



12 DAYS TO GO

SL want to repeat '96

AFP, Colombo

Sri Lanka's cricketers want to play aggressive cricket, like they did in 1996, to secure their second World Cup success, captain Mahela Jayawardene said Monday.

"We have been playing a pretty exciting brand of cricket in the past couple of years, as our results have shown," Jayawardene said ahead of his team's departure for the Caribbean, where the World Cup opens on March 13.

The key to winning the World Cup, according to the captain, lay in being aggressive with both bat and ball, as Arjuna Ranatunga's Sri Lankans were when they won the title in 1996.

Asked who would pose the biggest challenge in the West Indies, Jayawardene said he would never underestimate the Australians, despite their recent run of five consecutive one-day defeats.

Sri Lankan coach Tom Moody, a two-time World Cup winner with Australia in 1987 and 1999, said a recent visit to the Caribbean to get first-hand information on pitch conditions was very useful.

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Did U Know?

David Gower was the first English bowler at home to be called for throwing. He deliberately chucked the last ball of a Test against New Zealand when the Kiwis needed just one run to secure victory at Trent Bridge in 1986.



Jose Mourinho

(Chelsea manager)
"What I did in Portugal was unique. I'm the best in the history of my country. I came to England... I won the first championship in 50 years for Chelsea. I won twice in a row... and I have a few records in the Premiership."



STAR Sports

FA Cup
Reading v Man United
Live at 2:00 am (Wednesday)



National Cricket League
Day Two (Four-Day)
Rajshahi v Dhaka
Venue: Fatullah Cricket Stadium
Barisal v Chittagong
Venue: Chittagong Divisional Stadium
Sylhet v Khulna
Venue: Khulna Divisional Stadium

Tigers start well



CRICINFO, undated

Bangladesh demonstrated that a significant gulf in class exists between them and the genuine minnows of the World Cup, as they cruised to an eight-wicket victory over Bermuda at St John's in Antigua on Sunday.

The main man of their performance was the opener, Shahriar Nafees, who recorded the fourth ODI hundred of his 40-match career, an unbeaten 104 from 112 balls that secured victory with more than 12 overs to spare.

Bermuda's preparations for this tri-series tournament suffered a setback last week when they slipped to defeat against lowly Antigua and Barbuda in a warm-up game, but this time they did at least make a fist of their batting performance, winning the toss and posting a total of 205 for eight, thanks to solid contributions all down the order but particularly from the tail, as they recovered from a shaky 83 for five.

Lionel Cann top-scored with 33 from No. 7, while three other batsmen also exceeded 30, among them Saleem Mukuddem, whose 32 came to an end when he was run-out by a combination of Mohammad Rafique and the wicketkeeper, Mushfiqur Rahim.

Bangladesh's bowlers were not significantly stretched although Tapash Baisya came in for a bit of tap with the new ball, conceding his runs at 5.3 an over. The pick of the bowlers, as so often, was Rafique, whose 10 overs went for 38 runs, and resulted in the wickets of David Hemp and the captain, Irvine Romaine, for a duck.

In reply, Bangladesh lost their hard-hitting young opener, Tamin Iqbal, for 11 early on, but were never in danger of an upset, as Shahriar added 58 for the second wicket with

Aftab Ahmed (40) and an unbroken 134 with Saqibul Hasan.

SCOREBOARD

Scoreboard of the first match in the three-nation limited-overs international series between Bermuda and Bangladesh at the Antigua Recreation Ground on Sunday:

BERMUDA	
Smith c Rahim b Raseel	12
Minors b Razzak	11
Pitcher c Shahadat b Shakib	30
Hemp c Ashraf b Rafique	20
Romaine lbw b Rafique	0
Tucker c Rafique b Aftab	31

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PHOTO: INTERNET

Bangladesh opener Shahriar Nafees poses with the man-of-the-match trophy after his fantastic unbeaten 104 that propelled the Tigers to an easy eight-wicket win against Bermuda in the opening tri-series match at the Antigua Recreation Ground on Sunday.

