

SHAKIB appeals ban

Life without cricket painful,
says the all-rounder

SPORTS REPORTER



Suspended all-rounder Shakib Al Hasan yesterday submitted a prayer to the Bangladesh Cricket Board requesting it to reconsider the suspensions imposed against him on disciplinary grounds.

The Board slapped the ace all-rounder with a six-month ban from all cricket and decided against issuing him no objection certificate for overseas tournaments for 18 months in a board meeting on July 3.

Shakib appealed yesterday and also made a public statement apologising for his recent behaviour that forced the board to take such harsh decision.

"I sincerely apologise if the Bangladesh Cricket Board and Bangladesh cricket team are embarrassed through my behaviour. I also apologise to the fans who always support the Bangladesh cricket team", Shakib said while reading out an emotional and positive statement in front of a crowded press at the BCB headquarters in Mirpur.

"I accept that as a professional cricketer and as a contracted player of the board I could not act properly on many occasions. I am determined to behave in a more matured way in the future. I respect the decision that the Board has taken regarding me."

"But nothing can be more painful than staying away from cricket. Cricket is my life. I am carrying the colour of the country and have been wearing the BCB logo since I was 15. Bangladesh team is above everything for me," he continued.

"I have grown up at the BCB with the Bangladesh team. It is a very emotional place for me. As a result, I appeal to the Board to reconsider my suspension."

BCB acting CEO, Nizamuddin Chowdhury, said that the appeal would be forwarded to the BCB president Nazmul Hassan Papon and that a decision would be taken after due process.

While it is still not sure as to whether there will be any modifications regarding Shakib's suspension, BCB president Papon -- a day after the suspension was imposed -- did indicate that a possible reduction in Shakib's six-month ban.

Speaking to The Daily Star he had said that the board would consider reducing his six-month ban if the all-rounder 'apologised to the public' regarding his behaviour and 'changes his attitude'. Papon however added that the board would not change its stance regarding its decision to not provide the all-rounder with no-objection certificates.

The left-hander had gotten himself involved in a series of disciplinary issues in the last two months and according to BCB president Nazmul Hassan Papon, the suspension was a result of all the events combined.

During Bangladesh's home series against India, Shakib left the dressing room during an ongoing match and allegedly got into a scuffle with a spectator. He then defied the board's authority and left the country to take part in the CPL without obtaining a NOC from the BCB.

The breaking point, however, was reached when the board learned through a letter from coach Chandika Hathurasingha that the 27-year-old, after an argument with the coach before leaving for the West Indies, had threatened to quit ODI and Test cricket.



Shakib Al Hasan read out an apology note during a press conference at the Sher-e-Bangla National Cricket Stadium in Mirpur yesterday. He said he was sorry for his behaviour which led to him getting suspended by the BCB earlier this month and requested the board reconsider its decision.

PHOTO: STAR

Apology softens hearts

SPORTS REPORTER



Shakib Al Hasan's decision to appeal to the Bangladesh Cricket Board to reconsider his suspension has now put the ball in the BCB's court.

While it is still not clear as to whether the board will bring about any modifications to the suspension at all, a large section of Bangladesh's cricketing community feels that Shakib, who publicly apologised for his behavioural misconduct yesterday, now deserves a shorter sentence.

"He has apologised to the nation, which I think is a respectful thing to do from the

world's number one all-rounder. Hopefully what he has said will put the BCB in a different perspective. On behalf of Shakib's fans and Shakib himself, I would request the BCB for a shorter punishment," said former cricketer Athar Ali Khan.

"Shakib's decision to apologise is a good step. I just hope this proves to be a fresh air for both Shakib and the team," he added.

Former national captain Khaled Mashud shared a similar opinion. "I am not for cancelling Shakib's punishment altogether, but I think the six-month suspension was a bit too harsh. Had the BCB taken the right steps at the right time then such a day would

not have come at all."

"In my opinion, the BCB should show respect [to this appeal], sit together and solve this issue like one is done in a family. The decision should be reconsidered," said Mashud.

