

Sachin wishes cricket well

NEW DELHI, July 18: Barring maestro Sachin Tendulkar said the recent betting and match-fixing scandal had been a shock to him but he hoped that this was just a passing phase in the great game, reports PTL.

The former Indian captain contemptuously dismissed attempts to drag his name into the controversy.

"I have always been out of this kind of thing. The nation knows I am clean. My whole career has been transparent. I don't have to go out and say anything in my defence," he said in an interview published in the latest issue of Outlook magazine.

"The only reason I did not speak about it is that I didn't know anything about it. I would have given a statement if I knew something. So how can I say who is telling the truth and who is not?" Tendulkar said.

Tendulkar denied former Pakistan captain Rashid Latif's claim that he knew everything about match-fixing. "It's not true."

"And it's not necessary that I react to any person's statements."

Bierhoff stays at the helm

BERLIN, July 18: Oliver Bierhoff has been confirmed as German national team captain until the 2002 World Cup, reports AFP.

Bierhoff, 32, told the newspaper Bild Tuesday: "The manager, Rudi Voller, told me by telephone that I was still captain."

Halim

From page 8

the Guinness Book," he said.

Only in March this year, a 29-year-old That, Sam-ang Suwanis hogged the headlines across the world by juggling a football for 15 hours. But, unlike Sam-ang, Halim does not have a sponsor to bring him the publicity one craves for.

"I always wanted to do something creative. I don't have the financial ability to let people know about my achievement. So, I've focussed myself on what I afford to do. Right now, I cannot think of anything other than bemusing rural audiences," Halim told this correspondent.

The crowd-pleaser of Shalikhpa Upazila in Magura comes from a very poor family. At a tender age of 15, he wanted to emulate the feat of a rural footballer, who had kept a ball on his head for about 30 seconds during a football match at Magura suburb. All his hard work, perseverance, and patience over the years are now paying him back. He can eat, drink, ride a bicycle, change clothes, respond to nature's call and show 54 other tricks all the while nimbly juggling the ball using his feet, head and chest.

Halim, who has showed no signs of world-class ability on the field so far, can however neatly receive a ball on his head after kicking it up to 30 feet high in the air. He claimed that he could also swim and climb up a coconut tree with a ball on his head.

His fans have absolute faith in Halim's dexterity with football. "If his ability is projected properly this poor young man would certainly bring international glory for Bangladesh," said Sagir Ali, a neighbour.

Like many of his admirers, Halim is also hoping against hope that someday his long-cherished dream would come true and his artistry will earn fame and fortune.

Sandra blazes down the track



SACRAMENTO, California, July 18: Sandra Glover clocked the fastest time in the world this year and beat world record-holder Kim Batten in the 400m hurdles Monday to book her ticket to Sydney at the US Olympic Athletics Trials, reports AFP.

Glover won the final in 53.33, surpassing the 53.53 that Moroccan Nezhia Bidouane posted in Rome on June 30 as the best in the world this season.

Batten led early, but Glover took control on the curve and sprinted for the victory. Batten held on for second in 54.70, holding off Tonja Buford-Bailey who was third in 54.80.

Glover confirmed her status as America's premier intermediate hurdler with her second national title, and showed that Batten and Buford-Bailey still have some way to go after time off for injury and motherhood, respectively.

"When Batten set the world record of 52.61 at the 1995 World Championships, Buford-Bailey was second in 52.62. But Buford-Bailey took a two-year maternity leave from the track, and Batten was felled last year by a painful toe ailment, originally diagnosed as a bone chip but later found to be a nerve problem."

"I have more races under my belt, but it's only the second race I got the ribbon," said Glover, who won her first national title last year at the age of 30. Glover took her personal best from 55.11 in 1998 to 53.95 in 1999, and said her religious faith -- not to mention seven years as a primary school teacher -- had given her the patience to wait for her moment.

