



"I think last five-six months, our bowling unit has been outstanding, both pace and spin department. It's the batting unit that have to deliver."

MAHMUDULLAH RIYAD
BANGLADESH CAPTAIN



"Team effort, happy with the way the boys carried forward the momentum. We bowled well in the middle overs, finished it off well."

BABAR AZAM
PAKISTAN CAPTAIN

‘Pakistan played better cricket’

SPORTS REPORTER

A half-century from Fakhar Zaman propelled Pakistan to a comfortable eight-wicket victory over Bangladesh while securing the fate of the three-match T20I series in the visitors' favour with one match still left to play.

Chasing a humble target of 109, Pakistan lost their skipper Babar Azam on 12. Despite the early setback, Fakhar's solid knock of 57 off 51, and a 85-run partnership with opener Mohammad Rizwan, eased them to victory. Fakhar emphasised on the partnership as he was adjudged the player-of-the-match during the presentation ceremony.

"It wasn't easy to play shots early on," the left-hander informed. "After Babar [Azam] got out, Rizwan and I thought to not rush and if we can build a 20-25 run partnership, it will be easy to carry on," he added. Fakhar also scored a crucial 34-run innings in the first match of the series.

However, he stated that yesterday's wicket was better than the previous.

"It was a better wicket than yesterday's (Friday), still not an ideal wicket for us."

The 31-year-old also praised Bangladesh bowlers. "Bangladesh bowled well, however, we played better cricket. We have won two games and are looking forward to winning the third one," Fakhar said as he went on to admire Babar Azam's leadership.

"Since Babar took over the captaincy, he has set a standard in batting and fielding. I try to match that as well. His leadership has impacted this team and made a difference."

Fakhar concluded by expressing his gratitude to the people who came to support Pakistan.

"I came here before but didn't see so many people supporting Pakistan. We all were quite surprised and felt like we're playing at home as every time we got wickets or hit a boundary, there were loud cheers."

SPORTS REPORTER

The intention to provide assurance and place faith on the players that lost the first game was not reflected in the result as Bangladesh once again failed to make an impact with the bat, costing them the three-match T20I series against Pakistan yesterday.

Bangladesh lost the second T20I by eight wickets after posting a small total of 108 for seven in their allotted overs before Fakhar Zaman steered Pakistan to the target with an unbeaten fifty.

The inclusion of Saif Hasan in the opening position of a T20 game was open to questions once again as the right-hander failed for a second consecutive game. The 23-year-old, who was guilty of poor footwork as he was caught at slip in the first game, had another forgettable showcase of his skills yesterday.

Saif was undone by a well-directed fuller-length delivery from pacer Shaheen Afridi as he tried to play across the line without any control over his shot and was trapped leg before for a golden duck. Naim Sheikh (2) also threw



his wicket away like he did in the first game, slashing well outside the off stump without any movement of his feet and getting caught at slip off pacer Mohammad Wasim.

The Tigers' batting failures put them on the back foot right from the start and they again failed to utilise the Powerplay, with the scoreboard reading 36 for two after

six overs.

Despite Najmul Hossain and Afif Hossain adding 46 runs for the third wicket, the hosts were unable to regain control of the innings.

Afif was eventually dismissed while going for a reverse sweep after scoring 20 while Najmul was dismissed in rather soft fashion after setting himself at the crease

and making 40 when he handed a return catch to Shadab Khan.

"I think the team would have been in a better position if I could have batted a bit longer. I don't think scoring 40 runs was enough to help us post a winning total. If I was able to convert my 40 into a 60 or 70-run knock, I think we may have posted a total around 160 and it would have been a different ball game," Najmul said, adding that he felt the batters had failed to utilise the opportunity despite the pitch being better than it was for the previous match.

The dismal batting performance also included Mahmudullah being dismissed for 12 after an outside edge to pacer Haris Rouf and Bangladesh being unable to score a boundary for the next 38 balls while losing wickets at regular intervals.

After making 64 for three in the first ten overs, Bangladesh added just 44 runs and lost four wickets in the second half of their innings. The think-tank really needs to come up with a better approach and, more importantly, select appropriate players for specific roles if they are to change their fortunes in the shortest format.

