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South Africa pacer Dwaine Pretorius scalped three wickets to help restrict Sri Lanka to 203 runs in a World Cup encounter yesterday.

পদ্মা সেতুর মূল কাঠামোতে ব্যবহৃত হচ্ছে শুধুমাত্র স্ক্যানসিমেন্ট

ভিভিসি পুরো বাড়ি তৈরিতেই ব্যবহার করুন স্ক্যান সিমেন্ট মজবুত থেকে আপনার বাড়ির ভবিষ্যৎ

South Africa dent Sri Lanka's hopes

AFF, Chester-Le-Street

Hashim Amla and Faf du Plessis powered South Africa to a nine-wicket victory over Sri Lanka on Friday, dealing a huge blow to the Asian side's hopes of reaching the World Cup semifinals.

Amla (80) and captain Du Plessis (96) put on an unbeaten 175 for the second wicket as South Africa cruised to victory in the 38th over, finishing on 206 for one.

Sri Lanka were struggling after defeats to New Zealand and Australia and two washouts before reviving their World Cup chances with a shock win against hosts England last week.

But, with six points from seven games, the 1996 champions have now slipped behind England, Bangladesh and Pakistan in the race to qualify from the round-robin phase.

"It feels like it's a long time coming," said Du Plessis, whose side were already out of contention for the semi-finals before the match.

"It feels bittersweet, it doesn't feel like it means too much," he added. "But the basics of batting were shown today. We've not had guys bat long and build big partnerships. One big partnership and everything

looks much easier."

Sri Lanka's batting let them down against an inspired South African pace attack led by recalled seamer Dwaine Pretorius, who returned figures of 3-25 from his 10 overs.

"It was a tough wicket," said Pretorius. "We just had to be disciplined and luckily that plays into my game plan."

"I think everyone backed each other well and that was probably our most disciplined performance of the tournament so far.

"The wicket looks slightly slow with a big outfield. Good cricket shots, good partnerships and running hard will be key."

Playing for pride, South Africa rarely put a foot wrong after electing to field first in Chester-le-Street, bowling out Sri Lanka for 203 in the 50th over.

Chris Morris also finished with three wickets while pace spearhead Kagiso Rabada took two.

Sri Lanka had a disastrous start to their innings when skipper Dimuth Karunaratne was caught at slip by Du Plessis off the first ball of the match, delivered by Rabada.

Kusal Perera and Avishka Fernando batted positively to take the score to 67 for one in the 10th over before

Fernando (30) mistimed a shot, sending the ball steeping into the air before it was taken by Du Plessis.

Perera (30) was next to go, chopping a Pretorius delivery onto his stumps as Sri Lanka slipped to 72-3 in the 12th over.

Angelo Mathews was bowled by Morris for 11 and Kusal Mendis departed for 23.

A swarm of bees briefly interrupted play towards the end of the innings, forcing the players and umpires to lie flat on the ground.

