

Column One

SPORTS TALK



Sukhdev Singh Dhindsa
(Indian Sports Minister)
"It is not the intention of the government to send anyone to jail, unless somebody is deeply involved in it directly or indirectly."
On match-fixing

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- When did Bangladesh become ICC's associate member?
1977 1987 1997
- When will the next cricket World Cup be held?
2002 2003 2004
- Which country will host the next cricket World Cup?
England New Zealand South Africa

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Minister sure of Indian fixers!

NEW DELHI, July 9 (Reuters): India's sports minister said in an interview published on Saturday that he had information that five or six Indian cricketers were involved in alleged match-fixing.

"My information is that five to six players are involved. The number could be even more," Sukhdev Singh Dhindsa told India Today magazine.

He added that he was "more than confident" that federal police would be able to unearth the names.

"At this point, the nation has little trust in cricketers," Dhindsa said. "I have information that the junior-most cricketers in the Indian team have assets worth 100 million rupees (2.25 million USD)."

Dhindsa also reiterated that former captain Mohammad Azharuddin should step down until his name was cleared after ex-South African captain Hansie Cronje told the government inquiry in Cape Town last month that Azharuddin had introduced him to a bookmaker who led him (Cronje) astray.

"After Hansie Cronje said on oath that he had been introduced by Azhar to a man who turned out to be a bookie, 'Azhar' should have stepped down. An allegation on oath is serious," Dhindsa said.

Azharuddin has denied Cronje's claim and says he is ready to face any investigation. Dhindsa said he had set July 27 as a deadline for the Board of Control for Cricket in India (BCCI) to present a report on alleged match-fixing, failing which the government will consider action on the issue.

"They must tell us how they deal with issues like the players' code of conduct, how they spend their enormous funds, how they intend to clean up the game," he said.

Bangladesh blank Nepal

From Hasan Masood

RAJSHAHI, July 9: A second half rally saw hosts Bangladesh cruise home 2-0 over Nepal in their second match of the Asian Under-19 Football Championship Group Four qualifying at the floodlit local stadium here this evening.

After a barren first half, striker Rakunuzzaman Khan and captain Monwar Hossain scored one goal apiece amidst deafening cheers from the boisterous home crowd.

The victory, hot on the heels of coach Abu Yousuf's spirited boys' 4-1 thrashing of Maldives in the opening match, levelled Bangladesh at par with fancied Iraq, who handed a thumping 6-0 defeat on Maldives in the first match of the day.

Both Iraq and Bangladesh now share the top spot of the four-team meet with six points each ahead of their head-on clash tomorrow evening.

Although Iraq, who enjoy a far better goal difference, can afford a draw in the final match for a promotion in the final round, Bangladesh have no other alternative but to win.

Back to the day's second match, Bangladesh looked a little rusty in the first half.

Still, they created at least four good chances to take the lead, but failed to break the deadlock because of poor marksmanship.

Captain Monwar Hossain had the most distinct opportunity in the 42nd minute when

he got the ball from left wing back Tito at the top of the box. But his right footer came off the cross-piece.

Undaunted by the setback, Bangladesh came up firing all cylinders in the second session with a series of offensives.

Their relentless effort was not to be denied as Kanchan finally got the break through in the 63rd minute. The nimble forward, who played for Farashi-

ganj in the Premier League, lobbed a menacing cross from the right that took a wicked deflection off a Nepalese defender into the net (1-0).

Skinner Monwar then sealed the fate of the match with a brilliant volley from a Bulbul pass in the 80th minute.

In the remaining ten minutes, Bangladesh had couple of chances to increase the margin, but with no avail.

Yellow Cards: Ujjal Manandhar and Bibek Shrestha (Nepal).

TEAMS
Bangladesh: Titumeer Chowdhury, Anisur Rahman, Rezaul Karim, Mahmudul Hasan (Dulal), Tito, Monwar, Tanveer, Asad (Jahan-e-Alam), Bulbul, Kamruzzaman Selim and Kanchan.
Nepal: Ujjal Raj Kumar (Kalyan), Kallash, Robin Mani, Naresh Thapa, Purna Bahadur, Sal Bahadur Naresh Sherstha, Rajendra Tamang Hari Thakuri and Bibek Shrestha.

