

BFF President Kazi Salahuddin's statement for February

Women in Singapore

The national women's team came back with another impressive performance. They went to play in the Women's Development Tournament in Singapore against two higher ranked teams. I would like to point out here that most importantly the team is becoming stronger and playing better with time, which is very crucial.

As many of you may already know, I would further like to state here that 16 of the 20-member squad were U16 girls who provide the core strength of our national women's team. This tour was another visit that would contribute to the experience and exposure of these youngsters who are set to play the AFC finals in September later this year. The girls played against Malaysia and Singapore.

Conditioning camp

On to the senior men's team. The extended national men's squad of 61 players took part in a conditioning camp that ended on February 12.

Besides warming them up after the off season, the camp was also able to acquire scientific physical and physiological data of each participant in different activities.

This was the first time that such scientific data of our players was collected. I am glad to report that the players adapted well and made progressive development during the camp. This was also for the first time that the players would know about their physiological condition at the beginning of the season and they will be able to compare it to an end season camp.

The players were tested on a range of indicators that included distance covered over time, time to cover certain distances, period of recovery between certain activities, flexibility, agility, consistency of technique, recovery from one day to the next, speed, change of speed, speed of reaction, acceleration, even water retention and hydration.

The information will now allow comparison with players of other Asian countries and help the federation make better, more informed choices when picking the national squad.

The camp focused on eight key areas — injury prevention, recovery, game related practices, technical, tactical, strength & conditioning format, physical testing and core stability and flexibility — where players were given the tools to grow both in skills and strength.

These are tools that will help the players care for themselves, build their skills and build themselves as better footballers.

U15 talent hunt

With a U15 talent hunt kicking off the proceedings in Dhaka, the trials went to the districts. BFF coaches then helped each division build a team of 25 players who met in playoffs in Dhaka. Barisal became champions and Mymensingh was runners-up. The purpose of this competition was to scout age group talent and include them in the U16 Academy programme at the BKSP.

Mokh Cup Team

The young boys who won the plate cup at the Super Mokh Cup in Malaysia, were in a residency for a brief period before the tournament. These boys will go into the BKSP Academy along with the U15 talents I just mentioned.

Coaches Education

I am glad to say that we have kicked off our ambitious coach education programme with refresher courses for three levels — C, B and A.

There were 31 candidates for the C Level refresher course including six women.

Refresher courses for A and B levels were also completed with over 50 coaches attending.

Each course for each level has four hours of education and learning, and has been made mandatory for revalidation of coaching credentials.

These courses aim to allow coaches to register their coaching qualification with the federation and Asian Football Confederation (AFC), and revalidate their credentials.

That is very significant. Coaches are one of those crucial elements of the game without whom you will never have talent coming up through the districts. It is because of coaches who will nurture and guide young players that we hope to see talent grow. With that in mind, the BFF has instituted a fairly strong coaches' education programme. There will be many more workshops and training opportunities for coaches throughout the rest of the year.

Sheikh Kamal Tournament

The Sheikh Kamal International Club Cup 2017 was held with five foreign clubs from South Korea, Nepal, Maldives, Kyrgyzstan and Afghanistan. The second edition of this tournament, named after a dear friend of mine was exciting and inspiring. It is great to see Bangladesh play hosts to such international events where countries from far and wide take part. Of the eight teams that took part three were from Bangladesh.

National U18

With the national U18 championship scheduled for March 9, the football federation sent out coaches to every district to help them build the best teams who will face each other. This event will be held across the country from the second week of March and will surely be the centre of much attention. More importantly, this tournament is expected to provide us with another batch of fine young players for further training.

Academy

The football federation has a number of simultaneous academies/residential programs going on even at this moment. An academy is an elite player development concept and I would like to take this opportunity to inform everyone here that we will be running several age group academies besides the few that are already running.

The elite residency programmes have the same regime and same goals that an academy would strive for. Besides the U16 girls' squad, which is going through a rigorous preparation programme here at the BFF House, for the world cup qualifying tournament in Thailand in September, we have recently had the extended pool of national team players go through a 12-day conditioning camp at BKSP facilities in Savar. We are in the process of beginning more residency programmes for U14, U16 and U19 boys at the same facility.

Regardless of what we call it — residency, camp, workshop or Academy — the facilities and the regime together constitute an Elite Football Development Academy that strives for long term development of elite players.

Marcel Bangladesh League

We held the Marcel Bangladesh Championship League 2015-2016 prize giving ceremony this month. Eight local clubs took part in the tournament with Fakirapool YMC taking the trophy.

Bangabandhu, Bangamata tournaments

The Bangabandhu Gold Cup Primary School Football Tournament 2016 and Bangamata Begum Fazilatunnesa Mujib Gold Cup Primary School Football Tournament 2016 were concluded earlier. Financed by the Primary and Mass Education Ministry, the tournaments also included a workshop at the BFF House from February 10-12 with the head coaches and assistant coaches of 17 teams including the 8 divisional champions and runners-up. The coaches were also given certificates for their achievement during the closing ceremony.

U16 Divisional Championship

Another age level competition, the U16 divisional championship was concluded this month. This event was a joint venture between Bangladesh Football Federation and the National Sports Council.

Second Division League

In February, we successfully concluded the Second Division Football League 2015-16 that began in January. 12 teams participated in the league, each playing 22 matches on a 'home and away' basis.

Nababpur Krira Chakra became champions beating Kashaituli Samaj Kallyan Parishad in an end-season play-off. However, both the teams have been promoted and they have qualified for the first division in the next season. On the other hand, Prantik Krira Chakra finished the league at the bottom of the table and they have been relegated to play in the third division next season.

Referees Training

Just like coaches, we have also started training programmes for referees as well, to improve the overall quality of the game.

The 'New Football Referee Training Course-2017', which had started on February 9 under the direction of Bangladesh Football Federation and BFF Referees Committee, ended with a closing ceremony on February 14.

No less than 90 referees, hailing from 27 districts of Bangladesh, participated in the course.