A Cop in Cricket

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Neeraj Kumar

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For the five lady loves of my life
Mala,
Arunima,
Ankita,
Aishwarya and
Dhvani

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Foreword

Neeraj Kumar, who I have had the privilege of knowing for over a decade, has always been a man of great character and immense integrity. After a thirty-seven-year distinguished career in the Indian Police Service, Neeraj became a successful author, bringing to bear many insights he garnered in his policing career. While his works were non-fictional, their craft was enveloped in what you and I could associate with and interpret with joy and, at times, a little surprise.

I met Neeraj many years ago when he was the Director General of Delhi Prisons. It was a persuasive call on his part to invite me to Tihar and see the products the inmates were making under the brand TJ's. I was not just impressed with the artisanal brilliance of their work but also deeply moved by the approach that Neeraj had adopted qua the inmates: an approach of rehabilitation that respected them rather than dehumanize their lives. And that stayed with me. Post my visit to Tihar Jail, I made several calls to people in the retail industry asking them to stock these products, which many did. But that was not thanks to me. It was the vision and commitment of Neeraj Kumar that did the trick.

He has, in all the time I've known him, never been the kind to shy away from taking hard decisions that he believes are for the greater good. I still remember when people were baying for his blood during the unfortunate and terrible tragedy of Nirbhaya (Neeraj Kumar was the Delhi Police Commissioner then), not once did he lose either the focus or the resolve to bring the killers to justice and calm the feathers of a hugely ruffled Delhi citizenry.

This is why when I learnt of his appointment in 2015 as the head of the Anti-Corruption Unit of the Board of Control for Cricket in India (BCCI), India's cricket governing body, I was delighted. Not only because I knew of Neeraj's investigative, administrative and professional competence but equally because of his earnestness and integrity. He is incorruptible and a man not influenced by either office or lucre.

Hence *A Cop in Cricket* is both special and timely. It is a fascinating account of his short but rather eventful stint as the head of the anti-corruption body at the BCCI. This is a book that goes beyond the realm of cricket. In a country where cricket is a religion, to see the workings of the BCCI cloaked in mystery and, at times, deviousness is not only shattering but a call for some major structural changes. One doesn't know whether they will ever happen. Even the Supreme Court of India has not been able to do all it set out to do with the richest sports body in the world.

This book tells you about the deep rot that has set in at various levels of the game of cricket and how precious little is being done to either stem it or go for a major cleanup. The book brilliantly captures the warts of the entire ecosystem around the

sport that cares less about the game and more about lucre. And we as a people are allowing the cricketing establishment to get away with a brazen lack of both governance and accountability.

Very few have ever been as courageous in writing about the premier cricket body of the country as the author, perhaps because of fear of retribution. But then Neeraj was never one to hesitate in saying and doing the right thing, and I am glad he has authored the book he has. Given the affection that the common Indian has for the game and the players, it's time for the world to see what the cricketing establishment is all about. Accounts of player persecution and the ghastly control officials have over the game are damning. Equally insightful are the parts where Neeraj corroborates the facts that match- or spot-fixing are only minor problems when one looks at the rainbow of corruption that has set in at various levels of the game, where nepotism has replaced merit and where sports is the necessary evil that must always be subservient to commerce. It is an indictment not just of the sport's governance but equally of the betrayal of the faith that people have reposed both in the game and those who play and run it.

Neeraj brings a level of honesty that few can. He also carries with him the expertise and experience in fighting corruption in cricket very few have. It was under his leadership that the Rajasthan Royals match-fixing scandal came to light in the IPL in 2013. His tales of the neglect he faced and being marginalized during his three-year stint reflect more on the management style of the rulers at the then BCCI than anything else. They have been allowed to get away only because the system has been stymied in unimaginable ways.

For me personally, this book is not only about cricket or the BCCI: it is about the enduring malaise in the sporting culture of our country and what can be done about it. The book is not merely a critique of what is going on; it is a prescription enumerating the curative measures that can be put in place. For instance, the author has recommended enacting the long-pending Sports Integrity Bill, in the absence of which most police cases of match- and spot-fixing fail during the trial. A specific legislation on malpractices in sports would help various law enforcement agencies to go after the unscrupulous elements that corrupt sports. Perhaps this book will do what no one else has: start a conversation to preserve the quintessential integrity of the gentleman's game.

