

First Div Cricket transfers today

SPORTS REPORTER

Players' transfers for this season's First Division Cricket League will begin at the Bangabandhu National Stadium today.

A total of twenty teams are expected to participate in the bourse which will run till January 26.

Last year's Second Division promoted teams Sadharan Bima and BKSP are the additions to this year's competition along with Premier League's relegated sides Agrani Bank and Orient Club.

Sidhu given reprieve

AFP, New Delhi

India's Supreme Court decided Tuesday to stay the imprisonment of cricketer-turned-politician Navjot Singh Sidhu, sentenced to three years in jail for killing a man in an outburst of road rage.

The ruling, which means Sidhu is a free man until his appeal against the sentence is heard, also means he can seek re-election to parliament as an MP representing the Sikh pilgrimage city of Amritsar next month, the Press Trust of India said.

After his conviction in December, Sidhu had resigned his seat "on moral grounds", but said Tuesday he intended to re-enter parliament even though his legal woes were far from over.

In addition to his pending appeal, relatives of the victim are also demanding that his sentence be increased.

The case against the flamboyant Sidhu dates back to 1988 when he dragged an elderly man out of his car and showered him with blows after a road accident.

Shabbir on way to South Africa

AFP, Port Elizabeth

Pakistan captain Inzamamul Haq said Monday that fast bowler Shabbir Ahmed was on his way to South Africa as a replacement after serving a one-year ban for having an illegal bowling action.

But Inzamam refused to confirm a report from Pakistan that injured fast bowler Shoaib Akhtar had been fined after a public confrontation with coach Bob Woolmer during the second Test in Port Elizabeth.

"It is an internal team matter," said Inzamam. He also said a final decision would only be taken Monday night about Shoaib and fellow injured bowler Umar Gul returning home. "We'll decide tonight. The doctor's report is coming and then we will decide."

Anxious hours

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injury while the experienced Tapash Baisya and rookie Dollar Mahmud are also in consideration. In that case the axe will fall on all-rounders Forhad Reza and left-arm pacer Saeed Rasel.

The team will be officially announced tomorrow.

Mohammedan

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BIMAN: 134 all out in 43.3 overs (Javed 14, Raqibul 9, Mosharraf 14, Nafis 15, Jahan 0, Sanwar 19, Farhad 1, Sajid 9, Murad 11, Rasel 2, Moshed 1, extras 39, Dipujal 1-35, Azim 3-46, Rezaul 5-17, Rashed 1-9).

PARTEX: 138-5 in 42.2 overs (Aslam 8, Rajin 51, Tariq 6, Raqibul 7, Neeyamur 0, Rashed 48 n.o., Rezaul 8 n.o., extras 10, Rasel 1-21, Moshed 2-20, Murad 1-32).

Result: Partex won by five wickets.

Vaidisova sets

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through, it feels great," she said. "It's great for Czech tennis to have two quarter-finalists, one in the semis. Of course you don't want to play your friend but I'm just happy I got through it."

Sinking feeling

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felt bad for the way I was playing. You know, he didn't want to show me up or something.

"We won't talk about the match. We talk about what 25-year-olds talk about, I guess."

"We never really talk about tennis until right before. We had a joke or two right before we were walking out on the court, then it's business. We're both professionals."

Serena not egotistic

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the tennis court in the process of eliminating highly-rated 11th seed Jelena Jankovic.

"When I go out to play I like to go to the person's stronger side," she said.

"I guess it makes me feel macho or something that if I beat them going to their backhand or whatever, their stronger side, it makes me feel extra awesome."

"But I just wanted to get the match over with and not have to show off too much."

Gibbs trial today



Cricket

AFP, London

Herschelle Gibbs's appeal against a two Test match-ban imposed upon the South Africa batsman for "racially offensive" comments during the first Test against Pakistan, will be heard on Wednesday via teleconference, the International Cricket Council (ICC) said in a statement issued from its Dubai headquarters on Monday.

Gibbs's case will be heard by Richie Benaud, now one of cricket's most well-known broadcasters, in the former Australia captain's capacity as an ICC appeals commissioner.

The teleconference will also involve Gibbs, his legal representative, ICC match referee Chris Broad and a legal representative acting on his behalf. The global governing body's in-house lawyer Ursavi Naidoo will also be present on the call in an administrative capacity.

Benaud, under the terms of the appeals procedure, has seven days in which to hear and determine the appeal.

As his appointment was confirmed on January 18, the appeal

will be processed before the Friday start of the third Test between South Africa and Pakistan in Cape Town.

Benaud has complete discretion to increase, reduce, amend or

A black and white portrait of Herschelle Gibbs, a South African cricketer, wearing a cap and a dark jacket, looking slightly to the side with a serious expression.

HERSCHELLE GIBBS

insults, humiliates, intimidates, threatens, disparages or vilifies another person on the basis of that person's race, religion, colour, descent or national or ethnic origin."

The charge, laid by ICC chief executive Malcolm Speed, relates to an incident that took place shortly before the lunch interval on the fourth day of the first Test in Centurion earlier this month, when Gibbs's comments regarding Pakistan supporters were overheard through a stump microphone on the ground.

At a hearing conducted by Broad after the Test, which South Africa won by seven wickets, Gibbs apologised for his remarks but pleaded not guilty to the ICC charge.

Conflicting reports of the incidents, which led to Gibbs's remarks, have been published in South African newspapers.

The three spectators, who were moved from seats near the boundary after allegedly swearing at bowler Paul Harris, claim Harris swore at them.

But other spectators say the Pakistani supporters were abusive and made watching the game unpleasant for people sitting near them.

substitute the original verdict and his decision is final and binding.

The ICC's announcement came after Pakistan levelled the series at 1-1 earlier Monday with a five-wicket win in the second Test in Port Elizabeth.

Gibbs was found guilty of a Level 3 offence under the ICC code of conduct which prohibits using "any language or gestures that offends,



PHOTO: AFP

CALLING FOR HELP? West Indies captain Brian Lara speaks on his mobile phone prior to the start of a training session at the Barabati Stadium in Cuttack on Tuesday.

WI sweat

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Asked about the batting order, Dravid replied that it would be based on the situation. In the first game, Sachin Tendulkar and Mahendra Singh Dhoni were promoted ahead of him. "It all depends on the start and the situation of the game. There is nothing fixed about the line-up."

The game will be played under lights, and there's a feeling the dew could prove to be a factor. "The dew will be a factor but how much we don't know. The locals were saying that there was a lot of dew the day before but not much yesterday (Monday). We have to manage in whichever way we can."

Would India prefer chasing because of the dew factor? "We do not have a problem with either chasing or setting a target," Dravid said. "I don't decide whether we have to chase or bat first. We look at the wicket and decide what will be the best thing to do on that wicket. We will see the wicket tomorrow (Wednesday). It looks a bit dry today (Tuesday) but we will see how it is on match day after probably some watering and rolling today (Tuesday)."

Dravid also announced that Sourav Ganguly, who didn't take the field in the West Indian innings on Sunday, was fit and will play on Wednesday. Ganguly had a strap around his left elbow in the nets session but looked pretty fluent while batting, and confident enough to ask the fastest nets bowler to have a go at him. Sachin Tendulkar changed the team's thinking.

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