

## SPORT

## Short-term appointment 'very wrong': Mushfiqur

SPORTS REPORTER



Reappointed Bangladesh captain Mushfiqur Rahim has blasted his short-term appointment as a 'very wrong' concept. The 24-year old wicketkeeper-batsman believes that it hinders progress insofar as setting long-term goals for the team is concerned.

The Bangladesh Cricket Board (BCB) continued with their practice of appointing captain series by series as they decided to retain Mushfiqur as captain of the national team but only until December 31 this year, which meant the little man has to design all his goals for only one series against New Zealand at home in October this year.

"When the board is not thinking on a wide range then it doesn't matter what I'm thinking (about long-term captaincy). I have one series in hand during my five-month tenure and I will try to give my hundred per cent as I have the last time," the Bangladesh captain told reporters after training at the Sher-e-Bangla National Stadium in Mirpur yesterday.

But he was quick to speak from his

heart regarding the issue as he added: "I think we are the only country in the world that appoints a captain on a series-by-series basis. To be honest, it's very wrong because not only for a captain but for anybody it is very difficult and challenging to set goals if he is given a short-term responsibility. Hopefully, next time whoever gets the job will get it for a long time, for the good of the country and for team spirit."

His short-term appointment raised questions especially because coach Shane Jurgensen was given a long-term assignment with an eye on the 2015 World Cup, and also because in his near two-year captaincy stint the wicket-keeper batsman has enjoyed relative success. "I already congratulated Shane and I think he now has a very big challenge on his hand ahead of the next World Cup," said Mushfiqur.

Mushfiqur can count himself lucky to have been reappointed at all after his emotional and public resignation when Bangladesh lost the ODI series during the tour of Zimbabwe in May.

"You know that we as a nation are emotional. You can achieve many things with emotion but anything in excess is always bad. My emotional

outburst was wrong. Not only me but others can learn from it in future," Mushfiqur admitted his mistake.

The Bangladesh captain however thanked the board for keeping faith on him. "Thank to the board for retaining me as a captain. I would like to be as committed towards the goal as I was before. I don't think it will be very challenging for me. True we failed to achieve the expected result on our last tour of Zimbabwe but my focus would be to maintain the consistency we showed in the last few years," said Mushfiqur.

"There are high expectations with the home series because we have been playing good cricket at home for the last two years. Like us, New Zealand have also had ups and downs in their performance but they are a very dangerous side and recently they beat England. Last time we played good cricket to beat them and this time there is no alternative if we want to repeat that result. Everyone is working hard," he continued.

The Bangladesh captain also hoped that the new payment system for the upcoming Dhaka Premier Division Cricket League will be in effect only for this year and revert to the old system from the next season.



PHOTO: STAR

Reappointed Bangladesh skipper Mushfiqur Rahim makes his way back from batting practice during the national team's training camp at the Sher-e-Bangla National Stadium yesterday.

## Enjoying wedlock and phucka

SPORTS REPORTER

Newly married Tamim Iqbal joined the national team's conditioning camp yesterday at the Sher-e-Bangla National Stadium in Mirpur. The happily married left-hander was sporting enough to share some light moments with reporters watching the practice, who were more interested to learn about his new life than about his cricket.

The Chittagonian tied the knot with Ayesha Siddiqia, a bachelor in business administration, less than two weeks back after an eight-year courtship. The question on everyone's lips was how much had wedlock changed his life?

"If you are talking about any additional duties after marriage then that involves taking the wife out for 'phucka' and I enjoy it," came the straight-bat reply from the dashing opener.

"I don't feel any change in my life after the marriage. I heard lots of stories from married people that life will change after marriage but I don't feel anything like that. Bachelor friends are trying to put me in a separate group of human being but I want to remain the same Tamim as I was before," said the smiling Tamim.

Questions on cricket did eventually make it to the fore as the batsman was training after a long time. "I don't feel uneasy, even after a long gap the feeling is good when I'm batting in the nets."

## India crush Nepal

SPORTS REPORTER

India registered a 92-22 win over Nepal in the qualifying round (South Asian zone) of the U-16 FIBA Asia Championship at the Dhanmondi Basketball Gymnasium yesterday.

