



Did U Know?

First modern Olympic Games were held in Athens in 1896.



Kapil Dev
(Former India cricket captain)
"Sourav Ganguly needs to prove to everybody that he still deserves a place in the team. It would be a big challenge for him."



SET Max
Australia vs World XI
Super Series Test, Day 4
Live at 6:30 am

ESPN
Sportscentre
Live at 8:30 pm

English Premier Football League
Charlton Athletic vs Fulham
Live at 12:55 am (Tuesday)

Kumble happy with Dravid selection

PTI, Chennai

Terming as "a good call" the selection of Rahul Dravid as Indian captain for the ODI series against Sri Lanka and South Africa, ace leg-spinner Anil Kumble on Sunday said the former would make good use of his ability to read the game situations.

"Dravid's appointment is a good call. He has been there for a long time and will make good use of his ability to read the game," Kumble, who was here on a promotional visit, told mediapersons.

"He has on occasions assumed the role of a captain and that should serve him in good stead," Kumble, who has been left out of the team for the first two matches against Sri Lanka due to an injury, said.

As for his injury, the seniormost player in the Indian team said "my injury is nothing to worry about. It is a small niggle on the back. With long season ahead, I did not want to take a chance. Everything should be fine very soon." On the potential of young twerker Piyush Chawla, he said "from what I got to see of him, Chawla holds a lot of promise and the coming first class season will throw more light on him."

Same old pool

Cricket

SPORTS REPORTER

The national selectors dropped the idea to increase the number of national pool players for the Dhaka Premier Division Cricket League.

The Bangladesh Cricket Board (BCB) announced a 20-member list yesterday although the Cricket Committee of Dhaka Metropolitan (CCDM) was keen on increasing the quota to at least 28.

"We thought there was no need to increase the pool because some players would be deprived. Only those who have played for national team in the last six months were included," said chief selector Faruque Ahmed.

"We thought if we increased the list then there was a chance that some players would struggle to find a team.

In fact, a few players have been out of cricket for so long that their last competitive game was a year ago.

"We tried our best to draw up a list that would be as friendly as possible. Our previous experience regarding the pool system was not a pleasant one. That's why I requested that the distribution be done carefully," said Faruque.

THE NATIONAL POOL

Habibul Bashar, Rajin Saleh, Javed Omar, Mohammad Ashraful, Manjarul Islam, Tapash Baisya, Mohammad Rafique, Khaled Mashud, Nafees Iqbal, Khaled Mahmud, Aftab Ahmed, Nazmul Hossain, Enamul Haque Jr, Tushar Imran, Anwar Hossain Munir, Mashrafe Bin Mortaza, Shahriar Nafees, Shahadat Hossain, Mushfiqur Rahim and Syed Rassel.

CCDM chairman Khondokar Jamiluddin said that they would not change the policy of clubs including a maximum of three players from the list.

"We had planned to increase the number to four but in the end we decided against it," Jamil said without elaborating.

Although there were 20 players in the list, eventually it will be short-listed to 15 as leading pacemen Mashrafe Bin Mortaza and Tapash Baisya are injured. On the other hand, fellow pacer Nazmul Hossain, left-arm spinner Enamul Haque Jr and wicketkeeper Mushfiqur Rahim will be busy with the Under-19 team during the meet.

The domestic competition will kick off on December 1 but before that the inter-club cricketers' transfer will be held from November 14 to 6.

Mashrafe back to training

Cricket

SPORTS REPORTER

Mashrafe bin Mortaza started his rehabilitation under the supervision of physio Paul Close on Sunday.

The paceman, who was sent back home in the middle of the Sri Lanka tour six weeks ago due to a stress reaction in his fifth vertebrae, arrived in Dhaka on Friday from his hometown Narail and began training to regain fitness at the Army Stadium yesterday in the morning.

"I am feeling much better now. When the team came back from Sri Lanka, I met trainer Stuart (Karppinen) and Paul, who gave me some suggestions to prepare myself," said Mashrafe, who turned 22 ten days ago.

