

SPORT



Bangladesh players and officials bring out their now famous Nagin Dance after the nailbiting victory against Sri Lanka in the Nidahas Trophy at the R Premadasa Stadium in Colombo last night. (Inset) Substitute Nurul Hasan [L] gets into an ugly altercation with the Sri Lanka players during the final over of the Bangladesh innings.

PHOTOS: AFP



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A bit of needle is good: Shakib

MAZHAR UDDIN from Colombo



Despite a dramatic two-wicket win over Sri Lanka that took Bangladesh to the tri-nation T20I Nidahas Trophy final, verbal confrontations and the ensuing chaos hogged most of the attention when Shakib Al Hasan walked into the post-match press conference at the R Premadasa Stadium in Colombo yesterday.

"I don't want to talk about it, but what happened was that the square-leg umpire called a no-ball and after a discussion they cancelled it. I didn't think it was the right decision. I don't know what happened after the first ball, which was a bouncer, but after the second ball the umpire called a no-ball. We are all human, we should take it on the chin and move forward," the returning Bangladesh captain began.

"Many things happened that shouldn't have happened. I need to remain calm. I was overjoyed. Excitement was there. I must know how to react next time. I will be careful," said Shakib.

When questioned over the fiery rivalry emerging between the two subcontinent sides, Shakib responded: "A bit of needle is good for the crowd and journalists. It is good for cricket. Otherwise, we come, we play, we go. There is no spice in it. We Bangladeshis and Sri Lankans are used to having a lot of spice in our food. It is better to have this spice but only on the ground, not outside the ground," he added.

"My memory is not so sharp that I can remember so many years of cricket. It was one of the most exciting matches for Bangladesh. I thought it was terrific the way we kept our nerve. Sri Lanka batted really well after losing five early

wickets. There was so much guts around the team; the way Mahmudullah played, it was terrific. I have never seen a Bangladesh batsman hitting the ball so well in limited overs cricket," effused a normally reserved Shakib.

When asked whether he had called Mahmudullah after the no-ball incident, Shakib denied it and said that he was in fact telling him to continue.

There were also questions about Shakib not coming to bowl and not introducing another left-arm spinner such as Nazmul Islam throughout the game since there were two left-handers at the crease and Shakib replied that as a captain he may be wrong on a few decisions out of a hundred.

"The last 10 days were a roller coaster. I went to Thailand and Australia, came to Sri Lanka, went back to Bangladesh and now I am back in Sri Lanka. I didn't think I would play today's game. I trained for just one day in Dhaka. [BCB president Nazmul Hassan] Papon bhui told me that if I could bowl, it would help the team. I could have gone on the safe side by saying I was not match fit, but I felt that it was an opportunity. [I thought] I may not contribute a lot but it may still help the team. Being the captain of a winning team is a big thing. Credit goes to everyone, including our bowlers. It was a 180-190 wicket but we bowled very well in the first 10 overs. T20 is unpredictable but the biggest satisfaction is the win," concluded the left-hander.

Sri Lanka batsman Kusal Perera, who had to be restrained by Tamim Iqbal at the end of the match, also refused to make any comments over the unsavory scenes at the end of the match but did say that Bangladesh players became emotional and wanted to win desperately. However, the left-hander did not seem to be upset.

BD-SL SCOREBOARD					
SRI LANKA		R/B	4s/6s		
Gunathilaka c Sabbir b Shakib	4/7	0/0			
K Mendis c Soumya b Mustafizur	11/14	2/0			
K Perera c Mehedi b Soumya	61/40	7/1			
Tharanga run out	5/5	1/0			
Shanaka c Mushfiqur b Mustafizur	0/1	0/0			
J Mendis c Mustafizur b Mehedi	3/11	0/0			
T Perera c Tamim b Rubel	58/37	3/3			
Udana not out	7/4	0/0			
Dananjaya not out	1/1	0/0			
Extras: (lb-4, w-5)	9				
Total: (For 7 wks in 20 overs)	159				
Did not bat: Aponso, Fernando.					
Fall of wickets: 1-15, 2-22, 3-31, 4-32, 5-41, 6-138, 7-154.					
Bowler	O	M	R	W	
Shakib	2	0	9	1	
Rubel	4	0	41	2	
Mustafizur	4	1	39	2	
Mehedi	4	0	16	1	
Mahmudullah	4	0	29	0	
Soumya	2	0	21	1	
BANGLADESH		R/B	4s/6s		
Tamim c Perera b Gunathilaka	50/42	4/2			
Liton c Perera b Dananjaya	0/3	0/0			
Sabbir st Perera b Dananjaya	13/8	3/0			
Mushfiqur c Perera b Aponso	28/25	2/0			
Soumya c Perera b Mendis	10/11	0/0			
Mahmudullah not out	43/18	3/2			
Shakib c Dananjaya b Udana	7/9	0/0			
Mehedi run out	0/1	0/0			
Mustafizur run out	0/2	0/0			
Rubel not out	0/0	0/0			
Extras: (w-9)	9				
Total: (For 8 wks in 19.5 overs)	160				
Did not bat: Nazmul.					
Fall of wickets: 1-11, 2-33, 3-97, 4-105, 5-109, 6-137, 7-148, 8-148.					
Bowler	O	M	R	W	
Fernando	1	0	10	0	
Dananjaya	4	0	37	2	
Aponso	3	0	19	1	
T Perera	2	0	20	0	
Gunathilaka	3	0	24	1	
J Mendis	4	0	24	1	
Udana	2.5	0	26	1	
Result: Bangladesh won by 2 wickets.					
Player-of-the-match: Mahmudullah Riyad.					