Parag shocks French GM

SPORTS REPORTER

Bangladeshi FIDE Master Mehdi Hasan Parag pulled off the biggest upset in the Kolkata Open Grandmasters Chess Tournament when he secured a quick victory over French Grandmaster Oliver Renet in the first round at the Alekhine Chess Club at Gorky Sadan on Sunday.

Bangladeshi GM Niaz Murshed also won his first round board while IM Enamul Hossain Rajib, IM Abdullah Al Rakib and FM Abu Sufian Shakil drew their games. The only disappointment in this round for the Bangladeshi participants was GM Ziaur Rahman's defeat.

A total of 86 players including 21 GMs, 23 IMs, four WGMs, one WIM and six FMs from 16 countries are taking part in the 10-round Swiss-league competition.

JR DAVIS CUP

Pakistan edge Bangladesh

SPORTS REPORTER

Bangladesh failed to make most of their advantage in the Junior Davis Cup Asia/Oceania zone pre-qualifiers when the hosts went down to Pakistan 2-1 in the opening game yesterday.

Omar Faruk Sunny gave Bangladesh a bright start when he defeated Heera Ashiq 6-1, 6-3 in the first singles at the Ramna Tennis Complex.

The second singles was equally one-sided with Pakistan's Khurram Nazir winning 6-3, 6-1 over Bangladesh's Mufazzal Hossain.

In the doubles match, the local duo gave up a 4-0 lead to lose the

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Down The World Cup

Lane

1983: Indian summer

CRICINFO

The 1983 Cricket World Cup began with the same format -- two groups of four as in 1979 -- but this time, though, each team played the others in their group twice, not once, to determine the semifinalists.

As a ploy to reduce the chance of elimination by the weather, it was a good one, even if June was not wet and only three of the 27 games went into a reserve day anyway. For the first time, non-Test grounds were used.

Each side received 60 overs and the umpires were told to apply a stricter interpretation of wides and bouncers. The result? More than twice as many wides per match as in 1979 (9.59 to 4.64). A fielding circle (actually an oval) was introduced, 30 yards away from the stumps. Four fieldsmen needed to be inside it at all times.

England dominated Group A, beating Pakistan and Sri Lanka twice each, and New Zealand once. They were followed into the semis by Pakistan, who squeezed through by scoring 0.08 more runs per over than the Kiwis.

In Group B, West Indies and India disposed of a disappointing Australian side and newcomers Zimbabwe. The performance of the round came from Winston Davis of West Indies, who demolished the Aussies at Headingley with a Cup-record 7 for 51.

India's dark horses had been creeping up on the rails all tournament, and now they cantered unfussily past a below-par

England. Yashpal Sharma and Sandeep Patil made light of a pitch which had undermined England's batsmen, and hit crashing fifties in a six-wicket win.

West Indies strutted on, brushing aside Pakistan by eight wickets with more than 11 overs to go. They were helped by a display of Test-match patience from Pakistan's opener, Mohsin Khan, who scratched his way to an apologetic 70 off 176 balls. A lone boundary punctuated his 43 singles, and his teammates succumbed to attempts to up the tempo at the other end.

In advance, the final looked like an anticlimax. It would surely be another big day for West Indies cricket, and no more than a big day out for the Indians. When India were strangled for 183, and Richards led West Indies to 50 for one in reply, Caribbean celebrations began. But then Kapil palmed a wonder catch in the deep to dismiss Richards, inspiring Madan Lal and Mohinder Amarnath -- who finished their careers with a combined total of 103 wickets from 108 Tests -- to wobble the ball around, and somehow take three wickets each to fold the innings of a disbelieving West Indies for 140. Upsets don't come much bigger.

Cricket bid farewell to many including an unhappy Dennis Lillee, Jeff Thomson and Rodney Marsh. Finalists in 1975, but also-rans in '83, they retired from international cricket a few months later. New Zealand's batting bedrock, Glenn Turner, played his last game for his country, and Bob

Willis's creaking limbs did not hold out much longer. It was Clive Lloyd's final World Cup too -- there may never be a better chance to win three tournaments in a row.

