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Tigers show pace mettle but need another comeback

ABDULLAH AL MEHDI *from Chennai*

Hasan Mahmud's incredible showing nearly made the opening day of the Chennai Test Bangladesh's but after the fightback in the final session from India's Ravichandran Ashwin and Ravindra Jadeja, the visitors are need of a 'comeback' on the second day.

In the days leading up to the Chennai Test, the conditions had been hot and punishing, as is the norm in this part of the world. But in the morning of first day, the weather was gloomy and overcast, which the commentators termed peculiar.

The red soil in the wicket, which is usually an indication that there will be prodigious spin on offer in the later in the Tests, must have in the back of the mind of the Bangladesh think tank. Moreover, In 42 years, no visiting team had put India to bat first in India in a Test match.

But in the end, the weather dictated Bangladesh's plan, as they opted to bowl first, something India skipper Rohit Sharma said he would

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India's star batter Virat Kohli was one of four prized scalps of Bangladesh pacer Hasan Mahmud, who singlehandedly dismantled a strong Indian top order before the hosts bounced back through a mammoth 195-run unbeaten seventh-wicket stand between Ravichandran Ashwin and Ravindra Jadeja on Day 1 of their first Test in Chennai yesterday.

PHOTO: AFP

Ex-AL minister has property empire worth \$675 million

Finds Al Jazeera investigation

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Former land minister Saifuzzaman Chowdhury has built a property empire worth at least \$675 million, with plush properties in the UK, the US and the UAE, according to the latest documentary of Al Jazeera's Investigative Unit.

The investigation found Chowdhury, a close ally of the now deposed Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina, bought over 360 luxury properties in the UK worth \$250 million, 54 properties in Dubai worth \$190 million, nine properties in the US worth \$20 million, said Zulkarnain Saer Khan, the lead investigator of the documentary



Saifuzzaman Chy

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ATTACKS ON MINORITY COMMUNITIES

At least 9 killed from Aug 4 to 20

Oikya Parishad says; more than 2,000 incidents of violence took place

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

At least 2,010 incidents of violence against minorities took place across the country from August 4 to 20, inter-religious group Bangladesh Hindu Buddhist Christian Oikya Parishad said yesterday.

At least nine minority people were killed and four minority women were raped during the violent attacks, the Parishad said in a report revealed at a press conference at Dhaka Reporters Unity (DRU).

The organisation collected the data through its local representatives across the country, said Nirmal Rozario, one of the three presidents of the organisation.

A six-member central monitoring cell oversaw the data collection.

"We did not include any incidents of political violence in our report. Our report deals only with the attacks on minority people," Nirmal said, explaining the data in response to a question about

the potential political link of the victims.

Earlier on September 5, Chief Adviser Prof Muhammad Yunus in an interview with PTI said the attacks on minorities in Bangladesh are more political than communal.

According to the Parishad report, 1,705 families were attacked in 68 district and metropolitan areas. Of them, 157 homes were also looted, vandalised, and set ablaze. Thirty-four of the victim families belong to indigenous communities. The attackers also grabbed land of some people.

"These families are now living a miserable life,"

Nirmal said.

Khulna division saw the highest 810 attacks. All four rape incidents also took place in this division. One of the rape victims is speech-impaired. Among the other divisions, Rajshahi saw 297 incidents, Rangpur 271 incidents, Mymensingh saw 224 incidents, Dhaka

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OVERSEAS ASSETS

Singapore FIU seeks info on S Alam Group

MD MEHEDI HASAN

The Financial Intelligence Unit (FIU) of Singapore has requested details about the Chattogram-based conglomerate S Alam Group and its owners, including information on their domestic and foreign assets, from Bangladesh's Financial Intelligence Unit (BFIU).

BFIU officials, speaking to The Daily Star on condition of anonymity, confirmed that the FIU recently contacted them via email.

"We are preparing the details on S Alam Group and are ready to send this information to Singapore's FIU," the officials added.

A senior BFIU official said that the agency is responsible for exchanging information related to money laundering and terrorist financing with foreign counterparts.

Contacted, Bangladesh Bank Executive Director and Spokesperson Husne Ara Shikha also confirmed the matter to this newspaper and said the BFIU has yet to provide any information to Singapore.

The overseas assets of S Alam Group, including those in Singapore, came under scrutiny following recent media reports.

The Daily Star revealed last year that S Alam Group's owner, Saiful Alam, had built a business empire in Singapore worth approximately

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BNP forms six panels for reforms

PARTHA PRATIM BHATTACHARJEE

The BNP has formed six committees to formulate the party's reform proposals in line with its 31-point outline aimed at reforming the constitution and state system and ensuring economic emancipation, said party sources.

The party will put forward the proposals to help the interim government carry out reforms.

