

Green team 294 for 6

A brilliant 95 by Faruque Ahmed took Bangladesh Green to 294 for six in 85 overs against Bangladesh Red on the first day of the three-day practice match at the BKSPP ground in Savar yesterday, reports UNB.

The two teams were picked up from the selected players undergoing training at the BKSPP residential camp to prepare for the World Cup.

Bangladesh Green were led by national captain Aminul Islam Bulbul while the Bangladesh Red by vice captain Khaled Mahmud.

In his 195-minute stay at the crease, Faruque hit 14 boundaries off 172 balls.

The former national skipper shared 104 runs in a valuable partnership with Aminul for the fourth wicket. The skipper made 59 off 110 deliveries with nine fours.

Opener Ehsanul Haq played another notable innings of 52 runs off 106 balls with six hits across the rope.

Contributed 16 runs, Hasanuzzaman 13 and Jahangir Alam 10. Naimur Rahman was batting with five while Nahid was yet to score as the stumps were drawn for the day.

Shafuddin Ahmed picked up two wickets for 27 while Sujon took two wickets for 78.

Rafique claimed one wicket for 46 runs.

BANGLADESH GREEN: Gulla, Sezan, Jangir Alam, Faruque, Bulbul, Hasanuzzaman, Durjoy, Nahid, Imran, M Babu and Mahmud.

BANGLADESH RED: Akram, Opee, Sanwar, Rokon, Sujon, Nannu, MAK Sumon, Sumit, Rafique, SA Babu and Shanta.

Busta Cup cricket

Day Three rained off

Trinidad, Feb 23: Rain cancelled the third day of the Busta Cup cricket semifinal between Guyana and Trinidad and Tobago on Monday, virtually guaranteeing Trinidad's berth in the finals, reports AP.

The home team with a first innings lead of 140, has only to avoid defeat on the fourth and final day Tuesday to advance to the championships on March 20.

Rain prevented play before lunch, and just as umpires Zainul Maccum and Billy Doctrove were due to make an inspection at 12:30 pm, further showers abandoned any hope of a start.

Barbados host Jamaica in the second semifinal at Kensington Oval in Bridgetown on Friday.

Scores: Guyana 175 (Clayton Lambert 75, Vishal Nagamootoo 37, Mervyn Dillon six for 46, Marlon Black two for 37, Phill Simmons two for 37).

Trinidad and Tobago 315 (Daren Ganga 92, Phill Simmons 59, Mahendra Nagamootoo three for 86, Neil McFarrell two for 44, Colin Stuart two for 67).

Tri-series schedule amended

CAPE TOWN, Feb 23(Reuters/Internet): The final of the one-day international triangular series between England, Zimbabwe and hosts South Africa next year has been put back three days to Saturday, February 12.

The dates of three round-robin matches have also been changed, the United Cricket Board of South Africa said on Tuesday.

South Africa meet Zimbabwe in Durban on February 2 and play England in East London on February 4. Zimbabwe meet England in Centurion on February 9.

Int'l junior tennis on

Thirty-one boys' singles qualifying round matches were decided on the opening day of the 13th Bangladesh International Junior tennis championship yesterday at the Ramna National Tennis Complex, reports UNB.

Earlier, in the morning, State Minister for Information Prof. Abu Sayeed opened the five-day meet.

Vice-President of Bangladesh Tennis Federation (BTF) and Additional IG of Police M Nurul Alam and BTF general secretary Sanaul Haq were present.

Ninety-one players, including 31 girls, from 13 countries are taking part in the four-event World Ranking Group-3 tournament.

The countries: India, Pakistan, Thailand, Sri Lanka, UAE, Malaysia, Japan, Chinese Taipei, Kazakhstan, United Kingdom, South Africa, Canada and Bangladesh.

On completion of the qualifying round, eight boys entered the singles' main draw.

Twelve local boys took part in the qualifying round however all were eliminated.

The main competition in both boys' and girls' singles begins today at 8 am with 32 participants in the boys' group and 31 in the girls' group.

Five local players — Nadim Kamran Khan Rohan, Fahim Ahsan Romi, Rahat Kamal Islam, Kabir Hossain and Mustafizur Rahman Russel — will compete in the boys' main

draw.

Rohan reached the main draw by virtue of his rating while four others on Wild cards.

Three local girls — Seefat Nusrat Baishakhi, Dyuti Shanchaeta and Disha Islam — will directly enter the girls' main draw.

Although Ishrat Jahan Etl, qualified for directly, she is not available to compete.

