

SPORT

Going through difficult times

Says Mushfiq after Shane's resignation

SPORTS REPORTER



That Shane Jurgensen's resignation has jolted the Bangladesh Cricket Board (BCB) and that the board is drastically trying to bring things back in order, could be best understood from the national players' decision to remain almost mum on the issue.

Bangladesh captain Mushfiqur Rahim, during a signing ceremony at a local hotel yesterday, told reporters that the board had asked the players to strictly refrain from commenting on Jurgensen's resignation.

Going by the board's instructions, Mushfiqur, despite a barrage of questions on the issue, did not share his opinion on the coach's sudden departure. He did however state that that his teammates should face the 'challenging times' in high spirits.

"There can be plenty said on this issue, but I have been advised by the board not to comment on it. He (Jurgensen) is coming tomorrow (Wednesday) and I will talk to him personally. We will wait till the (BCB) president (Nazmul Hassan Papon) arrives and takes a decision on the matter. I hope he (Jurgensen) will change his mind," said Mushfiqur.

"We are going through difficult times. When bad times come they come from all angles. But as players we need to hold on to the spirit that we showed for the last two years, no matter what happens. It will no doubt be challenging and difficult to accept this, but nothing in life comes smoothly, so no matter what happens we have to hope for the best," he added.

A majority of the other national players also decided against speaking on the issue. A number of them, however, recalled the Australian for his good values.

Pacer Robiul Islam, who essentially restarted his international career last year, was virtually handpicked by Jurgensen. Robiul had not got a team in the Bangladesh Premier League T20 and Jurgensen made him bowl in an empty net at the Academy for an entire month. The camp ended up doing wonders for Robiul, who bowled magical spells in the Zimbabwe Tests later that year.

"I'll remember him for that camp. It brought me back to international cricket and helped me a lot. A lot of things changed after that. I played in Sri Lanka and then in Zimbabwe and was among the wickets," recalled Robiul.

Al-Amin Hossain's sudden burst into the top ranks was also was also a result of the Australian's persistence and he too echoed Robiul's sentiments.

"I am lucky to get him as my first coach. He always managed to keep the pressure down no matter how wayward you were bowling. I will also remember the fact that he gave me my first Test cap," said Al-Amin.

Spinner Shohag Gazi may not have benefited directly, skill-wise, from the Australian but he too believed that the team would miss him.

"The thing that I like most about him is that he is a very good human being. He always managed to create a good environment in the dressing room no matter what. I will definitely miss him," said Gazi.

On Monday morning Jurgensen had sent an e-mail to the BCB stating his decision to resign. The Australian cited comments made by certain board members to the media regarding the need for a new coach as the main reason to step down.

The BCB on their part had said that they had no intention of replacing the head coach. They are yet to accept his



Real Madrid defender Sergio Ramos is over the moon after scoring his second goal against Bayern Munich in a Champions League second-leg semifinal at the Allianz Arena in Munich yesterday. Real won the match 4-0 (5-0 on aggregate) for a place in the final.

PHOTO: AFP

Real rip Bayern apart

AFP, Munich



Real Madrid reached their first Champions League final for 12 years with an historic 4-0 win at Bayern Munich in Tuesday's semifinal second-leg to knock the holders out.

Having won last week's first-leg 1-0 in Madrid, Real won the semifinal 5-0 on aggregate as Pep Guardiola's Bayern suffered their heaviest home defeat in European competition.

Bayern had previously never lost at home by more than two goals in Europe as the Bavarian giants saw their dreams of reaching a fourth Champions League final in five years crushed.

Real are one game away from the 'Decima' - their tenth European title - and will face either neighbours Atletico Madrid or Chelsea in the May 24 final in Lisbon.

Real centre-back Sergio Ramos produced two early bullet headers to dismiss Bayern's dreams of becoming the first team to defend the Champions League title.

World Player of the Year Cristiano Ronaldo then made it 3-0 at the break before the Real superstar netted his 49th goal of the season with a free kick just before the final whistle.

