

Pakistan come to India on Feb 25

AFP, New Delhi

Pakistan's cricket team will tour India from February 25...

"The Pakistan team will tour India from February 25 till April 18," Nair said.

Pakistan are scheduled to play three Tests and five one-day internationals...

They last toured India in 1999 when a two-Test series was drawn 1-1.

But bilateral series between the two countries were banned in 2000 by the Indian government...

Cricketing ties were resumed after a thaw in relations last year when India went to Pakistan...

MCC to help reconstruct Galle arena

AFP, London

Marylebone Cricket Club, the private members club that owns Lord's Cricket Ground, has pledged 25,000 pounds towards the reconstruction of the Galle Cricket Stadium in Sri Lanka...

The MCC has also agreed to hold a fund-raising event in Lord's famous Long Room later this year and announced plans to stage a match for disaster relief at the ground during the English summer.

MCC's secretary chief executive, Roger Knight, said: "Everyone has been shocked by the tsunami disaster -- and its scale."

"Now it is essential for the region to receive the resources needed for a full recovery; MCC is determined to play its part in this process."

Cricket has been in the forefront of efforts to relieve the suffering of victims of the tsunami with millions of dollars expected to be raised by a first all-star charity match between an Asian XI and a Rest of the World team in Melbourne on Monday.

Lara crushes

FROM PAGE 13

days that Hussey had taken full toll of the West Indian attack, having made an unbeaten 83 for Victoria in last Wednesday's game at the MCG.

Lara is set to miss Sunday's return match with Australia A here as he has to catch a flight to Melbourne for the tsunami disaster fundraiser game on Monday.

The Windies announced Saturday that Ricardo Powell would be flown in as the replacement for all-rounder Ryan Hinds, who is out of the international series with a groin injury.

What to watch

FROM PAGE 13

- ESPN FA Cup (Third Round) Arsenal vs Stoke City Live at 7:55 pm
Primera Liga Barcelona vs Villarreal Live at 2:00 am (Monday)
STAR Sports FA Cup (Third Round) Newcastle vs Yeading Live at 7:40 pm
Primera Liga Real Madrid vs Atletico Madrid Live at 11:55 pm

Inzamam still in doubt Ryan pulls out of Windies side

CRICINFO/APP, undated



Pakistan captain Inzamam will take a late decision on whether to make himself available for the VB Series against Australia and West Indies.

Inzamam missed the last two Tests against Australia because of back problems, but has responded well to treatment.

"I will decide then but I am trying my level best to be fit," he told the BBC website on Saturday.

"The muscular injury was hurting deep when I was bending to take stance or while I was running. Now the pain has eased out but I have to make the right calculation about my comeback because I can't afford to blow away my chances of touring

India in March."

Meanwhile, West Indies batsman Ryan Hinds Saturday withdrew from the triangular one-day cricket series starting next week with a groin-related injury, a team spokesman said.

Hinds sustained the injury in the opening warm-up game against Victoria in Melbourne on Wednesday.

He will remain with the team as officials explore the possibility of having his injury treated in Australia.

Batsman Ricardo Powell will join the team on Sunday as a replacement, the spokesman said.

Powell, who has a reputation as a tremendous fielder and hard-hitting batsman, was a member of the West Indies team that clinched the ICC Champions Trophy in England last September.

Inzamam has come under fierce criticism from former Pakistan players for his side's 3-0 defeat to

Australia. He scored only one run in his two innings at Perth last month, and Imran Khan, who was the captain when Inzamam first entered international cricket, condemned his attitude.

"I have the highest regard for him but I wish Imran had seen the medical reports," Inzamam said, responding to the criticism. "We are more disappointed and sad than our supporters because we are not as bad as the results reflect. We improved gradually but we played against the best team in the world in their backyard."

But Inzamam reckoned that some pride could be won back in the VB Series. "The players have been working extremely hard as they know this may be their last chance to win back the confidence and trust of their supporters. If we are a good and talented team, we have to perform well in this tournament."

"Several associations, notably Australia, England, Germany, Greece, India, Malaysia, Portugal, Romania, Spain and Turkey, have expressed a wish to arrange charity matches with a view to donating the revenue to the solidarity fund," FIFA added.

Soccer's world and European governing bodies, FIFA and UEFA, are to organise a "solidarity match" in February to help victims of the Indian Ocean tsunami.

"FIFA and UEFA, which has also pledged aid to the FIFA/AFC Tsunami Solidarity Fund, have decided to organise a solidarity match on a grand scale in a major European stadium in February," FIFA said in a statement released on Friday.

FIFA said the joint solidarity fund it had set up with the Asian Football Confederation (AFC) has already received several donations, adding that what it called the "football family's solidarity endeavours" are multiplying fast.