"Everybody has this period of darkness," Glover said. "God waited for me to grow, and took me to another level."

"Working eight hours a day and dealing with children, you have to be patient," she added. "Glover gave up her job to concentrate on training this year."

"After working seven years, and you take a year off you feel a little lazy," she said. "But training-wise it went very good. Most definitely I can break the world record," Glover said, adding in an aside to Batten: "Sorry, Kim, your record is going down this year."

"That's OK, I've had it a long time," Batten replied. "The former world champ is just glad to be competitive after racing only in one low level meet this season."

"I'm not 100 percent, as far as training," Batten said. "But I felt very confident during the race."

And she's extremely happy to have finally found a way to fight the debilitating pain in her feet.

"It's 95 percent OK," Batten said. "There was a lot of nerve damage, that was from years of training and not getting it taken care of. We were all over the country looking for doctors to get the problem diagnosed. Then I went to chiropractor, and she used some different techniques than you would expect."

"I had to laugh to myself, it was like voodoo," Batten said. "But about a day and a half later, the pain was starting to decrease. Now, I have no pain."

Buford-Bailey said she was fit, but still "race rusty."

By the time I hit the eighth hurdle, I think I was in sixth place, and I started to panic," she admitted. "At that point I just decided to stop thinking and just run."

Melvin Lister more than made up for his disappointing performance in the NCAA Championships by winning the long jump with a leap of 8.32m, leading a trio of first-time Olympians from the college ranks.

American Sandra Glover leaps over a hurdle during the 400m hurdles at the US Olympic trials in Sacramento on July 17. — AFP photo

Kafelnikov scrapes thru'



STUTTGART, July 18: Yevgeny Kafelnikov scraped through three tiebreaks for a win over Frenchman Julien Boutter 7-6 (7/3), 6-7 (5/7), 7-6 (8/6) and a place in the second round of the one-million-dollar Mercedes Cup Monday, reports AFP.

Kafelnikov, holder of 20 titles and a 1996 finalist here, rolled out of Wimbledon during the first week after losing with a painful rib injury. He had taken two weeks off to rest and is playing his first event since then.

The hard-working Russian took a break at his home in the Russian Black Sea resort of Sochi.

The pause refreshed the 26-year-old as he seemed to have recovered all of his fighting powers -- but not without a battle against the Frenchman, who reached the third round at Monte Carlo.

Kafelnikov is known for barely ever stopping on the year-long tennis grind. But he has promised to start taking life a bit easier despite a schedule of singles and doubles which is the most hectic for a top player in the sport.

But he also keeps going in the belief that those who don't win big events don't stay at the summit.

For that reason, he's not sure that this year's new Champions points race on the ATP Tour is the right way to calculate standings.

The competition is stronger than ever now," he said. "But without playing well at the majors, you cannot be on top of the standings. It's as simple as that."

Kafelnikov gives his nod as Number One to seven-time Wimbledon winner Pete Sampras, rather than Mercedes top seed Magnus Norman, the current race leader and a steady winner but whose best career showing was the French Open final in June.

Norman opens Tuesday against German wild card Bjorn Phau, a member of the Boris Becker junior team.

Moroccan suffered contrasting fates, with fourth seed Younes El Aynaoui beating German Christian Vinck 6-1, 7-6 (10/8) while Australian Andrew Ilie rallied from 3-5 down in the final-set tiebreaker to oust Hicham Arzi 4-6, 6-2, 7-6 (7/5).

German Daniel Elsner, a three-time junior Grand Slam winner now playing only at the national league level, knocked out veteran Spaniard Francisco Clavet 6-4, 4-6, 6-3.

He will await the winner between Phau and Norman, but is not making any bets on the outcome.

"Of course, Magnus is the absolute favourite and I have nothing to lose. I respect him, but I'm not sure he will win so easily."

The German played for nearly two hours before earning his three-set victory. He won the first and led 3-0 in the second before his form dropped, necessitating a fightback.

