

Ehsan's poor passing shot

PTI, Dubai
In a startling admission, outgoing International Cricket Council (ICC) president Ehsan Mani has said awarding Test status to Bangladesh was a mistake.

"The mistake we (the ICC) made in the past - we should be honest enough to accept and learn from them - is the way that countries like Zimbabwe and Bangladesh were brought into Test cricket," said Mani who hands over the reins to South African Percy Sonn on July 7.

BCCI-Dalmiya war intensifies

PTI, Kolkata
The letter war between the Board of Control for Cricket in India and the Cricket Association of Bengal intensified Sunday with CAB President Jagmohan Dalmiya demanding that the Board withdraw its latest massive withholding subsidies and payments to the affiliate unit and tender an unconditional apology.

Alleging that the BCCI was following the doctrines of "unfairness" and "bad faith" in its acts and conducts, Dalmiya threatened to take "necessary steps as I may be legally advised" against Board Secretary Niranjan Shah if he did not comply with his demands.

"If the acts and conduct of BCCI, including contents of your letter of June 29 are considered, it would be explicitly clear that the BCCI is following the doctrines of unfairness and bad faith, apart from acting arbitrarily and capriciously," Dalmiya said in the strongly worded letter addressed to Board Secretary Niranjan Shah.

"Without prejudice and reserving all my accrued rights and entitlements, you are hereby called upon to withdraw your letter under reference and tender an unconditional apology forthwith.



Did U Know?

For the first time, the host nation Germany did not take part in the opening match of the 1974 World Cup. Holders Brazil took on Yugoslavia in a fiery clash that finished in a scoreless draw in Frankfurt and included 46 free-kicks.



Oleg Blokhin (Ukrainian football coach) "I'm disappointed at losing but completely satisfied with our performance considering it was our first World Cup."

What to WATCH

TEN Sports West Indies vs India Fourth Test, Day Four Live at 9:00 pm STAR Sports Wimbledon Championships Round of 16 Live at 4:30 pm



Sri Lanka opener Sanath Jayasuriya sweeps one during his swashbuckling knock of 152 against England in the fifth and final ODI at Headingley on Saturday.

SL whitewash Eng

Lasith Malinga took a creditable four for 44 amidst all the run scoring on a good pitch.

"To finish the series on such a high note has been brilliant," said Sri Lanka captain Mahela Jayawardene, whose team battled back to draw the preceding Test series 1-1.

"Sanath is very difficult to stop when he's in that mood." England were without several injured players, including bowlers Simon Jones, Andrew Flintoff, Ashley Giles and Paul Collingwood, but Jayawardene added: "I don't know about the casualties, the way Sanath played today any decent attack would have gotten the same from him."

"I've seen him going against Australia, with Glenn McGrath, Brett Lee and Jason Gillespie and he has done the same thing." Jayawardene finished on 12 not out and Kumar Sangakkara 23 not out.

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Jayasuriya's hundred, his 21st one-day international century, came in 72 balls with two sixes and 13 fours and Tharanga's up in 82 balls with a six and 14 fours.

"If you get 300 on any wicket you fancy your chances, but we just didn't get the ball in the right areas," Trescott said. "But coming up against someone like Sanath Jayasuriya in that sort of form is pretty difficult."

"It's always nice to get a hundred," he added of his own innings. "But it's irrelevant. We lost the game." Even allowing for their injury prob-

lems, England's inability to bowl straight was a worrying sign in the lead-up to next year's World Cup in the West Indies.

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THIRD EYE

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near the 1986 classic between the two sides that Brazil lost on penalties or even the 1998 final where France played scintillating football to hand the South American heavyweights their biggest ever World Cup defeat with Zidane's brace. It needed the individual brilliance of one man to separate the two sides and while Brazil's best hope Ronaldinho slumbered as he had the rest of the tournament, it was Zidane who pumped adrenalin into his teammates to make it an embarrassingly one-sided affair in the end.

