



## A burning desire forged in Bangalore

MAZHAR UDDIN from Colombo

Mushfiqur Rahim faced intense criticism for his premature celebration during the 2016 ICC World Twenty20 game against India in 2016, which Bangladesh went on to lose by just one run mere minutes after Mushfiqur celebrated the boundary that left them two to win off three balls.

The criticism has had a huge impact on Mushfiqur, who was one of the three wickets to fall in as many balls to signal a dismal end to Bangladesh's hopes in that match. Two years later on Saturday, however, he authored a Bangladesh-record 215-run chase against Sri Lanka, smashing a career-best unbeaten 35-ball 72 during which he struck the winning runs.

According to the 30-year-old, that Bangalore heartbreak has remained at the back of his mind and it was a lesson that helped Mushfiqur remain calm until he finished the game for his side.

"Obviously that was in my mind but to be honest my celebration against India during the T20 World Cup came in the heat of the moment -- I had no intention to celebrate early. That experience worked as a lesson for me and against Sri Lanka it was on my mind that until I take my side past the finish line, I will keep my focus on the game, and only then celebrate. I had the self-belief in me and the almighty was there for me," Mushfiqur told The Daily Star yesterday.

The pocket-sized dynamo looked extremely focused during his magnificent match-winning innings where Mushfiqur informed that he had the burning desire to do something well in the shortest format of the game.



"Obviously there's always a burning desire inside me and to be honest I have been unable to display my talent in T20 cricket so far, and there was a hunger in me that whenever I get an opportunity I will utilise that. My record in T20Is is also not good, so I am trying to improve that. And during the game against Sri Lanka that day I kept asking Allah to let me stay till the end and play the winning shot," he added.

According to Mushfiqur, after playing international cricket for over a decade it is the best time for him to contribute to Bangladesh and when asked whether it was his best innings so far, he said: "So far, yes, in the T20 format. I have a lot of other better innings in ODIs and Tests. I have the ability to play much better knocks in T20s," said Mushfiqur during the official press meet after the training session at the Sinhalese Sports Club ground in Colombo yesterday.

The former Test captain said that Bangladesh needed this win badly after going through a bad phase in recent times and added that the players will gain confidence from some much-needed momentum.

On the lighter side of things, Mushfiqur's 'Nagin' celebration after the winning shot has gone viral. "It is just a normal celebration. Maybe everyone liked it. I don't want to say much about it. It wasn't pre-planned. I think you can see in the celebration that we wanted the win badly."

Bangladesh Cricket Board president Nazmul Hassan said after the historic win that he never knew Mushfiqur could hit such big sixes and according to the right-hander, the BCB boss will now know about his big-hitting ability.

"I think after this innings he will know that I can at least play that way. I think he saw my game in a different way. There's a different feeling when all your hard work over months pays off in the middle. I don't think he saw us in training but we did it in the middle," he added.



Mustafizur Rahman (R), seen here talking to Bangladesh High Performance bowling coach Champaka Ramanayake during practice at the Sinhalese Sports Club yesterday, will have to lead the attack better than he has so far when Bangladesh face off against India in their Nidahas Trophy match tomorrow.

PHOTO: BCB

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## Mahmud unhappy with facilities

SPORTS REPORTER from Colombo



Bangladesh national team manager Khaled Mahmud expressed his dissatisfaction over the pitch at the Sinhalese Sports Club ground outer nets where Bangladesh were scheduled to practise yesterday.

It was raining throughout the day in Colombo yesterday and Bangladesh were forced to cancel their training session after the warm-ups. All of the squad -- except Tamim Iqbal, Taskin Ahmed, Mehedi Hasan Miraz and Liton Das -- had turned up for practice despite it being an optional practice day.

"We were scheduled to practise here at the SSC and the Bangladesh team have trained here before. But the wicket was not as good as we expected for practice and not the type of pitch we will play on in the game [the Nidahas



Trophy match against India on Wednesday]. The players can get injured any time so we did not want to take the risk," Mahmud told reporters while heading towards the hotel after cancelling the training session at the SSC in

Colombo yesterday.

Bangladesh will take on India at the R Premadasa Stadium on Wednesday and Mahmud expressed his disappointment for not being able to practise ahead of their crucial game.

"Obviously I am a bit disappointed for not being able to practise today [yesterday]. We even wanted to practise at the Premadasa nets but that also didn't happen as it's been raining from morning and the groundstaff have covered the pitch. So with not much option we had to turn back. I have told them [SLC] about the issue and they informed that as it's raining the grounds-men were unable to prepare the pitch. And just before the practice it rained again, but the wicket was not good when we arrived," he added.

