

Highlight reel featuring SHAKIB'S TROOPS

Shanto plays his 'best' knock

Najmul Hossain Shanto made 47 per cent contribution to the Bangladesh total with his 55-ball 71, and the only teammate who surpassed his strike-rate was Afif Hossain. The left-hander had long been under severe scrutiny from the press and social media alike, but Shanto responded on the biggest stage with his maiden T20I fifty, which he termed as 'very special' after match.

Taskin's early strikes pivotal again

An ever-improving Taskin Ahmed once again turned out to be the key for Bangladesh pace attack, bagging three wickets for 19 runs to pick up his second player-of-the-match award in the ongoing T20 World Cup. His knack of scalping wickets in his first over continued as well as Taskin became the highest wicket-taker in the Super 12 stage with an impressive haul of eight wickets in three matches.

Fizz rekindles old flames

The bowling partnership is often overlooked in batter-friendly white ball cricket. However, Bangladesh ace quick Mustafizur Rahman showed why it shouldn't be the case. While Taskin made the early inroads, Mustafizur Rahman removed two batters, including the prized wicket of Sikandar Raza, at his introduction in the last over of Powerplay. Fizz later made impact in his last two overs in the innings' back-end, conceding 10 runs in total while other Bangladesh bowlers were going for a beating.



Bangladesh pacer Taskin Ahmed, the wrecker-in-chief of Zimbabwe innings, spiritedly celebrates the dismissal of Zimbabwe skipper Craig Ervine during the exciting ICC T20 World Cup Super 12 clash at the Gabba in Brisbane yesterday. PHOTO: AFP

SCORES IN BRIEF	
Bangladesh vs Zimbabwe	
Bangladesh: 150 for seven in 20 overs (Shanto 71, Afif 29; Muzarabani 2-13, Ngarava 2-24)	
Zimbabwe: 147 for eight in 20 overs (Williams 64, Burl 27 not out; Taskin 3-19, Mustafizur 2-15)	
Result: Bangladesh won by three runs	
Player-of-the-match: Taskin Ahmed	

SCORES IN BRIEF	
Netherlands vs Pakistan	
Netherlands: 91-9 in 20 overs (Ackermann 27; Shadab 3-22, Wasim 2-15)	
Pakistan: 95-4 in 13.5 overs (Rizwan 49; Glover 2-22)	
Result: Pakistan won by six wickets.	
Player-of-the-match: Shadab Khan.	
India vs South Africa	
India: 133-9 in 20 overs (Suryakumar 68; Ngidi 4-29, Parnell 3-15)	
South Africa: 134-5 in 19.4 overs (Miller 56 not out, Markram 52; Arshdeep 2-25)	
Result: South Africa won by five wickets.	
Player-of-the-match: Lungi Ngidi.	

Pacers leading the pack for Tigers

SPORTS REPORTER

The fast bowling department has stood out in Bangladesh's two wins in the ongoing ICC T20 World Cup, and it was pacer Taskin Ahmed who rose to the occasion yet again as Tigers clinched a hard-fought three-run win over Zimbabwe in their third Super 12 game at the Gabba yesterday.

It will be hard to recall when was the last time a fast bowler picked up two player-of-the-match awards for Bangladesh, and that too in a World Cup, as Taskin showed his consistency and vast improvement of late to emerge as a world-class act for the Tigers.

The 27-year-old ended up with the figures of three for 19 from his four overs, at an economy of 4.75, to stage a successful defence of a modest 151-run target. Taskin spearheaded the three-men Bangladesh pace-bowling unit with experienced Mustafizur Rahman and young Hasan Mahmud to aid the Tigers in snatching a dramatic win.

Taskin's transformation as a fast bowler is now paying dividends and, most importantly, he has given Bangladesh the much-needed strength in pace-friendly Australian conditions.

"Look, Taskin has got all attributes of a genuine fast bowler and it was very important for him to realise what are his strengths and where to work on," prominent pace-bowling coach Sarwar Imran told The Daily Star yesterday.

"He has worked on his fitness and is stronger and fitter now, compared to the past, and he has also improved his game sense, which is very important from a fast bowler's point of view.

"Bowling quick is the main mantra if you really want to threaten the batters in Australian conditions, and Taskin's performance behind the two wins for Bangladesh was actually a breath of fresh air in the context of our cricketing culture," Imran added.

Meanwhile, despite remaining wicketless in the first two games, Mustafizur made sure he was economical,



having conceded below six runs per over prior to Zimbabwe encounter.

The 'Cutter Master' eventually showed his class by picking up two wickets in the same over, including the dangerous Sikandar Raza, and allowed the Tigers to build on the momentum given by Taskin at the start.