This is a book where every page is replete with specific examples of villainy and chicanery that create a revulsion no one should have towards any sport, least of all cricket, and that too in India. But I guess a 'manthan' on various issues involved is what we need, and hopefully, this book should initiate that conversation.

For when the history of cricket in India is written some years down the line, I hope this book will not just be a footnote but, instead, a beacon shining the light on the ailments that have plagued both the game and the various governing bodies administering it. And hopefully, someone somewhere will do something about it.

Suhel Seth
29 November 2022

Preface

This is the story of an awkward phase of my life that was of my own making. Having served in the Indian Police Service (IPS) for thirty-seven years, mostly in mainstream high-profile assignments, I retired as commissioner of police, Delhi, in 2013. But in the middle of 2015, under a strange set of circumstances, I strayed into the world of cricket. I was appointed as head of the Anti-Corruption Unit (ACU) of the Board of Control for Cricket in India (BCCI). I joined the organization on 1 June 2015 and quit exactly three years later, at the end of May 2018. When I joined the BCCI, I had no clue what I was getting into. By the end of those three years there my much-celebrated career in the police seemed a distant memory. The respectability that it had fetched me seemed to have been shredded – ignominy, hurt and unrelenting humiliation seemed my lot.

I recount here my experiences during my stint at the BCCI, which, though I say were marked by ignominy, hurt and humiliation, perhaps encapsulated both the best and worst times of my life. As commissioner of police, Delhi, I had led a police force of no less than eighty-five thousand men and women.

The assignment was the culmination of thirty-six years of my eventful police career that was riddled with adventures and risks, ups and downs, and a fair share of accolades and approbations.

To head the police of the capital of the country was a great honour and an experience that was heady, challenging and yet exhilarating. Of the many cases and crises that I handled during my thirteen-month stint as commissioner of police, Delhi, the unfortunate gang rape and murder of Nirbhaya was decidedly the roughest. The crime was brutal and horrifying, sparking worldwide outrage, and has not quite been forgotten since. In its immediate aftermath, everyone was looking for a scapegoat, and as the leader of the force, I seemed like the perfect fall guy. The media bayed for my blood, the city's chief minister demanded my resignation and surging crowds demonstrating at India Gate wanted my head to roll. I felt the heavens falling on my head. But by God's grace, and on account of ace sleuthing by my officers and men, not only did we crack the case in no time but also chargesheeted it within ten days of the last accused being arrested. The trial, too, was completed in record time and culminated in the death penalty for the surviving accused (one of them committed suicide during the trial). I had survived a test by fire and had emerged unscathed.

Among the many high-profile matters that Delhi Police had to deal with during my tenure was the May 2013 cricket spot-fixing case during the Indian Premier League (IPL) 6. In a three-month operation, we caught three cricketers from the Rajasthan Royals team – S. Sreesanth, Ajit Chandila and Ankit Chavan – 'underperforming' on the bidding of fixers. We intercepted their conversations with bookies wherein they were

striking deals, agreeing to give away a predetermined number of runs in the overs bowled by them. They were subsequently caught on television cameras delivering their promises to the fixers. We made thirty-six arrests in all in that case. We thought, in view of the audio and video recordings alongside the supporting documentary evidence, we had an open-and-shut case. However, within two years of trial, the court discharged all the accused on the ground that there exists a huge vacuum of law with regard to match and spot-fixing in sports.[1] The Delhi Police went in appeal before the Delhi High Court in a revision petition which is still pending there.

In the movies, they say, you are only as good as your last film. In much the same way, in the police you get identified with your last big case. And so it has been with me too. Even now, more than nine years after my superannuation, I am introduced in social circles as either the 'Nirbhaya commissioner' or as the man who busted the IPL spot-fixing case. My earlier investigations into organized crime, terrorism, economic offences and corruption, one more interesting than the other, don't count. That I have documented my celebrated cases in two books – *Dial D for Don* and *Khaki Files* – both being made into films or web series, doesn't make a difference either.

It was with this professional background that I joined the BCCI as their ACU chief in 2015. From eighty-five thousand officers and men under me in my last job, I now had only two. It had been a few months since the apex cricket body had sent all its top office bearers home on account of their misdeeds (revealing their conflict of interest) and the corruption charges against them. A fairly well-equipped office space that was provided to me in my early weeks at the BCCI headquarters

in Mumbai was taken away within months and given to the accounts department, and I wasn't even extended the courtesy of being informed about it. The new anti-corruption chief was not found worthy of even a decent office space. Repeated requests for additional manpower and resources for my unit fell on deaf years. It was only after I had left that my proposals for the ACU's expansion were accepted and implemented.

