

What to WATCH	T Sports	Premier League	Live from 8:05 pm
	India vs South Africa	Crystal Palace vs Man Utd	Nottingham Forest vs Brighton
	1st ODI	Live from 6:00 pm	Live from 8:05
	Live from 2:00 pm	West Ham vs Liverpool	Chelsea vs Arsenal
	Star Sports Select HD1 and HD2		Live from 10:30 pm

BCB drops red-flagged players from BPL auction

SPORTS REPORTER

A day before the players' auction for the 12th Bangladesh Premier League (BPL), scheduled for today, the Bangladesh Cricket Board (BCB) excluded several local cricketers from the auction list who are under suspicion of being involved in fixing-related irregularities in the previous edition.

The decision came following the recommendation of Alex Marshall, the Independent Chair of the board's Integrity Unit, who advised the board not to include any cricketers or officials who were "red-flagged" by the board's inquiry committee for alleged corrupt activities during the last BPL season.

According to documents obtained by The Daily Star, seven local cricketers who were part of the draft list, which was sent to the six franchises on November 26, have been dropped. The final list now includes 158 local players who alongside 267 overseas players will go under the hammer today.

Out of the omissions, the two biggest names are Anamul Haque Bijoy and Mosaddek Hossain -- domestic veterans who have played for Bangladesh across three formats and were placed in Category C in the draft list. The other excluded cricketers are: Alauddin Babu (Category D), Nihaduzzaman (Category E), Sunzamul Islam (Category E), Shafiqul Islam (Category F), and Mizanur Rahman (Category F).

The BCB clarified its position in a press release issued in the evening, saying that based on the advice of its Integrity Unit's Chair, "a number of individuals, including some players, have not been invited to participate in this year's tournament."

- » The players' auction is returning to the Bangladesh Premier League (BPL) T20 after 12 years. The first two editions in 2012 and 2013 used an auction system, while the next nine seasons followed a draft format.

» This auction will be conducted by Ormaan Rafay Nizam, who also oversaw the previous two BPL auctions.

» Six franchises have already directly signed 12 local and 11 foreign players. A total of 158 local and 267 overseas players will go under the hammer.
- » Franchise bids will range from BDT 50,000 to BDT 500,000 across six local player categories, and from USD 1,000 to USD 5,000 across five overseas categories.

» Each franchise must acquire at least 12 local players and at least two overseas players through the auction.

» The local players' purse has been set at BDT 4.5 crore (excluding direct signings), while the overseas purse is USD 350,000 (including direct signings).

The board also clarified that the decision applies only to the BPL and does not affect participation in other domestic tournaments.

The exclusion came as a shock to Bijoy, who told The Daily Star that he is considering legal action.

"I am not getting anyone on the phone, and no one is responding. Why did they exclude me? What evidence do they have? I need to know. They haven't informed me of anything," Bijoy said.

"I will definitely ask for the evidence. If they cannot show any, I will demand them to restore my reputation."

As the BCB is yet to officially name anyone for involvement in fixing related activities, some members of the cricket fraternity questioned how fair was the decision to exclude them from BPL.

