

ACSU back to dig deeper

SPORTS REPORTER



The International Cricket Council's (ICC) Anti Corruption and Security Unit (ACSU) made their way back into the country yet again, leading many to believe that the ACSU's report on corruption in the Bangladesh Premier League (BPL) T20 was finally in the grasps of the Bangladesh Cricket Board (BCB).

There were however more questions than answers at the BCB's headquarters in Mirpur yesterday.

"Two investigative officers of the ACSU arrived in the country last night (Sunday). They are here for two days. But the BCB does not know anything about their schedule or what they plan to do this time," BCB's acting CEO Nizamuddin Chowdhury informed reporters yesterday, adding that it was not certain when the two officials would meet the board.

It was learnt that the chances of the board receiving the report from the ACSU's officials during the current visit were slim.

It was also learnt that the ACSU wanted to conduct a few more interviews. Some of the individuals interviewed during its previous visit may be interrogated for a second time.

With the spate of allegations and names appearing in the national media recently, the BCB's tight-lipped approach was understandable.

Reflecting on the uncertainty regarding the delivery of the report, Chowdhury stated that the board was trying to get the report as soon as possible.

"We want to close the deal as much as you (media) all do. But one can't just finish these reports in a hurry. It needs time," said Chowdhury.

"It's obviously not possible to disclose the entire report to the media, but once we get it we will ensure that the media gets a summary of

Two ACSU officers to conduct more interviews, possibly second interrogations of previous interviewees

It is unlikely that BCB will be handed the corruption report during this visit

the report along with their (ACSU's) recommendations," he added.

When asked if the BCB were concerned about the possibility of additional names cropping up in the report he said, "There is nothing to worry if such a thing happens. It's always good to flush out the problems and be clean."

Earlier, the BCB had invited ACSU to investigate suspected corrupt activities in the second edition of the BPL. The board now awaits the ACSU's report and its recommendations in order to get the complete details of the issue.

Royals owner suspended

AFP, New Delhi

Cricket officials on Monday suspended the co-owner of an Indian Premier League (IPL) team and announced plans for a major clean-up of the sport after an illegal betting and spot-fixing scandal.

The Board of Control for Cricket in India (BCCI) held an emergency meeting in New Delhi into the Rajasthan Royals IPL franchise and its co-owner Raj Kundra amid the ongoing scandal.

"Mr Raj Kundra has been suspended, pending an inquiry, from all cricketing activities," BCCI interim head Jagmohan Dalmiya told reporters after the meeting.

Kundra, the businessman husband of Bollywood actress and former contestant on UK show "Celebrity Big Brother" Shilpa Shetty, has admitted illegally betting on his own team, according to police.

Three Royals players, including Test fast bowler Shanthakumaran Sreesanth, and numerous bookmakers have been arrested over allegations of spot-fixing during the recently-completed edition of the IPL.

After Monday's meeting Dalmiya released a blueprint called "Operation Clean-up" aimed at stamping out "sleaze" and corruption in the multi-billion dollar Twenty20 tournament.

Under the plan, IPL players, team owners and support staff face a "strict code of conduct". Owners' movements in team dugouts and dressing rooms during matches will be restricted.

Div-I b'ball

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Cantonians thrashed Mohammadpur Basketball Club by 43-14 points in the Citycell First Division Basketball League at the Dhanmondi Basketball Gymnasium yesterday. The winners led the one-sided affair by 23-6 points in the first half. Shimul scored highest 17 points for Cantonians while Ali scored nine points.

Meanwhile, in the late match on Sunday night, The Greggs Club defeated Josephites by 73-51 points.

Can Sk Jamal end on high?

SPORTS REPORTER



Sheikh Jamal Dhanmondi Club are looking forward to putting a frustrating season behind by winning the season-ending Super Cup.

The former premier league champions took the lead in both the Federation Cup and Independence Cup finals, but eventually surrendered the titles to Sheikh Russel. They were also in joint lead with their nemesis, but faltered in the end to finish behind Sheikh Russel. However this time they want to take lesson from their mistakes to win the Super Cup, which gets underway from Friday.

"We had to finish runners-up in three meets due to some of our mistakes. Now we have been working hard under a new coach (Wasim Iqbal) in a bid to end the season on high. Our target is to win the Super Cup," said Sheikh Jamal captain Hasan Al Mamun at the official press briefing at the BFF House yesterday.

Nevertheless interim coach Wasim Iqbal, who stepped in as regular coach Joseph Afusi went on leave, will have to deal with a couple of hurdles. Wasim will have to deal with injuries to some of his key players while he has a very short span of time to know his charges and to find proper replacement to the foreign players.

The injury problems have forced Sheikh Jamal DC to rope in five young players from their academy, along with free-agent midfielder Manwar Hossain while they get back the services of fit-again Monaem Khan Raju.

"The players have nothing to be taught at this level. My job is to bring consistency and I think the players are good in technique and thinking. I think they will be able to put up good show on the pitch," said the former star national booter, who last coached Brothers Union in the fourth Bangladesh Premier League.