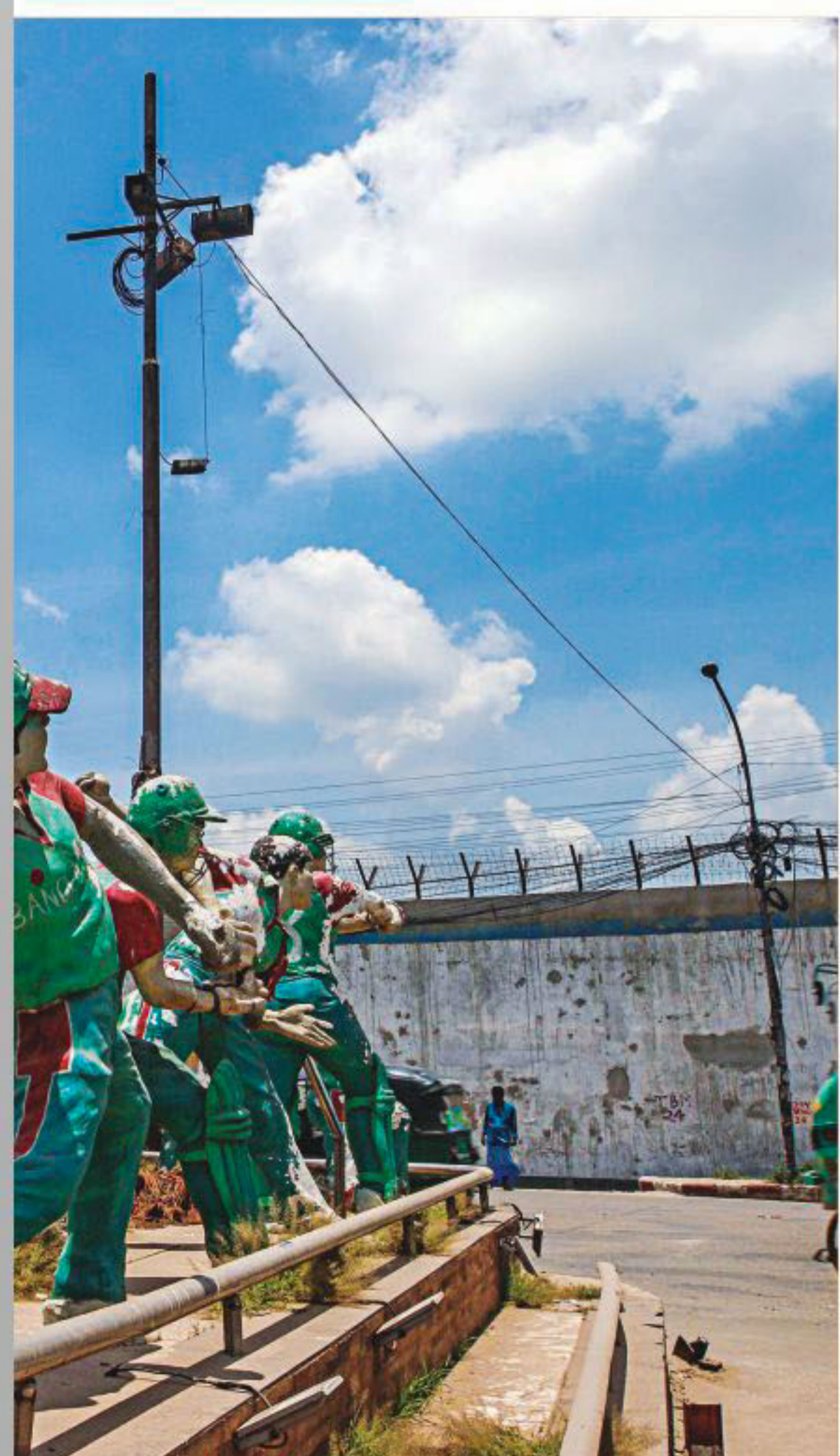
Veteran paceman Lasith Malinga struck in the fifth over of South Africa's innings, bowling Quinton de Kock for 15, but it only proved a minor hiccup.

Amla and Du Plessis took control as they mixed the right dose of caution and aggression to blunt the opposition attack.

"We needed to take wickets to stand a chance of winning and build pressure," said Karunaratne. "We've got to think about that going forward -- how we can build pressure and create mistakes."

South Africa will sign off with a final league match against Australia.

Sri Lanka have two more games -- against West Indies on July 1 and India on July 6.



Police plan to rehabilitate ex-militants

Over 100 to get assistance in an effort to prevent them from going back to the path of militancy

SHARIFUL ISLAM and MOHAMMAD JAMIL KHAN

The counterterrorism unit of police will provide assistance to over 100 former militants or their families to keep them away from the path of militancy.

The officials will begin with rehabilitating five former militants next week.

The five convicted leaders and activists of the mainstream JMB were recently released from prison. They were arrested before and after the 2005 series bomb attacks.

Family members of three other JMB militants, who are still in jail, have also been selected for awarding financial help so that militant outfits cannot recruit them with financial assistance, said Monirul Islam, chief of the Counter Terrorism and Transnational Crime Unit of police.

Saiful Islam, deputy commissioner of the unit, said, "For the rehabilitation, we would raise funds so that they can start small businesses."

The families facing serious financial hardships are being chosen, he added.

The initiative is part of a plan to establish a terrorism and international crime prevention centre of police.

"We will provide them with vocational or special trainings in such a manner that they may become experts in a certain field and do good for our society," Saiful told.

gram was PHOTO: RAJIB RAIHAN