Phau, a member of the Boris Becker junior team, suffered contrasting fates, with fourth seed Younes El Aynaoui beating German Christian Vinck 6-1, 7-6 (10/8) while Australian Andrew Ilie rallied from 3-5 down in the final-set tiebreaker to oust Hicham Arzi 4-6, 6-2, 7-6 (7/5).

German Daniel Elsner, a three-time junior Grand Slam winner now playing only at the national league level, knocked out veteran Spaniard Francisco Clavet 6-4, 4-6, 6-3.

He will await the winner between Phau and Norman, but is not making any bets on the outcome.

"Of course, Magnus is the absolute favourite and I have nothing to lose. I respect him, but I'm not sure he will win so easily."

Qatar to host women's tennis meet

DOHA, July 18: Qatar is to host a women's tennis tournament in 2001 with five of the world's top players on the international circuit taking part, Al-Raya newspaper reported on Monday, says AFP.

The tournament, sponsored by the French oil company TotalFinaElf, is to run from February 12 to 18 with prize money of 550,000 dollars.

Qatar's tennis federation chief Al-Fardan told the paper that the world No.1, Martina Hingis of Switzerland, and Russian glamour girl Anna Kournikova were to take part in the first major women's tournament to be staged in the Arab world.

Qatar has since 1993 hosted a one-million-dollar ATP men's tournament.

SA's tour tie drawn McKenzie hits batting form

COLOMBO, July 18: Neil McKenzie put pressure on South African selectors to find him a place in the first Test against Sri Lanka later this week as he hit 181 in a drawn two-day match against a local Board XI on Monday, reports Reuters.

McKenzie, unbeaten on 156 overnight, hit 25 fours and a six to help South Africa reach a formidable 441-7 declared in their first innings before the visitors skittled out the Sri Lanka Board XI for 109.

On the Sri Lanka side fast bowler Kaushalya Weeraratne top-scored with 38 as South African bowlers ripped through their innings in 36.2 overs.

South Africa, looking for some batting practice before the first Test begins in Galle on Thursday, scored a quick 82-3 declared in their second innings.

The Sri Lanka Board XI returned to bat again and scored 74-0 before the match was called off as a draw.

Aussies set up gambling forum

MELBOURNE, Australia, July 18 (AFP): Australian cricket Tuesday called for a code of conduct to rid the game of match-fixing.

Australian Cricket Board chief executive Malcolm Speed set up a gambling forum here in response to the bribery scandals that have ruined the careers of former South African cricket captain Hansie Cronje and Pakistan counterpart Salim Malik.

Speed said they had to make sure players fully understand the pitfalls of gambling.

Baichung to lead India in England

NEW DELHI, July 18: Star striker Baichung Bhutia will lead a 22-member Indian football team's 'historic tour' of Britain for exhibition matches, reports PTL.

India will play their first match against Fulham at Craven Cottage on July 22 and second against West Bromwich at the Hawthorn on July 26.

The team's final engagement is against Bangladesh at Leicester on July 29.

Mercurial striker IM Vijayan was named vice-captain with P K Banerjee technical director and manager and Shivinder Singh (chief coach).

Fergie won't have second thoughts



MANCHESTER, England, July 18: Manchester United manager Sir Alex Ferguson has ruled out a change of heart over his decision to step down when his current contract expires in two years' time, reports AFP.

Peter Kenyon, who will replace Martin Edwards as United's chief executive on August 1, says persuading 58-year-old Ferguson to stay on beyond the two years is a priority.

But Ferguson claims the club and Edwards in particular, dismissed his offer last year to take on a new role 'upstairs' when he gives up the post of manager.

And the United boss insists he is 'finished with management and coaching' when his contract at Old Trafford runs out.

"I made it obvious for quite a while that I would like a role in the club but I didn't hear anything from them so I started making plans," explained Ferguson.

