

## PAY BOOST FOR WOMEN, but equality still elusive

SAMSUL AREFIN KHAN

Step into the Sher-e-Bangla National Cricket Stadium in Mirpur, and the contrast is striking. Rows of sleek cars gleam in the parking lot – most owned by men's national cricketers, board directors, coaches, and staff. Among them, there's barely a sign of a car belonging to a woman cricketer. The scene reflects a reality that speaks louder than any statistic.

Even after years of representing the country, most women cricketers

cannot afford to enjoy the comforts that male counterparts take for granted.

Recently, Bangladesh Cricket Board (BCB) announced a 35 percent pay rise for women's cricketers and aligned their daily allowances and tour fees with the men's team. Players in four categories will now earn Tk 80,000–Tk 1,60,000 a month. The BCB also expanded the women's national contract list from 30 to 35, though monthly salaries remain Tk 30,000. By contrast, 21 male national

cricketers earn between Tk two lakh and Tk 10 lakh, while another 100 first-class players take home Tk 30,000–40,000.

Pay disparity is not unique to Bangladesh, but boards in India, Australia, and New Zealand already offer equal match fees. In Bangladesh, men earn Tk 2 lakh–Tk 8 lakh per international match, compared to Tk 50,000–Tk 1 lakh for women.

The BCB deserves credit for progress, but the scenario is far from ideal. Women's wing chairman and former national spinner Abdur Razzak had informed The Daily Star that they aim to "increase match fees gradually".

For many players, survival remains the pressing concern. One who lost her central contract after two years admitted thinking of quitting. She described earnings that are "barely enough to survive".

Limited matches make things worse. "In domestic cricket, it's even worse – the men's cricketers got Tk 40,000 per match in the NCL T20 this year, while we got Tk 3,000 last

• A total of 21 male cricketers and 15 female cricketers are currently under the BCB's central contract.

• While there are three categories -- A, B, and C -- with monthly salaries of Tk 40,000, Tk 35,000, and Tk 30,000, respectively, for the 100 nationally contracted male cricketers, the 35 female cricketers under national contract are not categorised and receive Tk 30,000 per month.

• In the recent NCL T20, male cricketers received Tk 40,000 as match fee, whereas in the last women's NCL, players received only Tk 3,000.

• Recently, the BCB equalled the day allowance and tour fee for male and female cricketers. From now on, both will receive USD 75 as day allowance and USD 50 as tour fee per day during international assignments, except during ICC and ACC events.



• In last year's women's DPL, many female cricketers did not receive the promised remuneration from their respective clubs. A few top players earned around Tk 9-10 lakh, while some others reportedly played for wages of around Tk 20-30 thousand.

### CENTRAL CONTRACTED PLAYERS

Grade	Male	Female
A+	10 lakh	N/A
A	8 lakh	1.6 lakh
B	6 lakh	1.35 lakh
C	4 lakh	95k
D	2 lakh	80k

### MATCH FEE

Format	Male	Female
Test	8 lakh	N/A
ODI	4 lakh	1 lakh
T20I	2.5 lakh	50k

\*\*All figures are in BDT

### Joy returns to Test squad

SPORTS REPORTER

Mahmudul Hasan Joy was recalled as Bangladesh announced a 14-member squad for the upcoming two-match Test series against Ireland, starting on November 11 in Sylhet.

The Tigers last played Test cricket in June against Sri Lanka, where they lost 1-0. Three players from that squad – off-spinner Nayeem Hasan, Anamul Haque Bijoy and Mahidul Islam Ankon – were left out.

Joy earned his place back after scoring a century in the recent National Cricket League T20.

The second Test will be played at the Sher-e-Bangla National Cricket Stadium in Mirpur.

**SQUAD:** Najmul Hossain Shanto (Captain), Shadman Islam, Mahmudul Hasan Joy, Mominul Haque, Mushfiqur Rahim, Litton Das, Jaker Ali, Mehidy Hasan Miraz, Tajul Islam, Khaled Ahmed, Hasan Mahmud, Nahid Rana, Ebadot Hossain, Hasan Murad

## Beyond technique: Ashraful focuses on the mental side

After more than a decade, former Bangladesh captain and arguably the most naturally gifted batter the country has ever produced, **Mohammad Ashraful**, is set to return to the national setup but in a different role. The Bangladesh Cricket Board (BCB) has appointed him as the specialist batting coach for the upcoming home series against Ireland this month. Few understand Bangladesh's persistent batting woes better than Ashraful. In an interview with *The Daily Star's* Bishwajit Roy, he shared his thoughts on his new role.

### On his appointment

It's undoubtedly an exciting and proud moment for me. I've played for and captained the national side, and now I'm returning as a coach. That's very special. I completed my Level 3 coaching certification three years ago and gained experience through roles in the DPL, BPL, and NCL. My stint with Rangpur Riders, in particular, gave me valuable insights. But working with the national team is a completely different challenge; every move will be under scrutiny.

### On the challenges ahead

The expectations are higher than ever, and results are what matter. But I'm optimistic because I'll be working with players I know well – experienced names like Litton Das, Mehidy Hasan Miraz, and Mushfiqur Rahim, who've all spent over a decade in international cricket.

