

Sylhet pays hefty fine

SPORTS REPORTER

Sylhet paid a heavy price for their ignorance of the game's rules after Bangladesh Cricket Board penalised them yesterday for breaching the Code of Conduct in the third round match of the Ispahani Mirzapore Tea 10th National Cricket League on Wednesday.

After having refused to play after 43.2 overs in their match against Barisal at the Shaheed Chandu Stadium in Bogra, the first-class tournament's technical committee, after reviewing match referee Belayet Hossain's report, decided to award the match to Barisal who receive 12 points (eight for an outright win and 4 bonus points for bowling out Sylhet in the first innings) as per clause 16.1 (refuse to play) of the tournament's playing conditions.

It was learned that the match, that was called off well after sunset, was allowed to get beyond the regulation playing time although it is permitted only when there is possibility of a result.

The entire Sylhet side were fined 50 per cent of their match fees while stand-in captain Imitiaz Hossain was fined 75 per cent of his

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Brothers Union goalkeeper Zia dives to stop an effort by Mohammedan striker Robin (L) during their Citycell B. League match at the Bangabandhu National Stadium yesterday.

PHOTO: STAR

Giants struggle in draw

SPORTS REPORTER



Brothers Union and Mohammedan spent hard times on their return to the Citycell B. League after three weeks as the title contenders shared a 1-1 draw at the Bangabandhu National Stadium yesterday.

Robin gave Mohammedan a first-half lead after the half-hour mark but Tapu cancelled the advantage 13 minutes from time to bring relief at the Oranges tent.

After five matches, Brothers pushed their collection to nine points with two wins and three draws while Maruful Haque's Federation Cup champions reached eight points from four outings.

It was Mohammedan's second draw which also saw them reduced

to ten men in the stoppage time when referee Abdul Hannan showed a first-time red card to substitute Maruf who had come nine minutes earlier and committed a clumsy sliding tackle.

Mohammedan and Brothers were away from action for long, having played their last matches on October 7 and 10 respectively, for their players' national duty and showed lack of combinations when the fifth-round game rolled on the pitch.

The Black and Whites, though, could consider them unfortunate not to go ahead early as Faisal Mahmud landed a volley onto the crossbar after four minutes.

Brothers had their chance in the 16th minute when Tapu deflected a shot by Zahid towards Oniya, but the Nigerian forward failed to control the ball across the face of the goal.

The midfielders controlled the

situation for Brothers in most of the first half but Mohammedan broke the deadlock after 31 minutes when Bukola controlled the ball well near the left side before releasing a cross for Robin to head home his third league goal.

The Oranges pressed early into the second half but Zahid, who had a very impressive show for the national team in the recently concluded Merdeka Cup in Malaysia, drove a cracking shot just over from the top of the area.

Brothers looked subdued afterwards but got the equaliser after second-half substitute Abdullah Parvez's exquisite play in the 77th minute.

The winger curled in a cross from the right with his favourite left foot and Mohammedan's outrushing goalkeeper Aminul was completely beaten in flight. Lito shrugged off a challenge by rival fullback Kamal to nod the ball onto

the sidebar and a lurking Tapu made no mistake to tap the ball in from close range for his second goal.

Mohammedan, whose previous performance in the competition was a 7-0 demolition of Muktiyoddha, showed signs of regaining that type of form towards the end but Nigerian forward Bukola, having done the hard work racing past an otherwise tight Brothers backline, put his shot over the far post from six yards in the 87th minute.

The pressure continued but a long-range effort by captain Arman Aziz in the 90th minute skimmed Brothers keeper Zia's upright shortly before Maruf's send-off.

"Maruf went for the ball and it was not a send-off offence," claimed Mohammedan coach Maruful Haque adding that the refereeing was sub-standard

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Razzak reported again

Cricket

SPORTS REPORTER

Left-arm spinner Abdur Razzak once again found himself in controversy after umpires Asoka de Silva and Daryl Harper reported his bowling action.

