

Shakib again in hot water

SPORTS REPORTER

The focus ahead of the sixth board meeting of the Bangladesh Cricket Board (BCB) was who will be named the Tigers' T20I skipper for the upcoming Asia Cup tournament slated to be played in UAE. However, no captain was announced in the media conference following the board meeting, with BCB president Nazmul Hassan Papon suggesting they have not decided on a captain yet.

Although the BCB president said that the squad had been decided, they could not announce it because the captain had not been named.

"A side has been formed but it will have to be approved by the one who will be made skipper," BCB president Nazmul said yesterday.

It was learned that the BCB was all set to announce Shakib Al Hasan as the skipper yesterday. It had been an open secret that the board had earmarked Shakib for the role. However, complications have arisen which saw the board postpone its decision for a few days before they name the squad and captain.

Sources close to the BCB have claimed that Shakib had asked about the length of his tenure as captain before he made the decision to accept board's proposal. However, according to sources, the BCB also have to iron out some complications with the all rounder before handing over the captaincy.

The indications are that those complications are related to the sponsorship deal Shakib had announced with betting site Betwinner's sister concern Betwinner news on his verified Facebook page on August 2.

The announcement from Shakib had come on the



same day that the BCB communicated their EOI to the franchises through the media to play in the upcoming BPL, where it was stated that any company related to tobacco, alcohol and betting cannot participate in the BPL.

"The board will not allow such a deal to happen if it has taken place," the BCB president said, adding it was an agenda that was discussed in the board meeting.

"He is not supposed to ask us for permission [in regards to signing a sponsorship deal with a betting related site] since we will not allow such a deal. We have to know if it has taken place first," BCB president added.

Asked whether they will hand over captaincy if Shakib is found to be in breach, Nazmul said: "First, we have to know what he has done. This (betting-related activities) is not only prohibited in cricket but in this country. It is prohibited and the law does not permit it. This is a serious issue. We cannot depend on a Facebook post, we have to investigate it," he told the media.

Mustafa Jabbar, the Minister of Post and Telecommunication, told The Daily Star that laws are in place if a breach was found.

"The responsibility to file a case belongs with the home ministry (in case of involvement with betting- related activities). If anyone is related with betting [or related activities] there are laws for it. If it happens digitally than it is possible to file a case under digital security act as well," he said.



Elaine Thompson-Herah, the only one of Jamaica's 'Big Three' women to show up at the Commonwealth Games, was rewarded with the 100 metres gold medal on Wednesday, while Kenya's Ferdinand Omanyala powered to the men's title. Thompson-Herah ran her usual smooth race to finish a comfortable winner in 10.95 seconds while Omanyala, who set an African record of 9.77 seconds last year, won in 10.02 seconds.

PHOTO: REUTERS

'Zimbabwe are a dangerous side at home'

SPORTS REPORTER

For Bangladesh, things have been chaotic in Tests and T20Is both on and off the field lately. The Test and T20I sides have seen sudden change in leadership, with Mominul Haque and Mahmudullah Riyad being stripped of captaincy of the Test and T20Is respectively.

But that did not see Tigers fare any better in these two formats, with the Shakib Al Hasan-led Test side suffering a humiliating 3-0 defeat in their recent-most Test series away to the West Indies in June while an inexperienced T20I side, under the leadership of Nurul Hasan Sohan, endured their first-ever bilateral T20I series defeat against Zimbabwe this week.

Amid such mayhem, if Bangladesh cricket can find some sort of order and stability, at least on the field, it is in their preferred format of one-day cricket. The Tigers have been in tremendous form in the format lately, winning six of their last seven ODI series under the leadership of Tamim Iqbal.

But Tamim still remained cautious ahead of their first match of the three-match ODI series, starting today at the Harare Sports Club.

"Considering the strengths of the two squads, we are definitely ahead of them. But in cricket, whichever team plays better on the day wins. Zimbabwe won the T20I series simply because they played better cricket than us. It's the same when it comes to the ODI series. We obviously want to beat them but for that we would have to bring our A game. In their conditions, Zimbabwe are a dangerous team," Tamim said at the pre-match press conference yesterday.

Bangladesh go into the series on the back of ODI series triumphs over South Africa and the West Indies. The Tamim-led side defeated the Proteas for the first-time ever in their own backyard back in March before whitewashing the West Indies in a three-match series last month.

And Tamim remained adamant that the team would keep doing whatever had worked for them lately.



"We have to do whatever we have been doing in recent matches – that's the plan. We also have to rectify those things that we did not do right. Most importantly, we would need to follow the process so that we can come out as winners even from difficult situations," Tamim added.

Tamim's long-term plan since taking the leadership role has always been surrounding the upcoming ODI World Cup next year in India. According to the left-handed opener, this series could be an opportunity for some of the youngsters in the squad to cement their places in the eleven ahead of the ODI World Cup.

"Apart from [Mahmudullah] Riyad, Mushfiqur Rahim and I, it is a very young squad. There are one or two spots in the squad which have not been cemented yet. So, considering that, there is an opportunity for every young player to make their statement and get into the eleven," Tamim added.