Referee: Ekachari T (Thailand).
Man-of-the-match: Kamruzzaman Selim (Bangladesh).

Another Iraqi goal feast

From Hasan Masood

RAJSHAHI, July 9: Favour-ites Iraq trounced Maldives by 6-0 in their second Group Four qualifying round match of the 32nd Asian Youth (Under-19) Football Championship at the local stadium here this afternoon.

Hasan Atea, Ahmad Adwan, Enad Ridha, Abul Hasan Khudair, Emad Mohoder and Almir Abbas scored one goal each to ensure yet another goal feast for Iraq. Iraq, who blanked Nepal 7-0 in their opening match, earned full six points from two matches. They will now face hosts Bangladesh in their last match tomorrow evening.

The top-scoring attack, the highly talented Iraqis ruled over the islanders to take 2-0 lead in the first half.

Capitalising on an Ahmad Adwan header, midfielder Hasan Atea shot the Iraqis ahead with a powerful grounder in the 17th minute. After being fed by an Atea pass, Adwan scored the second goal in the 32nd minute.

Iraq could have gone for the lemon break with a 3-0 lead had not Enad Ridha, who struck twice against Nepal, sent a penalty well over the cross-piece.

They however returned to the match with a renewed vigour, launching countless offensives on the Maldives fort. The whole team acted like a well-oiled machine in the second session and eventually got away with four more goals.

Ridha made it 3-0 heading home a Mohammad Shilgat corner in the 54th minute. Abul Hasan Khudair then stepped up to convert a penalty in the 69th minute after Maldives defender Ahmed Adeb handled the ball.

Yellow cards: Abul Hasan Khudair (Iraq) and Mohammad Nasir (Maldives).
Man-of-the-match: Hasan Atea (Iraq).

TEAMS
Iraq: Ahmed Jaber, Enad Ridha, Hasan Atea, Sameeh Amir, Salah Tahir (Emad Mohoder), Ahmad Adwan (Ahmad Alwan), Jassim Kalim, Abul Hasan Khudair, Naim Ibrahim and Mohammed Shilgat.
Maldives: M Arees, M Nimreel, A Iruhas, Ibrahim, Shiyam, A Thaha, Ismail Hashim, M Nasir (A Sajau), Ibrahim, sajjib, M Faisal, Ahmed Adeb and Fared Moammad. Referee: ALM Sultan (oman).

Rain rescues England

LONDON, July 9 (AFP): Rain came to England's aid when their triangular series one-day international against the West Indies here at Lord's on Sunday was declared a no result following a persistent downpour.

However, there was plenty of time for England's batsmen to fail for the second time in 24 hours, collapsing to 153 for eight after 43.5 overs.

On an overcast morning, England captain Alec Stewart, told BSkyB television that he too would have fielded first had the coin dropped in his favour.

As it was England, who on Saturday in their opening match were dismissed for 207 by a modest Zimbabwe attack, were facing the seemingly more formidable West Indies pace-men.

Although Curtly Ambrose is being rested until the Test series against England resumes in August and Courtney Walsh was spared from this particular encounter, a new ball-pairing of Nixon McLean and Corey Collymore was still sharp enough, with Franklyn Rose a lively first change.

As at The Oval on Saturday, Stewart was the first England batsman out, once again dismissed for 12.

After a trademark cover-drive and a couple of fierce cuts, Stewart edged an intended straight drive off McLean to Chris Gayle at second slip.

England 23 for one in the seventh over.

Fortunately for home hopes Marcus Trescothick, who made 79 on his one-day international debut in Saturday's five-wicket defeat, was showing that performance not to be a mere flash in the pan.

in at short-extra cover off Collymore - a sharp chance of a strongly hit drive.

Trescothick then played a majestic square-cut off the back-foot for four against McLean.

However, Matthew Maynard failed again. The Glamorgan captain, who managed just three against Zimbabwe, went for a five-ball duck this time.

Playing no stroke against Collymore he saw the ball nip back, flick his pad and bowl him, to leave England 47 for three.

Graham Thorpe and Trescothick produced England's only noteworthy partnership of the innings, the pair sharing a 50 stand in 69 balls.

Then, one short of his second consecutive one-day international fifty, Trescothick chipped an easy return catch to off-spinner Gayle. The left-hander had faced 79 balls and struck five fours but England were still 99 for four in the 26th over and deep in trouble.

