

‘A GREAT MOMENT’

This was only the second time that India were whitewashed in a home Test series, the only other instance coming back in 2000 when South Africa won 2-0 against India.

This, however, is the first time that India have been whitewashed in a home series of three or more Tests.

New Zealand became the fourth side to whitewash India in a series of 3+ Tests after England (4), Australia (3), and West Indies (1).

It is also the first time that New Zealand won three Tests in a series home or away and the first instance of the Kiwis winning three successive away Tests.

New Zealand defended 147 to win the third Test -- the second-lowest total ever defended by the Kiwis in Tests.

AGENCIES

Coming in after a harrowing 2-0 Test loss in Sri Lanka, New Zealand defied all expectations on Sunday to whitewash a strong India, a side that had won each of their last 18 series at home since 2012 when England won 2-1.

Chasing 147 for victory in the third and final Test, India were bowled out for 121 in 29.1 overs on day three, and it was Mumbai-born spinner Ajaz Patel who took six wickets to help New Zealand to a thrilling 25-run win at Mumbai's Wankhede Stadium.

New Zealand's Tom Latham, who was appointed as the new Test captain after the outing in Sri Lanka, cherished the win that came on the back of their eight-wicket win in first Test and a 113-run victory in the second.

"It's obviously a great moment for New Zealand cricket, probably one of New Zealand cricket's greatest series wins I think," said Kiwis' skipper Latham.

"Again, all we can do is keep playing cricket and keep playing our brand of cricket. We've felt a lot of support over the last couple of weeks, which is really special."

Latham went on to praise his side



for being able to adapt to the host of conditions on display, from the seam and movement in the opening Test to the turn in the subsequent two games.

"Just being able to adapt to each ground. There is no one way of doing

things - the seamers did the job in Bangalore, different guys stood up at different times. More contributions we were looking for. Last week it was Mitch, this time it was Ajaz," he said.

Ajaz ended with a match-haul of 11

wickets at a venue where he created history by claiming all 10 wickets in a Test innings in 2021. He scalped a total of 25 wickets in the two Tests at Wankhede.

In a tricky chase on a turning pitch, New Zealand reduced India to 29-5, before the left-hander Rishabh Pant (64 off 57) counter-attacked with his half-century.

Ajaz, after lunch, had Pant caught by wicketkeeper Tom Blundell, a decision denied by the on-field umpire but successfully reviewed by New Zealand. An unconvinced Pant trudged back.

"If we say something, it will not go down well. If the decision is not conclusive then the decision has to stand with what the on-field umpire calls," said India skipper Rohit Sharma.

"I don't know how that decision was overturned."

Rohit also took the blame for India hitting the nadir.

"This will be a very low point in my career, having lost three games at home," Rohit told reporters. "I fully take responsibility for that."

Meanwhile, India legend Sachin Tendulkar called for "introspection" following a humiliating series loss which he said was "a tough pill to swallow".

Two tons, one fifer in NCL

SPORTS REPORTER

Khulna Division off-spinner Mahedi Hasan claimed 5-62 to help his side bowl out Dhaka Metro for 210 in their first innings on day two at the Sylhet International Cricket Stadium on Sunday. Khulna, with a 166-run first-innings lead, enforced follow-on on Dhaka Metro, who scored 12 for no loss at stumps.

Earlier, resuming on 358 for six, Khulna could add only 18 runs to their overnight score.

In Bogura's Shahid Chandu Stadium, Sylhet Division, who resumed at 24 for no loss, were bundled out for 189, taking a narrow 31-run lead in their first innings against Rangpur Division.

Rangpur later witnessed a batting collapse in their second innings as Sylhet's Tofael Islam took three wickets to reduce them to 66-5 at stumps.

At the Cox's Bazar's Academy Ground, Sazzadul Hoque struck 139 off 185 balls -- his maiden first-class ton -- while Parvez Hossain Emon missed out on his hundred by just five runs as Chattogram Division made 371 runs in their first innings against Dhaka Division after resuming on 107-1.

Dhaka finished the day at 22-0, still trailing Chattogram by 349 runs.

The other game in Cox's Bazar between Barishal Division and Rajshahi Division got underway on day two after play was not possible on opening day due to wet outfield.