'17 million people are all Bayern fans now'

STAR SPORT DESK

Bayern Munich's summer recruit Sadio Mane wasted no time fitting in with his new teammates, revealing he brought his own lederhosen with him to the Bavarian capital this summer.

Speaking in an interview, Mane said he had held onto the traditional leather garb given to him in his time at Red Bull Salzburg in the hope of one day wearing them at Munich's famous Oktoberfest.

"Unfortunately not yet, but I'm really looking forward to it," Mane said when asked if he had ever made an appearance at the 222-year old festival. "I even have lederhosen at home from my time in Salzburg. I kept them because I always liked wearing them and I'm generally very interested in other cultures."

Mane, 30, has already shown how crucial he will be to the German record champions' on-field plans in 2022-23. Mane scored a goal in Bayern's 5-3 Super Cup win over RB Leipzig on Saturday, his first competitive outing for the club.

His arrival in Munich has helped assuage the fears of Bayern fans worried about the departure of Robert Lewandowski as the club pushes for a record-extending 11th straight Bundesliga title.

Bayern take on Eintracht Frankfurt tonight.

The two-time African Player of the Year scored 120 goals in 269 appearances for Liverpool.

Not only has Mane brought with him blistering pace, a constant goal threat and experience at the game's highest levels, but Bayern's new number 17 has swelled Munich's supporter ranks by around 17 million.

"My country is made up of 17 million football mad people and they're all Bayern fans now," Mane said. "I think you'll see a lot of Senegal flags in the Allianz Arena this season."



Will PSG fulfil greater ambitions?

AGENCIES

A leaner and fitter Lionel Messi, similarly rejuvenated Neymar and Kylian Mbappe staying after signing a new contract makes Paris St Germain runaway favourites to retain their Ligue 1 title when the French league season kicks off on Friday.

Last season, the Parisians romped to the title with a 15-point advantage over second-placed Marseille despite Messi failing to impress, Neymar and Mbappe being unsettled and Sergio Ramos missing most of the campaign.

But their galaxy of stars looks to have turned a corner and have shown a new lustre, evident on a pre-season tour to Japan and in last Sunday's emphatic 4-0 Super Cup win over Nantes.

It suggests the chasm between PSG and the rest of Ligue 1 could be even bigger this season, despite a change of coach with Mauricio Pochettino replaced by Christophe Galtier.

"Once you are at PSG, you have an obligation to achieve results," Galtier said on his arrival at the club last month. "I'm very ambitious. I came to Paris to win. There are three domestic trophies: we have to win them. You have to break records. And, in all modesty, I tell you, I came to Paris to win everything."

Galtier was the last coach to break PSG's hegemony when he took Lille to the title two seasons ago and will have to balance domestic dominance with their Champions League ambitions.

PSG begin their campaign at Clermont on Saturday with the first game of the Ligue 1 season on Friday when Olympique Lyonnais host promoted Ajaccio.

Haaland embracing life out of COMFORT ZONE

AGENCIES

For all the global appeal and excitement the Premier League generates, there is a clear danger that the dominance of Manchester City and Liverpool reaches a level of repetitiveness that undermines the competitive appeal of England's top flight.

The other members of the so-called "Big Six", however, are determined that when the action returns on Friday, with Arsenal taking on Crystal Palace, they can at least close the gap and begin to restore the unpredictable element that has been at the heart of the league's popularity.

City have won four of the last five titles with Liverpool's lockdown success in 2020, the only interruption to the dominance of Pep Guardiola's team.

Not since Chelsea triumphed in 2017, a year after Leicester City's utterly unexpected title, has the Premier League had a winner from outside the two North West clubs.

Chelsea's success was masterminded by manager Antonio Conte and the Italian coach, now in North London with Tottenham Hotspur, is hoping he can again disrupt the dominance of Pep Guardiola and Jurgen Klopp.

Spurs finished fourth last term, securing a return



to the Champions League, but their improvement under Conte and smart moves in the market have created the belief that they can further improve.

Premier League clubs have splashed an estimated £1 billion (\$1.2 billion) in the arms race for new talent

ahead of the start to the 2022-23 season on Friday, but champions City remain the side to beat.

After winning four league titles in five years, Pep Guardiola's squad has been bolstered by the biggest name arrival of the summer in Erling Haaland.

The Norwegian had his choice of Europe's top clubs after scoring 85 goals in 88 games for Borussia Dortmund and followed in the footsteps of his father Alf Inge -- a former City captain -- to the blue side of Manchester.

Haaland may have had a debut to forget as he missed a glaring opportunity towards the end of City's 3-1 Community Shield defeat to Liverpool on Saturday, but Guardiola warned the pretenders to his side's throne that "the goals will come".

Haaland has also warned the contenders to Manchester City's title that he will only improve in the competitive environment of English football as the Norwegian prepares for his Premier League debut away to West Ham on Sunday.

Haaland is the marquee arrival to the Premier League from over £1 billion (\$1.2 billion) spent by the 20 top-flight English clubs so far this summer.

The 22-year-old had his pick of top clubs after scoring 86 goals in 89 games for Borussia Dortmund, but said the demands of playing under Pep Guardiola was behind his reason for choosing City.