

SPORT

'Chandika needs to be a selector'

SPORTS REPORTER

Former national captain turned Bangladesh Cricket Board (BCB) director Khaled Mahmud has identified two major reasons behind the board's moves to revamp the selection panel which may give coach Chandika Hathurusingha more power in the running of the national team.

"First of all everything is under discussion and nothing is final. But it seems that the selectors are not quite good at keeping up with the fast-track thinking of Chandika and the board also found a lack of coordination between selectors and the coach. So I personally feel that it would be good if the coach becomes part of the selection panel," opined Mahmud, echoing the recent support of BCB president Nazmul Hassan Papon for the idea of providing the national coach a say in team selection.

Mahmud was part of the team which negotiated with the Sri Lankan and is now working with him as team manager, and that association made him a big admirer of Chandika.

"We still have a long way to go in international cricket but we gained a lot of respect in world cricket following our recent performances. Teamwork made it possible but I must give a majority of the credit to the coach and the coaching staff for this success," said Mahmud.

"He [Hathurusingha] is a fantastic inclusion in our cricket and it is his idea of giving the players the freedom that helped the team to get the best out of the players. I have never seen a coach work in such detail as he does. Players should get the priority for any success but one can't ignore Chandika's brilliant planning both for practice and matches. Without any doubt the current coaching staff is the best the country ever had," he continued.

It is believed that Mahmud's opinion will be immense in the revamp of the selection panel.

"Everybody is working in the greater interest of our cricket no doubt and Chandika is no exception. He is thoroughly professional in his thinking and is hardly driven by emotion. I believe it would be good for our cricket if he is involved in the selection panel. Ultimately the coach and captain take all the blame for failures.

"It is the coach who is actually making all the plans and he needs to be part of the selection panel to discuss with selectors about his demands and negotiate for desired players. I think he has faced some difficulties in executing his plans because of the lack of his desired players and we can solve those problems including him in the panel," explained Mahmud.

The former national skipper however wants the coach to do the selector's job in the true sense. "Definitely, if he is involved in the panel he needs to extend his working areas in the off time so that he can watch the young talent all over the country."



KHALED MAHMUD

Convolutated DPL draft completed

National players, U-19s garner most attention

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The national players who performed in the ICC World Twenty20 and the recently concluded Under-19 World Cup garnered a majority of the attention during the Dhaka Premier Division Cricket League (DPL) players' draft yesterday.

Over a period of five hours yesterday, the player draft of the premier 50-over domestic competition of the country, witnessed more than 100 players distributed among 12 clubs through the player-by-choice method, with the likes of Mahmudullah Riyad and Sabbir Rahman being the most popular choices.

As per the system, the players were divided into different categories and were assigned a fixed financial value. That value ranged from Tk 30 lakh for the Icon players to Tk 1 lakh for players belonging to category F. The 12 clubs were each given turns to buy the players on a lottery basis.

Players belonging to the Icon and A-plus categories were bought towards the end of the programme. The luckiest club of that round, Sheikh Jamal Dhanmondi Club, received the opportunity to call the first player and they chose Riyad. Holders Prime Bank Cricket Club were next in line and chose Sabbir Rahman.

Prime Doleshwar chose Nasir Hossain next, while Abahani Limited, Mohammedan and



Members of the Bangladesh Cricket Board and the CDDM react to a player-call during the players' draft for the Dhaka Premier League, the country's main 50-over competition, at a city hotel yesterday. PHOTO: STAR

Victoria Sporting chose Tamim Iqbal, Mushfiqur Rahim and Mominul Haque respectively.

That was followed by the Legends of Ruppang selecting Soumya Sarkar. Interestingly, national captain Mashrafe Bin Mortaza did not seem to be a favourite among the clubs. He was eventually selected by Kalabagan Krira Chakra, who were 11th in line out of the 12 clubs.

It was a surprise considering that Mashrafe's leadership played a big role in Comilla Vikings' victory in the Bangladesh Premier League. The players in that competition too were distributed via the

player-by-choice method.

Among the remaining players in those categories, Brothers Union signed up Imrul Kayes while Mithun Ali was bought by Ruppang in the second round.

