

Sport

Pak, SA tours of SL to go ahead

COLOMBO, May 5: Cricket tours by Pakistan and South Africa to Sri Lanka will go ahead as scheduled beginning June despite the country being put on war status to fight Tamil Tiger rebels, reports AFP.

"The government will not object to the matches being played. These tours are a commercial venture," said Rienzie Wijetilleke, chairman of the country's cricket board.

Wijetilleke was quoted as saying in the state-run Daily News that the only concern was that the two countries would have reservations about security situation in Sri Lanka. "But I think the tour will go ahead as planned," he told the newspaper.

The government has invoked the Public Securities Act empowering police and military to take any action to save the sovereignty of the country and imposed censorship after putting the country on a war status. The military is fighting Tamil Tigers, who have said they will try to retake Jaffna, their former capital.

Sri Lanka's 17-year war is in the north and the east, although the rebels have targeted Colombo to either kill political opponents, cause economic hardship to the government or to dramatise their homeland campaign.

The matches are to be played in Colombo the port city of Galle in southern Sri Lanka and in Kandy in central Sri Lanka.

The Pakistani team is due on June 8, while South Africa will arrive on July 3. Both countries are scheduled to play a series of three Tests against Sri Lanka and also participate in one-day triangular tournament.

Malik ready for inquiry

KARACHI, May 5: Pakistan's former cricket captain Salim Malik said Friday he was ready to face any inquiry on match-fixing and rejected reports that he was planning to quit the country for good, reports AFP.

"I am in Pakistan and will remain in Pakistan until all the inquiries clear me," Malik told this news agency from Lahore.

Malik, the central character in Pakistan's match-fixing controversy, is one of two players who faces a life ban from the game.

Malik Mohammad Qayum, a judge of the Lahore High Court who headed a judicial probe into bribery and match-fixing allegations in Pakistan cricket reportedly said his recommendations after a year long inquiry included a life ban on Malik and leg-spinner Mushtaq Ahmed.

Mushtaq is on the West Indies tour with the Pakistan team.

"I went to England for personal work but my detractors were again quick to drag my name into wrong things," Malik said.

Australian cricketers, Shane Warne, Mark Waugh and Tim May, claimed Malik offered them bribes to play poorly during Australia's tour of Pakistan in 1994.

Latif criticises cricket bosses

KARACHI, May 5: Pakistan's former Test captain Rashid Latif said Friday the International Cricket Council (ICC) had done paper work instead of anything "concrete" against the menace of match-fixing, reports AFP.

"They have once again formed committees like they did last year, they have not done anything concrete," said Latif, a central figure in match-fixing controversy in Pakistan.

"They had formed a committee in January 1999 but it never had any meetings until now," he said.

Latif said in statement he had set up an internet website on match-fixing.

"Anybody who wants to read evidence can surf my site -- rashidlatif8k.com -- and in a short time there will be some startling news on match-fixing on the site," he said.

The site will provide evidence recorded by Judge Malik Mohammad Qayum's inquiry commission in Pakistan during 1998-1999, he said.

"I will not spare those who have polluted the sacred game, nor will I leave cricket," Latif said.

Latif also criticised ICC president Jagmohan Dalmiya.

Evidence of former Pakistan captains Imran Khan, Javed Miandad, Aamir Sohail and Rameez Raja and of Ataur Rehman and Aaqib Javed will be available on the site, he added.

Kafelnikov fails on clay again

PALMA, Spain, May 5: A super-motivated Juan Ignacio Chela of Argentina ended top seed Yevgeny Kafelnikov's interest in the second round of the 500,000 dollars Mallorca Open here on Thursday, reports AFP.

When rain interrupted their match Wednesday night Kafelnikov had struggled to take the first set 7-5, while Chela, who showed his form when he claimed the scalp of seventh-seed Tim Henman in the Monte Carlo Masters Series event a fortnight ago, had run away with the second 6-0.

The third stood all square at 3-3 but it took Chela just eight minutes to rattle off three quick games and win that and a place in the next round 6-3.

American Venus Williams makes a backhand return against Irina Spirlea of Romania during their Betty Barclay Open in Hamburg on May 4. —AFP photo



Dewan Shahidul Amin Tipu (R) thinking over his next move against Abu Sufian Shakil during their 26th Professor Abdur Razzak National Chess Championship engagement at the NSC yesterday.

Asian U-16 qualifiers

BFF picks 36 players

Sports Reporter

Bangladesh Football Federation has selected 36 under-16 players for a residential camp ahead of the Asian Under-16 Championship Group Two qualifying round to be held in Jamshedpur, India from June 20.

