

SCORES IN BRIEF

**Bangladesh:** 192 all out in 46.5 overs (Liton 86, Shakib 30, Mahmudullah 29; Rashid 3-27, Nabi 2-29)  
**Afghanistan:** 193 for 3 in 40.1 overs (Gurbaz 106 not out, Rahmat 47; Miraz 2-37, Shakib 1-47)  
**Result:** Afghanistan won by 7 wickets.  
**Player-of-the-match:** Rahmanullah Gurbaz.  
**Player-of-the-series:** Liton Das.

## Shakib to play SA Test series

SPORTS REPORTER  
from Chattogram

News had surfaced recently that Shakib Al Hasan had handed in a letter to the Bangladesh Cricket Board, asking to skip the South Africa Test series, slated to begin from March 31. However, it later emerged that the letter was handed in before the IPL auction, which was confirmed



by cricket operations chairman Jalal Yunus yesterday.

It was surmised that BCB's stance on Shakib's availability for upcoming Test assignments for the next one year, will not be one of hard line.

"We want to know his overall plan for the next one year," Jalal had said.

However, by the evening things took a different turn when BCB president Nazmul Hassan spoke to the media. "After the game today, I had a talk with him from afar. I can't go near. I told him that when you return after playing the South Africa Tests, I will sit down with you. He told me with a smile 'whatever you say.'

"If a player doesn't want to play in a format, I have no problem with that but they will have to inform about it beforehand. Since he isn't playing the IPL, there is no other option," the BCB president informed.



Afghanistan opener Rahmanullah Gurbaz about to swing his bat in sheer ecstasy right after scoring his third ODI hundred in the final match of the three-match series against Bangladesh at the Zahur Ahmed Chowdhury Stadium in Chattogram yesterday. The 20-year-old might as well have thanked the player in front of him as Mushfiqur Rahim dropped him twice during the game. PHOTO: FIROZ AHMED

# Miles to go despite SERIES WIN

SPORTS REPORTER FROM CHATTOGRAM

Despite Bangladesh winning the three-match ODI series 2-1 against Afghanistan and also reaching the top of the ICC men's ODI World Cup Super League table, Tamim Iqbal and his troops would feel they still have a lot to improve in the coming days.

The Bangladesh team management, keen to grab those valuable ten points coming into the third and final ODI against Afghanistan, even opted to field an unchanged playing eleven but that did not work in their favour.

The Tigers failed to put up a fight against the visitors and were bundled out for just 192 runs in 46.5 overs. Except for the in-form Liton Das, who fought the lone battle by scoring 86 runs, none of the remaining batters were able to put up a show.

Courtesy of Rahmanullah Gurbaz's ODI century, his third in just nine innings, Afghanistan managed to cruise to victory and more importantly, prevented a whitewash.

Apart from the second ODI, where Bangladesh rode on Liton's magnificent century and Musfiqur Rahim's 86 to post 306 for 4, the Tigers' batting was not convincing in the rest of the series.

"I did my job in the first 15 overs since they bowled well in the first Powerplay. My target is to bat at least for 35 overs and if I can bat for longer, it will change the game."

LITON DAS, PAYER-OF-THE-SERIES

In the first ODI, Bangladesh were reeling on 45 for 6 before Afif Hossain and Mehedi Hasan Miraz saved the day with their 174-run partnership.

And for Tamim, he stayed stuck on the same loop in the third and final ODI as the Afghan left-arm pacer Fazalhaq Farooqi dismissed the Tigers skipper for the third consecutive time this series, in identical fashion on all occasions.

Farooqi, who has played just a single ODI prior to the series, had exposed the chink in the experienced lefty's armour. Tamim was trapped in front in the first two games before being bowled in the third game, when his front leg went across to an incoming delivery while his head was dropping.

Beside Tamim, the performance from

the experienced players, the likes of Shakib Al Hasan, Mahmudullah Riyad, and even Mushfiqur to some extent, excluding his eighty in the second game, remained inconsistent with the bat throughout the series.

Mahmudullah's approach also remained questionable yesterday, where he remained unbeaten on 29 off 53 balls without striking any boundary. And to make matters worse, the way the experienced player exposed the tail-enders, taking singles early in the over, raised many eyebrows.

