

SPORT

Chandika in charge till 2019 WC

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Bangladesh national coach Chandika Hathurusingha's contract has been officially extended till the 2019 World Cup.

The expected extension was officially confirmed in a board meeting at the Bangladesh Cricket Board's (BCB's) headquarters in Mirpur yesterday afternoon.

The contracts of the national team's spin coach Ruwan Kalpage and trainer Mario Villavarayan have also been extended, BCB president Nazmul Hassan Papon informed reporters following the meeting.

The BCB has also brought about several changes in the national selection process. The most highlighted among those was the exclusion of former national captain Habibul Bashar from the three-member selection panel, replaced by Sajjad Ahmed Shipon. Bashar will now work with the



Bangladesh Cricket Board president Nazmul Hassan Papon speaks to reporters at the BCB headquarters in Mirpur yesterday afternoon.

Premier League will begin on November 6.

Papon also said that the board has directed the clubs of the Dhaka Premier League to complete the payment of its players within the next 72 hours.

"If they don't, the BCB will pay on behalf of them and then take the sternest possible action against the clubs," said Papon.

As of now, the majority of the clubs have only paid 20 to 30 per cent of the required dues. The board wants them to complete them within the next three days.

With regards to the Abahani-Prime Doleshwar clash at the BKSP last Sunday, which was postponed indefinitely after the umpires had decided not to continue the game, the president said that they would form a committee -- comprising BCB's umpires committee chairman Nazmul Karim, Disciplinary committee chairman Sheikh Sohel, match referee Rakibul Hasan and Athar Ali Khan -- to determine what exactly happened in that game. The committee has been directed to submit the report within 72 hours.

"Actually, never have we faced such a situation before. We never had to stop a match for a reason like this. There have been cases when players have angrily reacted against umpires. There have also been cases when umpires have fallen sick. So, honestly speaking, we don't know how to continue from here," said Papon.

Furthermore, the BCB president also revealed that the board has formed a four-member bowling action review committee, which will be headed by BCB director Jalal Yunus.

While the process of judging the bowlers' action is still uncertain, Yunus revealed that it will be confirmed as soon as the league is over.

"For now, we will focus on those who have been suspected. We are even thinking of building a mini bowling lab in the near future," said Yunus.

'I won't be part of new system'

SPORTS REPORTER

The Bangladesh cricket team's chief selector Faruque Ahmed has said last night that he will not work under the new selection process which was officially adopted in the Bangladesh Cricket Board (BCB) board meeting earlier yesterday.

"The decision has been taken, I will not work under this system," Faruque told The Daily Star over phone from the United States, where he is currently away on holiday. "I will officially submit the letter of resignation to the BCB once I return."

In two separate stints as a national selector Faruque has had his hand in selecting teams that broke new ground in making the second round of the World Cup for the first time in 2007, played Asia Cup 2012 and 2016 finals, made the World Cup 2015 quarterfinals and won home series against Pakistan, India and South Africa in 2015.

The board meeting confirmed the plans for the new selection process -- namely expanding the personnel involved beyond the previous three-member committee to include the head coach, team manager and the cricket operations committee chairman, all three of whom now have to endorse the team before it goes to the BCB president for final approval.

"I have made my position clear before, that it will be difficult to work in this system. We have to have scope to work and work without interference. Selection is an area where you have to work with freedom without interference, because then you have accountability. Then people will know who is behind the decisions," Faruque said.

"Till now, before we sat down to select the team we used to call the coach and take his suggestions. Sometimes we called the captain if he had any special preferences. We then used to finalise the team, sign on it and send it. Then, just to make it official, the cricket operations chairman signed it and sent it to the president," he explained the system as it has been running



FARUQUE AHMED

- Habibul Bashar excluded from selection panel, assigned to women's team selection duties.
- Panel to seek the coach, team manager and cricket operations chairman's approval before submitting team to the BCB president.
- BCB to take legal action against BPL franchisee Sylhet Superstars
- 'Sternest possible action' promised if DPL clubs do not complete player payments within 72 hours.
- Another committee to submit findings on Abahani-Prime Doleshwar match within 72

Time for the championship bid

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The outcomes of today's Dhaka Premier League matches may go a long way towards providing a clear picture of the championship race, even though the league does not end till next week.

