

SPORT



Bangladesh cricket team captain Mushfiqur Rahim speaks at a press conference at the Sher-e-Bangla National Stadium yesterday.

PHOTO: STAR

On Dhaka Premier League: Players should be paid the amount they deserve

On match-fixing: Stresses on the need for more 'awareness' among players

On BPL payment: "I can't seem to find the franchise owners any longer"

On Captaincy: Awaits board's decision

'Not my father's team'

SPORTS REPORTER

Mushfiqur Rahim has been the most talked about cricketer in the press ever since he resigned from the national captaincy in Zimbabwe earlier this month. His surprise resignation was the first matter that dominated headlines. An unscheduled meeting between players of the national team last week during which issues regarding the Dhaka Premier League were discussed was the other.

The latter issue created a temporary distance between the members of the national team and cricketers outside it. The local cricketers had been protesting the delay in the Dhaka League for a while and to have organised a meeting among a select group of players was a move that was criticised by many. After the meeting last Monday, the diminutive skipper was unwilling to provide details of the meeting and said: "When time comes, you will know what it's about... wait for two more days."

In a press conference at Mirpur yesterday there was an attempt to clear the air from Mushfiqur, who was initially reticent to discuss the details of

the meeting, saying at the time that "We were worried about the new payment system in the Dhaka League and we had a mere discussion that day. It's not possible for me to contact all the 200 players in the league and call them to the meeting," said Mushfiqur.

"We were away in Zimbabwe for a while. So we wanted to be aware of the problems in the league and then take a stand. We were going to express our views through CWAB (Cricketers Welfare Association of Bangladesh) like the others. But before we could do that, there were a number of things written in the papers which made things complicated," he added.

Addressing the cricketers outside the national team the former captain said, "I would like to clear the fact that players who are outside the national team are not separate. The national team is not my father's team and I can't play here all my life. We want all the players to benefit from the league."

"For instance, if the grading system is enforced then players in the lower grade, who would have received Tk 15 lakh otherwise, will receive Tk 5-6 lakh only. So we discussed these matters as well," added Mushfiqur.

He further stated that the players are now waiting for the CCDM to reveal

the final payment structure of the league.

Touching on another controversial issue, he said that he received only 25 per cent of his BPL fee and requested the board to disperse the remaining money to the cricketers as soon as possible.

"Personally, I can't seem to find any of the franchise's owners now. But the board has said that they will pay the money and we hope that happens soon," said Mushfiqur.

While Mushfiqur was not ready to comment on the recent allegations made by the media on match-fixing in the BPL, he did believe that cricketers needed to be 'more aware' of such situations.

"It's a gentleman's game and silly mistakes should not take place. There were many who had gotten fixing offers earlier and they refused. It's an individual matter and they should think about their country before taking any step," said Mushfiqur.

Regarding his captaincy role, Mushfiqur said that he will make a call after the board's decision. "I spoke to the president and it all depends on them now. I think they want to form an investigating committee to look into the matter," said Mushfiqur.

Dinajpur-Bandarban final today

SPORTS REPORTER

Dinajpur reached the final of the 3rd Walton Hill Tracts Hockey Tournament eliminating Rangamati by a solitary goal in the second semifinal at the Maulana Bhasani National Hockey Stadium yesterday.

The only goal of the match was an own goal which Rangamati conceded in the 17th minute.

Defending champions Bandarban had earlier booked their berth in the final beating Khagrachhari 2-0 in tie-breaker on Sunday.

The final between Dinajpur and Bandarban will be a rematch of last edition's final where Bandarban beat Dinajpur to emerge champions.

The final will take place today at 3:10 pm and will be telecast live on ATN Bangla.

Clubs to begin Super Cup prep

SPORTS REPORTER

Former champions Mohammedan will start their camp today and according to an official no incidents of players' revolt is expected this time.

Muktijoddha Sangsad, who have a clean image of clearing players' dues in the past, had also experienced such players' revolt this season and coach Shafiqul Islam Manik believes that such incidents would not take place this time as the preparation would start from tomorrow.