Both Shakib Al Hasan and Mustafizur Rahman were ignored by the clubs in the first round since neither of them are likely to take part in the DPL. They will both be busy with leagues abroad. However, as per the current schedule of the league, there is a chance that both these players may get to play three matches in the final stages of the competition. As a result, they were kept in the list. Shakib was eventually bought by

Abahani while archrivals Mohammedan bought Mustafizur.

The inclusion of Shakib in the side means that Abahani have both Tamim and Shakib in their team. They have built a strong side with coach Khaled Mahmud making some smart picks at the table. Apart from the duo, they also selected Taskin Ahmed, Saqlain Sajib and leg-spinner Jubair Hossain Likhon.

They also have in the side under-19 allrounder Nazmul Hossain Shanto, who was in fact their first pick, prior to the distribution of the icon and grade A-plus players.

In a similar move, a number of other under-19 players got special

preference by the clubs. The former under-19 national captain Mehedi Hasan Miraz was retained by Kalabagan Cricket Academy. Hard-hitting batsman Saeed Sarkar was selected by Cricket Coaching School.

While the Bangladesh Cricket Board (BCB) and the clubs did manage to implement the players draft via the player-by-choice method, there was a clear lack of enthusiasm. Owing to the rather complex mechanism where lotteries were held for each of the 13 buying rounds, there were a few confusing moments during the draft with the clubs and the coordinator getting confused regarding the buying turns at times. These moments could have caused confusion among the viewers as well as the draft was broadcast live, without any proper graphical support.

At the end of the day, the clubs and the board did manage to organise the players' transfer with a cap on the players' earning capacity. However, one wonders as to how long this process can continue and whether the players will eventually get frustrated.

The chaos during the transfer was much like the proverbial fish market in more ways than one. The demand for players and their ceiling earning potential brings to mind the current rise in price of the Hilsa fish in the market with Pahela Baishakh fast approaching. Unfortunately for the general public, one cannot apply the 'player-by-choice' mechanism there.

DPL SQUADS

Prime Bank Cricket Club: Sabbir Rahman, Mehadi Maruf, Taibur Rahman Parvez, Md. Nazmul Islam Apu, Rubel Hossain, Yasir Ali Rabbi, Monir Hossain Khan, Shenaz Ahmed, Md. Azim, Jony Talukdar, Yasir Arafat Mishu, Kazi Nurul Hasan Sohan, Shuvagata Hom Chowdhury

Prime Doleshwar Cricket Club: Nasir Hossain, Forhad Reza, Rakibul Hasan (Jr.), Md. Al-Amin Hossain, Rahatul Ferdous, Imtiaz Hossain Tanna, Sahagir Hossain Pavel, Ziaur Rahman, Zakaria Masud, Rony Talukdar, Sanjamul Islam Nayan

Abahani Limited: Tamim Iqbal, Nazmul Hossain Shanto, Taskin Ahmed, Saqlain Sajib, Abul Hasan Raju, Avishek Mitra, Jubayar

Hossain Likhon, Tapash Baishya, Amitav Kumar Noyon, Abu Bakker Siddique, Shakib Al Hasan, Liton Kumar Das, Mosaddek Hossain Saikat

Kalabagan Cricket Academy: Irfan Shukkur, Bishonath Halder, Myshukur Rahman, Abu Jayed Chowdhury, Md. Abdul Halim, Prosonjit Das, Nur Hossain Munna, Taposh Ghosh, Rifat Pradan, Didar Hossain Imran, Mehedi Hasan Miraz, Mahmudul Hasan Lemon

Mohammedan Sporting Club: Mushfiqur Rahim, Saikat Ali, Ezaz Ahmed, Nayeem Islam (Jr.), Enamul Haque (Jr.), Nazmul Hossain Milon, Shuvashish Roy Chowdhury, Hamidul Islam Himel, Habibur Rahman Jony, Nazmul Hossain, Sayed Golam Kibria, Mustafizur Rahman, Naim

Islam, Ariful Haque

Legends of Ruppang: Soumya Sarkar, Tajul Islam, Asif Ahmed Ratul, Abu Hider Rony, Zunaed Siddique, Alauddin Babu, Mizanur Rahman, Mehedi Hasan Rana, Nahidul Islam, Sajjadul Haque Ripon, Murad Khan, Shaheen Hossain, Mohammad Mithun, Jahirul Islam Omi, Khandokar Musharraf Hossain