A hot rivalry, but at what cost?

Shakib, Nurul reportedly fined; get demerit points

SAKEB SUBHAN



When Mahmudullah Riyad, in his inimitable manner, flicked Thisara Perera for a massive six over square leg he not only won the match and took Bangladesh to the final, but also sealed arguably Bangladesh's best win in T20I cricket so far. It was a remarkable win and was celebrated as such in Bangladesh, judging by the sounds of crackers going off in the Dhaka night.

However, to the eyes of the rest of the world, and certainly in the eyes of Sri Lanka fans, the image of Mahmudullah running triumphantly after the six will compete with another altogether unsavoury sight when the dust settles – that of skipper Shakib Al Hasan calling the batsmen off the field when 12 was needed off four balls.

There were other images too. Non-playing member Nurul Hasan having to be restrained physically during shouting matches with Kusal Mendis and Thisara Perera, Mendis himself having to be restrained by Tamim Iqbal after the match when he went after Nurul, the entire team doing the Nagin Dance with team manager Khaled Mahmud a very happy and eager participant. All of these, while unsavoury, can be debated one way or the other and has happened before in Bangladesh cricket. In fact, Akila Dananjaya celebrated by miming a snake charmer after taking the catch to dismiss Shakib Al Hasan, so the Bangladesh team will have a case for their own celebration. 'He started it' seems an apt argument for the level of maturity on display yesterday.

What is indefensible and unprecedented in its petulance, however, is Shakib threatening to effectively forfeit the

match when they felt aggrieved by an umpiring decision.

The incident that sparked all the drama was umpire Raveendra Wimalasiri, according to Tamim Iqbal and others present at the R Premadasa Stadium in Colombo, signalling a no-ball and then supposedly withdrawing it after bowler Isuru Udana had bowled a second bouncer to tailender Mustafizur Rahman in the last over. According to the laws, only one above-shoulder delivery is allowed in an over in limited-overs cricket and the second such delivery has to be called a no-ball, and so Bangladesh's players felt that they were cheated out of not only a run but an extra delivery at the most crucial stage of the match. And both deliveries were above shoulder height.

Shakib came out of the dressing room and called Mahmudullah back, argued with the off-field umpire and also argued with TV commentator Russel Arnold who was near the advertising hoardings. He was the picture of fury trumping good sense. It was learnt that Shakib and Nurul incurred a demerit point each and were fined 25 per cent of their match fees by the ICC match referee after the match.

It will not matter much of course, because Bangladesh won the game in grand fashion and for most Bangladesh supporters, many fuelled by imagined past injustices, that is all that matters. It also cements a true rivalry with Sri Lanka.

Shakib said after the match that he hoped Sri Lankans would support them in the final. Along with him saying that he was in fact telling the batsmen to continue when he was waving his arms towards the dressing room, that comment was perhaps the funniest thing about a very ill-tempered affair.

Rupganj up to second on one-sided day

SPORTS REPORTER



An unbeaten 94 from Abdul Mazid followed a four-wicket hauls from Mohammad Shahid and Asif

Hasan in Legends of Rupganj's seven-wicket win over Brothers Union in their Dhaka Premier League 10th-round match at the BKSP in Savar yesterday. Their seventh win took Rupganj to second place in the 12-team table, level on 14 points with leaders Abahani.

Elsewhere on a day of one-sided games, Khelaghar Samaj Kallyan Samity handed Mohammedan Sporting Club a six-wicket defeat and Sheikh Jamal Dhanmondi Club outclassed Kalabagan Krira Chakrabarty 73 runs.