The umpires, who conducted the just-concluded Test series between Bangladesh and New Zealand, found Razzak's faster delivery a reason for concern after the drawn second game at the Sher-e-Bangla National Stadium in Dhaka. The two umpires have asked the International Cricket Council (ICC) to review the bowler's action.

"In their report the umpires explained they had concerns over the player's faster ball and, having monitored it during both matches of the series, decided it was appropriate the delivery should be scrutinised further under the relevant ICC process," stated an ICC media release.

After the ICC obtains three copies of the relevant footage -- one going each to the player, Bangladesh Cricket Board and one retained by the governing body itself -- Razzak is required to submit to an independent analysis of his action by a member of the ICC panel of human movement specialists, appointed in consultation with the BCB within 21 days of the report being received by the cricket board.

Thankfully for the Tigers, Razzak can play during the three-week period he has been granted

by the ICC for that means available upcom- South B C B ations chairman Hossain said that would seek sion, the series Proteas.

observation. And he will be for the ing tour of Africa. cricket oper- committee Gazi Ashraf however board an exten- maybe after against the

added Ashraf.

After the panel member reviews Razzak's action, 'the report must be filed with the ICC within 14 days of it occurring', according to the ICC regulations.

If a player is found to have bowled with an illegal action during the independent analysis then he will be banned from bowling until he undertakes remedial action and is reassessed. If the independent analysis finds the player guilty of bowling with an illegal action for a specific type of delivery only then he can continue to bowl in international cricket with a warning that if he is reported again then he will be banned from bowling with immediate effect. Until the receipt of the report of the independent analysis by the BCB then the player can continue to bowl.

But Ashraf said that it is too soon to give a verdict on the 26-year-old's action.

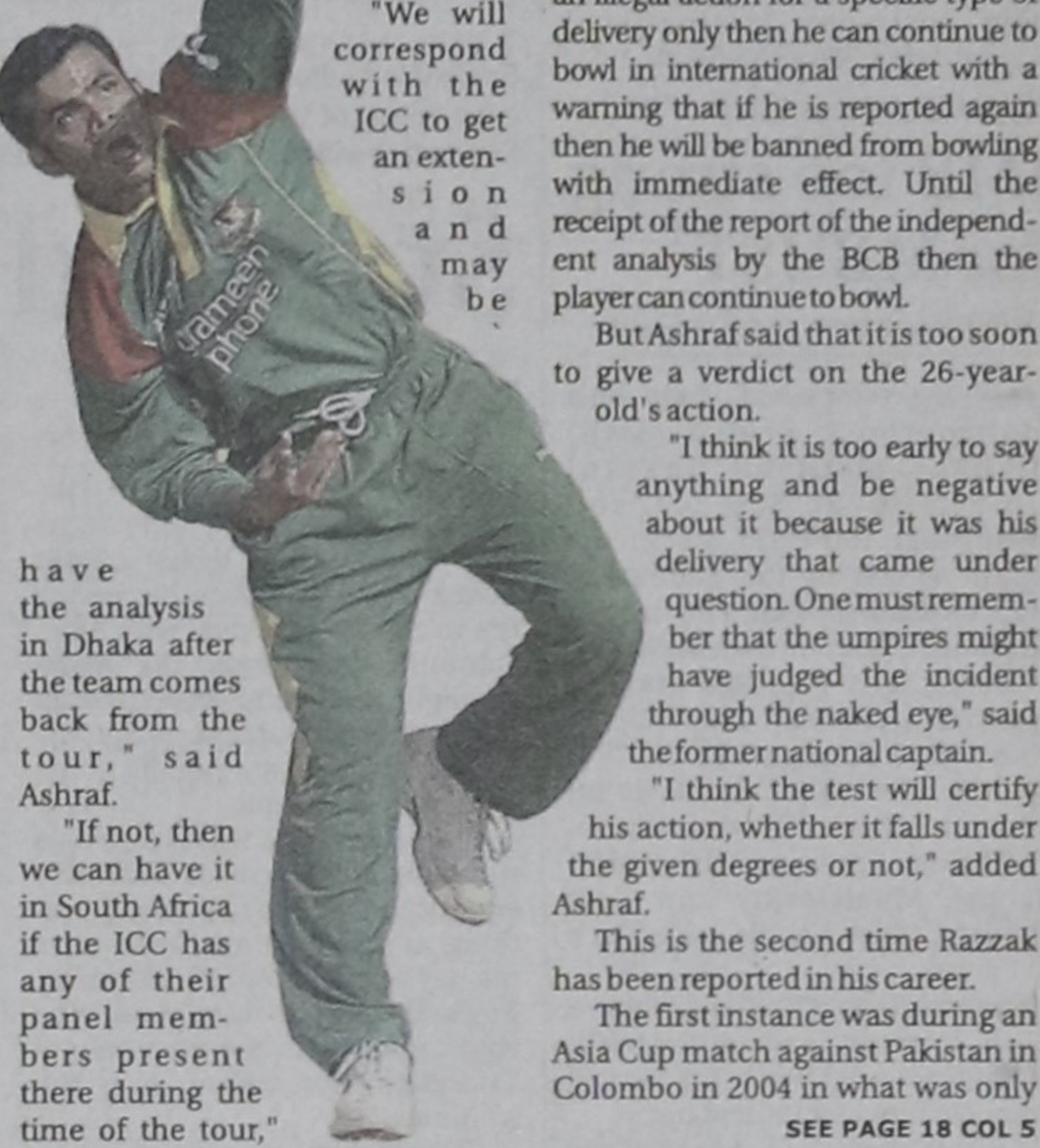
"I think it is too early to say anything and be negative about it because it was his delivery that came under question. One must remember that the umpires might have judged the incident through the naked eye," said the former national captain.