Bangladesh's first-ever ODI captain Gazi Ashraf Hossain felt that there were many possible 'avenues' that the board can take in this regard.

"There is a plenty of room for change. Shakib won't be able to play the IPL or CPL next year as he will be busy with international commitment, so I think he should get a waiver from his suspension to play foreign leagues as well," said Gazi Ashraf.

On the social media twitter and facebook, news feeds got busy soon after Shakib publicly apologised for his wrongdoings yesterday afternoon. There were several opinions, but a majority of them were in favour of the all-rounder.

Shakib, who tweeted yesterday and stated his desire to get back to the playing field as soon as possible, received a large number of replies.

Tweets such as "We need you back on the field", "Hope the BCB reconsiders your plea and provides you an Eid gift" and "I think Shakib deserves to play the Zimbabwe series if not the West Indies," flooded the timeline.

Zia held again

SPORTS REPORTER

Grand Master Ziaur Rahman again lost his ground in the XVI Ober International Sant Marti chess when he was held by Spanish Munoz Pantoja Miguel in the seventh round in Barcelona of Spain on Saturday.

Zia has now 4.5 points from seven outings.

Raza guides Zim to big win

AFP, Bulawayo

Sikandar Raza struck 141 runs as Zimbabwe cruised to an eight-wicket one-day international (ODI) triumph over Afghanistan in Bulawayo on Sunday.

A century from 17-year-old Usman Ghani was pivotal as Afghanistan made 256-7 in 50 overs at Queens Sports Club in the southern Zimbabwe city.

SCORES IN BRIEF

AFGHANISTAN: 256-7 in 50 overs (Ghani 118, Naib 23 n.o., Shah 22, Nabi 22; Masakadza 2-37, Panyagara 2-58)

ZIMBABWE: 257-2 in 43.3 overs (Raza 141, Masakadza 93)

Result: Zimbabwe won by eight wickets and lead four-match series 2-0.

Steyn guns SL down

AFP, Galle

Dale Steyn grabbed a match haul of 9-99 as South Africa thrashed Sri Lanka by 153 runs on the fifth and final day of the first Test on Sunday.

Steyn's figures, the best by a quick at the Galle ground, helped the visitors bowl Sri Lanka out twice despite a wicket which offered little help.

It was only South Africa's third win on the island and their first since 2000.

Steyn was well-supported by seamer Morckel, who picked up four wickets as Sri Lanka's second innings ended on 216 shortly into the second session.

The hosts needed to make another 260 runs on the final day with nine wickets in hand to pull off a come-from-behind win. But they lost their remaining wickets for just 106 to go down tamely in the end.

South Africa made 455-9 declared in their first innings before bowling out the home side for 292. In their second knock, South Africa declared at 206-6 to set Sri Lanka a target of 370.

The victory was especially sweet for Hashim Amla, who was leading the side for the first time in Test cricket.

He celebrated his winning start by hugging his teammates and exchanging high fives.

"It [winning] was not easy, credit to the boys, they put their hands up today," Amla said.

"We had some challenging overs last night but the bowlers came back and did really well. Dean [Elgar] got a hundred, JP [Duminy] got one as well and they set the game up for us."

South Africa, currently the world number two, can reclaim their top world ranking from Australia if they win the second and final Test in Colombo from July 24-28.

Part-time spinner Jean-Paul Duminy picked up two wickets including the crucial scalp of Kumar Sangakkara, who made a fighting 76 to salvage some pride for the hosts.

Sri Lanka, who had resumed on their overnight 110-1, added just 51 off 24 overs in the first session while losing five wickets.

"South Africans outplayed us on all the five days," said Sri Lankan skipper Angelo Mathews.

"We don't mind losing games if we have played good cricket but in this game we were really disappointing," he said.

"The first innings total [292] cost us the game, if we had added a bit more runs we could have been in with a chance."



South Africa pacer Dale Steyn (R) celebrates with teammates after dismissing Sri Lanka's Lahiru Thirimanne on the fifth day of the first Test at the Galle International Cricket Stadium yesterday.