New Zealand's Martin Crowe, aged 20, announced himself on the World Cup scene with 97 in the tournament opener against England. There was a limited-overs debut for Abdul Qadir, in which he bamboozled NZ to the tune of 4 for 21, only to improve with 5 for 44 against Sri Lanka. For once he received a pasting from England (0 for 104 in two games).

In their first-ever Cup game Zimbabwe beat Australia by 13 runs, but even this looked commonplace after some chaos in Kent. Coming in to bat for India against Zimbabwe at a disastrous 17 for 5, Kapil Dev turned the tranquility of Tunbridge Wells on its head by blasting an undefeated 175 out of 266 for 8, with 16 fours and six sixes. He put on a Cup-record 126 for the ninth wicket with Syed Kirmani, whose 24 not out was India's next-best score. Oh, and India won by 31 runs. Sadly, there is no footage available of Kapil's plunderers as the television crew were on strike that very day. Finally there was the mauling Martin Snedden took in New Zealand's opening match against England. With Allan Lamb in belligerent mood, his figures were an x-rated 12-1-105-2.

Tons galore in Round 8

SPORTS REPORTER



Batmen excelled on the first day of the eighth round matches of the Ispahani Mirzapore Tea 8th National Cricket League with four scoring hundreds at three venues across the country yesterday.

Wicketkeeper Anwar Hossain (105) and reserve stumper Sajjad Kadir (114 not out), also the stand-in captain, not only smashed tons but also shared a 183-run sixth wicket stand as second-placed Dhaka made a bold start against table-toppers Rajshahi scoring 329-6 at stumps at the Fatullah Stadium.

Chittagong rode on Gazi Salahuddin's 165 to amass 362-3 against Barisal at the Chittagong Divisional Stadium.

Away at the Khulna Divisional Stadium, Golam Mawla scored his maiden first-class hundred to guide Sylhet to 284 before being bowled out by the home team.

DHAKA-RAJSHAHI
It was not a perfect start for Dhaka when they decided to bat first in the top-of-the-table clash with the scoreboard reading on 21-2 but Anwar took the charge with his back-to-back hundred to repair the early damage with the help of Shamsur Rahman (31) and

Mahmudullah Riyad (48).

Then the right-hander had the big contribution with another century-maker Sajjad during his 172-ball 105 that featured 16 boundaries. The 31-year old Sajjad hammered his maiden first-class century with the help of 17 fours and a six.

Out-of-favour seam bowler Forhad Reza was the peak of Rajshahi attack with 3-69 while Mushfiqur Rahman took two for 72.

CHITTAGONG-BARISAL

After early departure of discarded Tigers opener Nafis Iqbal, a huge 173-run second wicket partnership between Gazi Salahuddin and Elias Sunny put Chittagong on top.

Young right-hander Salahuddin put the Barisal bowlers to the sword by clobbering 27 fours and a six during his highest first-class score of 165 while left-hander Sunny smote 12 fours and a six in his 127-ball 74.

Nazimuddin (53 not out) and Ehsanul Haque (44 not out) carried on the home essay when they finished the day with a 70-run unbroken fourth wicket stand.

Ariful Haque and Ali Arman took one wicket each.

SYLHET-KHULNA

Touring Sylhet made a disastrous start after deciding to bat first when Imtiaz Hossain was out for a duck

in the very first over of Mohammad Shiblu but Mawla smashed his first first-class hundred and Alok Kapali chipped in with a half century to give their side a decent total.

Left-arm spinner Humayun Kabir picked up five wickets for 106 from 29.1 overs.

The 23-year old Mawla scored unbeaten 106 off 162 balls with 12 hits to the fence while Kapali added 60 off 85 deliveries that saw ten fours and a six.

Khulna negotiated four overs without any loss to finish the day on 10-0.