In the girls' singles, Bangladesh number one Baishakhi meets V Kameswari of India, Shanchaeta faces Vi-

rat Prasert Suchana of Thailand and Disha takes on Nona Wagh of India.

Girls' top seed Goutham Sheetal of India (world rank 42) will play her inaugural match with Yang Pei Li of Chinese Taipei.

In the boys' singles Rohan of Bangladesh meets compatriot Kabir Hossain Romi takes on Brandon West-Smith of South Africa, Rahat Kamal faces Chi Hui Sung of Chinese Taipei and Russel plays Motonari Minato of Japan.

He has been out of action because of a shin fracture detected in December.

But the board faces a big dilemma over Kamli, the southpaw, who injured his ankle badly last April.

The only option left with the BCCU in such a scenario, would be to have its own panel of doctors test both these players and see whether they have recovered fully from their injuries, the sources added.

Kamli, Agarkar submit reports of fitness

MUMBAI, Feb 23: Injured Mumbai stars Vinod Kamli and Ajit Agarkar on Monday submitted fitness certificates to the Indian cricket board (BCCI) well in time before the selection committee meeting which has been convened here on February 28 to prune the World Cup list of probabilities to 19, reports PTI.

Mumbai Cricket Association's joint secretary professor Ratnakar Shetty told PTI on Monday that the two players have produced medical certificates from their respective doctors.

The certificate submitted by Kamli, as given by a Nanavati Hospital doctor, said that he has "adequate strength to do sporting activities."

Agarkar has given a certificate which said the wiry speedster would be hundred per cent fit in two weeks' time, indicating he would be fit enough for consideration to play in next month's triangular series at home featuring hosts India, Pakistan and Sri Lanka.

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Lara's two-Test trial

ST JOHN'S, Antigua, Feb 23(Reuters/Internet): Despite his team's disastrous performance in South Africa, Trinidadian Brian Lara was retained on Monday night as West Indies captain for the first two of four tests against Australia.

West Indies Cricket Board president Pat Rousseau announced the decision at a news conference in Antigua after a two-day meeting of the board and meetings with manager Clive Lloyd, coach Malcolm Marshall, and captain Lara.

There have been calls throughout the region for Lara's dismissal as captain after the West Indies were beaten 5-0 in tests and 6-1 in one-day internationals in South Africa.

It was the worst performance in West Indian cricket history. The problems began even before the tour started when Lara led a player revolt over pay and conditions which threatened the West Indies' historic first visit to South Africa.

Lara, 29, holds the highest test score (375 runs) as well as the highest first class innings (501 not out).

Rousseau said the board respected his outstanding abilities but he needed to improve his leadership skills significantly.

That opening batsman Stuart Williams of Nevis and fast bowler Franklyn Rose of Jamaica believe he has it within him to fulfil his potential but we are not prepared to wait indefinitely for these qualities to emerge," Rousseau said.

To this end, he will be given specific performance targets by the chairman of selectors related to improvement in his relationship with his players, discipline, interaction with the coach and manager, and nurturing and development of his team members."

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Colles' hopes rekindled

UNDATED, Feb 23: Australian Olympic official Phil Coles could be cleared within the next week of involvement in the scandal surrounding the 2002 Salt Lake City Winter Olympics, IOC member Kevan Gosper said Tuesday, reports AP.

International Olympic Committee investigators plan to finish their inquiry this weekend into the remaining cases of alleged misconduct and Gosper said this could lead to Coles being exonerated.

Coles has strongly denied an allegation in a report by the Salt Lake City bid that he and his family accepted free trips to the United States as guests of the city's bid committee.

"There have been some people named, notably in our case Phil Coles, by the ethics commission of Salt Lake City," Gosper told Australian Broadcasting Corporation radio Tuesday.

"It's quite clear from the information that Coles has been able to provide, that he did

not break the rules, then I think again that matter should be referred to a phone hookup by the IOC executive (before the full board meeting in March).

"I think Phil should be cleared very quickly. It is quite wrong and improper to keep these people suspended in front of the world until the executive board meets formally in mid-March."

Gosper said the ethics committee from Salt Lake City should have contacted Coles before naming him in its report.

He also said Coles had information which demonstrated he did not break any rules.

Gosper, a senior member of the Australian Olympic Committee, also rebuked the chief executive of a top American sponsor for speaking out against the IOC's handling of the corruption scandal.

Gosper said he was dismayed that David D'Alessandro had aired his criticism through the media.

