



Former Bangladesh captain Khaled Mahmud (C) submits his nomination paper to the returning officer at the Bangladesh Cricket Board (BCB) headquarters in Mirpur yesterday. Mahmud is the candidate of incumbent BCB president Nazmul Hassan led panel for the lone post of Category 3 in the upcoming polls, where the councilors will elect 23 out of 25 executive committee members on October 31. With no rivalry on the horizon, the Hassan led panel is set for a sweeping success like the South Africans against the Tigers in the on-going series.

PHOTO: BCB

BCB boss confirms curfew violation

To be present via teleconference at team meeting

SPORTS REPORTER from Bloemfontein

The Bangladesh team have expectedly retreated into a shell after news broke on Monday that three players -- Taskin Ahmed, Nasir Hossain and Shafiu Islam -- had violated the curfew time of 10:00pm set by team management the previous night hours after their 200-run loss in the third and final ODI in East London. The team had a rest day yesterday, with a few members going for a gym session in the morning.

While Minhajul Abedin, team manager in South Africa, had issued a soft denial on Monday

saying that the players had assured him of their timely return, Bangladesh Cricket Board president Nazmul Hassan confirmed the violation of the curfew yesterday while submitting his nomination papers for the BCB elections.

"We will definitely investigate the matter and take appropriate action. Let us get the written report from the team management after the tour," Hassan said. "If it was a matter of one player we could have taken a drastic step but as there are three cricketers involved we need to take some time."

The three players visited a casino, presumably after having dinner.

"They returned at 10:34pm whereas everyone

should go back to their room by 10:00 pm. It was a mistake and we will look after it but from what I learnt they did not gamble and only had some food at the place. They went to a nearby shopping mall where they met AB de Villiers and Rabada and later they went to the Casino along with them. There were some machines placed in that place to play games."

Papon also informed yesterday that the he will be present via teleconference during the team meeting in Bloemfontein, where Bangladesh will play the first T20I on Thursday. Meanwhile, Minhajul declined to comment on whether the curfew issue will be brought up as it was a team matter, despite saying the day before that he will personally take up the issue.

Are those outside the Big Five accountable?

SAKEB SUBHAN from Bloemfontein



As the three players broke curfew on the night of their 200-run loss in the third ODI at East London, there was not a senior member -- usually identified as Mushfiqur Rahim, Mashrafe Bin Mortaza, Mahmudullah Riyad, Tamim Iqbal and Shakib Al Hasan -- to be spotted in the hotel lobby. On other evenings, for instance following a practice day, these members have been seen in the lobby granting requests for selfies from expatriate Bangladeshis. But on match days and especially after a loss, they do not venture out and even if they have to get a bite to eat, they are always back well within time.

And so it has happened on the field too; over the last two years and particularly this year, there is the big five and the rest. As much as has been said about the brave new youngsters, when it comes to winning matches and being consistent the buck stops with these five players.

Now while Taskin Ahmed, Nasir Hossain and Shafiu Islam's act of breaking the curfew on the night of a humiliating series whitewash is certainly an offence, it seems to be the symptom of unthinking behaviour from those whom neither the public nor the management seem to want to hold accountable. ODI skipper Mashrafe, a magnanimous man, has recently talked about not pressurising the likes of Soumya Sarkar and Sabbir Ahmed too much. Only Shakib on the tour of New Zealand had said, when asked about the seniors stepping up, that everyone needs to take responsibility and perform their own roles.

It does not take an insider to know that there is a clear divide in maturity and expectation of accountability between the five seniors and the rest. There have only been a few press conferences from Bangladesh players on the South African tour that had

coherence and reflected the state of the team at the time of speaking and they came from Test skipper Mushfiqur, Mahmudullah, Shakib, ODI skipper Mashrafe and Tamim Iqbal.

While the ones from Imrul Kayes, Mominul Haque and Rubel Hossain -- all of whom have an appreciation of the environment the team are occupying -- have been unremarkable, the rest have ranged from comical and outrageous. Sabbir and Litton Das spewed empty bluster after their side was hammered from pillar to post during the first two Tests, Taskin displayed a clear lack of understanding of the ground realities, as did Nasir who after the thrashing in the one-day practice match tried to pass off the fact that they were bundled out in less than 50 overs as a positive, saying they could have scored more had they played more overs.

Mashrafe has been known to sit in his room and think about what went wrong in the match, how he could have bowled better, etc. All the seniors reflect similarly on their own performances, implement the corrections in practice and it shows on the field of play -- an example being Mushfiqur's improved showing in the ODIs. The likes of Taskin and Sabbir keep repeating the same mistakes.

