

# SPORT

## Chandimal sends ominous warning

SPORTS REPORTER



What began as a promising day for the Tigers ended on a sour note because of the only Test batsman in the Sri Lanka Cricket President's XI at the De Zoysa Stadium in Moratuwa yesterday.

After ending their stipulated 90 overs on 391 for seven on the first day of the two-day tour match on Thursday, Bangladesh began well by removing the top three Sri Lankan batsmen in just 12 overs. Taskin Ahmed bowled Avishka Fernando in the second ball of the fourth over and then removed Samara Sooriya for nought three balls later. The catch was taken by Mushfiqur Rahim, who was on the field and not behind the stumps.

Mustafizur Rahman took a brilliant catch off his own bowling with his wrong hand to remove Ron Chandraguptha in the 12th over.

For a moment it seemed as though the hosts were set for a collapse. While they did keep losing wickets in regular intervals, there was one man who defied the visitors. Lahiru Chandimal played a superb, unbeaten 190 off 253 balls to deny Bangladesh's bowlers a good end to the tour-opening warm-up.

He put on a number of stands with the middle and lower-middle order. Bangladesh managed to remove a number of the middle-order batsmen and reduced the home side to 291 for seven in 68 overs. However, once Chamika Karunaratne

joined Chandimal, everything went Sri Lanka's way.

Karunaratne scored an unbeaten 50 off 42 balls with two sixes and seven fours.

Chandimal hammered seven sixes, three of which were consecutively hit off Shakib Al Hasan, and 21 fours for his 190.

The duo put on 113 runs in the last 12 overs of the game and it helped the hosts finish the game ahead of Bangladesh's total of 391. They finished on 403 for seven.

Despite the poor end to the two-day match, team manager Khaled Mahmud said that the players were not disheartened. He focused on the positives and one of them was the performance of Mustafizur, who finished with figures of two for 28 in 12 overs.

"Mustafizur bowled in a good rhythm. He did not seem in trouble at all. He was bowling quickly and with good force. That was good to see. Taskin took three wickets and he was also impressive," Mahmud told The Daily Star over the phone yesterday.

When asked about Chandimal's innings, Mahmud said: "He batted really well. The players are not demotivated. This was a practice match. I am sure there will be a lot more enthusiasm among the players during the Test."

Liton Das, who had a good time with the bat in the first innings, did well behind the stumps as well, affecting a caught behind and a stumping. There is a good chance that the Tigers will go into the first Test with the same line-up that played the practice match.

The first Test will begin on March 7 at the Galle International Stadium.



Blagadesh pacer Mustafizur Rahman took two wickets, including this brilliant caught and bowled effort off Ron Chandraguptha, on the second and last day of the Tigers' practice match against a Sri Lanka Board President's XI in Colombo yesterday.

PHOTO: AFP



Players of TC Sports Club celebrate with the trophy of the Sheikh Kamal International Club Cup after defeating Pocheon Citizen FC in a thrilling final at the MA Aziz Stadium in Chittagong yesterday.

PHOTO: ANURUP KANTI DAS

## Trophy heads to Maldives

TC Sports Club beat Pocheon Citizen FC on penalties

ANISUR RAHMAN from Chittagong



TC Sports Club were crowned champions in the Sheikh Kamal International Club Cup following a 4-2 win over Pocheon Citizen FC in tiebreakers after regulation time and extra time ended in a 2-2 stalemate at the MA Aziz Stadium in Chittagong yesterday.

TC Sports' Nepalese goalkeeper Limbu Kiran Kumar was the hero of the evening, stopping two shots from Pocheon players while his side converted all of the four shots they took.

"I was fully confident about Limbu and I have also selected the right footballers, who converted all shots," TC Sports Club coach Mohammed Nizam. "I am really happy to win the title, which is also the first international trophy for a Maldivian club. It is also the beginning of what the existing committee of the FA [Football Association of Maldives] is working on."

Hanif Abdullah had given TC Sports a deserved lead in the 17th minute, before Pocheon Citizen turned the game around with strikes from Jang Yong IK and Ji Kyeong Deuk in the 44th and 55th minutes respectively.

Midfielder Azzam Mohamed levelled the score seven minutes from time and took the match into extra time before the game was eventually settled by penalties.

The final lived up to the billing as it was a thrilling affair with both sides playing attacking football and enthralled the 15,000 spectators who had packed the Big Bowl. Although Pocheon Citizen -- a third-tier club from South Korea -- lost the match, the players won the hearts of the specta-

<b>TC SPORTS CLUB</b> 2(4) - 2(2)	<b>POCHEON CITIZEN FC</b>
Hanif Abdullah-17'	Jang Yong IK-44'
Azzam Mohamed-83'	Ji Kyeong Deuk-55'

tors with the way they played throughout the tournament.

