

## Tanzid hammers hundred, Nasir settles in after ban



**SPORTS REPORTER**

Just a day after admitting the need to show more responsibility in converting starts into bigger scores, Bangladesh opener Tanzid Hasan Tamim lived up to his words.

The left-hander smashed a blistering 59-ball 103 -- his first List A century in two years -- to power Legends of Rupganj to a thumping ten-wicket victory over Partex Sporting at BKSP Ground 3 in Savar yesterday.

Tanzid's exploits helped his side chase down Partex's 129 all out in just 18.3 overs in the 50-over fixture.

The 24-year-old -- who had not found that elusive three-figure mark in List A in 46 innings, but found starts in international cricket, most recently in the Champions Trophy -- struck a boundary off Md Rakib to bring up his ton and the winning runs.

Rupganj bowlers had set the game up for Tanzid's carnage.



Pacers Shoriful Islam and Rejaur Rahman bagged two each, while Mahedi Hasan picked four for 34. The outcome meant they are fifth in the standings, still in line for qualifying for the Super Six with five wins.

Meanwhile, at BKSP Ground 4, Agrani Bank stunned Brothers Union with a four-wicket win, courtesy of Taibur Rahman's four-

fer and 35 with the bat.

Asked to bat, Brothers batters managed starts. Mizanur Rahman managed 44, while Aich Mollah notched 33 before veteran Alok Kapali's 57-ball 58 helped them to 238 for nine.

Agrani's chase had a similar look to Brothers' innings, but Taibur and Shuvagata Hom (45 not out off 35) helped avert a

collapse after three quick wickets, ensuring they remain fourth in the standings.

Elsewhere, in Mirpur, the focus was very much on Nasir Hossain, who returned to domestic action a day after his two-year ban for breaching ICC's Anti-Corruption Code was lifted.

Nasir appeared for Rupganj Tigers in their fixture against Gazi Group and helped his side upset the third-placed team with an eight-wicket victory, with 16.3 overs to spare.

Electing to bowl, Rupganj operated with Nasir from the start, and the 33-year-old off-spinner conceded 31 runs in the 10-over spell, returning with a wicket, while five others chipped in with wickets to bundle Gazi out for 159 in 42.1 overs.

In reply, Rupganj openers Abdul Majid and Amit Majumder both struck fifties to lay the platform for a smooth chase, before Nasir fell for nine after coming to the middle in the 30th over.

Kohli second-fastest to reach 13k mark in T20

**AGENCIES**

Virat Kohli etched his name in the history books once again as he became the second-fastest batter to reach 13,000 runs in T20 cricket during Royal Challengers Bengaluru's IPL 2025 clash against Mumbai Indians at the Wankhede Stadium yesterday.

The 36-year-old reached the milestone when he scored his 17th run in the match -- becoming the first Indian and only the fifth player overall to cross the 13,000-run mark in T20s -- before reaching fifty off 29 balls with a six off Vignesh Puthur.

Kohli achieved the feat in his 386th innings, placing him second on the all-time list behind West Indies great Chris Gayle, who reached the milestone in 381 innings. Kohli surpassed England's Alex Hales by a staggering 90 innings to clinch the second spot.

Since his T20 debut in 2007 for Delhi, Kohli has been a force in the format. Over 8,000 of his T20 runs have come in the IPL, where he also leads among Indians in centuries, with nine to his name -- eight of them in the IPL alone.

With this latest landmark, Kohli further cements his legacy as one of the greatest batters in the shortest format of the game.

## Lifting of saliva ban rewards IPL bowlers

**AFP, Ahmedabad**

The return of saliva on the ball in the Indian Premier League is helping bowlers generate reverse swing, with Gujarat Titans' Mohammed Siraj among those reaping the benefits.

Siraj starred with figures of 4-17 in Gujarat's third straight victory in the T20 tournament when they thrashed Sunrisers Hyderabad by seven wickets on Sunday.

The paceman beamed when asked if bowlers were enjoying the end of the saliva ban, saying, "100 percent".

"If the ball tails a bit, it is a wicket," Siraj said, after being named player of the match.

"When there is no saliva, the ball comes onto the bat easily. This rule makes it much better for the bowlers, with lbw and bowled now a chance (for the bowlers)."

The ban on saliva imposed during the Covid pandemic was lifted ahead of the 18th edition of the IPL last month.

The use of saliva to shine one side of the old ball and keep the other rough helps fast bowlers get the leather ball to swing late.

Punjab Kings pace spearhead Arshdeep Singh got the ball to reverse in his team's opener last month as he claimed two key wickets in a win.

Skipper Shreyas Iyer said left-arm quick Arshdeep "came in and said the ball is actually reversing a bit so the saliva on the ball is helping the bowlers".

The art of reverse swing was pioneered by former Pakistan fast bowlers Sarfraz Nawaz and Imran Khan to aid bowling on batting-friendly Asian pitches.

The IPL barred the practice after it was banned by the International Cricket Council (ICC) as a precautionary measure during the pandemic.

India pace spearhead Mohammed Shami appealed last month to allow the use of saliva in the game's 50-over format during the team's Champions Trophy triumph in Dubai.

## Brook named new England white-ball captain

**REUTERS**

England batter Harry Brook has been appointed the country's white-ball captain after Jos Buttler stepped down after their group stage exit from the ICC Champions Trophy, the England and Wales Cricket Board said on Monday.

