



PHOTO: STAR

BCB's chief executive officer Manzur Ahmed (sitting, R) shakes hand with Beximco Group's executive director Intekhab Mahmud after they signed a Tk 3.5 crore deal awarding the conglomerate the official sponsorship of the Tigers for the ICC Cricket World Cup.

Beximco Tigers sponsors

SPORTS REPORTER



Beximco Group struck a deal with the Bangladesh Cricket Board (BCB) yesterday to become official sponsors of the national team for the ICC Cricket World Cup 2011.

In a press briefing at a city hotel yesterday, BCB's chief executive officer Manzur Ahmed informed that Beximco, one of the largest industrial conglomerates of the country, was the lone bidder and earned the deal at the floor price of Tk 3.5 crore.

"Only Beximco took part in the bidding process. There was no scope for negotiation. This is the highest amount we got from team sponsorship," said a delighted Manzur.

"This amount is for the six first round matches and the sum will be increased on a pro rata basis if Bangladesh progresses in the tournament," he added.

The sponsorship allows Beximco to use its logo on players' jersey, leading arm, practice and travel clothing.

Beximco's executive director Intekhab Mahmud signed the contract while Manzur Ahmed signed on behalf of BCB. Bangladesh coach Jamie Siddons and captain Shakib Al Hasan were present during the signing ceremony.

BCB's previous best deal, which they penned with United Commercial Bank Ltd, for the team's sponsorship was worth 30,000 dollars (21 lakh taka) for the ICC T20 World Cup.

Beximco's vice-chairman Salman F Rahman thanked the BCB for allowing them to be the official sponsors of the national team while BCB president AHM Mustafa Kamal thanked Beximco for coming forward to extend their helping hands in order to making the event a success.

"We need help from everybody to become successful. ICC has given only 10 crore taka to BCB for hosting the mega event in Bangladesh, which is quite insufficient. So, we must thank those who came forward to help us," said Kamal.

The BCB boss also requested other industrial giants to come forward to make big-capacity venues so that huge number of fans can watch matches from the stands in future. He also said that they were planning to arrange a tournament like the money-spinning Indian Premier League (IPL) in the country.

Intekhab Mahmud informed that they would launch a countrywide 'Wish Campaign' from January 22 to inspire the national team before the World Cup.

He said a 100-foot bat will be carried on caravan through all 64 districts to collect signatures of cricket lovers across the country. The bat will then be handed over to the national team as a sign of inspiration at a reception on February 4.

Bangladesh will host eight matches including two quarterfinals besides the opening ceremony to be held on February 17 at the country's premier venue Bangabandhu National Stadium.

Sourav snub surprises Wasim

PTI, New Delhi

The snub to Sourav Ganguly in the IPL players auction shocked his former team Kolkata Knight Riders' bowling coach Wasim Akram, who said he expected any of the other franchise to pick the ex-India captain for his "experience and leadership qualities".

In a major embarrassment for Ganguly, he was not picked by his home team Kolkata Knight Riders or any of the other franchises after two rounds of bidding last week.

Added security

FROM PAGE 16 playing a match for the nationalside.

The meeting also decided to warn those clubs, who were not following the mandatory rules of having a B-license coach during the match of the Bangladesh League.

Newcomers Sheikh Jamal Dhanmondi Club have already played three league matches without a B-license or certified coach after the departure of Serbian coach Zoran Kraljevic on the eve of the league opener.

"Sheikh Jamal informed us that they would appoint a certified coach before their match against Arambagh KS on January 17," said Abu Naeem Shohag, manager of the Bangladesh League.

Not only Sheikh Jamal, Chittagong Abahani have also not certified or B-licensed coach.

The meeting has also requested the CID to keep their eyes on league matches in a bid to prevent the fixing of matches that had seemingly marred the last edition of the professional football league.

WC lifeline for Lee Named in ODI squad for England

AFP, Sydney

Pacemen Brett Lee and Shaun Tait were Tuesday named in Australia's squad for the opening match of a seven-game one-day international series against England, raising their hopes of a World Cup berth.

Lee and Tait, who are both returning from injuries, were included in a 14-man squad for Sunday's first one-dayer against the Ashes victors at the Melbourne Cricket Ground.

The 15-man World Cup squad will be announced on January 19 with chairman of selectors Andrew Hilditch saying both quicks were in the frame for the tournament in India, Sri Lanka and Bangladesh, starting next month.

