

STAR SPORTS SELECT 1

English Premier League
Crystal Palace vs
Tottenham Hotspur
Live from 5:30 pm
Leicester City vs
Manchester City

Live from 8:00 pm

Chelsea vs Aston Villa
Live from 10:30 pm
US Open
Women's Final
Emma Raducanu vs
Leylah Annie Fernandez

Live from 2:20 am

(Sunday)
STAR SPORTS SELECT 2
English Premier League
Manchester United vs
Newcastle United
Live from 8:00 pm

MTV INDIA

La Liga
Levante vs Rayo Vallecano
Live from 10:30 pm
Athletic Bilbao vs Mallorca
Live from 1:00 am
(Sunday)



Afif Hossain fought till the end with an unbeaten 33-ball 49 but very little support from the other batsmen meant the youngster could not help Bangladesh avoid a 27-run defeat against New Zealand in the fifth T20I at the Sher-e-Bangla National Stadium yesterday. PHOTO: FIROZ AHMED

Rusty and short of confidence

SPORTS REPORTER



Young pacer Shoriful Islam, who was included on Thursday in Bangladesh's squad for the upcoming T20 World Cup as one of the frontline pacers, struggled to get into rhythm yesterday in Mirpur when recalled into the playing eleven in the final T20I against New Zealand after sitting out the first four games.

Aside from Shoriful, three other players -- Taskin Ahmed, Soumya Sarkar and all-rounder Shamim Hossain -- who played for the first time in the series, seemed out of sorts facing a more relentless and attacking New Zealand.

Match practice is the best way to prepare for a tournament. And it was clear that these aforementioned four players lacked in preparedness due to inadequate game time. Before yesterday's game, in which the Tigers suffered a 27-run defeat, Shoriful last played the fourth of the five T20Is against Australia last month. And the left-arm had bowled at an economy of 4, giving away just eight runs in two overs, and had picked up the crucial wicket of Ashton Agar in that game.

In fact, Shoriful finished as one of the most impressive bowlers in that series, scalping a total of seven wickets, one less than the top wicket-getter Josh Hazlewood, in the four



(1964-2021)

Nadir Shah no more

SPORTS REPORTER

Cricket fraternity of Bangladesh went into shock following the demise of former international umpire Nadir Shah yesterday morning, who breathed his last at the age of 57 after a prolonged battle with cancer.

Nadir made his debut as an international umpire back in 2006 and stood in 40 ODIs and three T20Is and gained a stellar reputation in the domestic circuit over the years.

Nadir was the youngest of the seven 'Shah' brothers, and five of whom, the likes of Jahangir Shah Badshah who featured in five ODIs for Bangladesh, have played Dhaka Premier League with a lot of authority.

Known for his character and lively presence both on and off the field, however, there was a dark chapter in Nadir's career when he was banned on corruption charges in 2013 but it was later lifted by the board.

Former Bangladesh captain Mashrafe Bin Mortaza posted an emotional message on his Facebook page: "Nadir bhai, we will miss your half-folded sleeve shirt. Whenever my front leg was close to a no-ball Nadir bhai used to get angry at me and used to say, 'Mash you are getting tight on your foot landing, come back a little bit'. But whenever my feet touched the danger zone, there was no mercy. The way you spoke English and all those fun times spent with you has become a memory today. You wanted a sunglasses from me but it feels bad that before I could deliver, you left. Stay well on the other side, may the almighty bless you."

Advertisement for SUPER STAR Switch-Socket. The ad features a blue background with images of electrical switches and sockets. Text in Bengali and English: 'স্বো হোয়াইট সুইচ এর চোখ জুড়ানো স্তম্ভতা SUPER STAR Switch-Socket'. A phone number 09610774774 is also visible.



matches played.

How lack of game time has affected the young pacer could be ascertained from how he went from impressing in a series to ending the fifth T20I against the Kiwis as the most expensive among bowlers of the two sides.

As far as leaking runs is concerned, pacer Taskin also did not do any better in that regard.