"For about two weeks, I have followed those instructions. I had light running today to avoid any pressure on the point of pain. I have yet to know what future plans they have for me," said Mashrafe who was sidelined after

bowling just one delivery in the tour of Sri Lanka.

In a career plagued by injuries, Mashrafe -- whose latest stint of injury is one and a half months old -- had suffered two major blows, in New Zealand in 2001 and against England at home in 2003.

Dubbed Narail Express, he was out of the game for one and half years after tearing a ligament in a Test against England in Chittagong. He went through surgery and returned with steel-knees, which have not troubled him since.

Although the country's premier pace bowler is destined to miss the entire domestic season but experts hope that he would be fully fit by January next year, clearing him to play in Bangladesh's next international commitment, the Asia Cup in Pakistan in February 2006.

Paul Close, who was not available for comments on Mashrafe's present condition, had said in September that the bowler would need six to 12 weeks to full recovery.



World XI star Muttiah Muralitharan is ecstatic after taking the wicket of Adam Gilchrist of Australia on the third day of the Super Test at Sydney on Sunday.

McGrath warns pace rivals

BBC ONLINE, undated

Australia's Glenn McGrath believes it could be a long time before anyone surpasses his record for the number of Test victims claimed by a paceman.

McGrath took his total to 521 on the third day of the Super Test against the World XI in Sydney on Sunday.

And the 35-year-old said: "It will be tough to match. If you want to reach 500 you have to play 100-plus matches."

"With the amount of cricket we play these days, and the stresses of fast bowling, it can be very strenuous."

The veteran seamer bowled Graeme Smith for a duck in the World XI's second innings as they finished on 25-2, needing 330 more for victory with three days left.

McGrath does not expect the game to last beyond Monday and is confident of a home win.

No visiting team has scored 355 in the fourth innings to win a Test in Australia and the highest target achieved at the SCG was Australia's 276-4, chasing 274, to beat England in 1898.

"It's looking pretty much in Australia's favour at the moment. I think we are on top," he explained.

"It's going to be tough work for any batsman out there. If you look at the wicket, it is hard with the new ball and then the spinners come into their own."

Aussies collapse yet close to winning



AFP, Sydney

The World XI must face the twin leg-spin menace of Shane Warne and Stuart MacGill to conjure a come-from-behind victory against Australia in the Super Test at the Sydney Cricket Ground.

The world all-stars will have to battle against historical odds to pull off an improbable victory after they were set 355 runs Sunday to win the one-off Test on a turning SCG pitch with three scheduled days left to play.

No side has scored more than 276 runs to win a Test at the SCG since Australia faced England in 1898.

But the world side got off to a horror start, losing both openers Graeme Smith and Virender Sehwag inside the first six overs.

When bad light ended play 33 overs early, the World XI were 25 for two and still 330 runs adrift of an unlikely win. Rahul Dravid was not out 17 with Brian Lara yet to score.

Smith was bowled by the fifth ball of Glenn McGrath's opening over and in failing light MacGill coaxed a bottom inside-edge off Sehwag into Gilchrist's gloves for seven to send the world team reeling to 18 for two.

England's Ashes hero Andrew

MSC confirm three guest players

SPORTS REPORTER

Mohammedan Sporting Club have confirmed three guest footballers for the coming National Football League to make up for the absence of nine regulars.

The Black and Whites, who finished runners-up in the Premier Football League, have seven players in the national camp and two more in the under-20 camp.

Their new coach Shafiqul Islam Manik confirmed on Sunday the inclusion of veteran Wanderers striker Milton, Youngmen's Club Fakirerpool's young marksman Robin and Arambagh goalkeeper Shakil.

Although Shakil is also a member of the preliminary national squad but he is unlikely to get into the final squad ahead of senior custodians Aminul and Biplab.

One team will be able to recruit four guest players but Moha-mmedan have yet to confirm the last one.