Cummins the frontrunner to lead Australia

AFP, Sydney

Pat Cummins shaped up as the frontrunner Saturday to take over from disgraced former Australia Test skipper Tim Paine, with the likes of Mark Taylor, Dennis Lillie, and Steve Waugh all singing his praises.

The 28-year-old, who has served as vice-captain in both Test and white-ball formats since 2019, is widely seen as being in a two-way race with Steve Smith to assume the reins after Paine's shock departure



over a sexting scandal.

He stepped down after a series of sexually graphic text message exchanges with a Cricket Tasmania employee in 2017 came to light, despite being cleared by cricket authorities of any offence at the time.

Smith, who was stripped of the captain's armband and banned for a year after a ball-tampering scandal in South Africa in 2018 which culminated with Paine taking over, has support to complete a remarkable career revival.

But Cummins appears to be the heir apparent, with Smith tipped to be his deputy for the upcoming home Ashes series against arch-rivals England.

If appointed, Cummins will become the first specialist fast bowler to captain the side since Ray Lindwall did so for a single Test in 1956.

Cricket Australia chief Nick Hockley said the process to select a new captain was already in place, with Paine expected to retire after the Ashes regardless.



A desperate pitch invader managed to evade security staff to reach all the way to the pitch at the start of Mustafizur Rahman's second spell in the fourteenth over of Pakistan's innings, a stage when the game's excitement was lacking. Mustafizur, however, could only bowl a single delivery in that over before a sudden pain on his torso forced his exit. The Tigers' medical team will assess Mustafizur's condition today ahead of the T20I series finale on Monday.

PHOTO: FIROZ AHMED



West Indies eye maiden Test win in Sri Lanka

AFP, GALLE



A resurgent West Indies are aiming for their first Test victory

in Sri Lanka from Sunday, having failed to win on the island in three decades of trying.

In 11 attempts they have lost seven games and drawn four. Even

when Brian Lara hammered 688 runs in a three Test series in 2001, they still lost 3-0.

But the West Indies have had a decent year in Test cricket, having beaten Bangladesh away and drawn home series against Sri Lanka and Pakistan.

Their win over Pakistan in Jamaica in August gave them



the first points in the World Test Championship, while Sri Lanka are yet to open their account.

Both games are in Galle, but without spectators.

West Indies beat Bangladesh in February where conditions were similar, with tracks that kept low and turned, allowing spinners to come on early. In white ball, Sri Lanka have axed half a dozen senior players but for Tests, the Lions are sticking with experience, particularly with a tough tour of India due in February.

Skipper Dimuth Karunaratne, former captains Angelo Mathews, Dinesh Chandimal and Suranga Lakmal are back in the squad and they are expected to play in both matches.

WOMEN'S WORLD CUP QUALIFIER

TIGRESSES

start campaign today

AGENCIES

Bangladesh and Pakistan feature in a highly anticipated match on the opening day of the ICC Women's World Cup Qualifier in Harare today.

There is no knockout stage in the competition, with the preliminary league, followed by a Super Six stage to decide the final positions at the end of 25 matches.

The Zimbabwe tournament is an important one on the calendar as it decides three qualifiers for the next year World Cup to be held in New Zealand from March 4 to April 3, joining five teams who have already qualified through the ICC Women's Championship – Australia, England,

India, South Africa and hosts New Zealand.

The three qualifiers as well as the next two teams will also ensure places in the next ICC Women's Championship (IWC) along with the top five from last time, as the number of teams in the third cycle of the IWC goes up from eight to 10 teams.

Meanwhile, favourites flexed their muscles in Qualifier Warm-ups as Bangladesh, Pakistan, the West Indies and Sri Lanka claimed comfortable victories over the Netherlands, Ireland, Thailand and USA respectively.

Bangladesh defeated the Netherlands by 130 runs while Pakistan defeated Ireland by seven wickets, West Indies defeated Thailand by 151 runs.

GROUP A: West Indies, Sri Lanka, Ireland and the Netherlands.

GROUP B: Pakistan, Bangladesh, Thailand, Zimbabwe and the United States.

BANGLADESH'S QUALIFYING FIXTURES

November 21: Bangladesh Vs Pakistan

November 23: Bangladesh Vs USA

November 25: Bangladesh Vs Thailand

November 29: Bangladesh Vs Zimbabwe