

# Diluting cooling-off, disqualification clauses to top agenda at BCCI AGM

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KOLKATA, NOVEMBER 9

THE BCCI'S 88th Annual General Meeting (AGM) to be held in Mumbai on December 1, will consider some proposed amendments in the existing cricket board constitution, including a relaxation in the cooling-off clause for the president and secretary and other office bearers. It has also been proposed that the disqualification clause would be applicable to an office-bearer or an apex council member if he/she is sentenced to imprisonment by a court for a criminal offence for a period of three years and above.

"The proposed amendments to be considered in the item no. (H) (3) (To discuss and pass with or without modifications the proposed amendments to the Rules and Regulations of the BCCI) are enclosed herewith. The rest of the agenda papers will follow shortly," BCCI secretary Jay Shah mentioned in the AGM notice that was issued on Saturday.

As per the BCCI constitution, the Rules and Regulations can be amended "by a 3/4th majority of the members present" at the

AGM or a Special General Meeting (SGM). But to put them into effect, the Supreme Court's approval is required. "Any such amendment will not be given effect to without the leave of the Hon'ble Supreme Court."

However, the board feels the existing rule is not practical and seeking the court's approval for an amendment in constitution wasn't part of the Lodha reforms, nor was mentioned in the Supreme Court's principal judgment. "The final constitution of the BCCI contains a requirement that any amendments to the constitution have to be approved by the Supreme Court. This was not part of the Lodha Committee reforms. This did not form part of the principal judgement of the Supreme Court dated 18th July 2016. By this provision the members' autonomy and right to seek legitimate changes would every time have to be approved by the Supreme Court. This is not practical," says the explanation given by the BCCI.

The existing BCCI constitution says an office bearer, who has held any post for two consecutive terms of three years each either in state association or in the BCCI (or a combination of both), will have to go for a three-

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year cooling-off before he/she becomes eligible to hold an office or work as a councillor/committee-member again.

The proposed amendment says: "A President or Secretary who has served in such position for two consecutive terms in the BCCI shall not be eligible to contest any further election without completing a cooling off period of three years. During the cooling off period, such 'Office bearer' shall not be a member of the Governing Council or of any committee whatsoever of the BCCI. The expression 'President' or 'Secretary' should not be permitted to be circumvented by being a member of any

other committee or of the Governing Council in BCCI, as the case may be."

Simply put, the proposed amendment aims at separating the cooling-off period for the BCCI and state association and if passed at the AGM by a 3/4th majority, will allow the cricket board president and secretary to hold their respective offices for six years at a stretch irrespective of their term as office-bearers in state associations.

The explanation given for the proposed amendment is that the cooling-off clause, in its present form, is proving to be an impediment to selecting experienced hands.

"This restriction is proving to be a big blow to selecting talented and experienced hands. This also affects the continuity of the individual's ability to serve in administration unnecessarily. Hence, cooling off can be restricted to BCCI and the member state respectively," says the explanation.

The proposed amendment will allow Sourav Ganguly to helm the BCCI for two consecutive terms. As per the present constitution, Ganguly will have to go for a three-year cooling-off after July next year, as he has already served as a Cricket Association of

Bengal office bearer for over five years.

Amendments have been sought in the disqualification clause as well, notably how a person will be treated if he/she has committed any criminal offence. The existing BCCI constitution says: "A person shall be disqualified from being an Office Bearer, a member of the Governing Council or any Committee or a representative to the International Cricket Council or any similar organisation if he or she: g) Has been charged by a Court of Law for having committed any criminal offence, i.e. an order framing charges has been passed by a court of law having competent jurisdiction."

The proposed amendment calls for disqualification in this case to be restricted to: "Has been convicted by a Court of Law for commission of a criminal offence and sentenced to imprisonment for a period not less than three (3) years." This means, two years behind bars for a criminal offence, for example, shouldn't be an impediment to hold a BCCI post.

**Age 70 no bar**

Further amendments have been sought in the disqualification clause, like the provi-

sion to allow a person aged 70 years and above to represent the BCCI at the ICC. "In order to protect the interests of BCCI which are being steadily eroded at ICC, people with experience of negotiation and personal interaction with other member nations should be made the representatives," the explanation says.

This amendment will allow former BCCI office-bearers like N Srinivasan, who are above 70 years of age, to represent the Indian board at the ICC.

An amendment has also been sought to drop the IPL governing council members from the disqualification clause as the governing council is "only a committee of BCCI." The proposed amendment also says "holding any office or post in a sports or athletic association or federation apart from cricket" shouldn't be a bar.