Pacer Shahid and off-spinner Parvez Rasool combined to bring a swift end to the Brothers innings after Rupganj chose to field first. All of their top six reached double

figures, with opener Mizanur Rahman stroking a 58-ball 63, as Brothers reached 164 for four but when Shahid had skipper Alok Kapali caught behind in the 41st over it initiated a collapse that saw the last six wickets fall for just nine runs. Rasool got rid of Sohrwardi Shuvo in the next over.

Left-arm spinner Asif earlier dismissed both openers Mizanur and Junaid Siddique – who had put on a 77-run stand – and also taken the wicket Debabrata Das. He came back to dismiss Roni Hossen to finish with four for 23 from 10 overs. Shahid, who had earlier dismissed Myshukur Rahman, added the wickets of Iftekhar Sajjad and the last one of Shakhawat Hossain in the 49th over to end with four for 41 in 9.1 overs.

The chase was a simple one for Rupganj as after Salahuddin Pappu's early dismissal, opener Mazid put on 71 for the second wicket Mohammad Naim and 69 for the third wicket with skipper



ASIF... 4 for 23

Naeem Islam, Mazid hit five boundaries in his unbeaten 94 off 110 balls and sealed the match in the 38th over with his seventh six.

At the Sher-e-Bangla National Stadium in Mirpur, young Khelaghar left-arm spinner Tanvir Islam took four wickets to help bundle out Mohammedan for a paltry 181 in 45.4 overs. The start for Mohammedan was a good one after they had won the toss as openers Jony Talukdar and Enamul Haque put on a 73-run partnership, but



TANVIR... 4 for 30

there was little resistance after Tanvir broke that stand. Jony scored the team-highest 55. For Khelaghar, Tanvir took four for 30 from his 10 overs and Moinul Islam took two wickets.

Khelaghar lost four wickets while chasing the modest total but they were never in any trouble as Amit Majumder top-scored with 75 and Ashok Menaria remained unbeaten on 54 as they strolled home and into fourth spot on the table with 8.3 overs to spare.

In Fatullah, after being asked to

SCORES IN BRIEF	
SHEIKH JAMAL V KALABAGAN	(Mahidul 24, Amit 76, Menaria 54 not out; Gurinder 2-37, Onik2-33)
SHEIKH JAMAL DC: 263 all out in 49.5 overs (Pinak 49, Rakin 71, Tanbir 61 not out, Shohag 23; Abul 3-45)	Result: Khelaghar SKS won by 6 wickets.
KALABAGAN KC: 190 all out in 47.3 overs (Taibur 51, Muktar 51, Abul 32; Kamrul 2-47, Sunny 4-36)	BROTHERS UNION V LEGENDS OF RUPGANJ
Result: Sheikh Jamal DC won by 73 runs.	BROTHERS UNION: 178 all out in 48.1 overs (Mizanur 63, Junaid 26, Das 31, Kapali 20; Shahid 4-41, Rasool 2-31, Asif 4-23)
MOHAMMEDAN V KHELAGHAR	LEGENDS OF RUPGANJ: 183 for 3 in 37.3 overs (Mazid 94 not out, Naim 32, Naeem 36; Shakhawat 1-29)
MOHAMMEDAN SC: 181 all out in 45.4 overs (Jony 55, Enamul 32, Shamsur 20, Gurinder 20, Tajul 34; Tanvir 4-30, Moinul 2-14)	Result: Legends of Rupganj won by 7 wickets.
KHELAGHAR SKS: 182 for 4 in 41.3 overs	

bat first Sheikh Jamal rode on Pinak Ghosh's 49, Rakin Ahmed's 71 and Tanbir Hayder's unbeaten 61 to post 263 before losing their last wicket with one ball left in the innings. Pacer Abul Hasan took three for 45 off his 10 overs for Kalabagan.

In defence of the total, left-arm spinner Elias Sunny took four for

36 as Kalabagan's chase never quite picked up steam after they were reduced to five for 46. There was a 97-run partnership between Muktar Ali and Taibur Rahman, who each hit 51, but the early collapse was too hard to recover from. The innings eventually folded for 190 in the 48th over.

Mirpur demerit point upheld

STAR SPORT DESK

The International Cricket Council (ICC) upheld its decision to impose one demerit point on the Sher-e-Bangla National Stadium wicket which was used during the second Test between Bangladesh and Sri Lanka between February 8-10.

Match referee David Boon had rated the Mirpur surface 'below average', citing uneven bounce throughout the match and inconsistent turn.

The Bangladesh Cricket Board's appeal against the sanction was considered by Geoff Allardice, general manager of cricket, and Anil Kumble, chair of the Cricket Committee, who concluded that the rating given by Boon was correct.

The demerit point will remain active for a rolling five-year period and the stadium will incur a one-year suspension if the Mirpur pitch accumulates five demerit points in that time.