While the cases of Nasir and Shafiu are difficult as they have been in the national picture for some time, the team management and the setup must bear the brunt of the failures of the younger ones. The failure to implement and monitor a curfew is the tip of the iceberg that was exposed because of the low tide of the team's fortunes. It falls upon them and the board to address why these players have flattened out both in terms of performance and team involvement, and if the authorities say it is not because of a lack of effort on their part, then perhaps it is time to look elsewhere.

Rahmatullah bids an untimely bye

SPORTS REPORTER

Khaza Rahmatullah, a former national hockey player, died of cardiac arrest yesterday afternoon. He was 55. He complained of chest pain at his Narayanganj residence and was rushed to the Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujib Medical University (BSMMU) in Dhaka, where the attending doctors declared him dead.

His sudden and tragic demise only a couple of days after complying to the requests of reporters for an interview, standing on his beloved green top at the Maulana Bhasani National Hockey Stadium during the Asia Cup, stunned the hockey fraternity into silence.

He left behind his wife, three brothers, three sisters, mother and many well-wishers.

After hearing the sad news, all known faces in the hockey fraternity and current national hockey players rushed to the BSMMU to pay homage to one of the finest players.

Rahmatulla, who was serving as vice-president of the federation, actually had a test in the morning at the BSMMU.

"Today [Tuesday] he went through an ECHO test at BSMMU and returned home with a good result but he suddenly complained about pain in his chest and the family members then brought him to BSMMU again but he expired on way," said Dr. Sheikh Abdullah Al Mamun, registrar of BSMMU and brother-in-law of Rahmatullah.

Rahmatullah started his hockey career for Shadharan Bima in 1978 and then joined Mohammedan in 1985 before switching to Abahani where he captained the Sky Blues till 1995. He represented Bangladesh from 1986 and called time on his career after the 1989 Asia Cup. A Dhaka University blue, he was named in the All Asia Eleven in 1987 but did not join the squad.

Rahmatullah had a busy time during the Hero Asia Cup hockey tournament and was one of general secretary candidates of the postponed BHF polls. During his regime as the BHF general secretary, Rahmatullah had also not received support from a few clubs and subsequently resigned from the post to become vice president.

His aggrieved relatives blame his sudden demise as a sequel of nasty politics in the hockey federation, a few were even heard saying not to take his body to the federation for last respects.

His first namaz-e-janaja will be held at the Abahani Club in Dhanmondi at 10:00am before his second namaz-e-janaja at the Dehorbhog Akhra mosque in Narayanganj. He will be buried at the Paikpara graveyard, informed Khaza Ahsanullah, elder brother of Rahmatullah.

Sylhet Sixers bring in Waqar

SPORTS REPORTER

Former Pakistan fast bowling legend Waqar Younis reached Bangladesh, for a two-day trip organised by Bangladesh Premier League franchise Sylhet Sixers, yesterday.

Waqar will distribute prizes to the winners of the fast pace bowler hunt 'Future Sixers' and also take part in various promotional activities for the Sylhet Sixers. The former Pakistan coach flew directly to Sylhet after arriving in Bangladesh.

"Sylhet are a new team. I wish them all the best. There initiative to find fast bowlers is really commendable. I hope Bangladesh will find good bowlers," Waqar said. "The BPL is doing really well. It is improving every year. Bangladesh is improving through the BPL as well and it is something that has caught the eye."

'Can't forget everything as a poor tour'

Tamim Iqbal, who returned home early on Sunday after suffering a tear on his left thigh muscle, made a brief visit to Mirpur yesterday to consult with the BCB's chief physician Debashis Chowdhury. The left hander is expected to be in rehabilitation for the next two weeks and is set to miss the first couple of matches of the upcoming Bangladesh Premier League starting on November 4. During that Mirpur visit, Tamim also spoke to the media over his current injury situation, the Tigers disappointing performance in South Africa and also about his so-called spat with coach Chandika Hathurisingha. Here are excerpts of the conversation:

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Question (Q): What is your current physical condition?

Tamim Iqbal (TI): I have to be in rehabilitation for the next two weeks and after that there will be another examination. Initially it looked like I might miss the first few games of the BPL but at the moment it's too early to say anything before completing the rehabilitation. But it's confirmed that I am going to miss the first two games of the BPL.

Q: How risky it is to play without recovering completely?

