

# SPORT

## Verdict has Saber confused

**SPORTS REPORTER**

Following the Supreme Court clearance on Thursday that paved the way for the Bangladesh Cricket Board (BCB) elections under the amended 2012 constitution, the focus has shifted to the stance of former board president Saber Hossain Chowdhury.

The incumbent president Nazmul Hassan Papon, a ruling party MP, expressed his satisfaction soon after the verdict was delivered and he also made it clear that he will have his own panel in the BCB elections but Saber, also a ruling party MP, said that he was a little bit confused about the verdict.

"I'm little bit confused and I can only clear my position after seeing the full verdict. My expectation was that the Appellate Division of the Supreme Court will either uphold the High Court verdict or reject it. Instead they have just given the go ahead for elections," Saber, who was the president of BCB from 1997 to 2001, told the Daily Star Sport over telephone last night.

The go-ahead verdict came from the Appellate Division of the Supreme Court after BCB and the National Sports Council (NSC) filed the petition against a High Court verdict that declared the amendment to the constitution illegal on January 27 this year. In the ruling the HC said that the NSC had no authority to amend the constitution.

Saber earlier in a press conference termed the latest amendment as un-democratic and unethical and he once again raised his questions on two vital issues in the 2012 amended constitution.

"What I said is that I will contest in the elections if there is a level playing field. But there are two vital issues--- if the DC's (Deputy Commissioner) nominate the councillors, there is every possibility of abusing the process and it doesn't go with the spirit of ICC where they ask for non interference from the government. Similarly, providing two councillors for the six super league playing clubs of the Dhaka Premier League is also not fair," explained the former BCB boss, under whose tenure the ODI and Test status were achieved.



India's opener Shikhar Dhawan raises his bat after reaching a century during the second match of the ODI series against Zimbabwe at the Harare Sports Club yesterday. PHOTO: AFP

## SAFF U-16 C'SHIP BD-Nepal semi today

**SPORTS REPORTER**

Bangladesh are looking forward to secure a spot in the SAFF U-16 Championship final when they take on hosts Nepal in the first semifinal at the Dashrath Stadium in Kathmandu today.

Bangladesh started the campaign with a comprehensive 3-1 win over Sri Lanka before suffering a 0-2 defeat against India, which to set up their semi-final clash against Nepal, who are considered a tough opponent for Bangladesh.

The hosts stormed into the semifinals with two wins and a draw, scoring 11 goals in the three matches in which teenage marksman Bimal Gharti Magar struck five goals. Bimal, who has already played for the national team, will be main threat for Bangladesh, who were eliminated from the semifinals of the first edition of the SAFF U-16 championship.

"We don't have quality players in the team like Nepal, India and Afghanistan but we are ready for the match", Bangladesh's Dutch coach Rene Koster was quoted as saying by goalnepal.com.

"We will do our best and we will fight for a spot in the final," said a confident Koster.

## SA keep series alive

**AFP, Pallehelle**

David Miller and Lonwabo Tsotsobe played key roles as South Africa stunned hosts Sri Lanka by 56 runs in the third one-dayer in Pallehelle on Friday to stay afloat in the five-match series.

Miller plundered a robust 85 not out off 72 balls to steer South Africa to 223-7 after unorthodox spinner Ajantha Mendis had reduced the tourists to 154-7 in the 42nd over.

Tsotsobe then ripped through Sri Lanka's top order with three wickets in the space of six runs before finishing with 4-22 as the hosts were bundled out for 167 in the day-night game.

The victory ended South Africa's 11-match losing streak in one-day cricket on Sri Lankan soil and gave AB de Villiers' tourists a badly-needed win in the current series.

With Sri Lanka 2-1 ahead, South Africa must also win the fourth match at the same venue on Sunday to take the series into the decider in Colombo next Wednesday.

Thisara Perera lit up the gloomy evening for the hosts by smashing five sixes and a boundary in the 33rd over sent down by left-arm spinner Robin Peterson.

With the second ball declared a wide, the 35 runs taken in the over fell just one run short of the world record of six sixes hit by South African batsman Herschelle Gibbs off Dutch bowler Daan van Bunge during the 2007 World Cup.

Left-handed Perera made 65 off 49 balls with five sixes and as many boundaries, before he was caught in the deep off Farhaan Behardien, who finished with three for 19.

Sri Lanka paid the penalty for a shoddy batting display in which six batsmen failed to reach double figures and only two others entered their 20s.

