

Gavaskar tries to clear name

PTI, Dambulla
Former Indian captain Sunil Gavaskar is taking appropriate steps to clear his name from the unsavoury controversy which has broken out back home about his alleged involvement in a case of financial irregularity.

"My people back home are trying to establish the facts before taking measures to deal with it," said the legendary opener who is here as a television commentator for the Asia Cup tournament.

Registrar of Companies in Ahmedabad, the capital of western state of Gujarat, has filed a complaint with the local police against Gavaskar and four other directors for having raised 46 million rupees out of a public issue for a clothes and shoe company but failed to issue dividends to subscribers out of it.

Gavaskar, looking cool and unperturbed, said he had resigned from his post as a director at least a decade back in the 90s.

"During my brief association with it, I hardly attended any meeting of this company. The thing to remember is that I wasn't an executive director who is involved in the day-to-day running of a company."

Deport Fischer to USA or not?

AFP, Tokyo

Japanese immigration authorities are examining whether detained former world chess champion Bobby Fischer should be deported to the United States, an official said Saturday.

"We are in the process of deciding on deportation... He was detained for violation of the immigration law but he can lodge a protest (with the justice minister)," said the official at the Narita immigration office.

Cases are often settled in days, but the process can drag on for weeks, said the official who declined to be named.

Fischer, 61, has been wanted by Washington since 1992 for breaking an international embargo on the former Yugoslavia.

He was taken into custody at Tokyo's Narita airport on Tuesday as he was preparing to catch a flight to Manila, according to Miyoko Watai, the head of the Japan Chess Association and a personal friend of Fischer.

The US State Department cancelled Fischer's passport last December, she said, adding that Fischer had been travelling between Asia and Europe, including Japan and the Philippines.

Positive in defeat

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Club ground in Colombo on Saturday:

PAKISTAN

Table with 4 columns: Player, Runs, Wickets, Overs. Includes Hameed c Mushfiq b Mahmud 102, Farhat lbw b Razzak 28, Malik run out 3, Inzamam st Mashud b Razzak 59, Youhana not out 29, Younis b Baisya 19, Razzaq c and b Rafique 5, Mooin not out 3, Extras: (lb-3, w-6) 9, Total: (For 6 wks in 50 overs) 257, Fall of wickets: 1-86, 2-91, 3-200, 4-200, 5-241, 6-248, Did not bat: Sami, Akhtar, Kaneria

Table with 4 columns: Player, Runs, Wickets, Overs. Includes Bowler O M R W, Baisya 10 0 59 1, Mushfiq 10 1 50 0, Razzak 10 1 37 2, Mahmud 10 0 56 1, Rafique 10 0 52 1

Result: Pakistan won by 76 runs.

Man-of-the-match: Yasir Hameed.

Toss: Pakistan.

Umpires: Brian Jerling (South Africa) and Gamini Silva (Sri Lanka).

Result: India won by 116 runs.

Man-of-the-match: Rahul Dravid.

Toss: India.

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No problem for India

AFP, Dambulla

Rahul Dravid smashed an impressive 104 and Irfan Pathan grabbed three quick wickets as India thrashed the inexperienced United Arab Emirates by 116 runs in an Asia Cup Group B league match here on Friday.

India were tottering at 65-3 after electing to bat in the day-night match on a slow pitch before posting a competitive 260-6 against the non-Test-playing nation, thanks to Dravid's ninth century.

Left-arm fast bowler Pathan then captured three early wickets in as many overs as UAE were bowled out for 144 after being 45-6 at one stage.

Scoreboard of the Asia Cup Group B match between India and UAE at the Rangiri International Stadium on Friday.

INDIA: 260 for 6 in 50 overs (Dravid 104, Ganguly 55, Kaif 32)

UAE

Saeed c Kaif b Pathan 12

Arshad c Dravid b Pathan 0

Usman lbw b Balaji 9

Nameuddin lbw b Pathan 0

Khan lbw b Balaji 5

Maqsood c Laxman b Zaheer 5

Asghar Ali lbw b Kumble 14

Tauqir Dravid b Tendulkar 55

Rehman b Tendulkar 1

Asad not out 9

Latif c Laxman b Tendulkar 0

Extras: (b-8, lb-1, nb-4, w-21) 34

Total: (All out in 35 overs) 144

Fall of wickets: 1-1, 2-26, 3-26, 4-29, 5-36, 6-45, 7-97, 8-121, 9-144

Bowler O M R W

Pathan 8 0 28 3

Balaji 8 2 28 2

Zaheer 8 1 42 1

Kumble 7 1 16 1

Tendulkar 4 0 21 3

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National U-20 Swimming July 20

UNB, Dhaka

The 21st National Under-20 Swimming Championships begin at the swimming pool of Borgra District Sports Association on July 20.

