

Kamal has to perform

Cricket

BISHWAJIT ROY

AHM Mustafa Kamal on Thursday took over as president of the Bangladesh Cricket Board (BCB), the most lucrative sports federation of the country, with high hopes.

In the initiation ceremony at the BCB headquarters at Mirpur Sher-e-Bangla National Stadium, both the new boss and his predecessor Lt. Gen. Sina Ibn Jamali shared a common view that without professionalism in all activities it was impossible to achieve any goal in this modern day.

And here lies the main challenge for the new president and without any delay he should take some decisions to make everybody believe that his view about professionalism is not 'for the sake of discussion only'.

But the harsh reality is that an organisation like BCB has been running without a permanent CEO (chief executive officer) for more than one-and-a-half years now, although a plan is already in place to give the board a corporate shape.

One may disagree, but the reality is that professionalism has taken a backseat ever since the departure of Zimbabwean CEO Macky Duthia. And now there should not be any doubt that the new boss will have to appoint someone highly efficient in this demanding post if he wants to make his dream come true.

The biggest challenge ahead for the sport's local governing body is to successfully hold the 2011 World Cup and this should undoubtedly be the board's top priority. More than six months have already gone by after the BCB high-ups admitted that they were lagging behind in their preparations for the mega event. Unfortunately

the board has yet to start the work for preparing the stadiums for the event although the government has approved the budget.

No doubt that the board needs government's patronisation in this regard and the appointment of Kamal, a very influential ruling Awami League lawmaker, made many believe that things would now change and the board get the best support from government.

A lot was expected when a band of tried and tested organisers took office of the richest sports body of the country through a fervent election November last year, but one can't say the best has been delivered from them.

Like it or hate it, in modern day success depends on good governance and there is no doubt that the board has a lot of good people working with it and many believe that the new president can boost up the activities on a fiercely competitive field, where Bangladesh have won more criticism than applause.

It is hoped that under the new leader the board would move forward with pragmatic plans.

After the 2005 election the area that suffered most was development and here Kamal has to be proactive to fulfil his dream as he said in the press conference yesterday: "I want to take our cricket to new heights".

These are some of the many other issues that can be raised but the main thing is that the new president has to make sure a teamwork to look after the immediate issues as well as chalk out a long-term programme for which he will be remembered in the country's history of cricket.

And everybody wants to believe in his words that "club affiliation and political affiliation will not play any role in running the show during my tenure", although some unsavoury scenes took place as a few supporters greeted him with bouquets, hoisting banners.

Tigers resume training today

SPORTS REPORTER

The national cricketers will resume their practice after Eid vacation today at the Sher-e-Bangla National Stadium in Mirpur.

After treatment on his skin cancer coach Jamie Siddons, whose job has been extended till the 2011 World Cup, returned Dhaka two days back to take charge of the team.

The cricketers started their preparation ahead of the upcoming home series against Zimbabwe, who will arrive in Dhaka on October 21 to play a five-match one-day series against the Tigers.

Siddons however will get only few cricketers to train as four players have been selected to tour with the Bangladesh A team in India while captain Mashrafe Bin Mortaza is going through a rehabilitation programme and his deputy Shakib Al Hasan is nursing a groin injury.

Left-arm spinner Abdur Razzak is now in India with his

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South Africa pacer Wayne Parnell (L) clenches his fist after taking the wicket of Jesse Ryder of New Zealand during their ICC Champions Trophy match at SuperSport Park in Centurion yesterday.

PHOTO: AFP

England tour dates released

Cricket

SPORTS REPORTER

Bangladesh Cricket Board (BCB) revealed the itinerary of the England team's tour to Bangladesh in February-March next year.

The England team will arrive in Dhaka on February 17 to play two Tests and three one-day internationals against the Tigers during their 38-day long trip.

The visitors are scheduled to start their campaign with three one-day warm-up games but it was yet to be confirmed.

The first two ODIs will be held at the Sher-e-Bangla National Stadium in Mirpur and then the teams will travel to Chittagong to play the third and final one-day and as well a three-day warm-up game

before the first Test to be held at the Chittagong Divisional Stadium.

The second Test will be held at Mirpur.

