

BCB waking up

Cricket

SPORTS REPORTER

The recent hopeless performance of the national cricket team has forced the authorities to rethink the recruitment policy of the players in the backdrop of a notion that the current crop 'feels comfortable' about their future under the existing salary structure despite repeated failures.

The board while weighing options to take a hard line approach after the Tigers' 5-0 whitewash in Pakistan earlier this month and the subsequent careless remarks from captain Mohammad Ashraf is also contemplating financial punishment as a means to create awareness among the 'can't care less' players.

"I think time has come to rethink the whole process because everyone is getting frustrated to watch this kind of poor performance day by day. We just cannot sit on it and must find a solution,"

said BCB's cricket operations committee chairman Gazi Ashraf Hossain yesterday.

A former national captain, Ashraf said that financial penalty could be one among many options. But he made it clear that they have to find a way out to stop the slump in performance as it is not only displeasing to the millions of followers but also hindering the reputation at the international level.

"Let us find the problems behind the repeated failures first then we will think about the ways. Yes, financial punishment may be an option but before that we have to look at the bigger picture," he added.

In his first move, Ashraf has decided to sit with the national players today to understand their version behind the disastrous performance.

"Actually the cricket operations committee never sat with the players exclusively to discuss their performance."

"We will try to get explanations about their irresponsible dismiss-

als. It was not actually the result but the way they got out that upset everybody," he explained.

It seemed that Ashraf, the 1999 World Cup team manager, was not ready to bring the coaching staff under the scanner right now and believed that players ultimately should perform.

"People should understand that the board is spending a lot of money and they (the players and staff) have to pay back. It is called professionalism. Everybody is accountable to their jobs but in the case of the coaching staff, you can only judge whether they run practice in the right way. But it is ultimately the players who should deliver in the middle," he explained.

There were an indication that the board is trying to put pressure on the national players by giving the message that there are a good number of players in the bench who can snatch their places any time and as a sign, they brought some discarded players into training.

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A combo picture shows (L) BFF president candidate Kazi Salahuddin (2nd from L) and members of his panel are all smiles at the Youngmen's Club premises while (R) another president contender Maj Gen (retd) Amin Ahmed Chowdhury (2nd from L) go through some last minute details in front of the Sonali Otis Club yesterday.



PHOTOS: STAR

Katich propels Punjab



CRICINFO, undated

Simon Katich's last game of the Indian Premier League turned into a memorable one as he steered Punjab's run-chase against a formidable Delhi bowling line-up in Mohali on Sunday.

After a four-pronged pace attack had made use of a surface that offered bounce, keeping Delhi down to a modest total, Katich's innovative methods helped Punjab to their second successive win in the competition.

And after watching two early losses, Priety Zinta has plenty of reasons to smile.

Delhi's bowlers had set up both their earlier wins but their batsmen squandered the early advantage at the toss here. A string of sketchy cameos allowed them to reach a competitive total but even the usually niggardly bowling line-up had no answer to Katich's cheeky shuffles.

Punjab might feel they under-

used Katich -- sent in at No.5 in their first game, where he was up against an near-impossible asking-rate, and missing out on the next two. Opening the innings here was the ideal platform, though, and he did what no other batsman has managed to in the tournament: hit Glenn McGrath and Mohammad Asif off rhythm. The duo had got Delhi upbeat with a wicket apiece but neither could contain Katich's counter-attack.

McGrath was struck for two successive fours twice while Asif was a bit confused after a hat-trick of boundaries -- scooped over extra-cover, scooped over point and pulled to fine leg. Full or short, they were all put away.

He should have been out on 26, when an inswinging yorker from McGrath had him plumb in front, but Rudi Koertzen, the umpire, suggested there was an inside edge. Batsmen talk of playing in the V and Katich managed that both in front and behind the wicket. Two delectable straight drives, either side of the stumps at the non-striker's end, had McGrath muttering.

But what really messed with the bowlers' plans was his nimble

shuffles across the stumps, gliding and flicking past the keeper. Walking across the stumps, he regularly played the pick-up shot to fine leg and whenever offered with he didn't waste the chance to angle the bat fine. He fell with just 40 needed, a task which Yuvraj Singh made sure was accomplished without too many jitters.

