

'I was in Kuakata, for God's sake!'

SPORTS REPORTER

"Those who have a lack of self-confidence can only take such a decision".

This is not a fan broadside or criticism from board officials or former players, but from the man who many thought would also join the rebel Indian Cricket League -- Tamim Iqbal.

The left-handed opener quashed speculations that were fuelled when he did not turn up for the meeting with Bangladesh Cricket Board (BCB) on Monday.

"Speculation with me? Why? Do you think I can take such a decision only for money?" asked the dashing batsman, who has so far played four Tests and 42 ODIs, ridiculing all rumours yesterday.

He reminding everyone of his family background and said what

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SHARE YOUR VIEWS

The mass resignation of the national cricketers on Sunday created a stir in the country's sporting fraternity. We believe the readers of The Daily Star have their own way of looking into the stunning episode. We are inviting our valued readers to comment on it by emailing us at sports@thedailystar.net. Your comments will be published.

-- Sports Editor



Did U Know?

Dr. Guttman organised the 1948 International Wheelchair Games, which coincided with the 1948 London Olympics. His dream was of a worldwide sports competition for people with disabilities to be held every four years as "the equivalent of the Olympic Games". Twelve years later, his dream became a reality.



TEN Sports
UEFA Champions League
Man United v Villarreal
Live from 12:45am (Thursday)
Juventus v Zenit
Delayed from 2:45am (Thursday)

ESPN
Sportscentre India
Sports News
Live at 8:30pm

STAR Sports
AFC Champions League
Kashima Antlers v Adelaide United
Live from 3:55pm



DAY'S EVENT
Citycell B. League
Brothers Union v City Mohammedan
(3:30pm)
Venue: Bangabandhu National Stadium



Virender Sehwag

(Star India batsman)
"He is a very good player and you need such players to lift the competition. It is a loss for cricket, but we're happy."
While he welcomes the absence of Andrew Symonds in next month's Test series against Australia.

Dhaka Warriors is born

BCB rejects resignation letters

Cricket

SPORTS REPORTER

The desperate effort of the Bangladesh Cricket Board (BCB) or the lack of it finally saw the rebellion that hit the headlines on Sunday culminated in an uninterrupted transition after Shahriar Nafees and Alok Kapali sneaked through the green channel of the Zia International Airport yesterday and flew to Delhi to usher in a successful coup by the Indian Cricket League (ICL).

When Shahriar and Alok, two of the six contracted cricketers who resigned to aspire their careers with the banned ICL, left on the morning the board officials were sitting at their headquarters in Mirpur hoping that at least dashing right-hander Aftab Ahmed would defy the lure of lucre and report to them on a day they called a meeting with the 14 rebel cricketers.

Sadly though Aftab did not appear, at least to save their blushes. Worse was another wicket fell after opening batsman Nazimuddin, the seventh board contracted player, sent his resignation letter through fax.

And as the day wore on, confir-

mation came from across the board that a team titled Dhaka Warriors is born with the signing of the 13 rebel cricketers from Bangladesh.

"I signed with the ICL. I am very solvent, so money is not a big factor for me," said Shahriar just before leaving the country.

Despite all the facts BCB was not ready to take the final decision on the rebel players rather they called an emergency board meeting today to decide about the fate of the cricketers.

"We are not accepting their retirement letters. They didn't give us any prior notice before submitting the letters which is a clear violation of contract. Also they didn't mention when would their retirements be effective from," said Gazi Ashraf Hossain, chairman of BCB's cricket operations committee, who met the press along with

the other board members after waiting two hours for the rebel players.

"It was also totally unacceptable the way they talked with the media and hence they breached the code of conduct. The cricket operations committee will table their recommendations to the emergency meeting and they will ultimately take the decision. And definitely everything will be decided in line with the ICC's decision about unauthorised competition in last March," he informed.

The BCB officials met with their legal experts yesterday to make the guideline for the meeting.

