

SHAKIB'S trysts with controversy

► **October 2010:** On 92 in the fourth ODI against New Zealand, umpires could not stop the disturbance at the sightscreen. Shakib ran towards the screen and abused the offender and threatened to hit him with his bat.

► **February 2011:** During Bangladesh's World Cup game against the West Indies Shakib reacted strongly after being booed and allegedly made a rude hand gesture at the spectators. He then blasted former national players for criticising Bangladesh's fall in the game.

► **February 2014:** Shakib displayed a lewd gesture on live television after the camera repeatedly panned towards him. He was banned for three matches and fined.

► **March 2014:** During the World Twenty20, in an interview with a local daily -- against the code of conduct during an ongoing tournament -- Shakib said that he believed that Bangladesh should not host a series for two years and described the public's expectations as a major reason behind their downfall.

► **June 2014:** Shakib left the Bangladesh dressing room during the first ODI against India. He allegedly got into a scuffle with a spectator in the stands who reportedly harassed his wife.

► **July 2014:** He got into an argument with Bangladesh coach Chandika Hathurusinga. The latter in a letter to the BCB president stated that Shakib had threatened to quit ODI and Test cricket.

► **July 2, 2014:** He defied the BCB's authority by leaving for the West Indies to take part in the Caribbean Premier League without obtaining the No Objection Certificate from the BCB.

Shakib 'has a severe attitude problem'

SPORTS REPORTER



The year 2014 for Bangladesh cricket so far, both on and off the field, has been shrouded in darkness. Yesterday's decision by the Bangladesh Cricket Board (BCB) to impose a six-month ban on all-rounder Shakib Al Hasan has added another chapter to Bangladesh's bad run. It was expected that the board was going to take stern action against the all-rounder but still the BCB president Nazmul Hassan Papon's words were heavy with emotion when he announced: "Our board has unanimously decided to ban him from competitive cricket for the next six months, both national and international. And till 31 December 2015, he won't receive the NOC (No Objection Certificate) for any foreign tournament."

Following are excerpts from Papon's press conference, which was held after the board meeting which decided to punish Shakib for breaching agreement terms under the national player's contract:

"We had a lot of discussion. Individually we tried to give everyone time to take all opinions, including their own, into account. Shakib met up with me and he told me that he went (left for the West Indies without the No Objection Certificate) because he thought he would get the NOC after going to London. Regardless of whether Akram Khan (cricket operations committee chairman) told him to go through Shujon, he always takes the NOC from him (Shujon) and knows from whom to take it. He came to know that he did not have the NOC the night before (leaving for London) and he could not do anything about it at that point of time. He told Akram and left. Akram told him that he didn't have any problem but that Shakib needs to go through the CEO.

"The second thing is regarding his misbehaviour with the national coach. He clearly admitted that and he apologised for it. From what we



NAZMUL HASSAN PAPON

have seen, it's not just regarding his NOC; rather it's the multiple issues.

"We have a series of allegations and reports which clearly show that he has a severe attitude problem and the extent of which is such that we never received a player with such a disciplinary issue. Those who were here said that they never saw any one with such an extent of attitude problem. If the problem was restricted to just him that would not have been a problem. His behaviour is such that it affects our team directly. Not only regarding the team combination but also the performance. What is perhaps more alarming is that there are some others who have started behaving like him. If this continues it will destroy the future of our cricket. So that's why we believe that he obviously deserves a strict punishment. And after this if there are any further instances of gross indiscipline, we will not shy away from imposing life bans if necessary.

"Our cricketers can't take the entire fault. It's not that they have been doing these things for

the last one or two months; they have always been doing this, and we have been ignoring these small issues for a while, because they are loved by the nation. Having ignored these issues for such a long time, the board feels that if this trend continues the players will simply go out of control -- they won't listen to anyone.

"If he was a player who played just once and nobody knew him that would have been a different issue, but he is a role model. He is our country's ambassador. Many in the world know Bangladesh because of Shakib. That is why we think that a person of his level should be able to maintain his self-discipline.