For the Board, putting in place an ACU headed by a former police chief of Delhi appeared to be an act of just ticking a box for public consumption. Many a time when a media question was popped to the top honchos at the BCCI about what they proposed to do to control corruption in cricket, they would promptly say they had appointed me as their ACU chief. It was another matter that the demon of graft in cricket, in a country as vast as India, was to be fought by me with only two men in my team.

For ardent lovers of cricket, including those who cover the game for the media, corruption in cricket is typically match- or spot-fixing, in the form of an oily bookie offering cash or rewards in kind to a cricketer to 'underperform' so that a given game proceeds on the lines of a predetermined script. While the fixer makes a killing (because he already knows the outcome and places bets accordingly), the cricketer too makes decent money over and above his legitimate earnings. In years of yore, fixers are known to have compromised team captains (Hansie Cronje and Mohammad Azharuddin, for instance) who, in cahoots with some of their team members, gave away games to earn a few extra bucks. This possibility, however, is rather remote now. To get several players to compromise a game, as was done earlier,

is difficult now, given the heightened risks of being found out. Manipulators, therefore, are now content with spot-fixing, where it is enough to get a lone wolf to compromise, getting him or her to do specific things at specific stages of the game for a small fee while the fixers and their cronies bet a lot of money on that event and rake in the mega-bucks.

However, to think corruption in cricket means match- and spot-fixing alone is to not see the wood for the trees. In the three years that I spent at the BCCI, I realized that fixing was the proverbial tip of the huge iceberg of corruption in cricket. Fixing is, in fact, a minuscule percentage of the large-scale chicanery that cricket administrators indulge in. The handsome revenues earned by cricket in India – thanks to the IPL – are parcelled off to state cricket associations, where the money is mostly misappropriated. The 2015 Central Bureau of Investigation (CBI) case against the top bosses of the Jammu & Kashmir Cricket Association (JKCA) for embezzlement of crores of rupees given to them by the BCCI is a case in point.

Similarly, not much is known about the brazen corruption going on in the private T20 cricket leagues. These are local-level tournaments like the Rajwada or Rajputana Cricket Leagues as organized in 2017 by a bunch of con men, purely for betting and fixing, without the BCCI's permission. They are either televised or live-streamed to facilitate large-scale betting. Now fairly commonplace, they are veritable breeding grounds for corruption in cricket. A few of these leagues the ACU under me had the opportunity of disrupting, as will be narrated later in the book.

Many unsavoury things also happen at the grassroots level during team selections. Those happenings remain a matter

between the selector and the aspiring cricketer or his family. Who would have thought that the late father of our present skipper Virat Kohli was once asked to pay for his son's selection to the Delhi State junior cricket team? When his father refused to pay, Virat was left out of the team, and the young lad wept for days. Virat talked about this unfortunate incident in a web chat on Instagram with ace footballer Sunil Chhetri on 16 May 2020. God alone knows how many young cricketers have had their talents nipped in the bud after being dropped from teams they deserved to be in because their parents could not, or would not, pay bribes to selectors.

During my three-year tenure at the BCCI, my unit had to look into several such complaints, including a few where sexual favours were sought from young cricketers. We were frequently approached by players and their guardians complaining that they were cheated of lakhs of rupees by coaches or officials who promised them a place in an IPL or Ranji team and then disappeared, leaving them high and dry.

In this book, I have attempted to give the readers an overview of the malpractices that take place in the name of cricket in our country. At the same time, having witnessed the goings-on in the BCCI in the wake of the Supreme Court interventions following the Mudgal Committee and Lodha Committee reports, I am also able to write about the 'agents of change', appointed by the Supreme Court to clean up the Augean stables that is the BCCI. Readers would certainly like to know about the faux conscience keepers and management executives who stepped in ostensibly to set high standards of good governance and rectitude in cricket administration but only left the waters more muddied than before.