ITINERARY

February 21: One-day warm-up against BCB XI (To be confirmed)

February 23: One-day warm-up against BCB XI (To be confirmed)

February 25: One-day warm-up against BCB XI (To be confirmed)

February 28: First ODI at Mirpur

March 2: Second ODI at Mirpur

March 5: Third ODI at Chittagong

March 7-9: 3-dayer against Bangladesh A at Chittagong

March 12-16: First Test at Chittagong

March 20-24: Second Test at Mirpur

Proteas stay afloat

AFP, Centurion



South Africa bounced back into contention for 2009 ICC Champions Trophy

glory with a five-wicket triumph over New Zealand at SuperSport Park on Thursday.

Upset by Sri Lanka in the opening match of the ODI tournament two days ago, the Proteas had to win and did so with relative ease before a large, holiday crowd.

New Zealand were all out for 214 in 47.5 overs and South Africa cruised to 217-5 in 41.1 overs and another win Sunday over England would virtually assure the hosts of a place in the knockout phase.

The 'Black Caps', who may have erred in excluding Jeetan Patel for a match on a spin-friendly pitch, face Sri Lanka and England at the Wanderers stadium and a couple of victories would bring them back into the frame.

AB de Villiers was a fitting matchwinner, sealing success with a four having top scored for the Proteas with an unbeaten 70 in 76 balls, including nine boundaries.

Once again South Africa skipper Smith won the toss and once again he opted to field on a dry, slow, uneven early season track that gave the spinners assistance in warm, partly cloudy conditions.

New Zealand captain Daniel Vettori stressed the need to build partnerships, but his plea fell largely

on deaf ears with the 71-run stand between Ross Taylor and Grant Elliott a notable exception.

The stubborn 95-ball stand ended when South Africa-born Elliott chose the wrong line and his middle stump was pushed back by a deceptive delivery from spinner Roelof van der Merwe.

Taylor was the top Kiwi scorer with 72 off 106 balls before missing a low full toss and being trapped leg before by revitalised Wayne Parnell, who was voted man of the match.

Opener Brendon McCullum was the only other New Zealand batsman to make an impact, scoring 44 before trying a sweep off Johan Botha and getting a top edge to JP Duminy at short fine leg.

Parnell, rebounding from a nightmare outing against Sri Lanka, finished with five wickets, impressive Van der Merwe and speedster Dale Steyn claimed two apiece and Botha one.

Set a 4.30-run-an-over target, Smith managed just seven before departing because he played a Daryl Tuffey too early and Vettori took a simple catch at mid-on.

Jacques Kallis was next to go, adding 52 runs for the second wicket with Hisham Amla before an attempted drive off Shane Bond was snapped up by wicketkeeper McCullum.

Although ahead on run rate, South Africa were also struggling to build big partnerships and much-improved Amla returned to the pavilion having made 38 after being trapped leg before by Vettori.

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PHOTO: STAR

EXIT JAMALI, ENTER KAMAL: Newly appointed Bangladesh Cricket Board president Mustafa Kamal (sitting, R) takes questions from the media as his predecessor Lt. Gen. Sina Ibn Jamali sits next to him during a press conference at the board's Sher-e-Bangla National Stadium headquarters in Mirpur yesterday.

England's busy summer

Cricket

AFP, London

The England and Wales Cricket Board (ECB) on Thursday announced the dates for England's 2010 home matches against Bangladesh, Australia and Pakistan, and the Australia-Pakistan matches to be staged in England.

England, who are due to play two Tests and three one-day internationals in Bangladesh in February and March, will host Bangladesh for two Tests, at Lord's and Old Trafford, in late May and early June.

A one-off ODI against Scotland is then followed by a five-match one-day series against Australia, which will give England a chance to avenge this year's 6-1 thrashing in the post-Ashes one-dayers, and a three-match ODI series against Bangladesh.

Australia will then take on Pakistan in two Twenty20 internationals and two Tests, at Lord's from July 13 and Headingley from July 21. England is hosting these matches because the Australians have decided against touring Pakistan because of security concerns.

England conclude their summer with a four-Test series against Pakistan followed by two Twenty20 internationals and five one-dayers.

