

Extra game in Zim suggested

SPORTS REPORTER

The technical committee of the Bangladesh Cricket Board (BCB) has recommended for arranging an additional longer version practice match in Zimbabwe rather than sending the team to South Africa.

In it's earlier meeting the technical committee had suggested to send the national team to South Africa to play a four-day practice match as part of their preparation for the Zimbabwe tour in July-August but in yesterday's meeting, the members of the committee recommended for the cancellation of the stopover.

"Considering the budget, weather conditions in South Africa and the unavailability of the team management, the committee recommended for cancellation of the tour. It's also suggested to make the lone three-day practice match in Zimbabwe to a four-day game and also try to arrange another four-day match at our own cost," informed Sabbir Khan, the manager of cricket operations committee, after the meeting.

He also said that the committee also gave their suggestion about the team management for the upcoming Zimbabwe trip.

Head coach Stuart Law is likely to join the team on July 17 or July 18 while Sarwar Imran will accompany the team as an assistant coach-cum-specialist bowling coach.

"Tanjib Ahsan Saad has already been made team operations manager for the tour. The committee hoped that the board will get specialist fielding coach and physio before the tour but if it does not happen, then (former national pace bowler) Saiful Islam will accompany the team as the fielding coach and Dr Debashish Chowdhury as physiotherapist.

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Actress Bijori Barkatullah picks the name of one of the six teams during the draw ceremony of the Tk 1.45 crore Super Cup while former national cricket captain Khaled Mahmud and BFF high-ups look on at a city hotel yesterday.

PHOTO: STAR

Path for artificial turf finally cleared

SPORTS REPORTER

An artificial turf is finally being installed at the 'Balur Math' adjacent to the Bangladesh Football Federation as the football governing body and the residents of Arambagh signed an agreement yesterday after a one-and-half year delay.

Under the FIFA Goal development project, an artificial turf worth \$500,000 was supposed to be installed on the Balur Math in the latter part of 2009 to increase the practice facilities for the national football team as well as clubs.

AFC president Mohamed Bin Hamman laid the foundation stone in March 2008 after the National Sports Council allotted the ground to the football's governing body for ten years.

But the residents of

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Win 4 games, win Tk 1 crore

SPORTS REPORTER



Four hurdles to cross. Take one crore to gain. The message is loud and clear. After an extended year-long break, the much-hyped and much talked about Super Cup is back.

Following an enforced break which was imposed upon the Bangladesh Football Federation (BFF) due to the withdrawal of previous sponsors Citycell, fellow telecom company grameenphone has come to the rescue to ensure that the second edition of the money-spinning and crowd pulling event will start again from Friday.

The tournament will kick-off with newly crowned league champions Sheikh Jamal Dhanmondi Club facing off against traditional powerhouses Brothers Union at the Bangabandhu National Stadium. The fixtures, logos and other such details were revealed during an event at the Ruposhi Bangla Hotel yesterday.

Unlike the first edition of the tournament in 2009, the second coming of the Super Cup sees only six teams split into two groups taking part, which

means that the winners check of one-crore is possible to attain by negotiating just four matches.

"We have only a little time in hand to complete the Super Cup before the Bangladesh national team's World Cup pre-qualifiers against Lebanon and thus back-pedalled from our previous plan and decided to hold the tournament within a short period," said BFF tournament committee chairman Harunur Rashid.

League champions Sheikh Jamal Dhanmondi Club, Abahani and Brothers Union have been

FIXTURES		
July 8 -	Sheikh Jamal-Brothers	4:00pm
July 9 -	Muktijoddha-MSC	4:00pm
July 11 -	Abahani-Brothers	4:00pm
July 12 -	Sheikh Russel-MSC	4:00pm
July 13 -	Sheikh Jamal-Abahani	4:00pm
July 14 -	Muktijoddha- Russel	4:00pm
Semifinals		
July 16 -	Champions A- Runners-up B	
July 17 -	Champions B- Runners-up A	
July 19 -	Final	

drawn in Group A while Group B consists of league runners-up Muktijoddha Sangsad, Sheikh Russel KC and cup holders Mohammedan SC.

Former captain of Bangladesh national cricket team Khaled Mahmud, TV artist Bijori Barkatullah and model Mehzabin picked names of the three teams from three categories while BFF president Kazi Salahuddin was also present at the occasion.

The tournament committee had an actual plan to stage the group matches of the Grameenphone Super Cup on a two-leg basis which would then be followed by the semifinals and a final. But their best laid plans were thwarted because of the Bangladesh team's international engagements and the need to start preparation work at the BNS for the international friendly between Argentina and Nigeria on September 6.

The first edition of the Super Cup drew a lot of attention amongst football fans and a large number of spectators turned up to watch the matches with the final itself drawing a full house. This time however, the authorities admitted that the response might not be as proficient due to a lack of time to drum up interest about the tournament.

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Booters look ahead to Lebanon

SPORTS REPORTER

The Bangladesh national football team returned home yesterday morning after advancing to the next round of the World Cup pre-qualifiers with a 3-0 aggregate win following a goalless draw against Pakistan in their second leg match in Lahore.

The booters will now face Lebanon in the first leg away match on July 23 before hosting them in Dhaka on July 28 but they will get no opportunity to practice together due to the Grameenphone Super Cup which starts on Friday and is scheduled to end on July 19, just one day before they leave for Beirut.