"I think the test will certify his action, whether it falls under the given degrees or not," added Ashraf.

This is the second time Razzak has been reported in his career.

The first instance was during an Asia Cup match against Pakistan in Colombo in 2004 in what was only

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Did U Know?

Test captain Anil Kumble on Wednesday became the second most capped Indian Test player. Playing in his 132nd match, the ongoing Test against Australia at the Feroz Shah Kotla in Delhi, the 38-year-old leg-spinner went past compatriot Kapil Dev who played 131 matches between 1978 and 1994. With 153 Tests under his belt, battling superstar Sachin Tendulkar is the most capped Indian player.



Gautam Gambhir

(India's opening batsman) "I motivated myself to do well against Australia. I have often been criticised for not going on to make bigger scores after getting good starts. But this time I thought that if I was getting 60s and 70s, a hundred was just around the corner." After hitting a century against the Aussies in the third Test at Delhi on Wednesday.



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Citycell B. League
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Time: 6:00pm
Venue: Bangabandhu National Stadium

Not a serial offender

Cricket

SPORTS REPORTER

Just a day after he helped rescue the Tigers to save a Test match against New Zealand, Abdur Razzak must have thought of spending a few days at home in Bagerhat before embarking on another arduous tour. But that was not to be.

His quiet time was disturbed yesterday with the news he has been sought by the International Cricket Council (ICC) for doubts cast upon his bowling action.

Umpires Asoka de Silva and Daryl Harper found one of his deliveries suspicious and that it must come under ICC's review in the coming three weeks, which would test Razzak's nerve whether or not the Bangladesh Cricket

Board (BCB) can find him more time from the game's governing body.

He will have television replays played out several times and there would be the odd question about his state of mind. No matter how mentally strong he is, Razzak could be found second-guessing himself during net sessions or under the intense pressure of an international match.

But this is nothing new to this 26-year-old. Four years ago, after only his second ODI, Razzak's action (that same delivery) was brought under the scanner by the umpires. Richard McInnes cleared him in the six weeks given by ICC and Razzak resumed his career soon after.

But he spent years earlier mending his action under different coaches and it was confirmed

then that he has done enough work on it.

Two transgressions in the space of four years would deem him in the same class as other suspect actions but he is a genuine left-arm spinner who has trouble with only one of his deliveries. That certainly does not put him in any bad boy's bracket.

