



VVS Laxman
(Indian cricketer)
"I was working towards the World Cup and hoping I could contribute towards the team's success. I am extremely disappointed, even shocked."
After being dropped from the World Cup squad.



Did U Know?
Gymnast Olga Korbut performed the first backward somersault on the uneven bars, a loop that was named after her. She was a sensation at the 1972 Olympics. She also performed the first Korbut somersault, a backward somersault on the balance beam.



ESPN
English Premier Football League
Chelsea vs Leeds United
Repeat at 8:30 am
UEFA Champions League
Bayern Munich vs Deportivo La Coruna
Repeat at 4:00 pm
Sportscentre Hindi
Sport News
Live at 8:30 pm
Cricket Programming
Legends Of Cricket
Repeat at 10:00 pm
English Premier Football League
Liverpool vs Arsenal
Live at 1:55 am (Thursday)

STAR Sports
Gillette World Sports Special
International Sports News
Repeat at 7:00 am
Cricket Programming
Super Selector
Repeat at 7:00 pm
Sportsline Tonight
Sport News
Live at 8:00 pm
Harsha Online
Cricket Talk Show

Star WHIZZ KID COMPETITION 18
Tick the correct answers, post
The Daily Star
Competition closes at 8 pm
Feb 7, 2003 and draw

1. Who clinched the national junior chess title?
Parag Ali Zia

2. Bangladesh lost to Namibia by 20 runs 2-wkt 7-wkt

3. Who became MVP in the SAFF Championship?
Arman Rajani Alfaz

4. Who will lead Kenya in the cricket World Cup?
O d u m b e
Tikolo Suji

Name

Class..... Roll No.....

School Address

Phone: (If any)

Office hockey
BSS, Dhaka

Sonali Bank defeated Interactive Group 5-2 in the super league of the Office Hockey League at the Maulana Bhashani National Stadium yesterday.
Moksed netted three goals while Habul scored two for the winners.
Rahul and Titu scored one goal each for the losers.

BFF's hangover goes on

Football

SPORTS REPORTER

With the ninth South Asian Federation (SAF) Games exactly two months away, the Bangladesh Football Federation (BFF) is yet to decide when it would start the national camp.

The biggest sports festival involving the seven nations of this region will be held in Islamabad from March 29 to April 7. Afghanistan are also going to take part in the meet for the first time following an invitation of the Olympic Council of Asia (OCA).

The hangover of the third South Asian Football Federation (SAFF) Championship triumph continues in the BFF, making it totally oblivious of the next assignment.

Two vital issues need to be

sorted out if the country wish to successfully defend the gold they won in 8th SAF Games in Kathmandu in 1999.

Firstly, the BFF has to decide whether it should invite George Kottan to carry on his coaching at its own expense. Secondly, it needs to select a preliminary squad for the Olympic event where only three players over 23 years would be allowed to take part.

But unfortunately, the football's governing body is still dragging its heels over settling the two vital issues.

Kottan, who inspired Bangladesh to the SAFF Championship victory, ended his tenure as an AFC (Asian Football coach) sponsored coach in December last year. But despite the popular demand for an extended stint of the gray-haired mentor, the BFF remained silent over his future. The Austrian will fly back to Vienna

on January 30 to spent time with his family.

The federation also has not yet drawn up any plan to replace the nine over-23 players from the victorious SAFF Championship squad. BFF acting general secretary Sirajul Islam failed to give any answer when approached.

Back from Kuala Lumpur after attending an AFC seminar, Sirajul said that the matter would be discussed in the next BFF meeting.

"We will sit in an emergency meeting on February 2 and decide when to start the camp for the SAFF Games. I can not tell you anything before that," said Sirajul yesterday.

He also could not say who is going to pick the primary squad. Kottan was the lone man who took initiatives to select the primary squad previously. And he is no longer available.

Final practice match today

SPORTS REPORTER

Bangladesh will be hoping for an improvement in the batting department when they play the fifth and final limited-overs practice match against Namibia today.

Though Khaled Mashud's men enjoy a 3-1 lead going into the match at the Wanderers Club in Windhoek, the real concern ahead of the World Cup seems to be the consistent top-order failures.

In only one game did the team managed to cross 200-run mark.

Before Sunday's tense one-wicket win, Bangladesh who flew to Namibia on January 15 for a two-week camp, opened with a 60-run victory then lost the second match by two wickets. The Tigers however returned to winning ways with a three-wicket win.

