

BCB POLLS DRAMA SO FAR

Set for October 6, the Bangladesh Cricket Board (BCB) election has been nothing short of dramatic. Here are the events that have transpired so far:

Sept 1: BCB election announced

After a board of directors' meeting in Sylhet, BCB vice-president Nazmul Abedeen Fahim announced that the polls would take place in the first week of October. A three-member Election Commission (EC) was formed, with BCB CEO Nizamuddin Chowdhury issuing letters to Division and District Sports Associations, Dhaka Metropolis Clubs and their other affiliated organisations, asking them to send their councillors' names by September 17.

Sept 14: BCB extends councillorship deadline

BCB extended the submission deadline for councillor nomination, pushing it to September 19 from 17.

Sept 18: Further extension

BCB president Aminul Islam Bulbul sent a letter to the secretary of the Ministry of Youth and Sports, mentioning the new letters the board sent to those divisions and districts that didn't follow the process of nominating councillors from the ad hoc committee. As a result, the deadline was extended to September 22.

Sept 19: Voices raised over Bulbul's letter

A group of organisers under the Bangladesh District and Divisional Sports Organiser Association issued a letter to divisional and deputy commissioners, asking them not to follow Bulbul's 'misinterpreted' letter regarding the councillorship nomination.

Sept 21: Tamim alleges 'government interference'

In a press conference held by an alliance of Bangladesh's district and divisional sports organisers, Tamim Iqbal alleged 'government interference' in BCB polls. EC set October 6 as the date for the election.

Sept 22: First involvement of court

A Supreme Court chamber judge stayed, until September 28, a High Court order that had suspended the effectiveness of Bulbul's letter. Draft voter list, expected to be revealed, got deferred by a day.

Sept 23: Draft voter list revealed

EC revealed a list of 171 councillors, without 15 clubs, who were excluded due to several irregularities, under investigation by the Anti-Corruption Commission (ACC). EC did not receive councillors' names from six districts.

Sept 24: EC receives objections on draft voter list

A total of 38 objections on the draft voter list were received, with hearings held the following day.

Sept 26: 15 clubs included in final voter list

A final voter list of 191 councillors was revealed, including 15 clubs and five districts.

Sept 27: Candidates collect nominations

Of the 60 nomination forms collected, 25 were from Category 1, 32 from Category 2 and three from Category 3. Bulbul collected his nomination form from the Dhaka Division, while Tamim collected his in the club category.

Sept 28: Nomination submission

A total of 51 candidates submitted their nomination forms.

Sept 29: EC rejects three nominations

EC rejected three nominations after screening.

Sept 30: More court drama unfolds

A HC bench issued a stay order on former president Faruque Ahmed's writ petition challenging the inclusion of 15 clubs. Following the order, the 15 disputed clubs lost their voting rights. Also, EC heard five appeals, granted two.

Oct 1: Tamim and Co withdraw from BCB polls

Tamim and 15 others withdrew their nomination forms, citing government interference and conspiracy. EC later announced a final list of 33 candidates. Among them, six directors were elected unopposed from Category 1, while there will be elections in Dhaka Division (3), Rajshahi Division (3), Rangpur Division (3), Category 2 (16) and Category 3 (2).



Tigresses eye to 'set the tone' against Pak

SPORTS REPORTER

Bangladesh will begin their campaign in the ICC Women's World Cup 2025 today with arguably their biggest match in the league phase against Pakistan at the R Premadasa Stadium in Colombo.

Heading into their second-ever appearance in the tournament, the Tigresses have set a realistic goal for themselves to outdo their performance in the 2022 edition in New Zealand, where they won one out of seven matches.

That sole victory had come against Pakistan in Hamilton, where a 71-run knock from Fargana Hoque laid the foundation for a nine-run victory.

Captain Nigar Sultana Joty, who had scored a valuable 46 in that game, is once again leading the side in the mega event and is hopeful that her teammates can beat their South Asian rivals again to kick off their campaign on the right foot.

"A lot has changed after that [2022 World Cup]. It's a new day. It will be a good opportunity for the team to get a good start tomorrow [Thursday], definitely, because it's the opener for us. It will set up a good tone for the whole tournament," Joty said in the pre-match press conference on Wednesday.

"For us, it is a good thing to play against Pakistan because we have played together for a long time and we know each other. We played against them in the qualifiers and have played bilateral series as well. So, it could be a good contest," she added.

The Bangladesh camp was struck by the news of their head coach Sarwar Imran suffering a minor stroke on



Monday. Sarwar's condition has since stabilised, and he is at the team hotel, Joty confirmed to the media.

Before the tournament, the coach had earmarked two opponents in the eight-team event – Pakistan and Sri Lanka – believing they had a good chance of beating them.