Hilditch said the balance of the World Cup squad "will probably be very much reflected in the team we have just announced" for the first one-day fixture against England.

"But we are still looking at two or three people ahead of that final 15 selection," Hilditch told reporters.

"I don't want to be specific, obviously we know the areas we need to be looking at ahead of the final selection."

Hilditch said Tait and Lee were "both

looking extremely fit at the moment".

"Obviously Tait has only had limited bowling coming back but it's all going really well.

"He's probably fitter than he has been in his life," he said of the pace spearhead, who has just returned from a three-month layoff following elbow surgery.

"But obviously the elbow is an issue. It seems to be going really well so obviously we're looking at that over the next couple of Twenty20s and the one-day game to make sure he's at his best, but all the signs are positive.

"Brett has had a longer lead in from injury and we're looking at him to make sure that he's back to his best."

The 14-man squad will be captained by Michael Clarke in the absence of the injured Ricky Ponting.

Hilditch said squads for the remainder of the series against England would be announced after the World Cup squad is named next week.

SQUAD

Michael Clarke (captain), Cameron White, Doug Bollinger, Xavier Doherty, Brad Haddin, Nathan Hauritz, David Hussey, Mike Hussey, Mitchell Johnson, Brett Lee, Peter Siddle, Steve Smith, Shaun Tait, Shane Watson.

Messi, Nadal lined up for Laureus

AFP, Abu Dhabi

Footballer Lionel Messi and tennis ace Rafael Nadal and Serena Williams will lead the nominees for the Laureus World Sports Awards to be held next month in Abu Dhabi, it was announced Tuesday.

The Argentine who was named on Monday the World player of the year is nominated along with his Barcelona teammate Andres Iniesta for the awards which

are considered the sport version of The Oscars, organisers revealed in a press conference.

The event is being organised in Abu Dhabi for the second year in a row.

"We are pleased to host this event for the second year consecutively," said Mohammad al-Mahmood, secretary general of Abu Dhabi Sports Council.

Dozens of sports and Hollywood celebrities will travel to the capital of the

United Arab Emirates on February 5 to 7 to attend the event to be held at the Emirates Palace Hotel.

Other nominees include Germany's Sebastian Vettel, the youngest winner of the Formula One World Championship, Winter Paralympic stars Verena Bentele, Jakob Krako and Lauren Woolstencroft for Laureus Disability Award.

Ten-time world champion surfer Kelly Slater is nominated for Laureus Action Sports Award.

"Every year in which there is an Olympic Games or World Cup, we have some of the strongest fields of candidates," Edwin Moses, the chairman of the Laureus World Sports Academy, told AFP.

The Spain team which won the football world cup in South Africa will compete for the Laureus World Team of the Year category, along with the European Ryder Cup Team, Champions League winners Inter Milan, NBA winners Los Angeles Lakers, the Red Bull Formula One Team and the New Zealand All Blacks rugby team.

Last year's winners of the 2010 Laureus Sportsman and Sportswomen of the Year awards included Jamaican sprinter Usain Bolt for the second time, US tennis champion Serena Williams, and British Formula One driver Jenson Button.



PHOTO: COURTESY

The 13th Ispahani Cup Golf Tournament was held yesterday at the Bhatiyari Golf and Country Club. In the picture, Mirza Salman Ispahani, managing director of sponsors MM Ispahani Limited (3rd from R), and senior vice president of Bhatiyari Golf Club Mohammad Ashab Uddin, PSC (2nd from L) are seen inaugurating the event with other dignitaries.

Eyes on WC selection

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home soil, with the final scheduled for Mumbai on April 2.

"Every one of us in the India dressing room wants to lift that cup, not only for ourselves but also for the billions of fans supporting us around the globe."

Although the squads selected for the series in South Africa are unlikely to differ greatly from the final 15-man parties for the World Cup, fringe players in both camps will want to cement their places.

The competition for places in the Indian squad is likely to be particularly keen as the tourists have a group of 16 players in South Africa, of whom at least three are likely to miss the World Cup because room will almost certainly be found for two key batsmen, Virender Sehwag and Gautam Gambhir, who are not playing in the current series because of injury.

The South African selectors will be anxious to see whether Pakistan-born leg-spinner Imran Tahir can take the step up to international level. Tahir, newly eligible for South African selection after acquiring citizenship, has been in prolific form in domestic cricket.

