

## Shastri 'offered' interim cricket manager's post

Former India captain-turned-commentator Ravi Shastri is said to have been 'offered' the job of interim manager of the national team for the tour of Bangladesh next month by the Indian cricket board here Friday.

The said offer was made to Shastri, 44, during a meeting of seven former captains invited by the Board of Control for Cricket in India (BCCI) to discuss the team's World Cup debacle and suggest ways to build a strong team.

The post of Indian coach fell vacant following the completion of Greg Chappell's nearly two-year contract, which ended with the team's World Cup disaster in the West Indies recently.

When IANS tried to contact Shastri, there was no room left in the voice mail section in his mobile.

It remains to be seen if Shastri, who works for ESPN and is often based in Singapore for in-studio programmes, would be able to spare time from his professional commitments to become the interim coach for the tour.

Shastri, who played 80 Tests and 150 one-day internationals before retiring in 1992, has never coached any team formally.

A formal decision on the coach for the Bangladesh tour will be taken at the working committee meeting here Saturday. Shastri is also likely to get back to the board Saturday if he would be free to take up the job.

The BCCI called the former captains to discuss the team's first-round exit from the World Cup. Besides Shastri, they were Mansur Ali Khan Pataudi, Chandu Borde, S. Venkataraghavan, Sunil Gavaskar, Kapil Dev and K. Srikanth.

These captains made several suggestions ranging from strengthening domestic cricket structure to improving the quality of pitches for domestic tournaments to having India 'A' team tours abroad on a regular basis. 'A' team comprises promising and talented players who are on the verge of playing for the senior side.

*Qaiser Mohammad Ali* ( © IANS / India eNews)