

A MOMENTOUS 100TH



Bangladesh captain Mushfiqur Rahim (R) is ecstatic as Mehedi Hasan Miraz completes the winning runs on the final day of the second Test against Sri Lanka at the P Sara Oval in Colombo yesterday. The four-wicket victory in landmark 100th Test helped the Tigers draw the two-match series 1-1.

PHOTO: BCB

United they delivered

Tigers seal a historic four-wicket win in Sri Lanka

Sakeb Subhan from Colombo



The enormity of the achievement will take a while to sink in. Just six days ago, the Bangladesh team looked like sitting ducks as selection turmoil and backroom politics in the wake of a crushing 259-run defeat in the first Test in Galle overshadowed the joyous occasion that was to be the country's 100th Test match. They were sitting ducks because the match would be played at a venue where they recorded their lowest Test score of 62 all out in 2007, and where they had only known innings defeats in the three matches that they played here prior to this. The team that they were playing against had an unbeaten record against them, and won 15 of 17 previous matches. You could not have asked for a deck more stacked.

But once the Test match started at the P Sara Oval on March 15, from the first ball that Mustafizur bowled to Dimuth Karunaratne on the first morning to Mehedi Hasan

Miraz's sweep past square leg off Rangana Herath that eluded the diving short fine leg fielder to the fence and sealed the four-wicket win 45 minutes after tea on the last day yesterday, all 11 Bangladesh cricketers were not only far from sitting ducks, but Tigers who dominated the Lions in their own den.

Starting the day with Sri Lanka on 268 for eight, 139 runs ahead with two wickets in hand, Bangladesh did not let their shoulders droop when Suranga Lakmal and Dilruwan Perera rapidly increased the lead. They knew a wicket would bring another, and that is what happened when Perera decided to run off a Subashis Roy misfield at square leg and paid the price. In the next over, the 114th, Lakmal holed out to long off to give Shakib a deserved fourth wicket.

Adding to his already bulging collection of star turns in important matches, Shakib Al Hasan was adjudged player of the series, having hit a century in the first innings and taking four wickets in the Sri Lanka second innings. But there is not one member of the 11 of whom it can be said that they did not contribute. Taijul Islam and Subashis Roy

may have been the quietest performers as far as the scoreboard goes, but Taijul broke partnerships in both innings and Subashis with his aggression and pace was a vital part of the machine.

In the chase of 191 after Sri Lanka were dismissed for 319, there were hairy moments but Bangladesh responded with maturity each time, like they had done throughout the match when umpires' decisions or the lack of a Snickometer or Hot Spot in the review suite seemed to conspire against them.

Soumya Sarkar played an ill-advised down-the-wicket slog off Herath to be out for 10 and that was followed next ball by Imrul's first-ball edge to slip with the score on 22.

"I have never faced such a situation in Test cricket. It is new for us to chase on this type of wicket on a fifth day," said Bangladesh skipper Mushfiqur Rahim, who was nerveless in taking Bangladesh home with an unbeaten 45-ball 22 after Tamim and Sabbir Rahman put on 109 runs for the third wicket.

Tamim set the template for the rest of the batsmen, mixing attack with defence perfectly for a 137-ball 82 which

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United Commercial Bank Limited congratulates the Bangladesh cricket team on winning the

100th

test match

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