Zidane, who saw his world champions exit from Korea/Japan without scoring a single goal, had retired from the international stage but returned to help France qualify for the 2006 finals. Playing like a man possessed to exorcise the ghost of 2002, he showed what he can do with the ball even under tight marking, making the Samba Magicians mere spectators and appreciate his skill on and off the pitch. Brazil survived his defence splitting passes and dangerous freekicks. But not forever. The decisive moment came on the brink of the hour when ageing Brazilian captain Cafu, who came to football's showpiece event with an eye on extending his record of playing three finals to four, simply could not cope with the speed of Malouda and fouled the speedy winger to stop an attack. Zidane aired the ball over the entire Brazilian defence, which had been excellent throughout the game but faltered for one occasion seized by Thierry Henry who toe-poked from handshaking distance to hammer the final nail. It was very painful to see an exhausted Roberto Carlos, one of the best full-backs in the history of the game, resting with his hands on the hips just outside the area when he should have marked the Arsenal striker.

BD A in bad position

SPORTS REPORTER

Bangladesh A batting was found wanting in the third and final four-dayer against Zimbabwe. That brightened the home team's chance of squaring the three-match Test series at close of third day's play at Queens Sports Club in Bulawayo yesterday.

The visitors were forced to follow-on after being bundled out for 150 in reply to Zimbabwe A's, who are trailing the series 1-0 following their seven-wicket defeat in the first match, impressive first innings total of 353.

Conceding a 203-run first innings deficit, the second string Bangladesh side were also struggling in their second essay. But Alok Kapali and wicketkeeper Sahagir Hossain clung to the unbeaten sixth wicket stand as Bangladesh recovered from a precarious 141 for five to finish the day for 217-5 in 76 overs.

Right-handed Alok launched a counterattack against the home side with an unbeaten 86-ball 74 while Sahagir accompanied him scoring an 80-ball 28.

Sakib Al Hasan was the other notable scorer with 42 while captain Tushar Imran added 30 runs.

Henry, Domenech

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his imminent retirement.

"This is huge," gushed the hero of the French triumph in 1998 - at the Brazilians' expense. "We had to put in a huge performance and we did so. We had to hold it together defensively."

"We deserve our victory. Now we will try and get into the final, as we do not want it to end here. It is so wonderful that we want to carry on," added the 34-year-old.

Fellow veteran Patrick Vieira said France had played "a great match." He said: "I think we knew that we would have to if we wanted to make it to the semis. And over the 90 minutes we totally deserved it."

Vieira admitted that constant carping back home over the apparent decline of his generation of 1998 stars had hurt.

"I have nothing left to prove but the criticism hurts," he revealed. Defender Willy Sagnol said France had just kept on getting better after a slow start in the tournament.

"We had a tough first round group but we found our form against Spain and our self-confidence soared. "Now we want to go to Berlin!" Domenech warned that beating Brazil was not something to get carried away about.

"The Portuguese will not be easy to get past. But I am looking forward to meeting them. We are in the semis and we must savour the moment. These are great moments," said the bespectacled coach.

Shootout exit

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can't blame the referee or someone else."

A second-half substitution of captain David Beckham was because of a knee injury picked up in the first half. Beckham was in tears on the bench after being replaced by Aaron Lennon.

"Beckham got a knock on his knee in the first half," he said. "There were discussions at half-time whether he could go on. We decided to try but he suffered too much and we had to take him off."

Flair-less Latins

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weight as the tournament began, got it wrong when he said in mid-week that "I carry out politics as Ronaldinho plays football - with happiness."

Ronaldinho's smile was conspicuous by its absence as Parreira harked back to the very un-Brazilian style of 1994, which brought a shootout victory over Italy 12 years ago following a dull final.

At least Brazil kept faith in Ronaldinho. Argentina left his Barcelona teammate Lionel Messi, the "new Maradona," and Javier Saviola on the bench throughout the loss to Germany, when a second goal after Roberto Ayala's opener would have finished the hosts off.

Instead, the world witnessed tactical timidity, the new South American World Cup disease. Brazilian anthropologist Roberto DaMatta perhaps put his finger on a truism in his recent book "A bola corre mais que os homens" (the ball runs more than the men).