After today's match, the squad will fly to South Africa on January 31.

Three-way lead

SPORTS REPORTER

Three players led the table with four points after the fourth round preliminary phase matches in the Professor Abdur Razzak 29th National Chess Championship yesterday.

They are: FM Sheikh Nasir Ahmed, Syed Mahfuzur Rahman and Saifuddin Lavlu.

Following are the fourth round results: Nasir beat Arifuzzaman, Lavlu beat Aminul Islam Polash, Mahfuzur beat Shafiq Ahmed, Sumon beat Uten, Arman beat Monjur Alam and Main beat Masud Khan.

Sirajganj cricket

OUR CORRESPONDENT

Sirajganj Sadar (Red) Ekadosh defeated Belkuchi Ekadosh by 190 runs in the inter-upazila cricket tournament at the Shaheed Shamsuddin Stadium yesterday.

Sent in to bat, Sadar made 273 for five in the stipulated 35 overs. Johnny scored 104.

In reply, Belkuchi were all out for 84 in 35 overs.

Ten teams are taking part in the tournament.

AL honours champions

UNB, Dhaka

Leader of the opposition in Parliament and Awami League president Sheikh Hasina called upon everybody to keep sports free from politics to earn more success in the international arena.

"We should put emphasis on performance rather than political pressure while giving a chance to someone in sports," she said during a reception accorded to the Bangladesh national football team by the main opposition Awami League at a city hotel yesterday.

Hasina congratulated the players and officials of the national team for winning the 3rd South Asian Football Federation (SAFF) Championship title. She handed over a gold-plated crest and citation to each member. Hasina also presented an impressive trophy to the unbeaten champions.

Terming the success as an unforgettable moment in the country's sports history, she said her party is always willing to extend a helping

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Tense finish in store

Cricket

SPORTS REPORTER

A second innings collapse by Dhaka left the final of the Ispahani Mirzapore Tea National Cricket League evenly poised after the third day at the Bangabandhu National Stadium yesterday.

The holders were bundled out for 191 runs despite a superb 90 by Sajjad Ahmed Shipon and a fighting 44 by tailender Fahim Muntasir.

Surprise finalists Khulna will need to score 221 when they start their second innings on the last day today.

In an eventful penultimate day, Khulna added another 67 runs to overnight score of 271-7 with number nine Razzak scoring a vital 43. The southpaw struck four boundaries and a six. Still Khulna finished 24 runs short of Dhaka's massive first innings 362.

And they made up for the deficit by reducing Dhaka 135-8 midway through the final session. With the game firmly in Khulna's grasp, but Dhaka staged a late rally thanks to Sajjad and number ten Fahim.

Shipon's magnificent knock of 118 balls contained 14 boundaries. The highly talented right-hander missed his first 100 of the season when he dragged the ball on to the stumps while attempting a cut off Razzak. Fahim, on the other hand, dominated a 42-run last wicket stand to guide his side out of troubled waters.

The off-spinner hammered eight fours.

The holders collected 61 runs for the last two wickets before being bowled out in 67.1 overs.

Khulna new ball bowler Al-Amin took three wickets for 52 runs from his 18 overs while pacer Masud

