

# Kiran explains position to ACC

SPORTS REPORTER

**The Anti-Corruption Commission (ACC) yesterday interrogated Mahfuza Akhter Kiran, an executive member of Bangladesh Football Federation and Asian Football Confederation, after Begum Anwara Sporting Club lodged a complaint of embezzling sponsorship money against her in May this year.**

The Bangladesh Women's Football League outfit also alleged that Kiran laundered money from the BFF to Canada and Malaysia and embezzled foreign donations related to the footballers. The letter also stated that



Kiran herself demanded Tk 2 lakh bribe from the club, which was later not allowed to play in the league. It also claimed that she disbursed Tk 500 instead of Tk 5000 to the footballers during the pandemic. Denying all allegations brought against her, Kiran said she is ready to provide all documents to the ACC. "I went to ACC to help it and submitted all types of data and information I have. The properties that I possess have been declared through my income tax file up to 2021," Kiran told reporters at her BFF office. "Such complaints had been brought against me previously too, but ACC had cleared me of those allegations." "I have no involvement with BFF's financial matters. There is a purchase committee and I am not even a member of that committee. I notified ACC in black and white that I have no involvement with the BFF finances since I was elected member in 2016. I even submitted BFF's audited reports from 2016 to 2022 to the AC," added Kiran.



**Barcelona's latest teenage sensation Lamine Yamal has left many tongues wagging after his stellar performance against Tottenham on Tuesday helped the Spanish side beat Tottenham 4-2 and claim the Joan Gamper Trophy at the Estadi Olimpic Lluis Companys, their temporary new home. Coming in as an 80th-minute substitute with the game at 2-1, the La Masia graduate played a pivotal role in three late goals as Xavi Hernandez's side pulled out a thrilling performance.**

PHOTO: REUTERS



**Bangladesh head coach Chandika Hathurusingha returned to the country yesterday as players await the coach's guidance for the official training camp ahead of the Asia Cup. Meanwhile, spin-bowling coach Rangana Herath took a hands-on approach in instructing the Tigers' spin unit at the Sher-e-Bangla National Cricket Stadium.**

PHOTO: FIROZ AHMED

# Why the pause?

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Bangladesh team continued their training camp yesterday with the players going through the gears, doing endurance training along with some fielding exercises. There was even a specific drill for spinners that caught the media's interest. In the corner wicket, the spinners bowled in tandem as spin coach Rangana Herath watched over proceedings. There were footballs used to mark the lengths the spinners would bowl, and later Herath would tell them which bowl to deliver after coming half way through their run up. It was an exercise to allow spinners to make quick adjustments especially in circumstances where the batter makes a movement or comes down the track. While proceedings are grinding along, however, the only thing that is on halt and adding a bit of uncertainty to Tigers' proceedings is determining the ODI side's captain. Coach Chandika Hathurusingha also arrived in the country yesterday and training would now get more momentum from the coming days. What appeared a pretty straightforward captaincy announcement at first, even to Bangladesh Cricket Board (BCB) directors, now seems a little foggy as the board did not name the captain following an emergency board meeting on Tuesday. A few rumours regarding obstacles in naming Shakib Al Hasan as captain also made its way into the media fraternity.

Why the wait? Tamim Iqbal stepping down from captaincy so close to big events had seen the board try and step back to assess the situation at hand. The emergency meeting cleared that BCB president now has the mandate to move ahead with negotiations. "The wait is because Tamim was there as captain and him not being there [having stepped down] caused this situation in the first place. Since some of



them [captaincy candidates] are also due in the country, we wanted to talk to them and then confirm. We haven't talked to them yet. Emergency board meeting was called to ask for everyone's [directors'] opinion," a BCB high-up told The Daily Star on conditions of anonymity. Although many within BCB had assumed that the captaincy decision would come, the board wanted to discuss their terms and conditions, while also

assessing the terms Shakib would put forward, before holding talks with the candidates. Asked if communication with Shakib had taken place, he informed, "No. First the board wanted to discuss issues with directors before communicating with players. Some of the players are supposed to arrive soon [to the country] and in one or two days the captaincy will be finalised." BCB sources also have now confirmed that despite there being a delay, Shakib's possibility of becoming the captain is the greatest. "The BCB president has also said that if he can carry the responsibility, the board doesn't have an issue," another BCB source told The Daily Star on conditions of anonymity. The delay was since Shakib already has the Test and T20I captaincy, there is a bit of stiffness from the board's part to give him another big task. "We will talk to him to try to understand how he feels comfortable, and then that is how we will take things forward," the source added. With Hathurusingha now also back in the country, maybe some final details would be discussed with the head coach as well before the captaincy discussion moves forward. The wait, however, is only prolonging scope for rumours with the team management looking to name the Asia Cup squad.

