

ICC to discuss Indian diktat

CRICINFO, undated The full quorum of the ICC is meeting in Karachi on January 12 to discuss the serious threat to its finances posed by the Indian government's decision to impose restrictions on the exclusive telecast of cricket matches by private broadcasters.

The Indian government had recently announced that the telecast of all major sporting events involving India, including cricket matches, should be shared with Prasar Bharati, the state broadcaster.

By demanding that matches be broadcast by a number of channels, the value of the rights is significantly reduced and the ICC has explicitly stated that its finances will be seriously reduced as a result of this decision.

"I wouldn't like to speculate on how much money it would cost us, but I know it would be substantial," Ehsan Mani, the ICC president, said. "Cricket boards like the West Indies, Sri Lanka and others might not be able to survive without this revenue."

The TV rights issue has dogged Indian cricket since the Australia tour in October-November 2004. Prasar Bharati have been in the box-seat from thereon, with rights being dispensed on a series-by-series basis.

Late last year, the ICC wrote to Dr Manmohan Singh, the Indian prime minister, and to the minister in charge of broadcasting asking them to review the decision. Both the Rupert Murdoch-owned ESPN-Star Sports and Ten Sports are seeking legal means to force the government to rescind the decision.

Sanath to miss tri-series too

REUTERS, Melbourne Aggressive opening batsman Sanath Jayasuriya has been ruled out of Sri Lanka's side for the coming triangular one-day series with Australia and South Africa.

Jayasuriya, one of only four players to have scored more than 10,000 one-day international runs, slipped in the shower on his side's tour of New Zealand and dislocated his right shoulder.

He missed the last three matches of the New Zealand series and has been replaced by Michael Vandort, who made his last international appearance three years ago in a Test against Bangladesh.

Medium pacer Nuwan Kulasekara and Chamara Kapugedara have also been added to the side for the triangular series.

Sri Lanka have lost nine of their last 10 one-day internationals. They made 273 for six batting first in the fifth and final one-day international against New Zealand in Napier on Sunday.

Sri Lanka open the triangular series with a match against Australia at Melbourne's Docklands Stadium on January 13.

SQUAD Marvan Atapattu (captain), Chaminda Vaas, Mahela Jayawardene, Kumar Sangakkara, Tillakaratne Dilshan, Upu Tharanga, Michael Vandort, Farveez Maharoof, Muttiah Muralitharan, Jehan Mubarak, Russel Arnold, Ruchira Perera, Dilhara Fernando, Chamara Kapugedara, Nuwan Kulasekera, Malinga Bandara.

There was no hiding the disappointment for New Zealand captain Stephen Fleming who had set his heart on a 5-0 whitewash.

"One of our strengths has been the middle order, order which have kept us in games and won us games from nowhere, (but it) didn't quite fire today," he said.

"While it's disappointing to lose the middle order, it wouldn't throw fault at them for one game out of a series when they've been so strong.

"I thought we did enough through Peter's 100, and enough contributing acts to get across the line but Chaminda Vaas bowled well and it was just a blip in what's been a pretty good series."

Fulton's needless run-out with seven overs remaining triggered an avalanche of wickets with Vaas the chief tormentor.

PRIMERA LIGA Sweet fifteen for Barca

AFP, Madrid Football Runaway Spanish league leaders Barcelona moved another step closer to retaining their Primera Liga crown on Saturday with a 2-1 win at city rivals Espanyol.

Samuel Eto'o poaching his 18th goal in as many games to make it 15 straight wins for the Catalan club. Portuguese international midfielder Deco fired Barca into a 43rd-minute lead and Eto'o then poached the second in classic predatory style barely a minute after the break to send the champions and champions-elect five points clear of the pack.

Barca's sixth away win in nine games moved them onto 43 points from 18 games, five clear overnight of Osasuna, who take on Racing Santander on Sunday.

Deco, a European champion with Porto two seasons ago but who recently felt moved to tell Portuguese media he would see out his remaining five years on his contract amid rumours he might be for sale at the right price, slammed home a low drive for the opener with home keeper Kameni badly-placed.

Eto'o then took a nonchalant pass from Ronaldinho in his stride to whip home the second and give the visitors some breathing space after a sluggish opening period.

Eto'o will join up with Cameroon for the African Nations Cup for as much as a month on January 16 after Barca coach Frank Rijkaard cleared his availability, giving Swedish veteran Henrik Larsson and Argentine Maxi Lopez a chance to increase what until now have been cameo roles in the

Barca frontline.

