



Young Bangladesh leg-spinner Aminul Islam produced considerable turn to dismiss India batsmen KL Rahul and Shreyas Iyer during the first T20I at the Arun Jaitley Stadium in New Delhi yesterday. (Inset) A fine bowling display was backed up by the Bangladesh fielders, with skipper Mahmudullah Riyad (not pictured) fielding off his own bowling to run out Shikhar Dhawan.

PHOTO: AFP

18 excellent overs dampened by two

ABDULLAH AL MEHDI from New Delhi

Newly-appointed T20I captain Mahmudullah Riyad marshalled his charges well as Bangladesh curtailed India's stroke-makers early on, but the skipper will be rueing the late power-hitting which allowed the hosts to reach 148 for six at the Arun Jaitley Stadium in New Delhi in the first of the three-match series yesterday.

Quite a bit of grass had been left on the pitch a day ahead of the match but a more batting-friendly track was in the offing on the day of the match. The seamers were still likely to get some early swing and Shaful Islam seized that opportunity, removing Rohit Sharma leg-before in the first over with a sharp in-dipper. Riyad's field setting complemented his bowlers and made the Indian batsmen work for the runs while the slowness of the pitch worked in the Tigers' favour.

Indian batsmen had to force the issue as the visitors bowled a good line and length. Bangladesh also showed positive signs of overcoming the upheaval of the last few weeks with an electric fielding effort to complement the bowlers.

Following Shaful's early wicket, Al-Amin Hossain kept up the pressure at the other end and leg-spinner Aminul Islam benefitted. Aminul removed Lokesh Rahul in his first over as the ball turned away sharply from the right-hander and, as the batsman tried to check his shot, he only managed to lob an easy one to the well-positioned

Riyad at cover. Shreyas Iyer and Shikhar Dhawan tried to settle things for India but a few leading edges here and there showed that Tigers were not making things easy.

Aminul then got Iyer's scalp in the 11th over with the batsman looking to go big but only managing to connect with the toe-end of the bat and getting caught at long-off.

The next four overs brought 22 runs and with pressure beginning to tell, Dhawan succumbed after a handy knock of 41. A sharp piece of fielding from Mahmudullah saw Dhawan struggle to get back to his crease and eventually fall short as Pant sent him back after an initial call for a double.

Afif Hossain had been bowling a brilliant line and length and was rewarded when he sent back Shivam Dube with a brilliant catch off his own bowling.

India were 102 for five and in deep trouble but Pant managed to put some pressure back on the Tigers with a few nifty strokes. Curiously, Mustafizur Rahman was not batted on for the last few overs as Riyad chose to finish Al-Amin's quota.

The paceman, who came back into the national team after three years had bowled economically during his early spells but both him and Shaful Islam were taken apart in the last two overs of the innings that produced 30 runs.

Washington Sundar (14 off five) and Krunal Pandya's (15 off eight) late fireworks ensured that India reached a challenging total after it had appeared that the hosts would not go past the 135-run mark before the last two overs.

Smog can't cloud festivity

SPORTS REPORTER from New Delhi



The Air Quality Index (AQI) in New Delhi was once again the talk of the town before the start of Bangladesh's first T20I against India at the Arun Jaitley Stadium yesterday.

Concerns had been raised about visibility, with reports that 32 flights had been diverted to nearby cities as visibility dropped to around 300m at the Indira Gandhi International Stadium. There were even talks of the match being cancelled, but visibility improved towards the evening.

AQI is deemed 'unhealthy' when it is between 151 and 200 and 'severe' above 500. Only 7.7 kilometres from the ground stands the Jawaharlal Nehru

Stadium and the AQI recorded there was 912, and several other locations had recorded 999 -- the highest number the machines are capable of recording. A day in spent in those extreme conditions is the equivalent of smoking 33 cigarettes a day.

In these conditions, with the local government issuing a health advisory, one could expect a low turnout. But New Delhi hosted its last T20I in 2017 and it is not often that the city gets to enjoy the national team. So, ignoring the ongoing pollution levels, the crowd turned up in numbers and people of all ages attended the match.

Some fans said that it was their first time at the stadium. Asked about the pollution, one replied: "It's bad, but it's for an India match so it's okay."

Inquiring about whether they were

worried about the players, another said: "Not an issue for the match and sportsmanship wise they can perform well. Lots of people are attending the match for 3-4 hours so it's okay."

This reporter confronted a particularly interesting group of fans who had all donned Rohit Sharma's jersey in a concerted move. They resonated as a choir stating their support for India when this reporter approached them. "[MS] Dhoni is not playing, [Virat] Kohli is not playing, so the only man behind our enjoyment is Rohit Sharma," they said excitedly.