In the first ODI, Mahmudullah disappointed as well as he was dismissed on eight in an unpleasant manner at the bowling of Rashid Khan, at a time when the Tigers badly needed an experienced batter in the middle.

And Shakib, despite remaining instrumental with the ball, could not live up to expectations with the bat, as he scored 10, 20 and 30 in three games. Bangladesh's fielding and catching were also not up to the mark and the three dropped catches of centurion Gurbaz yesterday made a case in point.

With the tour of South Africa just around the corner and with even bigger challenges looming ahead, Tamim and Co cannot afford to bask in the series win.

## Tamim disappointed with how it ended

SPORTS REPORTER FROM CHATTOGRAM

Bangladesh ODI captain Tamim Iqbal was disappointed following their seven-wicket loss in the last game of the three-match ODI series against Afghanistan in Chattogram yesterday.

Tamim said that losing 10 ODI Super League points was the most disappointing aspect even though the Tigers clinched the series 2-1. However, he hoped that the team would qualify for the World Cup by finishing in the top four of the standings.

"Very disappointed. I had said that this match was probably very important. We won the series but the scenario is not such that it won't be a problem. Every game has a value. I am disappointed as we couldn't play the way we did



in the second match," Tamim said at the press conference following the match.

Bangladesh have upcoming ODI series away to South Africa and Ireland and at home against England. And although they top the Super League table, Tamim said that 'nothing is guaranteed'. "When you have this kind of opportunity, you have to take maximum advantage."

Tamim's ambition was to finish in the top four as he wanted to go to the World Cup with the aim of winning it. "There are two things here. If you win one or two more, you are probably qualifying for the World Cup. That's not my target, my target is to finish in the top four. If you want to claim that you have come here to win the World Cup in 2023, if you qualify as the seventh or eighth team, it doesn't make sense," he said



Liverpool players pose with the League Cup trophy in dressing room after winning the final in a dramatic penalty shootout against Chelsea on Sunday. Jurgen Klopp's side clinched the first of the four major trophies they are competing for this term. "This is the start," said Klopp. PHOTO: TWITTER

## Kings go top

SPORTS REPORTER

A penalty-strike from Robson Da Silva helped Bashundhara Kings notch a 1-0 win against Sheikh Russel KC in the Bangladesh Premier League at the Bashundhara Kings area yesterday.

The fifth win in six matches took Kings to the top of the table with 15 points, two more than Abahani and three more than Sheikh Jamal DC, who played out a 1-1 draw against Mohammedan SC at Birshreshtha Shaheed Flight Lt Matiur Rahman Stadium in Munshiganj.

Big-budget Sheikh Russel, with five points from as many matches, had a great opportunity to get back in the title race with a win over Kings, who turned up with a depleted side following injuries to key players such as defenders Tariq Kazi and Khalid Shafei.

But the makeshift backline of Kings hardly faced any trouble throughout the 90 minutes as Sheikh Russel surprisingly adapted a deep defensive approach. The 2012 champions even looked as if they would be happy with a single point against the defending champions, who however did not waste the opportunity once they got it.

Sheikh Russel, playing with three foreign recruits, interestingly showed a glimpse of their ability by playing a number of passes among themselves inside the Kings' half, soon after conceding the lead.

Kings were lucky not to face pressure like they faced in their previous match against Rahmatganj MFS, who had scored two goals before going down 3-2. Kings played most of the time in Sheikh Russel's half and created some good chances in the first half but the failure of the forwards saw them end the first half with a goalless draw.

Sheikh Russel had only one good move throughout the game with substitute Mannaf Rabbi, who himself was later replaced, seeing his side volley being parried by Kings goalkeeper Anisur Rahman Zico. Robson converted the spot-kick in the 83rd minute to separate the sides after he was brought down inside the box by Sheikh Russel defender Nasiruddin Chowdhury.



জাতীয় বীমা দিবস

১ মার্চ ২০২২

বীমায় সুরক্ষিত থাকলে, এগিয়ে যাব সবাই মিলে

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