

SPORT

BCB set to take aim at suspect actions

SPORTS REPORTER

The Bangladesh Cricket Board (BCB) is in the process of forming a committee that will focus solely on bowlers' actions in the upcoming Dhaka Premier League (DPL). According to BCB CEO Nizamuddin Chowdhury the committee will mostly be made up of former cricketers. "We have had several discussions regarding the formation of such a committee and it's in the final stages. It will be ready by the time the league begins. We are taking a bit of time as we want to ensure that this committee is extremely effective. "We will have former cricketers in the group. We will also have individuals who have a good understanding of the technicalities related to this issue," Nizamuddin told The Daily Star. The league, which is set to begin in mid-April, will feature three bowlers who have been banned from bowling in international cricket. Taskin Ahmed, Arafat Sunny and Sanjit Saha are all expected to feature in the player transfers list. While Taskin and Arafat were banned in the ICC World Twenty20, Sanjit, a national under-19 player, was banned during the Under-19 World Cup earlier this year. Although the bowlers have been banned from international cricket, they will

be allowed to bowl in domestic cricket. The International Cricket Council allows it as it feels that the players, by playing in domestic cricket, can improve and work on their respective actions before attempting a test in an ICC-accredited centre. It will be interesting to see how many clubs express their interest in buying these players during the player-by-choice procedure scheduled to take place on April 10. While these three players will no doubt garner attention, BCB's cricket operations chairman Akram Khan reckons that there will be a number of other players under the scanner. "Look, there are a number of suspect bowlers in our first division cricket and even in the Premier League. We will need to observe them seriously, provide our review and then work on fixing their actions," Akram told The Daily Star yesterday. "We will tell the umpires to keep an eye on this issue. We will base our decision based on the umpire's report as well as the committee's," he added. Akram further added that the board was extremely serious about eradicating suspect bowlers from domestic cricket. "We have planned about this very seriously this time. We will give the board our proposal soon. Apart from ex players there will also be umpires in this committee," he said.



Sheikh Jamal's Nigerian striker Emeka Darlington (2nd from R) celebrates the first of his two goals with a symbolic gesture, as he is expecting his first child, alongside hat-trick scorer Wedson Anselme (L) during their KFC Independence Cup match against Brothers Union at the Bangabandhu National Stadium yesterday. PHOTO: FIROZ AHMED

Bravo labels WICB 'most unprofessional'

AGENCIES, Port of Spain

West Indies all-rounder Dwayne Bravo launched an attack on the West Indies Cricket Board (WICB), calling it 'most unprofessional board in the world'. Bravo made the comments on air, in an interview with host Hema Ramkissoon on her show 'The Morning Brew', which is broadcast on the Trinidad & Tobago-based channel CNC3. "I was not surprised by Sammy's comments [after the World Twenty20 final]. We had enough as players," Bravo said. "Too many times people question our commitment; whether we are really committed to West Indies cricket or is it just the money." "A lot of people don't understand what we go through dealing with our board. It is the most unprofessional board in the world. There is nothing wrong with Sammy's speech and I support him one hundred per cent. According to Bravo, the WICB failed to respect and communicate with players. "The board refused to listen to what we have to say. It reached a point where we couldn't take it anymore and that encouraged us to go out there and win despite all the challenges. Even our own board did not think we were going to win the tournament. "We are yet to hear from the president, yet to hear from the CEO, yet to hear from the director of cricket. I mean how can you represent the region when the people who are supposed to be your bosses don't even wish you well, don't even support you?"

WI teams get hero's welcome

IANS, Bridgetown

The West Indies women team and a few players from the men's champions side arrived to a heroes' welcome as the country celebrated their clean sweep of the World T20 titles. The players touched down at the Grantley Adams International Airport in Bridgetown on Tuesday and were met by Sports Minister Stephen Lashley and Tourism Minister Richard Sealy along with the Barbados Cricket Association president and legendary former fast bowler Joel Garner, reports CMC. A large number of fans, family and well-wishers were also on hand at the airport to greet players. They were feted during a brief function before starting out on a motorcade which took them along the south coast, into the city before winding back to the Accra Beach located on the south coast. Garner, a member of the World Cup winning squad in 1979, said that both teams had brought immense joy to the Caribbean with their achievements. "We are eternally grateful for the joy you've brought to us and like everything else there has been a lot of hard work and sacrifice put in to your success," Garner said during the ceremony. "I don't think people really understand the hard work you put in to get to where you are and the hard work you put in to get to the end." On Sunday, the West Indies women chased down the highest ever total in a T20 World Cup final to upset three-time defending champions Australia by eight wickets and claim their first ever title. In the second final, the West Indies men became the first team to win a World