The game had been set up by the bowlers earlier. Irfan Pathan and Brett Lee made the early breakthroughs and were well backed up by VRV Singh and legspinner Piyush Chawla. They used the short ball effectively, amply illustrated by Shoaib Malik's tame upper-cut that sailed straight to Lee at third man. Pathan's two wickets -- one an in-ducker to nail Virender Sehwag, the other a quick one that knocked back Rajat Bhatia's off stump -- made him the leading wicket-taker in the tournament.

VRV was the most effective, ending with three wickets and conceding only 29. He hustled with pace and regularly surprised the batsmen with bounce. Dinesh Karthik had no clue to one that took off from a good length, flicked the

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AFC delegates happy at preparation

SPORTS REPORTER

The Asian Football Confederation (AFC) delegation in Dhaka to monitor today's election of the Bangladesh Football Federation (BFF) was happy at the preparation.

"At first, we realised that certain procedures of the election were not really following the way FIFA and AFC handles them," said Charmaine Perera, legal affairs director of the AFC.

"In fact, we found that the ballot papers were not in order. For the transparency and independency of the whole electoral process, it's important that the ballot papers be separate for each position, which was not the case."

"We talked with the election commission and they were hesitant at start but once we explained why it was necessary, the election commission gave us their full co-operation," she informed.

"Yes, we are looking forward to a good election tomorrow," commented AFC general secretary Dato Paul Mony, who is in his third visit to Dhaka in one month.

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NCA lose too many wickets

SPORTS REPORTER

GP-BCB National Cricket Academy (NCA) took a slender 95-run lead at the end of the second day's play of the first four-day match against Pakistan Cricket Academy at the Shaheed Chandu Stadium yesterday.

When stumps were called, NCA were on 144-5 in their second innings after PCA were bowled out for 241. The local academy side were earlier bowled out for only 192 runs in their first dig on the first day.

Asad Shafiq, who was unbeaten overnight on 21, scored exactly 50 before captain Mehrab Hossain caught him off slinger Rubel Hossain. Imad Wasim was the other notable scorer on the day, contributing an unbeaten 33 off 133 balls.

For NCA, Tigers left-arm seamer Sajidul Islam, off-spinner Farhad Hossain and Mahbubul Alam Robin took two wickets apiece.

Jahurul Islam and Farhad Hossain added 51 for the first

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BOA's first meeting held

SPORTS REPORTER

Bangladesh Olympic Association (BOA) president and Army Chief General Moeen U Ahmed yesterday asked the newly elected members of the National Olympic Committee to increase momentum in the sports arena.

Moeen was introduced to the new BOA members at the first meeting of its executive committee at the Kurmitola Golf Club before old treasurer Monirul Haque handed over the charges to his successor Sanaul Haque.

According to the agenda, there were discussions over the standing committees of the BOA and the training and monitoring committee was renamed training and development committee.

The BOA executive committee also decided to add two more standing committees -- law and ethics

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BFF polls today

Football

SPORTS REPORTER

With hope to elect a workable executive committee that will bring football in the country back on the right track, the long due election of the Bangladesh Football Federation (BFF) will be held today.

After the annual general meeting in the morning, the councillors will cast their votes for 21 posts from 2-6 pm at the BFF Bhawan with Asian Football Confederation (AFC) high-ups monitoring the process.

There is no clear favourite and legendary footballer Kazi Salahuddin is pitted against Maj Gen (retd) Amin Ahmed Chowdhury, a relatively unknown face in football arena, for the president's hot seat.

Both the president candidates have called the 112 voters out of 119 councillors to go for the worthy and honest persons but it seems that neither panel has won full confidence of the voters or even the critics.

The footballer lovers, however, will welcome a mix of both panels

to win in expense of the 'black sheep' of the family and represent the governing body of football for the next four years.

