

## STAND UP & BE COUNTED

One important way to tackle match-fixing is to educate the players and officials about how to avoid falling into the trap which criminals may set out for them. Some might listen, some just do not care and willingly collaborate with the fixers, some turn an eye to what goes on around them and carry on with their business as usual, whilst others may, but improbable, be immune or unsuspecting of what goes on.

It is every football stakeholder's responsibility to do the utmost in protecting the game. But it does not seem that everyone is prepared to stand up and be counted. We cannot expect the football association to single-handedly tackle criminality of this scale.

It may also be argued by some that match manipulation happens within the sport itself, so it makes the association's solely responsible of what goes on. The association is as much an injured party as any other honest individual in football. It is good to point out that the association has openly and repeatedly spoken about this grave matter and is continuously pleading for everyone's assistance and co-operation. It has been punching alone and well above its weight especially over these last years.

The majority of football stakeholders are honest and well-meaning people who devote their private lives to the game. They deserve respect. Respect from those who go on the field of play without who no fix can be successful.

However, having said that, I am not totally confident that all of them are committed to the quest for clean football. Some may even be upset by my declarations and perhaps also try and find the occasional objection. It is my duty and responsibility to guide the people who prefer to shut their senses to reality.

The fixers circle round our football from the inside and outside like vultures ready to prey on greedy players or officials, some of who may also be in vulnerable positions posing an easier target for the ruthless criminals. If the fixers find determined opposition to their offensive, or face tightly slammed doors with subsequent reporting to the law enforcers, then we will truly stand a chance of eradicating the malaise that has hit football with much greater impact and a continued momentum which one person or entity on its own will ever be able to stop. A united front against the marauding fixers is what we have been talking about for an extremely long time now.

Unfortunately, I cannot see many who are prepared to face the damaging reality within our football and perhaps finally realizing that their obligation is to stand and be counted.ft