

Tanzid’s ton as Rajshahi rejoice

ABDULLAH AL MEHDI

Rajshahi Warriors opener Tanzid Hasan Tamim capped a brilliant night with a ton in the Bangladesh Premier League (BPL) T20 final, guiding his side to a 63-run win over Chattogram Royals in Mirpur yesterday.

Rajshahi secured their second title, following Rajshahi Kings’ triumph in 2020, while Tanzid became just the third player to score a hundred in a BPL final, after Chris Gayle and Tamim Iqbal.

At the Sher-e-Bangla National Cricket Stadium, the southpaw was careful early, but the first signs of intent came against the best that the tournament had to throw this season, Shoriful Islam. A swivel pull over square-leg for six was characteristic of his strokeplay, but this time he kept up his aggression through to the latter end of the innings to give Rajshahi the upper hand.

Having struck just one fifty in his 12 innings ahead of the final, Tanzid had been carrying a burden. However, the manner in which he dispatched Shoriful again through extra cover for four showed he was intent on making his presence in the middle count. The 25-year-old would follow up with a maximum against Chattogram skipper Mahedi Hasan, another impact Powerplay bowler, as



Rajshahi Warriors opener Tanzid Hasan Tamim raises his bat after reaching his century off 62 deliveries in the final of the Bangladesh Premier League 2026 against Chattogram Royals at the Sher-e-Bangla National Cricket Stadium in Mirpur yesterday. Tamim’s ton helped Rajshahi clinch the title despite a two-wicket haul from Chattogram’s star bowler Shoriful Islam, who finished with a record 26 wickets.

PHOTO: STAR

BPL 12: More drama than delivery

SCORES IN BRIEF

Rajshahi Warriors: 174 for four in 20 overs (Tanzid 100, Sahibzada 30; Shoriful 2-33, Mukidul 2-20)

Chattogram Royals: 111 for nine in 17.4 overs (Baig 39, Asif 21; Binura 4-9, Murad 3-15)

Result: Rajshahi won by 63 runs
Player of the final: Tanzid Tamim

Rajshahi reached 40 for no loss after the Powerplay.

He would go after Mahedi again in his second over, this time producing back-to-back sixes to really put pressure on a Chattogram attack which had put opponents this season on a tight leash.

Tanzid’s fifty came in 29 deliveries, with six sixes already under his belt. Sahibzada Farhan’s departure after a run-a-ball 30 brought an end to an 82-run opening stand, and Tanzid went on to get a reprieve on 54 when dropped by Mukidul Mugdho.

He added 47 more runs for the third-wicket stand with Kane Williamson, who struck a brisk 15-ball 24. In the 19th over, Tanzid finally reached three figures with a push towards point for a single. Raising his bat and helmet, arms outstretched, he earned full admiration from the crowd, having set a new milestone as the Bangladesh batter with the most BPL tons.

Shoriful, meanwhile, claimed two wickets but also became the highest wicket-taker in a single BPL edition with 26 scalps.

Chasing 175, Chattogram never got going, eventually restricted to 111.

SAMSUL AREFIN KHAN

The 12th edition of the Bangladesh Premier League (BPL) reinforced the tournament’s reputation as a magnet for controversy, where off-field volatility consistently eclipsed the on-field action, requiring the governing body to repeatedly overhaul the schedule just to keep the league afloat.

The tournament faced immediate instability during its maiden away-from-Dhaka start in Sylhet. Before the opening match on December 25, the Chattogram Royals ownership withdrew due to financial insolvency, forcing the Bangladesh Cricket Board (BCB) to assume direct control of the franchise. Simultaneously, coaching staff at Noakhali Express staged a brief walkout over alleged mismanagement.

The league was then struck by tragedy on December 27 when Dhaka Capitals assistant coach Mahbub Ali Zaki passed away during a team warm-up session. This sombre atmosphere deepened on December 30 following the death of former Prime Minister Begum Khaleda Zia, which prompted the BCB to suspend play and cancel the post-Sylhet Chattogram phase entirely to accommodate a revised fixture.

When play resumed, the focus shifted from domestic logistics to international diplomacy. On January 3, the release of Mustafizur Rahman by the Kolkata Knight Riders ignited a row that saw the Bangladesh government and the BCB lodge a formal complaint with the ICC, even threatening the national team’s participation in the upcoming T20 World Cup in India.

Amid the escalating tension, a fresh internal crisis erupted on January 15. Disparaging comments regarding player salaries by BCB director Najmul Islam

BPL 12: HIGHLIGHTS

Most runs: Parvez Hossain Emon (Sylhet) – 395 runs

Most wickets: Shoriful Islam (Chattogram) – 26 wickets

Highest total: Chattogram 198-5 against Sylhet

Lowest total: Noakhali 61 against Sylhet

Highest score: Tawhid Hridoy (Rangpur) – 109 off 63 balls

100s: 4 (Najmul Hossain Shanto, Hassan Eisakhil, Tawhid Hridoy and Tanzid Hasan Tamim)

5-fer: 3 (Faheem Ashraf, Nasum Ahmed and Shoriful Islam)

Best bowling figure: Nasum Ahmed (Sylhet) – 5/7 against Noakhali

Hattricks: 3 (Mehedi Hasan Rana, Mrittunjoy Chowdhury and Ripon Mondol)

Most catches: 10 (Litton Das, Tanzid Hasan Tamim)

Most catches in a match: 5 Shahibzada Farhan (Rajshahi) against Sylhet

Most stumping in a match: 4 Adam Rossington (Chattogram) against Dhaka

triggered a league-wide player boycott. The strike was only resolved after the board stripped Najmul of his finance-related duties, leading to yet another rescheduling of the final phase in Dhaka.

