



PHOTO: ANISUR RAHMAN

GOOD TO SEE HIM BACK: Bangladesh quick Mashrafe-bin-Mortuza (in the foreground) practises along with the members of the national team at the Bangabandhu National Stadium yesterday. While the national team trains for the upcoming TVS Cup and the two Test matches against South Africa, Mashrafe is trying to regain fitness.

Batting Mahmud's concern

Cricket

SPORTS REPORTER

Bangladesh captain Khaled Mahmud wants to use the TVS Cup triangular one-day series as a platform to rebuild the image of Bangladesh's cricket after it hit its lowest ebb in the World Cup.

The 32-year-old who took over from wicketkeeper-batsman Khaled Mashud last month also said that he was eager to break the losing streak of nearly four years in the series that involves World Cup runners-up India and South Africa.

Bangladesh have not won a single one day international match since their

memorable victory against Pakistan in the 1999 World Cup in England.

"We did not win a game for four years. I'm not that optimistic to say that time has come to end that jinx. But I'm confident of creating a situation where we at least have a chance of winning," said the Bangladesh captain after the team's training session at the Bangabandhu National Stadium.

Bangladesh will play the opening match of the day-night competition against Saurav Ganguly's new-look Indian team that will miss the firepower of Sachin Tendulkar. The Indians are also without stalwarts Rahul Dravid and Javagal Srinath.

Although the ghost of the World Cup still haunts the national cricketers,

Mahmud said that his team was ready to start afresh. Bangladesh lost five out of their six preliminary matches in South Africa including a stunning 60-run defeat at the hands of tiny Canada.

"We want to forget the past. The World Cup was a disappointment for us. But we will definitely perform better on home soil," said a confident Mahmud.

But the batting that let Bangladesh down in South Africa still remained a cause for concern despite the inclusion of two experienced openers Mehrab Hossain and Javed Omar Belim.

Mahmud was also skeptic about his top-order that failed to score runs in two practice matches at the BNS.

"The top-order is still struggling

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No Hooper

REUTERS, Georgetown

Carl Hooper, the former West Indies captain, pulled out of the squad on Monday to face Australia in the home Test series starting on Thursday.

A West Indies Cricket Board (WICB) spokeswoman said that Hooper, replaced by Brian Lara as captain last month, had changed his mind and would not be playing against the world champions after initially being selected.

"This has been a difficult decision but one I felt must be made given the developments in recent weeks and the new direction the team is heading," a statement from Hooper of Guyana said.

"Though it's tempting to play, it would curtail the development of a younger player and, as I see it, also a backward step for West Indies cricket."

The squad announced last month included wholesale changes from the party which failed to progress past the opening group stage in the World Cup.

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All set for TVS Cup

Cricket

SPORTS REPORTER

With the world gripped by a sense of anxiety with the happenings in Iraq, international cricket tries to slip in through the back door in Bangladesh with the TVS Cup tri-nation tournament beginning Friday.

But the competition will definitely struggle to be in the spotlight with the eyes of the media focused on the day-to-day events in Baghdad.

The ten-day tournament gets moving with the arrival of competing

FIXTURES

April 11	Bangladesh v India
April 13	India v South Africa
April 14	Bangladesh v South Africa
April 16	Bangladesh v India
April 17	Bangladesh v South Africa
April 18	India v South Africa
April 20	Final

Note: All matches will be day-night affairs and start at the Bangabandhu National Stadium from 2 pm.

teams India and South Africa today.

South Africa, led by new skipper Graeme Smith, arrive at the Zia International Airport in the morning while Saurav Ganguly's new-look India are scheduled to reach the

capital in the early afternoon.

Both teams will be staying at the Sonargaon Hotel while host Bangladesh will be lodged at the Hotel Sheraton for the tournament that begins at the Bangabandhu National



PHOTO: STAR

Nurul Kabir Shaheen (C), organising secretary of the TVS Cup tri-nation tournament committee, speaks to reporters at the Conference Room of the Bangabandhu National Stadium yesterday.

Tickets go on sale from today

Cricket

SPORTS REPORTER

Tickets for the TVS Cup tri-nation series involving Bangladesh, India and South Africa, will go on sale from eight city branches of Premier Bank this morning.

Premier Bank recently won the right to sell the tickets of the tournament by paying Taka 22 lakh. It will give the Bangladesh Cricket Board Taka 15 lakh while the rest of the amount will be spent on printing of the tickets.

Apart from the eight branches Gulshan, Banani, Uttara, Motijheel, Dilkusha, Dhanmondi, Karwan Bazar and Imanganj tickets will also be sold at the Bangabandhu National Stadium

booths on match days under the supervision of the bank.