"It would have been better, had we got few opportunities to practise together but playing Super Cup will be one type of practice for us but we all playing for the national team will have to be careful about injuries as the away match against Lebanon is a crucial game for us," said captain Biplob Bhattacharjee after returning home from Pakistan.

"As there is no way to avoid the Super Cup, we must concentrate on the Lebanon ties after this tournament. If we can hold them in the away match, then we will have a good chance to do well in the home match," said the Muktijoddha Sangsad goalkeeper.

Biplob and his teammates were pleased to see the

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'Disturbed a hornet's nest'

AFP, Colombo

Former Sri Lanka skipper Kumar Sangakkara is in hot water after his highly acclaimed lecture at Lord's, where he criticised what he alleged was a corrupt and politicised cricket administration at home.

Sangakkara received a standing ovation after his outspoken remarks but they ruffled feathers back home in Sri Lanka, where sports minister Mahinda Bandara Aluthgamage ordered an investigation into the speech.

"Sangakkara's lecture at MCC (Marylebone Cricket Club) seems to have disturbed a hornet's nest," the state-run Lankapuvath news agency said.

The minister ordered Sri Lanka Cricket to make a report on Monday's speech, it added. "Sangakkara is likely to be called to explain," the agency said.

The star's controversial claims came just days after Sri Lanka's sports minister said he had forced the national cricket board committee to step down following allegations of financial mismanagement.

Sangakkara, 33, became the youngest man to deliver the Cowdrey Lecture at MCC, which owns Lord's.

Sangakkara's wake-up call



CRICINFO

Kumar Sangakkara has made an extraordinary, scathing attack on the "partisan cronies" at Sri Lanka Cricket who have blighted the sport in his country and who led him to resign the captaincy after only two years in charge, following the World Cup final in April. Sangakkara was delivering the MCC Spirit of Cricket Lecture at Lord's on Monday.

In an hour-long speech that earned him a standing ovation, Sangakkara charted the unique history of cricket in his country, and called on SLC to root out its corrupt practices and recognise the huge role the sport now needs to play in promoting reconciliation at the end of a 30-year civil war.

Sangakkara, the first active cricketer to deliver the speech,

pinpointed the country's most powerful moment of national unity -- the World Cup final victory over Australia in 1996 -- as the moment the sport's administration changed "from a volunteer-led organisation run by well-meaning men of integrity into a multi-million-dollar organisation that has been in turmoil ever since".

His speech could fetch him serious repercussions but the board's only response so far has been to state that it is unable to comment given that the team is currently on tour in England.

Sri Lanka's ongoing tour of England has been dogged by controversy ever since Sanath Jayasuriya, now an MP with the ruling UPFA party, was recalled at the age of 41 to play in the one-off Twenty20 and the first ODI at The Oval, despite having been out of the side for nearly two years. Without mentioning names, Sangakkara voiced his concern at the direction the sport in his country is now heading.

"Players from within the team itself became involved in power games within the board," he said. "Officials elected to power in this way in turn manipulated player loyalty to achieve their own ends. At times board politics would spill over into the team causing rift, ill feeling and distrust.

"Accountability and transparency in administration and



PHOTO: INTERNET

Kumar Sangakkara bares his soul while delivering the MCC Spirit of Cricket Cowdrey Lecture at Lord's on Monday.

credibility of conduct were lost in a mad power struggle that would leave Sri Lankan cricket with no consistent and clear administration. Presidents and elected executive committees would come and go; government-picked interim committees would be appointed and dissolved."

Last week, Sri Lanka's sports ministry dissolved SLC's interim committee, following allegations of financial mismanagement that left the co-hosts of the recent World Cup with a US\$ 69 million bill. That announcement followed the ICC meeting in Hong Kong, at which a directive was issued, stating that cricket boards had to be free of political interference by June 2013, or face the prospect of sanctions.

"After 1996 the cricket board has been controlled and administered by a handful of well-meaning individuals either personally or by proxy, rotated in and out, depending on appointment or election," Sangakkara said. "Unfortunately to consolidate and perpetuate their power, they

opened the door of the administration to partisan cronies that would lead to corruption and wanton waste of cricket board finances and resources.

"It was and still is confusing. Accusations of vote buying and rigging, player interference due to lobbying from each side and even violence at the AGMs, including the brandishing of weapons and ugly fist fights, have characterised cricket board elections for as long as I can remember.

"We have to aspire to better administration. The administration needs to adopt the same values enshrined by the team over the years: integrity, transparency, commitment and discipline.

"Unless the administration is capable of becoming more professional, forward-thinking and transparent then we risk alienating the common man. Indeed, this is already happening. Loyal fans are becoming increasingly disillusioned. This

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The finest innings at Lord's

Renowned cricket writer Peter Roebuck immediately followed up Kumar Sangakkara's MCC Lecture with his remarks. Here are some important observations from the ESPNcricinfo piece:

- "Kumar Sangakkara has made the most important speech in cricket history. Brushing aside the twin temptations of romance and sentiment, the erudite Sri Lankan has dared to confront the truths about cricket in his country. Along the way he struck many meaty blows on the game's behalf. His discourse was nothing less than a challenge to cricket to set higher standards for itself, to reject jealousy, pettiness and greed, and to become part of the enlightenment."
- "Both cricket and Sri Lanka deserve better from the governors. Alas, the worst remain in office in so many places, with Ijaz Butt running amok in Pakistan; Givemore Makoni, with terrible inevitability, returning to official ranks in benighted and betrayed Zimbabwe; Gerald Majola still in charge in South

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