

SPORT

Saber welcomes Papon contest

Raises numerous issues

SPORTS REPORTER

In an unscheduled press conference organised by former Bangladesh Cricket Board (BCB) president, Saber Hossain Chowdhury at his residence at Paribag, the Awami League MP welcomed BCB president Nazmul Hassan Papon's decision to contest in this year's BCB elections.

Saber, who had earlier announced his decision to run for the elections, said "I was never for a one-person contest. Elections should be contested by more than one candidate and I feel that this is a good development for Bangladesh cricket."

He also reiterated his wish of having a face-to-face debate with Papon in order to discuss a number of issues both on and off the field.

Saber began by criticising the board for not focussing on the disappointing results of the different Bangladesh teams abroad and accused the BCB of putting an over-emphasis on the elections.

Bangladesh A have so far lost seven games in England, Bangladesh under 23 were eliminated from the Emerging Cup following a defeat to the UAE and

Bangladesh U19 made an early exit in a tri-nation tournament in England.

"I understand the election issue is very important but the board just can't forget about the game. These teams represent our national team's future and Bangladesh cricket is a lot more important than the board



SABER HOSSAIN CHOWDHURY

itself," said Saber.

"However, I don't see any discussions on this issue. I think due to the elections everyone (at the BCB) has lost focus. The chief selector (Akram Khan) was seen attending the meeting between the district and divisional representatives and the president yesterday although

he didn't need to be present there," he added. Akram had earlier stated he would resign his post as chief selector and contest for the elections this year.

Furthermore, Saber also questioned Papon's move of organising a meeting with the DSA's within the premises of the BCB. "If the president wants to discuss the elections with some one he can do it, but he should do it outside the board and not inside since he is in the race now, or else it won't be a level playing field," said Saber.

The former president also questioned the delay in the processes of the election. The BCB was supposed to send a letter to the different entities of the elections to send in the names of their councillors after Eid, something that has not yet been done.

"At first they were supposed to send it on the 12th and then the 22nd but we still don't have a definite date. As per the Supreme Court's decision, the elections were supposed to begin as soon as possible, so why is there a delay now? Is it because they are not sure about winning?" he headed.

With regard to the recent accusations that the president was allegedly using the Prime Minister's office to interfere in the nomination of the councillors from the DSA's,

Saber said, "The government wants a level playing field I am sure. Earlier there were talks about interference and that is not there now. If it did happen before, then it didn't happen with the support of the government but due to personal relationships."

Saber also pointed certain flaws in the constitution passed in 2012. "According to the constitution there has to be 27 directors in the board, but if you see the number of directors from each category, that adds up to 26. So that's a problem. National Sports Council has to clear these things before going to elections. If we don't have the right constitution then the elections might prove to be futile."

He also spoke on the corruption allegations with regard to the building of the Cox's Bazar stadium.

"I was a bit shocked because he (Papon), in a television interview, said that they had given the Cox's Bazaar work without any tender due to the fast approaching World Cup. But the ad hoc committee has been there for nine months so they had ample time," he said.

"There might be some questions raised because of this practice. I feel that the president should form a committee to investigate these matters as soon as possible," he added.



PHOTO: REUTERS

England opener Joe Root pulls one on way to scoring a half century on the third day of the fifth Ashes Test against Australia at the Oval yesterday.

Clubs agree to transfers on August 25

SPORTS REPORTER

All clubs have agreed to take part in tomorrow's players' transfer for the much awaited Dhaka Premier League, but a few have also requested further delay for its start.

Chairman of the Cricket Committee of Dhaka Metropolitan (CCDM), Jalal Yunus said yesterday, after a meeting with all participating twelve clubs, that the board will decide about whether the league will start from September 3 as per the current schedule.

"Everybody agreed to take part in the players' transfer on August 25 but the venue and timing will likely change as the clubs have requested to arrange it in a hotel and the transfer will start from 3pm," informed Yunus last night.

"It was also discussed whether the league can be delayed a few more days as the clubs will get only a week to prepare their team if the league starts on time. But what I told them is that the board has set the timing and so a decision on this must come from the board. But only two to three clubs were requesting for delay," he added.

Yunus also said that the club representatives requested to give them the grant before the start of the league.

Meanwhile, the dates for the much awaited league were announced for the fifth time this year.