Despite getting pace and carry in a much better and sporting Mirpur wicket, Taskin often bowled a wide and wayward delivery that was put away for what it deserved. In the end, the right-arm quick, who had not played since the Tigers' tour of Zimbabwe in July, finished with bleak figures of one for 34 in four overs.

Meanwhile, Soumya, whose dismal series against the Aussies saw the team management drop him for the first four Kiwi T20Is, threw his wicket away after scoring just four.

And when Shamim walked into the pitch, Bangladesh were already staring at a defeat, but the way he ended up misjudging a slower from Jacob Duffy only reflected how much the young player needed some game-time to build his confidence back up after an underproductive Australia series.

It is true that these four players were responsible for how they failed to make the most of their opportunities but it also cannot be denied that the team management also could have had them better prepared with a bit more game time, especially now that they are set to feature for Bangladesh in the World Cup just a month later.

'Winning three series a real morale boost'

SPORTS REPORTER



Although Bangladesh completed the five-match T20I series against New Zealand with a 27-run defeat in the final game, the Tigers will have gained in confidence after three consecutive T20I series wins.

Following a whitewash at the hands of New Zealand in a three-match T20I series to start the year, Bangladesh bounced back strongly in the format, clinching series wins starting with a 2-1 win over Zimbabwe. That was followed by a 4-1 win over Australia and the latest 3-2 win over the Kiwis at home.

T20I skipper Mahmudullah Riyad believes the wins will give his side a much-needed morale boost ahead of the start of the Tigers' T20 World Cup mission, which starts from the qualifying round in Oman.

"I think we have played some very good cricket in the last three series. And winning three series in a row a real morale-boost. Hopefully, we can regroup at the World Cup and win some games over there," Mahmudullah said during the post-match presentation yesterday.

However, there are still concerns about whether Bangladesh extracting the most of home conditions for those series win will prove

SCORES IN BRIEF

NEW ZEALAND

161 for 5 in 20 overs (Latham 50 not out, Allen 41, Nicholls 20; Shoriful 2-48, Taskin 1-34, Nasum 1-34)

BANGLADESH

134 for 8 in 20 overs (Afif 49 not out, Mahmudullah 23, Naim 23; Patel 2-21, Kuggelejin 2-23)

RESULT: New Zealand won the match by 27 runs, but Bangladesh won the series 3-2

PLAYER-OF-THE-MATCH: Tom Latham

PLAYER-OF-THE-SERIES: Nasum Ahmed and Tom Latham

beneficial in preparing the Tigers for the mega-event, where pitches are expected to offer runs as they tend to do in ICC events.

The pitch at the Sher-e-Bangla National Stadium in Mirpur for the fifth match played much better compared to the preceding games

and the visitors posted 161 for five -- the most by any team in the last ten T20I matches at Mirpur.

In reply, Bangladesh ended on 134 for 8 after 20 overs as their batting department continued to be an area of concern ahead of the World Cup, with the top-order once again failing to provide a solid platform.

The Tigers were struggling on 46 for four inside nine overs before a 63-run fifth-wicket stand between Afif Hossain, who top-scored for the hosts with an unbeaten 49, and Mahmudullah raised some hope but that was ultimately not enough.

Bangladesh's skipper credited the Kiwi bowlers and added that losing early wickets proved costly in the end.

"I think bowlers did quite well but we didn't finish well enough. We probably went for too many runs in the last couple of overs but the bowlers bowled their hearts out. The spinners bowled really well. Shoriful also picked up two early wickets and gave us the momentum to restrict them," the 35-year-old said.

"It was a good wicket to bat on but I think we didn't start well. The required run-rate kept climbing. Afif and I had a good partnership but I think New Zealand bowled and executed their plans really well."