The focus will be on the BKSP where Tamim Iqbal-led Abahani will take on Mosharrar Hossain's Legends of Rugganj. Rugganj are currently on top with 20 points from 14 games, while Abahani are placed second with 18 points from 13 matches. The winner of this game will already have one hand on the trophy.

While a star-studded Abahani have depended upon the performances of their renowned players,

Rugganj have played as a unit. Rugganj have had to overcome a series of obstacles to reach this far, from their players getting banned to the controversial washout against Brothers Union that deprived them of a point.

Skipper Mosharrar Hossain believes the strength gained from overcoming these setbacks can help them beat Abahani.

"We never believed that we would be able to come so far. It's because we worked as a team. Whenever we needed someone to score or to take wickets, someone always stood up.

"We went through several problems in the league. And they were not expected. Had those things not happened, we probably would have been champions by now," said

Mosharrar. "Whatever be the case, we need to play as a team. That has been our strength so far and that is what we will depend upon against Abahani as well," he added.

The key player for Rugganj will be Soumya Sarkar. The national batsman scored a quick 47 in the last game and seemed to be getting back to form. This game will be the perfect time for him to recapture the magic.

As far as Abahani is concerned, they will depend quite a bit on Dinesh Kartik. The Indian batsman scored a century in his first game here and then calmly took Abahani over the line in the last game.

In yet another crucial encounter, Mominul Haque's Victoria Sporting will take on Nasir Hossain's Prime Doleshwar in Fatullah. Victoria are

third with 17 points, while Prime Doleshwar are fourth with 16 points, but have a game in hand. With both these teams still in contention for the trophy, the match could be an interesting one.

At the moment, Doleshwar seem to be slightly ahead of Victoria, who struggled in the last game against Abahani. And with Victoria's players yet to receive their payments, they could be going into this game low on morale.

Both Mominul and Nasir have done well in the league so far and going into this crucial juncture, they will be the key players for their respective sides.

At the Sher-e-Bangla National Stadium in Mirpur, Mohammedan will take on Prime Bank Cricket Club. With both these teams out of the championship race already, the result



Brothers Union defender Abbas Inussah heads the ball clear off the goal-line during their Federation Cup quarterfinal against Abahani at the Bangabandhu National Stadium yesterday. The assistant referee, however, deemed the ball had crossed the goal-line, prompting an ugly reaction from the Brothers players and officials.

Wedson leaving

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Wedson Anselme is set to leave Sheikh Jamal Dhanmondi Club within a few days as the Haitian forward is keen on playing in his domestic league to draw attention of the national team. The 30-year-old forward, who is currently spending his third season in Bangladesh wearing the Sheikh Jamal shirt, is believed to have already acquired a no-objection certificate from the club.

"The initial contract with Wedson was till the end of June. But he is not interested to stay here anymore as he has cited family reasons. He is supposed to collect his release letter from the club president today [Sunday]," said a Sheikh Jamal official anonymously.

The Haitian goal machine was lured to Bangladesh football in the 2013-14 season by his compatriot Sony Norde, who had made a name for himself in the previous season with Sheikh Russel KC. The two played for Sheikh Jamal in the 2013-14 season, winning the league and the Federation Cup titles. But while Sony has since been lured by the riches of the Indian Super League, Wedson stayed back in Bangladesh, playing a key role in Sheikh Jamal's league and Federation Cup titles in the following season as well as Sheikh Jamal's King's Cup triumph in Bhutan in 2014.

But while Sony, and another Haitian forward Pascal Millien who spent a season with Sheikh Russel, have been constant fixtures in the Haitian national team including recent participation in the Copa America Centenario, Wedson has failed to get back into the national fold since his only appearance in 2012 despite becoming the top-scorer in Bangladesh Premier League in 2014 and the second-top scorer in 2015.



lack of chances for the national team as well as Sheikh Jamal's floundering fortunes in recent times have spurred him for a move back to Haiti.

"To be honest, I am not enjoying it here anymore and it is good for me as soon as I can leave here," the 30-year-old striker told reporters after his side lost to Arambagh KS in the first quarterfinal of the Federation Cup on Friday.

"I want to return to the national fold as I have seen some of my colleagues play for the national team in Copa America. It is not possible to draw the attention of the national team if I continue to play here. If I want to make my dream true, I must play in the domestic league in Haiti," added Wedson.