Itakhar Hossain Ilti struck his maiden first-class ton -- a 205-ball 116 -- but his Barishal side could only make 205 in the first innings. Rajshahi, playing just one delivery, didn't open their score at stumps.

City, Arsenal slip as Liverpool go top

AFP, London

Manchester City suffered their first Premier League loss since December as Bournemouth stunned the champions, while Arsenal were rocked by Newcastle and Liverpool seized top spot on Saturday.

City were unbeaten in their previous 32 league games, dating back to a defeat at Aston Villa last year. But Pep Guardiola's second-placed side saw that streak come to an unexpected end in a 2-1 loss on England's south coast.

Bournemouth recently damaged Arsenal's title hopes with a 2-0 win at the Vitality Stadium and they inflicted pain on City.

City were rocked in the ninth minute when Bournemouth winger Antoine Semenyo drilled one home. Evanilson doubled Bournemouth's lead in the 64th minute with a composed finish. Josko Gvardiol's header reduced the deficit in the 82nd minute, but it was too late to save City from a second defeat in four days.

Meanwhile, Newcastle put a huge dent in fourth-placed Arsenal's title aspirations with a 1-0 win at St James' Park.

Alexander Isak scored a 12th-minute header as Mikel Arteta's Arsenal, runners-up to City for the past two years, have taken just one point from their last three games and are seven points adrift of first place. At Anfield, Liverpool were in danger of a surprise loss of their own before regrouping to take advantage of their rivals' stumbles with a 2-1 win over Brighton.

Ferdi Kadioglu gave Brighton the lead in the 14th minute with a fierce strike but Cody Gakpo bagged the equaliser in the 69th minute before Mohamed Salah put Liverpool ahead three minutes later.

In Arne Slot's first season in charge, Liverpool are two points clear of City after their eighth win in 10 league games.

Tigers in a bid to regain lost ODI mojo

SPORTS REPORTER

After a disastrous Test series against South Africa, Bangladesh are now bracing themselves for a new challenge, this time in the ODI format, when they take on an in-form Afghanistan in a three-match series scheduled to start in Sharjah on November 6.

The second and last group of the Bangladesh contingent left for the UAE yesterday, a day after the first group, to feature in their first 50-over series in more than six months.

Historically, Bangladesh have an edge over Afghanistan in this format, with 10 wins and six losses which also includes three victories in the 2015, 2019 and 2023 editions of the ICC World Cup.

The Tigers also boasted off a perfect record against Afghanistan in bilateral ODI series until July last year, when they lost to the Afghans 2-1 in Chattogram, a series defeat which initiated a lean period for Bangladesh in what is widely accepted as their strongest format.

Although the team managed to make it to the Super Four of the following Asia Cup, they failed miserably in the ODI World Cup, finishing eighth among 10 teams, and also lost three more bilateral series -- two against New Zealand and

one against Sri Lanka.

The recent poor results in other formats, their lack of ODIs this year, foreign conditions and Afghanistan's red-hot form means that Bangladesh could arguably be considered underdogs in the upcoming series.

The Afghans recently clinched their maiden ODI series victory over South Africa, beating them 2-1 in the UAE and possess a strong squad covering all the basis required to excel in those conditions.

Dependable opener Ibrahim Zadran is out as he is still healing from an ankle surgery and uncapped Sediqullah Atal has been named in his place in their 19-member squad.

Sediqullah, who made 368 runs in five innings at a strike rate of 147.79 and played a significant role in Afghanistan's recent triumph in the ACC Emerging Teams Asia Cup in Oman, is expected to open the innings with Rahmanullah Gurbaz, another in-form batter who struck 194 run in three innings in the series against the Proteas.

Afghanistan also posses an impressive line-up of all-rounders in Azmatullah Omarzai, Mohammad Nabi and Gulbadin Naib, and also have their leg-spin maestro Rashid Khan on hand, who is more than handy with the bat.



Skipper Najmul Hossain Shanto receives a bouquet as the first Bangladesh contingent reach their team hotel in Dubai on Saturday night ahead of their three-match ODI series against Afghanistan, set to begin from November 6. The second contingent was scheduled to reach the UAE late last night.

PHOTO: ACB

The pace unit will be led by left-arm pacer Fazalhaq Farooqi and left-arm leg spinner Noor Ahmad will add variety to this very potent bowling attack.