Parallel to these disruptions, the BCB

intensified its efforts to safeguard the league’s integrity following previous scandals, as the ICC Anti-Corruption Unit conducted rigorous screenings throughout the tournament. A Noakhali Express player, speaking on condition of anonymity, said, “Even a first-ball dismissal was questioned. Phones were checked regularly, and sometimes I didn’t even carry my phone to the ground.”

Adding another layer of embarrassment to an already turbulent season, the latest jolt came yesterday when BCB director Muhammad Mukhlesur Rahman stepped down as chairman of the board’s audit committee following allegations linking him to match-fixing during the tournament.

BPL governing council member secretary Itekhhar Rahman said the season had been “extremely difficult” due to time constraints. “But our goal was to organise a clean BPL. Integrity issues have improved compared to last year,” he said, adding that ensuring player payments is now the board’s priority and that franchises will be reassessed next season – and revenue sharing will depend on profitability.

Former Bangladesh captain and Rangpur Riders assistant coach Mohammad Ashraful told The Daily Star that while the final eventually featured the best teams, the overall impact was limited. “A major reason for lower scores was the cancellation of the Chattogram leg,” Ashraful said. “Except for [Abdul Gaffar] Saqlain, we didn’t really discover many new young players, which is tragic.”

He stressed the need for structural reform: “Until we implement a proper home-and-away system, the BPL will not have a significant impact.”

BCB audit committee chairman steps down following allegations

SPORTS REPORTER

Bangladesh Cricket Board (BCB) director Muhammad Mukhlesur Rahman stepped down from his role as audit committee chairman on Friday following allegations of involvement in match-fixing in the 12th edition of the Bangladesh Premier League (BPL).



“Yes, he has resigned from his role as audit committee chairman,” a BCB director informed.

Mukhlesur, who was elected from Chapainawabganj District Sports Association in the BCB elections on October 6 last year, has been accused of involvement in fixing – a matter that came into the light after journalist

Riasad Azim published a bombshell investigative report on his social media handle on Thursday night.

“We have already handed the details to Alex Marshall [chairman of BCB’s Integrity Unit]. He will begin his investigation from tomorrow,” a BCB director informed. “We have received allegations and it will be investigated,” he further added.

U-19s into WC Super 6

STAR SPORTS DESK

Bangladesh cruised to a seven-wicket victory over the USA in Harare yesterday to secure a place in the Super Six stage of the ICC U-19 World Cup.

The win was set up by a disciplined bowling effort, with the Bangladesh pacers doing most of the damage. Iqbal Hossain Emon led the charge with figures of three for 41, while fellow quicks Al Fahad and Rizan Hossain claimed two wickets apiece as the USA were bundled out for 199 in 50 overs.

For the USA, Adnit Jhamb top-scored with a brisk 68 off 69 balls, while openers Sahil Garg (35 off 60) and Utkarsh Srivastava (39 off 65) got starts but failed to capitalise.

In reply, Bangladesh got off to a solid start as opener Zawad Abrar raced to 47 off 42 balls. His opening partner Rifat played a watchful 30 off 55 deliveries, and the pair added 78 runs before Zawad was dismissed in the 15th over by Garg. Srivastava then removed Rifat in the 18th over, bringing captain Azizul Hakim Tamim to the crease.

Tamim steadied the chase with Kalam Siddiki, adding 88 runs for the third wicket. The skipper reached his half-century before falling to Ridvik Appidi with Bangladesh 24 runs shy of victory. Kalam remained unbeaten on a composed 30 off 55 balls, while Rizan Hossain chipped in with an unbeaten 20 as Bangladesh reached the target with 51 balls to spare.

The defeat eliminated the USA. India, Bangladesh and New Zealand have qualified from Group B, though second place remains up for grabs. New Zealand would need to lose to India in their final group match today for Bangladesh to finish second.



‘MY LEVEL IS GETTING BETTER AND BETTER’

Carlos Alcaraz stepped up his quest to win a maiden Australian Open as he overwhelmed showman Corentin Moutet on Friday to reach the last 16. Top seed Alcaraz was never in danger against French 32nd seed Moutet, easing through 6-2, 6-4, 6-1 at Rod Laver Arena in 2hr 5min. It was the Spaniard’s 100th Grand Slam match and he boasts a remarkable 87-13 win-loss record, matching the legendary Bjorn Borg at the same stage of his career. “I think my level is getting better and better,” said the six-time Grand Slam winner.

PHOTO: REUTERS



Sabina Khatun (R) celebrates with Masura Parvin following one of her four goals in a 9-1 thrashing of Pakistan in their penultimate match of the inaugural SAFF Women’s Futsal Championship in Bangkok on Friday. The win consolidated Bangladesh’s lead at the top of the seven-team table with 13 points from five matches. Sabina, who previously led Bangladesh to back-to-back SAFF Women’s Football Championship titles, can lead Bangladesh to another success when they take on Maldives on the last day of the competition on Sunday.

PHOTO: SAFF