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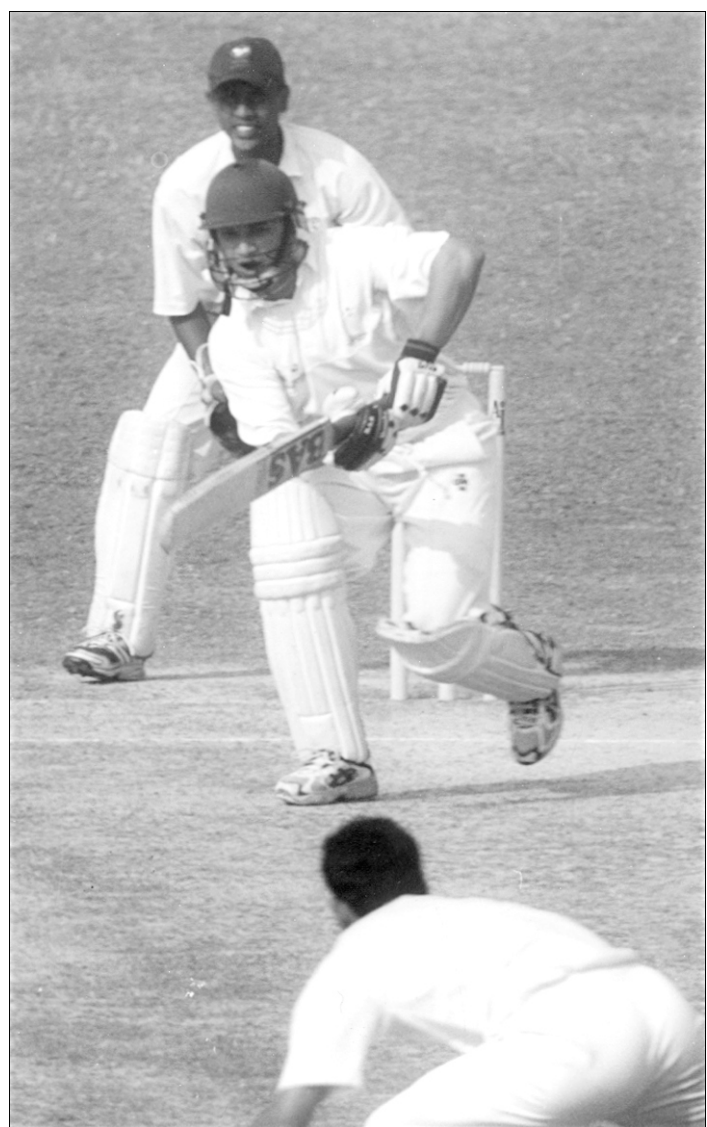


PHOTO: STAR

NEAR MISS: Dhaka batsman Sajjad Ahmed Shipon sets off for a run during his superb knock under pressure on Day Three of the Ispahani Mirzapore National Cricket Championship final against Khulna at the Bangabandhu National Stadium yesterday. Shipon missed a hundred by only ten runs.

Kenya laughs at NZC

ICC Cricket World Cup SOUTH AFRICA 2003

REUTERS, Nairobi

Kenyan police have dismissed as outrageous a statement by New Zealand Cricket that it will be unsafe to play a World Cup fixture in Nairobi next month.

"I would say it's outrageous and dishonest," Kenyan national police spokesman Kingori Mwangi said on Tuesday. "When some of these people hear it's in African countries, some of them think we are monkeys out there in the rainforests."

New Zealand Cricket chief executive Martin Snedden said earlier on Tuesday a security review had found there were "active terrorist organisations" operating in Nairobi that had the ability to launch an attack.

"The information was that these terrorist groups are looking to target Western interests in Nairobi," Snedden said in a statement. He added that Kenyan authorities could not provide adequate security.

The Kenya Cricket Association (KCA) said it had forwarded an enhanced security plan worked out with South African experts to the International Cricket Council (ICC) on Monday and accused the New Zealanders of succumbing to paranoia.

"They are being paranoid," KCA chairman and ICC member Jimmy Rayani told Reuters. "If people are being paranoid about security, then even the White House would be unsafe."

World Cup director Ali Bacher said he believed the new plan would be delivered on Tuesday and discussed by the ICC board on Thursday along with security issues associated with the six matches in Zimbabwe.

"It's simple," Bacher said. "If in

their opinion it is not safe for the players to go to Kenya, there will be no World Cup cricket.

"However, if the information now is there is a comprehensive security plan, I would like to think that they are going to be consistent and say once again that we want those two matches to take place in Nairobi."

New Zealand cricketers have twice been close to terror attacks in Sri Lanka and last May the team pulled out of a tour of Pakistan after

a bomb blast outside their hotel in Karachi killed 12 people.

Kenya's new President Mwai Kibaki pledged last week to improve security for the two World Cup matches in the east African country.

The World Cup, which is to be played mainly in South Africa, has been beset by doubts over plans to hold games in both Zimbabwe and Kenya.

Security fears sharpened in

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PHOTO: STAR

THERE GOES MY CHOLESTEROL CHECK! Awami League chief Sheikh Hasina feeds a piece of cake to Bangladesh national football team's Austrian coach George Kottan (C) during a reception accorded to the South Asian Football Federation (SAFF) championship winning national squad at the Purbani Hotel in the city yesterday.