Previously, despite all the Nidahas trophy matches taking place at night Bangladesh did not practise under lights before their first game against India which the Tigers went on to lose by five wickets.

## Pappu's maiden ton drives Rupganj

SPORTS REPORTER



Wicketkeeper-batsman Salahuddin Pappu smashed a maiden century as Legends of Rupganj raced to their sixth win in the Dhaka Premier League with a 26-run victory over relegation-threatened Kalabagan Krira Chakra at the BKSP in Savar yesterday.

Pappu hammered a 96-ball 125 in Rupganj's massive 315 for five in 50 overs. Opening the innings, the unheralded batsman, playing only his 18th List A game, struck a dozen boundaries and eight sixes before being out in the 32nd over, leaving the score at 196 for two. Skipper Naeem Islam then hit an unbeaten 61 off 53 balls to take Rupganj to their first 300-plus score this season.

Kalabagan, in their chase, fought gamely before being bundled out for 288 in 49.5 overs, with disgraced former Bangladesh captain Mohammad Ashraful ploughing the sands with 64 off 67 balls. Rupganj's Indian recruit Parvez Rasool and Asif Hasan picked



**SALAHUDDIN... 125**

up three wickets each. It was Kalabagan's seventh defeat in nine games, keeping them at the bottom of the 12-team table with four points.

However, fellow strugglers Agrani Bank recorded a crucial three-wicket win against Brothers Union at the Khan Shaheb Osman Ali Stadium in Fatullah going into the last two rounds of the first leg.

Sent in to bat, Brothers posted a challenging 289 for nine with Mizanur Rahman hitting a superb 102 and Junaid Siddiqui scoring 92. The pair added 200 runs in the opening stand,



**MIZANUR... 102**

but they failed to keep up the momentum after Mizanur was out in the 36th over. Experienced pacer Shafiqul Islam picked up four wickets for 48 runs.

Agrani Bank rode on four half-centuries to race to 292 for seven in 49.1 overs. The highlight of the chase was a 107-run fifth-wicket stand between Rishi Dhawan (70 off 59 balls) and Jahid Javed (55) after opener Azmir Ahmed (65) and Salman Hossain (63) gave them a sound start. It was Agrani Bank's third win from nine games.

At the Sher-e-Bangla National Stadium in Mirpur, Khelaghar Samaj Kalyan Samity pulled off a six-wicket win against Sheikh Jamal Dhanmondi Club.

Asked to bat first, Sheikh Jamal were bundled out for 167 in 48 overs by some controlled bowling from Tanvir Islam (4 for 30) and Anjum Ahmed, who picked up three wickets for 18 runs in his eight miserly overs. Leg-spinning all-rounder Tanbir Hayder hit 52 for Sheikh Jamal.

Khelaghar raced to 168 for four in 40 overs with their Indian recruit Ashok Menairi hitting an unbeaten 58.

With this win, Khelaghar brightened their chances of a berth in the six-team Super League with 10 points from nine games, two points more than Sheikh Jamal.

IND-SL SCOREBOARD					
SRI LANKA		R/B	4s/6s		
Gunathilaka c Raina b Thakur	17/8	0/1			
Mendis c Sharma b Chahal	55/38	3/3			
K Perera b Sundar	3/4	0/0			
Tharanga b Shankar	22/24	1/1			
T Perera c Chahal b Thakur	15/6	0/2			
Mendis b Sundar	1/3	0/0			
Shanaka c Karthik b Thakur	19/16	1/1			
Dananjaya c Rahul b Unadkat	5/11	0/0			
Lakmal not out	5/4	1/0			
Chameera c Unadkat b Thakur	0/1	0/0			
Fernando not out	0/0	0/0			
Extras: (lb-1, nb-1, w-8)	10				
Total: (For 9 wickets in 19 overs)	152				
Fall of wickets: 1-25, 2-34, 3-96, 4-113, 5-118, 6-120, 7-146, 8-151, 9-151.					
INDIA		R/B	4s/6s		
Sharma c Mendis b Dananjaya	11/7	1/1			
Dhawan c Perera b Dananjaya	8/10	1/0			
Rahul hit wicket b Mendis	18/17	1/0			
Raina c Perera b Fernando	27/15	2/2			
Pandey not out	42/31	3/1			
Karthik not out	39/25	5/0			
Extras: (lb-1, w-7)	8				
Total: (For 4 wickets in 17.3 overs)	153				
Fall of wickets: 1-13, 2-22, 3-62, 4-85.					
Bowler		O	M	R	W
Unadkat	3	0	33	1	
Sundar	4	0	21	2	
Thakur	4	0	27	4	
Chahal	4	0	34	1	
Shankar	3	0	30	1	
Raina	1	0	6	0	
Bowler		O	M	R	W
Lakmal	2	0	19	0	
Dananjaya	4	0	19	2	
Chameera	3	0	33	0	
Fernando	2.3	0	30	1	
Mendis	4	0	34	1	
Perera	2	0	17	0	
Result: India won by 6 wickets.					
Player-of-the-match: Shafiqul Thakur.					