"But still our door is open for them and we have extended our hands to welcome them back, but they must come to us before we have taken the final decision. But time and tide wait for none in this

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BCB PURSES TO THE REBELS

Player	Amount	Seasons
Habibul Bashar	Tk 10,796,495.00	2005-08
Aftab Ahmed	Tk 10,987,131.00	2005-08
Shahriar Nafees	Tk 10,251,787.00	2005-08
Forhad Reza	Tk 4,681,627.00	2006-08
Dhiman Ghosh	Tk 1,226,411.00	2007-08
Mosharraf Hossain	Tk 341,311.00	2007-08

Youness fires Russel

SPORTS REPORTER



A brace including a late penalty goal by Touati Youness gave Sheikh Russel a thrilling 3-2 win in their opener of the Citycell B. League yesterday.

Russel became the only team among the last year's top four to pull off a win in the opening round so far after reigning champions Abahani and third-placed Muktiyoddha's defeat and a draw by runners-up Mohammedan on the first three days.

After veteran striker Alfaz Ahmed opened the scoring early for Russel, Moroccan forward and skipper Youness added two in the second half before the empty stands of the Bangabandhu National Stadium while Federation Cup's losing semifinalists Farashganj twice equalised through Kabir and Yusuf from setpieces.

Alfaz, recalled to the national team after one year, showed his class five minutes after the kick-off when he took a long ball from Moroccan midfielder Ighir Mohamed and raced past his marker at the right side to shoot home with an angular drive.

Alfaz came close to double the lead in the tenth minute but the new signing of Russel fired over the bar from six yards after meeting a low cross by Tanvir.

Wajed Gazi's Russel, who travel to Chittagong for their second round game against the port city Mohammedan, lost Bourdif Mohamed in the 15th minute due to an injury. It proved crucial as defensive midfielder Jonny, covering for the Moroccan centre-back, tripped Yusuf inside the area two minutes later to concede a penalty.

Farashganj captain Kabir coolly placed the ball past rival goalkeeper Titu to level the score from the spot.

Youness missed a chance in the remaining of the second half but took part in a superb attack down the right as well as finishing the move ten minutes after resumption.

Substitute Nurul Islam won a tackle inside their own half to

release Youness, who sent Mobarak racing at the right flank and rushed for position inside the area.

Mobarak, who got close to the goal during a dazzling run, could have had a shot at goal but selflessly cut the ball back towards the path of Youness who toe-poked the ball into the back of the net from 15 yards.

Youness, whose lack of form

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PHOTO: STAR

Sheikh Russel's Alfaz (L) and Aminul (R) rush in to join Touati Youness, who is celebrating the first of his two goals against Farashganj in the B. League at the Bangabandhu National Stadium yesterday.



PHOTO: STAR

CWAB vice-president Aminul Islam (R) speaks during a press conference at a restaurant in Dhanmondi yesterday. On his right are CWAB president Naimur Rahman and general secretary Debabrata Paul.

Siddons won't comment much

BISHWAJIT ROY

Bangladesh coach Jamie Siddons cannot wait to take the challenge after the mass resignation of the national cricketers to join the banned Indian Cricket League (ICL) which hit Bangladesh cricket hard.

"I don't want to comment much, except to say 'bring on New Zealand'," expressed Jamie Siddons in a text message to this reporter yesterday when asked to comment on the recent episode.

"We will replace these guys (rebel cricketers) and move on," said a confident Tigers coach, who is planning to return to Dhaka earlier than originally scheduled.

"I can't wait to get back and start preparation for the next series," he added.

New Zealand will arrive in the capital on September 30 to play two Tests and three one-day internationals in Dhaka and Chittagong.

"It's a shame that the players

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Academy have upper hand

SPORTS REPORTER

Sri Lanka Cricket (SLC) Development XI were all out for 252 runs in their first innings against GP-BCB National Cricket Academy team on day one of the second four-day match at the R Premadasa Stadium in Colombo yesterday.

Jeevan scored a brilliant century scoring 136 runs off 252 balls for the hosts.

Sajidul Islam captured three wickets for 35 runs while Mahbubul and Zia bagged two wickets each for 53 and 56 runs.