Salahuddin's announcement to contest as president was greeted by

all quarters initially but the country's best (arguably) footballer's association with members of the incumbent committee, which has been time again blamed for the

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THE PANELS

Kazi Salahuddin (President)
Monir Ahmed (Sr VP)
Manzoor Hossain Malu (VP)
Ashrafuddin Ahmed Chunnun (VP)
Abdur Rahim (VP)
Golam Rasool Mollah (VP)

Members
Anwarul Hoque Helal
Sirajul Islam Bachchu
Mojammel Haque Mukta
Azfaruzzaman Sohrab
MR Shaheen
MAzim Badal
Golam Rabbani Helal
Amirul Islam Babu
Asaduzzaman Khasru
Mokbul Ahmed
Shafiquzzaman
Abul Khair Chandon
Arshad Ali
Shahiduzzaman Shahid
Hakul Islam

Amin Ahmed Chowdhury (President)
Salam Mursheidi (Sr VP)
Badal Roy (VP)
Shawkat Ali Khan Jahangir (VP)
Kazi Nabil Ahmed (VP)
Nurul Alam Chowdhury (VP)

Members
Harunur Rashid
Sheikh Mohammed Aslam
Fazlur Rahman Babul
Jinnatul Islam
Satyajit Das Rupu
MA Gafur
Hasanuzzaman Khan Babloo
Abdul Wadud Pintu
Manzur Morshed
Saiful Islam Bhutto
Shamsul Haque Chowdhury
Hamidul Haque Bahalul
Khorsheed Alam Babul
Towfiqul Islam
Ekramul Karim Chowdhury



Did U Know?

American swimmers Nancy Hogshead and Carrie Steinseifer registered the first official tie in Olympic history in the 100-metre freestyle at the 1984 Olympics. They each recorded a time of 55.92.



Arsene Wenger

(Arsenal manager)
"I still feel he is a world-class player and I think he will prove in Barcelona he is one of their better players."



SET Max
Indian Premier League
Royal Challengers Bangalore v
Chennai Super Kings
Live from 7:30pm
ESPN
Sportscentre India
Sports News
Live at 8:30pm
English Premier League
Derby County v Arsenal
Live at 12:55am (Tuesday)

Zia takes solo lead

SPORTS REPORTER

Grand Master Ziaur Rahman overcame a big hurdle when he won his seventh round board against Grand Master Abdullah Al Rakib to maintain solo lead in the 34th National Chess championship at the federation hall room yesterday.

Zia played with white pieces against Blumenfeld Gambit and won at the 21st move against his Biman teammate and reigning champion Rakib to improve his tally to 6.5 points.

In the other matches, IM Enamul Hossain Rajib beat national junior champion FM Minhazuddin Ahmed Sagar, GM Reefat Bin Sattar drew with FM Mohammad Javed, FM Abu Sufian Shakil beat Debaraj Chatterjee, FM Nasir Ahmed beat Sohel Chowdhury and FM Syed Mahfuzur Rahman Emon beat Monir Hossain.



PHOTO: STAR

Grand Master Abdullah Al Rakib (R) moves a piece during his 34th National Chess Championship game against fellow GM Ziaur Rahman at the chess federation hall room at National Sports Council yesterday.



CRICINFO, undated

Rajasthan Royals continued to surge up the points table by beating Bangalore Royal Challengers comprehensively by seven wickets in the Indian Premier League (IPL) at the Chinnaswamy Stadium on Saturday to draw level with the Chennai Super Kings with three wins each.

The win was set up by their bowlers, after Shane Warne decided to field, who restricted Bangalore to 135, allowing the batsmen to chase at a comfortable pace.

The contest wasn't too dissimilar to the one between the Chennai Super Kings and Kolkata earlier in the day, where Chennai completed an easy win after their bowlers kept Kolkata to 147. Having been put in on a pitch with a bit of assistance for the fast bowlers, Bangalore, perhaps taking cue from Brendon McCullum's 158, felt that being positive was the way to go but several aerial shots resulted in a flurry of wickets.

Bangalore were forced to play catch up right from the start, a predicament brought about by their batsmen's urge to attack. Rahul

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PHOTO: INTERNET

Jaipur's Australian all-rounder Shane Watson walks off with Mohammad Kaif after the two sealed a seven-wicket triumph over Bangalore in the Indian Premier League at the M Chinnaswami Stadium on Saturday.

Fm 89.6

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SMS করুন ৮৯৬০ নম্বরে
(kmm_question)
ইমেইল করুন :
kmm@radiotodaydhaka.com
পোস্ট বক্স : ৯০৩২ বনানী, ঢাকা
ফোন করুন : ০১৮১২২৮৯৬০ (অনুষ্ঠান চলাকালীন)

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