



## 'ALWAYS IMPORTANT TO START WITH A WIN'

Bangladesh clinched a scintillating three-wicket victory over Pakistan in the Group B opener of the ICC Women's Cricket World Cup Qualifier in Harare yesterday. The bowlers lay the foundation before a swashbuckling unbeaten half-century from Rumana Ahmed helped the Tigresses overcome a 202-run target with two balls remaining. "It's always important to start with a good win and we got the momentum. It feels really good," Bangladesh captain Nigar Sultana said after the match. "Winning habit is very important [Bangladesh won three matches against Zimbabwe before the qualifiers]. I think we started well, the bowlers took 5 wickets early but after that Pakistan built their partnerships, so I think we need to work on that before the next game," she added. "I am really happy. We won a very important match. We were so excited with this match. Hope we will be able to continue our good performance."

PHOTO: TWITTER

### SCORES IN BRIEF

#### PAKISTAN

201 for 7 in 50 overs (Ali 22, Nida 87, Aliya 61 not out; Salma 1-32, Ritu 2-36, Nahida 2-25, Rumana 1-40)

#### BANGLADESH

202 for 7 in 49.4 overs (Sharmin 31, Fargana 45, Rumana 50 not out, Ritu 33, Salma 18 not out; Nashra 2-24, Sohail 2-44)

**RESULT:** Bangladesh won by 3 wickets.  
**PLAYER-OF-THE-MATCH:** Rumana Ahmed.

## Mysukur's ton lifts Rangpur

SPORTS REPORTER

Tier-1 table toppers Rangpur Division staked their claim of returning to winning ways and as well as notching the title in the process, thanks to opener Mysukur Rahman's unbeaten century on the opening day of the sixth and final round of the National Cricket League (NCL) against Tier-1 bottom dwellers Sylhet Division at BKSP ground 4 yesterday.

Sent in to bat, Mysukur weathered a few early loss of wickets to pick up his first NCL ton this season. The right-hander found an able partner in wicketkeeper-batter Dhiman Ghosh and put on 96 runs for the sixth-wicket stand. Mysukur went on remain unbeaten on 131, laced with 14 fours, as Rangpur posted 304 for seven at end of day's play. First-class debutant Jaynul Islam was the pick of the bunch for Sylhet, scalping three wickets while Enamul Haque bagged two.

Dhaka Division kept themselves in the hunt for the title in the other Tier 1 match against reigning champions Khulna Division, starting with openers Abdul Mazid and Rony Talukdar 79-run opening stand. Mahidul Islam then took charge of the innings, hitting 92 off 190 deliveries before becoming pacer Al Amin's third scalp of the day as Dhaka paused at 263 for 6 at close of play.

Meanwhile, Mahmudul Hasan Joy continued his excellent form with the bat for Chittagong Division in the Tier 2 match against Dhaka Metropolis in Sylhet Cricket International Stadium. Batting first, openers Pinak Ghosh and Jasimuddin provided a healthy start and Mahmudul joined at one-down to strike 83 off 116, laced with nine fours. However, Sharfuddoula Ibne Shahid had other plans as he snared four wickets for 62 runs while Shahbaz Chouhan bagged three for 35 to restrict Chittagong to 223 runs. Dhaka Metro will resume at 52 for two on Day 2.

In another Tier 2 match at Sylhet Academy Ground, Barishal Division reached 225 for 7 against Rajshahi Division at day's end as Fazle Rabbi struck an unbeaten 122 to help his side - currently at second - in battle for promotion from Tier 2.



## 'I deserved more chances'

*Not only is he the only cricketer to score over 11,000 first-class runs in Bangladesh, he was just 28 shy of 12,000 when veteran Tushar Imran announced his retirement from all forms of cricket during the National Cricket League in BKSP yesterday. Tushar, who also has the most first-class centuries in Bangladesh, spoke to The Daily Star's Mazhar Uddin during an interview where he shared his experience over the last two decades, his regrets and the areas that Bangladesh cricket can work on to improve as a whole.*

*The excerpts are below:*

**The Daily Star (DS):** How was your describe your two-decade long journey in first-class cricket?

**Tushar Imran (TI):** The end was not as I expected. I wanted to retire after scoring more runs but it hasn't been a good season for me. I wanted to play for a few more seasons but since I wasn't able to play well, it was not suiting my character. So I decided to call it a day to provide opportunities to youngsters. Overall, it's been a great journey that I will cherish for the rest of my life.

**DS:** After scoring consistently in the past four-five seasons, do you feel you deserved a call-up to the national team at any point?