Despite the buzzing form of blossoming youngster Leo Messi, Barca were on the back foot for periods after the break and Raul Tamudo pulled one back for Espanyol on the hour mark but Rijkaard's men redoubled their efforts thereafter to ensure the defensive lapse remained a solitary one.

In Saturday's earlier game,



PHOTO: AP Barcelona midfielder Deco (C) is congratulated by teammate Ronaldinho (R) and Thiago Motta after he scored against Espanyol during their Primera Liga clash at the Olympic Stadium in Saturday.

Champions League contenders Deportivo La Coruna bagged a useful 2-1 win at Athletic Bilbao to move joint third with Valencia, who travel to Atletico Madrid on Sunday.

Real Madrid, 14 points adrift of Barca, will bid to reduce the gap with a win at Villarreal, like themselves bidding for a Champions League slot.

Nihat set for Newcastle?

BBC ONLINE, undated Newcastle have approached Spanish club Real Sociedad with a view to signing their striker Nihat Kahveci, according to the player's agent.

"The Magpies and Russian side Spartak Moscow are said to be interested in the 26-year-old Turkish international.

"We've started talks with Newcastle. They called to ask about Nihat's situation," agent Ahmet Bulut told the Sunday Sun newspaper.

"Spartak want him but between the two clubs, he would choose Newcastle."

Bulut, who was involved in bringing Emre to St James' Park, added: "Newcastle must first find an agreement with Real Sociedad."

Nihat joined Sociedad from Besiktas during the 2001-2002 season.

He has won 22 caps for Turkey and has scored six international goals.

Hameed out of first Test

REUTERS, Lahore Pakistan have lost their opening batsman Yasir Hameed with typhoid for the first Test against India which starts on Jan. 13.

Chief selector Wasim Bari told Reuters that the in form Hameed had fallen ill with the disease and needed at least another three days to make a complete recovery.

Hameed, 27, who has played 17 Tests and 48 one-dayers was included in the list of Pakistan probabilities for the first Test and according to captain Inzamam-ul-Haq was a front runner to open against India.

"It is unfortunate losing Yasir this way because he was in good form. But we are now looking at other options as the first Test of a series is always important," Inzamam said on Sunday.

Yasir scored 57 in his last outing for Pakistan against England in December.

A biennial

FROM PAGE 12 The ICC future tours programme is expected to be relaxed to ask every Test team to play the nine others at home and away at least every six years, down from the current five.

The two cricket boards are also finalising plans to play a fundraising match for earthquake victims.

"The Indians have conveyed their keenness to play their part in raising funds," Shaharyar added.

"Either we play a Twenty20 match in the current series or dedicate the proceeds of a scheduled one-dayer for the people affected by the quake.

India, who arrived Pakistan this week, are scheduled to play three Tests and five one-day internationals.

The earthquake which struck northern Pakistan on 8 October has left over 73,000 dead and some three million homeless.

The PCB dedicated gate receipts from a recent one-day international against England to victims.

Abahani harshly

FROM PAGE 12 sealed the victory, celebrated his second NFL title with the Black and Whites and overall third in his career.

"We were shaky because of Emeka's absence. But once we started to win the ball regularly and saw them hit the bar, I felt that it was our day. We regained confidence and our players were mentally strong. I am happy because I have been a Mohammedan fan for a long time and my return (from Brothers) has proved fruitful as we have won a title after three seasons," said an elated Alfaz.

Abahani captain Joy was naturally upset and said that Abahani's foreign booters were hopeless despite their good work early in the competition.

Veteran coach Amlesh Sen blasted the referees.

"The assistant referee was not even in position when we conceded the second goal. Divine was clearly offside. Also, they denied us from two penalties. Farhad was fouled in the first half in the penalty area and (Mansoor) Azad ignored a second-half handball," said the former national midfielder.

"Both teams played in similar pace but every time we were attacking, their players committed fouls to stop them. We did not get those freekicks from the ignorant referee.

SERIE A

Mutu brace sinks Palermo

AFP, Rome Football Adrian Mutu scored twice as leaders Juventus fought back from a goal down to win 2-1 at Palermo on Saturday and move 11 points clear at the top of Serie A.

Juve's hard-fought win in Sicily saw them gain revenge for the defeat they suffered in the same fixture last season.