## Rabada sets up crushing win

Pacer banned for two matches

AFP, Port Elizabeth



Kagiso Rabada put aside his disciplinary concerns to set up a series-levelling win for South Africa on the fourth day of the second Test against Australia at St George's Park on Monday.

South Africa won by six wickets after Rabada's fast bowling ensured they needed to chase a modest 101 runs for victory.

The fast bowler, who faces a ban from the remaining two Tests of the series, took six for 54 as Australia were bowled out for 239 in their second innings.

South Africa lost four wickets before Theunis de Bruyn hit the winning runs.

SCORES IN BRIEF

AUSTRALIA: First innings 243

SOUTH AFRICA: First innings 382

AUSTRALIA: Second innings 239

SOUTH AFRICA: Second innings 102 for 4 (Markram 21, Amla 27, De Villiers 28; Lyon 2-44)

Result: South Africa won by 6 wickets and level four-match series 1-1.

Player-of-the-match: Kagiso Rabada.



**RABADA... 11 for 150**

## Ctg Open from Mar 21

SPORTS REPORTER



The 2nd City Bank American Express Chittagong Open will be held at the Bhatiyari Golf & Country Club in Chittagong from March 21 to 24. Co-sanctioned by the Professional Golf Tour India (PGTI) and Bangladesh Professional Golf Association (BPGA), the 50-lac-taka event will feature 126 professional golfers from home and abroad.

An official title declaration ceremony in this regard was held at a hotel in the capital yesterday where managing director and CEO of City Bank Shohail RK Hussain, AMD Mashrur Arefin, BPGA president Asif Ibrahim, Riz Events chairman Rizwan Bin Farouq, Chairman, CCO of Regent Airways Hanif Zakaria and BSRM's branding and market outreach head Abul Hasnat were present among others.



The title sponsorship of the 2nd City Bank American Express Chittagong Open was declared at a press conference at a hotel in the capital yesterday. The event was attended, among others, by hosts, sponsors, organisers and golf related personnel.

PHOTO: COLLECTED

### SCORES IN BRIEF

**SHEIKH JAMAL V KHELAGHAR**

**SHEIKH JAMAL DC:** 167 all out in 48 overs (Shykat 24, Tanbir 52, Al-Imran 20; Tanvir 4-30, Anjum 3-16, Moinal 2-32)

**KHELAGHAR SKS:** 168 for 4 in 40 overs (Robiul 34, Rafsan 49, Menaria 58 not out; Shohag 1-26)  
**Result:** Khelaghar SKS won by 6 wickets.

**BROTHERS UNION V AGRANI BANK**

**BROTHERS UNION:** 289 for 6 in 50 overs (Mizanur 102, Junaid 92, Myshukur 37 not out; Shafiqul 4-48)

**AGRANI BANK CC:** 292 for 7 in 49.1 overs (Azmir

65, Salman 63, Dhiman 22, Dhawan 70, Javed 55, Suhrawardi 3-62, Khaled 2-52)

**Result:** Agrani Bank CC won by 3 wickets.

**LEGENDS OF RUPGANJ V KALABAGAN**

**LEGENDS OF RUPGANJ:** 314 for 5 in 50 overs (Mazid 20, Salahuddin 125, Naim 45, Naeem 61 not out, Rasool 32; Abul 2-49, Taibur 2-19)

**KALABAGAN KC:** 288 all out in 49.1 overs

(Goswami 75, Tasamul 23, Ashraful 64, Mahmudul 30, Abul 34, Faruque 29; Shahid 2-62, Rasool 3-50, Asif 3-43)

**Result:** Legends of Rupganj won by 26 runs.