"Let me give you an example and you will understand the severity of the problem. In the dressing room there was an incident. Our security guards who brought that boy (whom Shakib allegedly had an altercation with), they had the report that Shakib had hit him. He even told the team manager that he hit him. But when we called him for the hearing, he said that he didn't hit him. Then when he was asked as to why he left the dressing room he said he didn't know the rules. The board believes that this damn-care attitude of his won't work here.

"Some of the alleged behaviour was so inhuman that we were in awe as to how a player can commit these crimes.

"I met Shakib, and when he was in front of me I felt 'okay, let's forgive him right now'. But Bangladesh cricket is not for Shakib; Shakib is a part of Bangladesh cricket. That's why we had to give this punishment. Regarding discipline, there's zero tolerance.

"There will be a massive change in different places (management level). But today this one issue was so important, so delicate and so touching that we couldn't touch any other topic.

"Every player will get a letter, (to the effect that) before signing any commercial activity they have to inform the BCB. In certain cases they will need approval from the BCB."

Come back with a smile

AL-AMIN



Bangladesh Cricket Board (BCB) on Monday banned Shakib Al Hasan from all cricket for six months and barred him from playing in overseas competitions until the end of 2015. Was the harsh punishment inevitable for the champion all-rounder? Was it something that the whole nation tried to overlook time and again until it reached a point of severe suffocation that needed a little dose of inhaler in a serious attempt to breathe fresh air?

It's a bit of both and the BCB, though belatedly, took a right step to discipline Shakib and more importantly gave the strongest possible signal for the others that no individual is above the law. In a country where everyone (including yours truly) is a Shakib fan, such a groundbreaking decision is a tough one to take. Shakib is not only the leader of a fearless new generation of cricketers, who have lived up to the dream of the nation on so many occasions, but is also the biggest star for Bangladesh on the world stage. He is the poster boy of the country. His exciting cover drives, audacious pulls against the bests of the world is the pride of the whole nation. When he cried after a few near-defeats, the whole nation cried with him. But over the last two years or so this pure entertainer has failed to handle his fame on and most importantly off the field. This has been a case with many cricketers in the world. But what Shakib lacked most was modesty in fame. We could have still lived with that but his growing attitude to belittle others and his inability to show respect to an institution that feeds him made him the most intolerable character in our cricket establishment. No one speaks openly against him but ask even the junior-most member of the Bangladesh team and he will whisper to your ears -- Shakib Bhai is by far our best player but still I think he deserves this punishment.

It's a very sad revelation for Shakib. It is a betrayal of faith that he had created himself. But we believe this is not the end of the world for our beloved allrounder. We strongly believe that this head-strong man has the ability to correct his flaws. We would like to say that we are with you Shakib during the whole course of your six months of painful barrier. When you return we want to see your innocent smile back. And surely you will win more hearts and more games.

'He crossed a line'

SPORTS REPORTER



On the day when all-rounder Shakib Al Hasan was suspended from competitive cricket for six months there was a mixed reaction from Bangladesh's cricketing community.

According to former national cricketer Athar Ali Khan it was a decision that the BCB were 'forced to take' and something that the player had brought upon himself.

"To be very frank and honest I feel bad for Shakib, I feel really sorry for him. But on a different note as a player you also need to hold yourself back because you are one of the top players and you cannot cross certain lines. This was on the cards.

"The last six months we heard so many things about Shakib which were not acceptable. I think the BCB was forced to take this decision," said Athar.

Athar however, hopes that Shakib can win brownie points from the BCB through good behaviour.

"I expect Shakib to be at his best so that the BCB can consider reducing his punishment. As a player I know that being punished is a strong message in itself. I hope the BCB considers that," said Athar. "Knowing him personally I know that he will learn from this phase and come back even stronger," he added.

Baridhara on verge of relegation

SPORTS REPORTER



Newcomers Uttar Baridhara Club suffered their sixth consecutive defeat in the Nitol Tata Bangladesh Premier League as Brothers Union handed them a 4-1 defeat in the third meeting of the league at the Bangabandhu National Stadium yesterday.

