



FAMILY TIED AGAIN: National captain Joy having a chat with manager Sayeed Hassan Kanan (L) and team leader Ashrafuddin Chunnun (R) at the BFF Bhaban on Tuesday before their departure to the Zia International Airport.

Asghar strikes secret deal

Aston Moore to broker future TV rights



BISHWAJIT ROY

When the Bangladesh Cricket Board (BCB) awarded WorldTel exclusive TV rights five years ago, allegations were made that it did not serve the best interest of the most affluent federation of the country.

The 11.75 million-dollar deal that saw a change of hand from WorldTel to ESPNSTAR Sports in the middle of the five-year contract is set to expire in April next year after Bangladesh's home assignment against Australia.

So, there is a definite sense of urgency in the hierarchy of the present board to ponder over a new television deal. It was however expected that the board unlike the previous occasion would be transparent in handling the most sensitive financial contract that provides the chunk revenue for them.

But, transparency, it seems is a distant reality following a 'secret'

deal that the board president has struck recently spreading rumours that the BCB was heading for yet another shady television deal.

According to a highly-placed source, BCB president Ali Asghar in July appointed Aston Moore Sports and Entertainment to broker future sponsorship and TV rights.

"This is to certify that Aston Moore Sports and Entertainment have been granted to act as the Bangladesh Cricket Board's Marketing Agent and as such will be responsible for the Cricket Board's interests in terms of negotiating Sponsorship, Television rights etc.

"They have been instructed by us to develop the commercial interests of the Bangladesh Cricket Board and as such any enquiries should be directed to Aston Moore Sports and Entertainment," read a letter signed by the BCB president on July 13.

The Malaysian-based agency, which has a local office in Banani, has enjoyed a brief association with the board during Bangladesh's tour of

England. Actually they played the role of 'service provider' and it was learnt they have paid 10,000 pounds to the board. Their activities during the England tour basically focused on media affairs.

But their recent deal with the BCB raised a few eyebrows firstly because the board did not bother to make it public like what they did before the Bangladesh tour in England.

Aston Moore did a decent job in handling the hostile English media, but the board offer of a bigger responsibility two weeks after the tour led to a lot of speculation regarding their undisclosed new role.

It is a prerequisite for the board to invite open applications if they want to appoint an agent. It was however not gathered whether the board had gone through a proper procedure while appointing Aston Moore, but not many concerned people inside the board were aware of the new deal.

"Definitely there should be an open tender when you want to appoint something like that. I wanted

to know but unfortunately I didn't know anything. It is best to call the board president to know about the matter," said BCB joint-secretary Reazuddin-al Mamun.

Mamun, who is also the chairman of the media committee, however looked totally in the dark about the new role of an organisation he was closely associated with during the Bangladesh tour of England.

Another BCB high-up on condition of anonymity said that they didn't know why the president chose the single agency for such a big job. "You should call the other agents to make a comparison and pick the best one. Actually we don't know what happened behind the scene," he added.

It was learnt that some BCB high-ups were desperate to settle the issue as soon as possible. But the board will have to wait till March next year for approval of the next FTP (Future Tour Programme) before sitting at the negotiation table for the new TV deal.

Div selectors named

SPORTS REPORTER

The Bangladesh Cricket Board (BCB) yesterday named the selection panels for six divisions to take part in the seventh National Cricket League.

The panels, comprising with four members including a team official, coach and the captain, will select their respective divisional teams for the country's lone first-class competition.

Each of the three national selectors will work for two divisions.

THE PANELS

DHAKA: Athar Ali (national selector), Abdullah Al Fuad (official), Sarwar Imran (coach) and Khaled Mahmud (captain).

BARISAL: Athar Ali, Asaduzzaman Khosru, Nurul Abedin Nobel and Shahriar Nafees.

CHITTAGONG: Faruque Ahmed, SEE PAGE 13 COL 1

Bon voyage booters



SPORTS REPORTER

A 30-member Bangladesh football team under the banner of 'BFF XI' left Dhaka yesterday afternoon to play in the Grand Royal Four-Nation Invitational International Football Tournament in Myanmar.

The defending SAFF champions were due to reach the Myanmar capital Yangon last night via Bangkok.

