

SPORT



FIZZ IMPACT: Mustafizur Rahman's Sunrisers Hyderabad might have suffered yet another heavy defeat in the Indian Premier League (IPL) on Saturday, but the left-arm pace bowler continued to mesmerize with the ball. Here he has Kolkata Knight Riders' Andre Russell floored and his off-stump uprooted with a gem of a yorker at the Rajiv Gandhi Stadium in Hyderabad.

PHOTO: BCCI

Shahadat's DPL plea quashed

SPORTS REPORTER



The disciplinary committee of Bangladesh Cricket Board (BCB) yesterday dismissed pace bowler Shahadat Hossain's plea for taking part in the upcoming Dhaka Premier Cricket League.

"Shahadat's matter is still under court's jurisdiction. That's why we upheld his suspension. If he gets a favourable verdict from the court then we will lift his suspension," said BCB's chief executive officer Nizamuddin Chowdhury after a disciplinary committee meeting yesterday.

Shahadat and his wife were charged with torturing an 11-year-old domestic help under the Prevention of Women and Children Repression Act.

"I applied to BCB for allowing me to play in the league, but I did not get the permission. I want to return to cricket because life has become unbearable without cricket. I am not doing any business or any other job. Cricket is my passion, profession and everything for me," Shahadat said over phone.

"What has happened has happened, and you

know everybody gets a chance to rectify his mistakes. I also settled the issue with the victim's family. So I am looking forward to an end of this issue," the former national team member added.

The disciplinary committee, meanwhile, lifted a temporary ban on former national skipper-turned-match referee Roquibul Hasan, but the committee imposed a life ban on Rizwan Bin Farouq, who is BCB's sponsor partner and one of the owners of BPL franchise Barisal Bulls.

"We took stern action against him (Rizwan Bin Farouq) because his behaviour during the presentation ceremony of the Asia Cup tarnished the board's image. He will not be able to enter any stadiums and will not be able to take part in any cricketing activities which are under the jurisdiction of the cricket board," said disciplinary committee chairman AJM Nasir.

When asked to comment on the harsh decision, Rizwan told the Daily Star: "The disciplinary committee did not serve any show-cause notices to me and I was not even asked to appear for a hearing. I am yet to receive anything from the board and just learnt it from you people (media). They [cricket board] are actually making a big thing out of a small issue."

Shakib wins against Fizz

STAR SPORT DESK

Shakib Al Hasan has won the battle against Mustafizur Rahman when his side Kolkata Knight Riders overpowered Sunrisers Hyderabad by eight wickets in a lop-sided IPL game at the Rajiv Gandhi International Stadium in Hyderabad yesterday.

Batting first, Sunrisers put up an unimpressive 142 that the Knight Riders toppled for the loss of two wickets and with ten balls to spare. Kolkata captain Gautam Gambhir hit an unbeaten 90 off 60 balls which contained a four and a six in Mustafizur's fourth and final over. Despite being hit for 14 runs in his last over, Mustafizur was the most impressive bowler in an otherwise toothless Sunrisers line-up, conceding 15 runs in his first three overs and taking the wicket of Andre Russell.

Mustafizur, who took two wickets on his IPL debut against Royal Challengers Bangalore last week, never got the necessary support from the other end to put pressure on the opposition, who carefully played out his first three overs. Shakib on the other hand seized his chance of making it into the playing eleven after being sidelined for the first two games, blowing beautifully and conceding 18 runs in his three overs.

'All I can do is perform'

SPORTS REPORTER



As Mohammedan Sporting Club embark on their quest to revisit their glory days in the Premier Division Cricket League, Mushfiqur Rahim's performances will be the key. The Motijheel outfit will desperately be hoping that the little man gets back his form and contributes for their team in the title race in the country's coveted 50-over competition.

Mohammedan coach Sohel Islam yesterday made it clear that they have huge expectations from Bangladesh's Test captain.

"Mushfiqur is one of the best batsmen in the country, so everybody in the team is very excited. It will be fantastic if he can play long innings from his batting position and we will definitely be looking to him," said Sohel.

But Mohammedan also boasts last season's third highest run-getter; Naeem Islam.

If this is the competition for Mushfiqur to regain his form, then for Naeem it's the competition where he can draw the attention of the selectors.

