

Star SPORT

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The story of 0 and 55

Tamim Iqbal's actual score during the Nottinghamshire-Worcestershire game remained a mystery after it was reported differently in various news agencies and websites. The confusion began when popular cricket site Cricinfo had him at a duck and then after Nottinghamshire had batted out their 20 overs, as 55. They have since reverted back to the first score, likewise BBC. News agency AFP, however, stuck to 55. The real story? Tamim confirmed to a close friend that he has indeed made 0. We will take his word!



A SHARED SMILE: Though facing different propositions in Zimbabwe, Shuvogata Hom Chowdhury (L) and Nasir Hossain share a joke during training at the Sher-e-Bangla National Stadium yesterday.

PHOTO: STAR

Few outcomes in marathon meeting

Cricket

SPORTS REPORTER

A number of issues were discussed in the marathon directors' meeting of the Bangladesh Cricket Board (BCB) which was held in Sylhet; the city which will now become the newest international venue in the country.

It was a unique board meeting in terms of duration, as the meeting, which ended in the early hours of Saturday, lasted nearly about eleven hours with the directors involved in heated discussions regarding several issues like formation of the proposed Bangladesh Premier League committee and the activities of the GP-BCB National Cricket Academy.

The focus however was on the formation of the much-desired regional cricket associations and the proposal of the constitutional amendment when the board arranged the meeting outside Dhaka for the first time with a view to decentralise cricket in the country.

"The draft of regional cricket association was distributed to the directors for their observation and feedback. The meeting didn't discuss anything on the issues but it has decided that an exclusive meeting will be

called to discuss these important issues," informed BCB CEO Manzur Ahmed yesterday adding that the marathon meeting mainly dealt with the routine issues.

BCB's media committee chairman Jalal Yunus said that it is obvious that the constitution will be amended for the BCB's president post as ICC has asked for an elected president of the respective boards to make sure that there would be no political interference in the running of the board's activities.

"But there are a lot of other things in the constitutional amendment issue which will be discussed in the next exclusive board meeting," said Yunus.

The proposals of the constitutional amendment and formation of the regional cricket associations was made by the Dewan Shafiul Arefin-led constitution committee. Other discussion points are highlighted below:

SELECTORS IN TOUR PARTY

CEO Manzur Ahmed informed that the meeting has decided to send a selector to Zimbabwe where Bangladesh will play one Test and five one-day internationals next month. There was an uncertainty about

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Shuvogata's dilemma

Cricket

MOHAMMAD ISAM

Conjecture has enough legs for a belief to travel a long-winded trail in Bangladesh cricket. It can lift an element within the circle to its highest peak and equally, it can dump him to the point where it remains an afterthought, reduced to a footnote.

A player is often the centre of all the attention and when it comes to making a call on his future, the argument is at its loudest.

In the course of the next one month, Nasir Hossain and Shuvogata Hom Chowdhury should be prepared for two different battles in Zimbabwe. The former has to live up to his billing as an exciting talent but the latter should have his shields up for an avalanche of questions and innuendoes related to his selection.

One would quickly realise that both battles have had precedent but while one is easily traceable, the other is more complicated and is hardly talked about from a player's point of view.

Nasir, the all-rounder who has already made it big in domestic club cricket, can boldly say, "Pressure? There isn't any pressure on me." He's only been picked in the Tigers squad for a series

where whatever he does on the field will be a bonus for those who chose him.

Shuvogata was in Nasir's place just the other day when he was picked for the series against Australia. A fresh face was treated like a fresh face and nothing more.

This time however, he doesn't have that luxury.

After it was reported that his name was allegedly pushed to the national selectors in place of a more experienced player, Shuvogata finds himself in the middle of a storm. Denial from both parties holds little in this perspective; nobody's word is taken at face value and only new angles are tossed into the ring.

As of now, he replies to the burning question with a slight pause. Then, "I think the management can tell you who I replaced" is the reply.

The speculation could chew and spit him out like any one-tour wonder, but if he manages to dig deep into his resolve, he could come out as a better player and though the tag won't go away (it never does in Bangladesh cricket), he can live with it.

A little background on the right-handed batsman would reveal a universal theme with most cricketers in the country: a quiet man who has worked out of a small town, playing different leagues across the country. The likes of

Shuvogata sometimes move from one town to the next at night so that they can save up on accommodation.