# Where are the woman coaches amid all the vibes?

AFP, AUCKLAND

The World Cup in Australia and New Zealand has showcased the strides made in women's football on the field in recent years -- while exposing the lack of woman coaches at all levels of the sport. As the tournament heads into the quarter-finals, England boss Sarina Wiegman is the only woman left on the touchline. The first 32-team Women's World Cup began with 12 woman coaches. That's 37.5 percent, exactly the same as at the World Cup in 2019, when nine of the 24 teams in France had a woman at the helm. "It is a problem not only on the international stage but at every level in the women's game," said Randy Waldrum, the American coach of the Nigeria team that lost on penalties to Wiegman's England in the last 16. "We need more women coaching in the sport." In England, where women's football is highly professional, five of the 12 teams in the Women's Super League finished last season with a woman manager. In some other countries, including at the World Cup, women's football has only recently turned professional or

even remains an amateur sport. Many within the game believe that more woman coaches will inevitably filter through once women's football has had longer to take hold. "There's naturally more male coaches," Wales manager Gemma Grainger told Sky Sports earlier this year. "The men's game has been



professional for much longer and we see that transfer of male coaches into the women's game, and that's the state we're at in this moment." Although the proportion of woman coaches at this World Cup is the same as four years ago, there are hints of isolated progress. Shui Qingxia played for China at the inaugural Women's World Cup in 1991

and was in charge of the team at this edition, becoming the first woman to coach China. "What we hope is that that balance gets right in the future and we are working on that, at least in England," said Wiegman. Wiegman is the standard-bearer for woman managers, having won the European Championship with her native Netherlands in 2017 before taking them to the World Cup final two years later. She then won the Euro again last year with England. The Lionesses are favourites to lift the World Cup in Australia and New Zealand, and if they do, Wiegman will be the third woman coach in a row to win it. The USA lifted back-to-back World Cups in 2015 and 2019 under Jill Ellis. At the previous three Olympics, Bev Priestman with Canada, Silvia Neid (Germany) and Pia Sundhage (United States) have all managed teams to gold. The 2019 Women's World Cup final was the second, after 2003, to feature a woman in both dugouts. That will not be repeated this year after Hege Riise's Norway, Inka Grings' Switzerland and Desiree Ellis's South Africa were all beaten in the last 16.

# Dates of nine WC matches changed

AFP, New Delhi

India's clash with archrivals Pakistan in this year's ODI World Cup has been brought forward a day to October 14 among eight other fixture changes, the International Cricket Council (ICC) said Wednesday. The world's biggest cricket stadium in Ahmedabad will host the hotly anticipated match, originally set for October 15 at the same venue. Fixtures for the 50-over World Cup were originally published in June after weeks of delays arising from Pakistan's reluctance to travel to India. Wednesday's overhaul of the schedule, less than two months before the tournament begins, came after the Board of Control for Cricket in India said foreign teams had requested changes. Indian media reports said Ahmedabad officials had raised concerns about their ability to provide adequate security because the match was originally scheduled at the start of a nine-day Hindu religious festival. India and Pakistan are bitter adversaries and only play cricket against each other in international tournaments due to longstanding political tensions. Pakistan had agreed to visit India after they agreed to jointly host September's Asia Cup, allowing India to play its matches in Sri Lanka.

## BANGLADESH'S FIXTURES



Opponent	Venue	Date	Start time
Afghanistan	Dharamsala	Oct 7	11:00am
England	Dharamsala	Oct 10	11:00am
New Zealand	Chennai	Oct 13	2:30pm
India	Pune	Oct 19	2:30pm
South Africa	Mumbai	Oct 24	2:30pm
Netherlands	Kolkata	Oct 28	2:30pm
Pakistan	Kolkata	Oct 31	2:30pm
Sri Lanka	Delhi	Nov 6	2:30pm
Australia	Pune	Nov 11	11:00am

But it was only this week that the Pakistan Cricket Board got approval from their government to make the India trip for the 50-over World Cup. Any match between the South Asian neighbours therefore becomes one of the most-watched events on the global sporting calendar, and any victory is used to promote nationalism at home. When they do play, cricket fans around the world are glued to their TV screens in a multi-billion-dollar bonanza for broadcasters. Among the other changes, Pakistan's match against Sri Lanka has been brought forward by two days and will now be played on October 10. Australia's match against South Africa in Lucknow will be played on October 12 instead of the following day. England will take on Afghanistan in Delhi on October 15, a day after the original date. New Zealand's game against Bangladesh, originally scheduled as a day match for October 14 in Chennai, will now be held on October 13 as a day-night contest. England's match-up against Bangladesh in Dharamsala has now become a day match after it was originally scheduled to be played under lights. Tickets for the World Cup will go on sale on August 25, the ICC said.

# PCB announces Asia Cup squad

AFP, Lahore

Allrounder Faheem Ashraf has been recalled to a strong Pakistan squad for the three-match series against Afghanistan and subsequent Asia Cup, Pakistan Cricket Board (PCB) selectors announced Wednesday. The 29-year-old played the last of his 31 ODIs in England in July 2021 but chief selector Inzamam-ul-Haq said his efforts warranted selection. "We have picked 18 players for the Afghanistan series and one less for the Asia Cup and Ashraf was the best pace-bowling allrounder available to us," Inzamam said in Lahore. Babar Azam will lead the squad throughout. The ODI series against Afghanistan will be played on August 22, 24, and 26 in Sri Lanka, while the Asia Cup is scheduled to start from August 30. Middle-order batter Saud Shakeel is also recalled after a year-long gap but will only be part of the Afghanistan series.