In reply, GP-BCB National Cricket Academy team started their first innings and scored 33 for one at stumps.

Aminul, Naimur slam rebels

Cricket

SPORTS REPORTER

Former national captain Aminul Islam called the attitude of the rebel cricketers who signed up for the Indian Cricket League (ICL) as 'unprofessional and childish'.

The vice-president of Cricketers' Welfare Association of Bangladesh (CWAB), Aminul was speaking at a press conference hosted by the country's only players' body at a local restaurant in Dhanmondi yesterday.

He doubted the reasons given for the mass resignation, saying, "I

saw no reason for them to retire. If they gave specific grounds for resignation, then I would have no problem with it."

"Their steps will be harmful because it showed the wrong way for the future generations," said the country's first Test century-maker.

Aminul said that the players were not quite professionals, something they are usually called.

"I wouldn't call them blackmailers, but definitely it was childish and unprofessional decision."

"One of them said that the coach (Jamie Siddons) misbehaved with him. Most of us have heard worse things but never came out in

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ICL makes it official

SPORTS REPORTER

The rebel Indian Cricket League (ICL) yesterday announced the launch of its ninth team the Dhaka Warriors during a press conference in New Delhi, according to the organisers' website.

Players from this team will also represent ICL Bangladesh in the forthcoming second edition of ICL World Series.

Dhaka Warriors will be led by former Bangladesh captain Habibul Bashar and coached by former Indian seamer Balwinder Singh Sandhu.

The website also posted the profiles of thirteen cricketers -- Mohammad Rafique, Aftab Ahmed, Alok Kapali, Dhiman Ghosh, Forhad Reza, Monjurul

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Gilly rates Indo-Aussie Tests very highly

Cricket

AFP, Mumbai

India's cricket encounters with Australia are so closely fought that they are challenging the Ashes for prominence back home, retired Australian wicketkeeper Adam Gilchrist said on Tuesday.

Ricky Ponting's 15-man Australian squad is due to arrive in India on Sunday for a highly-anticipated four-Test series that Gilchrist hopes will live up to expectations.

"There's no doubt the upcoming series is yet again shaping up to be a fantastic series between Australia and India," Gilchrist, who

retired earlier this year, told reporters here.

"It seems like every time the two



ADAM GILCHRIST

nations have locked horns in the last 10 to 12 years, it's lived up to what I think has become an iconic series.

"In Australia, everyone knows the focus historically has been the Ashes (against England), but this has grown its own iconic status."

Gilchrist, in India to promote an Australian university, said he expected the tour, which begins with the first Test in Bangalore on October 9, to be hard-fought in conditions traditionally favourable to spin.

"There's no doubt the Australian team is inexperienced in regards to what we have had for the last 10 years. We've always had a very experienced team," he said.

"But that doesn't mean that

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VOX POP: Readers speak out on player exodus

Obviously these players made a wise decision to resign from the BCB. Aftab and Nafees are the glittering stars of Bangladesh, however BCB are ignoring them.

They should have resigned a year before. BCB will never find these kinds of stars again. All these players are capable to control any important match. All I want to say "Go Dhaka Warrior"

-Mir Yeameen

As (a) cricket fan I was shocked to learn that some of the best players of the country put forward their retirement for the sake of joining lucrative ICL (for) some quick bucks.

Moreover reading the Daily Star Sport I also came to know that some of the beloved cricketers even said that we should not think of them while they are not thinking of us.

In my opinion the reason, these cricketers lack patriotism. It is more prestigious to play for the country. How many of us can represent the country in international arena?

Finally I hope the writers of the Daily Star will give their views regarding the matter from all around the country. I request those cricketers to read these and change their minds.

-Muhammad Bin Abdullah
Cox's Bazar Model High School

These cricketers have no right to resign. All of them received huge amounts of monthly salary, bonuses, match fees. BCB also paid the cost of medical checkup if any of them were injured.

They showed the cause that their positions in the team were not secured. The fact is that, if a player plays well only then he can assure his position and if he loses, then he has to perform to return back in the team.

