

# SPORT

## BPL FIXING SCANDAL Forty days gone, still no tribunal

SPORTS REPORTER



Already forty days have passed since the ICC's Anti-corruption and Security Unit (ACSU) charged seven individuals, including popular batsman Mohammad Ashraful, with involvement in fixing in the second edition of the Bangladesh Premier League (BPL) and two others for not reporting corruption approaches.

But the Bangladesh Cricket Board (BCB) is yet to form the tribunals which will be responsible for conducting the trials of the nine cricketers and officials accused of breaching BCB's anti-corruption code.

The ACSU charged nine individuals on August 13 and according to BCB's anti-corruption code: 'Whether or not a preliminary hearing is held the Convenor of the Anti-Corruption Tribunal shall: (5.1.4.1) determine the date(s) upon which the full hearing shall be held. Save in exceptional circumstances or where the parties otherwise agree, the full hearing should take place no longer than forty (40) days after the receipt by the Participant of the Notice of Charge'.

The charging of the nine individuals on August 13 released a storm of scandal on the country, leading BCB to promise a quick trial and say that there would be stern consequences if anyone was found guilty. However, other than the BCB officially approaching former chief justice Mahmudul Amin Chowdhury to head the disciplinary panel and receiving an positive written response, there has been no progress in the matter whatsoever.

When asked about the delay, BCB's acting CEO Nizamuddin Chowdhury said: "The matter is under process and it will only be visible when the proceedings get underway. We will complete everything within the shortest possible time and the issue of provisional suspension of the named players is under consideration. It's not possible for me to say anything more regarding the issue."

On condition of anonymity, another BCB official said: "Yes, there is an issue regarding 40 days' time but the clause may be interpreted differently. We think that it's just a guideline because there is nothing there about what action will be taken in the case of failure to start the hearing within 40 days. On the other hand there has been some trouble in the final steps of forming the tribunals."

Mahmudul Amin Chowdhury however told the Daily Star last night that there has been no progress since he accepted the offer from the BCB president.

"I got a written offer from BCB president to become head of the disciplinary panel and I accepted it in written form. Ever since then there has been no development between me and the board. The contract is yet to be signed," said Mahmudul Amin Chowdhury.

When asked why there has been no progress, he declined to make any comment on the issue. However, a BCB source suggested that there were difficulties in settling upon a financial package in connection with forming the tribunal.



Rubel Hussain (L) and Aftab Ahmed of Gazi Tank Cricketers stretch with teammates during their practice session at the BCB Academy ground in Mirpur yesterday.

PHOTO: STAR

## SAFF interviews come to a close

SPORTS REPORTER



The fact-finding committee of the Bangladesh Football Federation (BFF), formed to investigate the debacle in the SAFF Championship, have brought an end to its proceedings of interviewing concerned personnel yesterday. The convenor of the committee, BFF vice president

Badal Roy, hinted that they would make recommendations on the basis of the interviews to the executive committee, which might take stern actions if any of the players or team officials are found guilty of gross negligence.

"We have finished interviewing all the concerned personnel and now we will make our recommendations, and the report might take two or three days to come out," said Roy at the BFF house yesterday.

The committee quizzed striker Shakhawat Hossain Rony, who had been alleged to have hid injuries going into the tournament, and held an informal talk with winger Zahid Hossain,

blamed for underperforming, who appeared late for the interview yesterday after ducking the scheduled interview altogether on the previous day.

"Zahid arrived after our session had ended which is why we did not take his interview. He was also absent on the previous day. These things, along with his questionable behaviour during the tournament, will certainly be on the recommendations," said Roy.

The winger however defended his position by saying that he had to play in a way different from his usual style and was under mental pressure to perform well.

"The way the coach made me play was not my usual style. I am not used to playing such pressing football and I discussed that with the coach too," said Zahid, who played 45 minutes each against Nepal and Pakistan and was benched in the match against India. Zahid also claimed that the transfer problem he had with the clubs had a mental impact on his game.

"I had taken money from two different clubs and the issue was not solved which kept me

under mental pressure," said Zahid, who had taken token money from Mohammedan, but later committed to stay at Sheikh Russel KC.

Rony, who sustained a groin injury after coming off the bench during the game against Nepal which subsequently ruled him out of the tournament, denied any claims of hiding any injuries going into the tournament.

"I did not carry any injuries going into the tournament as the fitness trainer had certified me as fit," said the 21-year-old striker. "I gave my hundred per cent effort on the field as I believe all of my teammates did. There is no point of hiding injuries, which could only jeopardise my position in the team," said Rony.

