

Shakib opines he could do better than BPL organisers

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The Daily Morning Voice Online Desk: The Bangladesh Premier League's (BPL) organisation once again became the focal point of discussions ahead of the ninth edition of the country's premier T20 competition. While on Tuesday, it was BCB director and Khulna Tigers coach Khaled Mahmud speaking about a lack of effort to put in a revenue sharing model that would have made the BPL more lucrative to franchise owners, this time criticism came from one of the players. And that player was none other than ace all-rounder Shakib Al Hasan, who tore into the BPL with his remarks, bugged by severe organisational issues.

There will be no DRS in this year's BPL, which in itself puts the seriousness of the tournament in doubt. Due to rise in T20 franchise leagues, such as the latest in Dubai, foreign players have found more lucrative places to showcase their talents, which inevitably also brings attention from teams in the IPL. In short, the BPL is quite some way down the ladder among T20 franchise leagues. Shakib, who is the brand ambassador of Gulf Oil Bangladesh Ltd, was made CEO of the organisation for one day and when he talked, he was in no doubt that he could do a much better job than the current BPL organising committee of the Bangladesh Cricket Board (BCB). "If I am made CEO of the BPL it wouldn't take me too many days. I think it would take one or two months at most to make everything right," he told reporters yesterday when asked what he would do if he was given the responsibility of organising the tournament. "It may not even take two months, even two months seem like too long," he added with a smile on his face.

Shakib went on to say that he would abolish the current way of doing things and added that the players' draft and auction would have to be staged afresh if he was in charge. The tournament this time found players from Pakistan and Afghanistan due to a few series cancellations, but overall the team-building processes from the franchises showcased how not to organise a tournament of the BPL's stature, which in its formative years had struck a chord with the general populace. "Here, a player will come and then leave after two days. No one knows who will arrive and when they will depart," the Fortune Barishal skipper remarked. "This is the worst scenario. Even our Dhaka Premier League (DPL) is better organised since they can build the team for a good period ahead of the tournament. They know early on what the team will be and they prepare in that manner," Shakib said, lambasting the BPL.

The tournament's current scenario fails to excite fans, barring a few star players turning up the heat. Shakib pointed out the fact that the availability of the players, the marketing required and the plans needed for implementation of a successful tournament were all missing. "We don't think we have tried to do anything with an honest mind. There is no budget because we haven't created it. If we could garner value, the budget would be bigger. Crores of people like the game in this country but it's very unfortunate if there is no market for it. I don't believe that to be the case. "It's a big marketing failure. I don't see any reason why DRS shouldn't be there. No reason for the draft and auction not to take place three months before tournament and the for the teams to not be ready two months before tournament," Shakib said. With just a day left before the tournament, the BPL's lack of awareness is more acute than its excitement. Since its inception in 2012, lack of brand value has become a headache for the BCB.