**SCORES IN BRIEF**  
**SOUTH AFRICA:** 223 for 7 in 50 overs (Miller 85 not out, De Villiers 47; Mendis 3-35)  
**SRI LANKA:** 167 all out in 43.2 overs (Perera 65; Tsotsobe 4-22, Behardien 3-19)  
**Result:** South Africa won by 56 runs

## Rauf's reputation on the line

**INTERNET, Mumbai**

Investigations have revealed that Pakistan umpire Asad Rauf urged small-time actor and betting intermediary Vinu Dara Singh to wager a huge sum on Kolkata Knight Riders in a match of this season's Indian Premier League.

The police on Thursday said they were in possession of taped conversations that clearly implicated Rauf in having direct links with the murky ongoing in betting and spot fixing in IPL-2013.

Vindu reportedly bet Rs 20 lakh of his own and CSK's Gurusamy Meiyappan's money, a police source said, but they had lost all their money.

The match under the scanner was between KKR and Pune Warriors that took place on May 15 at Ranchi. KKR went on to lose the match.

## India ease to 2nd win

**AFP, Harare**

A fortunate century by opener Shikhar Dhawan and some incisive bowling from left-arm seamer Jaydev Unadkat guided India to a 58-run victory over Zimbabwe in the second one-day international on Friday.

Dhawan was gifted three lives on his way to 116 as India posted an imposing 294 for eight, but there was nothing lucky about Unadkat's bowling as he stamped out a promising start by Zimbabwe and finished with figures of 4 for 41.

Although Zimbabwe won the toss and gained the right to bowl first in helpful conditions, they produced a ramshackle performance in the field and gave away soft wickets during their reply.

The hosts dismissed Rohit Sharma and Virat Kohli in the opening 10 overs, but Dhawan led a charmed life as he was caught off a Kyle Jarvis no-ball, dropped by wicketkeeper Brendan Taylor when he was on just 14 and then put down again when he was on 70.

Dhawan made the most of the opportunities, putting on a 159-run stand with Dinesh Karthik to guide India out of trouble after they had slumped to 65 for four.

The left-hander went to his third one-day century in 115 balls, while Karthik scored a sturdy 69 before he was run out in a mix-up with his batting partner.

Dhawan departed in the following over when he played a Prosper Utseya delivery onto his stumps, but India finished strongly as R Vinay

Kumar and Shami Ahmed took 23 runs from the final over, which was bowled by left-arm spinner Sean Williams.

Zimbabwe made a confident start to their reply on an improving pitch, led mainly by Vusi Sibanda's half-century.

However, Unadkat's controlled bowling turned the innings around as his first two overs went for just six runs, and his third brought the wicket of Zimbabwe opener Sikandar Raza.

After Zimbabwe had advanced to 109 for one, Unadkat returned to have Sibanda caught at midwicket for 55, and then run out Taylor for a duck.

Zimbabwe's innings faded rapidly thereafter, with spinners Ravindra Jadeja and Amit Mishra accounting for Sean Williams and Malcolm Waller respectively.

Elton Chigumbura hit 46 and Prosper Utseya scored an unbeaten 52, but Zimbabwe never looked like getting close to the Indian total on their way to a final total of 236 for nine.

India lead the five-match series 2-0 with the third game to be played in Harare on Sunday.

**SCORES IN BRIEF**  
**INDIA:** 294 for 8 in 50 overs (Dhawan 116, Kohli 14, Karthik 69, Jadeja 15, Vinay 27 not out; Vitori 2-27)  
**ZIMBABWE:** 236 for 9 in 50 overs (Sibanda 55, Raza 20, Masakadza 34, Chigumbura 46, Utseya 52 not out; Unadkat 4-41, Mishra 2-46)  
**Result:** India won by 58 runs.  
**Player-of-the-match:** Shikhar Dhawan.

## Shakib's side lose again

**SPORT REPORTER**

Ace all-rounder Shakib Al Hasan scored 15 runs and finished with figures of none for 37 as his side Leicestershire lost against Durham by five wickets in their eighth match of the Friends Life T20 on Thursday. Batting first Leicestershire scored 119 in their stipulated 20 overs. In reply, Durham, despite a middle order collapse which saw five wickets fall with just 56 on the board after 13 overs, reached the target with two overs to spare.

## FCI coming instead of ONGC

**SPORTS REPORTER**

The practice matches for the national hockey team have been deferred by two weeks after the Bangladesh Hockey Federation (BHF) preferred to host Food Corporation of India (FCI) instead of Oil and Natural Gas Corporation (ONGC) in the second week of August.

The ONGC were scheduled to arrive today to play three practice matches against the national team but they decided to travel to Bangladesh after August 2 which prompted the game's governing body to invite FCI for four matches.

