

Another DPL controversy

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The Dhaka Premier League this year has been riddled with controversy right from the start. At first it was the unusual, early demotion of Cricket Coaching School, who had arrived late to one of the league matches. There were also cries of favouritism on the field from various teams, who alleged that a particular club took advantage by employing umpires of their own choice in a few games.

There was an addition to the list of controversies yesterday when Brothers Union played a suspended player, Sohrawardi Shuvo, in their must-win encounter against Sheikh Jamal at BKSP-3.

Shuvo was suspended for a match and fined Tk 20,000 after he reportedly showed dissent to umpires in their previous match against Abahani. However, Brothers Union denied getting any official letter from the Cricket Committee of Dhaka Metropolis, the tournament organiser, regarding the suspension

Match referee Debabratta Paul also denied getting any letter from the CCDM regarding Shuvo's suspension. "When a player is suspended we get a letter before the match, but we did not get any," said Paul.

At the end of the match Sheikh Jamal,wrote a petition to the CCDM.

Regarding the issue, CCDM's member secretary Rakib Hyder Pavel said: "We had sent a letter at night to Brothers Union, after their match against Abahani. I can't understand how the match referee or club members were not aware. We will have a meeting tomorrow and take a decision regarding the result of the match."

Ashwin takes Shakib's place

CRICINFO, Dubai

Ravichandran Ashwin's hundred and a match haul of five wickets in the first Test against West Indies has lifted him to the top of the ICC's rankings for Test all-rounders, the first time he has reached No. 1.

Ashwin took the top spot from Bangladesh all-rounder Shakib Al Hasan, who is 43 points behind the India off-spinner, while South Africa's Jacques Kallis is third.

Ashwin scored a career-best 124 in the Kolkata Test and that pushed him 18 places up the rankings for Test batsmen to the 45th position. He also moved up to sixth place in the bowler rankings.

HERO INDIAN OPEN

Title Siddikur's to lose

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The flagbearer of Bangladesh golf, Siddikur Rahman, took a giant yet assured step towards winning his second Asian Tour title when he shot a flawless third round five-under-par (67) to take a four-stroke lead at the Hero Indian Open yesterday.

The 29-year old Bangladeshi golfer hit a sublime chip from the greenside bunker on hole 18 to put himself in pole position at the 1.25-million-dollar Asian Tour event.

Siddikur, who made headlines throughout the golfing world when he became the first Bangladeshi to win on the Asian Tour circuit at the Brunei Open in 2010, has been close to winning a second tour title quite a number of times in the meantime, but failed to finish the job. He came close twice to winning at the Delhi Golf course -- before ultimately finishing second at the 2011 SAIL Open and 2012 Panasonic Open India.

But this time Siddikur has looked more focused and has added some aggression to his game, especially after playing alongside Ernie Els and Bubba Watson at the CIMB Classic recently. Siddkur's straight hitting and hot putter has helped him remain consistent throughout the event, while others have gone up and down. The result is evident -- the Madaripur man has only dropped two shots in 54 holes, hitting an astonishing seventeen birdies and an eagle. Siddikur himself feels he is playing his best golf since turning professional in 2007.

"It has been a great week. This is the best I've

played in my career. I'm putting and hitting the ball so well. Mentally I'm strong and I'm very focused," said Siddikur, who leads with a three-day total of 17-under-par (199).

"When I won in Brunei, I had to play safe because I wanted to save my Asian Tour card and make some money to survive on the Tour. Now, I'm not playing for money. I'm hungry for achievements so that's my target."

The straight-hitting Siddikur said he will continue playing aggressively after trading his safe approach game with more attacking flair.

"I didn't read the lines properly or my score would have been lower. It is a big advantage for me now. If I can play like how I've been playing, then I think I can easily win," said Siddikur.

If Siddikur does win the title in Delhi, it will be a timely boost for the 29-year old golfer before he flies for the ISPS HANDA World Cup of Golf which will be held at the Royal Melbourne Golf Club from November 21-24.

The nearest contender to win the Hero Indian Open title is SSP Chowrasia, a two-time Asian Tour winner, who closed with a six-under (66) for an aggregate of 13-under (203) with Rashid Khan of India and Angelo Que of Philippines sharing the third spot on 204.

Chowrasia admitted that it will be a hard task to beat Siddikur in the form the Bangladeshi golfer has showed in this event.

"Siddikur has been playing some top quality golf. He has also done well at this venue in the past. I'll have to shoot somewhere in the region of seven-under to put up a stiff challenge on the final day," Chowrasia said.



PHOTO: ASIANTOUR.COM

Ace Bangladesh golfer Siddikur Rahman is in red-hot form at the Hero Indian Open and on course to add a second Asian Tour title.

Mohammedan keep leading

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Defending champions Mohammedan SC held on to their solo lead with maximum 14 match points after the 8th and penultimate round of the Rupahali Sarees Premier Division Chess League which is being held at the Bangladesh Chess Federation hall room.

In the round, Mohammedan beat Pritam-Prism Chess Club by 4-0 points.

Bangladesh Navy Chess Team and Leonine Chess Club were sharing the second position with 12 points each.

