



Even though he was just playing a practice match ahead of the tour of India in Mirpur yesterday, Bangladesh batsman Mushfiqur Rahim was riled up by a comment from a spectator after being dismissed and went into the crowd to confront the person. To the relief of his teammates waiting by the boundary, Mushfiqur did no more than warn the spectator.

PHOTO: FIROZ AHMED

Tensions mounting between Shakib and BCB boss?

SPORTS REPORTER



The Red Team comprising national cricketers lost a T20 practice match against The Green Team by 50 runs at the Sher-e-Bangla National Stadium in Mirpur yesterday. However, the focus was not on the match as the question on everyone's lips was: where is Shakib al Hasan?

The Test and T20I captain did not turn up at the venue to play the game. There were a lot of murmurs about the tension between Bangladesh Cricket Board (BCB) President Nazmul Hassan and the premier all-rounder following the players' strike, which was followed by a letter to the all-rounder from the board.

BCB issued the letter asking Shakib to clarify why he had breached his contract by signing a deal with one of the country's top mobile phone operators without informing the board. Shakib had inked an agreement with the national team's former sponsors, Grameenphone, for an undisclosed sum at a time when he was also playing a pivotal role behind the cricketers' strike for better pay and benefits. Shakib, who attended a UNICEF programme at a local hotel



PHOTO: STAR

The top brass of the BCB -- (From L-R) President Nazmul Hassan, CEO Nizamuddin Chowdhury and Director IH Mallick -- had a lot to think about yesterday as Test and T20I skipper Shakib Al Hasan did not show up to practice.

yesterday, was yet to reply.

"He didn't reply but there is enough time," said BCB CEO Nizamuddin Chowdhury when asked about Shakib's reply.

The BCB boss went to Mirpur to watch the practice match but when approached by reporters after the match, the usually media-friendly Hassan refused to say anything.

It was learned that the BCB boss was upset with Shakib's leading role in the players' strike.

"Everybody should get rid of their

ego... if all the parties allow their ego to take over, it can be suicidal for our cricket. We have to now fully focus on the upcoming India tour," an official said on condition of anonymity.

BCB's cricket operations committee chairman Akram Khan said: "The coach [Russell Domingo] told me that he was given a rest as he wanted to see the young players in the practice match."

It later emerged that Shakib's name was on the original players' list for the match, as a wicketkeeper no less.

U-19 women's team in works

SPORTS REPORTER

Bangladesh Cricket Board (BCB) director and chairman of the women's wing, Shafiul Alam Chowdhury Nadel, informed that the board was mulling the formation of a women's under-19 team as Bangladesh are set to host the ICC Women's Under-19 World Cup in 2021.

Nadel, who held a meeting with divisional secretaries and coaches, added that the board was also looking forward to introducing school cricket from February next year.

"We had a discussion today [Sunday] with divisional coaches and secretaries to form the divisional women's team as we are likely to host the next ICC Under-19 Women's World Cup in 2021. We are also planning to start school cricket in all divisions, which is the first step to preparing cricketers for future," Nadel told reporters yesterday.

The event is likely to be hosted in Dhaka, Sylhet, and Chattogram and according to Nadel the board is chalking out a long-term plan.

Was Nasir deployed against the rules?

SPORTS REPORTER



All-rounder Nasir Hossain's one-match suspension was lifted and he returned to action in the ongoing third round of the National Cricket League, making Rangpur's playing XI against Rajshahi yesterday.

He was chosen as a replacement for leg-spinner Rishad Hossain, who was among the nine players summoned by national selectors to participate in the Tigers' practice game in Mirpur.

Nasir was handed the ban after being found guilty of being involved in an altercation with the on-field umpire in the previous game against Dhaka at the Zahur Ahmed Chowdhury Stadium in Chittagong.

"Coincidentally, Nasir travelled with the team and paid his own expenses with the intention of attending the practice sessions. It would have been tough for Rangpur to fly in a new squad member for the game, which is why Nasir got included," member of the national selection panel, Habibul Bashar, said yesterday.

