



Did U Know?

The first ball in the World Cup history was bowled by India's Madan Lal to England's Denis Amiss at Lord's on June 7, 1975.



S Sreesanth

(India pace bowler)
"It is a dream come true for me. It is God's grace. It is really a great opportunity for me to do well."

After being named in the Indian squad for next month's World Cup.

Big win for Rasulpur

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Sathkira

PN High School and Rasulpur High School won their respective zonal matches in the Standard Chartered Young Tigers National School Cricket Tournament here yesterday. PN School defended a small 112-run total to beat Palli Mongol School and College by 40 runs at the Sathkira stadium.

At the Sathkira Government College ground, Rasulpur bowled out Palashpole for 99 in a huge 173-run victory.

On Tuesday, Pole Star Poura School defeated Rashida Begum School by four wickets.

GP Pacer Hunt in Barisal

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Barisal

The Barisal leg of the Grameenphone Pacer Hunt programme to find fast bowlers concluded at the local stadium yesterday.

About four hundred pacers participated in trial round with Kamrul Islam Rabbi hitting 76 kilometres, followed by Imamul Islam, Asif Talukdar and Sajedul Islam at 75k.

Former national team coach Imran Sarwar conducted the programme.

ACSU to ensure fair World Cup

PTI, Port of Spain

The International Cricket Council's Anti-Corruption and Security Unit (ACSU) will ensure the World Cup in the West Indies next month is free of match-fixing or other corrupt practices.

ACSU members will be present at the event venues as a precautionary measure as per ICC's zero-tolerance policy regarding corruption in the sport.

"There will be 'stringent measures in place to deal with any suggestions of corruption during the tournament which begins in three weeks with Warm-up matches," ICC Chief Executive Malcom Speed said.

"The ICC Anti-Corruption and Security Unit will be here in force. Its members, both the investigators and the Regional Security Managers, attend events such as this. They don't seek to attract attention to themselves but they will be here," he said told reporters in Trinidad.

The ACSU, which is staffed by former senior police officers from around the globe, will be monitoring any inappropriate activity surrounding CWC matches and following up on anything that appears to contravene the ICC Code of Conduct.

"That will be their focus throughout the Cricket World Cup," said Speed, revealing that millions and even as much as USD 1 billion in worldwide bets could be at stake per match if certain teams clash in ICC CWC 2007. PTI

Mashud not lost



Cricket

MOHAMMAD ISAM

Khaled Mashud welcomed the decision when he was asked to sit out the last two matches of the Zimbabwe series at home. Without asking too many questions, he let a young turk play. Again, just before the Scotland series in December, the same was asked of this man.

You are not indispensable, so take 'rest', the Bangladesh team management told him at that time.

For a man who has been standing behind the wicket for the past twelve years, even to ask him in this manner was unjustified. But Mashud did not ask any questions, rather thought that it was quite logical since it was wise to give young Mashfiqur Rahim a chance to play at the top level so that the baby-faced cricketer from Bogra can fit into his gloves.

But he never thought that his unconditional loyalty to the selectors would bring so much pain that he had ever endured in his luminous career.

"When I was injured during that league match against Biman (last month) at BKSP, I thought that it would be a big risk (to play in Zimbabwe) since I was assured of going to the World Cup," said Mashud while bearing his soul to a few reporters at a tranquil Dhamondi Cricket Academy ground yesterday, a day after the selectors omitted him from the World Cup squad.

"The biggest surprise for me was that I was rested from playing at home just so that a young player could get acquainted with the international scene. Now, I am not going to the World Cup.

"I must say that whoever has held my league performance against me, does not cover domestic cricket. When I play for Abahani, I cannot use those premier league matches just as my springboard to get into form. Playing for a big club like Abahani is very important so I just cannot play at four or five to get a big innings under my belt. I prefer playing for my team rather for myself," said the 31-year-old while responding to criticism that his domestic performance was not up to the mark.

Chief selector Faruque Ahmed and Co. might have considered his non-performance or to say the least his non-appearance as an excuse to chop him. But forget his recent form.

Just like every team he has represented so far in his career, he has added more than just the physical self. He knows how to motivate players in different situations and

also is a master at distracting the opponent. Experience of playing against all international teams could have been handy but the selectors decided otherwise – they went for a plus-minus approach when it came to carrying experienced players.

"Honestly, calling up Javed (Omar) is somewhat correct but he should have been given time to settle in. There was ample opportunity for the team to test him out once more, over the last two months," said Mashud.

He however said that he was shocked to learn that Rajin Saleh was being considered as a second wicket-keeping option. He refused to be drawn into any other talk about the selection.

Despite all the pain he is going through at the moment, he said that he felt better after the support he received from former players and the people of the country, particularly in his hometown Rajshahi, ever since news broke that he is not going to the biggest cricket tournament.

