



PHOTOS: AFP

THE PRINCE IS BACK: India's Sourav Ganguly (L) celebrates his half-century on return to one-day international cricket in the first match against West Indies while his rival batsman Shivnarine Chanderpaul wipes his brow following their defeat at the Vidarbha Cricket Association stadium in Nagpur on Sunday.



Did U Know?

Amir Sohail and Wasim Akram are the only left-handed batsmen to score double hundreds in Test from Pakistan.



Rafael Nadal
(Spanish tennis superstar)
"He's a very good player. He can be one of the best players in the world." On Britain's Andy Murray.



ESPN
South Africa v Pakistan
Second Test, Day Four
Live at 2:30 pm
Sportscenter India
Live at 9:30 pm
STAR Sports
Australian Open
Men's/Women's 4th Round
Live at 6:00 am

DAY'S EVENT
Premier Division Cricket League
Old DOHS v Abahani
Venue: Fatullah Cricket Stadium
City Club v Kalabagan KC
Venue: BKSP
Brothers Union v Indira Road KC
Venue: Dhanmondi Cricket Stadium

England one of Sourav's picks

BBC ONLINE, undated

Sourav Ganguly, who led India to the 2003 World Cup final, believes England are one of five teams with a chance of winning the World Cup this time around.

Ganguly, recalled to India's one-day squad after 16 months on the sidelines, told BBC Sport there was enough talent in the England side to go all the way.

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WC tickets sale slow

BBC ONLINE, undated

World Cup organisers have admitted that ticket sales are not going as well they would hope for, with just 50 days to go until the opening fixture in Jamaica.

And the hassle of obtaining the special visa has even led to cancellations. Josef Forstmayr, managing director of Round Hill Hotel and Villas in Montego Bay, Jamaica, gave the Miami Herald his version of the situation.

"This is the worst public relations nightmare the Caribbean has ever created for itself," he said.

Earlier in January, European tour operators, fans and Jamaican tourism workers criticised Caribbean leaders over the visa situation.

The Caricom visa is designed to allow easy travel from one host country to the next, plus Dominica, during the tournament.

Applicants must either walk in or post their passports to the nearest visa-issuing office along with 100 dollars -- and wait.

Both the Jamaica Hotel and Tourist Association (JHTA) and the

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Abahani challenge for champs

SPORTS REPORTER



Champions Old DOHS will face tough challenge to get back to winning tracks when they take on title contenders and leaders Abahani in one of three fifth round games of the Kai-Altech Premier Cricket League today at the Fatullah Cricket Stadium.

On their way to hat-trick title, DOHS suffered a four-wicket defeat in the previous round at the hands of giant-killers Kalabagan at the same ground while rejuvenated Abahani have won all their games to share the lead with Sonargaon Cricketers.

While the holders play the match in full-strength, their Dhanmondi rivals miss the services of skipper Khaled Mashud, all-rounder Manzarul Islam and opening batsman Nazmus Sadat -- all suffering injuries -- for the third consecutive outing.

The struggling City Club, under leadership of national vice-captain

Shahriar Nafees, will also try to put an end to their losing streak when they meet Kalabagan at BKSP.

City have won only one match out of four games compared to Kalabagan's two victories.

In the other match, bottom-table and pointless Brothers Union and Indira Road Kriya Chakra clash at the Dhanmondi Cricket Stadium.

The remaining fifth round games -- Biman v Partex (BKSP), Mohammedan v Pegasus (Fatullah) and Sonargaon v Victoria (Mirpur) -- are slated for tomorrow.

POINTS TABLE

Teams	M	W	L	Pts
Sonargaon	4	4	0	8
Abahani	4	4	0	8
Old DOHS	4	3	1	6
Mohammedan	4	3	1	6
Victoria	4	2	2	4
Biman	4	2	2	4
Young Pegasus	4	2	2	4
Kalabagan	4	2	2	4
City Club	4	1	3	2
Partex	4	1	3	2
Brothers	4	0	4	0
Indira Road	4	0	4	0

Kabaddi team fly today for WC

SPORTS REPORTER

Former national kabaddi captain Badshah Mia has been brought back from retirement to represent Bangladesh in the second Kabaddi World Cup to be held in India from January 24.