FIFA has already pledged \$2 million for the fund and the AFC another \$1 million to restore footballing infrastructure in the devastated region and to donate football equipment (balls, shirts, boots, goals etc) to the associations or their members.

"If we want to be in contention for the title at the end of the season, we have to keep doing what we have been doing. There is no reason for us

Law now a British

AFP, Manchester

Former Australian one-day international batsman Stuart Law, who plays county cricket for Lancashire, has been granted British citizenship after deciding to make his move to the United Kingdom permanent.

The 36-year-old has spent nine seasons in England spending six seasons with Essex before moving to Lancashire.

"I'm glad that it happened quickly and with no problems. I can now start the New Year and new season as an English player and hopefully in the long run benefit Lancashire," said Law.

Law has scored 23,000 first-class runs, with 68 centuries and at an average of 51.21.

He played just one Test for Australia but has also appeared in 54 one-day internationals.

'We can still win'

FROM PAGE 13

"I thought it was a bit drier than the wicket we played against India, which suggested it might spin. There are certain spots that do spin though, but not enough."

Whatmore however praised the effort of left-arm spinner Enamul Haque although he finished wicketless.

"I thought he was looking like the one to take wickets. He beat the bat more than anybody else but cricket is like that."

Bangladesh, a team used to playing on the back-foot, are now in the unusual position of going for the kill and Whatmore was the first to admit it.

"It was different and interesting to see how they reacted. I thought they stuck to their task well and hope that they will continue to do the right things in the next two days to enforce the right result," hoped a confident Whatmore.

SCOREBOARD

Scoreboard at stumps on the third day of the first Test between Bangladesh and Zimbabwe at the MA Aziz Stadium in Chittagong on Saturday:

Table with 2 columns: Team, Score. Bangladesh: First innings 488 (Bashar 94, Saleh 89, Rafique 69, Iqbal 56; Mpofti 4-109, Nkala 2-50). Zimbabwe: First innings (over-night 84-4).

Table with 2 columns: Player, Runs/Wickets. Bangladesh: Bashar b Baisya 28, Rogers run out 5, Sibanda lbw b Rafique 12, Masakadza b Mashrafe 29, Cremer lbw b Rafique 0, Taylor lbw b Mashrafe 39, Taibu lbw b Rafique 92, Chigumbura c Mashud b Rafique 71, Nkala not out 20, Hondo not out 0.

Srichaphan in Chennai final

REUTERS, Madras

Second seed Paradorn Srichaphan of Thailand reached his fourth consecutive final at the 400,000 dollars Chennai Open ATP tournament with a 7-6, 6-3 victory over Tomas Zib of Czech Republic on Saturday.

Asia's top player, winner here in 2003, wilted as the unfancied Czech hit a series of stunning backhand winners before clinching the first set tiebreak 7-5.

World number 27 Paradorn, however, found his rhythm in the second set to wear down the 28-year-old Zib, ranked 127th and playing his first semi-final in an ATP event.

The 25-year-old broke the Czech in the fifth game and went 5-3 up before converting his third matchpoint on Zib's serve.

"I was really happy to make it in the first set," Paradorn said. "He was returning just so well. His backhand down the line was really killing."

World number five Carlos Moya, the defending champion, faces fellow Spaniard Guillermo Garcia-Lopez in the second semi-final.

FIFA, UEFA to stage tsunami match

REUTERS, Zurich

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Barca keen on Kanoute

BBC ONLINE, undated

Barcelona have revealed they are considering a move for Tottenham's in-form striker Fredi Kanoute.

The La Liga leaders have been linked with Manchester City's Nicolas Anelka, but are now eyeing the 27-year-old.

Sporting director Txiki Begiristain said: "Kanoute is an option for the technical staff and coach to study, but nothing has been determined."

He told the Daily Star: "Kanoute is a good player and has a European passport which is a point in his favour."

But Begiristain admitted: "We have still not spoken with Tottenham about him."

Spurs boss Martin Jol, who is being linked with a renewed move Nottingham Forest, midfielder-mane Andy Reid, is unlikely to welcome

any approach.

Jol asserted recently that he was intent on keeping Kanoute, Jermain Defoe and Robbie Keane at the club.

Kanoute joined Tottenham from West Ham in August 2003 in a £3.5m deal.

"I am very happy that I have three strikers of such quality," said Jol. Despite being linked with Reid, Jol warned he may not move in the January market.

He said: "The way we improve is a big player - and if it's not on because it's too expensive or crazy money we don't do it and we have another crack with young players."

"If we buy someone else it's a replacement, so it's a problem if they start on the bench. No player wants that."

"With signing another striker, I can't go to a player and say 'Come sit on the bench'."

"We are looking at two or three players in the Championship. I had a look at a few very good young players last week."

PREVIEW: SERIE A Capello unfazed

AFP, Rome

Juventus coach Fabio Capello is not losing any sleep at nights, despite his team's loosening grip on top spot in Serie A.