Rony claimed he was given too little time to warm up before the Nepal match which could be the reason behind his injury. "I was told to get to the field by the coach just before he sent me in. I just had one and a half minutes of warm-up, which was not enough I thought. I took a long stretch to get to the ball toward the end of the match, which pulled the muscle in the groin," said Rony.

## Shafiq leads nat'l chess

SPORTS REPORTER

Shafiq Ahmed led the Berger Paints 39th National 'A' Chess Championship with maximum three points at end of the 3rd round at the media centre of Bangladesh Olympic Association yesterday.

Shafiq, playing with black pieces and Dutch Defence style, beat Jamal Uddin after 45 moves.

GM Ziaur Rahman, GM Abdullah Al Rakib and IM Minhazuddin Ahmed Sagar were sharing the second position with 2.5 points each. Zia beat Mohammad Hafizul Islam Chapal, Rakib beat FM Debaraj Chatterjee while Sagar beat IM Abu Sufian Shakil in the round.

Reigning champion GM Niaz Murshed GM was in the third position along with Enamul Hossain Rajib with 2 points each.

## BSJA cricket from today

SPORTS REPORTER

The Bangladesh Sports Journalist Association (BSJA) will begin its media cricket tournament, sponsored by PRAN sports RFL, from today. The six-a-side competition will witness 26 media houses from the print, electronic and online media battle it out at the Maulana Bhashani Hockey Stadium.

The trophies and jerseys of the competition were unveiled yesterday by former national captains Minhajul Abedin and Habibul Bashar. The league will be played based on a round-robin format.

## Taylor sees 'no point' in playing T20 WC 1st Rd

SPORTS REPORTER



Like Bangladesh skipper Mushfiqur Rahim, Zimbabwean captain Brendan Taylor too has expressed his concerns about fighting it out with associate nations in the preliminary round for a chance to join the eight other Test nations in the second round of the ICC World Twenty20 next year.

Taylor, who is currently in Bangladesh to play the Dhaka Premier League for Prime Bank Cricket Club told The Daily Star that he only became aware of the qualifying system last week.

"I don't agree with the system. I understand where this is coming from but honestly speaking, Bangladesh and Zimbabwe are Test playing nations, so I don't see the point in that. But these decisions are not up to us and we just have to go there and play well," said Taylor.

Mushfiqur had said last week that he had never heard of a system where the host nation would have to qualify to play in the final round of a tournament.

The advantage though for Taylor and Co is that there are a number of Zimbabwean national players who are in town to play the Dhaka League. The likes of Sikandar Raza and Hamilton Masakadza have the opportunity to adjust to the conditions ahead of the World T20.

Taylor himself got off to a brilliant start on Friday when he scored 86 and was involved in three dismissals as wicketkeeper against Cricket Coaching School.

"It was a good start. But I am just getting used to the conditions, the heat and the humidity. It's a lot hotter here



than the last time I came to play the BPL here," he remarked.

The Zimbabwean captain arrived on the back of the team's celebrated win in the second and last Test against Pakistan in Harare, their first win against Pakistan since 1998. The win fetched a significant lead -- worth 24 rating points -- over Bangladesh in the Test rankings. Taylor however does not feel that the bridge between Zimbabwe and Bangladesh have widened.

"Look, we have definitely improved a lot as a team over the years, we had a lot of heart in beating Pakistan. Bangladesh bowl well in their conditions and it would certainly be a lot harder for us to beat them in Bangladesh," said Taylor, adding that the Tigers have a good opportunity to improve their rankings during the New Zealand series in October.

Celebrations of Zimbabwe's win

were however curbed due to the board's fragile financial situation. The players had almost boycotted the Pakistan series due to payment issues.

"I feel that cricket has definitely progressed, but the financial situation is obviously not great and we need to get out of this rut. Hopefully the board will honour their commitments," said Taylor.

"These are some things that we can't control. The best we can do is to go out there and put in good performances so that we have a bargaining power with the board and come to the party so to speak," he added.

The financial issue recently compelled Zimbabwean pacer Kyle Jarvis to retire from international cricket at 24 after he decided to sign a three-year contract with Lancashire, citing job security concerns.

"We don't have a big pool of players, so it's not ideal when we lose such good bowlers. He is 24 and he was looking for a bit of stability, but three years on, maybe Zimbabwe cricket can have an open policy for him," said Taylor, who had turned down a similar offer to play in England.

"I personally love representing my country and leading my team. I am sure that the board's situation will improve," he added.

Away from the cricketing world Taylor celebrated the birth of his first son, Mason, and is finding it difficult to stay away from him.