This book is an account of my personal trials as ACU chief at the BCCI and my witness statement of the three critical years of the national cricket body caught in the throes of change. It is disappointing for me to see that though the apex court at that time toppled the overlords of cricket from their high perches, the old order suffered a setback only temporarily. Their sons, daughters or proxies have replaced them, making a mockery of the apex court's directives and the Mudgal and Lodha committees' recommendations. (It is worth pointing out that the Lodha report subsequently became the Supreme Court–mandated reformed constitution of the BCCI.) Nothing changed fundamentally for the grassroots-level cricketers or the fans, the two most significant segments in the food chain of the sport.

The 2013 spot-fixing case kindled a glimmer of hope in many a cricket lover's heart as it seemed to suggest that a complete overhaul of the cricket administration in the country was imminent. It was hoped this would lead to an equitable and fair system concerning facilities, opportunities, selection and governance. Alas, that pipe dream remains as chimeric as before.

Lastly, I wish to say that writing this book at a time when the COVID-19 pandemic was ravaging the world was trying. As the book progressed, so did the virulence of the pandemic. Corruption in cricket – the subject of the book – seemed progressively inconsequential as news of hundreds of thousands of people dying, a few of them close friends and relatives, kept pouring in. To maintain sanity in such troubled times and to complete the task at hand were feats I thought I was not capable of. But whenever I felt like quitting, I reminded myself why I

had started writing the book in the first place: I had to unburden myself of my experiences at the BCCI and cleanse myself of the toxins they had left in my system. That helped me complete the book, and here it is in your hands.

1

Wicket to Wicket

My first brush with big-time cricket was at the age of thirteen when I saw India play the then mighty West Indies at the fabled Eden Gardens in Kolkata (then Calcutta). Youngsters of today would find it difficult to comprehend what witnessing a live Test match meant for a teenager then. The sheer anticipation and excitement of seeing the all-time greats of the game in the flesh at the oriental Mecca of cricket is indescribable. In the sixties, for a young lad, visiting Calcutta for the first time was itself akin to Alice's visit to Wonderland. And then to watch a Test match live at Eden Gardens was like the icing on a Firpo's (a famed restaurant in Calcutta then) cake.

The Windies, then considered invincible, were touring India for the 1966–67 Test series with a galaxy of all-time greats in their ranks. Captained by Garfield Sobers, arguably the best all-rounder the game has ever seen, it had dreaded seam bowlers like Wes Hall and Charlie Griffith, the most dependable batsmen like Rohan Kanhai and Conrad Hunt, and the lanky off-spinner

Lance Gibbs, not to speak of Clive Lloyd, who was touring India on his debut Test series.

India, too, had its fair share of legendary cricketers, though our standing in international cricket was nowhere close to what it is now. We had batting giants like M.A.K. Pataudi, M.L. Jaisimha, Chandu Borde, and the spin trio of Chandrasekhar, S. Venkataraghavan and debutant Bishan Singh Bedi, to name a few. But the one department Indians were woefully deficient in was pace bowling, and they lacked the skills to play quick bowlers down the batting order.

My father, a civil engineer working in Bihar, was on deputation with the Calcutta Metropolitan Planning Organisation and lived in a flat on Kyd Street, a road that runs parallel to the fashionable Park Street, the main recreation zone in the city. I studied in a boarding school in my home state of Bihar and was in Calcutta in December 1966 to spend the Christmas holidays with my parents and two brothers. Aware of our interest in cricket, my father managed to procure two season tickets for the second Test match to be played in the city. One of the two tickets was for the stands of the lowest denomination and the other for what may be considered the medium class. The deal was that on the first day, I, being the elder brother, would go to the general public stand and my younger brother, barely eleven, would go to the better stand, and we would exchange places the following day.

The West Indies had commenced their campaign in India with a six-wicket victory over India at Brabourne Stadium in Bombay (now Mumbai). The second Test of the series that we were to witness was scheduled between 31 December 1966 and 5 January 1967. On the first day of the match, my younger

brother and I set out on foot for the stadium rather early in the morning to be in time for the game. The distance to be covered was nearly seven kilometres, but the long march mattered little to us as long as we got to see the match. As we got closer to the stadium, the rush of spectators became overwhelming, and so did the police presence. We saw mounted police in action for the first time and were terrified to see them charge at the crowds. At some point, my brother and I parted company and reached our respective stands to see the first day's game.