ENGLISH SUMMER SCHEDULE
ENGLAND V BANGLADESH TEST SERIES
May 27-31: England v Bangladesh, 1st Test, Lord's

June 4-8: England v Bangladesh, 2nd Test, Old Trafford

SCOTLAND V ENGLAND ODI

June 19: Scotland v England, Edinburgh

ENGLAND V AUSTRALIA ODI SERIES

June 22: England v Australia, Rose Bowl

June 24: England v Australia, Cardiff

June 27: England v Australia, Old Trafford

June 30: England v Australia, The Oval

July 3: England v Australia, Lord's

PAKISTAN V AUSTRALIA T20

July 5: Pakistan v Australia, Edgbaston

July 6: Pakistan v Australia, Edgbaston

ENGLAND V BANGLADESH ODI SERIES

July 8: England v Bangladesh, Trent Bridge

July 10: England v Bangladesh, Bristol

July 12: England v Bangladesh, Edgbaston

PAKISTAN V AUSTRALIA TEST SERIES

July 13: Pakistan v Australia, 1st Test, Lord's

July 21: Pakistan v Australia, 2nd Test, Headingley

ENGLAND V PAKISTAN TEST SERIES

July 29: England v Pakistan, 1st Test, Trent Bridge

Aug 6: England v Pakistan, 2nd Test, Edgbaston

Aug 18: England v Pakistan, 3rd Test, The Oval

Aug 26: England v Pakistan, 4th Test, Lord's

ENGLAND V PAKISTAN T20

Sept 5: England v Pakistan T20, Cardiff

Sept 7: England v Pakistan T20, Cardiff

ENGLAND V PAKISTAN ODI SERIES

Sept 10: England v Pakistan, Durham

Sept 12: England v Pakistan, Headingley

Sept 17: England v Pakistan, The Oval

Sept 20: England v Pakistan, Lord's

Sept 22: England v Pakistan, Rose Bowl

Hussey feels confident

CRICINFO, undated



Michael Hussey is confident Australia can spark up for the Champions Trophy

despite the short turnaround following their long tour of England. The Australians finished their one-day series against England in Durham on Sunday, losing the game but winning 6-1, and they resume training on Thursday ahead of their first match of the Champions Trophy.

Australia take on a weakened West Indies outfit at the Wanderers on Saturday and while the match shouldn't pose too many problems, Ricky Ponting has already aired his opinion that the England series was too long. But Hussey said a change of scenery would help to refresh the players.

"I guess it's new and exciting and all the best players around the world are here, so you spruce up a little bit no question," Hussey told AAP. "The one-dayers (against England) were

good. I still think we've got a few areas we need to improve in if we're going to be right up there at the business end of this tournament. We've got to make sure we try to start a tournament well and try to get better and better each game."

Australia hold the Champions Trophy after winning it in India three years ago and they will need to finish in the top two in their group of West Indies, Pakistan and India to get to the semi-finals. Hussey said the Australians needed to concentrate largely on their own game.

"Although it's important to focus on what they're going to do and what they can do and their strengths and weaknesses, we've got to make sure we get our things right," he said. "I'd back us if we can get our things right, then we'll be pretty competitive with all teams around the world no matter who they are."

After arriving in Johannesburg, Ponting reiterated his thoughts on Australia's weariness after a four-month tour of England that began with the World Twenty20. He said any team was

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Yuvraj blow for India

AFP, Johannesburg

Hard-hitting Indian batsman Yuvraj Singh has been ruled out of the Champions Trophy here due to an injury, the Indian cricket board said in a statement on Wednesday.

"Yuvraj has fractured a finger in his right hand and has been ruled out for six weeks," the Board of Control for Cricket in India said in a press release.

"The selectors have chosen Virat Kohli as replacement for Yuvraj. He will fly out as soon as formalities are completed."

Yuvraj, who suffered the injury during a practice session in the morning, has so far scored 7,098 runs and bagged 76 wickets in one-day internationals.

India open their campaign against Pakistan at Centurion on Saturday. Defending champions Australia and the West Indies are the other teams in the group. The top two sides qualify for the semifinals.

Younus fit for India match

CRICINFO, undated

Younus Khan will be available for the Champions Trophy fixture against India on September 26, the Pakistan cricket board (PCB) said on Thursday.

Younus suffered a minor hairline fracture on the little finger of his right hand during the warm-up game against the Warriors in Benoni in September 20 and had been advised rest by doctors.

