



DON'T WORRY COACH, THE WORLD CUP IS BEHIND US! Newly appointed Bangladesh captain Khaled Mahmud (R) makes a point to coach Sarwar Imran during the first practice session of the national cricket team at the Bangabandhu National Stadium yesterday.

Proteas confirm tour India minus stalwarts?

Cricket
SPORTS REPORTER

The fear of South Africa pulling out of their tour of Bangladesh due to security concerns related to the war in Iraq was put to rest when the United Cricket Board of South Africa (UCBSA) officially confirmed their visit yesterday.
The Proteas will take part in a three-nation one-day international tournament named the TVS Cup that also involves India and hosts Bangladesh, followed by two Tests against the Tigers during their first ever full tour of this country.
The UCBSA's confirmation came after they received satisfactory assurances from the Bangladesh Cricket Board (BCB) over the team's security during the four-week-long tour.
"The South African Ministry of Foreign Affairs has written to us that, in light of the on-going war in Iraq, the tour to Bangladesh may be favourably considered if the relevant authorities

there provide the team with the necessary and adequate security control measures," UCBSA chief executive Gerald Majola said in a statement.
"We have received an assurance from the Bangladesh Cricket Board and their government that all necessary security steps have been taken and that the team will face no security problems."
"Barring any unforeseen circumstances or changes to this situation, the tour is on."
South Africa team, led by new captain Graeme Smith, will arrive in Dhaka on April 9 and play a practice match against the BCB development squad at BKSP on April 11.
India, who are scheduled to play the opening match of the tri-series against Bangladesh, are also expected to reach Dhaka either on April 8 or 9.
Our Delhi Correspondent Pallab Bhattacharya reported yesterday that master batsman Sachin Tendulkar and vice-captain Rahul Dravid will not be in the list when the Indian selectors announce a 14-man squad for the tri-nation series in Mumbai today.

Both Tendulkar and Dravid have asked to the Board of Control for Cricket in India (BCCI) to spare them the Dhaka trip as they want to nurse their nagging finger injuries suffered during the World Cup in South Africa, Board secretary S K Nair said yesterday.
The Indians might opt for a makeshift team for the Dhaka tournament, as some of the other senior players like paceman Javagal Srinath, spinner Anil Kumble and left-arm quick Ashish Nehra also have reportedly sought rest after a gruelling international season.
Meanwhile, the International Cricket Council (ICC) have appointed former West Indies captain Clive Lloyd as match referee for both the one-day tournament and the Test series.
New Zealand's charismatic Billy Bowden and Pakistani Alim Dar are the two neutral umpires who will officiate in the tri-nation matches along with a local umpire. The BCB is yet to name the Bangladeshi umpire for the tri-series.
After the one-day tournament, famous West Indian umpire Steve

BCB involves Faruque, Athar

SPORTS REPORTER
Bangladesh Cricket Board (BCB) yesterday named former national captain Faruque Ahmed as their representative in the International Cricket Council (ICC) Cricket Committee (Playing).
Faruque has been nominated in place of former national captain Rouqibul Hassan who is now BCB's chief coordinator for next year's World Youth (under-19) Cup that will be held in Bangladesh.
Faruque's first assignment is to join a meeting of the committee that is scheduled in Dubai on April 7 and 8.
Former India captain Sunil Gavaskar is the chairman of the ICC Cricket Committee (Playing).
In another development, the BCB have nominated former Bangladeshi opener Athar Ali Khan as the tournament director for the Youth Asia Cup that is scheduled in Singapore from July 14 to 28.
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King annoyed!