Bangladesh will begin their campaign against China on October 27 and meet the hosts on October 29 before rounding off against India in the last league match on October 31. The top two teams will play in the November 2

final.

Although Bangladesh are sending the national team as preparation for Asian Cup pre-qualifiers and the next SAFF Championship in Pakistan, Myanmar and China will however, field their Under-23 teams while India are sending the Under-20 squad.

Bangladesh's Asian Cup home and away pre-qualifiers against Pakistan scheduled for November 11 and 18, meanwhile have been deferred after the request of the quake-hit country. A new date will be given soon.

Although there was uproar only two days ago regarding who would accompany the squad as its officials, the departure was on the other hand peaceful after the

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Salahuddin ponders U-turn?

SPORTS REPORTER

Celebrated footballer Kazi Salah-uddin may reconsider withdrawing his resignation from the Bangla-desh Football Federation (BFF).

The former national captain and coach, who stepped down as BFF vice-president and chairman of the National Team Management Committee (NTMC) on October 20, said yesterday that he was happy with the BFF's decision to give the NTMC full freedom to work.

All the members of the NTMC quit following Salahuddin's resignation and the BFF, under criticism from all quarters, later vowed to respect the advice of the NTMC in future.

"I have read the statement given by the BFF and the president

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Tendulkar back & bangs India abase Sri Lanka by 152 runs



AFP, Nagpur

Sachin Tendulkar smashed 93 off 96 balls on his return from an elbow injury as India whipped Sri Lanka by 152 runs on Tuesday to take a 1-0 lead in the seven-match one-day series.

Irfan Pathan hit a career-best 83 and new captain Rahul Dravid stroked an unbeaten 85 off 63 balls to lift India to 350-6 from 50 overs in perfect batting conditions in the Vidarbha Cricket Association ground.

Sri Lanka managed only 198 in reply as off-spinner Harbhajan Singh grabbed three wickets in his first three overs and super-sub Murali Kartik polished off the tail with his left-arm spin.

Kumar Sangakkara's 43 was the top score for Sri Lanka, who were struggling at 126-8 before Chaminda Vaas (37 not out) and super-sub Dilhara Lokuhettige (29) delayed the inevitable.

Tendulkar, the world's most successful limited-overs batsman, showed no signs of the tennis elbow injury that kept him away from the game for six months as he plundered nine boundaries and two sixes.

The 32-year-old, playing his first international match since the April 17 one-day against Pakistan in New Delhi, did not look back after taking

two consecutive boundaries in seamer Farveez Maharoo's opening over.

Tendulkar, whose much-awaited return was watched by a sell-out crowd of 40,000 home fans at the stadium and millions on television, took his world record tally to 13,735 runs from 349 matches.

Left-hander Pathan, promoted to number three, revelled in his new role as a pinch-hitter by blasting eight fours and four sixes during a second-wicket stand of 164 with Tendulkar. The duo took the Sri Lankan attack apart in hot and humid conditions before both batsmen fell in successive overs trying to force the pace.

Pathan holed out to point off Tillakaratne Dilshan, while Tendulkar narrowly failed to increase his record haul of 38 one-day centuries when he edged Maharoo to wicketkeeper Sangakkara.

Dravid, who won the toss and elected to take first strike, hit eight fours and a six as India smashed 100 runs in the final 10 overs.

"It was a fantastic team effort," said Dravid, who was later named man of the match.

"Sachin and Pathan set the game for us nicely and the spinners bowled beautifully to win the match for us."

"But this is not the end. Sri Lanka are not the number two side in the world for nothing. There is a lot of tough cricket ahead."

Both Dravid and his Sri Lankan counterpart Marvan Atapattu paid glowing tributes to Tendulkar.

"It is great to have Sachin back," said Dravid. "His presence makes such a difference in the dressing room."

"The idea to send Pathan at number three was Sachin's and (coach) Greg Chappell agreed with the suggestion. I am glad I have Sachin in my side."

Atapattu said Tendulkar and Pathan took the game away from his team.

"You can't set a field for Sachin when he is in such a mood," the Sri Lanka captain said.

"The wicket was good for batting in the morning but deteriorated in the afternoon. We lost too many wickets early on."

The second match in the series will be played under lights in the northern town of Mohali on Friday.

