

# SPORT

## Possibility of more than one tribunal

**SPORTS REPORTER**

Former chief justice Mahmudul Amin Chowdhury will head the Bangladesh Cricket Board's (BCB's) disciplinary panel, the members of which will be grouped into tribunals responsible for holding the trials of nine cricketers and officials accused of breaching BCB's anti-corruption code.

Speaking to The Daily Star, the former chief justice confirmed his acceptance of the role yesterday. "I have given my consent to the BCB with regards to heading the panel," said Chowdhury.

The head of the disciplinary panel will be responsible for the formation of the tribunals. The members of the panel will be selected from three different categories of professionals.

The members will consist of retired judges of the Supreme Court of Bangladesh, members of the social elite and persons having expertise in cricket.

Since nine have been charged by the ICC's Anti-Corruption and Security Unit (ACSU), there is a possibility of there being more than one tribunal for the hearings.

After the ICC announced the bringing of charges to nine individuals on Tuesday, the formation of the tribunals took centre stage and a number of names appeared in the media yesterday but the BCB, which is currently working on ensuring a smooth hearing process, decided against informing the media

regarding the identity of the chairman and other members of the disciplinary panel.

BCB's acting CEO Nizamuddin Chowdhury said: "The BCB is currently working on the process. As of now we are not in a position to disclose any information regarding the panel."

Barrister Rafique Ul Huq however told The Daily Star Sport that he has given his consent to be a member on the panel. "While I didn't get an official letter I have been asked to be a member on the disciplinary panel and I said 'yes'," said Huq.

Apart from Huq there has also been speculation that former High Court judge Syed Amirul Islam, Professor Jamilur Reza Chowdhury, Barrister Ajmalul Hossain, former Bangladesh captain Roquibul Hasan and former cricketer Ishtiaq Ahmed may also be named on the panel.

"I will appoint the other members of the panel, but I have not reached any decisions yet. I have some names in mind but have not yet made any offers; it will take some time," said former chief justice Chowdhury. "I could also have been head of one of the tribunals, but since any appeals will have to be made to me [as chairman of the panel] I will not head any tribunal."

On Tuesday, the ICC announced that they have charged seven individuals for involvement in fixing in the second edition of the Bangladesh Premier League and two others for not reporting corruption approaches.

All those charged will now have 14 days to appear before a BCB tribunal to either plead guilty or deny the charges.



ICC chief executive Dave Richardson (L) hands over the replica of the ICC Trophy that Bangladesh won in 1997 to BCB's acting chief executive Nizamuddin Chowdhury in Dhaka yesterday. PHOTO: STAR

## 3 of the accused come forward

**SPORTS REPORTER**

Three players out of a total of nine individuals charged with breaching the Bangladesh Cricket Board's (BCB's) anti-corruption code during their participation in this year's Bangladesh Premier League revealed themselves to the media yesterday.

Two of them -- Mahabubul Alam Robin and Mosharraf Hossain Rubel -- were charged with involvement in fixing whereas England's Darren Stevens was charged with not reporting corrupt approaches.

Robin, who spoke to the media at the Sher-e-Bangla National Stadium

yesterday said, "I received a charge letter and I have been accused of fixing the matches that the Dhaka Gladiators played against the Barisal Burners and the Chittagong Kings. They, however, didn't say as to what my exact offence was."

"I am completely innocent. I haven't done anything. (Mohammad) Ashraf put in my name just like that. I don't know why he mentioned my name. I am going to appoint a lawyer for the forthcoming legal battle," he added.

Rubel, who is currently in England on a minor county stint also confirmed receiving the charge letter and pleaded innocence. "I am really upset. I have to come back now because I have been provision-

ally suspended from all cricketing activities. I have to get ready for a legal battle now," he said over the telephone.

"If you look at the scorecard of the matches in question, then I played really well in them. How can some one be accused of fixing if he plays well? Someone is just using me as a scapegoat," added Rubel, who has not yet decided as to when he would be returning back to the country.

Meanwhile, Stevens in a statement released yesterday stated that he had been charged with failing to report a corrupt approach and will cooperate with the ICC and its anti-corruption unit in their investigation.

"I confirm that I have been charged by the ICC with a failure to report a corrupt approach made to me during BPL2 in February this year. I have not been involved in any corrupt activity and have not been charged with any and I am cooperating with the ICC and ACSU (Anti-Corruption and Security Unit) in their investigation and prosecution of the corruption charges in matters relating to the BPL," said the Kent allrounder.