Brothers Union, who are also in Sheikh Jamal's group, want to bring back some of their past glory through the Super Cup.

"We want to take match by match to ensure the semifinal first. As it is a fight among local players, I believe my boys can fight well against any side," said Brothers manager Amer Khan.

Brothers, trophyless since 2005, reached the semifinal of the inaugural edition of the tournament in 2009 before being eliminated by Abahani.



PHOTO: STAR

Sheikh Jamal DC's interim coach Wasim Iqbal (C) speaks during a press briefing at the BFF House yesterday about his side's chances in the Super Cup.



PHOTO: AFP

South Africa opener Hashim Amla plays a shot on the on side during his side's Champions Trophy match against Pakistan at Edgbaston in Birmingham on Monday. The elegant batsman scored 81.

SA crush Pakistan

AFP, Birmingham



Chris Morris took two wickets on his one-day international debut and Ryan McLaren a career-best four for 19 as South Africa returned to winning ways in the Champions Trophy with a 67-run success over Pakistan at Edgbaston on Monday.

Pakistan, set 235 to win, finished on 167 all out as South Africa made light of the absence of premier fast bowlers Dale Steyn and Morne Morkel in winning with five overs to spare.

Both Pakistan and South Africa needed to win this day/night fixture after losing their opening Group B matches to the West Indies and India respectively.

But while this victory revived South Africa's chances of a semi-final spot, defeat left Pakistan's hopes hanging by a thread.

Pakistan did well to restrict South Africa to 234 for nine after man-of-the-match Hashim Amla, dropped before he reached double figures, made 81.

Pakistan's chase stalled from the outset when Morris, a late call-up to the squad after Morkel was ruled out, produced a new-ball burst of two wickets for 10 runs in 19 balls.

The 26-year-old Highveld Lions seamer, struck with his fifth ball when he knocked over left-hander Imran Farhat's off stump.

Morris, who'd previously played two

Twenty20 internationals, then saw Mohammad Hafeez fail to get over the top of a bouncer and hole out to square leg.

By the time McLaren took two wickets in five balls, with the aid of fine catches by Colin Ingram and Faf du Plessis, Pakistan were 134 for six off 39 overs.

But Pakistan captain Misbah-ul-Haq, who made a career-best 96 not out against the West Indies, completed a 69-ball fifty with a straight six off left-arm spinner Robin Peterson.

It was a shot greeted by huge cheers from the overwhelmingly pro-Pakistan 25,000 capacity crowd in Birmingham, which boasts one of the largest Asian populations of any English city.

But the crowd was silenced when Misbah, on 55, pulled a Lonwabo Tsotsobe slower ball to Amla at mid-wicket and the skipper was booed at the post-match presentation ceremony.

McLaren ended the match by bowling Junaid Khan.

Amla was missed on seven when a cut off Mohammad Irfan flew to backward point where Umar Amin dropped the tough chance.

He made Pakistan pay with a typically stylish innings before he reverse-swept off-spinner Saeed Aijmal to Hafeez at short third man.

South Africa conclude their group campaign against the West Indies in Cardiff on Friday, with Pakistan facing arch-rivals India at Edgbaston on Saturday.

SL-NZ SCOREBOARD				
SOUTH AFRICA				
Ingram lbw b Hafeez		20		
Amla c Hafeez b Aijmal		81		
Du Plessis c Malik b Irfan		28		
De Villiers run out		31		
Duminy run out		24		
Miller c Misbah b Junaid		19		
McLaren lbw b Malik		4		
Peterson not out		16		
Morris run out		1		
Phangiso run out		0		
Extras: (lb-5, w-4, nb-1)		10		
Total: (For 9 wickets in 50 overs)		234		
Did not bat: Tsotsobe				
Fall of wickets: 1-53, 2-122, 3-145, 4-186, 5-195, 6-203, 7-231, 8-234, 9-234.				
Bowler	O	M	R	W
Irfan	7	1	27	1
Junaid	8	0	45	1
Hafeez	10	0	38	1
Riaz	9	0	50	0
Aijmal	10	0	42	1
Malik	6	0	27	1
PAKISTAN				
Farhat b Morris		2		
Jamshed c & b Tsotsobe		42		
Hafeez c Miller b Morris		7		
Malik b Duminy		8		
Misbah c Amla b Tsotsobe		55		
Umar c Ingram b McLaren		16		
Kamran c du Plessis b McLaren		0		
Wahab b Phangiso		13		
Aijmal c Ingram b McLaren		5		
Junaid b McLaren		4		
Irfan not out		0		
Total: (all out; 45 overs)		167		
Fall of wickets: 1-4, 2-18, 3-48, 4-86, 5-129, 6-134, 7-148, 8-162, 9-167.				
Bowler	O	M	R	W
Tsotsobe	9	1	23	2
Morris	7	0	25	2
McLaren	8	3	19	4
Phangiso	10	0	50	1
Duminy	7	0	26	1
Peterson	4	0	17	0
Result: South Africa won by 67 runs.				
Player of the match: Hashim Amla.				