WGM chess

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WIM Rani Hamid earned three points after the 5th round of the Women Grandmasters Chess Tournament in Chennai, India yesterday.

WFM Zakia Sultana and Mahmuda Hoque Chowdhury Moly earned 2.5 points each while Masuda Begum and Jahanara Haque Runu earned 2 points each.

Rani drew with Divya Grag of India, Moly drew with Simran Ahmed while Masuda drew with Sneha of India. Zakia lost to Pratyusha Bodda of India while Runu lost against Supriya Joshi of India.

Prime Bank in Super League

GAZI TANK: 251 for 8 (Oram 54; Shalika Karunanayanika 3-55)
VICTORIA SC: 137 all out in 41 overs (Md Sharif 58; Arafat 4-13)
Result: Gazi Tank won by 114 runs.
KALABAGAN KC: 240 for 8 (Naeem 86 not out, Tasamul 50; Al Amin 2-29)

ABAHANI: 244 for 4 in 43.5 overs (Smith 89, Mosaddek 53; Anjum 3-40)
Result: Abahani won by six wickets.
PRIME BANK CC: 225 for 8 (Taiabur 64; Forkan 2-34)
KHELAGHAR SKS: 166 all out in 43.1 overs (Shuvagata 51; Bopara 3-40)

Result: Prime Bank CC won by 59 runs.
SHEIKH JAMAL: 150 for 8 (Junaid 45; Shuvo 3-29)
BROTHERS: 151 for 4 in 36.1 overs (Nafees 44; Nahidul 2-23)
Result: Brothers won by six wickets.

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Khelaghar Samaj Kallyan Samity were relegated from the Dhaka Premier League yesterday after they finished at the bottom of the league following their 59-run defeat to Prime Bank

Cricket Club at Fatullah yesterday. Prime Bank will now join Mohammedan Sporting Club, Gazi Tank Cricketers, Prime Doleshwar and Kalabagan Cricket Academy in the six-team Super League.

In a must-win encounter for both sides at Fatullah, Prime Bank rode on Taiabur Parvez's 64 to post 225 for eight in 50 overs. Taiabur's innings was a measured one as he scored four fours and a six in his 85-ball innings.

In reply, Khelaghar were bowled out for 166 in 43.1 overs. Khelaghar's Shuvagata Hom scored a 79-ball 51 but lacked support from his teammates as his side was relegated.

At the Sher-e-Bangla National Stadium in Mirpur, Gazi Tank thrashed Victoria by 114 runs to overtake Mohammedan at the top of the table. After being put in to bat, two innings of 47 from Rokibul Hasan and Imrul Kayes and a whirlwind half-century by Jacob Oram -- 54 off

21 -- helped Gazi Tank post 251.

In reply, Victoria were bowled out for 137 in 41 overs. Spinners Arafat Sunny (4-13) and Ashar Zaidi (3-19) were the key bowlers for Gazi Tank.

Abahani finished ninth in the league following their six-wicket win over Kalabagan Krira Chakra at the BKSP-3 in Savar. Batting first Kalabagan rode on Naeem Islam's 86 and Tasamul Haque's 50 to post 240 for eight. Abahani however won the match with ease as they reached their target with 6.1 overs remaining. The win was made possible by assured innings from foreign recruit Gregory Smith (89) and Mosaddek Hossain (53).

The match at BKSP-2 saw Brothers Union beat Sheikh Jamal by six wickets. Under normal circumstances Brothers would have achieved 11 points and gone through to the next round, but controversy hit the match as Brothers reportedly fielded a suspended player -- Sohrawardi Shuvo -- and therefore the result of the match was put on hold by the CCDM. The team which gets the nod will play the super league.

DHAKA PREMIER LEAGUE TABLE

Team	M	W	Pts	Run-rate
Gazi Tank Cricketers	10	7	14	0.535
Mohammedan SC	10	7	14	-0.353
Prime Doleshwar SC	9	6	12	0.014
Prime Bank CC	10	6	12	0.733
Brothers Union	10	5	11	0.624
Kalabagan Cricket	9	5	11	-0.407
Sk. Jamal DC	10	5	10	0.429
Victoria SC	10	4	9	0.033
Abahani Ltd	10	4	8	-0.216
Kalabagan KC	10	2	5	-0.111
Khelaghar SKS	10	1	2	-1.222

FIXING SCANDAL

Panel starts work finally

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A familiar figure was seen in the grandstand of the Sher-e-Bangla National Stadium in Mirpur at the end of the T20I between Bangladesh and New Zealand on November 6. Upon sighting Mohammad Ashraful -- who had with him fellow disgraced cricketer Mahbubul Alam Robin -- a curious fan pointed and asked what had become of the cricketers now relegated to the shadows. The cricket fraternity is similarly curious to know about the matter.

Finally, on Saturday the Bangladesh Cricket Board (BCB) confirmed that the disciplinary panel was formed, headed by former Supreme Court judge and former chairman of the Bangladesh Law Commission Md Abdur Rashid and its first meeting was held yesterday. The other members are Justice Khademul Islam Chowdhury (Former Judge of Bangladesh Supreme Court), Justice Shiek Rezowan Ali (Former Judge of Bangladesh Supreme Court), S K M Anisur Rahman Khan (Former District and Session Judge), Ajmamul Hossain, QC, Nihad Kabir (Barrister-at-Law), Nirmalendu Goon, and former cricketers Shakil Kasem, Fakrul Ahsan, Mahmudul Hasan Saju and Mahboob Hussain Nantoo.