Naeem was once considered a utility player for his batting and spin bowling, but the arrival of new talents saw him struggle to cement a place in the national fold. His last international -- an ODI against Afghanistan in Fatullah -- came in March 2014. Naeem has already played 8 Tests, 59 ODIs and 10 T20s and he will need to do something special if he wants to revive his international career.

"My target is to do much better than in the previous season. The Premier League is very important for us because the monetary issues are also there and I know performances here will set the tone for next season," said Naeem.

"Nobody wants to be kept away from the national team and I'm no exception. These are issues which are out of my hands, but what I can do is perform. I must play good cricket in domestic competitions and the rest will depend on the selectors," he added.

However, he said that he didn't want to pressurise himself by thinking about the national team.

"I just want to bat well and bat at the top order," he said.

Naeem also expressed his optimism over Mohammedan's chance in this year's league. "We have got a good team but the pace attack could have been much better."

Mohammedan's coach and Naeem both hinted that they were looking to make up the weakness by roping in good foreign players.

BFF ELECTIONS 2016

The Poton surprise

SPORTS REPORTER

Save Football, the alliance opposing the incumbent panel of Bangladesh Football Federation in its upcoming elections, yesterday introduced Kamrul Ashraf Khan Poton, a member of parliament from the Narshingdi-2 constituency, as their nominee for the president's post.

The introduction was made by Sheikh Jamal Dhanmondi Club president Manzur Kader, the leading figure of the opposition alliance, at his Gulshan office in the afternoon.

Poton, a businessman and chairman of the Bangladesh Fertilizer Association, didn't have any association with football in the past, was recently elected as the president of Narshingdi District Football Association.

Former national footballer and

chairman of Sheikh Jamal DC's football committee, Ashrafuddin Ahmed Chunnun, said that they would announce the full panel under the leadership of Poton.

"He [Poton] will lead our panel in the BFF elections as the president candidate," Chunnun said. "We have relied on renowned faces like Kazi Salahuddin in the past, but he has failed to improve the status of the game. Now we have found Poton as someone fresh with the potential of creating a change in the country's football."

Poton himself promised to develop the game if elected as the head of the game's governing body.

"Salahuddin Bhai was a legendary footballer but he failed to improve the status of the game," Poton said. "I'm taking part in the election for the love of football. I have an aspiration to take Bangladesh football to a new height if I

am elected as president. I want to work with everyone and hope to get everyone's support."

Meanwhile, another nomination form for the president's post was bought by Nurul Islam Nuru, president of Tongi Krira Chakra.

The incumbent BFF president Kazi Salahuddin, however, didn't buy his nomination paper on the first day of distribution, but it is expected he would buy it today along with the other members of his panel.

A total of seven nomination papers were bought yesterday. Current vice-president Tabith Awal bought a nomination paper for the same post while former national footballer Saifur Rahman Moni, organiser Sabbir Hossain, Brothers Union coach Mahidur Rahman Meraj and former Rahmatganj MFS secretary Tipu Sultan bought forms for member posts.

Rani Hamid gets lifetime achievement award

SPORTS REPORTER

The Bangladesh Sports Press Association (BSPA) yesterday felicitated 22 female sports personalities who brought laurel for the country at both local and international stage since the Independence of Bangladesh.

The programme, styled 'Fair and Lovely Foundation Indefatigable Women', was held at the National Sports Council (NSC) Tower Auditorium yesterday afternoon.

21 women athletes from different sports disciplines were handed crests while Women International Master Rani Hamid was honoured with Life Time Achievement Award for her pioneering role in women's sports.

Cultural affairs minister Asaduzzaman Noor was present as the chief guest of the programme where high-ups of BSPA and other sports bodies and sports journalists were also present.

Inzi weighing PCB offer

DAWN.COM

The Pakistan Cricket Board (PCB), in a sudden move, has decided to appoint former Test captain Inzamam-ul-Haq as the new national chief selector which came as a complete surprise to many since the names of former players Iqbal Qasim, Mohsin Khan and Rashid Latif have been doing the rounds for a week or so.

Inzamam, who is currently serving as batting coach with the Afghanistan cricket team, will hold a quick meeting with their officials to end his coaching contract and is likely to join the PCB in the next couple of days, most probably before the start of the Pakistan Cup.

All indicators of this out-of-the-blue development go to show that the decision to appoint Inzamam as chief selector was taken, perhaps, in the political corridors of power.

His meeting with PCB chairman Shaharyar Khan the other day was hastily arranged and inside sources said PCB pledged to give Inzamam full powers and a free hand as chairman of selectors.