Mustafizur ended up picking two wickets, conceding just 15 runs from his four overs, and more importantly he had kept things really tight for the Zimbabwean batters at death overs as well.

The Fizz used his cutters and slowers tactfully to concede just six runs in the 17th over of the innings, with two set batters skipper Sean Williams and Ryan Burl at the crease, as Zimbabwe desperately looked to up the tempo.

Another young pacer Hasan Mahmud, who may have remained expensive and wicketless against Zimbabwe, also showed great promise so far -- certainly good signs for the Tigers' pace battery. "I think Mustafizur's control was something very impressive, not just yesterday but throughout the three games so far, and this is what you expect from an experienced bowler like him. Mahmud is young and still learning and I think he showed some good skills and pace. It will be important to bank on the seamers and I would hope the team management will be bold enough to include another pacer in the playing eleven," Imran concluded.

SA, Pakistan win to keep the group intriguing

AGENCIES

South Africa triumphed over India by five wickets while Pakistan trounced the Netherlands by six wickets, to keep their Twenty20 World Cup campaign alive, yesterday.

South Africa leaptfrogged to the top of Group 2 with five points from three games, a point ahead of India and Bangladesh. Zimbabwe have three points, Pakistan two and the Netherlands remain at bottom.

Group 2					
Team	Matches	Win	Loss	Points	Net run-rate
South Africa	3	2	0	5	+2.772
India	3	2	1	4	+0.8444
Bangladesh	3	2	1	4	-1.533
Zimbabwe	3	1	1	3	-0.050
Pakistan	3	1	2	2	+0.765
Netherlands	3	0	3	0	-1.948

WHAT TO WATCH	
T SPORTS & GTV	Hockey Champions Trophy
T20 World Cup	Cumilla vs Dhaka
Australia vs Ireland	Live from 06:30 pm
Live from 02:00 pm	Barishal vs Khulna
T SPORTS	Live from 08:00 pm



South Africa pacer Lungi Ngidi, who led a fiery pace onslaught to keep India to 133-9, celebrates the wicket of India captain Rohit Sharma during the T20 World Cup Super 12 match in Perth yesterday. Ngidi returned figures of 4-29 and David Miller hit unbeaten 59 as South Africa beat India by five wickets to brighten their semi-finals hopes. PHOTO: AFP

Australia wary of giant-killer Ireland

REUTERS, Melbourne

Australia captain Aaron Finch said his team cannot afford to take Ireland lightly in Monday's T20 World Cup contest, specially after Andy Balbirnie's side pulled off a massive giant-killing act against England.

Ireland stunned England in a rain-marred Super 12 contest on Wednesday and are joined by defending champions Australia as well as England on three points, two behind Group 1 leader New Zealand, from as many matches.

"They've got some seriously talented players," Finch said of their opponents on the eve of the match in Brisbane. "They've got a lot of experience, especially at the top of the order, as well, so they're never a team that you can take lightly."

"If the wicket has got anything in it, they've got very good bowlers to maximise that as well."

U-15 women eye title

SPORTS REPORTER

Hosts Bangladesh want to prove a point of possessing talented players in the pipeline through the 4th SAFF U-15 Women's Championship, which gets underway at the Birshreshtha Shaheed Mostafa Kamal Stadium in Kamalapur tomorrow.

The girls in red and green became champions in the inaugural edition in 2017 but lost the final twice in the 2018 and 2019 editions to India, who this time pulled out of the tournament, leaving the championship to a three-nation competition for the first time.

Now Bangladesh, Nepal and Bhutan will be vying for the title in double-league basis tournament with top finishers becoming champions.

"Talented players are coming out through the pipeline and our target is to prove this in this championship even though this group of players, except for one player, doesn't have international experience," head coach Golam Rabbani Choton said at a press conference yesterday.

"We have picked this group of girls through trials in June and since then they have been working hard and improved a lot in physical, technical and tactical aspects. The girls are determined to prove their improvement on the ground," said Choton.

The players have, on average, played 20 competitive matches in different domestic competitions and are expected to use that experience at international level.

Women's league in single-leg format

SPORTS REPORTER

In a bid to preparing women footballers for next year's international engagements, Bangladesh Football Federation (BFF) yesterday decided to hold the Women's Football League in single leg format instead of usual double leg system.

A record number of 12 teams, four more than the last edition which ended in July last year, are going to participate in the league, which is supposed to get underway on November 15.

"As we have four international engagements -- SAFF U-20 Women's Championship, AFC U-20 Women's Championship Qualifiers, SAFF U-17 women's Championship and Olympic pre-qualifiers -- from February to April next year, we need to bring the footballers into preparation as fitness of footballers deteriorate during domestic competitions due to limitation of training at club level," said BFF women's wing chairman Mahfuz Akter Kiran.