Gayle was a real thorn in England's side, not conceding a single boundary and completing his spell with a wicket-maiden. Mark Ealham bowled for 17 trying to turn the ball down to third man, England 152 for seven.

The off-spinner finished with figures of 10-1-28-2, but he did not turn the ball sharply and England's batsmen seemed

to play every delivery as if it were a potential hand grenade.

Earlier Thorpe, had gone for an industrious 42 off 76 balls - an innings which featured just two boundaries.

The Surrey left-hander departed tamely, chipping Franklyn Rose to Mervyn Dillon at mid-off to leave England 148 for six in the 42nd over.

Andrew Caddick, on nought continued the pattern of induced dismissals when seven balls after Ealham's exit he clipped Rose straight to Gayle at mid-wicket.

Rain, which had been falling gently, then forced the players off with England 157 for eight.

After play resumed, only five balls were possible before rain spared England further embarrassment.

The match was abandoned, the teams sharing a point apiece to leave Zimbabwe still top after their two wins.

SCOREBOARD
Scoreboard after England's triangular series one-day international against West Indies here at Lord's on Sunday was declared a 'no result' because of rain.

England innings
Trescothick c and b Gayle 49
Stewart c Gayle b McLean 12
Hick c Jacobs b McLean 12
Maynard b Collymore 0
Thorpe c Dillon b Rose 42
White c Jacobs b Rose 10
Ealham b Gayle 17
Caddick c Gayle b Rose 5
Gough not out 2
Extras (lb 4, w 3, nb 2) 9
Total (8 wickets, 43.5 overs) 158
Did not bat: A Mullally
Fall of wickets: 1-23, 2-41, 3-47, 4-99, 5-120, 6-148, 7-152, 8-153
Bowling
McLean 8 2 25 2
Collymore 10 0 46 1
Rose 9 1 42 3
Gayle 10 1 28 2
Dillon 6 5 3 0
West Indies: S Campbell, C Gayle, W Hinds, B Lara, R Powell, J Adams, R Jacobs, F Rose, M Dillon, C Collymore, N McLean
Umpires: R Julian and K Palmer (Third umpire: B Dudson)
Match referee: Ranjan Madugalle (Sri Lanka)
Result: Match abandoned

Magura cricket

From Our Correspondent
MAGURA, July 9: Independent Cricket Club defeated Young Boys Club by 77 runs in the second semifinal match of the Econo Cricket League at the Magura Stadium today.

BRIEF SCORES
INDEPENDENT CRICKET CLUB: 166 for seven wickets in 35 overs (Rubei 52, Ali 26, Roni 22, Domis 14, Rupok 2/21, Arif 2/26, Shaib 1/10, Bipu 1/26).

YOUNG BOYS CLUB: 89 all out in 25.3 overs (Bipu 19, Mishu 19, Babu 9, Jewel 8, Prince 3/29, Ali 2/8, Haradon 2/14, Monsur 1/5).

Result: Independent Cricket Club won by 77 runs.

Girls' age-group N'ganj natants dominate

Sports Reporter

Narayanganj ruled the pool on the opening day of the Green Delta national age-group girls' swimming competition, winning five out of the 15 gold medals on offer at the Dhanmudi Women's Swimming Complex yesterday.

Alaya captured the 200 metres freestyle gold for Narayanganj in the 14-16 age group. She clocked three minutes 23.38 seconds.

Her teammate Munni Akhter completed a double delight. Also competing in the 14-16 age-group, Akhter won the 100m breaststroke and 200m backstroke respectively.

Baishakhi and Sonia completed Narayanganj's haul.

Kushia, Pabna and Munshiganj bagged two golds each. Tangail, Natore, Rajbari and Shilaidaha claimed one apiece.

Earlier, State Minister for Youth and Sports Obaidul Quader declared the meet open in a colourful ceremony.

Mostafa surrenders solo lead
Sports Reporter

Former national sub-junior champion Golam Mostafa Bhuiyan surrendered his solo lead at the top of Group A in the Second Standard Chartered Bank Schools' Chess Tournament when he drew with Joydip Dutta yesterday.

The setback meant the student of Mymensingh City Collegiate School, in the penultimate round of the nine-round Swiss League meet, turned today's final round into a three-way battle between, Shomak Palit and Palanipon Aravinda. The trio are locked at seven points at the end of the eighth round.