TC Sports, who have been playing in Maldives' top-tier league from 2015, started off at a brilliant pace and dominated Pocheon Citizen, coming close to breaking the deadlock in the seventh minute of the game. Ibrahim Mahmudee Hussain turned and volleyed from the edge of the box, but the shot crept inches wide of the near post.

However, the Maldivian outfit did not need long to take the lead as defender Hanif Abdullah nodded home an Ibrahim Mahmudee corner in the 14th

minute. After going down, Pocheon responded brilliantly. They kept control of the ball and put huge pressure on the TC Sports backline, which faltered under the pressure and led to the game being levelled by an eye-catching header from Jang Yong IK.

After resumption, Pocheon continued their stranglehold and took the lead in the 55th minute as Maldivian defender Azzam headed into his own net while attempting to clear a corner from Ji Kyeong Deuk. However, Indian referee Santosh Kumar awarded the goal to Deuk.

After falling behind, TC Sports sent on a fresh pair of legs to aid their attack and they made an impact, with substitute striker Ibrahim Yameen missing the target narrowly before Azzam made amends by scoring the equaliser with a powerful drive that took a deflection off a Pocheon player before nestling in the back of the net.

TC Sports almost stole the game four minutes from time, but striker Nafiu Ali failed to beat the goalkeeper in a one-on-one.

Pocheon then had a chance to seal the game 11 minutes into extra-time as Jang Yong IK looked all set to tap home, but Azzam came to the rescue and cleared the ball from the goalline.

### BD VS SL BOARD PRESIDENT'S XI SCOREBOARD

<b>BANGLADESH:</b> First innings 391 for 7 (Tamim 136, Mominul 73, Mushfiqur 21, Shakib 30, Mahmudullah 43, Liton 57 not out; Karunaratne 3-61)			
<b>SL BOARD PRESIDENT'S XI:</b>			
<b>First innings</b>	<b>R/B</b>	<b>4s/6s</b>	
Chandraguptha c & b Mustafizur	20/42	4/0	
Fernando b Taskin	3/7	0/0	
Samarasooriya c Mushfiqur b Taskin	0/3	0/0	
Chandimal not out	190/253	21/7	
Silva c Liton b Taskin	38/83	5/0	
Buddika b Soumya	32/50	4/1	
Francisco b Mustafizur	27/36	3/1	
De Silva st Liton b Mehedi	32/31	3/2	
Karunaratne not out	50/42	7/2	
Extras: (lb-3, w-1, nb-7)	11		
Total: (For 7 wickets in 90 overs)	403		
Did not bat: Ambuldeniya, Samarakoon, Jayawickrama.			
Fall of wickets: 1-12, 2-12, 3-29, 4-110, 5-163, 6-219, 7-291.			
<b>Bowler</b>	<b>O</b>	<b>M</b>	<b>R W</b>
Mustafizur	12	4	28 2
Taskin	11	2	41 3
Subashis	11	1	44 0
Mehedi	13	0	68 1
Tajjul	12	1	79 0
Shakib	11	3	49 0
Soumya	13	1	53 1
Mahmudullah	6	0	25 0

## Anamul can play final

SPORTS REPORTER



The Bangladesh Cricket Board (BCB) has permitted out-of-favour national opener Anamul Haque to take part in the final of the Pakistan Super League (PSL), which is set to take place tomorrow in Lahore.

Speaking to The Daily Star today, BCB CEO Nizamuddin Chowdhury said: "We had received a request to grant Anamul Haque a no-objection certificate to play in the Pakistan Super League and we have granted him permission."

After receiving the no-objection certificate from the BCB, Anamul communicated with his team, the Quetta Gladiators.

"I have told them that the BCB has permitted me. I am waiting for the flight details and the schedule. Once they get back to me, I will come to know how things surrounding the final are going to be arranged. Once everything is set, I will be able to tell you a lot

more about the details," Anamul told The Daily Star yesterday.

Except for the final, which is scheduled to take place in Lahore on Sunday, the rest of the PSL was hosted in the United Arab Emirates. It was a tournament which also witnessed the likes of Shakib Al Hasan, Tamim Iqbal and Mahmudullah Riyad battle it out.

However, a number of foreign cricketers, including Kevin Pieterston and Nathan McCullum, backed out of the final because of security concerns.

Anamul had requested the BCB for a no-objection certificate earlier this week. The BCB took its time before finally deciding to grant Anamul his request.