As Pele noted, when Henry scored it was from a Zinedine Zidane freekick which eluded "three men who were standing around doing nothing."

"These are mistakes which shouldn't happen. I don't know what the players were thinking of," Pele scolded. Parreira only pointed the finger of "blame" at the magisterial Zidane. He added: "When you dont win the title, its because something was missing. We needed a little more preparation, probably in terms of fitness and getting the team to play as a unit."

India have upper hand

Cricket

AFP, Kingston

Harbhajan Singh picked up five Test wickets in an innings for the 19th time to set it up, and captain Rahul Dravid hit his second half-century of the match to consolidate India's position of strength against West Indies in the fourth and final Test on Saturday at Sabina Park.

India, leading by 97 runs on first innings, were restricted to 128 for six in their second innings when stumps were drawn on the second day, with Dravid unbeaten on 62 and Anil Kumble not out on two.

Dravid has again held firm for India, striking 11 boundaries from 130 balls in close to 3-1/2 hours of batting to follow up his knock of 81 in the first innings, and passing 9,000 Test runs in the process.

Jerome Taylor has again been the wrecker-in-chief of the Indian second innings with three wickets for 28 runs from 16 overs that followed his five for 50 in the first innings.

Corey Collymore lended support with two for 31 from 13 overs. Harbhajan had snared five or 13 from just 4.3 overs, as India fought their way back into the Test and dismissed West Indies for 103, replying to the visitors' first innings total of 200.

It was West Indies' lowest total in a Test against India, and left them in a vulnerable position in the Test, but Taylor provided them with two early scalps.

He had Wasim Jaffer brilliantly caught at third slip for one when the batsman edged a drive and substitute fielder Runako Morton held the catch with his right-hand, and then gained an lbw verdict over Virender Sehwag, who scored four, as India limped to 41 for two at tea.

After the break, Venkatsai Laxman and Dravid settled things

down for India with a stand of 43 for the third wicket.

Collymore made the breakthrough however, when Laxman drove loosely and was caught at second slip for 16, and had left-hander Yuvraj Singh caught in the same position for 13.

Pedro Collins then bowled Mohammed Kaif for six to leave India on 76 for five.

Mahendra Dhoni arrived and curbed his natural aggressive instincts to add 46 for the sixth wicket with Dravid before Taylor returned for a second spell just before the close and bowled him for 19 with a delivery that kept a bit low.

Earlier, Harbhajan collected four of the last five West Indies scalps that went down after the home team resumed after lunch on 80 for five.

Harbhajan removed Dwayne Bravo for zero, Ramnaresh Sarwan for seven, and Denesh Ramdin for 10 to close-to-the-wicket catches, then wrapped up the innings when Collins lofted a delivery to long-on and was caught for zero.

In between, Taylor was run out for six, after he and Collins completely muddled a single.

Before lunch, disciplined bowling and their opponents' typically careless batting had provided India with their window of opportunity.

Harbhajan completed a sensational morning for the Indians, when Daren Ganga was adjudged lbw in the final over before the interval for the top score in the West Indies innings of 40, playing back and across to a delivery that spun sharply from outside the off-stump.

SCOREBOARD

Scoreboard on the second day of the fourth and final Test between West Indies and India at Sabina Park on Saturday:

INDIA: First innings 200 (Dravid 81; Taylor 5-50)

WEST INDIES: First innings

Table with 4 columns: Player, Runs, Wickets, Extras. Includes players like Gayle, Sreesanth, Ganga, Jaffer, etc.

INDIA: Second innings

Table with 4 columns: Player, Runs, Wickets, Extras. Includes players like Jaffer, Patel, Kumble, etc.

WEST INDIES: Second innings

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Murray the hope bearer

WIMBLEDON

REUTERS, London

In just 12 months, Andy Murray has jumped 268 places in the world rankings and will now carry the hopes of a nation on his slim shoulders when he contests his first fourth round match at Wimbledon on Monday.