"For the Super Cup, the players are getting an opportunity to receive another chunk of money," said Manik. "Besides, they are also getting a platform to show their form ahead of next season's players' transfers."

Sheikh Jamal and Team BJMC begin their camp today while defending champions Abahani will begin their training from tomorrow. Brothers Union will start their camp from June 1.

After a three-week gap following the completion of the Bangladesh Premier League, the footballers are set to get back to business with some of the clubs starting their preparation camp for the Super Cup from today.

The third edition of the tournament is scheduled for June 14 to 25 with eight Premier League clubs but few of the clubs may face obstruction from the players regarding their payment.

Treble-winners Sheikh Russel KC, who started their camp on Sunday, experienced such revolt as three to four top booters skipped the first-day training citing different reasons but it was learnt that the real reason was the unpaid wages. However, they returned to practice yesterday after getting assurance of payment by the first week of June.



England skipper Alastair Cook celebrates his century on the fourth day of the second Test against New Zealand at Headingley in Leeds on Monday.

PHOTO: AFP

IPL SPOT-FIXING No govt interference with BCCI

PTI, New Delhi

Notwithstanding questions over BCCI in the wake of T20 spot-fixing, government has ruled out interference with it unless it "becomes absolutely necessary" but insists that the cricketing body should have "transparent" and "objective" systems in place to prevent malpractices. Law minister Kapil Sibal said the government should keep away from sports "as far as possible" as it could damage it.

"Sports can't be run by governments... governments getting involved in sports activities would ultimately damage sports," he said.

He was responding to a question as to whether government should step into the affairs of the Board of Control for Cricket in India as questions are being raised over its functioning in the wake of spot-fixing allegations.

"I am not saying that in every situation, but as far as possible government should keep away. But when it becomes absolutely necessary, then there is no way out, then of course at that time government can take a position," he said.

To buttress his argument, he said sports bodies across the world like American baseball, American football and soccer leagues in Europe are not under government control.

Even within the country, Indian Olympic Association and the Hockey Federation are not under government control, he noted.

Sibal, a renowned lawyer, said sports organisations should be encouraged to find solutions for themselves.

"If there are malpractices in sports, part of the solution lies in the organisations themselves taking a very strong view and cleaning up the mess from within," the law minister underlined.

"I think it's the primary responsibility of the organisation and the federation itself to put systems in place which are transparent, which are objective so that there is no recurrence of malpractices like this," he said.

When it was pointed out that there can be activities like match-fixing and spot-fixing in sports, Sibal said, "If there are criminal offences involved, the law should come into force."

On demands for bringing BCCI under the ambit of Right to Information Act, Sibal said it was up to the sports ministry to take a call.

Former sports minister Ajay Maken had in December 2011 favoured bringing BCCI under RTI, arguing that there is "just and reasonable grounds" for this.

BCCI has been rejecting any such move, saying it is a private body and RTI applies only to government organisations or those supported financially by it.

Dhaka United maul F'ganj

SPORTS REPORTER

Dhaka United SC notched their first win in the Premier Bank Bangladesh Championship League when they thrashed Farashganj SC 4-1 at the Bangabandhu National Stadium yesterday. Ibrahim opened the scoring for Dhaka United before Shehab scored twice to take a 3-0 lead. Ripon pulled one back for Farashganj but Sazim restored the margin the stoppage time.

Despite the win, Dhaka United stayed at the bottom of the eight-team table with seven points from 11 outings while Farashganj stayed at fourth position with 14 points.

KIIT Int'l chess

SPORTS REPORTER

GM Ziaur Rahman became 19th in the elite category of the 5th KIIT International Chess Festival which concluded in Bhubaneswar, Odisha in India yesterday. Zia earned 6.5 points from 10 games. GM Enamul Hossain Rajib became 22nd while FM Nasir Ahmed became 31st with 6 points each.

Police arrest 6 bookies

AFP, Panaji

Indian police said Monday they have arrested six bookmakers in Goa state who were part of a syndicate betting on Indian Premier League cricket matches.

