

Rise in cricketer councillors

SPORTS REPORTER

More cricketers have been nominated as councillors for the coming elections of the Bangladesh Cricket Board (BCB) than in earlier elections, thus taking BCB president Nazmul Hassan Papon's stated aim of bringing more cricketers into administrative positions closer to fulfilment.

Former captains Akram Khan and Naimur Rahman got the voting rights from their respective division and district while former captain Shamim Kabir, Roquibul Hasan, Shafiqul Haque Heera, Faruque Ahmed and Khaled Mashud were nominated from the BCB president's quota.

Meanwhile Gazi Ashraf, ASM Faruque, Khaled Mahmud, Shahidur Rahman, Dr. Asaduzzaman Misha, Mohammad Ali, Selim Shahed, Niyamur Rashid, Ahsanullah Khan Hasan and Hannan Sarker were nominated for councillorship from the former cricketers' quota.

Apart from the big names there were also some other cricketers like GM Faisal Robin (a CWAB councillor), Shawkatul Rahman (from Dhaka University), Mohammad Zakir Hossain (from Khulna University) besides long-serving cricketer-turned-organisers Mahbubul Anam and Jalal Yunus.

The BCB in an extraordinary general meeting (EGM) on March 1 last year had dissolved two clauses from the constitution ending the chance of 15 former players getting councillorships.

That amendment, which was suggested by the constitutional amendment committee led by then board director Dewan Shafiqul Arefin, had been widely criticised in the cricket fraternity.

Soon after the formation of the BCB ad-hoc committee, the cricketers got back their councillorship rights when the National Sports Council (NSC) approved a new constitution in 2012, which featured some major changes from the one which was approved in the EGM in March 2011.

Papon, since assuming office, has publicly spoken in favour of the players' councillorship rights in the constitution and his promise to bring more cricketers into administrative roles saw its first step to fulfilment with the increase of the number of players in the councillor list.

BCB have gotten all the councillors' names on Tuesday and will approve the list in today's emergency board meeting before forwarding it to the NSC.

Meanwhile, NSC has formed the three-member commission to conduct the elections of the country's richest sporting body. Joint secretary Abdur Rahman has been named chief election commissioner while deputy secretary Shishir Kumar Roy and NSC director Rezaul Mustafa Kamal are the other members in the panel.

"The election commission will announce the schedule after getting the councillor list from the board," said NSC secretary Shishir Roy yesterday.



Akram Khan talks to reporters at the Sher-e-Bangla National Stadium in Mirpur yesterday. This could be his last appearance as the chief cricket selector before the media if his resignation is accepted by the board today.

PHOTO: STAR

Sagar takes solo lead

SPORTS REPORTER

International Master Minhazuddin Ahmed Sagar took solo lead in the Berger Paints 39th National Chess Championship at the close of the fifth round at the media centre of Bangladesh Olympic Association yesterday.

Sagar beat Hafizul Islam Chapal to earn 4.5 points from five matches while GM Abdullah Al Rakib and GM Ziaur Rahman shared the second position with four points each after playing out a draw between themselves. After nine moves, Rakib offered a draw and Zia accepted it to end the fifth round.

However, FM Mehdi Hasan Parag produced the day's biggest upset after beating GM Enamul Hossain Razib. GM Niaz Murshed was in the third position with 3.5 points.

Royals outplay Lions

SPORT DESK

IPL outfit Rajasthan Royals beat South Africa's Highveld Lions by 30 runs in their Group A match of the Champions League T20 at the Sawai Mansingh Stadium yesterday.

Legbreak bowler Pravin Tambe bowled a destructive spell to take four wickets for fifteen runs as the South African side fell scored 153, chasing a mammoth 184 to win. Earlier, Brad Hodge's attacking innings of 46 not out propelled Rajasthan Royals to 183 for five in 20 overs.

SCORES IN BRIEF

RAJASTHAN ROYALS: 183 for 5 in 20 overs (Hodge 46 not out, Binny 38; Tsotsobe 2-26)

HIGHVELD LIONS: 153 for 9 in 20 overs (Peterson 40, Viljoen 24; Tambe 4-15)

Result: Rajasthan Royals won by 30 runs.

Life ban on Modi

AFP, New Delhi

Disgraced Indian Premier League (IPL) founder Lalit Modi was Wednesday banned for life from holding any cricket post.

