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Tigers bounce back in style

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Thanks to a disciplined display of bowling and an equally impressive showing with the bat, Bangladesh bounced back to level the three-match T20I series with a comfortable eight-wicket win over Sri Lanka in the second game at Sylhet International Cricket Stadium yesterday.

Skipper Najmul Hossain Shanto remained unbeaten with a match-winning 53 off 38 balls, featuring four boundaries and two sixes, while Towhid Hridoy was not out on 32 off 25 balls as Bangladesh reached the 166-run target with eleven balls to spare.

Another controversial moment in an already rugged rivalry between the two nations was added yesterday when the third umpire Masudur Rahman overturned Soumya Sarkar's caught-behind decision.

It was the first ball in the fourth over of Bangladesh's chase when Soumya tried to pull a short-pitch delivery from Binura Fernando and was given out for caught behind by on-field umpire Gazi Sohel. Although the ultra edge showed a spike, the third umpire gave a ruling in favour of the batter, who had started walking out of the field after seeing the clear spike on the big screen.

The Sri Lankan players were unhappy
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Bangladesh skipper Najmul Hossain Shanto and batter Towhid Hridoy walk off the field after guiding their side to a comprehensive eight-wicket victory over Sri Lanka in the second of the three-match series in Sylhet yesterday. The win levelled the series 1-1 with the decider to be played at the same venue on Saturday.

PHOTO: FIROZ AHMED

SHOOTING A STUDENT Teacher bought illegal arms from bordering district Say investigators

SHARIFUL ISLAM and AHMED HUMAYUN KABIR TOPU

Rayhan Sharif, the arrested doctor who shot his student during a viva on Monday, had bought his two pistols illegally from a southern district.

During primary interrogation, Rayhan, a teacher of community medicine at Shaheed M Monsur Ali Medical College in Sirajganj, told police that he bought one of the pistols in August and the other in October last year from the same source. He said he also bought 81 bullets.

Police also found 12 knives in his possession.

The investigators were trying to unearth the arms and ammunition supply chain and Rayhan's motive for collecting them, Sirajganj Superintendent of Police Arifur Rahman Mondal told The Daily Star yesterday.

He said they asked a court for a seven-day remand of Rayhan in the arms case.

Police said they learnt that Rayhan that day asked his students in the classroom whether any one of them had any pets.

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Secy off to Paris just before last day at work

BAHARAM KHAN

Just four days before his job contract expires, Kazi Washi Uddin, the outgoing secretary to the housing and public works ministry, went on an official visit to France yesterday.

The trip ends on March 11 and his tenure ends on March 9, according to ministry sources. Since March 8 and March 9 comprise the weekend, his last working day is today.

Kazi is attending the "Building Climate Global Forum" summit in France alongside Ashrafur Islam, the chief town planner of Rajdhani Unnayan Kartripakkha.

On March 4, the housing and public works ministry wrote to the Hazrat Shahjalal International Airport authorities requesting that Kazi be given access to the VIP lounge and other facilities he is entitled to yesterday when he leaves and on March 11 when he returns.

Contacted, Farida Yasmin, deputy secretary at the ministry who signed the letter, told The Daily Star, "He went on a visit as a secretary. He can enjoy the VIP facilities at the airport lounge even after one year of his retirement."

Seeking anonymity, an official of the public works ministry said, "They are setting precedents that are embarrassing for the entire administration."

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Gaza ceasefire talks deadlocked

Humanitarian crisis deepens; Houthi attack on a ship in Gulf of Aden kills 2

REUTERS, Cairo/Rafah

Talks on a ceasefire and hostage exchange between Israel and Hamas militants were at an impasse yesterday, as the humanitarian crisis in Hamas-run Gaza deepened and a Houthi attack on a ship in the Gulf of Aden killed at least two people.

Negotiators from the Palestinian militants, Qatar and Egypt - but not Israel - are trying to secure a 40-day ceasefire in time for the Muslim fasting month of Ramadan, which begins early next week.

Urging Hamas to accept the terms on the table, US President Joe Biden said on Tuesday that ally Israel was cooperating and "a rational offer" had been made for a ceasefire in exchange for the release of Israeli hostages.

"It's in the hands of Hamas right now," he told reporters, warning that it would be "very dangerous" if fighting continued into Ramadan.

The United States is worried that the Gaza conflict could spread in the Middle East, especially after a series of attacks on vessels in the Red Sea and Gulf of Aden by Iran-aligned Houthi forces acting in solidarity with the Palestinians.