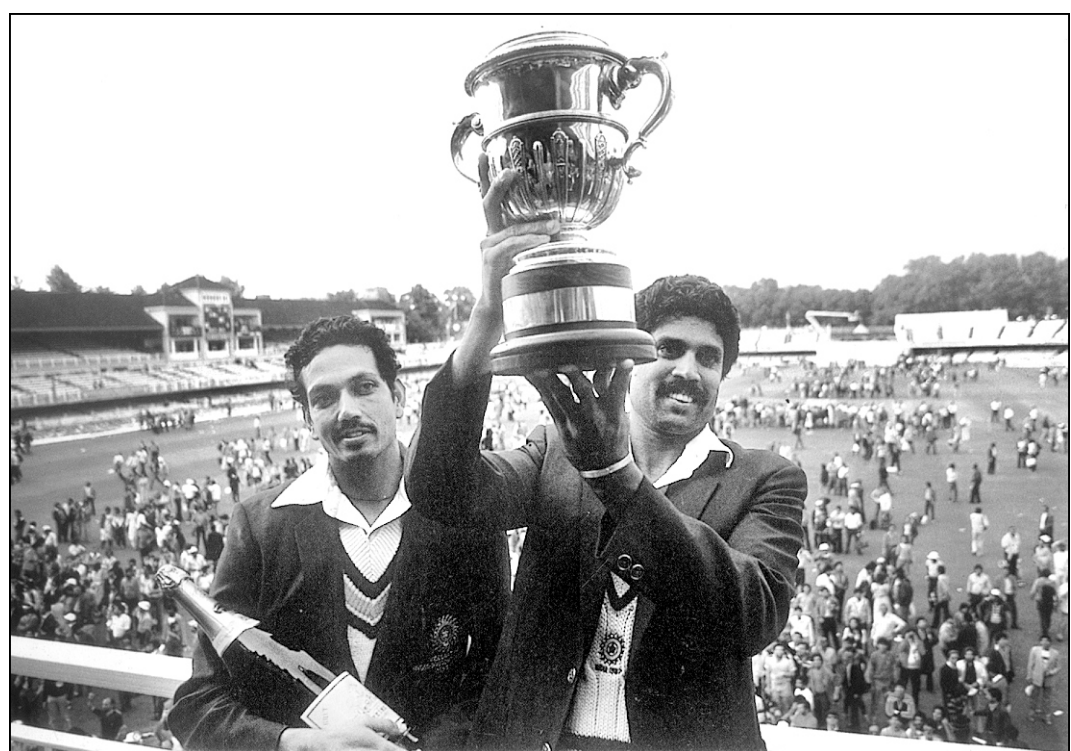


PHOTO: STAR FILE

INDIA'S GREATEST MOMENT: Proud captain Kapil Dev (R) holds aloft the 1983 Prudential World Cup trophy while man-of-the-match Mohinder Amarnath stands beside him with a giant champagne bottle after India had beaten the West Indies in the final at Lord's.

Donald in doubt? Rally round Sri Lanka

ICC Cricket World Cup SOUTH AFRICA 2003

BBC ONLINE, London

World Cup hosts South Africa have played down concerns about the fitness of veteran pace bowler Allan Donald.

Coach Eric Simons admitted that Donald was feeling "a little bit stiff" following last week's training camp in the Drakensburg mountains.

But he expects the 36-year-old to be available for selection for a



ALLAN DONALD

warm-up game against Western Province on Saturday.

Team physio Shane Jabbar said: "He's a little bit tight in some of the muscle groups he hasn't used before."

"The activities ranged from running downhill to sitting on a bicycle saddle for three hours. All that was quite taxing for a fast bowler's body."

"At practice one of the muscles deep in his backside developed a trigger point, an area of muscular

spasm that just didn't want to let go. "Every time he was running in, pulling his weight through, it was just clenching up. It was so tight, it caused him discomfort."

The World Cup is likely to be Donald's swansong after an international career stretching back to 1991, when South Africa's exile from the game was ended after 21 years.

He has taken 271 wickets in 161 one-day appearances, with best figures of six for 23 against Kenya in Nairobi in 1996.

South Africa start their campaign in Cape Town, when they meet West Indies in the opening game on 9 February.

They are hoping to become the first host country to win the World Cup in the tournament's 28-year history.