Costly outburst for Lehmann

AFP, London

Australia coach Darren Lehmann was fined 20 percent of his match fee by the International Cricket Council (ICC) on Thursday after accusing England's Stuart Broad of "blatant cheating".

The 27-year-old Broad angered Australia during England's narrow 14-run first Test win at Trent Bridge when he refused to walk after a thick edge deflected off the wicketkeeper's gloves to slip.

Victory sent England on their way to taking an unbeatable 3-0 series lead in the Ashes heading into the ongoing fifth and final Test at The Oval, which started on Wednesday.

AFC U-19 CHAMPIONSHIP Trial begins at BNS

SPORTS REPORTER



More than 600 budding footballers turned up at the Bangabandhu National Stadium yesterday, on the first day of Under-19 trial, with a dream of getting a place in the preliminary squad for the AFC U-19 Championship squad.

However, only 150 out of 568 players were lucky enough to be picked up by BFF coaching staff led by Dutch coach Rene Koster for the second day's trial while approximately 100 players failed to even take part due to exceeding the age limit.

"We have invited all the district football associations and football academies in and outside of Dhaka and the response of the juvenile players has been enthusiastic," said BFF technical director BA Jubair Nipu.

Dutch duo Koster and Kees Kalk, along with the BFF coaching staff, selected the 150 booters through skill tests as the pitch at the BNS was divided into eight groups to complete the trial.

"Some 65 goalkeepers turned up in the trial and 11 have been selected from half of those goal-

keepers today and the rest of them will be tested tomorrow," informed Nipu adding that the number of the selected footballers would be cut down again on Sunday's trial.

It may be mentioned that the football's governing body had selected 27 U-18 booters for the BFF Academy at the presence of FIFA technical advisor Jean Michael Benezet last December and they are supposed to be the main priority for the trial but it was not sure whether all of those players took part in the trial.

"As far as I know, most of them participated in the trial but at the moment I can not confirm how many of them have been selected. We are not considering who is coming from where, rather the performance of the players in the trial is the main criterion for selection," said Nipu.

Bangladesh were drawn along with last edition's runners-up Iraq, mighty Kuwait and Pakistan in Group C of the qualifying round of the AFC U-19 Championship, which will be held in Iraq from October 8-12. Bangladesh finished fourth among five teams in the last edition of the qualifying round which was held in Dhaka.

Pakistan win first T20I

REUTERS, Harare

Opener Ahmed Shehzad struck 70 from 50 deliveries to help Pakistan cruise to a 25-run victory over Zimbabwe in the first Twenty20 international played at Harare Sports Club on Friday.

Pakistan posted 161 for five from their 20 overs, a total that always looked beyond the hosts.

None of the Zimbabwe batsmen was able to score quickly with only skipper Brendan Taylor (32 not out) and Vusi Sibanda (31) compiling scores of note in the home total of 135 for five.

Pakistan all-rounder Shahid Afridi used all his guile to bamboozle the Zimbabwe batsmen and his wrist spin brought match-winning figures of three for 25 in four overs.

The second Twenty20 will be played at the same venue on Saturday.

SCORES IN BRIEF

PAKISTAN: 161 for 5 in 20 overs (Shehzad 70, Maqsood 26, Afridi 23 not out; Chatara 2-30)

ZIMBABWE: 136 for 5 in 20 overs (Masakadza 18, Sibanda 31, Taylor 32 not out; Afridi 3-25)

Result: Pakistan won by 25 runs. Player-of-the-match: Ahmed Shehzad.

Aussies edge ahead

REUTERS, London



Australia chiselled out four key England wickets to take control of the fifth and final Ashes test on an absorbing third day at the Oval on Friday.

The hosts, replying to Australia's 492 for nine declared, lost Alastair Cook for 25, Joe Root (68), Jonathan Trott (40) and Kevin Pietersen (50) on the way to 247 for four.

Although rain is forecast for Saturday, Australia are in a strong position to claim a consolation victory and English hopes of winning a home Ashes series 4-0 for the first time look to be over.

Ian Bell was unbeaten on 29 and Chris Woakes on 15 at the close with England still trailing the touring side by 245 runs and needing another 46 to avoid the follow-on.