The selection was made from 90 booters through a six-day trial that concluded at the Sher-e-Bangla National Stadium in Mirpur on April 26.

The camp will start at the BKSP from May 8.

The selected players have been asked to report to BFF at 2 pm.

Players: Anjaj, Munna, Sohag, Masru Rahman, Atiqul Islam, Siraj, Ahsan Kabir, Mohammad Amin, Mohammad Tareque, Malek, Mohammad Hasan, Aminul, Ruku, Khochi, Shipon, Hadi, Ferdous Alam, Murad, Mohan, Parvez, Enam, Kaiser, Masud, Shah Alam, Nadim, Al-Amin, Pappu, Masudul Islam, Polo, Saiful, Ujjal, Raju, Makbul, Sohel and Syed Hossain Surat.

Comilla Zilla zonal champs

From Our Correspondent

ANZ Grindlays National School Cricket

CHITTAGONG, May 5: Comilla Zilla School became Chittagong Zone champions in the ANZ Grindlays Bank inter-schools cricket tournament today.

In the final match held at MA Aziz Stadium, Comilla Zilla recorded a 62-run victory over Police Institute of Chittagong.

Sent in to bat first Comilla scored 165 runs for the loss of 8 wickets in the stipulated 30 overs.

In reply, Police Institute were all out for 103 runs in 23.4 overs.

Sabir Masum of Comilla was adjudged man-of-the-match for his all round performance.

Earlier, Selim Abedin Chowdhury, member of BCCB and general secretary of Chittagong Divisional Kriya Sangstha, inaugurated the match.

Yusuf Gani Chowdhury, newly elected vice-president of CJKS, gave away the prizes as chief guest.

BRIEF SCORES

COMILLA ZILLA SCHOOL: 165/8 in 30 overs (Khalifa 25, Rasel 24, Majumder 23, Hasan 22, Apu 17, Jewel 13, Masum 12; Noman 3/18, Azam 1/4, Tipu 1/20, Bappi 1/29 and Rubel 1/23, Kishore 1/26).

Result: Comilla Zilla School won by 62 runs.

Schools' v'ball

Semis today

Sports Reporter

Bangladesh International Tutor (BIT) of Gulshan moved into the girls' semifinals of the IT Excel schools' volleyball tournament defeating Agrani Balika Bidyalaya by two sets to nil at the volleyball court adjacent to the Bangabandhu National Stadium yesterday.

In the another match, Green Herald beat Dhanmondi Girls' School by an identical margin.

In today's semifinals, BIT Uttara will take on Green Herald while Viquarunnessa Noon School will face BIT Gulshan.

In the boys' group, BIT Uttara beat Jatrabari Ideal High School by 2-0 sets to book a place in the last four. BIT Gulshan also moved into the semifinals with an identical win over Gandaria High School.

BIT Uttara will meet Mathet Abdul Aziz High School in today's first semifinal while BIT Gulshan will take on South Breeze in the other one.

Scene from the IT Excel Schools volleyball competition match between Agrani Balika Bidyalaya and BIT Gulshan at the court near Bangabandhu National Stadium yesterday.



Former heavyweight champion Evander Holyfield (L) and his challenger John Ruiz (R) pose with promoter Don King at the press conference at the Caesars Palace on May 4.

—AFP photo

German Cup final

Bayern couldn't care less



COLOGNE, Germany, May 5: Stung 2-0 by Real Madrid in the opening leg of the Champions League semi final, Bayern Munich have dragged themselves back home for a game they are not keen to play: the German Cup final and squeezed in two rounds before the end of the regular season.

That is bad news for Bayern Munich because the final now comes right in the middle of their two Champions League

champions, national coach Erich Ribbeck requested the Bundesliga season be reorganised to give him more time to prepare the squad.

That has meant the German Cup final being wrenching out of its usual place in the calendar and squeezed in two rounds before the end of the regular season.

Maybe, because revenge is the best motivation of all. Saturday's final will be a repeat of last year's.

Twelve months ago Bayern entered the final as hot favourites but they eventually lost in a penalty shoot out, clear evidence of broken spirit and psychological scarring caused by the Lazarus-like job Manchester United did on them days earlier in Barcelona.

Bayern manager Hoeness doesn't forget things like that quickly, especially against old foes like Werder Bremen.

"It is always especially sweet for Hoeness to beat Bremen. He enjoys those wins more than any other," Bayern defender Markus Babbel said.