"I'm disappointed the should be debating this in public as if he is the conscience of the IOC," said Gosper, one of the IOC leadership's chief spokesmen.

D'Alessandro, president of Boston-based John Hancock Mutual Life Insurance, has been the only corporate executive so far to publicly challenge the IOC over its handling of the Salt Lake affair.

John Hancock has canceled negotiations with NBC for 20 million dollars in Olympic advertising and removed the Olympic rings from its stationery.

In interviews and in written opinion pieces in US newspapers, D'Alessandro complained the IOC was losing credibility every day it allowed the scandal to continue. He hinted that IOC president Juan Antonio Samaranch might be nearing the end of his once-unchallenged reign.

"I think D'Alessandro's comments are unfortunate," Gosper said in a telephone interview from Melbourne. "I think it's quite improper for him to debate this through the media. After all, he's a (Olympic) partner."

D'Alessandro responded Monday by saying that he met with Dick Pound, who is conducting the IOC's investigation, and Michael Payne, its head of marketing about the scandal.

"We told them of our deep concerns and we told them that if they followed through on Samaranch's promises in January that we would be willing to stay private," he said.

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But D'Alessandro said that "a complete turnaround" by Gosper and other IOC officials on the question of improper payments in Sydney's winning bid for the 2000 Games convinced him to take his criticism public.

"Clearly the IOC is not listening to private pressure," he said. "Clearly Gosper and others have been going back on their public statements."

Hancock is one of 11 major international corporate sponsors of the Olympics who pay around 50 million dollars for exclusive advertising rights.

The sponsors fear their investment is being devalued by the continuing fallout from Salt Lake City's successful bid for the 2002 Winter Games.

Twenty-four IOC members, a fifth of the total roster, have been implicated in receiving cash payments, scholarships, free health care and other improper inducements.

Hancock was one of the companies represented when top sponsors met with IOC marketing chiefs in New York 10 days ago. The sponsors strongly urged the IOC to clean up the scandal quickly or risk a rebellion.

Tyson may lose benefits

ROCKVILLE, Maryland, Feb 23: Mike Tyson will learn Wednesday whether he'll lose privileges and time off for good behaviour for hurling a TV during an outburst in jail, reports AP.

The former heavyweight champion faces a closed hearing at Montgomery County (Maryland) Correctional Centre that day and a ruling will be announced then, the county's Department of Corrections said Monday.

Department spokesman Eric Seleznow said jail officials cited Tyson for destruction of property, assault on correctional staff and disorderly conduct.

A disciplinary panel will determine Tyson's level of responsibility. Penalties could include loss of privileges and credit for good behaviour in time served.

The 32-year-old boxer has been in an isolation cell since Friday, when he tossed a television set against jail bars in an inmate recreation area. He reportedly became agitated when a guard hung up a telephone he was using.

West Ham rope in ROK striker

SEOUL, Feb 23: South Korea's top striker Choi Yong-Soo will transfer to London's West Ham United for five million dollars, a spokesman for his LG Cheetahs team said today, reports AFP.

Choi — whose deal is worth 700,000 dollars a year on top of the transfer fee — left today for London with LG Cheetah's deputy head Han Woong-Soo for a tryout before signing the contract on Thursday.

"I'm very pleased. This is a dream come true. I always wanted to play in Europe. I am all the more pleased because I

am going to Great Britain, homeland of football," Choi told journalists before leaving.

"I'll do my best, keeping the fact in mind that South Korea is going to co-host the 2002 World Cup," he said.

West Ham United will play Choi 700,000 dollars annually on top of the five million dollars it will fork out to LG Cheetahs for the transfer, the spokesman said, adding that the duration of the contract had yet to be fixed.

"Choi's transfer money is the biggest in history for an Asian player," he said, noting that the transfer of Japan's Hidetoshi Nakata to Italy was worth 3.3 million dollars.

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Suh Jung-Won's transfer to France's Strasbourg was worth 1.5 million dollars in 1997, the biggest amount previously paid for a South Korean.

Other clubs in Britain, France, Spain and Italy have also tried to sign up Choi.

Measuring 184 centimetres (six foot and a half inch) and weighing 77 kilograms (169.4 pounds), the 26-year-old is seen as the best striker in South Korea.

Nicknamed "Eagle" for his speed and ability to read games, he led South Korea to their fourth consecutive appearance in the World Cup in 1998.

He scored seven goals in seven appearances in the World Cup Asian region finals.

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