With Trezeguet and Zlatan Ibrahimovic ahead in the pecking order of strikers, Adrian Mutu has spent much of his time on the substitutes' bench

this season. But after Pavel Nedved was ruled out with an ear infection, the Romanian striker was given a rare start by Fabio Capello and the Juve coach must have been impressed with what he saw.

Mutu turned the tide in favour of the reigning champions with two excellent strikes before half time which earned him the man-of-the-match award, an ideal birthday gift for the former Parma forward who will turn 27 on Sunday. Capello was full of praise for the young Romanian.

"We took Mutu from Chelsea because I've always considered him a great player," Capello said.

"We knew all about his quality and he is a young man who will only improve."

Mutu thanked Capello for restoring his confidence after Chelsea unceremoniously dumped him.

"I'm thankful to him for believing in me," said the former Parma star.

The Palermo fans were in raptures in the 12th minute at a packed Renzo Barbera stadium.

Former Juve player Eugenio Corini crossed from the right and Terlizzi, who scored in Palermo's first four games of the season, volleyed low past Christian Abbiati.

Instead of denting their confidence, the goal brought a positive response from the title-holders who were back on level terms three minutes later.

Mutu saw his header come back off the bar, but he took the rebound on his chest before side-stepping Terlizzi and stroking home through a crowd of players.

Caracciolo shot narrowly over the bar and Stephen Makinwa headed inches wide as Palermo fought back after surrendering their early advantage.

But they were hit on the break in the 34th minute as Juve carved them open with a sweeping move.

Ibrahimovic's chip was knocked into Mutu's path by Patrick Vieira and the nimble-footed Romania international calmly side-footed past Lupatelli.

In the early match, title longshots Fiorentina were held to a 1-1 draw at Reggina which took them level with AC Milan on 37 points.

Unhappy stars can go: Jose

INTERNET, undated Jose Mourinho has insisted that he is willing to sell any Chelsea player who is feeling unhappy.

The likes of Shaun Wright-Phillips, Wayne Bridge, Glen Johnson and Robert Huth have barely featured for The Blues this season, and are desperate to play ahead of the World Cup.

Mourinho still feels that players such as Bridge are valuable to his squad, but is not prepared to compromise Chelsea's chances of success for the needs of individuals.

"Anyone who isn't happy here can leave," he revealed.

"I know Wayne Bridge needs to

play football but Chelsea need to win matches.

"I will keep my word to my players. I will keep the squad of players that I trust unless somebody shows me they are not happy or want to leave."

Bridge started the FA Cup game against Huddersfield on Saturday, but Mourinho indicated that he would not remain in the picture when the Premiership resumes next weekend.

"A Chelsea manager chooses, in his opinion, the players who are in better condition to play matches. Of course I want to help Bridge and give him some matches because he is a very good player who wants to come back to a high level," he explained.

"But if I feel that Gallas or Del Horno are the best options for me I cannot think with my heart."

Victoria end DOHS run

FROM PAGE 12 fragile tail after Khaled Mahmud departed for seven.

Mushfiq completed a fantastic win for Victoria when he took a stunning catch of Manjural running from long on to mid wicket.

MHAMMEDAN-KALABAGAN Indian Sandeep Sharma scored a swashbuckling 76-ball 98 and captain Habibul Bashar contributed 45-ball 44 as Mohammedan piled up 179-4 in the allotted 26 overs.

Sandeep then took four wickets for 40 to complete a virtuoso all-round show as Kalabagan were dismissed for 167 in 24.4 overs. Uttam Kumar scored a run-a-ball 60 and Pakistani Tareq Mehmood blasted a 41-ball 53 but it was not enough for them to pull off an upset victory.

CITY-BIMAN Smarting from a humiliating nine-wicket defeat against Mohammedan in the previous match, star-studded City bounced back strongly to score a convincing victory in their crucial match against Biman.

Rabiul Islam picked up four wickets for 21 runs and man-of-the-match Al-Amin took 3-20 to shoot Biman out for a paltry 128 in 42 overs.

City rode on an 80-ball 45 by Mehrab Hossain Jr to storm to 132-4 in 32.5 overs.

SONARGAON-ABAHANI With an ordinary team Abahani as expected failed to qualify for the Super League for the first time in their history when they stumbled to their sixth defeat at the Shaheed Chandu Stadium.

