

Shanto, Zakir star in Tigers' first 100-plus opening stand against India in Tests

December 17, 2022

The Daily Morning Voice Online Desk: Bangladesh brought up their first-ever century opening stand against India in Tests as the Tigers are chasing a record target in their first of two-Test series at the Zahur Ahmed Chowdhury Stadium in Chattogram on Saturday. At Lunch on Day 4, Bangladesh reached 119 for no loss in 42 overs. This is the first time in the match that a session did not yield any wickets. Also, it was made possible, courtesy of the Bangladesh openers putting up their first century stand against India in the longest format with the previous best being Tamim Iqbal and Imrul Kayes' 53-run opening stand at the same ground 12 years ago.

Both openers Najmul Hossain Shanto and Zakir Hasan brought up fifties to keep the Tigers' hopes alive in chase of a record 513-run target. Zakir, playing his first Test, scored his first Test fifty off 101 deliveries and barely looked to be in trouble against the Indians since the Tigers were asked to bat in the final hour of the last session on Day 3 after India declared their second innings on 258 for two. Zakir remains unbeaten on 55 off 109 deliveries.

Meanwhile, for Shanto, who was dismissed for a golden duck during the Tigers' batting debacle in the first innings, it was a first fifty since his 64-run knock in Bangladesh's historic Test win over New Zealand at the Mount Maunganui in January this year. This was also the left-hander's third Test fifty overall. Shanto is not out on 64 off 143 deliveries. The batters, who remained unscathed yesterday, continued in similar fashion after resuming the day on 42 for no loss. Both left-handed openers have been playing with ease on a Chattogram surface that kept consistent on its history of being batting-friendly in the final days of a Test.

India wrist spinner Kuldeep Yadav, who was the destroyer in chief in bundling out the hosts for just 150 in the first innings with his five-for, and off-spinner Ravichandran Ashwin were able to extract turn from the pitch, but the slow nature of the surface meant the batters faced little to no trouble in negotiating those.