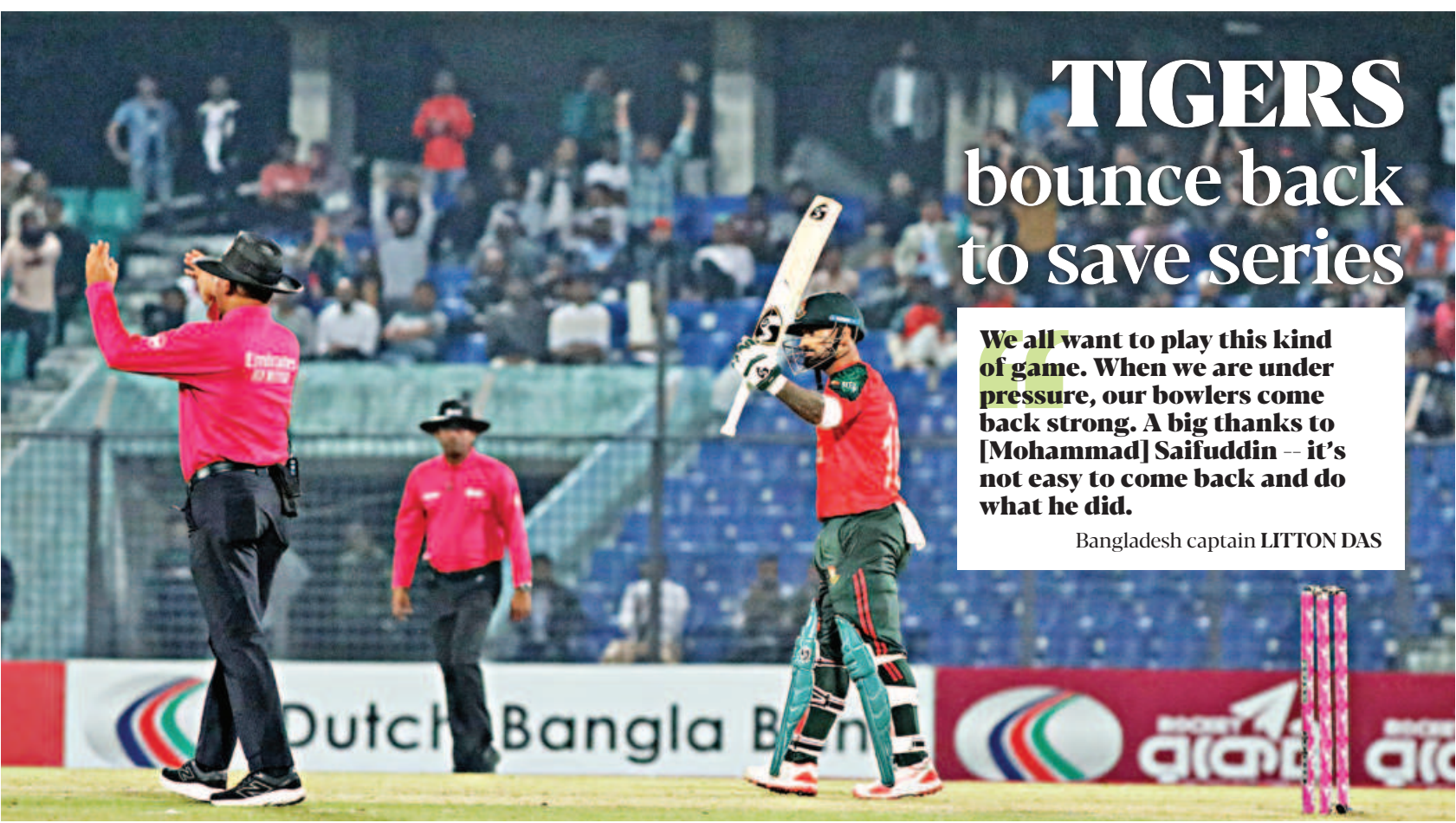
But the BPL Governing Council member Iftekhar Rahman Mithu strongly defended this move.

"As the Governing Council, we have every right," Mithu said yesterday after the conclusion of an integrity session conducted by the ACU and a pre-auction orientation on auction procedures for all six franchises.

"We established a process where injured players cannot be on the list, and flagged players will not be on the list. This is entirely our decision and within our jurisdiction. Those who feel they have been unfairly included in the red-flag list have appeal processes available."

Meanwhile, following widespread criticism, several domestic performers like Mohammad Rubel, Iftekhar Hossain Ifi, Tawfiq Khan Tushar, and Nuhayel Sandeed were added in the final list. Some players were also shifted in different categories.

Earlier, on February 3, the BCB formed a three-member Independent Evaluation Committee to investigate the 11th BPL. After nine months, the committee submitted a 900-page report on October 28.



TIGERS bounce back to save series

We all want to play this kind of game. When we are under pressure, our bowlers come back strong. A big thanks to [Mohammad] Saifuddin -- it's not easy to come back and do what he did.

Bangladesh captain LITTON DAS

Led by skipper Litton Das, Bangladesh clinched a four-wicket win in the second T20I against Ireland, levelling the three-match series 1-1 at the Bir Sreshtho Flight Lieutenant Matiur Rahman Stadium in Chattogram yesterday. After a 39-run defeat in the first game, where Bangladesh's batting struggled, and Litton managed only a solitary run, the captain struck a team-high 57 off 37 balls to chase down a 171-run target with two balls remaining -- their highest T20I chase at home. The Tigers wobbled late, losing four wickets for 19 runs at a crucial stage, but solid contributions from Parvez Hossain Emon (43 off 28) and Saif Hassan (22 off 17), along with late blows from Mohammad Saifuddin (17* off 7) -- recalled as one of three changes -- ensured Bangladesh crossed the finish line.