In the latest attack, at least two sailors were killed in a Houthi attack on a freighter, US and British officials said, the first deaths reported since

- Total death toll 30,700 since Oct 7
- 18 Gazans starved to death in last two weeks
- Israeli military blocking aid to Gaza, says UN
- Still no Israeli delegates at Cairo ceasefire talks

the Yemeni group began a campaign of strikes against shipping in one of the world's busiest sea lanes.

A shipping source said earlier four sailors were severely burnt and three missing. The Greek operator of the Barbados-flagged True Confidence said the vessel was struck about 50 nautical miles southwest of the Yemeni port of Aden and was drifting and ablaze.

Hamas pledged to continue to take part in the Cairo talks, but officials in the militant group said a ceasefire must be in place before hostages are freed, Israeli forces must leave Gaza and all Gazans must be able to return to homes they have fled.

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PREETI'S DEATH 25 eminent personalities call for fair investigation

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Twenty-five noted citizens yesterday demanded a fair probe into the death of Preeti Urang, the 15-year-old house help of The Daily Star executive editor Syed Ashfaul Haque.

The girl died after falling from the eighth-floor flat of Ashfaul on February 6. Ashfaul and his wife are in jail in a case filed with Mohammadpur Police Station by Preeti's father, Rakesh Urang, who is from Moulvibazar's Kamolganj upazila.

The eminent citizens in a statement said that on August 6 last year, a seven-year-old domestic help named Ferdousi fell from Ashfaul's Mohammadpur flat and was seriously injured.

In a case filed after that incident, Ashfaul and his wife were acquitted, the statement added.

The citizens termed the incidents worrisome, and said, "It is very difficult for the extremely poor and marginalised tea garden workers to run cases against

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New Marquez novel launched 10 years after his death

REUTERS, Madrid

Gabriel Garcia Marquez died a decade ago, but a previously unpublished book by the author who popularised the Latin American "magical realism" narrative genre hit the stores yesterday, somewhat despite his wishes.

At a presentation in Madrid on Tuesday, his sons, Gonzalo and Rodrigo Garcia Barcha, unveiled the 120-page novel "Until August" written by the Colombian-born Nobel Prize winner in 2004.

It was released in Spanish yesterday, which is Garcia Marquez' birthday, and will be released on March 12 in English, according to publisher Penguin Random House.

Before his death in 2014 aged 87, Garcia Marquez said the book was useless and should be "destroyed", but his sons and his agents reviewed the various manuscripts and considered them to have a literary value that may not have been perceived by the author in the last few years of his life, marked by memory loss.

"For me it means that all of Gabo's work has been published, that nothing is still pending and that in that sense he has closed a cycle," Gonzalo Garcia Barcha told a news conference, using the name Garcia Marquez affectionately went by across Latin America.

Garcia Marquez was best known for "One Hundred Years of Solitude", a dream-like, dynastic epic that helped him win the Nobel Prize for Literature in 1982.



Zulfikar Ali Bhutto 'didn't get a fair trial' Pakistan's top court rules

REUTERS, Islamabad

Pakistan's Supreme Court ruled yesterday that former Prime Minister Zulfikar Ali Bhutto, who was hanged 44 years ago after being convicted of murder, didn't get a fair trial.

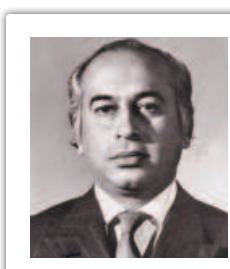
Bhutto, the founder of the Pakistan People's Party (PPP) now run by his grandson and former foreign minister Bilawal Bhutto Zardari, was hanged in 1979 after a trial under the military regime of late General Zia-ul-Haq.

"We didn't find that the fair trial and due process requirements were met," said Chief Justice Qazi Faez Isa in remarks telecast live of the ruling that he said was a unanimous decision by a nine-member bench headed by him.

Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif hailed the ruling. "It is a positive development that a wrong done by a court has been corrected by a court," he said in a statement from his office.

The ruling came in response to a judicial reference filed by Bhutto Zardari's father, Asif Ali Zardari, during his

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Bawalis, also known as the woodcutters of the Sundarbans, collecting nipa palm leaves, or "gol pata", from the banks of the Shela River in East Sundarbans recently. After getting a pass from the forest department, they entered the mangrove forest on January 28 to collect the leaves. Every year, the department grants them permission to pick the leaves for two months, after which it is forbidden again. The Bawalis then sell the leaves for Tk 220-250 per bundle (80 leaves).

PHOTO: HABIBUR RAHMAN