Cook and Root, resuming on 32 for no wicket, batted cautiously through the first hour under clear blue skies against tidy but largely unthreatening fast bowling. The pair had taken their opening partnership to 68, England's best of the series, when Cook nibbled at a wide ball from Harris just after the drinks break and wicketkeeper Brad Haddin took a diving catch.

The England captain's dismissal sent Root into his shell.

The 22-year-old failed to score a run off 19 balls in a row but he pulled Peter Siddle for a single just before lunch to reach his half-

century, made from 145 deliveries and including eight fours.

It was a welcome return to form for Root and England took lunch on 97 for one.

Root hit two fours in James Faulkner's first over of the day but with a century firmly in his sights he swept at a full-length ball from off-spinner Nathan Lyon and top-edged a simple catch to Shane Watson at short fine-leg.

Pietersen got off the mark by driving Mitchell Starc for four through mid-off but the normally dynamic right-hander also struggled to find his touch.

Trott's first boundary came off the 78th delivery he faced and Pietersen's frustration was evident when, on 11, he attempted a suicidal quick single and was well short of safety when David Warner's throw narrowly missed the stumps.

Australia took the second new ball just before tea and Starc trapped Trott lbw with his first delivery, the batsman failing to get the decision overturned on review.

Pietersen and Bell continued to play risk-free cricket in murky conditions and the former flicked Faulkner to the fine-leg boundary for his fourth four to reach his fifty.

But he fell with the total on 217, tempted by a wide full-length delivery from Starc and edging a straight-forward catch to Watson at first slip.

Woakes drove his first ball in test cricket sweetly through the covers for four and he looked assured at the crease on his debut.

SCOREBOARD

AUSTRALIA: First innings 492-9 ded (S Watson 176, Smith 138 not out; Anderson 4-95)				
ENGLAND: First innings (overnight 32-0)				
Cook c Haddin b Harris	25			
Root c Watson b Lyon	68			
Trott lbw b Starc	40			
Pietersen c Watson b Starc	50			
Bell not out	29			
Woakes not out	15			
Extras: (b-9, lb-5, w-4, nb-2)	20			
Total: (For 4 wickets in 116 overs)	247			
Fall of wickets: 1-68, 2-118, 3-176, 4-217				
Bowler	O	M	R	W
Starc	26	5	60	2
Harris	23	9	41	1
Faulkner	12	3	29	0
Siddle	21	6	46	0
Lyon	26	8	41	1
Smith	8	3	16	0



A section of the U-19 level footballers who assembled at the Bangabandhu National Stadium yesterday for the trial of the AFC U-19 Championship.

SECONND PRACTICE MATCH Hockey team beat Taipei

SPORTS REPORTER

After going down 5-0 against Pakistan in their previous match, the Bangladesh national hockey team recorded a 3-1 win over Chinese Taipei in their second practice match in Malaysia yesterday, as the build-up to the AHF 9th Asia Cup continued in earnest.

The tournament begins today in the Malaysian town of Ipoh and Bangladesh will play their first match against South Korea tomorrow.

In yesterday's match, Krishna Kumar put Bangladesh ahead before Pushkor Khisha Mimo struck twice to give Bangladesh a 3-0 lead in the first half. Chinese Taipei pulled one goal back in the second half, which lasted only 25 minutes, 10 minutes less than scheduled time, to cater for practice matches for other participating teams.

Even though the margin of victory was not a convincing one against minnows Chinese Taipei, the win will nonetheless boost the players ahead of tomorrow's match, as the players are only getting to terms with the newly-laid blue turf and the yellow ball.

"The teamwork was pretty good and the players played better than the first match against Pakistan. I am happy with their performance even though the boys could execute only fifty percent of my instructions," said Pakistani coach Naveed Alam over phone while attending the official dinner.

"Our target is to finish either fifth or sixth and I think we are on our way, especially after today's practice match," said the former Pakistani Olympian.

However, the newly-installed blue turf and yellow ball may prove to be a hindrance to achieving the target for Bangladesh, who had their entire practice on the traditional green turf with white ball at home soil.

"We still have one day in hand and I think we will be able to adjust with the new turf and the yellow ball before our first match," said goalkeeper Zahid Hossain, who also believed that the blue turf and yellow ball was one of the reasons behind Bangladesh's poor performance against Pakistan.

PHOTO: STAR