Certainly he has no birth defects to use as an excuse and for that matter, he is a regular bowler who has little to hide under the increasing glare of television replays.

He bowls his ten overs in one-day cricket and keeps the batsmen in check, giving away little. That's his game and what the ICC would look into is as normal as any other faster deliveries, bowled by more and less illustrious international bowlers day after day.

Gautam, Shane to face ICC hearing

AFP, New Delhi

India's Gautam Gambhir and Australia's Shane Watson were on Thursday charged with breaching the game's international code of conduct after an on-field exchange during the third Test.

The players were cited by on-field umpires Billy Bowden and Aleem Dar as well as TV umpire Suresh Shastri after they clashed on the opening day of the match at the Feroz Shah Kotla stadium here.

Gambhir appeared to elbow Watson after the all-rounder seemed to mutter something to the Indian batsman as he took a second run in the 51st over of Wednesday's play.

The opener was charged with a level two offence for conduct contrary to the spirit of the game, an

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Gambhir 206, Laxman 200no

Cricket

AFP, New Delhi

Gautam Gambhir and Venkatsai Laxman hammered double-centuries to put India in complete control on the second day of the third Test against Australia here on Thursday.

Opening batsman Gambhir struck a career-best 206 while the stylish Laxman remained unbeaten on 200 as the hosts posted a massive 613-7 before declaring their first innings midway through the final session.

Australia were cautious in their reply, reaching 50-0 at the close with Matthew Hayden on 16

and Simon Katich on 29. The day belonged to the Indian batsmen, who thrived in good batting conditions and set their side up for a series-clinching win.

The hosts lead the four-Test Border-Gavaskar series 1-0 after winning the previous match in Mohali by 320 runs. The opener in Bangalore ended in a draw.

"I just tried to play the ball on merit," Laxman told reporters at the end of the day's play. "I did not take too many risks because it was important from the team's perspective to put up a big score in the first innings. When I made the 100, I decided not to just throw it away and carry on for a bigger score."

Gambhir, 149 overnight, struck 26 fours and a six in his knock that spanned nearly nine hours while Laxman heaped further agony on the tourists with his 301-ball innings studded with 21 fours.

Laxman, 33, reached the 200-run mark with a two off Michael Clarke and also completed 2000 runs against Australia in the process.

It was his second double-century against Australia after his career-best 281 in the 2001 home series at Kolkata.

Laxman shared a 278-run stand with Gambhir and another 98 runs with skipper Anil Kumble (45) who must be pleased with his

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HI THERE: India batsman VVS Laxman acknowledges the crowd's applause on reaching his double century in the first innings on the second day of the third Test against Australia at the Feroz Shah Kotla Stadium in New Delhi yesterday.

Sourav's decision surprised Sachin

Cricket

CRICINFO, undated

Sachin Tendulkar has said the senior players in the Indian team must be respected for the "major contributions" they have made over the years. Tendulkar, who recently became the leading Test run-scorer, said on Wednesday the decision on retiring from international cricket should be made by the players, whom he felt will know when the time is right.

The seniors -- Tendulkar, Rahul Dravid, Sourav Ganguly, VVS Laxman and Anil Kumble -- were under intense scrutiny by the media after poor performances in the 2-1 defeat in the Test series in Sri Lanka. Ganguly, who was not picked for the Irani Trophy, announced the Tests against Australia will be his last interna-

tional appearance for India. "Lack of respect towards senior players doesn't happen anywhere," Tendulkar told the news channel NDTV. "We all know when to move away from the sport. But people have their opinions. Sometimes these opinions are not correct. But one is made to believe that this is the right opinion. The individuals will take their decisions when they feel it's the right time."

Tendulkar said he was "surprised by Sourav's [Ganguly] decision to quit". "I am sure it must have taken him a long time to reach there. And it's a big decision. But if he feels that it is the way to go, then we all should respect his decision."

Tendulkar and Laxman played crucial innings to save the first Test against Australia in

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