Amirul Islam (3rd from L) raises his arm as his teammates congratulate him following one of his three goals against Australia in the opening match of the FIH Junior Hockey World Cup at the Mayor Radhakrishnan Hockey Stadium in Chennai yesterday. The drag and flick specialist was adjudged player of the match for his impressive display as Bangladesh, playing their debut match in any level of world cup in hockey, put up a brave fight in a 5-3 defeat against the former champions.

1st Division League to start on Dec 11

SPORTS REPORTER

Bangladesh Cricket Board (BCB) president Aminul Islam Bulbul announced on Saturday that the upcoming Dhaka First Division Cricket League is scheduled to begin on December 11, featuring 12 teams instead of 20.

"We've decided to start the league on December 11. Those players who have already collected tokens will be able to complete fresh transfers on December 5 and 6," Bulbul told reporters at The Westin Dhaka following a meeting with representatives from several Dhaka clubs, the Cricketers Welfare Association of Bangladesh (CWAB), and players from various leagues.

The BCB hosted the tea-party inviting all 76 Dhaka clubs in hope of resolving the ongoing crisis surrounding the timely commencement of the leagues. However, only 31 clubs attended, while the remaining 45 -- who have been voicing concerns over the legitimacy of the current cricket board, alleged irregularities in the recent board elections, and other grievances -- did not participate.

Despite postponing the league's start date twice, the Cricket Committee of Dhaka Metropolis (CCDM) failed to convince the boycotting clubs to join.

BCB vice-president Faruque Ahmed said they would continue efforts to bring the dissenting clubs back into the competition and hinted at the possibility of organising an alternative tournament if needed.

"We'll arrange something so they get opportunities to play and benefit financially -- such a decision has been made," he said.

Meanwhile, CWAB president Mohammad Mithun assured that steps are being taken to ensure players are not left without opportunities.



Azerbaijan players celebrate one of their two goals during a 2-0 victory against Malaysia in the second match of the Tri-Nation Series at the Miral Stadium in Dhaka on Saturday. Peritan Bozdog gave Azerbaijan an early lead with a volley before Nigar Miraziyeva's long-range effort gave them a 2-0 cushion before half-time. The scoreline did not change after the restart as Azerbaijan claimed pole position in the three-team competition ahead of the last game against Bangladesh, who lost their first match against Malaysia 1-0, scheduled for Tuesday.

Five-star Kings go top as MSC slump

SPORTS REPORTER

Bashundhara Kings stormed to the top of the Bangladesh Football League table with a commanding 5-0 victory over Rahmatgonj MFS, while Mohammedan Sporting Club suffered a setback as they crashed to a 2-0 defeat against Young Men's Fikirerpool in Manikganj on Saturday.

At their home venue, Kings looked ruthless from the outset. The five-time champions broke the deadlock in the 27th minute through Rakib Hossain, who finished off a fluent attacking move. Just before the breather, Faysal Ahmed Fahim doubled the lead with a neat strike in the 45th minute, ensuring Kings went into halftime firmly in control.

The second half turned into a one-way show as Kings piled on the pressure. Centre-back Topu Barman added the third in the 71st minute before Nigerian forward Emmanuel Agbaji made it 4-0 just three minutes later, capitalising on Rahmatgonj's defensive frailties.

Brazilian striker Dorielson Gomes completed the rout in the 78th minute with a composed finish.

While Kings soared, Mohammedan endured a frustrating outing at the Shaheed Miraj-Tapan Stadium in Manikganj, where they fell 2-0 to Young Men's Fikirerpool. Only days after defeating arch-rivals Abahani, Alfaz Ahmed's side appeared lacklustre and disjointed against the spirited newcomers.

The first half remained goalless despite both sides creating half-chances. Fikirerpool, who beat

Mohammedan last season in their debut campaign, broke the deadlock just two minutes into the second half. Amid a goalmouth scramble, Irfan Hossain reacted quickest to guide the ball home, putting Fikirerpool ahead.

They nearly doubled the lead in the 49th minute, but Mohammedan keeper Shakib Al Hasan's timely clearance denied further damage. Shakib, however, could not prevent the second goal in the 61st minute, when Ivorian forward Ben Ibrahim Ouattara dribbled past three defenders, exchanged a clever one-two with Arian Hossain and slotted in with composure to make it 2-0.

In the day's other match, Brothers Union held Bangladesh Police to a goalless draw at the Shaheed Barkat Stadium in Gazipur. The single point lifted Brothers to third place with three points.

With today's victory, Fikirerpool climbed to eighth with four points, overtaking Mohammedan, who dropped to ninth on equal points but behind on goal difference.



PHOTO: BFF