



“Not enough runs [on the board]. The wicket was really good. We lost early wickets. We had partnerships but not big ones that’d allowed us to go big in the last ten. We are trying to force things but it isn’t working. At this moment, we have to perform together, which is not happening. We are looking for answers but aren’t getting it. Everywhere we go, fans come to the ground and are always behind us. They are our biggest strength.”

SHAKIB AL HASAN  
Bangladesh skipper

“We are trying to win our remaining matches and see where we stand. This win hopefully gives confidence in the coming matches. Shaheen started well with the ball. After 15-20 overs, they built a partnership. But our main bowlers struck. Main thing was our bowlers hit good lengths and took wickets.”

BABAR AZAM  
Pakistan captain

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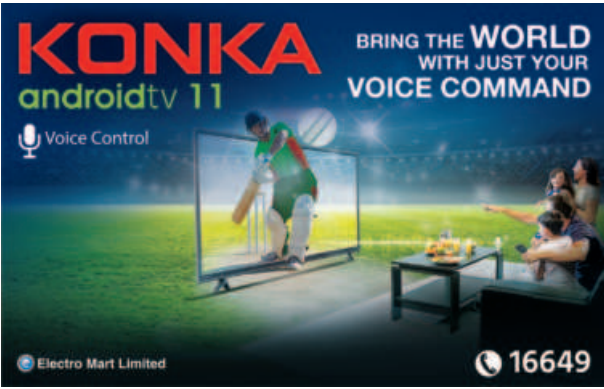
Haris Rauf had Mushfiqur Rahim nick one back to the wicketkeeper in his very first over as Pakistan pacers once again laid bare Bangladesh’s longstanding top-order troubles in their World Cup match in Kolkata yesterday. Bangladesh’s semifinal hopes ended with a seven-wicket defeat.

PHOTO: AFP

# SHAKIB’S BATTING a far cry from 2019 WC

ABDULLAH AL MEHDI

Against Pakistan, Bangladesh skipper Shakib Al Hasan posted his highest score in the ongoing World Cup, which only highlighted how far the all-rounder has fallen from the incredible form with the bat he enjoyed in the previous edition of the competition. The tournament he had in 2019 is the kind any player would dream of having at least once in cricket’s most coveted event. Shakib batted at number three in that edition, specifically asking the team management to let him bat at that elevated position and came into the tournament having done his homework. Despite many of his team mates’ struggles during the tournament, Shakib appeared to be in a zone of his own, scoring 606 runs at the tournament at an average of over 86 with two tons and five fifties. This World Cup has been a far cry from his performances in 2019. So far, Shakib has scored just 104 runs in six innings at an



average of just 17.33. The difference in form is also apparent from the way he has been playing the short balls in this edition compared to the one four years back. In 2019, he was getting well on top of the bouncers and looked mostly in control against them. But this year, he has gotten out to rising deliveries multiple times. Yesterday at Kolkata’s Eden Garden, Shakib came in at number six following the 79-run stand between Liton Das and Mahmudullah Riyad, the latter

pushed further up the order due to his consistency. Bangladesh needed another partnership to build on from the previous one and then kick on in the final overs. But Shakib was too cautious and he seemingly couldn’t find a way to rotate the strike as it took nine deliveries to open his account. He scored 20 off his first 44 deliveries and while Mahmudullah had reached his fifty at a brisk pace, Shakib’s confidence level appeared to be at the opposite spectrum.

## SCORES IN BRIEF

**Bangladesh:** 204 all out in 45.1 overs (Liton 45, Mahmudullah 56, Shakib 43, Miraz 25; Afridi 3-23, Wasim 3-31, Rauf 2-36, Iftikhar 1-44, Usama 1-66)  
**Pakistan:** 205 for three wickets in 32.3 overs (Shafique 68, Fakhar 81, Babar 9, Rizwan 26\*, Iftikhar 17\*; Miraz 3-60)  
**Result:** Pakistan won by seven wickets  
**Player of the match:** Fakhar Zaman

like that,” he added. Shakib grinded at the middle for 64 balls, scoring 43 runs thanks to the hat-trick of boundaries he hit against Iftikhar Ahmed in the 37th over.