It was learnt that the BCB decided to permit Anamul after they came to know that a few other West Indian players would also be travelling to Lahore to play the final. The ICC will also be sending a delegation to Lahore.

As of now, the final is expected to be a fly-in, fly-out affair and the foreign players are not expected to spend more than a day in Lahore.

## Kohli rejects Smith claim

India-Australia second Test starts today

AFP, Bangalore



Virat Kohli on Friday dismissed Australia's claim that India are under pressure following their heavy opening Test defeat as "mind games", insisting there will be no repeat performance in the second clash.

Steve Smith's Australia side, who started the four-match series as underdogs, humiliated top-ranked India by 333 runs inside just three days in Pune last week, meaning the hosts must triumph in Bangalore to keep alive their hopes of winning the contest.

Smith told Australian media that India will be "under (a) little bit of pressure" going into the second Test, stressing his side were just a couple of good sessions away from retaining the Border-Gavaskar Trophy.

But skipper Kohli told reporters that India were focusing on their game rather than bothering about what the opposition was saying.

"I am pretty relaxed, I am happy I am smiling. It's his (Smith's) views, whatever he wants to say," said Kohli at Bangalore's M Chinnaswamy Stadium, on the eve of the Test starting Saturday.

"It's time we focus on our skills more than what Australia is saying or Australia is preparing. I know these mind games and these press conferences are something they are very good at."

"We've still got to play the cricket we have played in the last two years and see where the series ends in the fourth game," he added.

The world number two Australians beat India at their own game of spin, restricting the hosts to miserable scores of 105 and 107 on the Pune wicket, which offered huge turn from the very start.

The loss ended India's record

unbeaten streak of 19 matches, which stretched back to 2015, and Kohli promised Indian fans that his side would not repeat their dismal showing.

"I can assure you everyone is taking this as a massive challenge and everyone is raring to turn things around in the series," said the captain, who endured a rare duck during the first innings.

"I assure you that you will not see a repeat of that kind of performance," Kohli added.

While the Pune wicket was rated "poor" by match referee Chris Broad and attracted lot of criticism, Kohli expects the Bangalore pitch to favour the Indians.

"Whenever we have played Test cricket out here we have done really well," he said.

"The last time we played a Test match (there) we won, even against

Australia the last time we played here we won. So obviously those things are big positives for us," he added.

Smith told reporters that a big first innings total would be key as Australia seek to take an unbeatable 2-0 lead in the series.

"Looking at the wicket it's crucial to score big first innings runs and that's about playing ourselves and trying to bat long periods and build big partnerships," said Smith.

"The last wicket we played on we thought 250 was a good total. On this occasion I think it's going to be a lot more than that in the first innings," he said.

"We know that we have to win one more game to regain the Border-Gavaskar Trophy and things can happen pretty quickly here in India at certain times, particularly at the back end of the game," said Smith.

## NZ look to spin for SA Tests

AFP, Wellington



New Zealand have boosted their spin options against South Africa by including Jeetan Patel in a 13-man squad for the three-Test series against the Proteas beginning next week.

Off-spinner Patel and all-rounder Jimmy Neesham were the two players recalled to the squad on Friday, coming in at the expense of quick Matt Henry and batsman Dean Brownlie.

Selectors also confirmed that short-ball specialist Neil Wagner was fit for the series after a hand injury last month put him under an injury cloud.

Patel, 36, has had a stop-start 21-Test career, making his debut in 2006 but dropping off the radar from 2013-2016 before joining the Black Caps' tour of India.

After returning home, he was discarded again for Test series against Pakistan and Bangladesh but has enjoyed a strong domestic season with Wellington.

Chief selector Gavin Larsen said Patel had the ability to turn the ball away from South Africa's left-handers, complementing fellow spinner Mitchell Santner.

"He brings a huge amount of experience to the team and gives us the balance of having two front-line spin options," Larsen said.

The first Test begins in Dunedin on Wednesday followed by two more in Wellington and Hamilton later this month.

## Australia unchanged

AFP, Bangalore

Australia captain Steve Smith said Friday that the visitors will go with the same team that thrashed India in the opening Test for the second encounter in Bangalore.

Smith said he had no hesitations in declaring the same XI for the second Test Bangalore's M Chinnaswamy Stadium.

"Same team. Based on the way we performed last week. It was a good mix of two fast bowlers, an all-rounder that bowls quick and two quality spinners as well," Smith told reporters on the eve of match, which starts Saturday.



India captain Virat Kohli and coach Anil Kumble (L) chat during a practice session yesterday ahead of the second Test against Australia, which starts from today at the M Chinnaswamy Stadium in Bangalore.

PHOTO: AFP