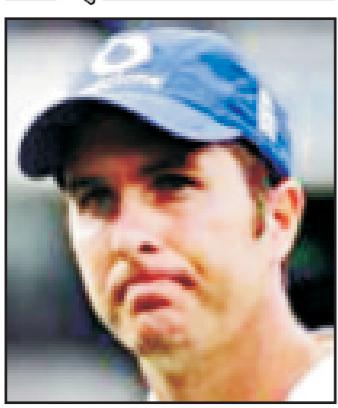




Did U Know?

Wasim Jaffer of India scored 116 runs in the first innings of the third and final Test against South Africa at Newlands on January 2. It was his third century, first against South Africa.



Michael Vaughan

(England cricketer)
"I feel ready. Mentally I am very fresh, which is important at our level. I believe I am a better person and I hope I will be a better player." After he was named in the one-day squad.



India Premier Hockey League
Orissa Steelers v Chandigarh Dynamos
Live at 5:00 pm
Sher-e-Jalandhar v Maratha Warriors
Live at 7:30 pm
Prima Liga
Zaragoza v Sevilla
Live at 2:55 am (Sunday)

STAR Sports

South Africa v India
Third Test, Day 5
Live at 2:00 pm

Sachin barred from batting at number 4

AFP, Cape Town

Star Indian batsman Sachin Tendulkar was prevented by match officials from batting in his usual position on the fourth day of the third and final Test against South Africa at Newlands Friday because he had been off the field at the end of South Africa's first innings.

There was a six-minute delay between the fall of India's second wicket and the arrival on the field of Sourav Ganguly.

As the delay lengthened there were boos from the crowd, while the South African players asked umpires Daryl Harper and Asad Rauf about the "timed out" rule whereby a batsman can be given out if he is not ready to face within three minutes of the previous wicket falling.

Cricket South Africa media officer Gordon Templeton said the explanation from match referee Roshan Mahanama of Sri Lanka was that Tendulkar had been ready to bat at his usual position of number four.

But because he had been off the field for 18 minutes at the end of the South African innings the previous day he was not permitted to bat until the same amount of time had elapsed at the start of India's innings.

With India losing their first two wickets within 12 minutes of the start of play Tendulkar could not bat.

"The match officials worked out that Sachin could only come out to bat at 10:48am," said Templeton.

The fourth official (South African umpire Murray Brown) only made it to the Indian dressing room the ball before (second man out) Wasim Jaffer was out."

With Tendulkar not permitted to bat, Ganguly had to get ready instead.

"According to the rules, Sourav Ganguly could have been timed out but because of special circumstances in that the fourth official got to the dressing room late he was not timed out," said Templeton.

Spotlight on Mashud

Selectors look beyond Zimbabwe tour



Cricket

SPORTS REPORTER

The Bangladesh cricket squad that will tour Zimbabwe to play four one-day internationals next month would virtually be the team for the World Cup to be held in West Indies in March-April.

So it would be more than just the selection for a single tour when Faruque Ahmed-led national selection panel sits to pick the side for Zimbabwe and the focus definitely would be on long-standing wicketkeeper Khaled Mashud, who has been almost an automatic choice over the last decade.

It had been evident that the selectors were confused about Mashud's services as they kept the veteran stumper in the squad for the last two games against Zimbabwe in the five-match series but sidelined him. After spending time inside the dressing room, he was then dropped for the two-match series against Scotland, although the selectors labelled it as rest.

Undoubtedly, Mashud is still unparalleled behind the stumps but the long-serving cricketer's batting has become a headache for the team management, especially after the just concluded Twenty20 Premier League, where he was rather off-colour.

The wicketkeeper holds a very important batting position in modern day cricket besides a specialised job and with Bangladesh transforming into a team that go for win rather than playing for 'face-saving', it would be necessary to put the right man at the right place.

The selectors have never cleared their positions about Mashud and there is hardly anybody to replace him. Chief selector Faruque says he is impressed by Mushfiqur Rahim – the selectors' blue-eyed boy – but the young wicketkeeper, by no means an exciting batsman, has so far not proved his worth with the gloves.

Faruque, however, was not interested to comment on this issue as he said that it was 'too early' to say anything.

"There is hardly any chance to see major changes in the team. But I think it is too early to say about any particular player. We will meet on Tuesday to discuss the squad for Zimbabwe," said Faruque.

"We should make a team for Zimbabwe tour which will likely be the World Cup team because reality is that the players will get only a week after returning from the trip," he said adding that they would announce the 15-member squad by the third week of this month.

"I won't say Mushfiq did a tremendous job in his few appearances but I must say he showed

signs that he has the ability to keep his place in the national side," observed Faruque.

So it is easily understandable that the coming Premier League matches would be a big challenge for Mashud, well-known for hard-work and dedication.

Although Faruque denied to comment on the Mashud issue, it was learnt that the board has been in favour of the Rajshahi stumper for his vast experience. The board high-ups are also not ready to take risk on the World Cup and the have sent the message home in a bid to avoid controversy.

The other major issue besides Mashud to be discussed during the selection meeting is whether they would pick a genuine seamer in place of all-rounder Forhad Reza.

Forhad, another Rajshahi man, glowed in his brief career but it seems that the right-arm paceman and a usefull-order batsman can only be effective on a favourable pitch.

"No doubt Forhad has done well so far and once again I can say it is too early to comment on any particular player. But it is true that we are thinking about including a genuine third seamer considering the conditions in the Caribbean," informed Faruque.

It seems that up and coming medium pacer Dollar Mahmud has a bright chance to get a national call.

India lose their grip



Cricket

AFP, Cape Town

India lost four wickets for 31 runs as their grip on the third and final Test against South Africa was loosened on the fourth day at Newlands Friday.

India were 121 for six at tea, an overall lead of 162.

Rahul Dravid and Sourav Ganguly put on 84 for the third wicket in a stand which seemed to be taking India a long way towards batting South Africa out of the match and ensuring at least a share of the series, which is tied at 1-1.

But then Ganguly (46) steered a catch to gully off Jacques Kallis and India's scoring rate dropped dramatically as left-arm spinner Paul Harris and seamer Shaun Pollock bowled tightly in tandem.

Dravid reached 47 before going down the wicket to Harris. He failed to get fully to the pitch of the ball and pushed back a simple catch.

VVS Laxman was needlessly run out when he was too casual in taking a second run. Pollock rifled in a return from the midwicket boundary and wicketkeeper Mark Boucher broke the wicket with Laxman's bat on the line, no more than a centimetre from safety. He was given out by television umpire Marais Erasmus.

Sachin Tendulkar, who was prevented from batting in his normal position earlier because he had been off the field too long at the end of South Africa's first innings, struggled for 88 minutes and 62 balls in scoring 14 before he was out in the last over before tea, adjudged lbw to a ball that reverse-swung sharply back into his pads.

It completed a poor afternoon for India, who scored only 48 runs for the loss of four wickets between lunch and tea.

India, starting their second innings with a lead of 41 runs, lost both opening batsmen in the first 14 balls of the day and then were told Tendulkar could not bat at number four after being off the field for 18 minutes at the end of South Africa's first innings Thursday.

There was a six-minute delay before Ganguly appeared on the field and he was almost out first ball.

when he edged Makhaya Ntini between third slip and gully.

But captain Dravid and former skipper Ganguly batted solidly to add 84 in 131 minutes.

India restored the hard-hitting Virender Sehwag to his opening batsman role in a sign that the tourists intended to bat positively in

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