**CEO under secretary**

The proposed amendments also aim to curb the chief executive's power. "The Management personnel, the staff and the CEO shall work under the direct supervision, control and direction of the Secretary."

# Work in rapid progress

Satwiksairaj-Chirag chip away at the World No 1 'Minions' even as they lose 21-16, 22-20

SHIVANI NAIK  
NOVEMBER 9

THE TRICK didn't stop at rattling Marcus Fernaldi Gideon. Known to be slightly more vulnerable than his partner Kevin Sanjaya Sukamuljo — and we are talking the barest of tiny margins here — Gideon (28) was the slimmest of openings for India's top doubles pairing to prise open the door. So, Satwiksairaj Rankireddy and Chirag Shetty set about peppering Gideon with their attack in the semifinals of Fuzhou China Open.

The straightforward tactic of badgering the weak(er) link brought the Indians a bunch of points. But the real gains were made in drilling doubt in Kevin's mind and snaring points from right under his nose.

"We knew he's the weaker of the two and if he's put under pressure then Kevin gets irritated. Cause Kevin's the fancier guy," Chirag explains of badminton's most creative wizard, who can cover for his partner on a shaky day, but the effort eats into the 24-year-old's free-flowing genius.

On Saturday, Kevin had to whizz front and back and across the court to shadow Gideon and pounce in for desperate retrievals and have his back. Consequently, the Indonesians escaped against the serious Indian upstarts who this year are increasingly looking like bonafide top-five materials.

And so the count moved to 8-0, eight matches the Indians have lost against the World No 1 Indonesians. But each encounter has loosened one screw of their game, making the Indian pair look more threatening than last time. The 21-16, 22-20 loss might've prolonged the wait for their first win against the ridiculously talented Indonesians, but Satwik-Chirag are inching closer. This journey to topple the top pairing is as much fun as would be the destination of actually securing the win.

The Indonesians are called the 'Minions' for their bouncy, busy vibe and size, but together Kevin and Gideon are the smartest players in the sport. When they steal the moon, they aren't following blind orders from a 'Gru', and in fact their improvisations match their outrageous speed and skill and reaction times — which are innate.

So when the Indians led 18-16 in the second after a breakaway 21-16 opener from the Minions, Kevin brought on his disruptive weapon — the spin serve, and raced to three bunched points. Again at 20-all, and with Indians not showing signs of being rolled over, the younger Minion, varied the pace on his smash since the Indians had pounced on the harder one in the point before, and in all the frenzy got to match point with the softest of kills.

In the dying stages of the game, Indians brought out their scramble defense, but realised the Indonesians can crank up the pace at will and their plan of slowing things down to catch breath and sneak in variations might not always yield rewards.

Earlier, the Indians had proved they were up to the task of countering the Minions.



The loss in the China Open semifinal might have prolonged the wait for their first win against the Indonesians, but Satwik-Chirag are inching closer. PTI

They started hitting straight, but soon enough Chirag was scampering across and angling interceptions at the net.

There were avoidable errors — down to lack of poise and nothing wrong in the game technically. The flat game saw some eye to eye exchanges, with serve variations thrown in to make it a highly skilled encounter.

Crowding their returns on the forehand, the Indians were opening up yawning spaces on the other half of the court exploited at 9-10 in the first, after things had stayed even on 7-7.

**Matrix-like returns**

While Kevin hovered around the net, not much was going past his Matrix-like returns. Kevin Sukamuljo plays at a pace that moves the shuttle 2-times faster into the opponents court and one can only imagine what Satwik-Chirag saw whizzing at them in real-time. He is like one of the Marvel or DC enhanced beings with their blurring movements, and the epithet "Minions" does no justice to how quick he can get while staying busy.

Chirag went from silly errors to inspired kills, pumped up at times with his backhand

taps as the Indians tried to hassle and hustle them away from the net and pin them to the back. The Indian attack got truly going in the second, though they couldn't string together a good enough lead to put solid pressure on the Indonesians, even while they sniped at Gideon. At 3-2 came a 52-shot rally where all four brought out some eye-popping returns, keeping the shuttle in play while down on their backsides and then from inches off the floor.

Indian defense, though needing a lot of improvement, has come a long way. And though they couldn't hit the shuttle down (again drawn into a pace and height that

**And so the count moved to 8-0 — the Indians have lost eight matches against the World No 1 Indonesians. But each encounter has loosened one screw of their rivals' game, making Satwik and Chirag look more threatening than last time.**

Kevin dictated), Satwik and Chirag did well to pick some below-the-knee shuttles and frustrate the Indonesians.