Cricket
AFP, Sydney

"I've seen no terms or conditions, I still haven't."
"I was actually informed at eight o'clock this morning of my appointment without really too much prior knowledge that that was the way they were going to go."
"And then they announced it to the press, which I was pretty annoyed at."
"At the moment that's where it stands and I haven't seen anything, so I



BENNETT KING
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can't make any decisions really."
Asked if he would become the next West Indies coach, replacing Roger Harper, King replied: "I'll tell you when they get some terms on the table."
The Australian team left for the West Indies late Monday, with the WICB announcing that Gus Logie would coach the team against Australia and Sri Lanka in the interim.
King thought he was expected in the Caribbean in July.
"I believe the first week in July they're looking at me being there, but in terms of making a decision, I can't do anything until they give me something."
When asked if the premature announcement of his appointment would effect his decision, King said: "We'll wait and see. I need a bit more time to think about it."
He added the Australian Cricket Board (ACB) had supported him throughout.
"I need to speak with the ACB about all this, they've been very supportive through this whole process," he said.
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NZ fans out to help Olonga

AFP, Hastings

A group of local cricket fans are campaigning to win rebel Zimbabwean cricketer Henry Olonga a place in the Central Districts cricket team.
Olonga, the first black cricketer to play for Zimbabwe, was suspended from his Harare cricket club and may face treason charges carrying a penalty of death after he and teammate Andy Flower made a political protest at the Cricket World Cup.
They wore black armbands during their opening match against Namibia to "mourn the death of democracy in our beloved Zimbabwe."
Cricket fan Earl Stevens said Tuesday he was leading a campaign to get Olonga here.
"It really is a crying shame what's happened in Zimbabwe. It's a country that should have everything and they've got nothing," Stevens said.
"Firstly, we need to see if we can get him over here. Secondly, we need to find out where he is to get information to him, and thirdly, we would need to organise a job for him and accommodation and financial support to get him here."

Brian back at the helm

Cricket
INTERNET, Barbados

Double world batting record holder Brian Lara has been returned to West Indies captaincy for the Cable & Wireless home series against Australia and Sri Lanka.
The 33-year-old Lara, who previously led the West Indies in 1998 and 1999, replaces Carl Hooper, and the West Indies Cricket Board (WICB) announced other major appointments on Monday, including making Australian Bennett King the first ever foreign coach of the West Indies cricket team.
The WICB named Ramnaresh Sarwan as vice-captain to Lara, and Gus Logie as King's coaching assistant, while retaining Ricky Skerritt as team manager and formally appointing Roger



BRIAN LARA
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Matured, motivated

Cricket
INTERNET, Barbados

in West Indies cricket.
"In retrospect, I think it was a good decision at the time (to give up the captaincy) and now it's a big challenge," Lara said.
The 33-year-old Lara, who previously led the West Indies in 18 Tests between 1998 and 2000 after taking over the reins for a solitary Test against India in 1997.
"It is most importantly for us to continue shaping our character because we've got a team that is very young and we've got a team that is full of a lot of potential," Lara noted.
"We need to shape our characters, especially in the tough times, especially against the best team in the world. There is no better opposition to do that against," Lara maintained.
Lara said he is sensing a different feeling as he prepares for his second stint as captaincy.
"Now is a different occasion, now it's

a lot more receptive in my new role in leadership. I expect a lot of support from the people and the team also," Lara remarked.
Lara said the inclusion of his predecessor Hooper would be an asset to the team once he is in form.
"Carl has to be able to tell us what he exactly wants to do. I think Carl would be a welcome addition to West Indies cricket at any time, especially if he is in form," Lara declared.
"Presently, I know they are keeping Jamaica at bay. He is been away for a couple of weeks because of injury but Carl has always been a favourite son in West Indies cricket. Of course, anyone who is in form of that ability, you would want to see him around the team," Lara reckoned.
The world double record holder revealed he had to think things over.
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City going great

Cricket
SPORTS REPORTER

Faruque Ahmed continued to inspire City Club to a height that the mediocre Mirpur outfit could never reach before in the Premier League.
The motivated team of the former national captain was cruising for a comfortable victory in their first Super League game against Uttara Sporting Club at the Dhamondi Cricket Stadium yesterday, the third day of four-day encounter.
With the rain staying off after the washed-out second day, Faruque's men bowled out Uttara for 93 in 36.4 overs.
Uttara, who could add four runs to their first day's total of 89-8, also suffered a second innings collapse after City Club posted a massive 329 for 5 in 75