But right as it seemed Shakib was returning to his old self, he fell to a short delivery, trying to hook Haris Rauf. Against the pacer, there was a noticeable change in his stance as he was facing towards mid-on, which is unusual for him. Fahim feels that the weight of captaincy may be weighing down on Shakib and hurting his batting. “Captaincy is always a headache since you don’t get time to think about your own

## Trott’s ‘structure’ crucial to Afghan rise

REUTERS, New Delhi

Afghanistan’s superlative display has been the story of the 2023 World Cup and former England batter Jonathan Trott has been its mastermind, lending a certain method to the madness of the rag-tag bunch of players at his disposal. Afghanistan have long been perceived as a team built around their enviable bunch of crafty spinners, while their batting lineup was nearly entirely made of reckless sloggers. They managed one win in their World Cup debut in 2015 and none in 2019, which only strengthened the perception that the 50-overs format was probably not their cup of tea. It took three giant-killing acts by Hashmatullah Shahidi and his men to turn that notion on its head and Afghanistan now have outright chances of making the semi-finals of the 10-team tournament. They stunned holders England in New Delhi and proved it was no fluke with comprehensive victories against 1992 winners Pakistan and 1996 champions Sri Lanka to move to the fifth place in the points table. “The way that we train, the way we think about our cricket, certainly with batting... we’re starting to see also the confidence in the players, in their own ability,” Trott, who played 52 tests between 2009-2015, said after Monday’s victory against Sri Lanka. “There’s such an amount of talent, and we’ve just given a bit of structure, a bit of a gameplan, understanding what makes them the best players that they can be,” said Trott

# Zampa leaving his mark at World Cup

AFP, New Delhi

With a John Travolta tattoo, trademark playing glasses, and bonding with Virat Kohli over being meat-free, Australia leg-spinner Adam Zampa has become one of the standout stars of the World Cup. The 31-year-old has also overcome absent-mindedly swimming into a hotel swimming pool wall and recovered from a fever so severe that he was dubbed “Lazarus” by teammates. With a joint tournament best of 16 wickets, Zampa is a crucial part of Australia’s push towards a sixth World Cup title. However, his time in India did not get off to the most promising of starts. He went wicketless in his team’s opening loss to the hosts and then managed just one in their thrashing by South Africa. Since then, however, Zampa’s success has mirrored that of his team as four successive wins have put Australia on the brink of the semifinals. “I’m very good at self-reflection,” said Zampa after the win over Sri Lanka. In his career, he has needed that quality, none more so than in September when he returned the joint-worst ODI figures of 0-113 against South Africa at Centurion. Zampa had an injury scare at the start of Australia’s campaign in India when he hit a wall



while swimming with his eyes closed. That left him with a nasty-looking scar on his face. Zampa also had to deal with fever after his back spasms but rattled Pakistan’s batting including the key wickets of skipper Babar Azam and Mohammad Rizwan to help his team come up trumps in a high-scoring match. The bespectacled Zampa plays wearing glasses after ditching contact lenses. He has also followed a vegan diet since 2013 and bonded with Indian superstar Kohli at the 2020 edition of the Indian Premier League. Zampa was picked by the Royal Challengers Bangalore and captain Kohli, a vegetarian, welcomed the Australian with a voucher for a vegan restaurant in the United Arab Emirates during the Covid pandemic. “Waking up every day and not having that guilty conscience, knowing that you’re not affecting any animals out there,” Zampa said. But it’s not just cricket and veganism for the cricketer. Amongst his tattoos is an image of John Travolta dancing in cult movie “Pulp Fiction”. Another is a tribute to late Australian cricketer Phil Hughes. “I don’t really see myself as a cricketer. I see myself as quite a cultured person,” Zampa told the BBC in an interview.



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Pakistan’s Shaheen Shah Afridi became the fastest pacer to reach 100 ODI wickets when he had Bangladesh opener Tanzid Hasan Tamim trapped in front in the very first over in their World Cup encounter at the Eden Gardens in Kolkata yesterday. Shaheen, getting to the hundred wickets mark in his 51st ODI, surpassed Australia’s Mitchell Starc, who reached the feat in his 52nd ODI in 2016. The left-arm quick finished with impressive figures of three for 23 in nine overs, including a maiden, to help Pakistan bundle out Bangladesh for 204 in 45.1 overs.

PHOTO: AFP