

BFF President Kazi Salahuddin's statement

We launched the third phase of football development plan in December. This plan, encompassing all aspects of football, will see us through 2020 and beyond. While we have already instituted new ways of doing things, we still have a long way to go.

The structure of these briefings will be very simple. I will try and update the people of this country, the media, about football activities, developments and achievements. This will be followed by a few questions from the media.

We have incorporated a more professional approach to every aspect of the game. In this regard we have acquired foreign expertise such as our Technical Director, Head of Goal Keeping, Head of Strength and Conditioning and we shall be adding more technical experts to our pool of human resource. I am certain we are already seeing the benefits of these new personnel that we have on our team.

Men's Senior National Team Camp

Let me begin with something that is ongoing, which is the national men's team's physical conditioning and assessment camp at BKSP in Savar. For the first time we are conducting such a camp which will primarily assess our players physiologically and biomechanically. What this means is that the players will be appraised and tested across a range of physical fitness categories throughout their 12 days at the camp. This will allow us to collate data and information on all our players. This is being done with scientific methods and analysis for all of the 62 selected players in two phases. The information will not only help the federation make better choices during selection but also help respective clubs not to mention the players themselves to understand their physical conditioning capacity and standards.

Such benchmarking would also help compare our players with those of other countries. As for the players, they have been very positive and have much to gain from this approach.

Japan Tournament

Another ongoing development is the Japan tour of the U16 girls' team who are competing in an international tournament. They are currently playing in the J Green Sakai Tournament and are there with other international teams and female teams of Japanese Academies. The players are staying at the Dream Camp in Osaka one of the JFA's National Centres. The girls are rubbing shoulders with J League professional clubs and Japanese national players both male and female who use the facilities. This will be a great eye-opener for these youngsters who now provide much of the firepower for our national women's team.

There will hopefully be many more of such tours and visits in line with the appropriate exposure planned in the third phase. The Women's U16 player development plan is an all round educational programme including physical, psychological, technical and tactical development.

(Senior Women's National Team - SAFF)

Not too long ago, the national women's team became runners up in SAFF championship for the first time. This was the best result in SAFF so far. Moreover, the fact that the Bengal Girls were unbeaten till the final match and in fact held India to a goalless draw at the group stage shows the resolve and potential of our young women's team.

In fact it was not just that Bangladesh was unbeaten through the tournament. That our women's team did not concede a single goal till they faced reigning champions India in the final match was all the more impressive. In addition, eight out of the starting eleven players were from the U16 team.

Super Mokh Cup - Malaysia

Another age level team that has done us proud is the U14 boys' team at the Super Mokh Cup in Malaysia where they became champions in the plate round. The team beat some of the power houses of world football during the tournament.

Last week, I hosted both the U14 boys' team and the U16 girls' team at my house to recognise their fine progress. This was also to show these young boys and girls that we are keen about their development and we are watching out for their welfare.

Elite Referee Development and Coach Education

The football federation has initiated a number of measures along eight development pillars for the evolution of the game. This includes referees and coaches too.

We held a 4-day Elite Referee Course in December under the direct supervision of FIFA. With 40 participants — 28 men, 2 women and 10 observers — this course was supervised by FIFA official Ismail Adnan Ismail Alhafibetween December 4 and December 8.

We also consider coach's education very important. Towards that end, BFF will conduct refresher courses for all coaches at all levels — classes A, B and C courses will be held in February. Participation in the four-hour workshop will ensure revalidation of coaching credentials and further knowledge development.

2017 will see a comprehensive programme of coaching courses at all levels of the game. A concerted effort on attracting and introducing more female coaches to the game will be a focus. The development and education of elite female coaches game is another objective that we intend to reach as part of our overall strategy to lift women's football, which is one of the development plan pillars. We are extremely serious about the investment and development of coaches in Bangladesh. If we are able to continue the growth of more educated coaches at all levels of the game then we are confident that technically better equipped players will also continue to grow.

Club Licensing

The Bangladesh Football Federation initiated dialogues with all the BPL and BCL professional clubs to ensure that there is a common understanding around club licensing regulations.

Workshops with the clubs not only sought their feedback but also looked forward to the 2017-18 season.

The technical director conducted these workshops and said the participants were keen about their responsibility. He said it was important for the development of the game and ensure continued membership according to the AFC rules.

The workshop looked forward to a closer relationship with the federation only to ensure an integrated partnership to fulfil requirements of the BFF and Asian Football Confederation Club Licensing Regulations. As AFC adopts a mandatory stance on club licensing and expects all clubs to have everything in place by 2018, we will be hosting AFC over a two-day period at the end of the month. We will work closely with our clubs during this time as regards club licensing compliance, youth development and club infrastructure.

U15 Talent Hunt

Our coaches at the grassroots level have been working closely with the districts and sub-districts to organise training sessions and scout U15 players. These coaches, who are an integral part of the grassroots coaching

and development initiative, have been visible throughout Bangladesh. It is through the efforts of these coaches that we have identified and recruited the best players for future development.

Tournaments

Local leagues and competitions are very important and an integral part of the structure that will recruit and produce more players, referees, coaches and volunteers to take the game to the next level. Indeed the federation had engendered the words ‘competition drives development’ for the previous phases of our football development plan.

Bangladesh Football Federation held the national U14 Women’s Football Championship in December which is a regional championship and will lead to future players with coaches and scouts watching out for talent at the tournament.

We have concluded the JB Bangladesh Premier League with 12 teams playing 22 matches each. The Marcel Bangladesh Championship League with 8 teams, each playing 14 matches was also concluded in December.

We have just seen the Saif Powertec 2nd division football championship conclude with 12 teams.

Objective

Our commitment towards elite player development will see us developing the next generation of male players at U14, U16 and U19 levels through an elite development environment. We want to see them enter SAFF and AFC competitions at the U16, U19 and U23 level.

Regardless of the obstacles, we will not deviate from our goal towards a uniform approach to player development. Our one overarching goal is to select and develop the best players, with the best coaches in the best environment possible.

And in the ongoing third phase, we continue with Engaging and Enriching the Next Generation of Teachers, Players, Coaches and all involved in the game.