The chairman of the panel is expected to form more than one anti-corruption tribunal, which will conduct the trials of the nine individuals -- including Ashraful and Robin -- accused of breaching BCB's anti-corruption code, shortly.

It has taken more than two-and-a-half months for the panel to start the process since the ICC's Anti-Corruption and Security Unit (ACSU)

charged seven individuals with involvement in match- and spot-fixing in the second edition of the Bangladesh Premier League (BPL) and two others for not reporting corruption approaches.

"I have started the work since I got the appointment as head of the panel on October 14," said former High Court Justice Md Abdur Rashid, who had a meeting with the panel members and the BCB officials last night.

The charging of the nine individuals on August 13 this year unleashed a scandal storm on the country, leading BCB to promise a quick trial and say that there would be stern consequences if anyone was found guilty. There was also a clause in the board's anti-corruption code to start the hearing within 40 days of the receipt by the participant of the Notice of Charge but this deadline expired on September 23.

BCB initially approached former chief justice Mahmudul Amin Chowdhury to head the disciplinary panel and received a positive written response but finally, according to sources, they failed to settle upon a financial package in connection with forming the tribunal which delayed the process significantly.

"The tribunal is now all set and will start their proceedings hopefully by next week," informed BCB's acting CEO Nizamuddin Chowdhury yesterday without offering any explanation when asked about the delay.

It was further learnt that Mosharraf Hossain Rubel, one of the accused who received the provisional suspension along with the other accused, and Robin filed a case with the lower court last month against the suspension.

Star-studded SK Jamal

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The 2010-2011 professional football league champions Sheikh Jamal Dhanmondi Club have announced their target of winning all the silverware

this season after forming a star-studded squad which includes nine current national team members, along with the highest-paid footballer Sony Norde of Haiti and his compatriot Wedson Anselme. The Dhanmondi outfit registered 25 players including five foreigners at the Bangladesh Football Federation (BFF) House yesterday, while two other foreigners are on their way to joining the squad.

The Dhanmondi outfit had made a buzz by forming a similar star cast three years ago when they won the premier league title. But as many of their star players left, Sheikh Jamal had managed to win only the Federation Cup in the next season. Last season they finished second best to Sheikh Russel in the premier league, the Federation Cup and the Independence Cup.

But recruiting nine members of the national team, including captain Mamunul Islam and vice-captain

SQUAD

GOALKEEPERS: Maksudur Rahman, Zaiur Rhman, Mazharul Islam, Omar Sharif

DEFENDERS: Yeamin Munna, Rayhan Hasan, Linkon, Yeasin Khan, Nasiruddin Chowdhury, Didarul Haque, Kesto Kumar Bose, Zahurul Islam

MIDFIELDERS: Mamunul Islam (C), Monaem Khan Raju, Sohul Rana, Shahedul Alam, Alamgir Kabir Rana, Mobarak Hossain Bhuiyan, Ikechuku Okemirri, Femi Orunnimi, Allii Abdullahi

FORWARDS: Shakhawat Hossain, Taklis Ahmed, Sony Norde, Wedson Anselme

Nasiruddin Chowdhury, and some quality foreigners in key positions, the Dhanmondi outfit looks likely to be title contenders for the four major silverware.

"This is the best possible football team in Bangladesh. We have recruited all the best players of the country including the captain and vice captain of the national team. We also have the highest-paid footballer (Sony Norde) in the country's history. Since this (The Bangladesh Premier League) will be a three-leg league, we have the reserves taking into consideration injuries and suspensions. There is no reason we should not be able to win all the silverware this season," said the

club's president Manjur Kader at the registration ceremony, adding that the team has a budget in excess of Tk9 crore.

Including the capture of Mamunul from Sheikh Russel, Sheikh Jamal have included 15 new players, all of whom are considered bright stars of local football, which gives the side the balance as well as bench strength. Mamunul thinks bench strength could be the factor that will set this side apart from other teams.

"This team is much better than the Sheikh Russel side I played for last season. We have replacements for every position. In Sheikh Russel, we had 12/13 good players, but here we have a reserve bench which is almost as good as the reserve bench of the national team," said Mamunul.

It is not only the locals but inclusions like Sony -- arguably the best player last season -- will go a long way in deciding the outcome in winning multiple competitions. Sony will have his compatriot Wedson, and local strikers Sakhawat Hossain and Taklis Ahmed, to deliver the goods up front.

"I believe, with the players at our disposal, anything less than four trophies will be disappointing," exuded Sheikh Jamal coach Joseph Afusi.



PHOTO: STAR

MATCH-WINNERS: Gazi Tank's Jacob Oram and Arafat Sunny exchange high fives during their match against Victoria at Mirpur yesterday. Oram smacked a 21-ball 54 whereas Sunny finished with 4 for 13.