When he played in Dhaka, his life depended on performance. Unusually for a player of this day and age, Shuvogata has been a one-club man. Cricket Coaching School (CCS) has been his sole address in Dhaka since 2005. It shows loyalty from the 25-year-old, though he terms it as security. "At least I have a club," he said with a broad smile.

It is a remarkable enough statement from a player who has made it to the national team but not surprising given the hazards of choosing this profession in this country.

Akram Khan, the chief selector who has vehemently denied of any pressure put on him about Shuvogata, said that the batsman will get his shot during the one-day series.

"He was in the squad against Australia but didn't get a game, but he will play this time. I said at the beginning that we'll give everyone a fair chance," Akram said yesterday.

If Shuvogata joins the scrapheap, he would definitely be cited as a shining example of what is wrong with the Bangladesh Cricket Board. He will forever be the scapegoat for Akram's first selection but if he does the job, well, the tag will remain but it won't be as hurtful.

Sanctions approved

Football

SPORTS REPORTER

The executive committee of Bangladesh Football Federation (BFF) yesterday approved the Bangladesh League probe committee's recommendations of fines and suspensions for Sheikh Jamal and Rahmatganj, the two clubs alleged to be involved in match-fixing during their Bangladesh League fixture on June 11.

The decision was reached after a five-hour meeting at the BFF House.

BFF president Kazi Salahuddin, speaking to reporters after the meeting said, "We have approved the recommendations of the league committee without altering a single line."

Earlier, the investigation committee headed by Salam Murshedy, proposed a fine of Tk 20 lakh on Sheikh Jamal Dhanmondi Club and Tk 5 lakh on Rahmatganj, while their goalkeeper has been suspended from playing any level of football or participating in football-related activities. Additionally, Rahmatganj media officer Salahuddin Kala is suspended for three years from taking part in any football-related activities, while Muktiyoddha coach Maruful Haque has been suspended from coaching for two months for allegedly

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Josephites take U-21 basketball crown

SPORTS REPORTER

In a keenly-contested finale last night, defending champion Josephites had beaten Vertical Horizon 63-53 at the Dhanmandi Basketball Gymnasium to take home the 2nd VH Under-21 Basketball Championship trophy.

Bangladesh Basketball Federation president Mostafa Jalal Mohiuddin MP handed over the prizes to the teams.

Eight teams, including one from Chittagong, participated in the tournament.

It was jointly organised jointly by and Vertical Horizon, an English Medium Study Centre. Radio Today was the event's media partner.

L'pool triumph in a sea of red

Football

ZAKARIA SIMON, from Kuala Lumpur

Liverpool's preparations for the up-coming English Premier League continued as they recorded an in-the-end comfortable 6-3 victory over a Malaysia XI in a friendly match in Kuala Lumpur yesterday.

The Reds went ahead in the 26th minute thanks to a controversial penalty. Referee Nagor Amir Bin Noor Mohamed ruled that the Reds' new record signing Andy Carroll had been brought down illegally by Fadhli Mohd Shas. Midfielder Charlie Adam stepped up and despite needing a retake, buried the chance. The mood in the crowd was so good and uplifting that it did not matter to them who had scored. They celebrated the goal with a spectacular cheer.

The stadium though, went ballistic when Malaysian captain Shafiq Rahim equalised in the 42nd minutes when his banana free-kick from the top of the box found the net, sailing over the outstretched hands of Liverpool goalkeeper Brad Jones.

Their next chance came on the stroke of half-time when another Rahim 40-yard free-kick missed the far post by a whisker which meant the scores remained 1-all at the break. Liverpool were true to their spirit of practice that they replaced all their eleven players for the second half.

The charges of legend Kenny Dalglish went ahead again in the 67th minute and widened the gap three minutes later. They cleared further with a strike from Maxi Rodriguez in the 77th minute. Things just looked different after that as the hosts started to regroup and attack. To the delight of the jam-packed 'partisan' crowd, Mohd Safee Mohd Sali pulled one back in the 77th minute before adding another few minutes later.

The match was heading for a 4-3 finish, a result the Reds

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Malaysian fans paint the Bukit Jalil Stadium in Kuala Lumpur red before Liverpool's friendly match against Malaysia XI yesterday. Liverpool won 6-3.

PHOTO: AFP