

BFF polls on June 9

SPORTS REPORTER

The election of the Bangladesh Football Federation (BFF) will be held on June 9, it was decided at an executive committee meeting of the football's governing body yesterday.

Although the tenure of the current committee expires this month, the BFF has reportedly got the green signal from FIFA and AFC to stay in power till the polls.

The meeting also formed two committees with BFF vice-president Monir Ahmed heading the Metropolis School Football League Committee and Azfaruzzaman Sohrab as chairman of the qualifying competition (under-10-12 years) for Danone Cup, which will be held in France.

Freddie the key player, says Jones

BBC ONLINE, undated

Fast bowler Simon Jones has defended Andrew Flintoff from the criticism the England squad is suffering following their World Cup exit on Tuesday.

Glamorgan's Jones, who says he is eager to reclaim his England place, says no one should question Flintoff's desire.

"He's looked a bit out of form but it happens, you can't be good all the time can you?" Jones told BBC Wales Sport.

"Fred (Flintoff) is such a key player that if he's not playing well then the whole team suffers."

England needed to beat South Africa in Tuesday's Super 8 match in Barbados to stay in the hunt for a semifinal place.

But instead Michael Vaughan's side slumped to a hurtful nine-wicket defeat as the Proteas easily swept past England's measly 154 all out.

"I don't know what to make of it because I wasn't there, but England need Fred firing on all cylinders if they're going to succeed," added Jones.

"He had a super 2005 (Ashes) series, he was probably the world's best all-rounder then but you do get a dip in form sometimes."

"I'm sure he'll be working as hard as he can in the nets, working on his fitness and he'll be back, don't worry about it."

Jones has not played for England since the fourth Ashes Test in August 2005 because of injury.

The 28-year-old began his latest comeback last week in a friendly match against Sussex at Hove.

Glamorgan chose to rest Jones for Wednesday's first-class match against Oxford UCCE at The Parks, but he will return to competitive action on Sunday in the Friends Provident Trophy match at Somerset.

Jones is determined to force his way back into the England side, hopefully for the power Test series against the West Indies which begins next month.

"We'll have to wait and see, and I'll have to take some wickets first," Jones said.

"I don't feel I have to prove my cricketing ability, I feel I just need to prove my fitness and if I can last the full five days."

"It's something I haven't done for a while, so it's going to take a little bit of time to get my rhythm."

"I'm looking forward to it, this is why I've worked so hard over the last 12 months just to get back playing and I can't wait now."

Hosts serious

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let them off the hook. They put up a good total and we were left to fight hard for a win and we failed in that," said Bashir.

Left-arm paceman Syed Rasel, who missed the Ireland match due to a sprained ankle suffered minutes before the toss, will return to face the West Indies, while batsman Mohammad Ashraf was also cleared to play after hurting his middle finger on the left hand.

"We must give it our best shot to end on a high note," said Bashir.

"We must realise that we deserve a better place than last."

TEAMS

WEST INDIES (from): Brian Lara (captain), Ramnaresh Sarwan, Chris Gayle, Dwayne Smith, Shivnarine Chanderpaul, Dwayne Bravo, Marlon Samuels, Ian Brashaw, Corey Collymore, Jerome Taylor, Denesh Ramdin, Devon Smith, Lendl Simmons, Daren Powell, Kieron Pollard.

BANGLADESH (from): Habibul Bashar (captain), Shahriar Nafees, Tamim Iqbal, Aftab Ahmed, Shakib Al Hasan, Mohammad Ashraf, Mushfiqur Rahim, Mohammad Rafiq, Abdur Razzaq, Mashrafe Bin Mortaza, Shahadat Hossain, Forhad Reza, Syed Rasel, Rajin Saleh, Javed Omar.

Umpires: Billy Bowden and Rudi Koertzen.



PHOTO: STAR
Sheikh Russel fullback Aminul (R) challenges Khulna Abahani midfielder Tajul (C) during their B. League rematch at the Bangabandhu National Stadium yesterday.

Styris wants Cup

AFP, St George's

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Arguably the closest New Zealand have come to winning the World Cup was in 1992, when they were joint hosts with Australia.

In front of a home crowd in Auckland, New Zealand were on top in their semifinal against Pakistan until the then unknown Inzamamul Haq scored 60 off 37 balls to turn the game the way of the eventual champions.

But by then New Zealand had already left a mark on the tournament, not least through the innovative tactics of captain Martin Crowe which included opening the bowling with off-spinner Deepak Patel.

"I was reasonably young," said the 31-year-old Styris, "but I do remember it gripping New Zealand."

He added: "New Zealand got in behind it big-time because they played well and out-thought a few opponents, which is where the history of New Zealand tactical smarts has come from, with Martin Crowe."

"If we play well, we know we are a good enough side to win it," said Styris.

"In the past, a semifinal spot has been a fair result for some of those (New Zealand) teams. This team here, if we hadn't made the team it would have been a failure.

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