landing at the Hazrat Shahjalal International Airport in Dhaka yesterday. England are here for a three-ODI and two-Test series starting with the first ODI in Dhaka in Mirpur on October 7.

PHOTO: BCB

Tigers' last chance to get it right

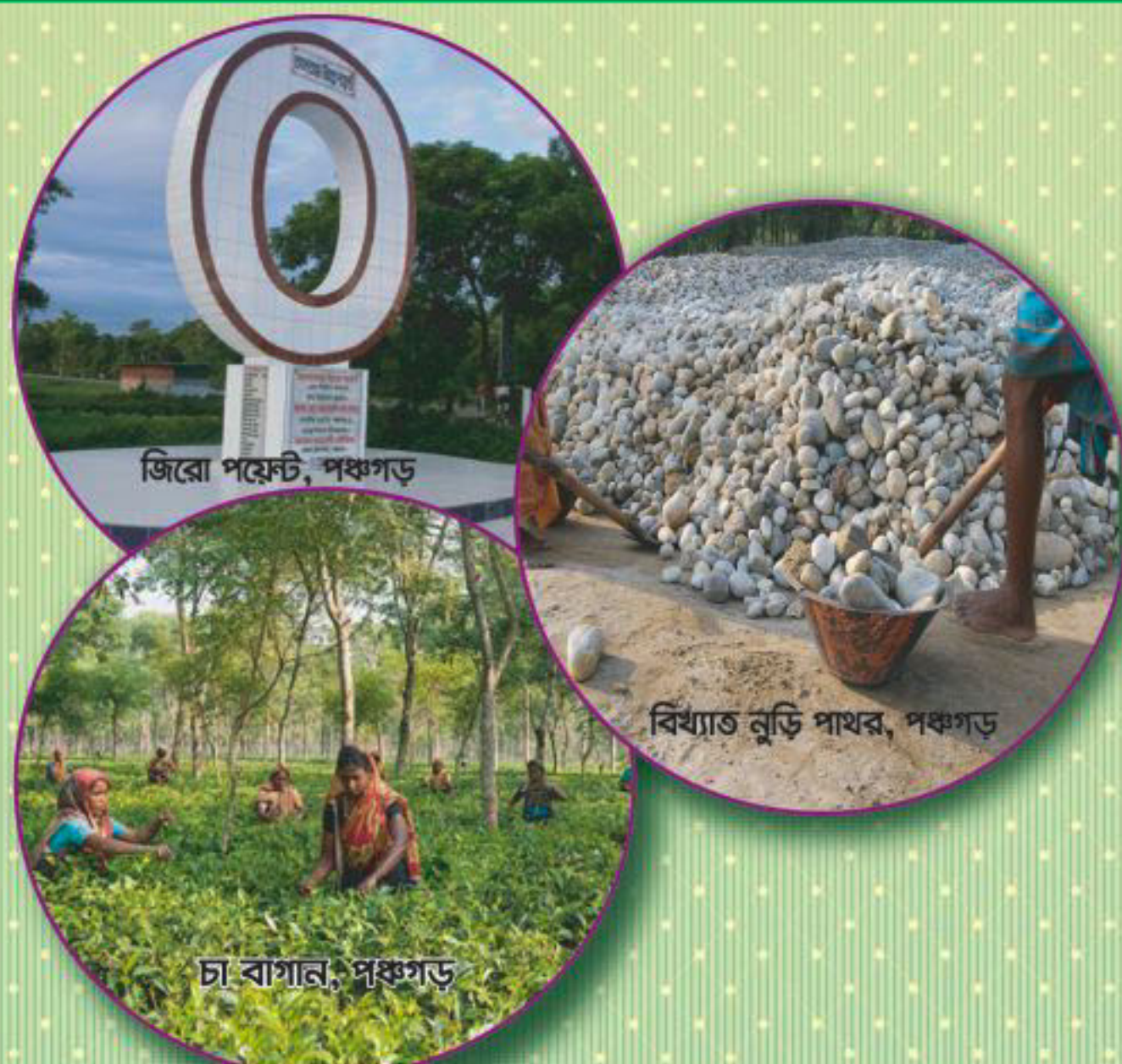
SPORTS REPORTER

Bangladesh go into the series decider at the Sher-e-Bangla National Stadium today facing a situation they would not have expected before the series. Afghanistan were expected to put up a fight and they were expected to fight hard. Truth be told however, not many reckoned that they would still be in contention for the series by the end of it.

Today, taking the field on level terms with the three-ODI series tied at 1-1, they have a chance to create history. Afghanistan's young top-order batsman Hashmatullah Shahidi said during the pre-match press conference yesterday that if they manage to beat Bangladesh today, it will be the biggest achievement in the country's cricketing history.

And why should it not? If the Afghans go on to win the series today they will have achieved something that the likes of India, Pakistan and South Africa could not in recent times: beat Bangladesh at home.

SEE PAGE 2 COL 5



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