"We have cancelled the proposal of ONGC due to a time clash. The national players are supposed to enjoy a four-day Eid vacation starting from August 6 while the ONGC wanted to come after August 2," said BHF member and selection committee member Mamunur Rashid yesterday.

"Instead of ONGC, the FCI, one of ten teams of the Indian national hockey league, will come in Bangladesh on August 12 and play four practice matches on August 13, 14, 16 and 17 before leaving on August 18," said the former national player.

Bangladesh are also supposed to play two practice matches against hosts Malaysia and Pakistan before the Asia Cup gets underway from August 24.



## What ails Jimmy?

**ATIQUE ANAM**

There is a dingy corner on the second-tier of the Maulana Bhashani National Hockey Stadium where eight small rooms are lined up one after another, across the narrow corridor that faces the busiest intersection of the city. The rooms are barely 12 feet by 14 feet in size, yet cram four beds into each of them. The belongings of the inhabitants occupy the rest of the space -- leaving hardly any room to move about. The beds are wrought iron structures with the thinnest of mattresses, covered by bedsheets that are brown and dirty. Constant honking of horns from across the street gives the inhabitants hardly a moment of peace. A breath of fresh air seems to be the most sought-after commodity here. The window at the rear end, overlooking the astro-turf, comes as the only respite for these inhabitants. The view from here gives them a sense of pride that out there on the turf they are the king, no matter how poor they may be away from it.

**JIMMY HAS A HALF-DAY OFF**

Russel Mahmud Jimmy was granted half-day's leave after attending the morning training session yesterday. He took this opportunity to spend some time in the evening to look after his shop at the New Super Market. It was a respite for the national team's most prolific forward who has been through a lot in the past few days. A prominent voice in pressing players' demands, Jimmy has recently been threatened from unknown quarters; a fact which has forced him to contemplate retiring from the national team. "I have been criticised time and again for



Bangladesh's national hockey players reside in the shabby rooms at a corner of the Maulana Bhashani National Hockey Stadium. PHOTOS: FIROZ AHMED

being vocal about our legitimate demands. Now I am being threatened only because I talk to the media on behalf of the juniors. You saw the state we live in at the camp, it is things like that which makes us raise our voice. But who cares?" said Jimmy with some ire in his voice.

**BORN INTO A POORMAN'S GAME**

Jimmy could not help accepting the fate that awaited him. Born into a hockey playing family with a father like Sona Mia, Jimmy knew he was destined to live with hockey. But when he took up the stick at the tender age of seven, little did he know the treacherous journey that awaited him -- one that would earn him plenty of acclaim but little financial and social security.

By Jimmy's own admission, hockey players are one of the most-neglected sports

personalities in the country, no matter how much effort they put on the field.

"It seems like a sin to be to be a hockey player in our country. The cricketers have an assured stream of high income, the footballers are paid well too by their clubs. But when it comes to hockey, everyone becomes a miser," said Jimmy.

In comparison, a national cricketer draws a few millions in a calendar year -- from the board payroll, from the clubs that he represents in the premier league, the national league payment and from the money-spinning T20 leagues. A national footballer too, earns on average 15 lakh to 35 lakh taka each season only from his club payments apart from the benefits he receives from the federation. For the national hockey player though, there is no such certainty of any assured income. Not salaried by the federa-

tion, and not having the opportunity to earn easy bucks by playing for hire, hockey players look forward to the transfer market to fetch them a couple of lakh taka. But the premier league is irregular, because the clubs are mostly at loggerheads with each other and with the federation. This often leaves the players with no alternative but to stage protests and boycott camps.

**PAWNS IN THE POWER GAME**

And there is always a group or two who will be inciting the players into such protests and boycotts, to fulfil their own design -- which is to get to the throne of the federation or keep holding onto it. No matter how poor the players are, the throne is worth a fortune and it is worth risking the reputation of the players. Hence during the election season, the clubs awash the otherwise-impoorished game with money, luring the players with pledges and promises of financial security. The incumbent ones too come up with promises of their own, which they are ill-equipped to live up to. The whole thing leads to a backlash which only pulls the game down and with it, the players.

Promises remain promises in the end, and the players remain poor.

"We love the game. That is the only reason we keep playing no matter what we get back in return. But the federation and the people associated with it keep making it harder for us," Jimmy says.

**LIFE GOES ON**

Those who know Jimmy, those who followed him through his younger years, will know that he is not the one to be budged by a text message. Jimmy received such messages before in his career and never took them seriously. If Jimmy contemplated retirement, it was more out of desperation about the sad state of affairs of the game than anything else. That saddest part is that Jimmy has a second source of income and a family he can lean back upon, but for most of his teammates who share the green turf with him, there is no such luxury.