The BNP, which has not formed any government since 2006, is making this move at a time when the interim government has formed six commissions, led by six eminent personalities, to amend the constitution, reform the judiciary, election system, police administration, the Anti-Corruption Commission, and the public administration.

According to BNP sources, the number of panels and their size may be expanded.

The party thinks that different government organs have become almost ineffective due to the misrule of the previous Awami League government and that long-term reforms are necessary.

If the BNP is voted to power, it intends to carry out sustainable reforms. Keeping this goal in mind, the party has taken an initiative to finalise its plans from now.

Before discussing reforms with the interim government, BNP wants to determine its position on reforms so it can put forward specific sector-wise reform proposals. The party's standing committee discussed this issue in its last meeting on Monday.

Sources said BNP Secretary General Mirza Fakhrul Islam Alamgir will lead the party's panel on state reforms. The other members of the committee are BNP standing committee members Nazrul Islam Khan, Salahuddin Ahmed, Amir Khasru Mahmud Chowdhury, former bureaucrat and BNP chairperson's advisory council member Ismail Zabihullah and party media cell Convenor Moudud Alamgir Pavel.

Salahuddin will head two committees on reforms to the public service

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Yunus to leave for NY on Sept 24

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Chief Adviser Prof Muhammad Yunus is set to leave Dhaka for New York to attend the 79th United Nations General Assembly (UNGA) on September 24.

He will lead a delegation of around 20, including Foreign Adviser Touhid Hossain, Energy Adviser Fouzul Kabir Khan, foreign ministry officials said.

Touhid said only those with direct responsibilities at the UNGA will accompany the chief adviser, reported UNB.

There might be some meetings on the sidelines, but due to his limited stay in New York, the scope will also be limited. Bilateral meetings on the sidelines usually get finalised at the last moment.

This is seen as a big opportunity for him to share his government's reforms and economic plans, Rohingya crisis, climate change and other areas that require the engagement of the international community, foreign ministry officials said.

Yunus is likely to address the UNGA on September 27 before returning to Dhaka the same day.

Ex-planning minister MA Mannan held

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Sylhet

Police arrested former planning minister MA Mannan at his home in Sunamganj's Shatiganj upazila yesterday evening.

AFM Anwar Hossain, superintendent of Sunamganj police, said, "He [MA Mannan] is accused in a case filed with a court. After being informed that he was at his village home, police arrested him."

"We will produce him before a Sunamganj court in the morning as per the legal procedure," the SP said while talking to journalists.

On September 2, a case was filed accusing Mannan and 98 others with Sunamganj Senior Judicial Magistrate Court over a clash between protesters and police and Awami League activists on August 4, reports our Sylhet correspondent.



NESTLED IN LOVE ... A young Capped Langur safely nestled in its mother's embrace while they rest on a treetop in the Hazarikhil Sanctuary in Chattogram's Fatikchhari. Locally known as "Lalche Hanuman", these primates are native to northeast India, Bhutan, Bangladesh and Myanmar, where they inhabit lowland, wet, evergreen rainforests and temperate forests. There, they feed mainly on leaves, flowers and fruits. Capped Langurs are predominantly arboreal and can be found leaping through the forest canopies. They usually live in groups with one male and around seven females, who all share the responsibility of looking after the children. Capped Langurs have witnessed a 30 percent drop in their population in all their ranges over the past 40 years due to rampant deforestation and thus, have been categorised as "endangered" in the IUCN Red List. Their numbers are expected to keep dropping over the next three generations if immediate conservation measures are not taken on a wide scale.

PHOTO: KAMOL DAS

Israel bombs Lebanon after walkie-talkie blasts

Continues deadly assault on Gaza

AGENCIES

Israel bombed southern Lebanon yesterday and said it had thwarted an Iranian-led assassination plot after explosions in booby-trapped walkie-talkies and pagers in the past two days caused bloody havoc in the ranks of its arch-foe Hezbollah.

The attacks on Hezbollah's communications equipment killed 37 people and wounded around 3,000, raising fears that a full-blown war was imminent. The action also sowed disarray across Lebanon as panicked residents abandoned their mobile phones.

Israel has neither confirmed nor denied being behind the attacks but multiple security sources have said they were carried out by its spy agency Mossad.

Hezbollah chief Hassan Sayyed Nasrallah said the attacks on his group's communications devices will be met with "just punishment".

The Lebanese army said yesterday it was blowing up pagers and suspicious telecom devices in controlled blasts in different areas. It called on citizens to report any suspicious devices.

Lebanese authorities banned walkie-talkies and pagers from being taken on flights from Beirut airport until further notice, the National News Agency reported.

In Beirut yesterday, a distant roar in the skies could be heard from what state media said was Israeli warplanes breaking the sound barrier - a noise that has become common in recent months.