



## WORLD CUP TIDBITS

### Liton's unhappy 29th

Bangladesh batter Liton Das endured a nightmare 29th birthday on Friday when he was out first ball for a duck in the World Cup match against New Zealand in Chennai.

After Bangladesh were put into bat, Liton shuffled down the wicket to confront Trent Boult only to sky the ball to a grateful Matt Henry who pocketed the chance at fine leg.

Liton walked back to the pavilion after his fourth first-ball duck in ODIs, failing to shrug off the 'inconsistent' tag off himself.

Often criticised for being inconsistent, Liton finally got runs when he made 76 in a losing cause against England in the Tigers' previous World Cup game after beginning the mega event with a modest 13-run knock in Bangladesh's six-wicket win over Afghanistan.

Liton, playing in his 80th one-day international, has scored 2,339 runs in the format with a best of 176 against Zimbabwe in 2020.

For veteran fast bowler Boult, it was a 199th wicket in one-dayers.

### Boult's double hundred

Veteran New Zealand fast bowler Trent Boult took his 200th one-day international wicket in Friday's World Cup clash against Bangladesh.

Boult, 34, reached the personal landmark when he dismissed Towhid Hridoy, caught at extra cover by Mitchell Santner for 13, in the 38th over.



While Bangladesh skipper Shakib Al Hasan had to deal with cramps, another top-order failure, and the disappointment of throwing his wicket away, New Zealand captain Kane Williamson hit a fifty on his return from injury and carried his team safely to shore in their World Cup game in Chennai yesterday.



Playing in his 107th ODI, Boult is the sixth New Zealand bowler to break the 200-wicket mark in the format.

Earlier Friday, he had dismissed Liton Das, celebrating his 29th birthday, off the first ball of the match.

"It was pretty hard not to think about the 200th wicket when it was coming up on the screen every day before the match," said Boult who finished the innings with 2-45 as Bangladesh made 245-9.

"It's nice to tick it off and on a bigger note nice to keep Bangladesh to a good total.

"It's not why you play the game but nice to tick them off along the way. The one-day format is one I've enjoyed down the years. I feel lucky to be here in a third World Cup and contributing like I do," Boult added.

Boult's 200 wickets in ODIs takes him level with Chris Cairns on New Zealand's all-time list which is topped by spin bowler Daniel Vettori who claimed 297 before he retired in 2015.

### Most sixes by Tigers!

Even though Bangladesh posted a below-par 245 for nine against New Zealand in Chennai yesterday, the Tigers surpassed their record for most sixes hit in a World Cup game.

Bangladesh batters hit a total of eight sixes in their innings, with skipper Shakib Al Hasan, Mushfiqur Rahim, Mahmudullah Riyad, and Taskin Ahmed hitting two maximums each.

Bangladesh's highest in this regard was when they hit seven sixes in their successful chase of a 319-run target against Scotland in the 2015 World Cup.

The Tigers also hit six maximums in their record World Cup chase of 321-run target against the West Indies in the 2019 edition of the mega event in England.

## Shakib leads batting disappointment

SPORTS REPORTER from Chennai

Soft dismissals, unforced errors have led to the demise of the Bangladesh top-order in recent times, and it was no exception against New Zealand in their third ICC World Cup fixture in Chennai yesterday.

It was not uncommon to see the Bangladesh top four batter sent packing inside 13 overs, given it marked the seventh instance in the last 10 ODIs where Bangladesh went on to lose four wickets before reaching three figures.

But what followed, after skipper Shakib Al Hasan steadied the ship Mushfiqur Rahim, was the most frustrating from the Bangladesh perspective.

Veterans with five World Cup experience, Shakib and Mushfiqur did make their experience count somewhat, but the job was far from done for the two Bangladesh stalwarts when the former faltered.

At 145 for four after 29 overs, knowing that they have a long tail, the situation required Shakib and Mushfiqur to play sensibly for another five to six overs to lay the platform of a near 270. A while earlier, Shakib had suffered a cramp and he proceeded without wearing a cap or a helmet in a never-before-seen act from the ace all-rounder.

While it was not surprising to see the Bangladesh skipper opting to aim for the boundaries to

compensate for his compromised running ability, his overtly aggressive approach did not reflect his wealth of experience.

Following drinks break, spinner Rachin Ravindra was on the receiving end of a four and a six from Shakib. The next over, a top-edge off a Lockie Ferguson delivery resulted in a six over backward square leg as Shakib reached forty but he paid the price next ball, having played one shot too many.

