

"It's not acceptable for Pakistan to not win a home Test for that long and we accept the responsibility for that. As a cricketing nation we all are hurt right now."

Pakistan captain **Shan Masood** said at a press conference in Karachi yesterday ahead of England Tests.



DAY 4 HIGHLIGHTS

- Mominul Haque made his 13th Test hundred, first against India.
- India broke the record for fastest team fifty ever, taking only 18 balls and smashing England's record (26) from July, and the fastest hundred in Test cricket as well when Yashasvi Jaiswal smashed a boundary off Khaled Ahmed to take India past three figures in 10.1 overs, breaking their own world record set last year.
- India went on to break more world records: for the quickest 150 (18.2 overs), 200 (24.2) and 250 (30.1) in Tests.
- Ravindra Jadeja took his 300th wicket by removing Khaled, becoming the seventh Indian bowler to reach the landmark.
- Virat Kohli became the fastest player to reach 27,000 international runs, pulling off the feat in his 594th innings, surpassing Sachin Tendulkar who took 623 innings to reach the milestone.



Yashasvi Jaiswal celebrates after reaching his fifty as India registered the fastest team 50 as well as 100 on Day 4 of the second Test against Bangladesh at the Green Park stadium in Kanpur yesterday. Jaiswal led the charge as he smashed 12 fours and two sixes for his 51-ball 72, helping India cross 50 in 18 balls and then a team hundred in 61 deliveries.

BANGLADESH V SOUTH AFRICA SA name spin-heavy squad for crucial WTC series

ICC

South Africa have named 15-member squad for the Test tour of Bangladesh in late October.

The two-match series, part of the ICC World Test Championship cycle, will kick off on October 21st at the Sher-e-Bangla National Cricket Stadium in Mirpur.

The Proteas will next head to Chattogram, where they will play the second Test match at the Zahur Ahmed Chowdhury Stadium, starting on October 29th.

South Africa spinner Senuran Muthusamy made a return to the Test team after a year and will be part of a three-prong spin attack that has Keshav Maharaj and Dane Piedt.

The 30-year-old all-rounder has three Test caps, with his last appearance coming in March 2023. Matthew Breetzke is the only uncapped player in the Test squad.

"Bangladesh is always a tough place to tour. They've become a formidable side at home and we have to be prepared for the challenge that awaits us. We have therefore chosen a squad for the conditions we are expecting to greet us when we get there," South Africa head coach Shukri Conrad said.

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The last time the two teams met in the longest format was in early 2022 when Bangladesh toured South Africa. The Proteas secured a 2-0 series victory, extending their unbeaten run against Bangladesh in Test cricket. The two teams have met 14 times in Test cricket, with South Africa winning 12 matches, while the remaining two ended in draws.

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Bangladesh (point percentage of 39.29) and South Africa (38.89) currently sit 5th and 6th in the ICC World Test Championship standings, aiming to secure a place in next year's final. The two-game series in Bangladesh could play a major role in determining the final standings for both teams.

After this series, Bangladesh are due to face West Indies in this championship cycle. On the other hand, South Africa will face off against Pakistan and Sri Lanka at home as part of their WTC itinerary.

FIXTURES

First Test: October 21-25, Mirpur

Second Test: October 29-November 2, Chattogram

SOUTH AFRICA SQUAD: Temba Bavuma (captain), David Bedingham, Matthew Breetzke, Nandre Burger, Tony de Zorzi, Keshav Maharaj, Aiden Markram, Wiaan Mulder, Senuran Muthusamy, Dane Paterson, Dane Piedt, Kagiso Rabada, Tristan Stubbs, Ryan Rickelton, Kyle Verreynne.

'Safety first' as Tigers face T20 onslaught

SPORTS REPORTER from Kanpur

"In Tests, we see different scenarios. How the game went today, it was like in T20s," Bangladesh all-rounder Mehedi Hasan Miraz encapsulated what transpired in India's first innings on day four of the second and final Test at Green Park Stadium in Kanpur yesterday.

The home side scaled new heights, moving from one world record to another in an enticing and fast-forward day of Test cricket. India, leading the series 1-0, had two days to win a match, and while many might have naively expected a draw after two days of rain, the hosts surpassed all expectations.

First came the fastest 50 by a team, then the fastest 100, 150, and 200 followed. Rohit Sharma and Yashasvi Jaiswal started it, and the others maintained that mode of batting as a Test match turned into T20 cricket after Bangladesh had made 233 in the first innings, courtesy of Mominul Haque's unbeaten 107.

India batted for 34.4 overs, just over a session. They scored 285 for nine to not only ensure a lead in the quickest time possible but also declared to pick up two Bangladesh wickets: opener Zakir Hasan and nightwatchman Hasan Mahmud.

It was a very different Test experience for the likes of Khaled Ahmed, hit for two sixes in his first two deliveries this series, or even Mehedi Hasan Miraz and the experienced Shakib Al Hasan.

