

**IN THE MATTER OF PROCEEDINGS BROUGHT  
UNDER THE ICC ANTI-CORRUPTION CODE**

**Between:**

**THE INTERNATIONAL CRICKET COUNCIL**

**and**

**MS SHOHALY AKHTER**

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**Agreed Sanction Decision**

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**Introduction**

1. The International Cricket Council (the “ICC”) is the international governing body for the game of cricket and as such is responsible for the development, co-ordination, regulation and integrity of cricket worldwide. As part of its continuing efforts to maintain the public image, popularity and integrity of cricket, and in particular to take the strongest possible stand against the scourge of match-fixing, the ICC adopted and implemented the ICC Anti-Corruption Code for Participants (the “Code”). The Code sets out the details of the conduct that, if committed by a Participant in relation to an International Match, will be considered an offence under the Code. It also provides a range of sanctions that are to be imposed in the event of the commission of an offence, and sets out the disciplinary procedures to be followed where an offence is alleged.
2. Shohaly Akhter is an international cricketer who has represented Bangladesh in 13 women’s T20I’s and 2 women’s ODI’s, making her international debut in April 2013 against India. Ms Akhter’s last appearance for Bangladesh was on 10 October 2022 in the Women’s Asia Cup. Ms Akhter has also played domestic cricket in Bangladesh.

**Status as a Participant bound by the Code**

3. As a consequence of her participation in International Matches for Bangladesh up until 10 October 2022, Ms Akhter constituted a Player and thus a Participant for the purposes of the Code. As such, she was automatically bound by the Code and agreed, among other things, (i) to comply with the Code; (ii) not to engage in conduct that would constitute a breach of the Code; and (iii) to submit to the jurisdiction of the ICC’s Anti-Corruption Unit (“ACU”) to investigate apparent or suspected Corrupt Conduct that would amount to a violation of the Code.

**Summary of relevant background facts**

4. On 14 February 2023, prior to the Bangladesh v Australia match in the ICC Women’s T20 World Cup 2023, Ms Akhter contacted her friend and teammate, [PLAYER A], via Facebook Messenger, sending her voice notes in which she tried to persuade [PLAYER A] to agree to carry out fixes in future Bangladesh matches.

5. In particular, Ms Akhter told [PLAYER A] that her 'cousin' who bets on his phone, has asked her to speak to [PLAYER A] and ask [PLAYER A] whether she would get out hit wicket after a pace delivery during the Australia match. Ms Akhter also told [PLAYER A] that she would be paid 2 million Bangladesh takas if she did the fix, and the money would come from winnings that her 'cousin' made from his bets.
6. Ms Akhter also told [PLAYER A] that her 'cousin' could pay her more if 2 million takas was not enough.
7. Ms Akhter told [PLAYER A] that their conversation would be secret and it was up to [PLAYER A] whether to say yes or no.
8. In a voice note, Ms Akhter told [PLAYER A] that she would delete her messages so they no longer existed, and Ms Akhter did delete those messages.
9. [PLAYER A] immediately rejected the approach and reported it to the ACU, providing the ACU with copies of the voice notes Ms Akhter had sent her which she had forwarded on before they were deleted.
10. When interviewed by the ACU, Ms Akhter confirmed sending the voice messages to [PLAYER A] but claimed that she only did so in order to show her friend, [Mr Z], that members of the Bangladesh team were not involved in fixing, not because she was genuinely making a corrupt approach.
11. In her first interview with the ACU, Ms Akhter showed the ACU screenshots she claimed were between her and her friend talking about the 'challenge', claiming that these messages had been sent prior to 14 February.
12. Having reviewed the underlying metadata for the messages, the ACU identified that these screenshots had actually been created after the approach on 14 February. Ms Akhter subsequently admitted that she had fabricated these messages herself, using two different phones, although she claimed that the contents of the messages were accurate representations of messages that [Mr Z] had sent her which she had subsequently deleted once details of her approach to [PLAYER A] became public (and following a specific request from [Mr Z] to do so).
13. In her interview, Ms Akhter also admitted that she had had contact with [Mr Z] going back at least a year, and in 2022 she started to think that he might have been involved in cricket corruption.

#### **Relevant Provisions of the Code**

14. Code Article 2.1.1 makes the following an offence: *Fixing or contriving in any way or otherwise influencing improperly, or being a party to any agreement or effort to fix or contrive in any way or otherwise influence improperly, the result, progress, conduct or any other aspect of any International Match, including (without limitation) by deliberately underperforming therein.*

15. Code Article 2.1.3 makes the following an offence: *seeking, accepting, offering or agreeing to accept any bribe or other Reward to (a) fix or to contrive in any way or otherwise to influence improperly the result, progress, conduct or any other aspect of any International Match or (b) to ensure for Betting or other corrupt purposes the occurrence of a particular incident in an International Match.*
16. Code Article 2.1.4 makes the following an offence: *directly or indirectly soliciting, inducing, enticing, instructing, persuading, encouraging or intentionally facilitating any Participant to breach any of the foregoing provisions of this Article 2.1.*
17. Code Article 2.4.4 makes the following an offence: *failing to disclose to the ACU (without unnecessary delay) full details of any approaches or invitations received by the Participant to engage in Corrupt Conduct under the Anti-Corruption Code.*
18. Code Article 2.4.7 makes the following an offence: *Obstructing or delaying any investigation that may be carried out by the ACU in relation to possible Corrupt Conduct under the Anti-Corruption Code (by any Participant), including (without limitation) concealing, tampering with or destroying any documentation or other information that may be relevant to that investigation and/or that may be evidence of or may lead to the discovery of evidence of Corrupt Conduct under the Anti-Corruption Code*