SCORES IN BRIEF

DHAKA: First innings 329-6 in 90 overs (Uttam 11, Rashedul 6, Anwar 105, Shamsur 31, Riyad 48, Sharifullah 1, Sajjad 114 not out, Arafat 1 not out, extras 12; Shahjada 1-55, Mushfiqur 2-72, Forhad 3-69).

CHITTAGONG: First innings 362-3 in 91 overs (Salahuddin 165, Nafis 6, Sunny 74, Nazimuddin 53 not out, Ehsanul 44 not out, extras 20; Ariful 1-44, Ali Arman 1-70).

SYLHET: First innings 284 all out in 84.1 overs (Imtiaz 0, Saif 35, Kapali 60, Mawla 106 not out, Golam Rahman 1, Mabud 27, Rezaul 11, Ejaz 2, Arman 12, Sharif 8, Nabil 1, extras 21; Shiblu 1-31, Manjarul 2-41, Kabir 5-106).



PHOTO: STAR

Omar Faruk of Bangladesh plays a forehand against Pakistani Heera Ashiq (not in the picture) in the second singles of the Junior Davis Cup Asia/Oceania Zone Pre-qualifier at the Ramna Tennis Complex yesterday.



PHOTO: FOCUSBANGLA

Bangladesh athlete Mohammad Shamsuddin (R) crosses the finish line ahead of the pack to win the men's 100m sprint on the second day of the Indo-Bangla Games at the Salt Lake Stadium on Monday.

INDO-BANGLA GAMES Shamsuddin fastest man

BSS, Kolkata

Mohammad Shamsuddin emerged as the fastest man of Bengal when he won the 100m sprint gold at the first Indo-Bangla Games -- competition of athletes from Bangladesh and West Bengal, India -- at the Salt Lake Stadium here yesterday.

Shamsuddin banked on a good start in the most prestigious athletics event and maintained lead till the finishing line, leaving behind the tough challenge from West Bengal sprinter Debashish Das and compatriot Masudul Karim.

Shamsuddin timed 10.8s while Debashish and Masudul both took 10.9 seconds but the Indian took silver and Masudul bronze respectively.

The athletics team won a total of three gold medals on the day as 10th South Asian Games gold medalist and favourite Mahfuzur Rahman Mithu won the 110m hurdles while Salim Mian took honours in the 1500m run.

Mithu won the first athletics gold for Bangladesh winning his pet

event in 14.30s. His teammate Asaduzzaman finished in same timing (15.40s) with Pijush Mondol of West Bengal but the Bangladeshi had to settle for silver after the judges' verdict.

Mithu expressed his delight and said he was excited to win the first gold for the country in athletics.

"I am pleased with this gold after winning my first laurel abroad at the SA Games. It will inspire me to do well in other international competitions.

Bangladesh also earned three silver and as many bronze medals to finish the day with a total of nine medals.

West Bengal athletes captured five gold, five silver and five bronze to dominate the competition. Sumita Rani won the first silver for Bangladesh in women's 100m hurdles, Rowshan Ara Putul won silver in women's 1500m while Afzal Hossain provided another silver in men's 400m.

"I am very happy winning gold in the first Indo-Bangla Games

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AFP, Kingston



2007 World Cup which gets underway on home soil next month.

Lara claims that the West Indies, who won the first two tournaments in 1975 and 1979, have their best chance yet to add a long-awaited third title.

"We are looking to get to the semifinals and then take it from there," said Lara, who was forced to sit out his home island of Trinidad and Tobago's domestic championship final win over Barbados at the weekend because of a knee injury.

"We have a very good record at home, and the players are really looking forward to this major event. We have a fit team that is ready to go. We have the ingredients to do well.

"We will be together for a few days before the World Cup gets



BRIAN LARA

going. It's the greatest tournament in the West Indies, and we are looking forward to doing very well."

West Indies have been drawn in Group D alongside Pakistan, Ireland and Zimbabwe in the first round of the World Cup and will face the Pakistanis in their opening game on March 13 at Sabina Park here.