Shomak, a student of Calcutta's Mitra Institute, defeated Naim Arefin of Dhanmudi Govt. School. His fellow Indian Aravinda posted a crucial victory over Minhaz, a student of Hazrat Shah Ali School.

Joydip, a student of Kumar Ashtosh School in Calcutta, shared second position with compatriot Debayan Majumder, both collecting six and a half points.

Rigo goes by the passport
From Sports Reporter

RAJSHAHI, July 9: There is no official complaint about Bangladesh's fielding over-aged players in the ongoing Group Four qualifiers of the 32nd Asian Youth Under-19 Football Championship here.

No team management has come up yet to Match Commissioner Alexander Rigo with that allegation. Rigo told this correspondent while responding to a report that Maldives has lodged protest with the Asian Football Confederation (AFC) over the real age of a few Bangladesh players.

"As far as passports are concerned, I don't have any problems with age of any team members. I had problem initially with Nepal team who did not bring their passports. But AFC has cleared that problem," said Rigo.

Zimbabwe dent English ego
LONDON, July 9 (AFP): Zimbabwe beat England by five wickets in the triangular series one-day international here at The Oval on Saturday.

A stand of 123 in 176 balls between former captain Alistair Campbell and his successor Andy Flower formed the backbone of their reply to England's 207 - a meagre total made worse by the fact that the home team were 136 for one.

SCOREBOARD
Scoreboard of the triangular one-day series match between England and Zimbabwe at The Oval on Saturday:
ENGLAND: 207 all out in 50 overs (M Trescothick 79, Hick 50, Ealham 32; P Strang 3/36, G Flower 3/9).

ZIMBABWE
Johnson c Maynard b Caddick 0
Wishart lbw b Caddick 2
Goodwin lbw b Ealham 11
Campbell lbw b Croft 80
A Flower b Mullally 6
G Flower not out 33
G Whittall not out 4
Extras (lb 4, lb 5, w 1, nb 6) 19
Total: For five wickets in 48.2 overs) 210
Fall of wickets: 1-0; 2-9; 3-35; 4-158; 5-206.

Did not bat: Dirk Viljoen, Paul Strang, Bryan Strange, Gary Brent.

Bowler
Caddick 10 2 27 2
Gough 10 0 47 0
Ealham 10 0 44 1
Mullally 9 2 33 1
Croft 5 0 30 1
Flintoff 4 0 20 0
Result: Zimbabwe won by five wickets.
Man-of-the-match: Alistair Campbell.

Cubs maul Malaysia

India emerge champions

Sports Reporter

Bangladesh ended their ACC Under-15 Cricket Championship campaign on an impressive note, defeating hosts Malaysia by 190 runs at the RSC ground in Kuala Lumpur on Saturday.

According to a belated fax message received here yesterday, Bangladesh, batting first after winning the toss, piled up a commanding total of 248 for eight in their share of 40 overs.

In reply, Malaysia were bundled out for 58 in 28.2 overs.

Mahmud Ullah scored a swashbuckling unbeaten 62 off 56 balls after openers Nafees and Hasibul gave Bangladesh a perfect start. They rattled off 70 runs in 11 overs.

Nafees scored 33 and Hasibul who hammered a brilliant 103 against Thailand in the previous match, made 21.

Golam Rahman with 23 was the other notable run-getter in the Bangladesh total.

For Malaysia Yusairy claimed three wickets giving away 38 runs in his eight allotted overs.

But the home side had little to offer when it was their turn to face the lethal Bangladesh attack, spearheaded by Arif Hossain.

The young leg-spinner claimed three wickets for 11 runs to complete a wonderful tournament with a haul of 13 wickets.

Ibrahim also took three wickets for 12 runs in eight economical overs.

Yusairy top-scored with 15. It was only Bangladesh's third win against as many defeats in the first of its kind event under the banner of Asian Cricket Council.

Meanwhile, India lifted the title defeating arch-rivals Pakistan by 54 runs in the final yesterday.

Batting first, India scored 209 all out in 38.5 overs. Pakistan replied with 155 for nine before being exhausted their quota of 40 overs.

AT Rayudu of India collected both the man-of-the-final and player-of-the-tournament awards.