His goal put Real 4-0 up on aggregate and on course to qualify for their first Champions League final since they last lifted the trophy in 2002.

The only downside to Real's stunning win in Germany was the loss of Xabi Alonso for the Lisbon final after he picked up his third booking of the campaign.

But there was no denying an historic night for Real, especially for coach Carlo Ancelotti who has now never lost to Bayern in eight matches, six times with former club AC Milan and twice with Madrid.

There was a minute's silence before kick-off for former Barcelona coach Tito Vilanova, who died on Friday at the age of 45, and Vujadin Boskov, the former Real coach who passed away on Sunday aged 82.

The Munich crowd soon saw their dreams of a repeat of last season's treble of European, Bundesliga and German Cup titles swept away as Real floored the Bavarians in a devastating first-half spell.

Real needed just 16 minutes to take the lead at the Allianz Arena as Ramos powered home his first header from Luka Modric's corner to silence the home support.

It was the start of a miserable five minutes for Bayern as centre-back Dante was shown a yellow card for clumsily scything down Ronaldo just before Ramos struck again.

When Angel Di Maria swung in a free-kick, centre-back Pepe flicked it on for Ramos to head home his second goal in

just four minutes to leave Bayern reeling.

Real then compounded Bayern's misery as Di Maria played Karim Benzema into space and the Frenchman found Bale, who accelerated away.

His pass was drilled home by Ronaldo on 34 minutes, breaking the record for most Champions League goals in a campaign, to leave the hosts 3-0 down at the break and on the ropes.

A foul by Xabi Alonso on Bayern's Bastian Schweinsteiger five minutes later earned the Spain star a yellow card, his third of the competition, to rule him out of the final.

Guardiola responded at half-time by swapping Mario Mandzukic for Javi Martinez, abandoning his 4-2-3-1 formation for a 4-2-4 system, pushing Schweinsteiger up into the attacking midfield alongside Thomas Mueller.

2-yr ban on marathoner Shobukhova

AFP, Moscow

Russian marathon star Liliya Shobukhova was on Tuesday banned for two years by the national track and field athletics federation's anti-doping panel.

Shobukhova won the Chicago marathon in 2009, 2010 and 2011 and the London marathon in 2010.

The 36-year-old was banned based on abnormalities in the haematological profile of her biological passport, which indicates a high probability of blood doping.

The ban will be backdated to January 24, 2013 and will end on January 23, 2015.

Russian Athletics said that all Shobukhova's results from October 9, 2009, were cancelled, meaning her marathon best of 2hr 18mi 20sec, set in winning in Chicago in 2011, will be wiped from the record books.

Shobukhova also holds the European record over 5000m (14min 23.75sec) and 3000m indoors (8min 27.86sec).

Britain's Paula Radcliffe, the marathon world record holder, said on Twitter: "Lilya Shobukhova finally exposed as a drug cheat."

"Fraud on so many levels, so much money effectively stolen in appearance fees, winnings and endorsements."

Shobukhova can appeal the ban, which will also see her second place in the 2011



The victorious Al Hikma School of Rajshahi celebrate their win over Jessore Municipal Preparatory School in the final of the First Security Islami Bank National School Hockey Championship at the Maulana Bhasani Hockey Stadium yesterday.

PHOTO: STAR

Al Hikma clinch school hockey title

SPORTS REPORTER

Al Hikma School became the third institute from Rajshahi district to win the national school hockey title when they came from behind to beat Jessore Municipal Preparatory School 2-1 in the final of the First Security Islami Bank National School Hockey Championship at the Maulana Bhasani Hockey Stadium yesterday.

Walid Hossain Sweet put the Jessore school ahead before Abu Sayeed Hridoy levelled the margin in the first half. Ahsan Habib Hridoy scored the winning goal in the second half for the Rajshahi school to ensure that the fifth title out of seven national school hockey championships were clinched

by a Rajshahi school.