"The support from former players

and captains has given me a lot of hope. They are all on my side and the amount of support I have received from the public has made me realise, over the past 24 hours, that I am not lost yet," he admitted.

"I am not lost to cricket. I am not lost as a cricketer."

But three former cricketers decided to disagree with the rest of the country and that has nailed his exclusion from the national side.

Was it a personal issue with chief selector Faruque then? Whispers are that Faruque's role in the Reebok commission affair back in August is in the root of all the trouble. Apparently, Faruque solely blames Mashud for blowing up the secret.

Decency was also missing when only coach Dav Whatmore informed this big name about his omission.

"Dav was kind enough to inform me that I was not considered for the

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PHOTO: COURTESY

NOT SO RELAXED AT HEART: Discarded national player Khaled Mashud gives a blank look as he faces the media at the Dhamondi Cricket Academy yesterday for the first time since his omission from the World Cup squad.

Rain ruins NCL resumption

SPORTS REPORTER

The sixth round of the Ispahani Mirzapore Tea 8th National Cricket League began yesterday without a ball being bowled on opening day of all three four-day matches due to unexpected rain across the country.

The country's only first-class competition resumed after over two months' break due to the staging of the first-leg of the Premier Cricket League in Dhaka.

Hosts Rajshahi are taking on Chittagong, Barisal facing Sylhet at the Fatullah Cricket Stadium and Dhaka are pitted against Khulna in their away match.

ICC president nominees to be weighed

CRICINFO, undated

The International Cricket Council Nominations Committee was to meet in Dubai on Wednesday to discuss the nominations of Sharad Pawar and David Morgan for the post of the next ICC president.

In what is the first of a three-step process, the committee will make its recommendation to the ICC Executive Board, which meets at Cape Town on March 1.

On the basis of what the committee suggests, the board will make its own recommendation, which will be taken into consideration for the final voting at the annual conference at London in June.

Voting rights are unequally divided among the 10 full members, 32 associate members and 55 affiliate members of the ICC. A nominee must secure at least a two-thirds majority among the full

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Faruque lied!



Cricket

TIGERCRICKET.COM, undated

It is a mystery for seaming all-rounder Mohammad Sharif why he is not in the World Cup squad that was announced on Tuesday.

"I was extremely hopeful even

last (Monday) night that I was going to the West Indies. But the chief

selector (Faruque Ahmed) called me in the morning to tell me that I was not in the side because of my injury," said Sharif, who had been recalled to the national side after England A if I am selected and hopefully I will make a comeback for the national team sooner rather than later."

Mehrab Hossain, the 19-year-old opener, took his exclusion sportingly but admitted that it was unexpected.

"I could not perform in the last series but before that I thought I had formed a good opening pair with Sharif Nafees in the home series against Zimbabwe and Scotland. So it came as a shock to me. But I believe the selectors chose the squad for the greater interest of the country. Now my job is to concentrate more on my work and hopefully I will return shortly," responded the left-handed opener.

NOTICE

Dear readers, if you have something to say about Bangladesh cricket team selection for the World Cup, please write a short email and send to sports@thediarystar.net. We will publish your comments the next day you send it. The deadline to send your mail is 8pm everyday.

-- Sports Editor

LOCAL SNIPS

SPORTS REPORTER

The England A cricket team were scheduled to arrive in Dhaka in the early hours of today to play two four-dayers and three one-day matches against their Bangladeshi counterparts.

The second string English side, who have five players with ODI experience, will launch their campaign with a three-day warm-up match against BCB Academy team on February 17 at the Mirpur Sher-e-Bangla National Stadium.

The first Test (4-day) will begin from February 22 at the same venue and the second four-day will take place at the Shaheed Chandu Stadium in Bogra from March 1.

The three limited-over games are scheduled for March 7 (Bogra), 9 and 11 (Mirpur).

Squad: Michael Yardy (captain), Stuart Broad, Michael Carberry, Nick Compton, Steven Davies, Will Jefferson, Amjad Khan, Alex Loudon, Graham Onions, Matthew Prior (wicketkeeper), Adil Rashid, Tom Smith and Tim Bresnan.

SCHOOLS CRICKET

A hurricane half century by Anik guided Monipur High School to a 53-run victory over Kalshi Islamia High School in the Standard Chartered Young Tigers National School Cricket Tournament at the East End Club ground yesterday.

Anik smashed a 39-ball 89 as Monipur scored 160-8 in the stipulated 20 overs. Kalshi were bundled out for 107 in 13.3 overs.

Sourav Ganguly made 48 to boost the score before David and Mahendra Dhoni (67 not out) sealed India's win with a fifth-wicket stand of 133.

David was unlucky to be run out four runs short of victory when bowler Malina Bandara deflected a hit from Dhoni on to the wicket.

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