There are three types of rates for the tickets.

Tickets for the first round matches involving Bangladesh will be cheaper than the South Africa-India matches. Prices of tickets for the final will be a slightly higher.

A press conference was held at the Bangabandhu National Stadium yesterday with BCB organising committee secretary Shah Nurul Kabir Shahin in the chair.

Kazi Abdul Majed, the advisor of Premier Bank, MA Yusuf Khan, managing director Premier Bank and Khandker Jamiluddin, the chairman of ticket and seating committee, were also present on the occasion.

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King won't coach West Indies

Cricket

AFP, Sydney

Australian Bennett King will continue in his role as Australian Cricket Academy head coach and not take up an offer to coach the West Indies cricket team, the Australian Cricket Board said on Tuesday.

King was keen to continue as academy coach in Adelaide and had advised the West Indies Cricket Board (WICB) and the ACB of his decision, the ACB said in a statement.

The West Indies coaching position becomes available on July 1 and King advised the ACB that he had spoken to the WICB about the position.

King is highly regarded in Australia, having guided Queens-land to three



BENNETT KING

consecutive Sheffield Shield titles from the 1999-2000 season after succeeding John Buchanan when he took over the Australian team.

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McGrath to play in final two Tests

Cricket

AFP, Sydney

Paceman Glenn McGrath plans to rejoin the Australian team in the West Indies before the final two matches of the four-Test series, the Australian Cricket Board said on Tuesday.

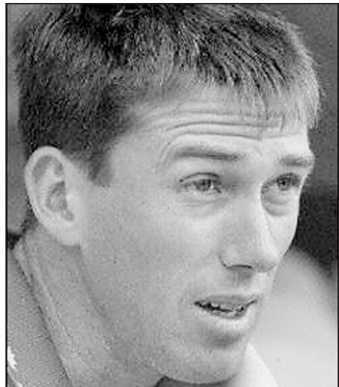
McGrath returned home last week from the West Indies after his wife had been diagnosed with a secondary cancer infection in her hip.

It was her second battle against cancer in six years.

Jane McGrath is undergoing further treatment which is expected to lead to a full recovery.

Subject to his wife's health, McGrath plans to fly back to the West Indies on April 21, the ACB said in a statement.

The first Test gets underway in Georgetown, Guyana on Thursday.



GLENN MCGRATH

Depending on his wife's reaction to the cancer treatment, the ACB said McGrath will play in the third Test in Bridgetown on May 1-5, the fourth Test

in St John's, Antigua, on May 11-13 and the seven one-day internationals.

"We're in constant touch with Glenn, he has our full support on this matter and we don't want to say he's got to return by this time...we want to maintain an open approach," Australian Cricket Board (ACB) chief executive James Sutherland said on Tuesday.

"It's a more optimistic outlook than where we were a week ago."

Sutherland left open the possibility that paceman Brad Williams, who went to the Caribbean to cover for McGrath, would remain on the tour, saying that would remain to be left up to selectors.

"It's too early to say for sure that as soon as Glenn gets there Brad would return home, that's not necessarily the case," Sutherland said.

ACB spokesman Pat O'Beirne

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Pakistan's late flurry

Cricket

AFP, Sharjah

Shoaib Malik hit 76 off 58 balls as Pakistan scored 286 for 8 from 50 overs after electing to bat against Kenya in the last league match of the Sharjah Cup here on Tuesday.

Pakistan, who have already qualified for Thursday's final of the four-nation event against Zimbabwe, notched up the highest total in the otherwise low-scoring tournament.

Misbah-ul Haq made 42 in his first appearance here, while skipper Rashid Latif slammed 38 off 31 in a run-a-ball stand of 72 for the sixth wicket with Malik.

World Cup semifinalists Kenya, who lost both their previous matches to Zimbabwe and Sri Lanka, did well to restrict Pakistan to 150-5 in the 35th over.

But Malik and Latif wrested the initiative with bold hitting, the Pakistan

captain taking two boundaries and two sixes in his aggressive knock.

Kenyan captain Steve Tikolo was the most successful bowler for the Africans, his steady off-spin gaining the wickets of Misbah, Yousuf Youhana and Latif.

Pakistan's new opener Mohammad Hafeez provided an entertaining start with a quickfire 36 and Faisal Iqbal made 23 as their team raced to 102-2.

The innings ended with Pakistan plundering 108 runs in the last 10 overs to set Kenya a stiff target of 5.8 runs an over under lights.