Going by the ICC WODI rankings, his assertion holds weight as the Tigresses are currently sitting at seventh, sandwiched between Sri Lanka (sixth) and Pakistan (eighth).

Bangladesh are aiming for gradual ascension with a goal of two victories, but fulfilling such a target is easier said than done – just ask the Tigers.

The Bangladesh men's team had burst onto the scenes with two wins in their maiden World Cup appearance in 1999, against Pakistan and Scotland, but in the following edition they went winless, even losing to Canada.

Even in women's cricket, consistent

progression in global events is hard to accomplish.

Pakistan, for example, didn't win any games in their maiden World Cup appearance in 1997, then won two matches in 2009, only to go winless in the 2013 and 2017 and winning just one game in the last edition to finish dead last in the eight-team event.

The Tigresses have not played any international matches since the World Cup Qualifiers in Pakistan in April. Their first warm-up game for the World Cup got rained out against South Africa and in the second and final one, they beat Sri Lanka by one run in Colombo on Saturday.

Batter Sharmin Akter Supra top-scored with 71 and star left-arm spinner Nahida Akter claimed three wickets in that match. Skipper Nigar would hope that these players will carry their form into the Pakistan tie and start the tournament with a crucial win.



After missing the reporting on Monday and skipping the first training session the following day over the club's decision not to release players, Mohammedan Sporting Club's six footballers eventually joined the national team's camp and trained with the 20 other players at the National Stadium yesterday. PHOTO: FIROZ AHMED

Niaz crowned national chess champion again



SPORTS REPORTER

Grandmaster Niaz Murshed became unbeaten champion in the 49th National Chess Championship with 10.5 points after beating FM Subroto Biswas in the final and 13th round, held at Level 4 of Youth Tower in Shewrapara, Dhaka yesterday.

The eighth win alongside five draws in 13 matches saw Niaz clinch the title of the national championship for the seventh time overall and first since 2019.

The latest title makes the 59-year-old the second highest winner in the national championship following late GM Ziaur Rahman, who won the title 14 times.

Niaz and IM Fahad Rahman had started the last round with 9.5 points each. But Fahad lost to Mohammad Saker Ullah, settling instead for a runner-up finish with 9.5 points.

SHORT CORNER

Aus ease to six-wicket win against NZ

An unbeaten maiden century by New Zealand's Tim Robinson wasn't enough to deny Australia a comfortable six-wicket win in the opening Twenty20 at Bay Oval on Wednesday. Captain Mitchell Marsh made 85 off 43 balls as they raced to 185-4 off 16.3 overs, cahsing a 182-run target.

Abhishek sets T20I rating points record

India's flamboyant opener Abhishek Sharma has set a new rating points record for batters in the ICC Men's T20I Player Rankings after his Player of the Series effort in the Asia Cup. The 25-year-old reached 931 ratings point, which is 12 more than the previous best rating of 919 attained by England's Dawid Malan in 2020.

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Tigers hope to go level with Afghans

Just days after beating Afghanistan in a crucial Asia Cup game and pushing them to the brink of elimination in the process, the Jaker Ali-led Bangladesh will be taking on Rashid Khan and Co in a three-match T20I series in Sharjah

from today. The second and third matches are scheduled for October 3 and 5, respectively, at the same venue, before the teams move to Abu Dhabi for a three-match ODI series, starting from October 8.

Bangladesh will be hoping to go level on head-to-head in T20Is with Afghanistan when they face the hosts tonight. The Tigers have won six and lost seven of their 13 T20Is against the Afghans.

The Tigers, however, have lost just one of their last four T20Is against Afghanistan.



LIVERPOOL STUNNED IN ISTANBUL

Victor Osimhen's first-half penalty sealed a bitter night in Istanbul for Liverpool on Tuesday. Galatasaray's supporters had set the tone long before kickoff, lighting up the skies outside the Reds' hotel with a relentless midnight fireworks barrage on the eve of the Champions League clash. That same ferocity carried into the stadium, where the deafening atmosphere drove the hosts to a 1-0 victory that sent fans into another night of celebration. Liverpool, who were on a roll with seven straight wins in all competitions, have now slumped to back-to-back defeats after last week's Premier League setback at Crystal Palace. Earlier in the evening, Kylian Mbappe struck a hat-trick in Real Madrid's 5-0 demolition of Kairat, Jose Mourinho's return to Chelsea with Benfica ended in a narrow 1-0 loss, and Lautaro Martinez's brace powered last year's finalists Inter past Slavia Praha 3-0. Harry Kane netted twice in Bayern Munich's 5-1 away rout of Pafos, while Atletico Madrid matched that scoreline at home against Frankfurt.

PHOTO: X