About 500 participants, of them 365 are boys and 185 girls, are to participate in the three-day meet.

Bangladesh Swimming Federation general secretary Shahabuddin Ahmed informed a press conference yesterday that sponsor Eastern Bank Limited will pay an amount of Tk 3,50,000 out of a total budget of Tk 8 lakh.

Shahabuddin also informed the reporters that they had a plan to hold a national long distance swimming championship on the River Dakatia in Chandpur next November.

Nepal Open chess

SPORTS REPORTER

Mehdi Hasan Parag and Debaraj Chatterjee secured 6.5 points each after the end of the ninth round games of the first Mechi Open International Rating chess tournament in Nepal.

Aminul Islam Polash, Arman Monir, Kazi Rashed Dinayet, Khorshed Alam and Farhadur Rahman Sabab earned six points each.

Indian International Master Atanu Laheri is leading the table with eight points.

The meet began on July 13.

Rios calls it a day

AFP, Santiago

Former world tennis number one Marcelo Rios of Chile has retired at the age of 28 due to a recurrent back problem.

"With great sadness, I confess that the time has come for me to leave tennis, my passion since childhood," said Rios, named the best Chilean sportsman of the century.

Rios hit number one in the ATP rankings for six weeks in 1998, becoming the first South American to do so. He won 18 singles titles and one doubles during his career.

"I don't know what I'll do in the future. For the moment, I want to rest, recuperate well, accept the idea of no longer being able to play and then think quietly about what I'll do," Rios said.

Finals of NFL

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group will enter the final round to be held at the Sher-e-Bangla National Stadium in Mirpur.

The Mymensingh round will end with a match between surprise package Sheikh Russel KC and Jhenidah Mohammedan on July 24 and then travel to Rangpur, Jessore and Chittagong.

GROUP A: Muktiyoddha Sangsad KC, Dhaka Abahani, Chittagong Mohammedan, Najirpara KC of Chandpur, Panchagarh Brothers Union and Kararchar KC of Narsingdi.

GROUP B: Dhaka Mohammedan, Dhaka Brothers Union, Dhaka Sheikh Russel KC, Jhenidah Mohammedan, Unmochan of Bagerhat and Bangladesh Air Force.

Abahani's midfield will rely on the tireless running of Joy, Rakib's creativity and playmaking skills of Ashqar Babu.

"Rakib is a proven fighter but he didn't do justice to his reputation in the Premier League. But he is now fully fit. Besides, our Ghanaian attacking midfielder Ibrahim will also join the team and that's good news for us."

Abahani frontline has got two promising live wires in Ujjal and Khokon. But the Dhanmondi outfit will need the goals of their Nigerian striker Colly Barnes to do the trick in the National League.

Abahani have been pencilled in Group A along with holders Muktiyoddha, Chittagong Mohammedan, Najirpara KC of Chandpur, Panchagarh Brothers Union and Kararchar KC of Narsingdi.

Khuram puts brakes

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on a slowpitch. The left-hander, playing his first one-day in 18 months, hit nine fours in his eighth half-century in 46 matches.

Gunawardene steadied the innings after the cheap dismissals of openers Saman Jayantha (18) and veteran Sanath Jayasuriya (21), adding 64 for the third wicket with Kumar Sangakkara (17).

Khan triggered a middle-order collapse when he dismissed Tillakaratne Dilshan (six) and Thilina Kandamby (four) to send the hosts reeling at 161-6. His third victim was Gunawardene, caught by Sameer Zia.

He was well-supported by fast bowler Ali Asad, who finished with 2-35 off 10 overs.

The UAE were also a bowler short for a major part of the innings as left-arm seamer Asim Saeed returned to the pavilion due to a sprained muscle after bowling just two overs.

The Sri Lankan batsmen still struggled for runs, especially against Khan who kept a tidy line and length in his impressive spell.

Jayasuriya, Jayantha, Sangakkara and stand-in captain Mahela Jayawardene (26) all failed to build on good starts.

Jayawardene slammed a run-a-ball 26 before being run out going for the second run. He led the team in the absence of Marvan Atapattu, who was rested along with left-arm fast bowler Chaminda Vaas.

The UAE are playing their sec-

Gaddafi plots Palace coup?

REUTERS, London

Libyan leader Colonel Muammar Gaddafi could buy promoted Premier League soccer club Crystal Palace, The Guardian says.