Victoria Sporting Club: Mominul Haque, Dhiman Ghosh, Mohammad Al-Amin (Jr.), Abdul Majid, Kamrul Islam Rabbi, Fazle Rabbi Mahmud, Anamul Hoque, Jubair Ahmed, Dollar Mahmud, Mahamudul Haque Setu, Humayan Kabir Shahin, Nadif Chowdhury, Sohrwardi Shuvo

Brothers Union: Imrul Kayes, Zakir Hasan,

Shahriar Nafees, Mohammad Shahid, Nabil Samad, Ahmed Sadikur Rahman, Sanjit Saha Dip, Sk. Tushar Imran, Nur Alam Saddam, Nafees Iqbal Khan, Rumman Ahmed, Sheikh Najmul Hossain, Asif Hassan, Iftekhar Sazzad Rony

Sk Jamal: Mahmudullah Riyad, Marshall Ayub, Muktar Ali, Joyraj Sheikh, Shaiful Islam, Nazmus Sadat, Zaid Hossain, Rasel Al Mamun, Mahbubul Karim Mithu, Abdur Rahman Rony, Shohag Gazi, Arafat Sunny

Kalabagan Krira Chakra: Mashrafe Bin Mortaza, Mohammad Sharifullah, Sadman Islam Anik, Tanvir Haider Khan, Mehrab Hossain (Jr.), Nihad Uz Zaman, Mohammad Jasimuddin, Dewan Sabbair Ahmed, Mohammad

Hassanuzzaman, Robiul Islam, Shariful Islam,

Abdur Razzak, Tasamul Haque Rubel

Cricket Coaching School: Nasum Ahmed, Saeed Sarkar, Rajin Saleh Alam, Amit Majumdar, Saleh Ahmed Shawon, Salman Hossain Emon, Refatuzzaman Ovi, Ali Ahmed Manik, Mehrab Hossain Joshi, Saif Hasan, Mohammad Saifuddin

Gazi Group Cricketers: Anamul Haque Bijoy, Shamsur Rahman Shuvo, Mehadi Hasan, Mohammad Sharif, Farhad Hossain, Delwar Hossain, Mohammad Furkan, Abu Sayem Chowdhury, Nasir Uddin Faruque, Sajedul Islam, Imamul Mustakin Rassel, Alok Kapali, Mohammad Elias

BCB's calendar confusion

SPORTS REPORTER

We do not know if the news of West Indies' tour of Bangladesh 'in the next two months' was a faux pas on the part of the Bangladesh Cricket Board (BCB), but it is now certain that the tour will not take place. And three days after BCB president Nazmul Hasan Papon's public announcement of that proposed tour, the board is apparently in a spot of bother following what now appears to be a 'miscommunication' that involved multiple individuals.

The board officials are tight-lipped about the tour in question and BCB media committee chairman Jalal Younus yesterday made an official announcement where he said: "The BCB can't entertain the West Indies in November due to the players' involvement in the Bangladesh Premier League (BPL)."

The jigsaw puzzle is that, 'in two months' time' and 'November' refer to two different periods and one was understandably a proposal the BCB received last year from the West Indies Cricket Board (WICB). But it is understood that the WICB has not proposed something different after that and the sudden disclosure of a 'tour in two months' time' is not something that is remotely on WICB's mind.



Muktijoddha forward (C) Kolo Musa slides the ball past Brothers Union goalkeeper Uttam Barua (L) for the only goal of their Independence Cup tie at the Bangabandhu National Stadium yesterday. PHOTO: STAR

Muktis sink Brothers

SPORTS REPORTER



Muktijoddha Sangsad notched up a 1-0 victory against Brothers Union in their KFC Independence Cup Group A fixture at the Bangabandhu National Stadium yesterday.

Nigerian forward Abdul Kolo Musa separated the sides five minutes from the break of the match where both sides struggled to display their normal game amid scorching heat.