The tournament has been reeling from a spot-fixing scandal which has led to the arrest of three cricketers and 11 bookies.

Eng close to series win

AFP, Leeds

Graeme Swann bowled England to the brink of victory against New Zealand in the second and final test at Headingley on Monday.

The off-spinner took four for 61 in 21.4 unchanged overs, extending his match haul to eight wickets, before bad light ended the fourth day with New Zealand 154 for six.

That left the black caps still needing a further 310 runs to reach their victory target of 468.

The most any side has

ever made in the fourth innings to win a test is West Indies' 418 for seven against Australia in Antigua in 2002/03.

It seemed only the rain on Tuesday's final day could now deny England victory and a 2-0 series win.

In that case they might rue both captain Alastair Cook's decision not to enforce the follow-on on Sunday and indeed bat on after lunch on Monday in a match where the whole of Friday's first day was washed out without a ball bowled.

For New Zealand, only former captain Ross Taylor, with a stylish 70, offered much in the way of significant resistance Monday before he was yorked by Swann to leave New Zealand 154 for six.

ENGLAND: First innings 354 (Root 104, Bairstow 64; Boult 5-57)		NEW ZEALAND: First innings 174 (Swann 4-42, Finn 3-36)			
Fulton c Bell b Broad	15	4	51		
Rutherford c Root b Swann	17	3	67		
Williamson lbw b Swann	24	4	68		
Bracewell	13	3	49		
Guptill	5	0	41		
Taylor b Swann	5	0	0		
Brownlie c Bell b Finn	5	0	0		
Guptill c Trotter b Swann	7	0	0		
McCullum not out	7	0	0		
Southey not out	7	0	0		
Extras: (lb-6)	6	0	0		
Total: (For 6 wickets in 54.4 overs)	158	0	0		
Fall of wickets: 1-21, 2-40, 3-65, 4-144, 5-153, 6-154					
To bat: Bracewell, Wagner, Boult					
Bowler		O	M	R	W
Anderson	11	4	28	0	
Broad	8	2	19	1	
Swann	21.4	7	61	4	
Finn	11	1	43	1	
Root	3	2	1	0	

Hockey players make new demands

SPORTS REPORTER

When it seemed that the crisis in hockey was coming to an end, it took a bizarre twist yesterday after the Hockey Players' Welfare Association (HPWA) made new demands threatening that failure to meet those demands would lead them to boycott all kinds of activity under the current executive committee of the Bangladesh Hockey Federation.

In the face of players' solitary demand of a transfer date, the BHF president Air Marshal Enamul Bari sat with the high-ups of all premier division clubs and took a unanimous decision to hold the transfers from July 2 to 4 on Saturday. But that has failed to appease the players, as the players under the banner of HPWA, met with the general secretary Rahmatullah and wanted written guarantee about the transfers. They also demanded putting a cap on number of BKSP players allowed in each team and reducing foreign



Hockey Players' Welfare Association placed their three-point demand to the general secretary of Bangladesh Hockey Federation yesterday.

PHOTO: STAR

players' quota to three for each team.

"From our previous experience, we can not rely on their verbal assurance," said national striker Rassel Mahmud Jimmy. "As he (Rahmatullah) can not take responsibility for us, we should not play any games under him and the existing committee."

"I have learnt that some top clubs are planning to form their squads with players from BKSP, then how the national players will be accommodated? That's why we demand a quota on the BKSP players and reducing the foreign players' quota,"

said former national goalkeeper Rassel Khan Bappi, who however said that they would not put such appeal to the clubs.

BHF general secretary Rahmatullah said he has no sole authority to make a decision on such demand.

"If they (players) do not rely on the decision made by the federation president along with the clubs' high official, how can I give them guarantee," said Rahmatullah. "I have nothing to say about their new demands which can only be met by the league committee."

Rahmatullah suspected that the players might be misguided by a group with an agenda in the polls of the Bangladesh Hockey Federation.

The former national player, Rahmatullah, however said that the federation would talk with the players again and request them to join the national camp for the Asia Cup, which is yet to be announced.