Some serious training in gymnastics will do the Indians good for that low defense where the body is expected to curve into a C, while feet stay rooted and the racquet pointing at 90 degrees down keeps tossing them over the net. But Satwik and Chirag did well to shift the focus on Gideon, who looked stressed as the Indians threatened to break away from 13-12.

It was a series of well constructed points as Indians varied the pace, but stayed true to their attacking intent. "Yes we stuck to our game plan but Kevin came with his spin serve at 18-16 and took 3 points. But we came back level at 19-all and it was anybody's game then," Chirag said.

**Inching closer**

The anybody turned out to be Kevin and Gideon, but the Indonesians will be worried about just how many points Indians are conceding to unforced errors, which as time passes, the Indians will tighten and repair.

"Yes we are inching closer. A win will be

there soon. Just a little more smarter and then I guess we can beat them. But the idea was right today; just a few mistakes in execution," Chirag said.

The two top pairings with great success against the Indonesians are Mathias Boe and Carsten Mogensen (5-4 head to head) and Lee Yong Dae and Yoo Yeon-seong (0-3), and those four legends had an uncompromising defense.

A sturdy defense can help Indians switch their game — slow down and vary the attack to earn the lifts. For even a different game isn't enough on its own against the world's most exciting doubles pairing who crowds throng to watch and who put up a show like no-one else.

As India's top doubles pairing go about figuring most other combinations in the top-ten, and are left with the Indonesians and Japanese to negotiate, the country can quickly raise its bar to expecting dazzling results from Satwik and Chirag week in, week out. But the moon's there for the taking only if the Minions are beaten. That the Indians are mighty close, even if the losses pile up, is what makes Satwiksairaj Rankireddy and Chirag Shetty imminently watchable as the most-vaunted thing in Indian badminton.

# Leave Rishabh alone: Rohit, ahead of series decider

**Nagpur:** Stand-in India captain Rohit Sharma on Saturday strongly backed an under-fire Rishabh Pant, urging critics to "leave him alone" as he is only trying to execute the team management's strategy. Pant, whose shot selection has come under the scanner on several occasions, became the centre of unwanted attention due to his poor glovework in the second T20 against Bangladesh in Rajkot. He botched up a stumping of Liton Das with the third umpire ruling that his hands were slightly in front of the stumps, when he dislodged the balls.

"You know there is a lot of talk happening about Rishabh Pant every day, every minute. I just feel that he needs to be allowed to do what he wants to do on the field. I would request everyone to keep their eyes away from Rishabh Pant for a while," skipper Rohit said on the eve of the T20 series decider against Bangladesh here. "He is a fearless cricketer and we (team management) want him to have that freedom. And if you guys take your eyes off him for sometime, it will allow him to perform even better," added Rohit.

Not so long ago, Pant was the preferred



Will Sanju Samson get a place in the XI in the third and final T20?

choice in all three formats but Wriddhiman Saha played ahead of him in the three Tests against South Africa at home last month only on the basis of superior glovework. "He is a young guy trying to make his mark in international cricket. Every move he makes on the field, people start talking about him. It is not fair. I think we should allow him to play his cricket," added Rohit.

**INDIA VS B'DESH, 3RD T20: LIVE ON STAR SPORTS 1 & 3 — 7 PM ONWARDS**

# Five Indian players practise with pink ball today

DEVENDRA PANDEY  
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FIVE INDIAN cricketers will practise with pink balls at the National Cricket Academy (NCA) on Sunday as the home team prepare for the Day-Night Test against Bangladesh in Kolkata. The plan was to have at least two days of practice, but since the official supplier of the pink ball, Sanspariel Greenlands (SG), could only deliver the first batch of 60 pink balls on Saturday, the training would be restricted to Sunday. The Bangladesh team will get the pink balls on Monday in Indore, which would host the first Test, a red-ball affair, on November 14.

The decision to practise with pink balls was taken by Rahul Dravid, head of cricket at the NCA, in consultation with the Indian team management. Ajinkya Rahane, Cheteshwar Pujara, Mayank Agarwal, Mohammad Shami and Ravindra Jadeja are the five players who opted for the pink-ball practice after the option was put forward to the team selected for the two Tests against Bangladesh. Some players such as Pujara, Hanuma

Vihari, Agarwal and Rahane have played with pink ball in a Duleep Trophy game three seasons ago. However, the Indian board then had opted to use the Kookaburra ball. Now, the BCCI has decided to go with SG. In the 11 day-and-night Tests held so far, Kookaburra and Dukes pink ball have been used; this would be the first time pink SG balls would be used in a Test. There was talk regarding using the Kookaburra ball but Sourav Ganguly, the new BCCI president, said: "No, it can't be (used) because the series has to be played with same ball. It can't be two different balls in the same series."