#### **Disciplinary Proceedings**

19. On the basis of the evidence obtained through its investigations, and the admissions made by Ms Akhter to the ACU and set out above, the ICC charged Ms Akhter with Code Articles 2.1.1 (on the basis that she contrived, or was party to an agreement or effort to fix or contrive or otherwise influence improperly, the result, progress, conduct or any other aspect of International Matches), 2.1.3 (on the basis that she offered a Reward to [PLAYER A] (namely a payment of least 2 million Bangladesh takas) if she were to engage in corrupt conduct at the ICC Women's T20 World Cup. 2.1.4 (on the basis that she attempted to solicit, induce, entice, persuade, encourage or intentionally facilitate [PLAYER A] to breach Article 2.1), 2.4.4 (on the basis that she failed to report to the ACU the approaches and invitations that he received from [Mr Z] be a party to an agreement or effort to fix matches in the Women's T20 World Cup 2023) and 2.4.7 (in that she obstructed the ACU's investigation by (i) fabricating a series of WhatsApp messages and (ii) deleting all of her messages with [PLAYER A] and, separately, with [Mr Z]).
20. By way of a letter agreement dated 10 February 2025, Ms Akhter formally admitted the charges laid by the ICC.
21. This decision is issued pursuant to Article 5.1.12 of the Code and sets out the sanction proposed by the ICC, and accepted by Ms Akhter for her admitted breaches of the Code.

## Agreed Sanction

22. Article 6.2 of the Code provides that the range of permissible sanctions for (i) the Article 2.1 charges is a period of Ineligibility of at least five (5) years up to a maximum of life, (ii) the Article 2.4.4 charge, a period of Ineligibility of at least six (6) months and a maximum of five (5) years, and (iii) the Article 2.4.7 charge, a period of Ineligibility up to a maximum of five (5) years.
23. Article 6.1 of the Code sets out the relevant factors that the Anti-Corruption Tribunal would be required to consider in determining the relative seriousness of the offence and thereby arriving at an appropriate sanction within that range.
24. It is acknowledged by the ICC that any sanction imposed must be proportionate. In considering what is proportionate, the ICC is entitled to weigh against the impact of a ban on Ms Akhter the importance of the objectives underlying the Code, the seriousness of the particular breaches of the Code by Ms Akhter, the need to deter others from similar wrongdoing, the need to protect the image of sport, and (above all else) the need to maintain public confidence in the determination of the sport of cricket to stamp out corruption.
25. The ICC notes that in order to seek to adequately and effectively protect the sport of cricket against the threat of corruption, it is of paramount importance that Participants do not engage in any form of Corrupt Conduct under the Code and immediately report any approaches or invitations or other information which comes to light which suggests potential Corrupt Conduct under the Code.
26. Relevant aggravating factors in Ms Akhter's case including the following:
  - 26.1. The fact that the Articles 2.1.1, 2.1.3 and 2.1.4 offences had the potential to substantially damage the commercial value and public interest in the relevant International Matches, i.e. the ICC Women's T20 World Cup.
  - 26.2. The fact that the Articles 2.1.1, 2.1.3 and 2.1.4 offences had the potential to affect the result of the relevant International Matches.
  - 26.3. Ms Akhter's conduct during the investigation, including her fabrication of messages and her continued denials of doing anything wrong.
27. The following mitigating factors have been taken into account in the sanction:
  - 27.1. Ms Akhter's previous good disciplinary record.
  - 27.2. Ms Akhter's admission of the charges, meaning that there was no need for a formal disciplinary process or hearing to be undertaken.

28. The ICC has considered all of the circumstances of this case, including giving Ms Akhter credit for agreeing an outcome that avoids the need for a hearing and so saves considerable time and money for use elsewhere in the fight against corruption, and has considered relevant precedents. The ICC therefore considers that a period of ineligibility of five (5) years is reasonable and proportionate.
29. Ms Akhter has agreed to this sanction. As such, a period of ineligibility of five (5) years is imposed.
30. In accordance with Article 6.4 of the Code, Ms Akhter's period of ineligibility shall commence on the date of this decision.
31. During her period of ineligibility, Ms Akhter's status is as set out in Article 6.5 of the Code, as follows:

*"No Participant who has been declared Ineligible may, during the period of Ineligibility, play, coach, officiate or otherwise participate or be involved in any capacity in any capacity in any Match or any other kind of function, event or activity (other than authorized anti-corruption education or rehabilitation programs) that is authorized, organized, sanctioned, recognized or supported in any way by the ICC, a National Cricket Federation, or any member under the jurisdiction of a National Cricket Federation, or receive accreditation to provide media or other services at an official venue or Match. National Cricket Federations shall take all reasonable steps within their powers to give effect to this Article 6.5 to the extent that they have the jurisdiction, power or ability to do so."*
32. In accordance with Article 7.2 of the Code neither Ms Akhter nor the ICC shall have any right of appeal against this decision.
33. This decision constitutes the final resolution of the matter of Ms Akhter's charges as currently issued by the ICC.

## **Conclusion**

34. To summarise:
  - 34.1. Ms Akhter admits that she has committed breaches of Articles 2.1.1, 2.1.3, 2.1.4, 2.4.4 and 2.4.7 of the Code as charged.
  - 34.2. A period of Ineligibility of five (5) years is imposed pursuant to Article 6.2 of the Code, commencing on the date of this decision.
  - 34.3. Ms Akhter's status during the period of Ineligibility is as set out in Article 6.5 of the Code.
  - 34.4. This decision constitutes the final decision of the ICC in this matter and will be disclosed publicly, including on the ICC's website.

34.5. There is no need for any further hearing in these proceedings, which are hereby terminated.

**Dubai, 10 February 2025**