The 34-year-old Buttler had overseen 22 losses in 34 One-Day Internationals since succeeding the retired Eoin Morgan in June 2022 and led England to their second Twenty20 World Cup title that same year. However, the performances have dipped since then with the side failing to retain their T20 and ODI crowns.

Brook, 26, captained England in the ODI series against Australia in September and was vice-captain at the Champions Trophy.

"It's a real honour to be named England's white-ball captain," Brook said in a statement.

"Ever since I was a kid playing cricket at Burley in Wharfedale, I dreamed of representing Yorkshire, playing for England, and maybe one day leading the team."

"I want to thank my family and coaches who've supported me every step of the way. Their belief in me has made all the difference and I wouldn't be in this position without them," Brook said. "There's so much talent in this country, and I'm looking forward to getting started, moving us forward, and working towards winning series, World Cups and major events."



## Faltering Real face Arsenal

Real Wednesday's high-voltage Champions League quarterfinals lineup will feature defending champions Real Madrid taking on Arsenal at the Emirates Stadium. In the other fixture, Bayern Munich will host Inter Milan. The Arsenal-Real contest pits together two sides who are second in their respective domestic league. At the same time, it is a clash of league-leaders as Bundesliga toppers Bayern will brace for the arrival of Serie A leaders Inter in the other fixture.

➤ Arsenal won their only previous tie with Real Madrid, back in 2006 -- a goalless draw at Highbury following a 1-0 win in Spain in the last 16 of the competition.

➤ The Gunners last progressed into the semifinals of the competition in 2009, while Real have been crowned kings of Europe six times since then.

➤ Real Madrid have won 11 of their previous 22 knockout games against English opposition in the UEFA Champions League.

➤ Real haven't lost the first leg in any of their last eight knockout-stage ties in the Champions League, winning five of them. They are unbeaten in four when on the road for the opening game of a tie, with only two defeats in their previous 13 such matches.

➤ Los Blancos have beaten 111 different teams in the European Cup/Champions League, but Arsenal are not yet one of them.

➤ Inter have kept a clean sheet in

eight of their 10 matches in the UEFA Champions League this season and have conceded only two goals in that period in the competition.

➤ Bayern are unbeaten across their last 22 home matches in the Champions League (W17 D5). The last time they lost was when they faced PSG in the quarters in April 2021.

➤ Bayern have won five of the nine encounters between these two sides in European competition, with three wins for Inter and one draw.

## Abahani aim to derail Kings

**SPORTS REPORTER**

Domestic football returns with a bang today following a seven-week break, as defending champions Bashundhara Kings face off against traditional powerhouses Abahani in the Federation Cup's Qualifier-1 fixture at Shaheed Dharendranath Datta Stadium in Cumilla.

In Mymensingh, spirited Brothers Union will also take on giant-killers Rahmatganj MFS in the competition's elimination match at Rofiq Uddin Bhuiyan Stadium. Both matches will kick off at 2:45pm.

Under the new format of the Federation Cup, the winners of Qualifier-1 will move to the final, while the losing side will face the winners of the elimination match to have a second shot at the final.

Since the emergence of Kings in top flight football, they have knocked down all heavyweights, including Abahani, who have managed to conquer Kings only twice in the last six seasons.

However, this season brought a twist. Abahani, fielding a squad without foreign players, secured their first-ever Bangladesh Premier League win over the Kings.

Local coach AKM Maruf Haque was behind Abahani's triumph. The club have now strengthened their squad with the inclusion of two proven foreign campaigners -- Raphael Augusto and Emeka Ogbu -- and are determined to secure a place in the final after one season.

"Amid tight schedule, we don't want to wait for another match to confirm the final berth; rather, we want to ensure the Federation Cup final



by beating our opponents tomorrow [Tuesday]," Abahani head coach AKM Maruf Haque told The Daily Star from Cumilla yesterday.

Abahani had kept up their training during Ramadan, and the two new foreign recruits also had three weeks to adjust to the local squad. Coach Maruf is optimistic about the inclusion of midfielder Raphael and attacker Emeka.

"We had previously lacked control of the game from midfield and, as a result, failed to create goal-scoring chances. But the inclusion of Raphael and Emeka has mostly resolved those issues," said Maruf, who, however, downplays his significant role in shaping the Abahani squad.

Kings, meanwhile, used the break to bolster their ranks with four foreign players. Three are likely to feature today alongside proven Brazilian Jonathan Fernandes.

However, they face injury setbacks. Miguel Ferreira and Tariq Raihan Kazi will miss the tie due to unavailability and injury, while defender Tapu Barman and new Argentine forward Juan Eduardo Lescano are also nursing knocks.

Despite the injury concerns, Kings are determined to reverse their fortunes in the season's second meeting with Abahani and make it to the final for a second straight year.

"Although Bashundhara Kings are ahead of Abahani in terms of the head-to-head record over the last six to seven years, tomorrow [today] the team who takes their chances will come out successful," Kings assistant coach Mahbub Hossain Roxy told The Daily Star over the phone from Cumilla.



Bangladesh women's team coach Peter Butler consults with his assistants as players in the camp go through a gym session at the BFF Gymnasium yesterday. The English coach came to Dhaka yesterday and oversaw the session, which was not attended by the senior players who had been boycotting training under him since January 29. With four of the seniors already off to Bhutan, the remaining 14 who were part of the boycott, later sat for a meeting with Butler. According to BFF's women's wing chairman Mahfuz Akter Kiron, who arranged the meeting, the Englishman asked the players to join the training on his terms by forgetting past issues, and Kiron claimed that the players agreed to the proposal.

PHOTO: BFF