"There's no bigger feeling than being a father and its tough being away from him. I hope to see him during the Eid break. But yeah it's been good times for me," he said.

The Zimbabwean will be in action today when his side takes on Prime Doleshwar at BKSP-3.

## BFF ponders poor man's Super Cup

SPORTS REPORTER



The Professional League Committee of the Bangladesh Football Federation (BFF) is planning to introduce a new tournament titled 'Champions Cup', styled after the cash-rich Super Cup, for the Bangladesh Championship League clubs.

Abdus Salam Murshedy, chairman of the Professional League Committee (PLC), informed that the tournament would feature six top teams of the Championship League from the upcoming season.

"We want to introduce the new tournament for the second tier teams which will be like the Super Cup," said Murshedy, after a meeting at the BFF House yesterday.

Meanwhile, the PLC is scrutinising a letter issued by Mohammedan SC on September 19 where the Motijheel outfit claimed that five of its players -- Zahid Hossain, Mamun Miah, Nahidul Islam, Shakil Ahmed and Shariful Islam -- have committed to play for other clubs although they took money from the club for the coming season.

The committee also approved the Bangladesh Premier League bylaws and sent it to participating clubs and extended the deadline of the ongoing local players' transfer to October 23 instead of October 20.

## BHF planning youth meet in November

SPORTS REPORTER

Bangladesh Hockey Federation (BHF) is planning to stage the National Youth Hockey Championship in the first week of November which may clash with the proposed Dhaka Premier League, planned by a group of rebel clubs led by Mohammedan SC.

BHF insiders informed that they were planning to hold the tournament in between the inter-club players' transfers (October 29-31) and the Club Cup competition (starting on November 15). And the rebel Premier League is scheduled to start at the end of November.

However, the rebel group, who have decided not to take part in any hockey related activities under the current governing body of the federation, asked for the Maulana Bhasani National Hockey Stadium for the first ten days of November to organise the league. The National Sports Council is yet to respond to their appeal though.

The BHF is expected to sign a deal worth 36 lakh taka with Agrani Bank on September 28 to stage the national youth hockey tournament over three seasons.

## Papon gets Abahani nod

SPORTS REPORTER

In a meeting yesterday, Abahani's board of directors nominated Bangladesh Cricket Board (BCB) president Nazmul Hassan Papon and Shayan F Rahman as their councillors for the upcoming BCB elections.

These names were recommended by the club's cricket committee and were approved by the board yesterday. Interestingly, Papon's opponent in the elections and former BCB president Saber Hossain Chowdhury was also present in the meeting yesterday as one of the club's directors.

Speaking to The Daily Star Saber said: "I am happy with the members nominated. But I am even happier that the board meeting took place after such a long break."

Abahani's last board meeting took place in September 2010.

Mohammedan meanwhile nominated current BCB ad-hoc committee members Lokman Hossain Bhuiyan and Mahbub Anam as their councillors.

## DPL 4th round starts today

SPORTS REPORTER

Three matches of the fourth round of the Dhaka Premier League will be held today. At Fatullah, reigning champions Victoria Sporting Club, led by Nasir Hossain, will take on Kalabagan Krira Chakra, who have so far been led by stand-in captain Naem Islam in the absence of Shakib Al Hasan.

At Mirpur, Mahmudullah Riyad's Gazi Tank Cricketers will take on Cricket Coaching School, while Prime Bank Cricket Club will take on Prime Doleshwar Sporting Club at BKSP-3.

## WALTON OPEN TT Lalbagh Club & Biman champs

SPORTS REPORTER

Bangladesh Biman and Lalbagh TT Club emerged champions in the men's and women's team events respectively in the Walton Mobile Open Table Tennis Competition yesterday.

Biman defeated Sheikh Russel KC 3-1 in the final at the Paltan Wooden Floor Gymnasium. Javed of Biman beat Rocky of Sk Russel, Regan of Biman beat Hasib of Sk Russel while Javed beat Hasib in another match. Tuhin of Sk Russel meanwhile pulled one back by beating Antu of Biman.

In the women's team event, Lalbagh became champions after finishing atop the four-team table. BISS Club finished runners-up.

## Monty given Ashes lifeline

AFP, London

Controversial spinner Monty Panesar was given a chance to revive his England career after being named Monday in a 17-man squad for the forthcoming Ashes tour of Australia.

England also selected uncapped trio of Yorkshire batsman Gary Ballance, Durham all-rounder Ben Stokes and former Ireland seamer Boyd Rankin for a tour where they they will bid to win a fourth straight Ashes series against arch-rivals Australia -- something they last achieved in the 19th Century.