TI: My message is clear, to me the national team is important but I don't think it will be right for me to play without recovering properly and so I won't do that. The medical staff will not give me the clearance without being fully fit. The BPL is an important tournament for all and the upcoming Sri Lanka series will be a big one so no matter how many matches I miss in the BPL I will only return to field after recovering completely.

Q: How challenging will it be for the national players to perform after their disappointing series in South Africa?

TI: I hope it won't be difficult. We were not able to perform according to our potential in both the Test and ODI series in South Africa. We all have to take a lesson from everything [we did] and I think it was a big learning experience for us in South Africa. I am sure all the bowlers and batsmen have realised their mistakes and still we have two T20 games remaining so I hope the team will do well in that. To me the most important thing is not too forget the mistakes we made in South Africa and work accordingly for the future.

Q: What will be the next step?

TI: If we forget everything [and think of it] as a poor tour then we won't be able to improve from here. We have to rectify the mistakes and plan accordingly to move forward. The next World Cup in England is in 2019 and it will be tough for us there so we have to move forward keeping that in



mind as well. Personally, [I think] the problems we faced on tour [are what] we have to do everything to improve on and if we can't, then we won't be able to improve.

Q: Did you think this tour would be so tough? Are you disappointed with the result?

TI: We knew that there would be difficult conditions but you can't only blame the conditions or the fact that we did not tour

Another whitewash would be nice: Robbie

SPORTS REPORTER from Bloemfontein



Even though he is an uncapped player, South Africa's pace-bowling all-rounder Robbie Frylinck has

sounded the first shot before the two-match T20I series against Bangladesh, which will start off with a day-night encounter at the Mangaung Oval here on Thursday.

"The guys take every game as it comes. You don't write off anybody, you don't think about what's happened before, because you can't gauge on that," said Frylinck after practice at the Mangaung Oval yesterday. "T20 is a different animal on its own. I am sure the guys will come in and give 200 per cent; it will be nice to have another whitewash but we are not looking that far ahead. Thursday's first game and we are going to come out firing."

Frylinck may be an important presence in

the series as he dismissed openers Imrul Kayes and Soumya Sarkar in the one-day practice match at the venue on October 12, before the start of the three-ODI series that South Africa won 3-0, to go with their 2-0 clean sweep of the Tests.

"Definitely, it's nice to get a good look at them," said Frylinck. "They are pretty much lining up similarly, so hopefully it goes well."

He is a domestic journeyman in South Africa and is in line to get an international cap at the age of 33 after 65 first-class games, 103 List A matches and 87 domestic T20s.

"I think growing up, or playing as much as you do, you respect every opponent or they come up and sting you," Frylinck said about his opponents. "So, we definitely won't be writing them off regardless of what happened in the Tests and ODIs. Bangladesh are a strong T20 side; they have played all over the world in various competitions, so they are a team to be respected."

BD A take 2-0 lead

SPORTS REPORTER



Bangladesh A registered a comfortable eight-wicket victory over Ireland A in the third one-day of a five match series, courtesy of some clinical blowing from the home team who now lead the series 2-0, at the Sheikh Kamal International Cricket Stadium in Cox's Bazar yesterday.

The Bangladesh bowlers piled on the pressure right from the start as Ireland, after electing to bat, kept losing wickets at regular intervals.

Ireland skipper Andrew Balbirnie did try to steady the ship with a team high 52 runs off 90 balls, featuring three fours and six, while Shane Getkate added 23. However, as none of the other batsmen were able to reach double figures, the visitors were eventually bundled out on just 103 runs from 35.4 overs.

As for the Bangladesh bowlers, left-arm seamer Abu Haider was the best among the lot as he picked up three wickets at the cost of 29 runs from his eight overs while left-arm spinner Sunzamul Islam and leg-spinner Tanvir Haider bagged two each.

The home team faced no difficulty what so ever in reaching the target in just 23 overs,



ABU HAIDER ... 3 for 29

aside from the loss of openers Sadman Islam (24) and Anamul Haque (20), where skipper Nazmul Hossain remained unbeaten on 41 runs off 38 balls, including eight fours, alongside Al Amin who was not out on 14.

The fourth match of the series will take place today at the same venue.

SCORES IN BRIEF

IRELAND A: 103 all out in 35.4 overs (Balbirnie 52, Getkate 23; Haider 3-29, Sunzamul 2-23, Tanbir 2-14)

BANGLADESH A: 106 for 2 in 23 overs (Shadman 24, Anamul 20, Nazmul 41 not out, Al-Amin 14 not out; Dockreil 1-23)

Result: Bangladesh A won by 8 wickets.

Player-of-the-match: Abu Haider.