Younus could have been available for Pakistan's opening Champions Trophy game against West Indies in Johannesburg on Wednesday but the team management decided against taking a risk so that he could be fully fit to play India in Centurion.

India suffered a setback even before their Champions

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Umar sees Pakistan home

AFP, Johannesburg



West Indies' little-known paceman Gavin Tonge grabbed four wickets, but

failed to stop Pakistan from posting a five-wicket victory in the Champions Trophy here on Wednesday.

Pakistan were reeling at 61-4 following Tonge's incisive opening spell, but teenager Umar Akmal helped his side achieve a 134-run target with a responsible 41 not out in the day-night match on a lively track.

Tonge finished with 4-25 off 10 overs in only his third one-dayer.

The under-strength West Indies were also well-served by wicketkeeper Chadwick Walton, who took four catches.

"I think the guys bowled very well and showed great maturity," said stand-in Pakistan captain Shahid Afridi.

"I just told Umar to play positively and not bother about the pitch. I love bravehearts, and that's why I like him."

Tonge struck in his opening over when he bowled Imran Nazir and then had Kamran Akmal, Shoaib Malik and Mohammad Yousuf caught behind to put pressure on Pakistan.

Yousuf (23), dropped on one by Darren Sammy in the slips off Tonge, and Malik (23) looked set to put Pakistan in a comfortable position before falling in the space of seven runs.

Man-of-the-match Akmal, 19, also survived a nasty blow on his fingers off a Tino Best beamer in the later part of his knock, but kept his cool under pressure. He hit six fours.

"I didn't feel any pressure. I just maintained a positive attitude as the seniors in the team advised me," said Akmal.

Afridi, leading in his first one-day international, remained unbeaten with 17. He added 58 crucial runs for the unfinished sixth wicket with Akmal.

"I would like to congratulate Nikita Miller for his half-century. Tonge bowled well and our bowling and fielding was very good," said West Indies captain Floyd Reifer.

Pakistan will now clash with archrivals India in their next match at Centurion on Saturday. Defending champions Australia are the other team in Group A, with the top two sides making it to the semi-finals.

Teenage paceman Mohammad Aamer and Umar Gul earlier grabbed three wickets apiece to restrict the West Indies to a small total.

Left-arm seamer Aamer, 17, finished with an impressive 3-24 in only his sixth one-day international, while paceman Gul bagged 3-28 as the West Indies failed to last their quota of 50 overs.

Lower-order batsman Miller top-scored with a gutsy 51 for his maiden half-century in one-day internationals. He smashed one six and six boundaries in a 57-ball knock.

Sammy (25) and Devon Smith (18) were the

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Bracken out of Trophy

CRICINFO, undated



Australia have suffered

red a major blow before their first Champions Trophy match with Nathan Bracken ruled out of the tournament with a chronic knee injury. Cricket Australia confirmed Bracken would be sent home on Thursday due to the problem with his right knee.

"The nature of Nathan's right knee problem has meant that he has had some ongoing manageable pain, but this has now reached a point where he is unable to continue playing in the ICC Champions Trophy," Australia's physiotherapist Alex Kountouris said. "He will



NATHAN BRACKEN

the specialist."

The loss of Bracken will hurt Australia's attack as he is the team's highest-ranked one-day international bowler, sitting sixth on the ICC ODI rankings, ahead of the next Australian Mitchell Johnson in equal ninth. Bracken, who played in the recent one-day series in England, will also be in doubt for the Champions League Twenty20, where he was expected to represent New South Wales in early October.

Australia's first match of the Champions Trophy is against West Indies on Saturday. Cricket Australia has not yet confirmed a replacement for Bracken in the 15-man squad, although contenders will include Doug Bollinger, Stuart Clark and Brett Geves.



Did U Know?

Justine Henin appeared in the first Grand Slam tournament final in 2001 that was Wimbledon.



Kim Clijsters (Belgian tennis superstar) "I think that Justine's comeback is good news for women's tennis but even better news for Belgium in general." Hailing the return of compatriot Justine Henin to professional tennis.



ESPN Sportscenter India Sports News Live at 9:30pm
STAR Cricket ICC Champions Trophy Sri Lanka v England Live from 7:15pm