"I am totally against any corruption in cricket and would never do anything other than perform to the best of my ability in any game. ICC has not suspended me from playing and I remain willing and able to play for Kent in all fixtures if selected," he added.

## BD A go down despite Zia ton

**SPORTS REPORTER**

Bangladesh A extended their losing streak to four matches after losing against county side Nottinghamshire by four-wickets in a high-scoring encounter at Trent Bridge yesterday. Batting first, Bangladesh posted an imposing 292 for seven in 50 overs, thanks to an unbeaten 69-ball 104 from hard-hitting batsman Ziaur Rahman. Zia smashed seven boundaries and same number of sixes down the order after Shamsur Rahman (52) and Mominul Haque (47) had built the platform for the launch.

Nottinghamshire's reply stuttered as they lost five wickets in 29 overs with the score at 118. But a sixth-wicket partnership of 170 runs between Adam Tillcock (97 not out) and Paul Franks (75) took the hosts to victory with seven balls to spare.

## Shakib out for a duck

**SPORTS REPORTER**

Ace Bangladesh allrounder Shakib Al Hasan took a wicket and was out for a duck as his side Barbados Tridents slumped to a five-wicket defeat against Antigua Hawksbills at the Sir Vivian Richards Stadium in Antigua in the Caribbean Premier League on Tuesday.

Shakib finished with figures of 1 for 21 in four overs with Ben Rohrer as his solitary victim. Batting first Tridents finished on 97 for 9. In reply, Antigua rode on a 22-ball 31 by Orland Peters and reached the target with one wicket remaining.

## U-23s off to Singapore

**SPORTS REPORTER**

The Bangladesh Under-23 team will leave for Singapore in the morning today to participate in the Asian Cricket Council Emerging Team's Cup. The one-day tournament will be held from August 17-26 and feature the Under-23 sides of Bangladesh, India, Pakistan and Sri Lanka alongside national teams of Afghanistan, Nepal, Singapore and the UAE.

Captain Mahmudul Hasan, who spoke to the media at Mirpur yesterday, said that he expects a tough challenge. "I don't expect any match in the tournament to be easy. The associate sides are fielding their national teams and the junior sides of the other nations are also strong," said Hasan.

Bangladesh, who have been placed in group B alongside Sri Lanka U-23, UAE and Singapore will begin their campaign against the hosts on Saturday.

## Saber to run for BCB post

**SPORTS REPORTER**

Former Bangladesh Cricket Board (BCB) president Saber Hossain Chowdhury on Wednesday said that he would contest in next month's BCB elections.

"I strongly feel that cricket has now become an exclusive property of one or two clubs. There is also fear that what we have achieved since 1996 is under serious threat in the face of clear division between clubs and district organisers. I think it's my moral duty to fight against injustice. That's why I have decided to contest in the elections," said Saber while talking to a group of reporters at his Paribagh residence.

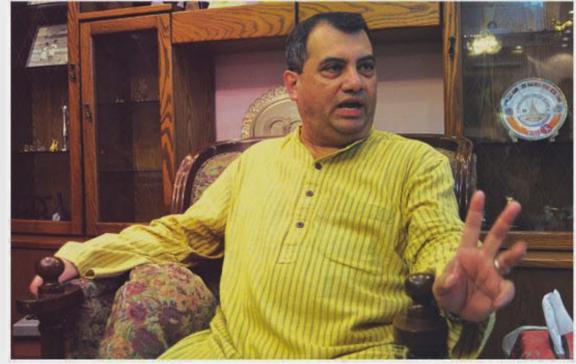
Saber's decision to enter the fray of the country's most high-profile sports federation means it will be a heady two-way battle between two ruling Awami

League lawmakers, with incumbent Nazmul Hassan Papon already expressing his desire to stay in the hot seat.

The National Sports Council is expected to announce the election schedule next week for a 27-member board of directors, who will elect a new president through ballot for the first time under the much-talked-about and controversial amended 2012 BCB constitution.

A pioneer in Bangladesh's elevation to a Test nation, Saber had earlier said that his participation in the elections would depend on whether there was a level playing field. But yesterday he said he chose to battle against all odds and against a candidate who reportedly has all the cards in hand to possibly influence the nomination of district and divisional councillors.