T20 twice when they defeated England by four wickets in a dramatic match. Lashley hailed the achievements of both teams, noting it was apparent that team spirit had a key role in their success. "This evening I had the pleasure of greeting all of the members of both the women's teams and of course the men's team who came back to Barbados and I was really touched by, not only the excitement, but the team spirit they carried with them," Lashley said. "I believe that team spirit was instrumental in achieving success in the just-concluded World series. I believe I speak on behalf of the entire Caribbean family when I say we salute you. We were there at the crease, on the pitch, on the boundary, everywhere literally, as you so carefully crafted that victory." Women's captain Stafanie Taylor



West Indies women's team captain Stafanie Taylor (R) stands alongside selector Courtney Browne after the team reached Barbados to a raucous reception yesterday. PHOTO: COLLECTED

St Lucia to name ground after Sammy

AFP, St. John's

Darren Sammy's success in captaining the West Indies to the World Twenty20 title has been recognised by his native St Lucia after it was announced that the island's main cricket ground would be renamed in his honour. The Beausejour Cricket Ground will now be known as the Darren Sammy National Cricket Ground, with one of the stands to be named in honour of fellow St Lucian and Twenty20 winner Johnson Charles. According to the West Indies Cricket Board, the announcement was made by the Prime Minister of St Lucia, Kenny D. Anthony, at a "welcome reception" on the island on Tuesday. "The West Indies Cricket Board would like to congratulate West Indies captain, Darren Sammy and opener, Johnson Charles for the honour their home country St Lucia has bestowed on them," the WICB added in a statement, issued from their St John's, Antigua, headquarters. Sunday's victory over England meant the West Indies became the first team to win the World Twenty20 title twice. Sammy, 32, was also the West Indies' captain when they beat then hosts Sri Lanka in the 2012 final in Colombo.

'Save football' turns to Papon

SPORTS REPORTER

A group of organisers and former players under the banner of 'save football' yesterday met Bangladesh Cricket Board (BCB) president Nazmul Hassan Papon and requested him to carry their messages regarding the poor state of football in the country to the Prime Minister. Papon assured them that for the sake of football, he would forward their message to the right people. Former footballers Zakaria Pintu, Golam Sarwar Tipu, Sheikh Mohammad Aslam, Kaiser Hamid, Abu Yousuf, Ashrafuddin Ahmed Chunnun, Shafiqul Islam Manik and Gaffar Chowdhury joined former Bangladesh Football Federation (BFF) joint secretary Manzoor Hossain Malu, Arambagh KS president Mominul Haque Sayeed and Sheikh Jamal DC manager Anwarul Karim Helal at the meeting held at Papon's Gulshan residence. "Those who came here are former and current footballers as well as organisers, who wanted to say that if football continues to be run the way it is now, then it will be destroyed. They have come to me thinking that I can help them, but I told them that I am not involved with football in any way. However, I love football, which I believe is still the most popular game in the country," Papon said after emerging from the meeting. "I told them that I would carry their messages to the right authorities where it needs to be placed," said Papon. "There is nothing to agree or disagree with but I believe what they have informed me is correct. Everyone wants to see football go forward. This government and the prime minister also want to see the progress of sports. Her [Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina's] father and grandfather were also good footballers, so she will never want to see the country's football die. Whatever decision she will take will be the right decision," said Papon. Officials of Sheikh Jamal, Mohammedan and Arambagh are mainly behind the 'save football' movement. They recently made a human chain protesting irregularities by the existing BFF executive committee headed by Kazi Salahuddin. The BFF boss has called a press conference today to brief the current situation.