Ump Francis passes away

CRICINFO, Colombo

Umpire KT Francis, who officiated in Sri Lanka's inaugural Test match against England at the P Sara Oval in February 1982, died on Sunday in hospital after losing his battle against diabetes. As a result of the illness, Francis, 73, had to have both his legs amputated below the knee.

Francis was a member of the ICC international panel of umpires and officiated in 25 Tests between 1982 and 1999, and 56 ODIs in that period which included two World Cups in 1996 and 1999.

He started his career as a railway guard and played football and cricket for the Ceylon Government Railway in the Government Services tournaments for 40 years.

Reflecting back over the years, Francis once said, "Because of cricket I am known today in Sri Lanka and sometimes outside the country."

Bravo ready for India

AFP, London



match at The Oval on Tuesday.

The winner is almost certain to take one of the two semifinal berths from group B after both teams won their opening games, albeit in contrasting fashion.

India, the reigning World Cup champions, brushed aside injury-hit South Africa by 26 runs in Cardiff after an impressive batting display saw them post a commanding 331-7.

The West Indies shot Pakistan out for 170 at The Oval on Friday, but then showed their vulnerability while batting as they lost eight wickets while chasing the modest target.

All-rounder Bravo, who replaced Darren Sammy as one-day captain ahead of the tournament, said the close result did not worry him as his side prepared to face the inform Indians.

"We came out on top and that's more important," said Bravo. "It does not matter if you lose eight or nine wickets, we got the two points that we wanted."

Bravo, whose side beat Sri Lanka by 17 runs in a practice match in Edgbaston last

week, said winning two games in a row was the right morale-booster ahead of tougher encounters.

Bravo, who plays for Indian captain Mahendra Singh Dhoni's Chennai Super Kings in the Indian Premier League, said the West Indies had the resources to take the world champions in their stride.

"It's another tough game against a team whose strength lies in their batting," he said. "But we have the right bowlers to control their batting."

"Cricket is played on the day. India could turn up on Tuesday and be knocked over, or score a big total again as they normally do."

"I have the right attack if I want to go with someone with raw pace. I have the reserve bench that is strong enough to actually come up with the 11 that I think will do well against the Indians."

Bravo said the opening win against Pakistan added to the joy of captaining the West Indies.

"It is a great personal achievement for me," he said. "But it is not all about me as a captain. It's how we all come together and try to make the best decision for the team."

"The West Indies normally do not start well in tournaments like this, so it was important that we get our first win out of the way and look forward to the rest of the games ahead."

Hockey players join camp

SPORTS REPORTER

After a lot of drama regarding the inter-club players' transfers, the national hockey players finally joined the preparation camp of the Asia Cup at the Bangladesh Krira Shikkha Protisthan (BKSP) yesterday with 24 players out of 33 reporting to coach Mahbub Harun.

Forward Rasel Mahmud Jimmy and defender Moshir Rahman Biplob, who are in Germany, are supposed to return on June 30 to join the national camp, which was initially supposed to get underway from May 15.

Apart from Jimmy and Biplob, five players including penalty-corner specialist Mamunur Rahman Chayan from Bangladesh Navy have not been granted leave yet while two from Bangladesh Army, who are in training, are supposed to join the national camp by June 20, informed Harun.

Harun informed that they would stay at the BKSP for seven to ten days for only fitness training as the new turf at the BKSP is being installed currently.

Bangladesh have been drawn alongside South Korea, India and Oman in the Asia Cup which will be held in Malaysia from 24 to September 1.

R'ganj, F'ganj end with draw

SPORTS REPORTER

Former premier league clubs Rahmatganj MFS and Farashganj SC finished their Premier Bank Bangladesh Championship League campaign in third and fifth positions respectively after playing out a 1-1 draw in their last match at the Bangabandhu National Stadium yesterday.

Nurul Absar had given Rahmatganj a 21st minute lead, only to be cancelled out by Nur Hossain's strike deep into injury time. Rahmatganj finished with 19 points from their allotted 14 matches while Farashganj ended on 16 points.

Fahad still in lead

SPORTS REPORTER

Former national junior champion Fahad Rahman stayed at joint lead with 3.5 points, along with three other players, after the fourth round in the under-10 group of the 14th ASEAN Age-group Chess Championship in Chiang Mai, Thailand yesterday.

Fahad drew against Lye Lik Zang of Malaysia in the fourth round yesterday, after beating Pum Fu Vin of Vietnam in the third round on the previous day.

Suspension on Ramdin

CRICINFO, London

West Indies' Denesh Ramdin has been fined 100 per cent of the applicable match fee and suspended for two ODI matches after being found guilty of a Level 2 breach of the ICC Code of Conduct during the ICC Champions Trophy 2013 match against Pakistan on Friday.

All players found guilty of a Level 2 offence at a hearing have a right to appeal the decision to a Judicial Commissioner, within 24 hours of receipt of that decision. Pending the outcome of the appeal, the sanction imposed will apply.