Due to dense fog the match was truncated to a 25-overs a-side contest and Abahani created an opportunity to win the game by restricting Sonargaon to 117-7.

But their chase ended at 112-8 after their share of 25 overs.

BROTHERS-INDIRA Opener Imroz Siddiqi hammered a 61-ball 73 as Indira Road upset Brothers by five wickets to register their second win.

Brothers thrived on two half centuries by Pakistani Rashid Hanif (73) and Sohrawardi Shuvo to set a daunting task for their opponents scoring 191-5 in 26 overs.

But Indira raced to 195-5 in 25.1 overs thanks to a brilliant knock of Imroz and Golam Mawla (47 not out).

AGRANI-ORIENT Jamal Faisal hit an unbeaten 44 and Imtiaz Hossain added 37 as Agrani Bank recorded a comfortable victory against Orient.

The bankers made 105-3 in 22 overs in reply to Orient's 104 all out in 25 overs.

SCORES IN BRIEF VICTORIA: 250-9 in 45 overs (Mabud 50, Faruque 34, Jaffar 61, Mushfiqur 32, extras 21; Razzaq 5-55).

DOHS: 231 all out in 43.2 overs (Nazimuddin 28, Shahin 59, Akram 34, Manjural 61, extras: Shahnevez 6-47).

Result: Victoria won by 19 runs. MOHAMMEDAN: 179-4 in 26 overs (Hannan 13, Sandeep 98, Bashar 44; Imtiaz 3-38).

KALABAGAN: 167 all out in 24.4 overs (Uttam 60, Tareq 53, extras 7; Dollar 2-24, Monjurul 2-21, Sandeep 4-40).

Result: Mohammedan won by 12 runs. BIMAN: 128 all out in 42 overs (Javed 19, Sajjad 24, Mosharraf 24, extras 11; Al-Amin 3-20, Rabiul 4-21, Sajju 12-12).

CITY: 132-4 in 32.5 overs (Nafees 19, Mehrab 45, Siraj 27, Taibu 20 not out, extras 10; Rashed 2-26).

Result: City won by six wickets. SONARGAON: 117-7 in 25 overs (Al-

200 up for Shearer

AFP, Newcastle Football Newcastle skipper Alan Shearer scored his 200th goal for the Geordies on Saturday to take him level with the legendary Jackie Milburn.

The 35-year-old struck in the 79th minute to see off League Two Mansfield at St James' Park in the FA Cup third round match to the relief of the 41,459 crowd who hailed his Gallowgate End goal.

The former England forward was overjoyed with his achievement.

"I'm very proud to be sitting up there alongside the great Jackie Milburn. It's a great achievement. I was brought here to score goals, and thankfully that's what I've been doing for the last 10 years now," said Shearer.

"I'm pleased it was here at St James' Park," added the former England man.

Shearer, however, revealed that

Divine blessings

FROM PAGE 12 meeting against Abahani this season turned out to a nightmare 5-1 defeat, it was the first victory against their perennial foes in two years.

President Dr Professor Iajuddin Ahmed distributed trophies after the final as chief guest.

Mohammedan received Tk 5 lakh as winners and a Tata Indika sedan car while Abahani pocketed Tk 3 lakh.

Cameroonian Ndem Kiyek received Tk 50,000 and a scooter as player of the tournament while the Fair Play trophy went to debutants Samabesh Club of Munshiganj. Muktiyoddha's Odafo Okelo got Tk 25,000 as top scorer with seven goals.

Yellow cards: Divine, Kamal (Mohammedan) and Nizam, Marshall, Egr (Abahani).

TEAMS MOHAMMEDAN: Biplab, Kamal, Odaf, Nazrul, Hassan, Munna, Arman Aziz, Divine, Francis (Asad, 90th minute) and Alfaz. ABAHANI: Nizam, Obaidur, Pradeep, Marshall, Wali (Lajuk, 46th), Ndem, Joy, Egr, Ujjal (Tipu, 75th), Farhad and Ibrahim. Referee: Mansoor Azad.

Some solace for SL

AFP, Napier Cricket Despite the loss, Fulton, 26, will have fond memories of the series.

Recalled to the New Zealand side after his one earlier appearance produced just nine runs two years ago, he finished as arguably the batsman of the series with scores of 70 not out, 32, 50 and 112 for a series average of 68.

Adding gloss to Fulton's innings was the situation he faced when he reached the crease, with New Zealand teetering at 13 for two after Fleming was out leg before wicket without scoring and fellow opener Lou Vincent fell for five.