BATTLE OF THE TEENS

It will be the Big Apple battle of teenagers in Saturday's U.S. Open final after Britain's Emma Raducanu became the first qualifier to reach the title clash at a major, joining Canadian Leylah Fernandez as the duo continued their giant-killing spree. The final under the lights at the colossal Arthur Ashe Stadium between Fernandez and Raducanu will be the first major final in the Open Era across both the men's and women's game to feature two unseeded players. It will also mark the first Grand Slam final to be contested by two teenagers since the 1999 U.S. Open between Serena Williams and Martina Hingis. Both Raducanu, 18, and Fernandez, who turned 19 this week, were yet to be born then.

PHOTO: REUTERS

U-19s scrape past Afghans

SPORTS REPORTER



In their first assignment since the previous batch won the Under-19 World Cup last year, Bangladesh Under-19s started with a close win over their Afghan counterparts in the first of five one-dayers at the Sylhet International Cricket Stadium yesterday.

Having been bundled out for 154 in 38.3 overs after electing to bat, Bangladesh Under-19s managed to eke out a 16-run win. A concerted effort from the bowlers saw Bangladesh restrict Afghanistan to

138 all out in 48.2 overs.

Pacer Ripon Mondol stood out with the ball in hand, returning figures of four for 20 in 9.2 overs.

Ripon dealt Afghans the first blow, dismissing opener Suliman Arabzai in the sixth over before claiming three more wickets.

Earlier, two early wickets saw Bangladesh reeling at 12 for two after 6.5 overs. However, opener Prantik Nawrose Nabil's 78-ball 42 and skipper Meherob Hasan's 57-ball 49 gave the hosts a chance at fighting.

'Waited a long time for this'

AFP, Buenos Aires



Lionel Messi scored a hat-trick to overtake Pele as the top international goalscorer in South American football history on Thursday as Argentina cruised to a 3-0 victory over Bolivia in their 2022 World Cup qualifier.

Messi pounced for his 77th, 78th and 79th international goals to keep Argentina firmly on course for a place at next year's finals in Qatar against a Bolivia team languishing near the foot of the table.

The 34-year-old Paris Saint-Germain forward, making his 153rd appearance for Argentina, drew level with Pele's longstanding mark of 77 goals in the 14th minute, nutmegging a defender and then curling a sublime shot past Bolivia goalkeeper Carlos Lampe.

The Argentina captain then moved one clear of Pele in the 64th minute with his second of the night, surging into the Bolivian box and playing a one-two with Lautaro Martinez before tucking away a finish from close range.

Messi completed the seventh international hat-trick of his career two minutes from time, burying a rebound from close range after a shot from the edge of the area was only parried by Lampe.

"I've waited a long time for this," an emotional Messi said afterwards. "Now I'm going to enjoy it, it's a unique moment after waiting so long. I am very happy," he added.

On a night when Argentine fans were allowed to watch their national team for the first time since the start of the COVID-19 pandemic, Messi broke down in tears as he lifted the Copa America trophy at the



Monumental stadium.

Argentina won the Copa America in July, their first major title in 28 years, and Messi danced with his team mates and showed off the trophy to the 21,000 supporters present. "There was no better way to celebrate than by being here," he said. "My mum is here, my siblings are in the stands. They have suffered so much and they are here celebrating. I am very happy."

The former Barcelona star's great rival Cristiano Ronaldo holds the outright record for goals scored in international football with 111 from 180 games.

The win leaves the two-time World Cup winners second in South America's overall qualifying standings with 18 points from eight games, six points behind leaders Brazil, who maintained their 100 percent qualifying record on Thursday with a 2-0 win over Peru in Recife.

Messi's Paris St-Germain teammate Neymar, third on the scoring list with 69 goals, scored one and set up another for Everton Ribeiro.

The Neymar goal, tapped home five minutes before half-time after Ribeiro's shot was saved, was his 12th in World Cup qualifiers, a Brazilian record.

Neymar, however, took aim at those who criticised him despite his contribution. "I don't know what more I need to do in this shirt for the fans to respect Neymar," he said after the win in Recife. "This isn't normal. This has been happening for a long time, from you reporters, commentators, and others as well. Sometimes I don't even want to give interviews but I do my bit at important moments."