'People or IPL?' asks Mumbai HC

PTI, Mumbai

Rapping the BCCI [Board of Control for Cricket in India] and cricket associations in Maharashtra and Mumbai over water wastage when the state is reeling under severe drought, the Mumbai high court on Wednesday said ideally Indian Premier League (IPL) matches should be shifted elsewhere, where there is no water crisis. "Only if water supply to BCCI is cut, you will understand," the court observed. "How can you (cricket associations and BCCI) waste water like this. People are more important or your IPL matches? How can you be so careless? Who wastes water like this? This is criminal wastage. You know what the condition is in Maharashtra," a division bench headed by Justices V M Kanade and M S Karnik said, while hearing a PIL filed by NGO 'Loksatta Movement'. "Ideally, you should shift the IPL matches to some other state where water is in abundance," the court observed. The court also told the state that ultimately it is the government's responsibility and duty to do something about this (water wastage) and impose some kind of restraint.

It also asked the state government to spell out tomorrow what steps it plans to take on the issue. The high court, while posting the PIL for hearing today, had yesterday sought responses from all other respondents, including the Maharashtra Cricket Association Stadium, Vidarbha Cricket Association, Maharashtra government and the civic bodies of Mumbai and Nagpur. The PIL has challenged the use of nearly 60 lakh litres of water to maintain pitches at three stadiums in the state which will hold IPL matches. The court today asked the Mumbai Cricket Association how much water would be used in Wankhede stadium, to which MCA's advocate said they would be using over 40 lakh litres water for the seven IPL matches. To this, the court said it is a huge number. The petitioner then said that pending hearing of the PIL, the court should grant an interim order restraining all the cricket associations in Maharashtra from using water to maintain the pitches. The high court said it will consider the interim relief sought by the petitioner, during the hearing tomorrow.

RJs suspended for pranking Stokes' mum

AFP, Wellington

A pair of New Zealand radio presenters were suspended Wednesday for broadcasting a conversation with England bowler Ben Stokes' mother without her knowledge. Radio Hauraki shock jocks Jeremy Wells and Matt Heath had been mocking Kiwi-born Stokes' role in England's loss to the West Indies in the World T20 final on Sunday before the on-air incident. His mother Deborah called the radio station to take issue with her son's treatment and found herself talking to Heath, unaware she was on air. She subsequently realised she had been broadcast live and complained to station owner NZME, resulting in Heath and Wells being suspended for a day. "Putting Ben's mum to air without her knowledge, albeit defending her son, was over the line. The pair been reprimanded," NZME group program director Mike McClung said in a statement.

Sarfraz ready for 'challenge'

DAWN, Karachi

Newly-installed Pakistan Twenty20 captain Sarfraz Ahmed has termed his elevation as huge challenge in the wake of disappointing results during the recent Asia Cup and the ICC World Twenty20. The wicketkeeper-batsman, who on Tuesday was named by the Pakistan Cricket Board (PCB) as struggling all-rounder Shahid Afridi's successor, pledged to create a cordial atmosphere amongst the players under his command. "Leading your country is the biggest honour because just a few get this opportunity. Having been the vice-captain for almost one year in both one-day and T20 formats, I have had the chance of monitoring the situation from game to game," Sarfraz told Dawn in an exclusive interview shortly after being installed. The 28-year-old, while admitting Pakistan had been going through difficult times, pledged to improve the team's position on the ICC rankings where Pakistan are seventh. "Obviously this hurts because not long ago we were the top T20 side in the world. Our aim will be rectify this downside and to achieve this objective collective efforts will

have to be made by all of us to raise a good, competitive Pakistan team," he stressed. Asked who would he address the problems within the squad, Sarfraz said that he has no qualms solving issues as long as there are no personal egos. "I believe in unity and that will be my motto as captain. Ever since I started playing cricket, I have been taught to show respect to all people, regardless of their age," he observed. "And having been part of Pakistan cricket, I have been through many ups and downs as a player and know how one feels if he is unwanted. "This is not my style of playing the game. And if you are the leader then one has to set examples for the others so that all of them contribute to a team goal. In my book a senior player is just as important as a junior. I have utmost respect for the senior players and always look to them for inspiration. "Captaincy is not new for me and there is no pressure on my mind. I had the privilege of leading Pakistan to the Under-19 World Cup title when we beat India in that thrilling final at Colombo in 2006," he added. "I also had a taste of it when Azhar [Ali] was injured and could not play the last one-day match against Zimbabwe in October. We won that one to win the series 2-1."

