

Afghanistan Cricketer Faces Doping Ban

The International Cricket Council has announced Afghanistan wicketkeeper-batsman Mohammad Shahzad faces a provisional ban under its anti-doping rules.

Shahzad will be suspended as of April 26th unless he decides to challenge the decision before that date. It was revealed by the ICC that a sample provided by the 29-year-old was found to contain the prohibited substance [Clenbuterol](#) in an out-of-competition test in January.

A statement from the world governing body of cricket reads the International Cricket Council today announced that Afghanistan's wicketkeeper-batsman Mohammad Shahzad has been charged with an anti-doping rule violation under the ICC anti-doping code. The ICC statement further reads that the sample Shahzad provided in an out-of-competition test, which was conducted on 17 January 2017 at the ICC Academy in Dubai and analyzed at the WADA-accredited laboratory in Salt Lake City, was found to contain the presence of Clenbuterol, a prohibited substance which appears in Section 1.2 of the WADA prohibited list (in the category of other [anabolic agents](#)).

The statement also reads that Shahzad, in accordance with the ICC anti-doping code, pending the outcome of the disciplinary process, will be provisionally suspended, with such suspension coming into effect on 26 April 2017, unless he exercises his right to challenge the imposition of the provisional suspension before such date.

Shahzad has the right to request that his B sample be tested within five days from the notice, and to challenge the suspension within 12 days. A hearing will take place if he challenges the suspension and the suspension will not be imposed till the outcome of the hearing is known. The big-hitting Shahzad, who has played 58 ODIs and 58 T20Is, also has to respond to the charge within 14 days. It will be considered to be an admission of guilt if he does not respond.

Shahzad was last seen in action during the series of Afghanistan against Ireland in India. In December 2016, the Afghanistan wicketkeeper-batsman was named the Associate and Affiliate Cricketer of the Year by the ICC, for the period running September 2015 to 2016.

A key player in the team's charge towards potential Test match status, Shahzad has scored 1,901 runs in one-dayers with a best score of 131 not out while smashing 1,779 runs in T20 with a high of an undefeated 118. The Afghanistan batsman is the fourth highest run-maker in T20 internationals, and even surpassed Indian superstar and Captain Virat Kohli in the rankings when Afghanistan whitewashed Ireland 3-0 earlier this year.

A rare prospect reprieving from the politically hit country of Afghanistan, Shahzad was recently included in the IPL auction pool by the Board of Control for Cricket in India (BCCI). The list of others included batsman Asghar Stanikzhai, pacer Dawlat Zadran, all-rounder Mohammed Nabi and bowler Rashid Khan Arman and the India-born Chirag Suri of United Arab Emirates.

The wicketkeeper-batsman was part of the Afghanistan side that was taking part in the [Desert T20 challenge](#) in Dubai in January. The Afghanistan side twice beat Ireland, including in the final when Shahzad made an unbeaten 52 in a 10-wicket win.