India comfortably led the first half 41-15. Singh and Sunil of India caged 27 and 12 points while Anish and Baniya scored 11 and six points from Nepal.

## India in battle for survival

PTI, Port of Spain



Their campaign in tatters after two consecutive defeats, India need to regroup quickly as they go into a must-win match against hosts West Indies in the Tri-series on Friday.

The Champions Trophy winners have suddenly looked vulnerable as the young Indian players found it tough to come to terms with the challenging conditions.

As if the two-paced Caribbean wickets were not enough to trouble the Indians, injury to charismatic skipper Mahendra Singh Dhoni has only made the job tough for them.

Friday's contest comes as a huge challenge and test for the leadership quality of Virat Kohli, who is being considered as a future captain of the country.

Kohli's tactics during the big defeat against Sri Lanka did not work and it will be interesting to see how he leads the young pack in the pressure match, where a defeat

will virtually ensure their elimination.

West Indies are best placed so far with nine points, courtesy two wins from as many matches while Sri Lanka are second with five points. Both the teams have managed to win a bonus point.

A victory on Friday will keep India alive in the competition. Their defeat would send the hosts into the final and from there, India's chances to qualify for the final will depend on a lot of ifs and buts.

First and foremost, India would need a favour from the West Indies that the hosts beat Sri Lanka in their final league match on Sunday and then India will have to beat the Asian neighbours on Tuesday in a certain number of overs to make it to the summit clash.

India's victory on Friday will keep the tournament open as all three teams will have a chance to book a place in the title clash.

Considering the grim situation, India need stroke-maker Shikhar Dhawan to yet again provide a solid opening along with Rohit Sharma, who is the only one so far from the side to score a half-century.

## BD teams' schedule in Kings Cup

SPORTS REPORTER

Instead of Brothers Union, Arambagh KS along with Team BJMC will be representing Bangladesh in the Kings Cup to be held in Bhutan from July 20 to August 10.

Arambagh will start the campaign against hosts Yeedin FC in the opener of Group A, which includes one team each from Bangladesh, India (Mohan Bagan) and Bhutan and two from Nepal.

Team BJMC were placed in Group B along with one team each from Bangladesh, Bhutan, Nepal and India. Team BJMC will play their first match on July 23.

The top two finishers of each group will advance to the semifinals to be held on August 6 and 7 before the final on August 10.

## Academy in limbo

SPORTS REPORTER



Funding, coaches, players and concrete structures are all in place, but the Bangladesh Football Federation (BFF) is still facing a struggle to inaugurate the first football academy in Sylhet due to long-winded government procedures preventing the equipping of the facility.

The BFF have already struck a two-year deal with Dutch coach Rene Koster to take over as the head of the BFF Academy. 64 players have also been selected in the presence of a FIFA technical consultant in December last year and the first chunk of the 300,000 dollars from the FIFA Goal Project for the academy has also been received in June last year after the government leased the Sylhet BKSP to the BFF in December 2011 for five years.

The BFF president Kazi Salahuddin had earlier announced a number of dates for the start of the academy with June 2013 being the last stated date. But a long tender procedure from the National Sports Council, to equip the academy, has meant that he has failed to keep his word. And at this stage neither the BFF, nor the NSC can clearly say

when the academy will be functional.

"Please ask the NSC about the Sylhet BKSP. I don't know what they are doing in last six months despite the finance ministry releasing the project fund (Tk 1.94 crore)," said a disappointed Salahuddin yesterday.

It has been learnt that the finance ministry approved the BFF academy project in March. NSC floated the tenders three months later but cancelled it due to a technical fault before retendering in June.

A source within the NSC informed that they would issue the work-order next week as the technical evaluation committee approved the tender procedure for the BFF Academy yesterday.

He also expected to start work at the Sylhet BKSP by July 11 or 12 through painting. Installation of furniture and earth-filling of the two fields will likely take even longer and hence it will be a significant amount of time before the academy actually becomes functional.

The football's governing body will also have to wait to get some tools such as roller machines, grass-cutters etc worth Tk 40 lakh as the NSC technical evaluation committee recommended to re-tender it for the third time according to the source.