"I've not been short of offers and I've got a lot of plans in various areas. Over the last six months, my sons have been developing some ideas. Some are in football."

"But I am finished with management and coaching, that is without question," he told The Times newspaper Tuesday.

"In the last nine months I have come round to a clean break from my own perspective. I have accepted it and got on with my life."

"I'm not asking for anything. I don't need to ask for anything. I shouldn't have to ask for anything. They haven't made me an offer, so you make your plans. It's as simple as that."

"I don't want it to be daunting for my successor. I don't want to be some sort of ogre."

"Martin Edwards felt that I should not have any involvement at all with the club because it is the Sir Matt Busby syndrome, but I can't agree with that."

"You would think that the club would want someone of experience to stay on. I wouldn't have wanted any involvement with the first team whatsoever and I said that to Martin Edwards. I'm not sure they could grasp the situation."

"I've not been short of offers and I've got a lot of plans in various areas. Over the last six months, my sons have been developing some ideas. Some are in football."

"But I am finished with management and coaching, that is without question," he told The Times newspaper Tuesday.

"In the last nine months I have come round to a clean break from my own perspective. I have accepted it and got on with my life."

"I'm not asking for anything. I don't need to ask for anything. I shouldn't have to ask for anything. They haven't made me an offer, so you make your plans. It's as simple as that."

"I don't want it to be daunting for my successor. I don't want to be some sort of ogre."

"Martin Edwards felt that I should not have any involvement at all with the club because it is the Sir Matt Busby syndrome, but I can't agree with that."

"You would think that the club would want someone of experience to stay on. I wouldn't have wanted any involvement with the first team whatsoever and I said that to Martin Edwards. I'm not sure they could grasp the situation."

"I've not been short of offers and I've got a lot of plans in various areas. Over the last six months, my sons have been developing some ideas. Some are in football."

"But I am finished with management and coaching, that is without question," he told The Times newspaper Tuesday.

"In the last nine months I have come round to a clean break from my own perspective. I have accepted it and got on with my life."

"I'm not asking for anything. I don't need to ask for anything. I shouldn't have to ask for anything. They haven't made me an offer, so you make your plans. It's as simple as that."

"I don't want it to be daunting for my successor. I don't want to be some sort of ogre."

"Martin Edwards felt that I should not have any involvement at all with the club because it is the Sir Matt Busby syndrome, but I can't agree with that."

"You would think that the club would want someone of experience to stay on. I wouldn't have wanted any involvement with the first team whatsoever and I said that to Martin Edwards. I'm not sure they could grasp the situation."

"I've not been short of offers and I've got a lot of plans in various areas. Over the last six months, my sons have been developing some ideas. Some are in football."

"But I am finished with management and coaching, that is without question," he told The Times newspaper Tuesday.

"In the last nine months I have come round to a clean break from my own perspective. I have accepted it and got on with my life."

"I'm not asking for anything. I don't need to ask for anything. I shouldn't have to ask for anything. They haven't made me an offer, so you make your plans. It's as simple as that."

"I don't want it to be daunting for my successor. I don't want to be some sort of ogre."

"Martin Edwards felt that I should not have any involvement at all with the club because it is the Sir Matt Busby syndrome, but I can't agree with that."

"You would think that the club would want someone of experience to stay on. I wouldn't have wanted any involvement with the first team whatsoever and I said that to Martin Edwards. I'm not sure they could grasp the situation."

"I've not been short of offers and I've got a lot of plans in various areas. Over the last six months, my sons have been developing some ideas. Some are in football."

"But I am finished with management and coaching, that is without question," he told The Times newspaper Tuesday.

Anelka will find it out soon



PARIS, July 18: Nicholas Anelka's future at Real Madrid could be decided on Thursday, the French international announced on Tuesday on his website, reports AFP.

His brother and agent, Didier, will meet the Spanish club's newly-elected president Florentino Perez to discuss a possible transfer to Paris St Germain.

