



Shakib Al Hasan led from the front against Afghanistan, scoring a match-winning, unbeaten 45-ball 70 featuring eight boundaries and a six as Bangladesh won by four wickets at the Zahur Ahmed Chowdhury Stadium in Chattogram yesterday.

PHOTO: FIROZ AHMED

‘Have to play calculated cricket’

SPORTS REPORTER from Chattogram

OBHA
Bangladesh may have finally broken the Afghanistan jinx, registering their first win in T20Is after four consecutive defeats, but the Tigers had to work hard for that and rely on skipper Shakib Al Hasan's individual heroics. The experienced left-hander struck a match-winning, unbeaten fifty in the final league match of the tri-nation T20I series at the Zahur Ahmed Chowdhury Stadium in Chattogram yesterday. Despite a flying start that saw Afghanistan openers Hazratullah Zazai and Rahmanullah Gurbaz add 75 runs in nine overs, the visitors went on to post a modest 138 for 7. However, things could have been different had they managed another 15-20 runs and even the Tigers' team management would realise that it was not a convincing win. Although there remain a lot of areas to improve upon with

both bat and all, yesterday's win will surely give the Tigers a much-needed boost ahead of the final on Tuesday. Mosaddek Hossain, who made a crucial 12-ball 19 and remained not out, said that regardless of the manner of victory, the result would help the Tigers gain momentum ahead of the final. "A win before the final will definitely build confidence for any team and it was a much-needed win for us. I think that when we lose a ground, it's not like we fall to the floor. So after this win, it's not like we are flying high. I think it would be better for us to continue playing the way we are at the moment. Yes, we lost to them in the past, but as I said, we have to play calculated cricket," Mosaddek told reporters yesterday. Bangladesh had lost wickets at regular intervals at one point and required 27 runs from the final three overs with four wickets in

hand. Mosaddek started the 18th over with a boundary before Shakib struck a six and four. That over, from a limping Rashid Khan, yielded 18 runs and changed the course of the game. "He even picked up a wicket with the second ball [of the 16th over] despite being injured so you can't say whether he could have done better or not if he wasn't injured. We had to charge at the end and we were only focusing on that; not thinking of Rashid's injury," Mosaddek said. Rashid has always proved the biggest threat for the Tigers in the past and when asked what they did to overcome any fear of the leg-spinner, Mosaddek responded: "Actually, I never said that we were scared of Rashid Khan and I don't think there is anything to be scared of." However, the 23-year-old added that despite yesterday's victory it would be a totally new game in the final and he was hopeful that the Tigers would be able to work on past mistakes and start confidently.

BD-AFG SCOREBOARD

AFGHANISTAN				R/B	4s/6s
Gurbaz c & b Mustafizur	29/27	2/2			
Zazai c Mustafizur b Afrif	47/35	6/2			
Afghan c Najmul b Afrif	0/2	0/0			
Zadran b Saifuddin	14/16	0/1			
Nabi lbw b Shakib	4/6	0/0			
Gulbadin run out					
(Mahmudullah/Mushfiqur)	1/1	0/0			
Shafiqullah not out	23/17	2/1			
Karim c Mustafizur b Shafiu	3/4	0/0			
Rashid not out	11/13	0/0			
Extras (lb-1, nb-1, w-4)	6				
Total: (For 7 wickets in 20 overs)	138				
Fall of wickets: 1-75, 2-75, 3-80, 4-88, 5-96, 6-109, 7-114.					
Bowler	O	M	R	W	
Saifuddin	4	0	23	1	
Shafiu	4	0	24	1	
Shakib	4	0	24	1	
Mahmudullah	1	0	16	0	
Mustafizur	3	0	31	1	
Mosaddek	1	0	10	0	
Afrif	3	1	9	2	
BANGLADESH					
Liton c Asghar b Muejeb	4/10	0/0			
Nazmul c Rashid b Naveen	5/8	0/0			
Shakib not out	70/45	8/1			
Mushfiqur c Shafiqullah b Janat	26/25	0/1			
Mahmudullah lbw b Rashid	6/8	0/0			
Sabbir Gurbaz b Naveen	1/2	0/0			
Afrif b Rashid	2/4	0/0			
Mosaddek not out	19/12	1/0			
Extras (lb-1, nb-1, w-4):	6				
Total: (For six wickets in 19 overs)	139				
Did not bat: Saifuddin, Shafiu, Mustafizur.					
Fall of wickets: 1-9, 2-12, 3-493, 5-96, 6-104.					
Bowler	O	M	R	W	
Muejeb	4	0	19	1	
Naveen	4	0	20	2	
Janat	3	0	31	1	
Naib	2	0	16	0	
Nabi	3	0	24	0	
Rashid	3	0	27	2	
Result: Bangladesh won by 3 wickets.					
Player-of-the-match: Shakib Al Hasan.					