SCOREBOARD

Full scoreboard of the first one-day international between India and Sri Lanka at the Vidarbha Cricket Association ground in Nagpur on Tuesday:

INDIA
Sehwag c Sangakkara b Vaas 20
Tendulkar c Sangakkara b Maharoo 93
Pathan c Jayawardena b Dilshan 83

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Rajshahi thrash CAB U-17s

SPORTS REPORTER

The Rajshahi Divisional Under-17 team recorded a thumping seven-wicket win over visiting CAB (Cricket Association of Bengal) U-17s in a limited-overs match at the Jagannath Hall ground on Tuesday.

Man-of-the-match Mysukur Rahman grabbed four wickets for nine runs in 5.5 overs to destroy the CAB batting for just 51.

Only number ten batsman Chandan Pal, reached double figures scoring ten after the West Bengal boys elected to bat in the 35-overs a-side match.

The Rajshahi outfit also struggled after openers Sharif (26) and Zakirul (11) put on 36 runs but managed to reach 52-3 in the 22nd over.

Simmons doesn't know what to do

AFP, Harare

Four days after being served a 24-hour deportation notice by the Zimbabwe immigration authorities, West Indian cricket coach Phil Simmons is still waiting to hear whether he must catch a plane out.

His lawyer Jonathan Samkange has spent his time since the notice was served on Friday trying to clarify the sudden order for Simmons to leave the country.

Simmons believes the deportation order originated from Zim-ba-bwe Cricket, the national controlling

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What to WATCH

ESPN
English Premier League
Newcastle v Sunderland
Taped version at 10am
Sportscentre
Live at 8.30pm

STAR Sports
English Premier League
Fulham Vs Liverpool
Repeated at 1pm

TALK TURKEY



Mike Atherton

(Former England cricket captain)

"In four things does Multan abound, dust, beggars, heat and burial grounds."

Summing up the challenge awaiting England's tour of Pakistan.

Vaughan's caution



AFP, London

England captain Michael Vaughan has insisted there will be no 'Ashes let-down' for his side when they play

Pakistan.

England's dramatic 2-1 home series defeat of Australia, the world's number one ranked Test team, gave them the Ashes for the first time in 18 years and inspired a huge surge in cricket's popularity in the land of its birth.

But on the eve of England's departure for a three-Test and seven one-day match tour, Vaughan told reporters at England's hotel here Monday that his side would have to be at their best to win in Pakistan.

There are only five survivors from England's successful 1-0 win in a three Test series on their last tour of Pakistan in 2000-01 - Vaughan, Matthew Hoggard, Ashley Giles, Marcus Trescothick and Andrew Flintoff - in the current squad and Vaughan said his team would have to adapt quickly to the conditions.

"It's a big challenge and opportunity

for the team to continue the progress we made in the summer," said Vaughan, a sight-screen pusher when England won five years ago in fading light in Karachi to clinch a dramatic Test and series win said.

"The last two years the England team has played some good cricket and the tour to Pakistan is really going to test our skills in conditions which some of the players haven't played in."

"There's only five of the squad that have played Test match cricket in the sub-continent so it's going to be a real challenge and a real exciting challenge."

"The Ashes are a massive goal and we attained that in the summer. It was great to play the cricket that we did in England. We're used to the conditions over here so we

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Pakistan ready for resurgent England

AFP, Islamabad

Pakistani captain Inzamamul Haq has vowed to save his country's earthquake wounds with an exciting Test series against a resurgent England, who arrive Wednesday on a high from their Ashes triumph.

"Cricket has been a great healer and we hope that both teams put on their best show to heal some of the wounds caused by the earthquake," Inzamam said from Lahore where the team is warming up in a training camp.

"The loss of lives is irreparable but what I appreciate is England's resolve to bring smiles back on our people's faces and my boys would not be left behind in the cause."

Pakistan suffered its worst natural disaster on October 8 when a massive 7.6-magnitude earthquake struck the north of the country, killing more than 53,000 people and leaving millions homeless.

England captain Michael Vaughan, who last month led England to its first Ashes win over Australia in 16 years, had vowed his side will do its best to bring smiles back to Pakistani faces.

The Pakistan Cricket Board (PCB) has donated 860,000 dollars for quake victims and will also give the gate money from the first one-day international in Lahore on December 10.

A trouble-free tour will also help to dispel concerns about security

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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