A tame draw

SPORTS REPORTER

The two-day match between CAB (Cricket Association of Bengal) Under-17s and their Rajshahi counterparts ended in a tame draw at the Jagannath Hall ground on Sunday.

The opening match of the series was called off shortly after tea on the second and final day due to rain with the visitors, who were overnight 27 without loss, on 154-7 in their first innings. Kunal Chowdhury, who top-scored with 47 in the CAB essay after taking two wickets for 19 in the Rajshahi U-17s innings, was adjudged man-of-the-match.

New ball bowler Muktar Ali took 3-39 for the local side who were bundled out for 119 in their first innings.

Vaughan aware of the Pakistan task

Cricket

BBC ONLINE, undated

Captain Michael Vaughan says adjusting quickly to conditions in Pakistan will hold the key to England's chances.

The tourists have two three-day games to prepare for the first of three Tests in Multan, starting on November 12.

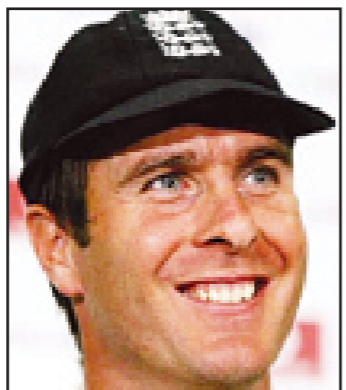
"We've got players who haven't played in the subcontinent and it does take a while to get used to the surreal conditions out there," Vaughan said.

"It's a different type of cricket and we're going to have to be at our best to get used to the conditions quickly."

England arrive on October 26 in a country coming to terms with the recent earthquake which has claimed more than 38,000 lives.

Vaughan is hoping his side can do their bit to help the relief effort by maintaining the positive style of play which has brought them six successive Test series victories, including the memorable summer triumph over Australia.

"Going to Pakistan now for me is



MICHAEL VAUGHAN

just a chance to hopefully put a few smiles on some of their faces," he explained on BBC Radio Five Live's Sportsweek programme.

"We've played some great cricket and we know how passionate they are about their cricket."

"It's going to be difficult but hopefully we'll get the chance to do a bit of fundraising while we're there, play

some good cricket and bring some joy to some of them."

The England skipper is well aware, however, of the task facing his team, and has urged them to put memories of Ashes glory to one side.

"It was great to play in and win but we have to move on now and try and play well in Pakistan," Vaughan added.

"Pakistan are a very talented team. Bob Woolmer has done a good job with them, got them playing well as a team, so it's going to be a tough challenge."

Vaughan also said he was happy to remain as England captain for as long as cricket chiefs and players wanted him in the job.

"I'm sure there will come a stage where the players would like to hear a different voice and like to have a different direction."

"When that is I'm not too sure but it is up to the players and the ECB to decide how long they want me to carry on."

"I would love to carry on for a while but it is not my decision. I'll stay for as long as they want me."

No spat between Sachin & Sourav

Cricket

CRICINFO, undated

Reacting angrily to a media report suggesting ego clashes between them, Sourav Ganguly and Sachin Tendulkar have sought an apology and also threatened to take legal action if such "misleading" reports

continue to be published in the future.

In a joint statement, the duo rubbished the media report, pertaining to Ganguly calling Tendulkar a "tourist" and the latter conveying to Kiran More, the chairman of the selection committee, his unwillingness to play under Ganguly's captaincy -- thereby pushing Rahul Dravid for the role.

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WE WANT TO HEAR FROM YOU

Dear Readers

As The Daily Star approaches its 15th anniversary, the Star Sport team would like to know your feedback on how to make the pages more attractive. So, for the next two weeks send us your suggestions, comments and even criticisms within 200-250 words to sports@thedailystar.net. We intend to publish them and wish your valuable views will enrich your favourite pages. The last date for submission of your comments is October 31.

-- Sports Editor



CAN'T TAKE CRICKET AWAY: Children in Muzaffarabad of Pakistan, devastated by last week's earthquake, enjoy some cricket at a refugee camp on Sunday.

PHOTO: AFP