"There is a possibility. I have also heard that instructions have been directed from the highest



Former BCB president Saber Hossain Chowdhury talks to the media at his residence in Dhaka yesterday. PHOTO: STAR

by the court last month for holding the elections, Saber said that he was open to debate with anyone including Papon just to prove how the court and the International Cricket Council (ICC) were deceived with concocted information.

"I'm challenging anyone including the present president for a debate on the 2012 constitution. It's quite inexplicable to have two votes for one club. There are other anomalies in the constitution. And I'm afraid of what will happen if this constitution is declared illegal in the final court verdict," Saber said acerbically.

The soft-spoken Saber said that his mission is not to win but to unite the clubs and district organisers under one umbrella to take Bangladesh a step forward.

"Cricket is a national property. My mission is to build a bridge between club and district organisers. And if it happens we can present to the nation a model elec-

tion," said an optimistic Saber.

He also spoke about the match-fixing episode in the Bangladesh Premier League (BPL) that has hit the country's cricket hard.

"I want to thank the present BCB president for his wholehearted effort to find out the culprits in the BPL. Some players and officials have been charged and like many others I want the trial to end quickly," Saber opined.

He however said that the board should investigate the very concept of the BPL itself.

"I think we should give a long look at the formation of the BPL itself which in my view is flawed. We should not have exactly copied the IPL because our economic affluence is not as strong as that of in India. Besides, we should also review the teams and Game On which I think is a game on for everyone," he said with a smile adding that, if needed, the board should suspend next January's third edition.

## Asif admits to fixing

**AFP, Karachi**

Disgraced Pakistani fast bowler Mohammad Asif on Wednesday apologised for his role in a notorious 2010 spot-fixing scandal, admitting his guilt for the first time and accepting a five-year ban.

The 30-year-old is the last of three players to come out with a confession, after teammates Salman Butt and Mohammad Aamer admitted their part.

## De Kruif defends 'tired' players

**SPORTS REPORTER**

Dutch coach Lodewijk de Kruif said he is now seventy per cent sure of his playing eleven and the remaining thirty per cent will be confirmed in the remaining training sessions, with eleven six weeks into the preparation for the SAFF Championship which begins on August 31 in Nepal.

The Dutch coach brought a number of changes to his starting eleven in every practice match played on home ground and he was forced to

bring six changes in Tuesday's match where his charges eked out a 2-1 win against a hastily-put BFF Eleven.

"A coach always pens it (his playing eleven) down one day before the match and that may be with a certainty of ninety per cent. At the moment I can say it is seventy per cent for me," said De Kruif yesterday while explaining his constant tinkering with the eleven.

The 43-year old coach said the only bad moment since taking over the charge of the national team was on Tuesday's performance of his side against the BFF Eleven.

"It was a bad moment for me as well as the players but the way the

boys trained and responded today (Wednesday) was excellent and I hope to continue the training in the same vein," said De Kruif.

Explaining Tuesday's poor performance De Kruif said, "What I was told that they (players) were very tired in their body and mind and that was the reason they could not put 100 per cent effort and may be they performed to 50 per cent of their ability. But as a coach I have to take care of the fact to make them fit in their body and mind," said De Kruif, who had declined to talk the media after the practice match on Tuesday.

The Dutch coach said he needs

more inside sessions like talking, video and theory classes in a bid to recharge the players ahead of the SAFF Championship.

"When we came to the country, the physical condition of the players was not very good and that is why we trained very hard. May be that's the reason behind they are tired. I know how to recharge the players," said De Kruif.

Replying to a query about his seven-day vacation, De Kruif said that he did not enjoy any vacation, rather he had to go back to the Netherlands to pick his family but could not do so as the football federation has yet to arrange an apartment for them.

## Sloane slays Maria

**AFP, Cincinnati**

American Sloane Stephens snatched her second major scalp of the season as she toppled former champion Maria Sharapova in the second round at Cincinnati on Tuesday.

Stephens rallied to beat the world number three from Russia 2-6, 7-6 (7/5), 6-3, bringing Sharapova's injury return to an abrupt end in this combined WTA and ATP Masters hardcourt tournament.

While Sharapova -- who enjoyed a first-round bye -- was struggling with her game, Roger Federer made a smoother comeback after dealing with back pain in recent weeks.

The five-time champion who is defending the title and needs as many matches as possible before the August 26 start of the US Open, won his seventh career match against German friend Philipp Kohlschreiber 6-3, 7-6 (9/7).