Juve, who host Livorno on Sunday, were surprisingly held to a 1-1 draw by relegation-threatened Parma on Thursday, while defending champions AC Milan thrashed Lecce 5-2.

AC Milan have cut Juve's lead from six to two points over the last five games, but the ice-cool Capello remains unmoved by the growing threat of the title holders.

"We are still first and very much alive, so I'm calm," said the former Roma coach, who has won five Italian league titles as a coach.

"We are not worried if the team behind us has one point, two points or three points. I would be concerned if we weren't creating chances to win our own matches, but that has not been the case."

"If we want to be in contention for the title at the end of the season, we have to keep doing what we have been doing. There is no reason for us

Di Canio in hot water

AFP, Rome

Lazio captain Paolo Di Canio is to be investigated by the Italian football federation (FIGC) over an alleged fascist salute during his side's 3-1 victory over bitter city rivals AS Roma on Thursday.

According to witnesses and photographs published in the newspapers Di Canio extended his right arm to the Lazio fans who have a history of racial abuse and suspected fascist leanings.

Di Canio, though, strongly denied that he had intended to cause offence.

"It was only to celebrate," said the former Italian international. "I am a professional and my manner of celebrating has nothing to do with politics."

Lazio president Claudio Lotito defended Di Canio.

"Of course he celebrated quite forcefully but he did so within the laws of the game," said Lotito.

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to panic."

Juventus have not played Livorno in Serie A since 1948 when the teams played out a 2-2 draw. They have met on 12 previous occasions with Juve winning 10, drawing once and losing once.

AC Milan face a potentially tough examination away to Palermo, who have lost just one of their eight matches at their Renzo Barbera stadium in Sicily.

Milan's French international Vikash Dhorasoo is hoping to retain his place in Carlo Ancelotti's starting line-up after catching the eye with an energetic performance in midfield against Lecce.

Born in Harfleur, Normandy, Dhorasoo said he was always confident he would prove himself to be a good enough for the Italian champions after signing from French club Lyon in the summer.

"I wasn't scared of playing in a new league and I knew it was going to be tough, but I was also aware that I had to be patient," said the 31-year-old.

"I started a match for the first time on Sunday and I'll never forget that moment at the San Siro. I was satisfied with the victory, but also with my own individual perfor-

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West Indies captain Brian Lara in action against Australia A in Hobart yesterday.



Slovakia Daniela Hantuchova (R) and Dominik Hrbaty display the Hopman Cup trophy after beating Argentina in the final yesterday.

Slovakia clinch Hopman Cup

REUTERS, Perth

Daniela Hantuchova and Dominik Hrbaty had given Slovakia an unassailable 2-0 lead before they won the final mixed doubles via a walkover because of Guillermo Coria's sore back.

Former world number five Hantuchova recovered from a terrible start to beat Gisela Dulko 1-6, 6-4, 6-4 and put the third seeds ahead.

Hrbaty, who had not lost a set in his three singles matches in the group stages, then upset world number seven Coria 6-4, 6-1 to help erase the memories of 2004 when the Slovaks lost to the United States in the final.

"I would like to congratulate

second set littered with breaks to draw level.

Dulko had an early chance to break in the second game of the deciding set, but the contest stayed with serve until the seventh game when a double fault from the Argentine gave Hantuchova the vital break.

"I was so nervous because I really wanted to win for the team and for Dominik as he played so well all week," Hantuchova said.

"I didn't think I was playing my best but I just tried to hang in there and fight hard for every point for my country."

World number 14 Hrbaty was in imperious form as he sauntered past Coria in just 58 minutes.

The Argentine struggled with a sore back in the second set but Hrbaty showed no mercy in wrapping up victory with another backhand winner.

World number 31 Hantuchova, ranked two places above Dulko, had won two of her three matches in the run-up to the final but looked nervous as she dropped the first four games of the match.

Dulko, who had lost all three of her singles matches in the group stages, grew in confidence and took the first set in just 27 minutes before Hantuchova hit back in a

Slovakia won the Cup on their first appearance in 1998, when Karol Kucera and Karina Habudova led them to victory over France.

CROSSWORD By Eugene Sheffer

Crossword puzzle grid with clues for Across and Down. Includes a solution time of 24 mins.

CRYPTOQUIP

Cryptoquip puzzle grid with a solution key and a clue: Saturday's Cryptiquip: IF A PORCUPINE PLAYED VOLLEYBALL, YOU'VE GOTTA THINK HE'D BE FANTASTIC AT SPIKING.

Srichaphan in Chennai final

Text article about Srichaphan's victory in Chennai, including a quote from him: 'I was really happy to make it in the first set, Paradorn said. He was returning just so well. His backhand down the line was really killing.'