The Board of Control for Cricket in India (BCCI) accepted the verdict of its disciplinary panel that found Modi guilty of "serious" acts of indiscipline and misconduct.

Sk Jamal pip MSC

SPORTS REPORTER

Sheikh Jamal Dhanmondi Club marked the inauguration of their newly-renovated stadium in Faridpur superbly as they defeated Mohammmedan Sporting Club 1-0 in a friendly match yesterday. The Dhanmondi giants edged their Motijheel rivals by a 56th minute goal from midfielder Alamgir Kabir Rana in front of an enthusiastic crowd and a host of dignitaries at the Sheikh Jamal Stadium in Faridpur.

The two sides fielded their best players, including the new recruits, in the pre-season friendly. The Dhanmondi club came into this match of the back of more than a month's training under coach Joseph Afifi while Mohammmedan practiced a little more than a week before this match, under coach Saiful Bari Titu.

The match was witnessed by Bangladesh Football Federation president Kazi Salahuddin, chairman of Sheikh Jamal DC Manzur Kader, director-in-charge of administration of Mohammmedan SC Lokman Hossain Bhuiyan and other local dignitaries.

Women's h'ball from today

SPORTS REPORTER

Walton Invitational National Women's Handball tournament begins today at the Shaheed (captain) M Mansur Ali National Handball Stadium with eight teams participating.

The eight teams, split into two groups, will play in round-robin system and top two teams from each group will advance to the semifinals. The teams are BJMC, Dhaka, Dinajpur, Noogaon, Rangamati, Rajshahi, Kushtia and Bangladesh Police.

Akram quit a week ago

SPORTS REPORTER

Chief selector Akram Khan yesterday revealed that he had submitted his letter of resignation to Bangladesh Cricket Board (BCB) president Nazmul Hassan Papon on September 18 and that an official decision regarding the issue would be taken by the BCB in a board meeting scheduled to take place today afternoon.

The former national captain submitted his resignation as he plans to contest this year's BCB elections. "My contract was supposed to be renewed at the end of this month but I have informed the board that I am interested in contesting the elections and

that I will not continue," said Akram.

"As far as I know, any person who wants to contest the elections cannot be working for the board," he added.

Akram also told reporters that he would not mind providing a helping hand in the selection committee during the New Zealand series. "I have told the board that if they require any sort of help during the series, I will do it. I have six years of experience and I don't mind lending them my services for free," said Akram.

An emotional Akram, who marked Bangladesh's success in the Asia Cup in 2012 as one of the more memorable events during his tenure, hopes to make a bigger difference as a board director.

The future of the selection committee, the contract of which will end on

September 30, remains uncertain. According to BCB's cricket operations chairman, Enayet Hossain Siraj, the board is yet to decide on Akram's successor.

"We have not decided what to do with the selection committee as of yet. It's up to the board really, I don't even know if the issue will be raised at the board meeting on Thursday," said Siraj.

However, the team selection for the New Zealand series, according to Akram, is almost complete. "The team is almost done. We may see new players in the series, it's going to depend on the performance of the players in the practice match before the first Test," said Akram.



Grand Master Niaz Murshed (R) ponders his next move against Shafiq Ahmed during their fifth round game of National Chess Championship at the media centre of Bangladesh Olympic Association Bhaban yesterday.

Star shine bright

SPORTS REPORTER

Former champions The Daily Star got their Pran-Frooto BSIA Media Cup cricket campaign off to a rousing start with an emphatic 91-run dismantling of Naya Diganta at the Maulana Bhasani Hockey Stadium yesterday.

The six-a-side game resembled a football match more than a cricket game as players slugged it out amid steady rainfall which however seemed to have no effect on The Daily Star batsmen. Player-of-the-match Raful Islam hammered 30 - the maximum score before a batsman must retire -- and Tanvir Ahsan came in with some crucial late blows to take the English daily to a formidable 108 for four in six overs. Naya Diganta were in a generous mood, donating 28 runs in wides and no-balls.

At the halfway stage there were concerns about the wet conditions making it difficult to grip the ball, but those fears proved unfounded. Naya Diganta were skittled out for just 17 in 4.3 overs with each over producing a wicket. The most spectacular of these came from Raful who swooped down on a defensive shot off his own bowling, swivelled around and hit the non-striker's wicket in one swift motion to run Touhid out -- an effort Shakib Al Hasan would be proud of.