Ganguly still grieving

Cricket
AFP, Bombay

away from the team's good performance in the tournament," Ganguly said at a function here.
"They (Australia) are the best, but it does not mean we should have lost to them."
India lost only two matches in the entire tournament in South Africa both of them to Australia in the preliminary league and the final on March 23.
The cricket-mad country went into

mourning after the team's loss, with Ganguly coming in for severe flak for his decision to field first after winning the toss.
Australia, fired by a brilliant century from captain Ricky Ponting, amassed a World Cup final record total of 359-2 to crush India by 125 runs.
But Ganguly said the Indian team had impressed the entire cricketing world by its performance in the tournament, which included a six-wicket win over arch-rivals Pakistan in the first round.
"The way the team played, the whole country is proud. I am sure we can win the World Cup in 2007 in the West Indies," the Indian captain said.
"It's a young side with nine players having played the World Cup for the first time. With the experience, we are now better placed to win in 2007."
The Indian team will take part in the April 11-20 tri-series in Dhaka against South Africa and Bangladesh.
There is no international cricket scheduled for the team after that until the home Test series against New Zealand in October.
The Indian team for the Dhaka tri-series will be selected on Wednesday amid reports that senior players like Sachin Tendulkar, Rahul Dravid, Anil Kumble and Javagal Srinath will be rested.



India skipper Saurav Ganguly poses with former Bollywood star Poonam Dhillon during a function to felicitate his performance as a captain in the World Cup in Bombay yesterday.
PHOTO: AFP
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Counts on BD tour

Cricket
INTERNET, Johannesburg

Bangladesh before the opening game.
"There definitely will be a debriefing over the World Cup," added Simons. "Of course we have to acknowledge what happened and try and learn from it."
"But that won't be our sole aim. There're quite a few new faces in the squad and we want to be able to learn from it."
"I'm quite relieved that we are going on at least one of the tours before England," said Simons, referring to South Africa's decision not to take part in the Sharjah triangular series following the outbreak of war in Iraq.
"If this one had been called off I probably would have asked to arrange something against South Africa A or maybe a short tour with Kenya."
The Bangladesh tour will see Graeme Smith lead the side for the first time after Shaun Pollock was sacked following South Africa's first round exit from the World Cup.
The South Africans will fly out on Monday, giving the squad four days in

develop a new style of playing.
"It's not that we want to adopt a certain game plan for every game. Rather we want to adopt a game plan that will suit the playing XI and the situation."
Simons feels that a tour against Bangladesh is an ideal opportunity to deal with issues that stymied South Africa's quest to become the first host nation to lift the World Cup.
"We have to look at how we deal with the pressure," pointed out Simons, who was appointed coach following the hiding Australia meted out last summer.
"When we came to the World Cup and the pressure increased, we started playing different cricket. Some of the guys almost froze in certain situations."
After a lead up to the World Cup where South Africa swept aside all opposition, the side struggled to chase down targets that, although



ERIC SIMONS
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Chief Lankan selector quits

Cricket
INTERNET, undated

Sri Lanka's chairman of selectors Guy de Alwis has resigned, complaining of continued government interference.
De Alwis, a former Test wicketkeeper, is the third man to have quit the post during the tenure of Sports Minister Johnston Fernando, who must approve all national teams.
Fernando last week refused to allow the selectors to drop wicketkeeper Kumar Sangakkara or allow spinner Muttiah Muralitharan to rest a shoulder injury during next week's Sharjah Cup.
"The minister of sports has interfered in everything from the time I took over and there's no way I can continue

Olympics qualifier BFF names primary 24

BSS, Dhaka
Bangladesh Football Federation (BFF) has primarily selected 24 players and five officials for the qualifying round of next year's Olympic Games football competition.
The residential training camp begins at the Bangladesh Krira Shikha Pratisthan in Savar today.
Bangladesh play Myanmar at home on April 12 and away on 19. The 28th Olympic Games will be held in Athens, the capital of Greece.
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