Although the Bangladesh Kabaddi Federation (BKF) had finalised the squad as early as the first week of January, veteran Badshah was a last-moment inclusion in the squad which leave Dhaka today.

Kabaddi legend Badshah announced his retirement in December after the Asian Games but he will replace injured Yunus Mia in the 14-member squad including ten players. Badshah, however, will depart by road due to this late development while the team fly.

The state of Maharashtra will host the four-day event with 16 teams participating in four groups. Defending champions India also hosted the first World Cup in New Delhi in 2004 where Bangladesh were eliminated by Iran from the semifinals.

Coach Abdul Jalil targets at least a semifinal berth for the under prepared side, which had to train on taekwondo mat.

Although the federation received the fund to buy synthetic mat for its court at the Outer

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Kolkata erupts

PTI, Kolkata

An air of jubilation pervaded the city as Sourav Ganguly made a perfect comeback to the one-day international team and giving a fresh spurt to the clamour among his fans for reinstating him as Indian cricket captain.

Since Ganguly crossed the half-century mark, fans were either seen shouting 'three cheers for Sourav' or sending sms to friends or at least having an animated discussion on the former India cricket captain's glorious innings.

As Ganguly got out at 98, the enjoyment was not totally unalloyed however, it gave a fresh spurt to the clamour for reinstating him as the Indian cricket team's captain.

"India will win the World Cup only if Sourav is the captain; it is as simple as that," said former first class cricketer and cricket coach Raju Mukherjee.

"A fifteen month hiatus from one-day internationals has only bolstered his hunger for runs and Dada will make the difference in India's World Cup quest," said Monotosh Roy, an 82-year-old avid cricket fan, who appeared as confident as Ganguly was in the crease at Nagpur this morning.

But a large section of the city's fans had to be content with seeing live scores on news channels and not the action at Nagpur owing to failure by a number of cable operators to beam 'Neo Sports', which is telecasting the match.

Angry cricket fans could be seen in front of cable tv offices in different parts of the city.

"Our cable operator's office is closed and his mobile is switched off. He is going to lose business due to this. We have several options to choose from," said S B Chatterjee, one such person waiting anxiously to see some of the live action.

Ganguly guides India



AFP, Nagpur

West Indies opening batsman Shivnarine Chanderpaul smashed a robust century, but failed to stop India from posting a thrilling 14-run win in the first one-day international here on Sunday.

The left-hander cracked an unbeaten 149 for his fifth one-day hundred before the West Indies were restricted to 324-8 in reply to India's challenging total of 338-3 on a batting pitch.

India were indebted to Sourav Ganguly for posting their highest total against the West Indies as the left-handed opener celebrated his comeback with a superb 98.

The former Indian captain, playing his first one-day in 16 months, hammered three sixes and 11 fours in his 110-ball knock to help the hosts surpass their previous best total of 325-5 against the West Indies.

The 32-year-old Chanderpaul threatened to ruin Ganguly's day

with a gem of an innings, which came off 136 balls with the help of three sixes and 16 fours. He was named man of the match.

The West Indies matched India in the early stages when they raced to 80 in 12 overs, thanks to Chris Gayle who punished the pacemen with a wide range of shots to hit 10 fours in his 46-ball 52.

The run-rate declined after the dismissal of Gayle, caught in the slips by India skipper Rahul Dravid off spinner Harbhajan Singh. The spinner struck again when he bowled Runako Morton to reduce the West Indies to 102-2.

Chanderpaul sustained the West Indies' hopes, but the asking-rate kept climbing as they needed an exact 100 to win in the closing 10 overs with seven wickets in hand.

Skipper Brian Lara scored a brisk 31 before falling in a bid to step up the run-rate. India then looked in control despite Chanderpaul's heroics.

India's batting flourished in the morning session, much to the delight of a sizeable Sunday crowd. Ganguly and Gautam Gambhir (69)

put their team on course for a big total with a 144-run stand for the opening wicket.