"He is going to score a hundred today," they cheered during entering the ground. Unfortunately, the Rohit fans must have been left disappointed as he was removed by Shaful Islam in the very first over.



The India Gate in New Delhi was engulfed by a thick fog of smog as the Air Quality Index in some parts of the city ticked over to 999 -- the highest the machine is capable of recording. Anything above 500 is considered 'severe'.

PHOTO: AFP

Khulna, Dhaka Metro in charge

SPORTS REPORTER



The excitement was dialled up on the second day of the National Cricket League fourth-round game between Rangpur Division and Khulna Division as 12 wickets fell and a hundred scored in the Tier-1 contest at the Sher-e-Bangla National Stadium in Mirpur yesterday.

Despite a horrible collapse it was Khulna who took control thanks to Mahedi Hasan's fifth first-class ton, which was instrumental in his side taking a nine-run first-innings lead after the batsman came in at number eight and lifted Khulna to 233 all out.

In reply, Rangpur were in a spot of bother and ended the day on 67 for four. Khulna's premier left-arm spinner Abdur Razzak, who picked up seven wickets in the first innings and became the first Bangladeshi to pick 600 first-class wickets, bagged another three in Rangpur's second innings. Rangpur will resume the third day leading by 58 runs with six wickets in hand.

Earlier, resuming on 24 for four



MAHEDI... 119

Khulna kept losing wickets at regular intervals and at one point were reeling on 80 for eight. Mahedi then got valuable support from Rubel Hossain during a brilliant 133-run ninth wicket stand.

Mahedi was eventually dismissed for 119 off 150 balls, which included 15 fours and a six, while Rubel remained not out on 36 off 109 balls when Khulna were bundled out.

Right-arm pacer Robiul Haque registered his maiden five-wicket haul and ended up with figures of five for 41

from 18 overs.

In Tier-2, Dhaka Metropolis were on the cusp of a big win over hosts Chattogram Division, who were forced to follow on and were still trailing by 216 runs with seven wickets in hand in their second innings.

Dhaka posted a huge first innings total of 403 all out, with centurion Shadman Islam eventually dismissed for 178 runs off 276 balls, which featured 23 fours and two sixes.

Later it was Dhaka Metro's bowlers who took charge as off-spinner Sharifullah and pacer Taskin Ahmed picked up four and three wickets respectively to bundle out Chattogram for just 91 in 30.5 overs. Sadikur Rahman's 22 was the highest score as the hosts were asked to follow on.

There was little change in Chattogram's second innings as they lost three quick wickets before Pinak Ghosh struck an unbeaten fifty and the hosts will resume the third day on 96 for three, with a mountain to climb to save the game.

In the other Tier-2 game Sylhet

Division were in control as Barishal Division were still trailing by 148 runs with nine wickets in hand in their second innings.

Resuming on 82 for one, Sylhet secured a 160-run first-innings lead by posting 322, riding on fifties from Shanaj Ahmed (73) and Zakir Hasan (53). Left-arm spinner Monir Hossain picked up three wickets for Barishal.

In reply, Barishal lost opener Rafsan Al Mahmud for a duck. Mohammad Ashraful and skipper Fazle Mahmud will resume the day with the score on 12 for one.

In the Tier-1 game in Cox's Bazar, Dhaka Division took the first-innings lead over Rajshahi Division and ended the day on 284 for four, riding on unbeaten nineties from Tainur Rahman (92 not out) and Shuvagata Hom (93 not out).

Dhaka were however unable to put up a big partnership before Taibur and Shuvagata added an unbeaten 180-run fifth wicket stand. Rajshahi's left-arm spinner Sunzamul Islam picked up three of the four wickets that fell.

SCORES IN BRIEF

RANGPUR V KHULNA
RANGPUR: First innings 224 and second innings 67 for 4 (Mehedi 23, Suhrawardi 24; Razzak 3-12)
KHULNA: First innings 233 all out (Anamul 21, Mahedi 119, Rubel 36 not out; Mukidul 2-71, Sajedul 2-29)
RAJSHAHI V DHAKA DIVISION
RAJSHAHI: First innings 230
DHAKA DIV: First innings 284 for 4 (Saif 28, Raqibul 29, Taibur 93 not out, Shuvagata 92 not out; Sunzamul 3-108)
BARISHAL V SYLHET
BARISHAL: First innings 162 and second innings 12 for 1.
SYLHET: First innings 322 all out (Imtiaz 48, Shanaj 73, Zakir 53, Kapali 29, Jaker 35; Monir 3-69)
DHAKA METROPOLIS V CHATTOGRAM
DHAKA METRO: First innings 403 all out (Shadman 178, Al Amin 83, Shamsur 50, Marshall 40; Mahmud 3-72, Irfan 2-66, Afridi 2-70)
CHATTOGRAM: First innings 91 all out (Sadikur 22; Taskin 3-34, Sharifullah 4-30, Asif 2-7) and second innings 96 for 3 (Pinak 55 not out; Taskin 1-16)



I did not know about this too long ago. When I got to know at the last moment, I contacted them [the BCCI]... I could not believe it after landing. I saw smog inside our plane before landing... The smog is so bad that it's almost unimaginable. The BCCI have been saying that the match can't be shifted. They said that it was too late. I sat down with them even today. I was informed that as the day wears on, visibility will be better.