In the day's other matches Samakal defeated Dhaka Tribune by one wicket, Radio Today overcame Bangladesh Sangbad Sangstha by four wickets, Maasranga thrashed Shokaler Khobor by 76 runs, GTV won a one-run cliff-hanger against Manavzamin, Banglavision won against Independent by three wickets and Rising BD trounced Ittefaq by 103 runs.

Siddikur's Panasonic challenge starts today

SPORTS REPORTER

Siddikur Rahman will be hoping for a change in fortunes as he takes the field for the Asia-Pacific Panasonic Open today.

Siddikur, the 2010 Brunei Open winner, has been in indifferent form this season, which has placed him at 17th position in the Asian Tour Order of Merit. His two most recent performances have been a 135th position finish in the Omega European Masters and a 41st position finish in the Yeangder TPC two weeks ago.

With only a handful of events remaining in the calendar year, Siddikur will be hoping his turnaround starts from here in Osaka.

Siddikur will be joined by an in-form Thaworn Wiratchant of Thailand, Panasonic ambassador Anirban Lahiri of India, current Order of Merit leader Kiradech Aphibarnrat of Thailand, Asia's first male Major winner Y.E. Yang of Korea among others at the Ibaraki Country Club.

Venus survives Simona scare

AFP, Tokyo

Venus Williams snatched victory from the jaws of defeat to beat fast-rising Romanian Simona Halep 4-6, 7-5, 6-3 and reach the quarterfinals of the Pan Pacific Open on Wednesday.

Broom slays Scorchers

INTERNET, Jaipur

Opener Neil Broom slayed Perth Scorchers with a blood-curdling hundred as Otago Volts preserved their perfect record in the ongoing CLT20 with a 62-run win on Wednesday.

At the Sawai Mansingh Stadium, in the most one-sided of matches, Volts needed just one innings to decide what could be termed a contest only in name.

Propelled by Broom's 56-ball 117, his maiden T20 century, and Ryan ten Doeschate's 26-ball 66, Volts posted a mammoth 242/4 after Scorchers sent them to bat. There was only one logical outcome after a bombardment of 16 sixes and 19 fours and when Scorchers devolved to 11 for

3 in the second over of what would have been the biggest successful chase in all T20 cricket, the die was cast.

For the record, Scorchers managed 180 for 6 in their 20, Hilton Cartwright top-scoring with an unbeaten 69, but there is little merit to discussing how they fared with the bat -- or how Volts fared with the ball -- for it was all about the havoc wreaked in the first innings.

This was Otago's 14th successive victory in the format.

SCORES IN BRIEF

OTAGO VOLTS: 242 for 4 in 20 overs (Broom 117 not out, De Boorder 45, Ten Doeschate 66; Paris 2-50)

PERTH SCORCHERS: 180 for 6 in 20 overs (Voges 36, Cartwright 69 not out, Turner 27, Trifitt 25; Butler 3-27)

Result: Otago Volts won by 62 runs.

Yonex ties up with BBF

SPORTS REPORTER

Yonex, a leading sports equipment manufacturer, has recently tied the knots with the Bangladesh Badminton Federation (BBF) to provide sports gears for the national badminton team as well as the junior team for the next four years.

"We have signed an agreement with Yonex for four years and as per the agreement, the company will provide us with jerseys, trousers, rackets, bags, keds, socks and shuttles for 24 players of the senior and junior teams," BBF's acting general secretary Golam Aziz Jilani revealed during the press conference of the Roxy Paints Summer Open Badminton tournament yesterday.

Yonex has already provided equipments to the Bangladesh junior team, which took part in a tournament in India between September 3 and 8 and will provide 15,000 dollars for an

international tournament to be held in Bangladesh in December, informed Jilani.

Under the agreement, the federation will have to buy and use Yonex shuttles in any tournament organised by the federation, which is also set to introduce the Yonex shuttles in the Summer Open, beginning from tomorrow at the Shaheed Tajuddin Ahmed Indoor Stadium.

Except for top shuttlers like Raisuddin and Saifuddin, some 175 shuttlers including 25 women from 36 districts, organisations and education boards will be competing in four events -- men's singles and doubles, women's singles and doubles. A total of Tk one lakh will be distributed among top four players in each of the four events as sponsors Roxy Paints will give Tk three lakh for the tournament.

BBF vice president Hedayetul Islam and sponsors' marketing head Sabir Hasan Manwar also spoke on the occasion.