BD U-23s level one-day series

SPORTS REPORTER



The Bangladesh Under-23 team bounced back from their 34-run defeat in the first game by registering a five-run win (D/L method) against their Indian counterparts in the rain-interrupted second one-dayer at the Ekana Cricket Stadium in Lucknow yesterday. Bangladesh captain Saif Hassan and teammate Mahedi Hasan made a good start after the visitors decided to bat first, adding 52 runs for the opening wicket before the later was dismissed for 25 runs. Fardeen Hasan joined Saif to contribute a 75-run second wicket stand. Saif returned to the dressing room on a 92-ball 64, featuring four boundaries and a six. After 34 overs of Bangladesh's innings, rain stooped the match and when it resumed, it was reduced a 36-over affair. Bangladesh posted 149 for two in 36 overs and as per the D/L method, the target was set at 218 for the home team.

In reply, India made a solid start through a 72-run opening stand between Yashasvi Bhupendra and Madhav Kaushik. Br Sharath and Priyam Garg then hit half centuries but their efforts were not enough for the home side to achieve the target as they finished their 36-over quota for 212 runs with three wickets in hand. Abu Hider and Sumon Khan claimed two wickets each but it was skipper Saif who was more economical, giving away just 22 runs in seven overs, to help his side level the series after contributing with the bat. The third match of the five-match series will take place at the same venue tomorrow. **SCORES IN BRIEF** Bangladesh U-23s: 149 for 2 in 36 overs (Saif 64, Fardeen 47 not out, Mahedi 25, Yasir 7 not out; Shokeen 2-39) India U-23s: 212 for 7 in 36 overs (Sharath 55, Priyan 53, Yashasvi 34, Madhav 34; Sumon 2-44, Hider 2-45, Tanvir 1-49) Result: Bangladesh U-23s won by five runs (D/L).

Tohura brace earns a draw against Aussies

SPORTS REPORTER



Bangladesh ended their AFC U-16 Women's Championship campaign with a brilliant 2-2 draw against Australia, earning their first point in the history of the final round of the championship. Fleet-footed striker Tohura Khatun was the star for the Bangladesh team, twice giving her side the lead only to see the Young Matildas fight back. Even though Bangladesh finished bottom of the four-team group, the draw will restore some confidence in the camp, which was shattered following defeats against Thailand [1-0] and Japan [9-0]. From the beginning of the match, Bangladesh never looked like they were playing against an opponent who are much higher in women's ranking and have drawn against Japan while thrashing Thailand 8-1. The girls in red and green, who missed a sleuth of scoring chances against Thailand and looked out of their depth against Japan, stood-toe-to toe against the Young Matildas, making up for their physical disadvantage with skill. There were not too many chances that Bangladesh created, unlike Australia, but the two half-chances that Bangladesh created on counter-attacks were grabbed with both hands by Tohura.