The fact that Bangladesh are arriving

in the UAE just days before the series whereas the Afghans have been training for a good amount of time, would also be a challenge for the Tigers -- one of the many they have to overcome if they want to regain their lost mojo in ODIs.

Pak seek balance as Aussies look for fiery start

AGENCIES

With their eyes set on the ICC Champions Trophy next year, Pakistan will begin their three-match ODI series today against hosts Australia under new captain Mohammad Rizwan.

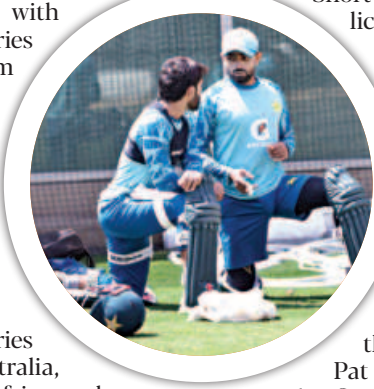
Appointed as the new white-ball skipper, Rizwan said that he hoped to find the right combination for the ICC tournament next year with a number of ODI series scheduled for the team ahead of it.

"We are scheduled to play a good number of ODIs before the next year's ICC Champions Trophy back in Pakistan," Rizwan said in a statement released by PCB.

"The forthcoming series beginning with Australia, then Zimbabwe, South Africa, and the home tri-nation tournament will help us assemble the right combination going into the mega event."

Pakistan have also announced their playing XI for the first ODI, with Muhammad Irfan Khan and Saim Ayub making their debut.

Pakistan will also see the return of their out-of-form star batter Babar Azam, who



was dropped for the second and third Tests against England in October after scoring just 35 runs across both innings in Pakistan's defeat in the first Test. Pakistan went on to win the series with wins in the last two games.

Meanwhile, Australia, who also named their playing XI for the first ODI, have given their new opening pair of Matt Short and Jake Fraser-McGurk a license to attack the new ball.

The duo are in direct competition for the role of Travis Head's opening partner in the Champions Trophy next year.

"Both of them in T20 and one-dayers have been pretty scary to bowl at so that's our message to them," Australia skipper Pat Cummins said ahead of the first ODI in Melbourne. "My preference would be they give it a good crack for sure."

Former Victorian teammates Short and Fraser-McGurk will open the batting together for the first time in national colours on Monday in their hometown of Melbourne, with Cummins also returning for his first ODI since last year's World Cup final triumph.

SPORTS REPORTER

Since Bangladesh's maiden triumph in SAFF Women's Championship two years ago, there have been strong recommendations for taking necessary initiatives to take the country's women's football beyond the South Asian region, a demand that has only been strengthened following the successful title



defence in Nepal a few days ago.

Bangladesh Football Federation's women's wing chairman Mahfuza Akter Kiron believes taking women's football beyond South Asia is not possible without the financial and infrastructural help from the government as she feels the game's local governing body has been struggling to run training camp and holding league and FIFA friendly matches over the years.

"We don't have any infrastructure. We don't have ground for women's football; we even can't do practice properly. In this context, it is a miracle for the women's football team to become back-to-back champions in South Asia," Kiron told reporters at the

BFF House yesterday.

"We don't have shortage of effort to develop women's football. We also asked the previous government for financial and infrastructural support. Without the support, we will not be able to take football to the next level. We also make the same demands to the interim government," said Kiron, who returned from an AFC Congress on Saturday.

Chief Adviser Profession Muhammad Yunus on Saturday accorded a reception to the SAFF winning team at the State Guest House, Jamuna, and asked the players to present their individual demands in written.

Thanking the chief adviser for the reception and financial

incentive for the women footballers, Kiron said, "We know the Chief Adviser promised to address the players' individual demands but we, the BFF, also want to place a development proposal before the interim government after discussing the matter with the newly elected executive committee."

"We can't roll competitions for women's football regularly for the lack of the grounds, so we want a dedicated ground for women footballers," Kiron said. "If the government provides us with a BKSP-like academy and a training ground, it will be useful towards the development of women's football."

Kiron also said that they would seek financial help for the coaching staff including foreign coaches and help for arranging FIFA friendly matches.

"The women's team don't often get opportunity to play FIFA friendly matches due to shortage of fund, so if the government supports us to play at least five to six friendly matches in the FIFA window every year, it is possible to go beyond the South Asian level," said Kiron.