

BFF President's statement for January 2019

Greetings! Welcome to the briefing of January 2019

BPL 2018-19 going on

The much awaited 2018-19 season of Bangladesh Premier League football kicked-off this month. Reigning champions Dhaka Abahani beat the newly promoted NoFeL Sporting Club 2-1 at the Bangabandhu National Stadium in the opening match. Later that day, Bashundhara Kings picked up a 1-0 win over Sheikh Jamal.

This time around, six venues have been incorporated into the league pool. The venues are: Bangabandhu National Stadium in Dhaka, Rafique Uddin Bhuiyan Stadium in Mymensingh, Sheikh Kamal Stadium in Nilphamari, Sheikh Fazlul Haque Mani Stadium in Gopalganj, Shahid Bulu Stadium in Noakhali and Sylhet District Stadium.

This is part of our initiative to take the nation's top tier football outside the capital and cater to the demand for football in the districts. This will also inspire a new generation of grassroots footballers with the chance of watching quality football at their doorsteps.

PM rewards 10 more U18 female players

Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina on January 24 awarded 10 more players and one official of the U18 Women's Football Team for clinching the SAFF championship title.

The players, Masura Parveen, Sheuly Azim, Israt Jahan Ratna, Marzia, Sanzida Akter, Israt Jahan Swapna, Ruksana, Krishna Rani Sarkar and Razia Khatun, and the official Khalid Mahmud were handed cheques at PM office. Each of the 10 players received Tk 10 lakh, while the official got Tk 5 lakh.

BFF Football Academy to begin in March

The Bangladesh Football Federation will launch a long-term residential training camp at the newly built BFF Football Academy in Dhaka's Beraid from March 1, 2019 for U15 and U18 players. The players will be selected through a talent hunt that has already begun.

U15 and U18 players were invited to attend the talent hunt programme in Chapai Nawabganj on the first day. The trials will take place in other districts as well leading up to the final selection in Dhaka at the end of February.

Agreements signed with 36 female footballers

The federation has signed player agreements with 36 female footballers who are already members of the ongoing Elite Women's Residency Camp at the BFF House. Parents and guardians of the footballers were invited where they spent a day with us understanding everything about our long-term vision and commitment to the ongoing development of these and other talented female players. It was refreshing to meet all the players parents and guardians and receive such positivity from them.

Meeting with Jordan FA President

I met Jordan Football Association (JFA) and West Asian Football Federation (WAFF) president Prince Ali bin Al Hussein in Abu Dhabi on January 5. The brother of the Jordanian King Abdullah bin Al Hussein, Prince Ali is also chairman of the Asian Football Development Project (AFDP). We explored possibilities of support for the BFF Football Academy at Beraid, Notun Bazar in Dhaka.

BPL hits Nilphamari and Mymensingh

Nilphamari hosted its first ever Bangladesh Premier League (BPL) match on January 23.

I, along with State Minister for Youth and Sports Zahid Ahsan Russell and BFF Executive Committee members were present at the inauguration at the Sheikh Kamal Stadium.

Home team Bashundhara Kings won the first ever match at the ground 3-0 over Dhaka Abahani.

Also, Rafiquddin Bhuiyan Stadium of Mymensingh, another one of the six district venues, hosted its first match on January 19.

Bangamata U19 Women's International Gold Cup to be held in April

Bangamata U19 Women's International Gold Cup 2019 will begin in April with six countries including Bangladesh taking part. BFF has entered into a sponsorship deal with K-sports for the tournament. The signing ceremony was held on January 16.

Sheikh Kamal Int'l Club Cup to begin in October

The BFF executive committee decided earlier this month that the Sheikh Kamal International Club Cup 2019 will begin October later this year. We hope to launch a successful event which will contribute to our overall goal of having more tournaments and matches.

DFA Presidents meet BFF President

The presidents of district football associations made a courtesy call on January 12. I thanked the DFA presidents for accomplishing their respective district football leagues in due time and discussed various issues including age-level competitions and DFA infrastructural development. The association chiefs also agreed to work with the Federation for the development of district level football.

Further Coaching Support

We are continuing to offer coaching support for coaches who have attended the AFC B and A Certificate Courses in 2018. The support consists of practical coaching support with the coaches who are now working with players at the BPL and BCL clubs. This mentoring is part of the course programs which we are keen to offer bespoke coaching and education provision for all coaches at all levels in Bangladesh.

AFC U16 Qualification Round 2

Our U16 Girls are busy preparing for the next phase of the 2019 AFC Qualification. I have seen them hard at work in their training and preparation schedule and I am extremely optimistic about our chances. The competition is to be hosted in Myanmar at the end of February.