BRIEF SCORES
Bangladesh: 248 for 8 in 40 overs (Mahmud 62 not out, Nafees 33, Hasibul 21, Rahman 23; Yusairy 3/38).

Malaysia: 58 all out in 28.2 overs (Yusairy 15, extras 16; Arif 3/11, Ibrahim 3/12, Shafiq 1/9, Tavabur 1/11, Alamgir 1/9, Mahmud Ullah 1/3).

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Result: Bangladesh won by 190 runs.

Ball-doctoring in Colombo

Waqar, Mahmood face the music

COLOMBO, July 9 (AFP): Pakistani fast bowler Waqar Younis was axed from the Singer Cup one-day international against Sri Lanka here on Sunday for tampering with the ball, becoming the first cricketer to be banned for this offence.

Waqar was handed a one-match suspension and fined 50 per cent of his match fees for lifting the seam off the ball during Saturday's game against South Africa here.

Two other Pakistani players, captain Moin Khan and all-rounder Azhar Mahmood, were also hauled up by tournament referee John Reid of New Zealand in connection with the same offence.

In a statement released here on Reid's behalf by the Sri Lankan cricket board, Mahmood was fined 30 per cent of his fees and Moin severely reprimanded for "allowing the spirit of the game to be impaired."

Reid said the players had contravened the laws and spirit of the game after both Waqar

and Mahmood were caught on television tampering with the ball.

Waqar received a heavier penalty than Mahmood because he had been warned for a similar offence by Reid during the third Test against Sri Lanka at Kandy last week.

The one-match suspension meant Pakistan were without their most experienced bowler for Sunday's key match against hosts Sri Lanka.

But Waqar will be allowed to return for Pakistan's last league match against South Africa next Wednesday.

Reid summoned Pakistani team manager Mohammad Nazir, coach Javed Miandad and Moin on Sunday morning and informed them of his decisions.

The referee considered that the incident, which was clearly visible on television, was very serious," the statement said.

"Waqar Younis was fined 50 per cent of his match fee and given a one ODI match suspension effective immediately."

"Azhar Mahmood has been fined 30 per cent of his match fee."

"Moin Khan, the Pakistani captain, who is responsible for his team's actions on the field has been severely reprimanded for allowing the spirit of the game to be impaired," the statement said.

Waqar and the other players refused to speak to the media, but team manager Nazir said the "boys were obviously very

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Lanka lash Pakistan

COLOMBO, July 9 (Reuters): Sri Lanka handed a comprehensive six-wicket defeat to Pakistan on Sunday to win their third match in a row and reach the final of the one-day triangular tournament which also includes South Africa.

Set a target of 241, Sri Lanka won the game with four balls to spare when Russell Arnold hit Azhar Mahmood for a four.

Captain Sanath Jayasuriya featured in a rousing 96-run first wicket partnership with hard-hitting Avishka Gunawardena off 101 balls to set Sri Lanka's course to victory.

Jayasuriya, who made 54 off 81 balls with six fours and a six, earlier claimed two Pakistani wickets for 33 runs to take the man-of-the-match award. Gunawardena hit 47 off 50 balls with six fours.

The Pakistani attack seemed tame without Waqar Younis and the Sri Lankan batsmen

had little trouble fending off the bowlers on a slow pitch.

Younis was serving a one-match suspension for ball-tampering in the game against South Africa on Saturday.

Mahela Jayawardene returned to form, hitting 49 off 55 balls with three fours and a six. Kumar Sangakkara remained unbeaten at 36.

Earlier Azhar Mahmood lashed an unbeaten 43 off 25 balls to help lift Pakistan to 240 for six from their 50 overs.

Mahmood and fellow pace-bowling all-rounder Abdur Razaq (17 not out) put on 58 for the seventh wicket to boost Pakistan from 182 for six in the 44th over.

Pakistan, after winning the toss, suffered early setbacks when openers Saeed Anwar and Imran Nazir were both dismissed with only 19 on the board.

Younis Khan and Imzamam-ul-Haq led a recovery by adding 82 for the third wicket.

Younis was top-scorer with 59 before being bowled by Jayasuriya's left-arm spin, which also accounted for Imzamam for 47.

The spinners contained Pakistan effectively until Mahmood came in to thrash one six and four runs.