France's Marion Bartoli pumps her fist in celebration after beating Belgium's Kirsten Flipkens in the Wimbledon singles semifinal yesterday.

PHOTO: AFP

## It's Lisicki vs Bartoli

AFP, London



Sabine Lisicki became the first German woman since 1999 to reach a Grand Slam final when she defeated Poland's Agnieszka Radwanska 6-4, 2-6, 9-7 on Thursday in a thrilling Wimbledon semifinal.

The 24th seed Lisicki will face France's 15th-seeded Marion Bartoli, the 2007 runner-up, in Saturday's title match looking to become Germany's first champion at a major since Steffi Graf beat Martina Hingis to claim the 1999 French Open.

Bartoli stormed into her second Wimbledon final as the French 15th seed crushed Belgium's Kirsten Flipkens 6-1, 6-2.

Bartoli was beaten by Venus Williams in her only previous Grand Slam final appearance at Wimbledon in 2007, but she finally has another chance to win a first major title after demolishing Flipkens in just 62 minutes on Centre Court.

"I just can't believe it, I played so well today," said Bartoli.

"It feels so great. Kirsten had an amazing run and played some unbelievable matches. She was a bit injured today and that must be hard in the semi-finals of Wimbledon.

"I gave her a hug because I wanted to show her respect."

Bartoli said she is playing better and better, having made the final without dropping a set.

"I saw the ball like a football. I was hitting it really cleanly, my footwork was sharp, my passing shots and lobs worked perfectly."

Bartoli, tormented by injuries and illness in recent months, has enjoyed one of the best spells of her career over the last two weeks.

Flipkens looked drained by her three-set win over Petra Kvitova in the previous round and Bartoli made her pay, hitting 23 winners compared to just 10 from the Belgian 20th seed.

Bartoli failed to even make the last 16 at the Australian and French Opens this year and this was her first Grand Slam last four appearance since Roland Garros in 2011.

But she had stunned another Belgian, Justine Henin, in her previous Wimbledon semi-final six years ago and once again she produced a superb display on the big occasion.

Bartoli, now coached by 2006 Wimbledon winner Amelie Mauresmo instead of her father Walter, used her piercing returns and accurate ground-strokes to overwhelm Flipkens, who was making her Grand Slam semifinal debut aged 27.

Flipkens, a former junior Wimbledon champion, had seen her ranking plummet to 262 after blood clots contracted during a flight from Thailand left her sidelined for several months last year.

She didn't even qualify for Wimbledon 12 months ago.

The Belgian was wearing her trademark prescription tinted sunglasses, yet she seemed dazzled by the spotlight on Centre Court.

She produced a hesitant opening service game and Bartoli took full advantage to break for a 2-0 lead.

Bartoli, an intense character at the best of times, seized her opportunity to take control in ruthless fashion, punching home a volley to move 5-1 ahead before slamming an ace to take the set.

Throughout her career Bartoli's game has been marked by bizarre routines as she jumps, skips, shuffles and twirls her racket before serving or returning.

And her quirky routine was on full display as she shattered any hopes of a Flipkens fightback with two breaks in the opening three games of the second set.

Trailing 3-0, Flipkens called for treatment and managed her first break of serve after resuming.

That just postponed the inevitable and Bartoli immediately broke again before sealing the victory.

## NBR after Ashraful's accounts

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The National Board of Revenue (NBR) has started an investigation into the income and wealth of former Bangladesh captain Mohammad Ashraful, said an official yesterday.

The revenue authority has already collected transaction information in Ashraful's bank accounts as part of the drive.

Last month, the NBR asked banks for the accounts of Ashraful and transaction details to detect the sources of transactions, said a senior official of NBR on condition of anonymity.

The revenue administration moves to examine income, expenditure and wealth of Ashraful against tax payment records after the cricketer confessed to his involvement in match-and spot-fixing during the Bangladesh Premier League (BPL).

Ashraful made the confession at a time when the International Cricket Council's Anti-Corruption and Security Unit (ACSU) were investigating allegations of match-fixing in the second edition of the BPL. The batsman was later suspended by the Bangladesh Cricket Board.