Well informed sources told Dawn that Inzamam will pick the members of the selection committee very soon too.

Sources also said that while the PCB had been instructed by the patron-in-chief not to make an appointment without his approval, Inzamam's name was forwarded directly from the Prime Minister House.

'I don't think about the past'

Bangladesh's 20-year-old sensation Mustafizur Rahman is a man in high demand. After stunning the world with his displays in the colours of the national team, the youngster caused a bidding war as he made his way to the Indian Premier League. The left-arm spoke to Mid-day, a sports portal, on Saturday, conversing about his struggles in the early days, honing his skills, the tense World T20 match against India and what he wants to do with his IPL earnings. Here are some excerpts from the interview:

On his humble beginnings:

I will not say that I had the worst of days as a child, but it is certain that there is no shortcut to success. I have had my share of ups and downs in life, but my family always stood by me like a pillar. I am what I am today because of their blessings, support and faith.

When my father saw me play, he saw what I had in me. He knew I was different from those in my age group.

As a family, they never pressurised me to pursue academics. My teammates at SRH know I am not very comfortable with languages other than Bengali, so they are always around watching my back. In fact, I am picking up a lot of words from other languages during this stint.

On the initial struggles:

There were never problems which could stop me from playing. But yes, the facilities and infrastructure that we had back home in those days weren't as great compared to what it is like here



Mustafizur Rahman

in India. I have seen it grow and evolve in the last 5-7 years and I am grateful that the Bangladesh Cricket Board and the government are doing a lot for cricket. When I was growing up, there was a shortage of training academies and there was also the issue of affordability. I am not a product of any academy. I started playing various district-level tournaments to keep my game up. I used to train in the fields and run in the hills to keep fit.

On his back-to-back five-wicket hauls in his first two ODIs:

It was a proud moment, but I do not

believe in thinking about the past. The two hauls were instrumental in getting me a place in the team, but what really helps in earning respect of teammates and management is consistent performances. Even as a bowling unit here at SRH, we know the strengths and weaknesses of each other and we are working together and constantly helping each other improve.

On what he does with prize money:

After my first match, which was a T20, we organised a small get-together for my family and friends at home. I am looking forward to getting back home after the IPL. I want to buy myself a new motorbike and a car for the family.

On honing his skills, especially the cutters:

There is no particular person who taught me about it [the cutter]. It is a result of mentoring by many notable coaches who have trained me from my

younger days in domestic, second-division leagues and now in the national team. Even when I reached the Sunrisers camp, practising with the likes of Trent Boult and Ashish Nehra has been a great lesson. All these guys are very open to sharing their experiences and are willing to help me as a bowler. I am surely gaining a lot from my first IPL season here.

On his wrist position:

It comes naturally to me. There were people who advised to make little tweaks to the position. Most coaches have been happy with the way the ball has come out from my hand.

On the final over vs India in the World T20:

There was a lot of clutter, but we had to focus on what we had to do. The atmosphere in the stadium was very tense. But every game has its own set of pressures and the stakes are particularly high in a match as important as that one. So, we were in a tough



Cultural affairs minister Asaduzzaman Noor (C), chief guest at the programme titled Fair and Lovely Foundation Indefatigable Women, poses with the award winning women sports personalities at the National Sports Council Tower Auditorium yesterday.

PHOTO: COURTESY

ECB mulls new points system

AGENCIES, London



England Cricket is reportedly considering following in the footsteps of the Women's Ashes and devising a multi-format points system for the visits of Sri Lanka and Pakistan this year.

A points system for a bilateral series was first devised between the ECB and Cricket Australia and introduced for the 2013 Women's Ashes. It saw six points awarded for a Test victory (two each for a draw) as well as two points for victory in an ODI or T20I match.

The Test weighting was revised down to four points for a victory for the 2015 series, with the rest unchanged.

England will host Sri Lanka for three Tests, five ODIs and a one-off Twenty20. They will play four Tests against Pakistan, with the same number of white-ball games.

It has been reported the ECB is in advanced negotiations with Sri Lanka and Pakistan, with each board required to consent to the concept before it can go ahead.

The thinking is to give greater meaning and purpose to limited-overs series.

Although the idea is to generate greater interest across the whole tour, the Test weighting and scheduling of Tests first mean a three-nil Test series win would leave either England or Sri Lanka needing just one more victory from the six remaining limited-overs matches to clinch the overall prize.