It is a request to other players: please do not follow their way. They will never see the sunshine of Bangladesh cricket.

-Ayon

This is very, very frustrating for the whole nation. Yes, money matters

but some other things also matter. How the BCB officials were laughing in the press conference after getting such kind of letters!

We doubt whether they communicated properly with the players to solve this issue. Players like Aftab and Bashar might not be born in every year.

-Mir Mohammad Fakhru Islam
Dhaka University

I am ready to offer BCB a free course on Risk, Quality and Project management to minimise the fallouts.

I am very happy that players made the choice themselves. At the end of the day, they will be the sufferers and can't blame on anyone else. When kids, to me these national team players are kids) get married at the tender age of 21-22, harsh reality in managing professional life and personal life comes in to play. Supporting their family becomes priority.

Aftab, Nafees, Mehrab, Rajin, Nafis Iqbal and others all made their choices. Right or wrong their future will decide. However, the

extra burden of managing the dual role is hindering in their professional stage. Performance is hurting. Money becomes a huge issue.

-Mijanul Akbar
Chief Auditor, Attorney General's Office, Arkansas

I really can't believe that we are losing players like Aftab. I really don't care about others. The way Bashar talked about Jamie Siddons, who I think is very consistent and a good coach. He knows where is our cricketers' problem. He gave enough chances to Habibul Bashar. But he can't even make 20 runs in his last 5 or 6 Tests and forget about ODIs. I think BCB should now just somehow keep Aftab cool because he is really the most important batsman.

-Jahid Islam

All the players that have left, none of them are international quality. Ashraf is mastermind of all this? He's not even international quality. Habibul Bashar: Though he is

our most successful captain, he had an average of 21.68 in ODIs; and never even scored a century.

Aftab Ahmed: He was very exciting to watch but most of his big scores were against minnows.

Shahriar Nafees: Beside his 138 against Australia, all his other runs came against minnows. He also got very big-headed and acts like he's some big shot, not to mention how he's obsessed with himself and his looks. But the main thing is, he is inconsistent.

Forhad Reza: His 22 wickets in 32 ODIs is not impressive. That looks like the stats of a part time bowler or an all-rounder. He's a bowler, and those statistics alone show how he is not of international quality. Some might argue he's an allrounder, but look at his batting average, its 16.95. And worst of all his economy is over 5 runs per over. Horrible.

Dhiman Ghosh: He was a good wicket keeper in my opinion, but nowadays in the international stage, wicketkeepers need to be bat well. And though he had some lucky performances, I could tell

that he didn't have the temperament of a consistent batsman.

Tapash Baisya: He is a good bowler, but he's nowhere close to our Mashrafe or Shahadat. Enough said.

Alok Kapali: He is way too inconsistent and doesn't deserve a position in the national team.

Nazimuddin: He earned more call-ups than he deserved yet he failed to impress every time.

That just about covers all the important players we lost to the Dhaka Warriors. They joined the ICL because they are insecure about their talents. And they have a reason to be. So it's only natural for them to chase after money as they know they will probably be dropped and never be able to return to the national team after about a year or two.

Dhaka Warriors is a blessing in disguise. We lost all of these inconsistent players.

The real performers however, stayed on the team. They are consistent and they are confident.

Tamim Iqbal, Shakib Al Hasan, Shahadat Hossain, Rokibul Hasan

are just some of the examples.

I am getting tired of typing now, but if you research all the players that have remained, it is because they are consistent.

So all you fans out there who are complaining and nagging, please stop giving these players so much attention. They don't deserve it. So thank you all who have joined the ICL for your services. Good luck to you. Just don't try to come back in the future for your and our own good.

-Nabil

To me the main culprits are the BCB officials. They take too many new players who have negligible experience of playing in the international scene and then they are being sent to play with strong teams like Australia.

In case of Shahriar Nafees, he is the best opener we have got, his average after playing 60 ODIs is over 33 which is way more than Ashraf who is considered to be the best batsman for the team. When Ashraf gets out the bowlers

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