"Sometimes we get paid a bonus for defeating Bremen. They are his favourite club to beat."

"Last year there was criticism because the Cup final was played two weeks after the Bundesliga season ended."

"Now there are other people complaining. Personally I think this year's arrangement is better than last year's."

"My biggest worry is concentration. Normally you get butterflies before a final. This time though we are coming straight from the Champions League game in Madrid."

"That means we won't even have a chance to think about Bremen until Thursday and that takes away any butterflies. Our sense of anticipation and excitement for the final are completely gone."

The problem is not the Cup itself but its timing. Traditionally the German football season comes to an end on a muggy Saturday in Berlin's Olympic stadium, a cathartic end to 10 draining months of football.

This year though, to accommodate UEFA's European championships in Holland and Belgium where out-of-form Germany will be the defending

semi final games against Real Madrid.

Once this became apparent a few weeks ago Uli Hoeness was scathing in his criticism.

He slammed the DFB for their lack of foresight - DFB spokesman Wolfgang Niersbach called it "unfortunate" scheduling - and has even threatened to send out a reserve squad Saturday evening to protect his big guns for next Tuesday's do or die

final.

His incentive to win? "I didn't want to play just once. I have some new dresses to wear," she said.

Williams has the ability to change the course of a match when she feels she is not playing up to her potential, and that is what led to the turn-around.

She dismissed the speculation that arose when her father Richard recently said he thought she should retire.

After failing to win three break points in the second game and another at 2-1, Williams found herself in trouble at 3-3.

She held off four break points in that game, and when a double-fault gave Spirlea another break point to lead 6-5 Williams was forced to scramble to reach a drop-shot and convert it into a winner.

But once she had surrendered

the first set tiebreak, Williams snatched into a higher gear.

Striking the ball more positively she broke Spirlea three times in the second set, and a further break to love at the beginning of the third was enough to discourage Spirlea and set Williams firmly on the way to victory.

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In other matches, former champion Arantxa Sanchez Vicario had to work harder than she expected to overcome fellow Spaniard Magui Serna 6-3, 7-6.

Her opponent broke to lead 5-3 in the second set and served for it at 5-4 before Sanchez Vicario rallied. The number four seed failed to close out the match when serving at 6-5, but then eased through the

final set tiebreak.

Williams, 32, disappeared after the allegations were first made in India but was interviewed by the tabloid Daily Express on Friday.

"I have never met Hansie Cronje and certainly have never given him any money as it has been claimed," he was quoted as saying.

"I am innocent and have done absolutely nothing wrong and I am being chased and harassed for nothing."



American Venus Williams makes a backhand return against Irina Spirlea of Romania during their Betty Barclay Open in Hamburg on May 4. —AFP photo

MELBOURNE, May 5: Australian cricketers will be asked to sign a public undertaking stating they are clean of corruption before every Test and one-day series.

While the documents have no legal binding, moral and ethical standards placed on players were lauded as the world's toughest by the Australian Cricket Board (ACB) today.

Players and officials will sign the undertakings to remind them of obligations and provide the public a guarantee matches would be played on merit, ACB chief executive Malcolm Speed said.

Speed revealed five initiatives to ensure corruption failed to take a hold in Australian cricket.

In addition to the public undertaking, the ACB resolved to:

• Appoint a special investigator charged with probing corruption in Australia who Speed hoped would have "very little to do."

• Call a meeting of other Australian sporting bodies to discuss corruption in sport.

• Immediately adopt penalties decided by the International Cricket Council (ICC) mandatory life bans on players found guilty of match-fixing, announced on Wednesday after an emergency ICC meeting at Lord's.

In a statement the ACB also said it would convene a conference with the leaders of Australia's other major sports to identify common strategies to tackle corruption in sport.

Vaughan uncertain England delay training

LONDON, May 5: England have cancelled a planned training camp ahead of the first Test against Zimbabwe in order to give players more match practice with their own county teams, reports Reuters.

England coach Duncan Fletcher said on Thursday excessive rain during April had meant little cricket being played and it was decided players would gain more effective preparation for the first Test by playing county matches.

"We want to give the England players another chance to get valuable middle practice, for batsmen to get runs in competitive situations and for bowlers to bowl long spells," Fletcher said.

The training camp had been scheduled for May 11-13 but the squad will now meet at Lord's on May 15 to prepare for the first Test which starts three days later.

Meanwhile, middle-order batsman Michael Vaughan is in doubt for the first Test against Zimbabwe after retiring hurt with a suspected broken finger on Thursday.</