However, there are questions surrounding the inclusion as, according to the regulations a bowler can take the field in place of a fellow bowler and the same applies for a batsman in case of replacements.

Nasir is an established batting all-rounder and replaced a full-time bowler, who made headlines on the first day of the game with a five-wicket haul.

Nasir was unbeaten on an 82-ball 55 with five boundaries and two sixes at stumps on day two in the first innings.



Rangpur, Dhaka make headway

SPORTS REPORTER



Rangpur Division took a first-innings lead of 62 runs with four wickets in hand in their Tier 1 clash against Rajshahi courtesy of fifties from Mehedi Maruf, Naem Islam and Nasir Hossain on the second day of the third round of the National Cricket League match in Cox's Bazar yesterday.

Resuming the day on 32 for two at the Sheikh Kamal International Cricket Stadium Academy ground, Naem and Mehedi added 127 runs for the third wicket before the latter was dismissed for a 232-ball 78, which featured seven fours and two sixes.

Naem departed on 54 off 191 balls, striking six fours and a six, while Ariful Haque added 47 runs. Nasir is playing as the replacement for Rishad Hossain -- who was summoned by the selectors to join the national team's practice game -- and utilised the opportunity. He remained unbeaten on 55 as Rangpur ended the day on 263 for six. Off-spinner Iftekhar Sajjad bagged two while left-arm spinner Saqlain Sajib took a wicket for Rajshahi.

SCORES IN BRIEF

RAJSHAHI V RANGPUR

RAJSHAHI: First innings 201 all out (Farhad Hossain 60; Rishad 5-50)

RANGPUR: 263 for 6 (Mehedi 78, Nasir 55 not out; Iftekhar 2-59)

KHULNA V DHAKA DIVISION

KHULNA: First innings 371 all out (Anamul 126; Taibur 3-41)

DHAKA: First innings 206 for 2 (Rony 73, Joyraz 51; Moinul 1-37)



With play being called off because of rain for a second successive day, Chattogram and Sylhet players amused themselves with an impromptu game in the gallery of the Shaheed Kamruzzaman Stadium in Rajshahi yesterday.

PHOTO: COLLECTED

In the other Tier 1 game in Cox's Bazar, Dhaka Division made a good reply to Khulna's first-innings total of 371 as they ended the second day on 206 for two, trailing by 165.

Resuming the day on 290 for six, Rajshahi were bowled out after adding 81 to their overnight score. Dhaka seamer Sumon Khan and left-arm spinner Taibur Rahman bagged three wickets each.

In reply, Dhaka made a steady start riding on openers Rony Talukdar and Joyraz Sheikh, who added 125 for the opening wicket before the latter departed after scoring 51.

Rony looked impressive but he departed after scoring 73 off 126, which included six fours and three sixes. Saif Hasan (41 not out) and Raqibul Hasan (38 not out) then steadied the ship and added an unbeaten 81-run third-wicket stand before stumps. Rubel Hossain and Moinul Islam bagged a wicket each for Rajshahi.

Meanwhile, the other two Tier 2 games between Barishal and Dhaka Metropolis in Bogura and the match between Chittagong and Sylhet in Rajshahi were called off without a single ball being bowled due to wet outfielders for the second consecutive day.

Bangladesh better than South Africa: Dav

AGENCIES, Chennai



Former Bangladesh coach Dav Whatmore, now responsible for Kerala Cricket, believes that the upcoming T20I series against India will be an exciting one. He feels that the visitors are a better side than South Africa, and that this is a good time for India to start trying out combinations for next year's T20 World Cup.

India are without the services of Virat Kohli (rested). Bangladesh will miss Tamim

is no doubt that he is the best batsman in the world, across all formats. His mere presence will be a big morale-booster for any team. But even without the services of Kohli, India are still a formidable side.

"The likes of Rohit Sharma are in great form. At home, India are a difficult proposition for any opposition. For Bangladesh, it will be a big task, indeed."