**TI:** To be honest, yes. I was hoping to get a call to the Bangladesh team during the 2017-18 season and since then I can say that my motivation was to make a comeback to the

national team. My dedication to score runs and hunger has helped me become better. I should also credit to my Khulna teammates because I tried to compete with them all the time.

**DS:** Do you regret not having as long an international career as your first-class career? What are the reasons behind that?

**TI:** Yes, I do regret that but the fact is that when I made my Test debut I was very young and hardly understood Test cricket. I played against top opponents and it is obvious a player will fail initially in his career. I am not as talented as Mohammad Ashraful, but I think deserved more chances after that.

**DS:** From your vast knowledge of first-class cricket in Bangladesh, what are the areas you think have

been the biggest obstacles to improving the standard of cricket over the years?

**TI:** I think it's important for national players to play first-class cricket regularly. It will encourage youngsters and others to set a benchmark and competing with the best will help improve the standard of cricket. I think we don't have enough sporting tracks all across the country, which is also why we fail abroad most of the time. We need good pitches that encourage both bowlers and batters.

**DS:** What are your plans after retirement?

**TI:** I want to be attached with cricket and I will probably take up coaching. It is very difficult to stay away from cricket even if you stop playing the game. Let's see.

## Parvez the latest entrant to opener merry-go-round

MAZHAR UDDIN



Bangladesh are all set to field a new opening pair as they tweak the team to eke out a consolation victory in the final game of the three-match T20I series against Pakistan at the Sher-e-Bangla National Stadium in Mirpur today.

It will be no easy task for the Tigers given the manner in which they lost the first two games at the same venue. Bangladesh will need to dig deep if they are to restore some pride in the final match after a barren run in the game's shortest format.

Unfortunately, it seems that the crisis with the Bangladesh team deepened after the two defeats to Pakistan. The think-tank, under the leadership of former national skipper Khaled Mahmud, drafted in some new faces to give them exposure after the T20 World Cup debacle, but after just two games they seem to have lost the plot.

In an interview with The Daily Star, Mahmud said: "You can think of it as an investment series for us." That gave rise to questions about whether they had chosen a good investment, to which he stated: "I feel the need for patience is vital for us at every level."

The last moment inclusion of young opener Parvez Hossain Emon in place of Saif Hasan for the third and final T20I hardly matches that line of thinking. Instead, it portrayed a lack of clarity within the Tigers think-tank and selection process.

Regardless of whether it is Parvez or another combination of openers today, it will be the Tigers' tenth different opening pair in 27 games this year in T20Is, reflecting a lack of consistency and patience towards players in the shortest format.



The inclusion of Saif as a T20 opener had surprised many and the manner in which the right-hander struggled to deal with quality bowlers and got exposed did not exactly come as a big surprise for many. But the exclusion of the batsman after two games shows how abruptly things have been going for the players.

"Saif failed to perform in two games, which is why we included Parvez for the third game. Saif will join the Test team in Chattogram. It's an opportunity for Parvez to showcase his talents. He has been in the set-up for some time now," chief selector Minhajul Abedin told The Daily Star. Will this game of inclusion and exclusion ultimately help these two young players?

Unfortunately, history suggests this kind of quick-fix selection policy only deters players' confidence. Players should take the responsibility for not delivering on the field, but it must be pondered whether this kind of practice actually hinders the development of a player.

The confusion over a stable opening pair started even before experienced Tamim Iqbal opted out if the ICC T20 World Cup, with the Tigers trying four different opening pairs ahead of the mega-event.

Despite being the only consistent scorer in the opening slots prior to the World Cup,

Naim was surprisingly dropped from the opening first-round game at the T20 World Cup, with Soumya Sarkar opening the innings with Liton Das as Bangladesh crashed to a shock six-run defeat against Scotland.

The team management then decided to tinker with the opening pair, returning Naim to his position alongside Liton. Following a dismal show in the mega-event, selectors then opted for a major overhaul for the three-match Pakistan series. Both Liton and Soumya lost their places for the Pakistan series but the experiment of including Saif did not work out, eventually forcing the selectors to make another change in the form of Parvez.

It may not be harsh to say that an unsettled team management cannot create a settled team at all.



**Sri Lanka skipper Dimuth Karunaratne slammed an unbeaten hundred to give his team the upper hand in Sunday's opening Test against the West Indies. Bad light forced an early end to the day's play in Galle with two overs remaining and the hosts finishing on 267-3. This was Karunaratne's 13th Test century and fourth this year. He has bagged more than 750 runs in 2021, including a career-best 244 against Bangladesh, despite only playing 10 innings.**

PHOTO: AFP