Wicketkeeper-batsman Dhoni (62 not out) and Dravid (54 not out) built on the openers' efforts, exploding with a flurry of boundaries to add 119 vital runs for the unfinished fourth wicket in the closing 11.5 overs.

Lara's decision to put India in to bat after winning the toss failed to produce instant results as his team had to wait for nearly 25 overs for the first success.

Off-spinner Gayle provided the breakthrough when he had Gambhir caught cutting by Marlon Samuels. Gambhir, playing his first one-day after nine months, hit 10 fours in his second half-century.

But there was no stopping Ganguly, who batted with authority against both seamers and spinners. His aggressive knock helped India maintain an impressive run-rate from the beginning.

Ganguly put on 70 for the second wicket with Sachin Tendulkar, a specialist opener batting at the

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PHOTO: AFP

South African batsman Jacques Kallis (R) executes an on-drive as Pakistani wicketkeeper Kamran Akmal watches on the third day of the second Test at St George's Park in Port Elizabeth on Sunday.

Pakistan need 183 more



AFP, Port Elizabeth

Mohammad Asif and Danish Kaneria wore down the resistance of South Africa's batsmen and gave Pakistan a chance of gaining a series-levelling win on the third day of the second Test at St George's Park Sunday.

Needing 191 to win, Pakistan were eight for no wicket at the close.

Opening bowler Asif took five for 76 and leg-spinner Kaneria claimed four for 105 as South Africa were bowled out for 331 in their second innings.

Jacques Kallis made 91 for South Africa. No other batsmen could make a half-century although there were useful contributions down the order, including a last wicket stand of 41 between Andre Nel and Makhaya Ntini.

Asif, Kaneria and Mohammad Sami had to carry a heavy bowling

load because of the absence of injured fast bowler Shoaib Akhtar.

Asif sent down 38 overs and Kaneria 51.2, while the less successful Sami bowled 29.

The two key spells of the innings were bowled by Asif, who dismissed both South African opening batsmen on the second day and took the crucial wickets of Kallis and Herschelle Gibbs (40) in a 10-over spell with the second new ball Sunday.

Ashwell Prince was the only batsman dismissed on a morning which yielded 76 runs in 32 overs. Prince was leg before to Kaneria for 22 in the fifth over of the day.

Kallis and Gibbs batted well to put on 78 for the fifth wicket before Asif struck after lunch.

In an over in which he had already had two leg before appeals and beat Gibbs with a ball which went over the top of his stumps, Asif dismissed Gibbs when the batsmen edged a drive low to

Younis Khan at second slip.

Asif followed up with the prize

wicket of Kallis, who was leg before to a ball which cut back in to him to end a 294-minute, 226-ball innings.

Pakistan could have been in a stronger position if Kallis had been caught by wicketkeeper Kamran Akmal off Kaneria when he had 63. At that stage, 19 overs into the day, South Africa were only one run ahead.

South Africa's last two recognised batsmen, Mark Boucher (46) and Shaun Pollock (36) put on 80 in the best partnership of the match before Kaneria took a return catch when Pollock mistimed a drive seven balls after tea.

Boucher followed five overs later when he edged a drive against Asif to slip. Paul Harris was soon smartly caught at short leg off Kaneria but Nel and Ntini went for their shots and frustrated the tiring bowlers before Ntini was caught at cover off Kaneria.

Shoaib Akhtar, whose four wickets were a major factor in

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stumps were broken, but was given not out by the third umpire.

Clarke had another life on 42, Franklin the frustrated bowler this time as wicketkeeper Brendon McCullum could not hang onto an inside edge standing up to the stumps.

Those crucial errors enabled Australia to recover from 77 for four, with Clarke and Hussey putting on 90 for the fifth wicket to put

their side within reach of victory.

Once again, the unflappable Hussey did the job for Australia in the final overs as the Black Caps paid the price for dropping a specialist bowler to strengthen their batting.

The victory, which means Australia has won 18 of its last 20 limited-overs matches against New

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PHOTO: AFP

Australia's Michael Hussey (R) and Stuart Clark walk off the ground after Australia beat New Zealand in their one day international at the Sydney Cricket ground on Sunday.