PHOTO: AFP

SCOREBOARD

SOUTH AFRICA: First innings 455-9 declared (Elgar 103, Duminy 100 not out; Perera 4-162)

SRI LANKA: First innings 292 (Mathews 89, Tharanga 83; Steyn 5-54)

SOUTH AFRICA: Second innings 206-6 declared (De Villiers 51; Herath 4-79)

SRI LANKA: Second innings (overnight 110-1)

THARANGA DE KOCK b STEYN 14
Silva c de Kock b Steyn 38
Sangakkara c Amla b Duminy 76
Jayawardene c de Villiers b Morckel 10
Thirimanne c de Villiers b Steyn 12
Mathews not out 27
Chandimal c de Kock b Morckel 1
Perera c de Kock b Steyn 0

HERATH c DE VILLIERS b DUMINY 20
Elgar c Tahir b Morckel 12
Eranga c Elgar b Morckel 0
Extras: (b-1, lb-4, nb-1) 6
Total: (All out in 71.3 overs) 216

Fall of wickets: 1-14, 2-118, 3-138, 4-149, 5-153, 6-158, 7-161, 8-190, 9-216

Result: South Africa won by 153 runs and led two-match series 1-0.

Player-of-the-match: Dale Steyn.

England chase 319

AFP, London

Ravindra Jadeja proved a thorn in England's side with both bat and ball as India took charge of the second Test at Lord's on Sunday.

Jadeja made a dashing 68 before the left-arm spinner struck with his first ball Sunday to have Australia-born opener Sam Robson lbw for seven.

At tea on the fourth day England were 18 for one, needing a further 301 runs to reach their imposing victory target of 319.

One consolation for England was that captain Alastair Cook, looking to end a run of 26 innings without a Test hundred, was still there on five not out, with first-innings century-maker Gary Ballance unbeaten on one.

Only three times in their history have England made more than 300 in the fourth innings to win a Test, most recently when they posted 315 for four against Australia at Leeds in 2001.

At lunch, India were 267 for seven, a lead of 243.

Three quick wickets early in the second session and England would have been well-placed to end their run of nine Tests without a win.

But the first 10 overs after lunch saw Jadeja and seamer Bhuvneshwar Kumar score 66 runs.

Jadeja made a dashing 50 while tailender Kumar was last man out for 52 -- his third fifty in four innings this series.

The pair put on 99 for the eighth wicket with Kumar, whose six for 82 in England's

SCOREBOARD

INDIA: First innings 295 (Rahane 103; Anderson 4-60)

ENGLAND: First innings 319 (Ballance 110, Plunkett 55 n.o; Kumar 6-82)

INDIA: Second innings (overnight 169-4)

Vijay c Prior b Anderson 95

Dhawan c Root b Stokes 31

Kohli c Prior b Plunkett 43

Rahane c Prior b Broad 0

Domini c Bell b Plunkett 5

Shami c Cook b Ali 19

Jadeja c Cook b Stokes 68

Kumar c Bell b Stokes 52

Shami c Prior b Ali 0

Sharma not out 0

Extras: (b-19, lb-9, w-1) 29

Total: (All out in 103.1 overs) 342

Fall of wickets: 1-40, 2-118, 3-118, 4-123, 5-202, 6-203, 7-235, 8-334, 9-338.

Bowler O M R W

Anderson 29 11 77 1

Broad 23 6 93 1

Stokes 18.1 2 51 3

Plunkett 22 6 65 3

Ali 11 3 28 2

ENGLAND: Second innings

Robson lbw b Jadeja 7

Cook not out 5

Balance not out 1

Extras: (b-19) 5

Total: (For 8 wickets in 8 overs) 18

To bat: Bell, Root, Ali, Prior, Stokes, Broad, Plunkett, Anderson

Bowler O M R W

Kumar 3 1 2 0

Shami 2 0 9 0

Sharma 2 2 0 0

Jadeja 1 0 2 1