Miraz admitted that they went into T20 mode too, and it was what he and Shakib both did. He bagged a four-fer along with Shakib to dent India's rapid



scoring, but it was still difficult. Talking about his dismissal of Rohit Sharma, who was looking menacing, he said: "The way he started with a first-ball six, it was a challenge to bowl. I tried to bowl in T20 mode."

Talking about Shakib's four-fer, he said: "They batted in a T20 mindset, and since he's very successful in the format, he understood how to apply himself, and he got it from the very first over."

But the match scenario does not allow for more aggression from Bangladesh batters, who will have to face more than

two sessions to save the match.

"The situation right now is that we have to think of safety first. We will try to bat as long as possible," Miraz felt.

But overall, it was a different kind of experience for Bangladesh. India batted for more than 10 an over in the first 10 overs faced. They just kept going, even as wickets fell.

"Before this, two days were foiled by rain. Obviously, this hasn't happened before, and it was new for me. There is a lot to learn from this match, and we have done that," he added.



"That was our message this morning, you know, with losing two days of the match... that positive intent was going to be key. I thought the way the boys went up with the ball upfront was incredible to see. To show the intent with the bat was awesome. Our game plan was to see how can we get the winning result."

India bowling coach **Morne Morkel**

BRIEF SCORES

Day 4

Bangladesh: 233 all out in 74.2 overs (Mominul 107 not out, Shanto 31; Bumrah 3-50, Akash Deep 2-43) and 26 for two in 11 overs (Zakir 10, Shadman 7 not out; Ashwin 2-14)

India: 285 for nine declared in 34.4 overs (Jaiswal 72, Rahul 68; Miraz 4-41, Shakib 4-78)

Veteran or liability? Mahmudullah's inclusion does not add up

SHABAB CHOWDHURY

"You either die a hero, or you live long enough to see yourself become a villain" is an iconic dialogue from The Dark Knight, a popular film from the Batman series. In essence, it resonates enormously with what veteran Mahmudullah Riyad has become for Bangladesh cricket in the 20-over format.

Despite the uncertainty surrounding his inclusion, the 38-year-old was named in the 15-member squad announced for the upcoming three-match T20I series against India, starting in Gwalior on October 6.

Mahmudullah's fate looked to be sealed after Bangladesh lost their last Super Eights match of the 2024 T20 World Cup against Afghanistan – a contest in which Najmul Hossain Shanto's side had the chance of making it to the semifinals of the tournament for the very first time.

As one of the chief architects of the catastrophic approach that led to the defeat, the 38-year-old veteran had dishied out a detrimental knock that was a far cry from reflecting the mentality of a side chasing greater and unprecedented success.

With Mahmudullah having managed just 95 runs in seven matches with a disappointing strike rate of 94.05 in that edition, it appeared the demanding format seemed to have outpaced the most experienced Bangladesh player in T20Is,

with the second-highest runs in the format.

Chief selector Gazi Ashraf Hossain Lipu, however, put an end to speculations about Mahmudullah's spot, saying that he considered the experience factor when selecting the veteran batter, but it seemed to have contradicted his vision regarding the composition of the Tigers' T20 side in the 2026 T20 World Cup.

Lipu said that the squad was a reflection of their plans for the mega event, centring around youth and exuberance, and pointed out that players would get a couple of editions of the Bangladesh Premier League, and as many T20 editions of the National Cricket League, in addition to about 21 T20Is in the build-up to the major event.

If that is indeed the case, then why not back someone younger instead of Mahmudullah, who will turn 40 by 2026? It is baffling to see the selectors carrying the right-handed batter who has played in all but one edition of the T20 World Cup but has very little to show for it on the biggest stage – in 37 T20 World Cup matches, Mahmudullah mustered 458 runs, averaging 17.62 with a strike rate of 106.76.

The big debate about "finding a replacement" for Mahmudullah often follows. The popular argument amongst fans and experts is often that there is no replacement for a senior player in the side, such as Mahmudullah, and other players would have to fill in and strive to do what

the veteran has been doing. However, the fundamental flaw in this reasoning is the focus on finding a replacement, rather than seeking someone better.

Since January 2021, Mahmudullah has batted at a strike rate of 115.88 in 20 matches in positions 6-8. When batting in the same positions in T20 World Cups, it comes down to 114.78, and in both cases, the average flirts around roughly 23. It is quite a puzzle to decipher the selectors' thoughts for the future when they've found their faith in such numbers produced by a player nearing the dusk of his career. When will they get past the hangover of the six Mahmudullah flicked in the Nidahas Trophy in 2018?

And as for the Batman analogy, the question with Mahmudullah at this point is what comes after one lingers long enough to become a villain, as he had arguably become one following Bangladesh's T20 World Cup exit in June.

Shakib Al Hasan, meanwhile, announced his plan for retirement from T20Is on Friday, underlining the need for new faces to come through, keeping in mind the T20 World Cup two years from now.

Now, it sets a premise for Mahmudullah to perhaps follow in Shakib's footsteps, thinking about the greater good of the team; or he could maintain the status quo and keep hold of a vital spot by virtue of being one of the "Fab Five".