SCOREBOARD
Scoreboard of the Pakistan innings in the Sharjah Cup one-day international against Kenya on Tuesday:

PAKISTAN	
Hafeez c Otieno b Ongondo	36
Umar b Angara	17
Iqbal c Odumbe b C Obuya	23
Misbah c Patel b Tikolo	42
Yousuf Youhana b Tikolo	18
Malik c C Obuya b Ongondo	76
Latif b Tikolo	38

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Cricket

INTERNET, London

Adam Hollioake should be made captain of England's one-day side, according to Surrey teammate Mark Butcher.

England Test batsman Butcher gave his Surrey skipper a full vote of confidence for the captaincy position made vacant when Nasser Hussain resigned after the World Cup.

And Hollioake is one of the leading candidates, despite not having played for England for almost four years.

"I think Adam would make an excellent one-day captain for England," Butcher told the BBC Sport Website.

"There's been things written in the press that he's desperate to take the job but I'm not sure that's the case."

"But if Adam wants to do it, then I'm sure he's the best man for the job."

Hollioake is the only candidate

with experience in the job, having led England on 14 occasions for six wins including the 1999 Sharjah Cup.

Bookmakers make Hollioake only third favourite for the post behind odds-on shot Michael Vaughan, while



ADAM HOLLIOAKE

Marcus Trescothick is also under consideration.

But Butcher reckons Hollioake is

the right option.

"One of his biggest strengths is the ability to empower the people that are playing with him and make them play well as a team," he explains.

"He's fantastic at making people believe in themselves."

"That's the kind of captain he is at Surrey and I know he'd do the same if he was given a chance with England."

Meanwhile, Hollioake himself said he would jump at the chance to skipper his country again.

The England selectors are also thought to be considering Marcus Trescothick, Michael Vaughan, Paul Collingwood and Andrew Flintoff.

But Hollioake, who has led Surrey to three championship titles, believes he is even better equipped to take on the challenge following the death of his brother, Ben, last year.

"It's a tough job, but I would relish the captaincy. I don't know

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Old foes renew rivalry

Cricket

REUTERS, Georgetown

Brian Lara and Steve Waugh will have contrasting points to prove as West Indies tackle world champions Australia on Thursday at the start of a Test series to relish.

The 33-year-old Lara, back in charge of the team after Carl Hooper's demotion, will be looking to prove himself as a leader.

Waugh, 37, axed from the one-day side as a front-line player but whose captaincy skills are unquestioned, will be keen to show he can still contribute with the bat in his world-record 157th Test appearance. Their places in the limelight, following larger-than-life exploits in the past two series in the Caribbean, were already assured, but the absences of Hooper, Shane Warne and Glenn McGrath have underlined their pivotal roles.

Hooper, sacked as captain last

month after West Indies were knocked out of the World Cup in the first round, has left his selectors guessing over whether he will retire.

Warne, meanwhile, is serving a 12-month drugs ban while McGrath will return for the second half of the four-Test series after spending time with his

sick wife.

Australia will also have to do without specialist batsman Damien Martyn (broken finger), while the West Indies, in some disarray themselves, are without a full-time coach following Roger Harper's post World Cup departure.

The Australians, fresh from retaining



STEVE WAUGH



BRIAN LARA

the World Cup under the captaincy of Ricky Ponting, will be seeking to go back to the top of the world Test standings after being usurped by South Africa.

"I've thought about it a few times," said Waugh. "That will be one of the motivating factors."

Waugh will also be motivated after deciding to soldier on despite his disappointment at being dropped as a one-day player.

In the 1994-5 series, he averaged 107.25 over four Tests, including a double century in the decider at Kingston, Jamaica which effectively ended West Indies' domination of the world game as well as paving the way for Australia's emergence as the team to beat.

It was West Indies' first home defeat in 22 years and Australia's first series win against them since 1978.

Waugh, who made a century in the drawn tour opener against Guyana last week, was to be almost

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Only a draw will suffice Reefat

SPORTS REPORTER

International Master Reefat-bin-Sattar requires only a draw in the last round today to win the Professor Abdur Razzak 29th National Chess Championship.

At the end of the 12th and penultimate round yesterday Reefat defeated Syed Mafuzur Emon to increase his impressive tally to 10.5 points. He will wrap up his campaign with a match Rezaul Haque.

Grand Master Niaz Murshed's challenge ended when he was forced into a draw with Kh Aminul Islam. The veteran GM shares second place with IM Abdullah-al-Rakib on 9.5 points. Rakib beat Mohammad Javed.

Fellow IM Enamul Hossain who beat Mehdi Hasan Pargaspai places with 8.5 points.



PHOTO: STAR

GM Niaz Murshed (R) and Aminul Islam are engrossed in thinking during their twelfth round fixture of the Professor Abdur Razzak 29th National Chess Championship yesterday.