Whatmore is pleased that his protege Shakib Al Hasan has gone on from strength to strength to become one of the finest all-rounders in the world, apart from leading his country from the front. "Happy for

Emerging team knocked out before final

SPORTS REPORTER

The Bangladesh Women's Emerging team were knocked out of the race to the final of the Asian Cricket Council Women's Emerging Teams Cup on October 29 after slumping to a four-wicket defeat in Colombo against their Sri Lankan counterparts yesterday.

Having won the toss, Bangladesh lost wickets at regular intervals and were eventually bundled out for 127 runs in 48.3 overs. Kavisha Dilhari bagged three wickets for the hosts. In reply, Sri Lanka lost six wickets before notching the win as skipper Harshitha Madavi struck a team-high 53. Nahida Akter bagged three wickets for Bangladesh.

U-16s' opener ends in a draw

SPORTS REPORTER

Bangladesh U-16s' first three-day match against Pakistan U-16 ended in a draw on the third day in Rawalpindi yesterday.

Bangladesh started the day on 119 for four before being bowled out for 200, with Nayeem Hasan hitting a team-high 73. Ali Asfand grabbed a six-wicket haul for the hosts. Pakistan negotiated 43 overs to reach 120 for 2 with Mohammad Shehzad remaining unbeaten on 80 when stumps were drawn.



Shakib is a vastly improved player who can walk into any team in the world. He has always been known to be a tight bowler with a penchant for big wickets. His batting has improved a lot in the last couple of years. He is a complete all-rounder now. He was in good form in the World Cup. I am sure that a series against a top team like India will make him give his best.

Iqbal. He opted out to be with his wife, who is expecting their second child. Imrul Kayes is his replacement. "The series will be an interesting one. Bangladesh are at the moment a better side than South Africa.

"Their players have been in a lot of T20 leagues. That will come in handy for them. Plus, they have always been a dangerous side. They can upset calculations on a given day. So, no dull moments."

Many believe that Kohli's absence will be come as a big relief for Bangladesh. "There

the way his career has progressed. At that time, I never thought that he will lead his country. But credit to him.

"He is a vastly improved player who can walk into any team in the world. He has always been known to be a tight bowler with a penchant for big wickets. His batting has improved a lot in the last couple of years. He is a complete all-rounder now. He was in good form in the World Cup. I am sure that a series against a top team like India will make him give his best."

Delhi pollution a concern ahead of Tigers' T20I



Sri Lankan players took the extraordinary step of wearing anti-pollution masks on the field as the air quality deteriorated during their third Test against India in New Delhi on December 3, 2017.

PHOTO: COLLECTED

PALLAB BHATTACHARYA from New Delhi



A spike in air pollution in Delhi has become a cause for concern in the run-up to the day-night India-Bangladesh T20I on November 3. According to government agencies, the air pollution level in the Indian capital shot up yesterday and was expected to enter the 'severe' category last night due to firecracker emissions on the occasion of Diwali, unfavourable weather and a significant spike in stubble burning.

A thin layer of toxic haze hung over Delhi yesterday morning and the overall air quality index stood at 313 at 9:00am local time, which continued its upward trend and was recorded at 341 at 2.30 pm. An AQI of 100 or less is considered 'satisfactory', and between 300 and 400 is considered 'very poor', and 'severe' above 400.

After last year's Diwali, Delhi's AQI had crossed the 600-mark.

It is expected that the Bangladesh team will be asked to carry face masks in case the need arises.

"Look, we have factored in the post Diwali air pollution in Delhi but since the match is a week away, we are hopeful that the players won't face any health hazards," a senior BCCI official told PTI while acknowledging that there are practical concerns.

"The travel itinerary has been chalked in such a manner that Bangladesh will directly arrive in Delhi and exit the country from Kolkata. We wanted to make the travelling convenient that it starts from North, goes to West (Nagpur, Rajkot, Indore) and finishes in the east (Kolkata)," the official said.

The Indian government has also asked Haryana and Punjab to stop stubble burning completely for the next 'critical' days.