He took his total of wickets in five first-class matches for the Dolphins franchise to 42 with a 12-wicket match haul against the Warriors last weekend.

Andrew Hudson, the convener of the South African selectors, announced on Monday that Tahir had been added to the country's 30-man preliminary World Cup squad in place of batsman Jonathan Vandiar.

"We feel that we need to widen our bowling options," said Hudson.

Another newcomer seeking to impress is Francois 'Faf' du Plessis, a free-scoring batsman, athletic fielder and part-time leg-spin bowler who was the leading run-scorer in South Africa's domestic 40-overs competition which ended last month.

Although the 14 players in the South African squad have an inside track for World Cup selection they will be well aware that some capable, experienced players, including all-rounders Albie Morkel and Ryan McLaren, could be contenders despite not being picked for the forthcoming series.

A batsman from outside the squad who could take advantage if the batting does not fire against India could be Morne van Wyk, who is in the preliminary squad of 30 and top-scored in a Twenty20 international at the Moses Mabhida football stadium on Sunday on a slow, low pitch -- conditions more akin to India than is usual for South Africa.

SQUADS

SOUTH AFRICA: Graeme Smith (captain), Hashim Amla, Johan Botha, AB de Villiers, JP Duminy, Faf du Plessis, Colin Ingram, David Miller, Morne Morkel, Wayne Parnell, Robin Peterson, Dale Steyn, Imran Tahir, Lonwabo Tsotsobe.

INDIA: Mahender Singh Dhoni (captain), Sachin Tendulkar, Murali Vijay, Virat Kohli, Suresh Raina, Yuvraj Singh, Rohit Sharma, Harbhajan Singh, Zaheer Khan, Ashish Nehra, Praveen Kumar, Munaf Patel, Ravichandran Ashwin, Yusuf Pathan, Piyush Chawla, Shanthakumaran Sreesanth.

FIXTURES

Jan 12: Durban (D/N) Jan 15: Johannesburg (D/N) Jan 18: Cape Town (D/N) Jan 21: Port Elizabeth (D/N) Jan 23: Centurion

Defying Dublin's cold

FROM PAGE 16

It was a very well organised tournament, which we really enjoyed. The team performed well. Everything was great and we enjoyed it very much.

DSS: You scored 45 against the West Indies, how different was their bowling from what you usually faced? NR: We played that match in Ireland, and the weather was pretty bad. There was a lot of rain and it was very cold, and batting was difficult. Still, I tried my best to stay at the wicket as long as possible.

DSS: Recall your sweetest memory. NR: The best memory was definitely the win against Pakistan. We were a good combination and as a team were in pretty good shape.

It was the last match of our campaign and there were a few changes. Even with our coach leaving, the team atmosphere was good.

DSS: What are your expectations from the 2011 World Cup? NR: Our team is in a pretty good shape now, and some key players are in top form. I want the team to play as they are playing now, and enjoy themselves.

They should take it match by match. If we start talking about second round or quarterfinals even before the tournament has started, that might lead to problems.

We should play for every match individually rather than getting ahead of ourselves. If they play well, they will automatically reach the quarters.

No decision

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"This would not be feasible in the timeframe agreed for this hearing in Doha.

"The tribunal has therefore determined to continue its deliberations and hold a further hearing in Doha on the fifth of February of this year, at which its decisions will be handed down to the parties and any consequential matters will be dealt with.

"Until that date, all three players will remain suspended from all cricketing activities."

The trio face charges of spot-fixing during Pakistan's tour of England last year in a scandal that rocked the sport. It is alleged that they conspired in the bowling of deliberate no-balls - claims they all deny.

CROSSWORD By Eugene Sheffer

Crossword puzzle grid with clues for ACROSS, DOWN, and CRYPTOQUIP.

13x13 crossword puzzle grid with numbers 1-55.

CRYPTOQUIP

D Y X W L T Y U S Y K Y M M H F K H E V H U U H Q N X R H L U U S Y D Y T U Q W E U T, N F H L M I U S N C R S Y G N T T Y I S N T X L M M N C V. Yesterday's Cryptquip: SINCE I MADE THE EDITORIAL ADJUSTMENT UNTHINKINGLY, MIGHT YOU CALL THAT A KNEE-JERK REDACTION? Today's Cryptquip Clue: S equals H