Wedson has so far scored 68 goals for Sheikh Jamal in two-and-a-half seasons, including six hattricks. He has scored a combined eight goals in the Independence

Major ODI revamp in the works

CRICINFO

The ICC is pushing for the creation of a new ODI league for the world's top 13 countries to give 50-over cricket new context and relevance.

Plans are well-advanced to create a new league from 2019 for 13 nations - believed to be the ten Test teams, Afghanistan, Ireland and one other Associate, with Nepal advocated by some as a favoured option in a debate that still has some way to run.

The league will see all countries play each other over three years, with the top two nations playing a play-off series to determine the overall winner of the league.

It is hoped that the proposals will give ODI cricket a new context and sense of purpose, amid fears that the format fits awkwardly between Test and Twenty20 cricket, insufficiently loved either by traditionalists or newer fans.

Under the plans, each team would play a three-match series either home or away against every other country, amounting to 36 ODIs each over a three-year basis. The fourth year of each cycle would be reserved for World Cup preparation.

It is envisaged that the ODI league would progress towards a play-off series, likely to be either three matches or five, to determine the overall winner, giving bilateral ODI cricket a global showpiece it has previously lacked.

The system, if adopted, would also be used to determine automatic qualification, and seedings, for the World Cup. The side finishing bottom after three years would face relegation to the World Cricket League Championship, the second tier of one-day cricket, possibly after a play-off with the winners of the World Cricket League Championship.

As with the proposed reforms to Test cricket, the structure is intended as a minimum schedule for each country, and they would be free to organise extra ODIs, which would not count towards the league.

The most obvious beneficiaries of the schedule would be Afghanistan and Ireland, who would have a guaranteed set of fixtures to develop their teams and have a more attractive set of matches to sell sponsors. While both have enjoyed an upturn in fixtures since their inclusion on the 12-team ODI rankings table, the proposed new ODI league would bolster this further.

Abahani overcome quarterfinal hurdle

SPORTS REPORTER

Abahani crossed the Federation Cup quarterfinals hurdle for the second time in five seasons when they came from behind to hand a 2-1 defeat to Brothers Union in the third quarterfinal at the Bangabandhu National Stadium yesterday.

Substitute winger Jewel Rana cancelled out a 35th-minute opener from Augustine Walson in the 69th minute before Sunday Chizoba headed in the winner nine minutes from time to set up Abahani's semifinal clash against Sheikh Russel KC in the 27th edition of the tournament.

Since Abahani's eighth title in 2010, the Dhanmondi outfit have only managed to qualify for the last four only once, in 2012, where they lost against Sheikh Jamal DC. In the last edition, Abahani were eliminated from the quarterfinal stage after suffering a 1-0 defeat to Muktijoddha Sangsard.

This time, though, the Sky Blues looked more confident and dominated the first half-an-hour of yesterday's game, creating a number of opportunities, but were denied either by Brothers goalkeeper Uttam Kumar or the defenders.

After surviving three scares, Brothers started to show signs of resistance, with Nkwocha Kingsley and Walson exposing the opposition backline time and again

with their speedy runs. The Gopeabagh outfit broke the deadlock in the 35th minute when Kingsley's back-heel found Walson on the edge of the box, and the Haitian dinked the ball into the top corner of the net.

Abahani strengthened their attacking options by sending in Jewel Rana in place of defensive midfielder Faisal Mahmud after the break and the move gave the Sky Blues much needed momentum, with Jewel wreaking havoc down the right flank.

While Brothers also kept pressing with Walson and Kingsley exchanging quick passes, it was Abahani who found the equaliser in the 69th

minute when a miscued header from Nabib Newaz Jibon came to Jewel on the edge of the six-yard

box, and the young attacker made no mistake as he tucked it home.

The Sky Blues then sealed the victory in the 81st minute when Lee whipped in a cross from the right for Sunday, who saw his goal-bound header headed out by Brothers defender Abbas Inussah. Though Sunday sat on the ground in frustration, assistant referee Harun-or-Rashid allowed the goal to stand, deeming the ball had crossed the goal-line.

The Brothers players, officials and team assistants assaulted the assistant referee and play remained halted for seven minutes before it resumed again, with Abahani holding the lead to the final whistle.

BROTHERS	- 1
ABAHANI	- 2