Eventually, Mushfiqur Rahim's 66 and a rearguard action

the back foot from the onset on what turned out to be a batting-friendly surface. And despite all the noise that the surface at the MA Chidambaram stadium was primed to be a spinner's paradise, New Zealand pacers eventually shared seven of nine scalps.

Bangladesh batters can only blame themselves at the end of day. Young Tanzid Hasan Tamim timed a flick and found the fielder at the in-field after a promising 16 off 17 balls, while in-form Mehedi Hasa Miraz, in at number three, departed in similar fashion to Liton after a well-compiled 30.

The worst fear was coming true for Bangladesh, it seemed, once Najmul Hossain Shanto - who averaged 80-plus in last five ODIs - was the next to get out following another soft dismissal against the run of play. This time, off-spinner Glenn Phillips found his victim without much effort.

Apart from Mushfiqur, who fell to Matt Henry's brilliantly executed slower delivery that bounced low, none of the top six Bangladesh batters looked like they were up for an occasion of World Cup's magnitude.

The execution was vividly lacking on the day, but the team management's decision to keep shuffling the top-order is also bound to come under heavy scrutiny.

## Aus to seek clarity on contentious call



REUTERS, Lucknow

Australia's Marnus Labuschagne said the team would seek clarity from World Cup match officials about the controversial manner in which Marcus Stoinis was given out following a review in their heavy defeat by South Africa on Thursday.

All-rounder Stoinis was adjudged caught behind off a Kagiso Rabada delivery during the 18th over of Australia's unsuccessful chase of 312 after a review of the call by the on-field umpire, despite the batsman's bottom hand looking to be off the bat as the ball struck his glove.

Third umpire Richard Kettleborough adjudged that although Stoinis' right glove was off the bat handle, it was in contact with the left one which was holding on to the bat. But TV replays appeared to show a gap between the gloves.

"The hand's connected to his top hand, therefore in contact with the bat and we've got a clear spike," Kettleborough said as he asked on-field umpire Joel Wilson to reverse his original decision and give the batsman out.

A shocked Stoinis spoke with the on-field umpires before eventually leaving for the dugout. "It was certainly confusing and I'm sure we'll get clarity or we're going to seek for clarity because it's a World Cup and we don't want small decisions that can be avoided to change the outcomes of games," Australia batsman Labuschagne said.

"Obviously, in the situation we were in it's hard to say that it was going to change the outcome but for the future you certainly want to make sure we get them right."



## Search for relief ends in disappointment

MAZHAR UDDIN from Chennai

The stands at the MA Chidambaram Stadium in Chennai were mostly empty for today's Bangladesh-New Zealand World Cup match with some clusters of fans sprinkled across the massive gallery.

In one such cluster, around 30 or so Bangladeshis were looking on in despair as Shakib Al Hasan's troops kept losing wickets at regular intervals against the Kiwis.

The disappointment of seeing the Tigers hobble to a sub-par total was not a pleasant sight for any Bangladesh fan present at the venue.

However, for this selection of fans, the sorry display of the batters was even more disheartening.

"When we heard the Bangladesh team will come here to play their World Cup match against New Zealand, more than 30 of us who are here from Bangladesh for medical purposes decided to watch the game together," said Ruhul Amin, who came to Chennai from Brahmanbaria with his wife around two weeks ago for medical purposes.

Unlike most Bangladeshis at the venue, the main purpose of their



visit to Chennai was not to see the Tigers in action. They have made the journey to the capital of Tamil Nadu state to receive medical treatment.

Exhausted from the constant visits to hospitals, pharmacies, and medical testing facilities and staying away from their loved ones for weeks or even months, many Bangladeshi patients came to the Chepauk Stadium on Friday to see the Tigers in action, in hopes of forgetting their hardships for a few hours at least.

"To be honest, it's not easy to come to another country for

treatment purposes as it can take a huge mental toll. Apart from going to the hospital and returning to the hotel, we have hardly done anything else since arriving in Chennai," Ruhul added, reflecting how Shakib's team treated them with further disappointment in the first innings of the match, as they could only muster 245-9 in their 50 overs.

Every year around 2.5 million Bangladeshis travel to India for medical purposes. Chennai is a popular destination among them for its top-notch medical facilities at comparatively affordable rates.

Bangladesh's sombre tale of top-order failure continued in their World Cup encounter against New Zealand in Chennai yesterday, with Lockie Ferguson claiming three crucial wickets to break the backbone of the already frail batting order of the Tigers. After Trent Boult removed young opener Tanzid Hasan and then accounted for Mehedi Hasan Miraz and Bangladesh skipper Shakib Al Hasan after both the batters got a reasonable start.

PHOTO: AFP