However, Australia eventually found their way back into the match in the 77th minute, with Claudia Mihocic bundling home a corner kick. Two more goals came in the next three minutes at either end, with Tohura almost replicating her first goal in the following minute with another excellent finish, this time breaking the offside trap and sliding the ball past the Australia keeper, who was hesitating to commit herself to the ball. The Bangladesh camp burst into joy, but the joy lasted only two minutes as Paige Zois's left-footed strike from the top of the box sneaked under the crossbar, evading the outstretched hands of Rupna. Bangladesh lived a few nervy moments towards the end, evoking memories in the camp of a 3-2 defeat against Australia at this stage of the championship two years ago, but there were no late heartbreaks this time around. The team's coach Golam Rabbani Choton was happy that his players lifted themselves from the demoralising defeats and held a much-better side to a draw. "We are very happy because today our girls showed that they can play big tournaments. The first match was disappointing and the second one was a disaster. Today they were up against a very strong side like Australia, but they played very well," Choton said in



Tohura Khatun was the toast of her teammates after she scored both goals in a 2-2 draw against Australia in the AFC U-16 Championship in Chonburi yesterday.

PHOTO: AFC

The Bangladesh No. 10 raced onto a long ball from Rituporna Chakma and found the back of the net with a powerful and precise shot over onrushing Australia goalkeeper Miranda Templeman in the 20th minute. Bangladesh goalkeeper Rupna Chakma, who was much maligned for the performances in the first two matches, redeemed herself with some assured goalkeeping to keep the Aussies at bay in the first half.

his post-match reaction. He gave credit to all the players for their effort. "Coming back from a nine-goal defeat against Japan to give this kind of performance against Australia deserves a lot of credit. The draw against Australia shows that we have improved from the past," Choton said. The veteran coach also heaped praise on Tohura, calling her a special talent and hoped that they could nurture her for even greater things.

SHORT CORNER

Rohit eyes Kohli's spot

After taking a 1-0 lead in the series, India will take on South Africa in the 3rd T20I at the M Chinnaswamy Stadium in Bengaluru today. The battle of T20I dominance between India captain Virat Kohli and vice-captain Rohit Sharma will continue as the two Indian batting greats are in a neck-and-neck battle



Pakistan leave out Hafeez

Pakistan left out veteran batsman Mohammad Hafeez for next week's series start against Sri Lanka, who are touring the country for the first time since they were targeted in a terror attack. Hafeez, 38, was part of Pakistan's fifth-placed World Cup squad but has been kept off due to his commitments in the Caribbean Premier League, said head coach and chief selector Misbah-ul-Haq. "He is not out of our plans," Misbah added. "Whoever is effective for the team will be included in the future." Fellow World Cup team members Hasan Ali and fast bowler Shaheen Shah Afridi have also been left out due to poor fitness. Sarfaraz Ahmed will lead the team in both the one-day and T20 matches. Middle order batsman Iftekhar Ahmed was recalled to the one-day squad after a four-year absence. Cricket tours were suspended in Pakistan for six years after a 2009 assault on the Sri Lankan team bus that killed half a dozen police officers and wounded six members of the visiting team. Sri Lanka agreed to the current tour after a favourable security assessment. Three one-day internationals will be played in Karachi, the first on September 27.

Another three Twenty20 matches will be played in Lahore in early October. **SQUAD** Sarfaraz Ahmed, Babar Azam, Abid Ali, Asif Ali, Fakhar Zaman, Imam-ul-Haq, Haris Sohail, Mohammad Hasnain, Iftikhar Ali, Imad Wasim, Mohammad Amir, Mohammad Rizwan, Shadab Khan, Mohammad Nawaz, Usman Shinwari, Wahab Riaz. --Afp

Moeen on break from Tests

England all-rounder Moeen Ali has taken a break from Test cricket after losing out on a central contract for the longest format for the 2019-20 season following a dismal summer. The 32-year-old off-spinner and left-handed batsman lost his place in England's World Cup winning team before being dropped from the Test side after the defeat in the first Ashes Test. "It's just to get away from it a little bit. I feel like I want to enjoy my batting and this will give me a bit of a break," Moeen told ESPNcricinfo. "I want to spend some time with the family."



"I've been playing for England for five years and it's been quite tough. The intensity is obviously higher in Test cricket so this is just to give me a break and then we will see what happens after that. "I'm not ruling out playing Test cricket in the future." --Reuters



A snapshot of the action at the Sylhet District Stadium in the upazila final of the Bangamata Gold Cup between Jointapur and Gopalganj yesterday. Gopalganj finished as champions.

PHOTO: SHEIKH NASIR