Though there was no impressive performance from either of the side but it was teamwork from the players of Al Hikma School, who have been together for the last four years.

"We are committed to keep our hockey heritage intact and we did it by winning the final," said Al Hikma coach Bappi Kumar Ghosh, who is also a Dhaka Premier Division player.

Bappi informed that most players of his side have been playing in district league and participated in the national youth championship for Rajshahi district and most of them want to build their career as hockey players.

The boys from Jessore though have no such experience and have only been

together for 45 days of training and they are more or less happy with the result.

"Actually we lost due to inexperience. However, we are happy with the way the boys played throughout the tournament," said Municipal Preparatory coach Jasimuddin urging the district organisers to resume the Jessore hockey league which was last held in 2005.

The Bangladesh Hockey Federation picked up 80 players from the championship in which six players each from the champions and runners-up teams have been chosen.

Chief guest sports minister Biren Shikdar distributed prizes among the players where Shihab Hossain of Armanitola School received Tk one lakh as top scorer with 16 goals.

Parvez stunner leaves MSC reeling

SPORTS REPORTER



A struggling Team BJMC brought high-flying Mohammedan SC down with a thrilling 3-2 victory in the Nitol Tata Bangladesh Premier League at the Bangabandhu National Stadium yesterday.

National discard Abdullah Parvez was the architect behind BJMC's remarkable triumph after three successive defeats as the winger, who came in place of Shahnur Ronny in the 77th minute, struck a spectacular winner from 40 yards out in the stoppage time after setting up Samson Iliasu for the equaliser.

With the clock ticking towards the last minute of stoppage time and the score 2-2, substitute Parvez took the ball in the midfield, had a glance at Mohammedan keeper Mamun Khan who was in the middle of the box and pretended to play Ismail Bangoura on the right side. But instead of releasing it for Ismail, he struck a dipping shot from just inside centre circle which sailed over an out-of-position Mamun and ended up at the back of the net.

"It is one of the five best goals I have struck in my playing career but I would consider the goal against Abahani in 2000 which derailed them Abahani from the title race, on top," said an ecstatic Parvez.

Mohammedan prided over their new backline which turned rock-solid with the inclusion of Nigerian defender Ubom Henry and the Black and Whites won five successive matches without conceding a single goal prior to this match. BJMC went ahead in the 14th minute when Bangoura converted a penalty kick after he was brought down by Cameroonian defender Bayback before Mohammedan levelled the margin on the half-hour mark through a penalty kick, converted by Damien Chigozie. The Black and Whites went ahead three minutes into the second half through Wahed, who beat BJMC goalkeeper Himel after availing a poor clearance from defender Shamsuddin.

The second defeat in 12 matches means Mohammedan remain at third position with 20 points, eight behind leaders Sheikh Russel and five behind second-placed Abahani while BJMC raised their tally to 15 from 12 matches to stay at seventh position of the 10-team table.

Meanwhile, in the day's second match of the day, relegation battlers Chittagong Abahani and Uttar Baridhara played out a goalless draw to occupy the bottom two

WOMEN'S KABADDI Dhaka, Narail in final

SPORTS REPORTER

Dhaka and Narail DSAs reached the final of the Marcel LED TV Inter-Divisional Women's Kabaddi Tournament yesterday.

Dhaka DSA beat Panchagarh DSA by 47-28 points with four lonas while Narail DSA moved into the final outplaying Jamalpur DSA by 35-8 points with two lonas, at the Kabaddi Stadium in Paltan yesterday.

The final will be held today at the same venue.

Imran's T20 league gets PCB's nod

PTI, Karachi

Cricketer-turned-politician Imran Khan's party Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) has been given the green signal by the Pakistan Cricket Board (PCB) to organise a Twenty20 league next month.

A PCB spokesman said that the organisers have been given a No-Objection Certificate (NOC), revealed the Express Tribune.

The league named 'Love Pakistan Peace Cricket League 2014' is expected to be played across five cricketing centres including Karachi, Lahore and Peshawar between May 3 and 18.