As the Test team has to report in Indore by Monday, it was decided to go ahead with a one-day session under lights.

"The practice will be on centre wicket where practice will be done in form of match stimulation. Dravid, too, will be part of it. The Karnataka State Cricket Association will provide bowlers and fielders for the session. We wanted to have couple of days under night but due to unavoidable circumstances it was decided to have only one day," a source in the BCCI informed this paper. It was Sourav Ganguly who had pushed

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for the pink-ball Test. It was also Ganguly who, as the head of the Cricket Association of Bengal, was instrumental in arranging the first pink-ball game in India — a Super League final between Mohun Bagan and Bhowanipore in June 2016. That year, the BCCI then used the pink balls in the Duleep Trophy games. Bangladesh have played a domestic final with the pink ball, though that was way back in 2013.

India's decision to play with pink balls has been keenly followed in Australia

which is pushing for two pink-ball Tests against India next year Down Under. In 2018, India had turned down Australia's proposal to play a pink-ball Test. England's former captain Michael Vaughan had taken a friendly dig on that issue, tweeting: "Now India have agreed to play a Day/Night Test against Bangladesh surely they will agree to play 1 or 2 in Australia next year ... #JustSaying"

The pink ball is manufactured in similar way to the red ball but the treatment of leather is different. It's dyed, pigmented with a bright colour, and polished. The seam colour is black, though the nature of the thread is the same as the one used in red balls.

There have been some concerns about dew hampering the spinners but Ganguly dismissed those worries. "We will make sure there's no dew. After all day/night one-dayers are played here. There's this dew treatment spray and all. Nothing will happen," he said. "Test cricket needs this push. Thanks to Virat (Kohli) also, he agreed straightaway. And even more to Bangladesh Cricket Board that they agreed at such a short notice. It's a good way forward."

# Seasoned Tejaswini secures India's 12th Tokyo quota

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA  
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VETERAN TEJASWINI Sawant secured India's 12th Olympic quota in shooting but missed out on a medal in the women's 50m rifle 3 positions event in the 14th Asian Championship here on Saturday.

Provided she is picked in the final shooting squad for next year's Tokyo Games, it will be her maiden Olympic appearance, having missed the bus in 2008, 2012 and 2016.

The former world champion bagged the quota for next year's Tokyo Games by virtue of making the finals of the 50m rifle 3 positions event in the championship.

Out of the eight finalists, six of them were ineligible for various reasons, giving India one of the three available quotas in the event.

The 39-year-old from Maharashtra's Kolhapur reached the final at fifth position after shooting 1171 in the 12-shot qualifications across the three positions of kneeling, prone and standing.

However, in the finals, Sawant fought well but had to be satisfied with a fourth-place finish. The seasoned Indian shot 435.8 in the finals at the Lusail Shooting Range.

India also won nine medals in all competitions through the day including three more gold. Sawant's score was way above her previous best score in qualification in the new longer format introduced only in this current Olympic cycle, helping her finish fifth and ease into the eight-woman final.

It also helped secure a quota place as six other finalists had either booked their individual quotas or their respective National Olympic Committees (NOC) had already exhausted their limit of two quotas per event.

Though she could not win an individual medal, she combined with Kajal Saini and Gaayathri Nithyanadam to bag the team bronze. Sawant was third after the second series but fell behind in the later attempts, finishing with an 8.8. Sawant, who also competes in the 50m rifle prone, has won many medals, including gold at the World Championship, World Cup and the Commonwealth Games.

In 2010, she became the world champion in the 50m rifle prone event in Munich with a world-record equalling score. She was the first Indian woman shooter to win a gold medal at the Worlds.

China's Mengyao Shi won the gold medal with 457.9, while the silver went to Yesugen Oyunbat of Mongolia (457.0). The bronze and the second available quota was won by Japan's Shiori Hirata (445.9). The third quota went to Thailand's Chotphibunsin Thanyalak, who was placed ninth in the qualification with 1168. The other Indians in fray, Saini and Nithyanadam finished 13th and 16th in the qualification individually, with scores of 1167 and 1165.