### On his goals and Bangladesh's batting issues

My main focus will be on the



mental side of batting. At this level, there's little scope to change a player's technique. In my view, technique isn't our biggest issue, it's the mental side of the game. We often lack game understanding and awareness, which is why our batters get good starts but fail to convert them. This has been a persistent problem since my playing days. To build a strong batting unit, players must think for

themselves – develop individual game plans and read match situations better. My experience playing in England taught me the value of understanding your game. Talent alone doesn't guarantee success if you don't understand your own game and can't read the game. Take Litton's recent T20I innings or Soumya's [Sarkar] knock against West Indies – both show lapses in game

awareness. Mushfiqur Rahim, on the other hand, succeeds because of his discipline and cricketing intelligence.

### On bridging the gap between domestic and international cricket

The biggest question in our cricket is why players fail to carry their domestic form into the international arena. Again, it comes down to game awareness and individual planning. Domestic and international cricket may look similar, but the standard is vastly different. At the top level, you face five quality bowlers on challenging surfaces. You must adapt quickly and understand your game deeply. Many players fail because they treat international matches like domestic ones. It's crucial to know when to take risks and when to hold back. If you're always chasing runs without reading the game, you'll struggle. That's the area I want to address – helping players think smarter and respond better to match situations.

In-form forward Erling Haaland will aim to become the first player to score in five consecutive Champions League appearances for three different teams (Manchester City, Borussia Dortmund, and Salzburg) when Manchester City host his former club, Borussia Dortmund, on Wednesday. It will be the seventh Champions League meeting between the two sides, with Dortmund winning only once in the previous six (D2 L3).

PHOTO: MANCHESTER CITY



## The irony in Cabrera's methods

SPORTS REPORTER

Top European leagues, along with the Champions League and Europa League, are still in full swing, with fixtures even scheduled on the eve of the upcoming international break from November 10 to 18.

But in contrast, Bangladesh's footballers have already shifted their focus to international duty, gearing up for the Asian Cup Qualifier against India on November 18 – the final day of the international window. They will also play a friendly against Nepal on November 13.

While the global football conversation revolves around player burnout amid relentless schedules, Bangladesh's situation remains quite the opposite. Here, players are not overworked by fixtures but by the structure that sidelines domestic football for prolonged national camps.

Head coach Javier Cabrera, who returned from a family visit to Spain and joined the ongoing camp on Tuesday, has once again opted for an extended training camp – an uncommon practice globally, especially when it comes at the expense of domestic competitions.

It seems only in Bangladesh that league football routinely pauses to accommodate the national coach's



PHOTO: FIROZ AHMED

plans. Yet Cabrera remains steadfast in his methods, continuing to rely on a familiar pool of 28 to 30 players for international fixtures. His reasoning, however, appears to contradict his own approach.

"The last three international windows are very close to one another. We always prepare in a similar way, with similar ideas. So, it's normal to give continuity to the same group," Cabrera said when asked whether Bangladesh have only 30 players of international quality.

Ironically, the coach for whom the domestic play gets halted also acknowledges that the absence of regular competition hinders the discovery of new talent. "We don't

have a consistent league or regular competition to see new players performing at a high enough level for national selection. That's why around 90 to 95 percent of the squad has remained unchanged in the past three months," he explained.

Cabrera also defended his decision not to expand the training squad: "If you start with 22 players and later add 12 more, the total becomes 30-35, and the quality of training drops. It's best to keep 25-27 players; otherwise, the difference in quality becomes too big."

As the camp continues, questions linger – whether this approach truly serves the long-term growth of Bangladesh football, and whether clubs, in a country where league culture still struggles to thrive, have what it takes to challenge it.

Teams like Bashundhara Kings and Mohammedan have sent players late to such camps. Kings even requested extra rest for their footballers after their AFC Challenge League campaign, confirming they would release them on November 7 – eight days after the camp had already begun.

And so, as Bangladesh resumes another long training stretch, the country's football still waits for balance – between preparation and progress.



বাংলাদেশ নির্বাচন কমিশন  
নির্বাচন কমিশন সচিবালয়

### বিজ্ঞপ্তি

নং- ১৭.০০.০০০০.০২৫.৫০.০৯২.২৪ (অংশ) -৭৬৫

তারিখঃ ০৪ নভেম্বর ২০২৫

রাজনৈতিক দল নিবন্ধন বিধিমালা, ২০০৮ এর বিধি ৭(২) এর অধীন বিজ্ঞপ্তি

এতদ্বারা সর্বসাধারণের অবগতির জন্য জানানো যাইতেছে যে, "জাতীয় নাগরিক পার্টি-এনসিপি"

কে, ঠিকানা: রূপায়ন ট্রেড সেন্টার (২য় তলা) ১১৪, কাজী নজরুল ইসলাম এভিনিউ, বাংলামোটর, ঢাকা-

১২০৫, Representation of the People Order, 1972 (PO No.155 of 1972) এর

Chapter VIA এর আওতায় রাজনৈতিক দল হিসাবে নিবন্ধনের জন্য দলের আহ্বায়ক জনাব মোঃ নাহিদ

ইসলাম এবং সদস্য সচিব জনাব আখতার হোসেন নির্বাচন কমিশনের নিকট একটি দরখাস্ত পেশ

করিয়াছেন। উহাদের প্রার্থিত প্রতীক "শাপলা কলি"।

উক্ত রাজনৈতিক দলের নিবন্ধনের বিষয়ে কাহারও কোন আপত্তি থাকিলে প্রয়োজনীয় দলিলাদিসহ

উহার কারণ উল্লেখপূর্বক ১২.১১.২০২৫ তারিখের মধ্যে নিম্নস্বাক্ষরকারীর নিকট লিখিতভাবে জানাইবার জন্য

অনুরোধ করা হইল।

আখতার আহমেদ  
সিনিয়র সচিব

নির্বাচন কমিশন সচিবালয়