After playing himself in, he let rip in the 13th over with three successive boundaries off Vaas. The first was a crunching blow through long-off, then a hook which sent the ball fly onto the main grandstand roof, before a six over long-on.

He and Nathan Astle shared a third-wicket partnership of 108 before Astle holed out to mid-on in the 22nd over for 47 and New Zealand were 121 for three.

Hamish Marshall joined Fulton to push the score to 199 before the wickets began to tumble.

New Zealand could have faced an even bigger total with a 300-plus target a reality on the McLean Park wicket, but too few Sri Lankans had the batting form to push on.

After winning the toss for the first time in the series, Atapattu chose to bat and his half-century was well backed up by an innings of 58 from wicketkeeper Kumar Sangakkara.

At 208 for four in the 40th over, the stage was set for a late flourish but the Sri Lankans were stymied by a lack of boundaries.

Shane Bond conceded just one run in the final over, and finished with two for 53 while Chris Martin took three for 62.

Despite the loss, New Zealand won the series 4-1.

Scoreboard table for the match between Sri Lanka and New Zealand, showing runs, wickets, and extras for both teams.

Scoreboard table for the match between Sri Lanka and New Zealand, showing bowler performance with overs, maidens, runs, and wickets.

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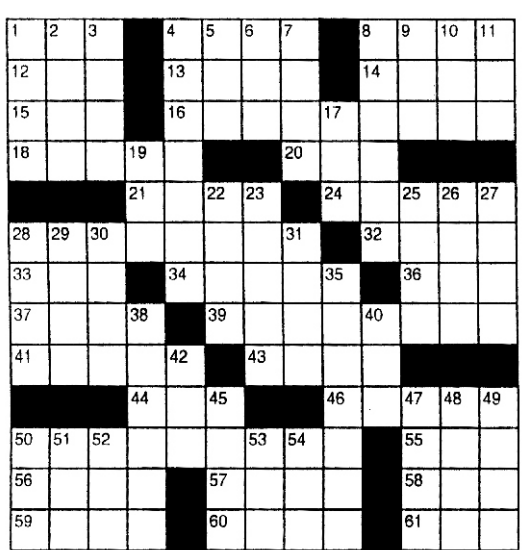
Did U Know?

Australia's eight-wicket win in the third Test is their third in a row against South Africa at SCG since January 1998. Overall, they have won 7, lost 1 and drawn 2 out of 10 played against South Africa.

CROSSWORD By Eugene Sheffer

ACROSS 1 Mountain of Crete 4 Poet Teasdale 8 Show-room sample 12 Bush league? 13 Harvard-ers' foes 14 Eastern bigwig 15 Roast 16 Idea, symbolically 18 "Chicago" role 20 Nevertheless 21 Wound reminder 24 Day at the movies? 28 Pronto 32 Source 33 "A Chorus song" 34 Malt-shop orders 36 Seesaw quorum 37 Flight component

DOWN 3 Pinnacle 4 Makes one's mind 5 Boxer Laila 6 Pretelermine the outcome 7 Wan 8 IOU signatory 9 Flightless bird 10 Wire measure 11 Sphere 17 Koppel or Kennedy 19 Some-what (Suff.) 22 In due time 23 "The Thinker" 24 Simpleton sculptor



Solution time: 21 mins. G A L A T W A S H E M E V I J A I N T I D O L E T U S P I A T Y T I L L M U S E L A T T E D J A N E R I C H O L L A C O A S T E R S O I L B U R N T H I P M A T T E R E D A N A M I S E H I L Y D O N A S H E E T I S A B L A W R E T H E D E A Y A L A E S S E D I R E B O Y W A S P G M E N

CRYPTOQUIP B V H O X R J X W P J V J C N U N P R B C P N G W U I V X W A G V H H V J C R J A R O W R J W A A D V P Z : " Z D W X R H H N G I P G H W ." Yesterday's Cryptoquip: WHEN AN ELECTRICIAN GETS TENSE AND HIGH-STRUNG, I SUPPOSE YOU COULD SAY HE'S WIRED. Today's Cryptoquip Clue: D equals H

The Cryptoquip is a substitution cipher in which one letter stands for another. If you think that X equals O, it will equal O throughout the puzzle. Single letters, short words and words using an apostrophe give you clues to locating vowels. Solution is by trial and error.