Given the distance between the 'janata stand', where I was seated, and the playing arena, hardly anything was visible. And, given the jostling crowds, finding a place to sit was not an edifying experience by any stretch of the imagination. But, as the game progressed, with the help of the transistor sets that many spectators in my stand carried relaying running commentary, I was able to make sense of what was happening on the ground. The West Indies were batting and Rohan Kanhai was in full flow. He played a glorious inning of 90 runs, which was a treat to watch. I also remember it was Bishan Singh Bedi's debut Test, and he wore a sky-blue turban and not the 'patka' that he wore in the field in later years. The largely Bengali crowd in the stand where I was seated made fun of him for what they thought was an incongruous sight – a turbaned Sikh on a cricket field. But when Bedi took two quick wickets – Basil Butcher's and debutant Clive Lloyd's – he silenced the mocking Bengali crowds at Eden Gardens for the remaining part of the day.

On the second day, much like on the first, the number of spectators in the stadium far exceeded its seating capacity. Apparently, the Cricket Association of Bengal (CAB) had sold

many more tickets than the available seats in the stadium. Either more than the authorized number of tickets were printed and sold by CAB or duplicate tickets were in circulation. The net result was that those who could not find seats in the stands jumped over the flimsy barrier between the stands and the ground and sat on the boundary rope. Gradually, their numbers swelled, and hundreds crept up beyond the rope and sat right in the playing arena. The Indian side was fielding. Skipper Pataudi remonstrated with the umpires; given the circumstances on the ground, it was not possible for his team to field with spectators in the playing arena, he complained. One umpire walked up to the intruders and asked them to retreat so the game could resume. All this was happening at a short distance from where I was seated. Remember, it was the second day of the Test, and it was my turn to sit in the better stand.

Somebody from among the spectators seated on the ground went up to the umpire, perhaps to say that everyone had a valid ticket and he (the umpire) should ensure the game was resumed. But the police deployed in the vicinity, probably fearing that the man might attack the umpire, rushed to whisk him away. When the spectator resisted and began to argue with the policemen, they beat him up mercilessly. That was enough to enrage the already restive crowds, who had paid for their tickets but could not find a place in the seating arena. Within minutes they ran amok. A pitched battle ensued between the police and the irate spectators. Soon, mindless vandalism, arson and mayhem followed. The protesters pulled out the bamboo poles holding the overhead canopy aloft and used them to attack whoever came their way. Neither the baton charge nor the tear gas shelling by the police

could check the angry mob. The stadium was set ablaze, and everyone, including the players, ran for their lives. I too rushed out, petrified by what I had witnessed. As I scampered across the maidan, I saw Jaisimha, Hall, Griffith, Gibbs and many others I can't recall now, running with the crowds to save themselves from harm.

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As I ran back to Kyd Street, I noticed a familiar face in the milling crowds. He was a school senior, a popular comic figure known for his braggadocio and bombastic English in our boarding school. He was as surprised to see me as I was at spotting him. In that chaos, all he had to ask me was which stand I had been sitting in. After telling him that I had been seated in a respectable part of the stadium, I asked him where he had been seated. With a smug grin, he proudly pointed to a ticket peeping out of his shirt's front pocket – it read, 'Player's Guest'. While I stood there looking at him incredulously, he disappeared into the crowd in a flash. I kept racking my brain trying to guess who in the Indian team could have possibly invited him as his guest, but it remained a mystery to me for quite some time.

When our school reopened after the winter recess, my flamboyant senior, then aged fifteen, returned with the ticket framed in glass and went about flaunting it to everyone. Of course, the other students were suitably impressed with his trophy, and he had me as a witness to prove that he indeed had been at the ground. After persistent probing by envious friends, he satisfied everyone's curiosity, including mine, with this interesting story.

He had arrived in Calcutta to witness the Test match without a ticket and was at a loss to know what to do next. He came to know that both the Indian and West Indian cricketers were staying at the Great Eastern Hotel in Dalhousie Square, right in the middle of the city's central business district. On the first day of the match, he stood outside the hotel, hoping to catch a glimpse of the cricketers as they walked out to board the buses that would take them to the stadium. At some point during the wait, he somehow gathered the courage to walk into the lobby. As he looked around, he spotted Lance Gibbs seated alone in the coffee shop having breakfast. My school senior, a fifteen-year-old from Purnea, then a small district town in Bihar, walked confidently up to him and said, 'Good morning sir! What a pleasure to see the world's greatest off-spinner in person, and what a pity I won't be able to watch him in action.' Gibbs looked up at him, nodded his head politely at the compliment and asked him, 'Why, young man, aren't you coming to the match?' The youngster replied, 'Sir, how can I? I don't have a ticket.' Gibbs asked him to wait in the lobby as he finished his breakfast. The lanky cricketer then went up to his room and returned shortly afterwards with a Player's Guest invite. My friend, overjoyed to the point of hysteria, ran out of the hotel and straight towards the stadium to be on time for the first day's game.