NAZMUL HASSAN
BCB PRESIDENT



BD-IND SCOREBOARD

INDIA	R/B	4s/6s		
Sharma lbw b Shaful	9/5	2/0		
Dhawan run out	41/42	3/1		
Rahul c Mahmudullah b Aminul	15/17	2/0		
Iyer c Naim b Aminul	22/13	1/2		
Pant c Naim b Shaful	27/26	3/0		
Dube c & b Afif	1/4	0/0		
Pandya not out	15/8	1/1		
Sundar not out	14/5	0/2		
Extras: (lb-3, w-1)	4			
Total: (For 6 wkts in 20 overs)	148			
Did not bat: Chahal, Chahar, Khalil.				
Fall of wickets: 1-10, 2-36, 3-70, 4-95, 5-102, 6-120.				
Bowler	O	M	R	W
Shaful	4	0	36	2
Al-Amin	4	0	27	0
Mustafizur	2	0	15	0
Aminul	3	0	22	2
Soumya	2	0	16	0
Afif	3	0	11	1
Mosaddek	1	0	8	0
Mahmudullah	1	0	10	0
BANGLADESH: Mahmudullah Riyad (capt), Liton Das, Soumya Sarkar, Mohammad Naim, Mushfiqur Rahim, Afif Hossain, Mosaddek Hossain, Aminul Islam, Shaful Islam, Mustafizur Rahman, Al-Amin Hossain.				
Umpires: CK Nandan (IND), Nitin Menon (IND)				
TV Umpire: Chettithody Shamsuddin (IND)				
Match referee: Ranjan Madugalle (SRI)				

U-19s in take 137-run lead

SPORTS REPORTER

The Bangladesh Under-19 team were in a commanding position against their Sri Lankan counterparts, leading by 137 runs in their first innings after the second day of the second and final Youth Test match at the Sheikh Abu Naser Stadium in Khulna yesterday.

Resuming the second day on 71 for two, Bangladesh ended on 321 for eight courtesy of Prantik Nawrose, who fell just two runs short of a century.

The young Tigers lost two early wickets before Nawrose and Alvi Hoque added 135 for the third wicket. However, Nawrose was dismissed after a 181-ball knock that contained 15 fours while Alvi departed for 72.

Middle-order batsman Shahadat Hossain also hit a fifty, leaving Bangladesh eyeing a healthy first-innings lead.

Wickramasinghe, Dunith Nethmika and Nipun Dananjaya picked up two wickets each for Sri Lanka.



Bangladesh's Shabik Al Hasan, who is serving a two-year ban levied by the ICC for not reporting a corrupt approach from an alleged bookie, visited the Anti-Corruption Commission (ACC) headquarters in the capital's Shegunbagicha area yesterday. The all-rounder is a goodwill ambassador of the ACC. PHOTO: COLLECTED

NZ make it 1-1

AFP, Wellington



The safe hands of Colin de Grandhomme proved crucial as New Zealand drew level with England 1-1 in their Twenty20 international series in Wellington on Sunday.

While de Grandhomme was pouncing all four skilled balls that went his way, England were left to rue an uncomfortable day in the field with six spilled chances including three by James Vince.

New Zealand, who suffered a seven-wicket loss in the first match on Friday, were sent in to bat first and made their most of the errant fielding to post 176 for eight.

Martin Guptill at the top of the innings clouted 41 off 28 deliveries, while Jimmy Neesham belted 42 off 22, including four sixes, before he was removed on the final ball of the innings.

De Grandhomme also pushed the pace, facing only 12 balls for a whirlwind 28. England in reply looked comfortable at 91 for four in the 11th over before New Zealand removed the remaining six wickets to end the innings with a ball to spare.

SCORES IN BRIEF
NEW ZEALAND: 176 for 8 in 20 overs (Guptill 41, De Grandhomme 28, Taylor 28, Neesham 42; Curran 2-22, Jordan 3-23)
ENGLAND: 155 all out in 19.5 overs (Malan 39, Morgan 32, Jordan 36; Southee 2-25, Ferguson 2-34, Santner 3-25, Sodhi 2-37)
Result: New Zealand won by 21 runs.
Player-of-the-match: Mitchell Santner.