Rally round Sri Lanka

AFP, Colombo

Sri Lanka on Tuesday asked disappointed fans to provide 'morale support' to the national team despite an acrimonious pay dispute between cricket administrators and players.

Sports Minister Johnston Fernando said the country should 'forget the past' and rally behind skipper Sanath Jayasuriya and his team who were criticised here for their demand for a hefty slice of the World Cup guarantee money.

"I don't want to say their demand was fair or not... but we must now forget the past and I appeal to the entire country to support our players to win the World Cup," Fernando said.

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Waugh decision in 2 weeks

Cricket

REUTERS, Melbourne

Steve Waugh will make a decision on his playing future within the next two weeks, he said on Tuesday.

The Australia test captain is considering retirement but said he still has not made his mind up and wants another fortnight to think it over.

"There's days when you contemplate either way and I really haven't made a decision yet," Waugh said at Tuesday's Allan Border Medal

presentation night.

"People say you'll know when it's the right time, but I'm not so sure."

"I'll have a think about it and decide in the next couple of weeks."

Waugh, 37, has been facing increasing opposition to his place in the team over the past 12 months but silenced his critics with a magnificent century in the last Ashes test in Sydney earlier this month.

Punching the final ball of the day through the field to reach his hundred, Waugh equalled Don Bradman's Australian national record of 29 test centuries.

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Disgraced skippers happy

Cricket

AFP, New Delhi

Banned former Indian cricket captain Mohammad Azharuddin saw a ray of hope Tuesday after teammate Ajay Jadeja was absolved of any wrongdoing in the match-fixing scandal.

The Delhi High Court on Monday overturned a five-year ban imposed on Jadeja by the Board of Control for Cricket in India (BCCI), saying there was no proof he was guilty.

Azharuddin, who was given a life ban following the match-fixing inquiry by the federal Central Bureau of Investigation (CBI), voiced confidence that too would be absolved by another court where he had challenged the ban.

"He (Azhar) was confident that justice will be meted out to him too," the former captain's lawyer Arun Bharadwaj said.

"The BCCI ban is both illegal and against the principle of natural justice and we will now examine the Delhi High Court order on Jadeja and use it to substantiate our argument in Azharuddin's case."

Azharuddin had filed his appeal in a court in his hometown of Hyderabad soon after he, along with Jadeja, Manoj Prabhakar and Ajay Sharma, was suspended in December 2000 by the BCCI.

The CBI in its report claimed that while Jadeja and Prabhakar ho-

nored with alleged bookmakers, there was sufficient proof to nail Azharuddin and Sharma to match-fixing.

Azharuddin's lawyer Bharadwaj expressed the hope that his client would soon be absolved.

"The cases (of Jadeja and Azharuddin) are very similar in nature, the allegations are similar and the BCCI's evidence in both cases is similar and based more on hearsay than anything else," he said.

"I will try to acquire a copy of the Delhi High Court decision to supplement my case," said the 39-year-old Malik, whose name was mentioned in the Indian match-fixing inquiry.

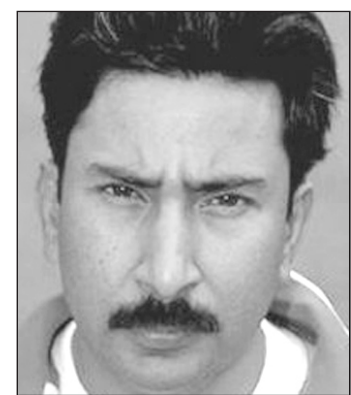
confident this will help me in my fight to quash a life ban."

"This proves that there has been no evidence of match-fixing in the probes conducted and I would be able to prove my innocence," said Malik, who played 103 Tests and 283 one-day internationals for Pakistan from 1981-1999.

"I will try to acquire a copy of the Delhi High Court decision to supplement my case," said the 39-year-old Malik, whose name was mentioned in the Indian match-fixing inquiry.



MOHAMMAD AZHARUDDIN



SALIM MALIK

Meanwhile in Karachi, banned former Pakistan captain Salim Malik also welcomed the decision said it should help him fight his life ban from the game.

"I am really very happy to hear that Jadeja is relieved and he may revive his cricket career and am

Australian players Shane Warne, Tim May and Mark Waugh alleged Malik offered them a bribe to under-perform during Australia's tour of Pakistan in 1994-95.

Pakistan conducted a compe

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