"Didier leaves for Madrid on Thursday and my future will be discussed then. I'm not really up to date on the details," Anelka said.

"I'm taking advantage of my remaining time in Guadeloupe and I will return to Paris Tuesday where I will stay for a while for the remainder of my holidays," he added.

Anelka has made no secret of his wish to return to his former club Paris St Germain.

Real's outgoing chairman Lorenzo Sanz was in favour of letting the 21-year-old striker go in a deal worth in the region of 30 million dollars. But the transfer depended on Sanz being re-elected.

Perez, who was sworn in as president of the European club champions Monday, said that the French player's future was in the hands of club coaching staff and managers.

"If the technicians decide, he will leave the club. But I think 5.3 billion pesetas (30 million dollars) is too little. He's worth a lot more," said Perez.

Real signed Anelka last summer for a Spanish record 37 million dollars after a protracted and acrimonious transfer wrangle with English Premiership outfit Arsenal.

But the Frenchman, a member of his country's Euro 2000 winning squad, quickly fell out with the Spanish club and after refusing to train was suspended without pay for 45 days.

After he publicly apologised the ban was suspended and he returned to feature in the Real Champions League winning team but has candidly admitted since relations were strained with his team-mates.

Perez was elected on the platform of signing Portuguese international Luis Figo from arch-rivals Barcelona and is also interested in bringing French star Zinedine Zidane to Spain from Juventus.

Perez is ready to pay the 56 million dollar payment necessary to enforce the clause in Figo's contract releasing him from Barca.

Real's outgoing chairman Lorenzo Sanz was in favour of letting the 21-year-old striker go in a deal worth in the region of 30 million dollars. But the transfer depended on Sanz being re-elected.

Perez, who was sworn in as president of the European club champions Monday, said that the French player's future was in the hands of club coaching staff and managers.

"If the technicians decide, he will leave the club. But I think 5.3 billion pesetas (30 million dollars) is too little. He's worth a lot more," said Perez.

Real signed Anelka last summer for a Spanish record 37 million dollars after a protracted and acrimonious transfer wrangle with English Premiership outfit Arsenal.

But the Frenchman, a member of his country's Euro 2000 winning squad, quickly fell out with the Spanish club and after refusing to train was suspended without pay for 45 days.

After he publicly apologised the ban was suspended and he returned to feature in the Real Champions League winning team but has candidly admitted since relations were strained with his team-mates.

Perez was elected on the platform of signing Portuguese international Luis Figo from arch-rivals Barcelona and is also interested in bringing French star Zinedine Zidane to Spain from Juventus.

Perez is ready to pay the 56 million dollar payment necessary to enforce the clause in Figo's contract releasing him from Barca.

Real's outgoing chairman Lorenzo Sanz was in favour of letting the 21-year-old striker go in a deal worth in the region of 30 million dollars. But the transfer depended on Sanz being re-elected.

Perez, who was sworn in as president of the European club champions Monday, said that the French player's future was in the hands of club coaching staff and managers.

"If the technicians decide, he will leave the club. But I think 5.3 billion pesetas (30 million dollars) is too little. He's worth a lot more," said Perez.

Real signed Anelka last summer for a Spanish record 37 million dollars after a protracted and acrimonious transfer wrangle with English Premiership outfit Arsenal.

But the Frenchman, a member of his country's Euro 2000 winning squad, quickly fell out with the Spanish club and after refusing to train was suspended without pay for 45 days.

After he publicly apologised the ban was suspended and he returned to feature in the Real Champions League winning team but has candidly admitted since relations were strained with his team-mates.

Perez was elected on the platform of signing Portuguese international Luis Figo from arch-rivals Barcelona and is also interested in bringing French star Zinedine Zidane to Spain from Juventus.

Naogaon cricket

NAOGAON, July 18: The final of the Naogaon Gold Cup cricket tournament was held at Par-Cricket Sadar Para playground recently, reports BSS.

