

INTERNAL CONFLICT

Research into the records of internal strife taking place incessantly in every corner of the globe since the turn of the twentieth century, is alarming. A number of countries have never been at complete peace ever. Statistics show that there have been over 10 million fatalities resulting from internal conflicts which unendingly occur at every minute of our life. This is frequently the doing of sinister people with their own imaginary reasons to terrorise compatriots eliminating them in the process. Very often this is done in collaboration with external powers, attacking the internal “enemy” in diverse ways.

These are the real and tangible global problems surrounding us, but we somehow manage to distract ourselves with pastimes and entertainment whilst the world is steadily simmering waiting to boil over at any time. But regrettably we are not protecting our precious pleasures, as even our football faces continuous attacks and internal conflict. Shadows have also been cast on the administrative processes being adopted by football’s organisational bodies.

I do not comprehend how the game has been allowed to be infiltrated by crooks, with the full co-operation of football lovers and in the process being perceived as a dubious sport by many. I do not accept the impression of football being synonymously associated with result manipulation at every turn. Whenever I discuss or overhear football enthusiasts, match-fixing invariably comes into the equation. This sometimes also applies to matches in important international competitions. This is far from the truth and it is not fair that all matches are put on the same scale for no valid reason whatsoever.

This twisted image has tarnished our enjoyment. Why are all local match results considered to be suspicious by the public? Is this what our football administrators wish for? I very much doubt. It is our duty and responsibility to look at the long term repercussions should we allow further deterioration of football’s integrity. It might be fine in the very short term for some ill-intentioned individuals, but it is slowly but surely eroding a sport which has given so much fun to generations on end.

I met an avid fan of one of our top teams in the Premier Division. He was very happy about his team’s recent success in an important match, but during our brief conversation, he asked me if, in my opinion, the result was an honest one devoid of any manipulation. I am sure that deep down he unfortunately suspects every single result in our leagues. This is the impression that our football is ceaselessly facing, which is not fair on the numerous administrators, players and supporters who strive for the honourable upkeep of the game.

Our concerted objective is to keep on cleansing the negative spectre hovering over the game and bequeath a saner football legacy to our children. ft