Not only was the game on the day of the riots abandoned, but the following day too was declared a rest day. The match resumed on 3 January 1967 and ended on 5 January, with India losing by an innings and 45 runs in less than four days.

The riots of 1 January had alarmed our parents, and we were not allowed to go back to the stadium when play resumed. My

romance with Eden Gardens had ended even before it had begun, or so I thought.

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Forty-eight years later, sometime in early April 2015, I received a phone call from Anurag Thakur, a Member of Parliament and then secretary of the BCCI, asking me if I was interested in taking up the job of heading the Board's ACU. I had retired from police service over a year earlier as commissioner of police, Delhi, and was busy writing my first book, *Dial D for Don*. A few offers from the private sector had come my way, but none seemed worthwhile or exciting. I was enjoying my freedom and the abundant leisure that came with it. I could plan my day the way I wished – whether binge-watching movies or reading a book through the day. I got up late in the morning, played golf during the day or, if it was winter, just lounged around in the sun. For the first time in my life, I was answerable to none, except perhaps to my wife.

After thirty-seven years of active policing – mainly in high-pressure mainstream jobs – running from one situation to another, firefighting most of the time, retirement had come as a welcome change. The feeling of emancipation was exhilarating. I was living in my own house with no mortgages to pay, and I revelled in the freedom that had finally come my way. There could be no better time for me, I thought to myself, than now, when I could put my feet up and see the world go by. Being in the state that I was, the call from Anurag Thakur came as a jolt. It put me in a quandary.

'Anurag ji, my problem is that I would not like to relocate from Delhi to Mumbai,' I said, hoping to put him off. Undeterred, he said, 'Who is asking you to shift? You can continue to stay in Delhi and operate from here. I too stay in Delhi and work from here.'

'Anurag ji, I was hoping to join the ACU of the ICC [International Cricket Council],' I said, making a last-ditch effort to wriggle out.

'Please join the BCCI first. We will help you become the head of ICC's ACU too,' he replied.

I was still not too sure if I wanted to take up the assignment. But I said yes. Recent controversies in cricket had made it clear that the cricket administration in India needed public-spirited individuals to step up to the plate. As a cricketlover and proud Indian, I felt this was something I could do for the sport and for my country.

Towards the end of the month, I received a call from Boria Majumdar, a well-known cricket journalist I had interacted with at the time of the 2013 spot-fixing exposé during the sixth IPL. Boria informed me that at the general body meeting of the BCCI at Kolkata it had been decided to appoint me as the head of the BCCI's ACU.

Even though I had initially been hesitant, I was now excited as a totally new area of work awaited me. I imagined the job would entail activities I was not alien to – intelligence gathering, surveillance, enquiries, operations and interaction with a wide array of agencies. However, I knew that the ecosystem at the BCCI would be totally different from what I was used to.

The challenge, I thought to myself, would be to function in a new environment, perhaps alien and inhospitable, yet achieve tangible results. But one thing was certain: the most exciting part of my new job would be to stay close to cricket, my childhood obsession.

2

Past Sins!

One cannot tell with certainty when corruption in Indian cricket first came to light. The toss-fixing controversy during the sixth India–Pakistan Test in Calcutta in 1979–80 is perhaps the earliest instance of graft to be widely reported; to date this is talked about. The story goes that when G.R. Vishwanath, the Indian skipper, threw the coin in the air, Asif Iqbal, the Pakistan captain, hastened to say, *even before the coin could land*, 'Vishy! You have won the toss.' Vishwanath found the rival captain's behaviour suspicious, but he was a mild-mannered man and did not protest. Since the Indian skipper had not objected to what was clearly a questionable comment, the toss-referee too looked the other way. However, the doubt as to whether that toss was fixed between a bookie and Asif Iqbal still lingers.

There was another controversy that preceded this one, relatively lesser known, which was an attempt at match-fixing. The match in question was the Moin-ud-Dowlah Gold Cup Final played in 1934 when Lala Amarnath played for the