Rantu Smriti Sangsad won the championship defeating Newton Club by 40 runs.

Hi-tech Aussie tracksuits!

SYDNEY, July 18: Australian Olympic Committee president John Coates launched Australia's high-tech uniforms today as long jumper Nicole Boegman modelled the full-length swift favoured by United States sprint star Marion Jones, reports Reuters.

Complete with a hood, the track bodysuit will be offered to all Australian athletes for the Sydney Games.

Australian dual 400 metres world champion Cathy Freeman helped to design the suit along with Jones.

Boegman said: "The designers have tried to cover every part of the body that's affected by wind drag."

"I haven't tried it out in training yet. Certainly if it's going to make me run faster and get me that little bit further then I'll definitely wear it."

Australia will wear the traditional national colours of green and gold at the Games which start on September 15.

For the first time, Paralympic athletes will wear the same uniforms as their Olympic colleagues. The Paralympics start on October 18 in Sydney.

A staggering 87,528 items have been made for both teams.

TV Guide

Wednesday 19th July (All programmes are in local time. The Daily Star will not be responsible for any change in the programme)

BTV

3:00 Opening Announcement, Recitation From The Holy Quran And Programme Outline 3:15 Patriotic Song 3:20 Open University Prog. 4:00 Bangla News 4:05 Sashtotho (Health Developing For Mother & Children) 4:20 Cartoon: The New Adventure of Captain Janak 4:40 Shamol Chhaya 5:20 Aalay Bhuban Bhara (Programme For Children) 5:45 Pusti Tathto 6:00 Bangla News 6:05 Desh-O-Biggan 6:30 Transmission From Chittagong Center 7:00 News For Weather 7:05 Geetiban (Rabindra Song) 7:25 Nupur Nikkan (Dance) 8:00 Bangla News At 8:20 Serial: Biponna Basona #6 ("Tony Daves, Bijori Borkotullah, Shams Suman, Tonima Ahmed, Jamaluddin Hossan, Roushan Aara, Hossan) 9:00 Series: The New Adventure of Robinhood (Bangla Dub) 9:30 Chhindo Chhabi (Songs) 10:00 News At Ten (English) 10:20 Mukti Pathe (Programme Drug Addicted) 10:50 Dristi-O-Sristi (Programme On Letaraecture) 11:30 Bangla News 11:35 English News 11:40 A) Programme Outline For Thursday B) National Song 11:45 Closing

EKUSHEY

2:00 pm Ekushey Newspaper Headlines 2:05 Shampa Rezar Boithok 2:30 Prio Ganar 3:00 Ekushey News Headlines 3:05 Cinema Bouma 5:30 Dristi Public View 6:00 Ekushey News Headlines 6:02 Expedition to the Animal Kingdom 6:30 Charidike 7:00 Ekushey News Headlines 7:05 Cir-

CHANNEL-1

Morning 6:15 Drama Everyday: Nirapad 6:50 My Channel-1 7:00 Six Million Dollar Man 7:40 Talk Show: Galpo Salpo presenter Abdullah Abu Syeed 8:05 Sasoy Bartha 8:15 Concord Sonali Jagot 9:00 Business File 9:50 I Focus 10:00 Read from holy Quran 10:10 Musical Show I Music 10:40 Manchok Lok 11:15 Drama Everyday: Nirapad 11:50 My Channel-1 12:00 Six Million Dollar Man 12:40 Talk Show: Galpo Salpo presenter Abdullah Abu Syeed 1:05 Sasoy Bartha 1:15 Concord Sonali Jagot 2:00 Business File 2:50 I Focus 3:00 Bangla Cinema: Chamaikar

Evening 6:00 Read from holy Quran 6:10 Musical Show I Music 6:40 Shipa Katha 7:15 Drama Everyday: Nirapad 7:50