Their 15th defeat in 23 outings left Baridhara at the bottom of the 10-team table with only 12 points, just two points less than ninth-placed Feni Soccer Club, and the two are locked in the relegation battle. Although both Feni Soccer and Baridhara still have four matches in hand the clear picture of who is going to be relegated will likely be clear when they face on July 16.

Brothers Union, on the other hand, notched their 10th victory in 23 matches to raise their points tally to 36, just one behind fourth-placed Muktiyoddha Sangsad. They

Windies draw level

SPORTS REPORTER

Shakib's mentor and former national assistant coach Mohammad Salahuddin was extremely hurt when he heard the news. He spoke to The Daily Star in a sombre voice and said, "I am really hurt. If you tell a mother that you are going to suspend her son from playing cricket how would she feel? If someone told you that you would not be able to write from tomorrow how would you feel? I don't have anything to say to the BCB. I just hope he doesn't commit these mistakes again."

Gazi Ashraf Hossain, Bangladesh's first ODI captain was concerned regarding how the decision could backfire for the national team. While he did state that Shakib had an 'attitude problem', he said that the sanctions imposed could have been different.

"There were several controversies and this was a result of all of that. I think if the steps would have been taken in time then we would not have had to see such a big punishment today. Now the BCB will have to wait and see if Shakib can be fit in time for the 2015 World Cup.

"I think the BCB should have gone through the right process while taking this decision. They could have taken more time. They could have for instance suspended him from his commercial activities for five years or given him a huge fine. That way we could have availed his services," he added.

have a good opportunity to finish higher than their current fifth position.

A spirited Brothers Union suffered defeat in their away match against Chittagong Abahani and the way they started yesterday's game it appeared that they might again be stunned by minnows Uttar Baridhara but Haitian hitman Augustine Walson shrugged off such fears and put Brothers ahead in the 22nd minute converting a penalty kick after he was fouled by Kenyan Collins Theigo inside the box.

Four minutes from the break, Faisal Mahmud doubled the lead with a harmless lob from the left while Walson made it 3-0 with a solo effort in the 60th minute.

Walson found a fine chance to complete his hat-trick but was denied by goalkeeper Osman Gani's stretched leg and substitute Abdul Malek tapped in the follow-up to make it 4-0.

Baridhara, who had beat Brothers 3-2 in the first meeting of the league, had a consolation goal three minutes from time when Dulal Mahmud placed a Collins cross home from the edge of the six-yard box.

AFP, Roseau

New Zealand's batting collapsed under the pressure of an ever-increasing scoring rate as the West Indies claimed a 39-run victory in the second and final Twenty20 International on Sunday.

Replying to the hosts' total of 165 for six, the Black Caps lost their last six wickets for 13 runs to be dismissed for 126 off 19.1 overs at Windsor Park in Dominica.

The series finished 1-1 after New Zealand had taken the three-match Test series 2-1.

SCORES IN BRIEF
WEST INDIES: 165 for 6 in 20 overs (Simmons 36, Fletcher 62, Bravo 14, Pollard 13, Russell 14 not out; Boulton 2-22)

NEW ZEALAND: 126 all out in 19.1 overs (Williamson 37, McCullum 21, Taylor 21, Anderson 14, Ronchi 12; Cottrell 3-28, Narine 2-19)

Result: West Indies won by 39 runs and level two-match series 1-1.

Player-of-the-match: Andre Fletcher.
Player-of-the-series: Andre Fletcher.

Novak back on top

AFP, London

Wimbledon champion Novak Djokovic went back to the top of the world rankings on Monday while Andy Murray slipped to number 10, his lowest place for six years.

The 27-year-old Serb replaced Rafael Nadal as the world's top player following his five-set triumph over Roger Federer in Sunday's final at the All England Club.

It was Djokovic's second Wimbledon and seventh Grand Slam title which also allowed him to book a place in the season-ending World Tour Finals in London.

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