It said Gaddafi, who owns a 7.5 per cent stake in Italian club Juventus, has not made an offer yet but has shown interest in the small south London club that surprisingly won the promotion playoffs in May.

"I've been told that Gaddafi and his son (Al-Saadi) are interested in acquiring Palace," the Guardian quoted the club's chairman Simon Jordan as saying.

Jordan said there had been no formal approach but if there was "I'd consider it... If it's beneficial to the club it will be considered."

Having taken over the club four years ago when it was in administration and overseen a remarkable recovery capped by the team's unexpected promotion, Jordan has said he wants to quit but will only do so when the right buyer is found.

Jordan said there might be many people in Britain who would object to Gaddafi being involved in an English football club given the two countries' long enmity.

Ties between Britain and Libya warmed this year after the latter agreed to pay damages for the 1988 airliner bombing over Lockerbie, Scotland, which killed 270 people.

Palace last played in the premier league in 1998.

Murali woos

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going the law as it stands today," he explained.

Like Ian Chappell, Woolmer also urged to change the 'crooked law', which might deem that the actions of a lot of bowlers are not within the law.

Bahrain hold

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Hubail shocked China on 41 minutes with a superbly goal on the counter. The Bahrainis broke out swiftly after snuffing out a Chinese attack, and Talal Yusuf split the defence with a 40-yard pass to Hubail who looked offside.

China goalkeeper Liu Yunfei got caught in two minds after advancing off his line and could only palm the advancing Bahraini player's perfectly weighted lob into the net.

China led the field at half-time to howls of derision from their fans, but came out for the second half with all guns blazing to have the Bahrainis on the back foot immediately.

Bahrain keeper Ali Saeed was forced to clear after striker Li chipped down after 49 minutes before Zhou Ting saw his shot parried away two minutes later.

China's pressure got its reward on 59 minutes though when Yan Song forced a handball from Saeed Mahfood for the penalty.

Zheng buried his shot to Ali Saeed's left but was ordered to take the kick again by Malaysian referee Mohammed Salleh Subkhiddin. Zheng made no mistake with the second, chipping down the middle to level.

Buoyed by the equaliser, China continued to dominate and they were soon in the lead. Zhou strode purposefully into Bahrain territory before slipping a pass to striker Li, who rolled a neat finish past Ali Saeed.

China looked headed for victory but Bahrain refused to roll over and Ali led the home fans dumbstruck with just a minute left with a shot that flew past Liu.

Hiddink confirms German approach

AFP, Berlin

PSV Eindhoven's Dutch coach Guus Hiddink on Friday confirmed he had been in contact with the German football federation (DFB) about the German national team coach post.

The Danish football federation however made it known on Friday that they did not wish to release their national coach Morten Olsen who is many people's favourite to take over the role.

Hiddink told the Dutch press he had received an offer to succeed Rudi Voller who resigned on June 24, the day after the German team were knocked out of the Euro 2004 tournament in Portugal.

PSV Eindhoven president Harry van Raaij however said, according to Friday's Bild newspaper, he was not pleased that the DFB had not contacted him directly about Hiddink.

Kicker magazine reported Olsen as saying recently that to be coach of the German national team would be a very attractive proposition.

And Franz Beckenbauer, a World Cup winner in 1974 as captain and 1990 as coach, was quoted in Wednesday's Bild newspaper saying he expected the next coach to be a foreigner though he did not name names.

Scoreboard

Scoreboard of the Sri Lankan innings against the United Arab Emirates in Asia Cup Group B match at the Rangiri International Stadium on Saturday:

SRI LANKA

Jayantha b Maqsood 18

Jayasuriya lbw b Asad 21

Gunawardene c Zia b Khan 73

Sangakkara lbw b Zia 17

Jayawardene run out 26

Dilshan b Khan 6

Kandamby c Maqsood b Khan 4

Chandana b Asad 21

Zoysa c Zia b Arshad 21

Muralitharan b Khan 3

Malinga not out 5

Extras: (b-10, lb-4, w-10) 24

Total: (All out in 50 overs) 239

Fall of wickets: 1-39, 2-41, 3-105, 4-143, 5-151, 6-161, 7-190, 8-214, 9-222

Bowler O M R W

Asad 10 0 35 2

Saeed 2 0 15 0

Maqsood 7 0 60 1

Zia 10 0 44 1

Tauqir 10 1 34 0

Khan 10 0 32 4

Arshad 1 0 5 1

UAE: Khan, Saeed, Arshad, Usman, Naemuddin, Maqsood, Asghar, Tauqir, Zia, Asad, Rai.

Toss: Sri Lanka.

Umpires: Peter Parker (Australia) and Ian Howell (South Africa).