The proud Scot has replaced Tim Henman and Greg Rusedski as Britain's best hope of ending the 70-year search for a men's champion at the All England Club and he is reveling at the prospect of taking on Cypriot Marcos Baghdatis on Centre Court.

"To get into the second week of a grand slam for the first time is great," said the 19-year-old from Dunblane.

"I'm (not) used to being around the locker room when there's only kind of 16 people left. I'm obviously looking forward to playing."

he could run into 2002 champion Lleyton Hewitt.

"Hewitt and the highest seed left in my section and he's obviously won Wimbledon," said Murray.

"I wouldn't really expect to get past the quarter-finals if I had to play him."

But anyone who has followed the trials and tribulations of Murray's career, whose ranking has shot up from 312 to 44 since last year's Wimbledon, will be aware that he defeated the Australian to capture his first ATP title in San Jose earlier this year.

Along with his talent, Murray also possess a hot head which has often led to his downfall in the past.

But on Saturday, a focused Murray kept a lid on his emotions and refrained from his usual displays of whacking the net with his racket in frustration or challenging line calls in anger.

He believes his calm demeanour is a sign of the times. "It's easy when you're playing like that to keep your cool," said Murray.

"I get really annoyed when I'm playing badly because I'm a perfectionist. I know I can play matches like that."

With England's exit from the soccer World Cup on Saturday, Murray knows that he will be the sole British sportsman under the spotlight next week and is hoping he will be able to live up to expectation.

WC BRIEFS

involved in scuffles on the Channel Island of Jersey after Portugal's World Cup penalty shootout win, with more than 25 arrests.

A Jersey police statement said the arrests came after England supporters threw bottles at police lines following their side's defeat. Ten percent of Jersey's population is Portuguese.

Bear market still for Germans German fans have not forgotten Bruno, the roaming bear shot by hunters after spreading panic in the south of the country.

As toymakers prepare to produce a teddy bear to immortalise the animal, some fans on Berlin's Fan Mile and at the quarter-final win over Argentina have been waving placards in his memory.

"Revenge for Bruno," read one.

Beckham quits

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his standards and some commentators have even called for him to be axed altogether.

McClaren, the former Middlesbrough manager, takes over from Sven-Goran Eriksson as coach with immediate effect after the Swede bowed out following five-and-a-half years in charge.

"I came to this decision some time ago some time ago but I had hoped to announce it on the back of a successful World Cup. Sadly that wasn't to be," added Beckham. 31.

"This decision has been the most difficult of my career to date. But after discussing it with my family and those closest to me I feel the time is right."

Beckham said the team was devastated by their failure to move beyond the quarterfinals, but that he was proud of his time as captain.

"Our performance during this World Cup has not been enough to progress further and both myself and all the players regret that and are hurt by that more than people realise," he said.

"I wish to thank all the players for their support during my time as captain, as well as Peter Taylor, Sven and all the coaches.

"I would also like to thank the press and of course all the England supporters who have both been great to me and my teammates. I want them to know for me it has been an absolute honour.

Brazil can hardly

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were the better team, and when all's said and done, that's football.

"We are proud of how we battled and what we sacrificed in order to get this far."

Juninho, who plays his club football with French champions Lyon, said Henry's sumptuous side-footed volley past Dida killed the game off for the Brazilians.

"Once they scored it was very difficult for us to turn it round," he said. "I think that the team as a whole didn't play well... but now we have to accept the criticism and start to get the young players ready for the next World Cup. We didn't play as Brazil can."

"Again Zidane stood foursquare in our way with France," said Folha Online.

For O Globo: "Brazil lost to France to see the dream of a sixth title fade away.

"Zidane had one of those Zidane days and one of creative football's last, unpredictable, mohicans defeated Brazil."

Brazilian President Luiz Inacio Lula da Silva, known by his footballlesque single moniker of "Lula", was quick to express his solidarity with the team in a telephone call to Parreira and federation officials.

His message of good luck before the match might have fallen on deaf ears in the Brazilian camp, but one Brazilian who did benefit was Luiz Felipe Scolari, whose Portugal side beat England on penalties in the last eight and will play France in the semi-final in Munich on Wednesday.