Smarting from 0-2 defeat at the hands of Chittagong Abahani last week, Muktijoddha played comparatively better than the Gopibagh-based outfit, who had come into the match on the back of a 5-0 drubbing at the hands of Sheikh Jamal DC.

Brothers Union could hardly expose the backline of Muktijoddha, who twice came close to doubling the lead in the second half but Brothers goalkeeper Uttam Barua

thwarted both attempts.

The win opened the account for Muktijoddha while Brothers Union remained on three points from same number of matches.

In the first match of the day, Feni Soccer Club came from behind to play out a 1-1 draw against promoted Arambagh KS in a Group B affair.

After a barren first half, Arambagh went ahead through a strike from Abdullah in the 59th minute but the lead lasted only six minutes as substitute Iqbal Hossain drove a powerful shot from inside the box to level the margin.

In the dying minutes, Feni Soccer's Twum Frank found a great opportunity score but the Ghanaian striker floated the ball over the crosspiece as the runners-up of last edition had to remain winless. Feni moved to two points from three outings while Arambagh got their first point on the board after two matches.

Sk Jamal off to Malaysia

SPORTS REPORTER



Sheikh Jamal Dhanmondi Club left for Malaysia last night for their AFC Cup away match against Selangor FA with only 14 eligible players due to unavailability of 'on-loan players'.

The three-time Bangladesh Premier League champions, who are all but out of the race for knockout stages of the continental competition following three successive defeats, had registered most of their previous season's players. However, eight of those players left the club before of the start of new season, leaving the champions forced to take five of those players on loan from other clubs. But this time four of those on-loan players -- Jamal Bhuiyan, Shahidul Alam, Sohel Rana

and Yeamin Munna -- are not available for selection due to the club's writ petition against the Bangladesh Football Federation.

"Only Tapu Barman of Abahani is travelling with the squad, which comprises 14 players as the other [on-loan] players are supposed to appear before court tomorrow [Monday]," said Sheikh Jamal manager Anwarul Karim Helal last night.

The 14-member squad, which features only two goalkeepers, have three players -- Rakin, Murad and Noor Joseph -- who have not yet played a single match for the club.

"It is a team of patchwork and I may field players in unusual positions. I may even field a goalkeeper up-field because I don't have any options," coach Shafiqul Islam Manik said, adding that a couple of players have been suffering from injuries.

ASIAN KHO KHO C'SHIP Bangladesh teams finish runners-up

SPORTS REPORTER

Bangladesh men's and women's kho kho teams have emerged runners-up in the 3rd Asian Kho Kho Championship, which concluded in Indore, India yesterday.

Bangladesh men's team suffered a 26-16 defeat to their Indian counterparts in the final while Bangladesh women's team conceded a 26-17 defeat to India's women in their final, said a press release.

The third edition of the championship featured India, Bangladesh, Nepal, Sri Lanka and North Korea and was held after a gap of 15 years.

KP in Proteas colours?

PTI, Mumbai



Former England batsman Kevin Pietersen is eyeing a return to international cricket by playing for his country of birth, South Africa, saying it is "definitely still an option".

The flamboyant middle-order batsman would become eligible for South Africa in 2018, four years after his England career ended following the 2013-14 Ashes when he was sacked by the England and Wales Cricket Board (ECB) for "cricketing reasons".

Pietersen would be 37 in 2018, but if his words are any indication, it is clear that he hasn't yet given up on making a return to the top-flight.

"Yes, it is a thought in my head. If it happens, it happens, if it doesn't, it doesn't. Obviously, playing international is something I have done for a very long time,"

Pietersen said as he began his latest stint in the Indian Premier League (IPL).

Pietersen, who is currently representing the Mahendra Singh Dhoni-led new IPL franchise Rising Punt Supergiants, added, "Do I miss playing international cricket? Do I miss batting in international cricket? Yes, I do very much so you never know. The eligibility for South Africa is still a year away."

"So we will have to wait and see but it is definitely still an option. An English call-up is definitely still an option. I am in a great frame of mind now."

One of the major fallouts during Pietersen's England career came during the 2012 series against South Africa when he sent derogatory texts about then captain Andrew Strauss to Graeme Smith.

The batsman was left out for the final Test of that series before returning in India, where he helped England win the series, before relations between him and the ECB took another turn for worse.