



11 DAYS
TO GO

Bashar awaits
tough Canada

TIGERCRICKET.COM, undated

Bangladesh captain Habibul Bashar is happy with his side's overall performance in the eight-wicket win over Bermuda in the World Cup warm-up tri-series match on Sunday but reckons Canada, their opponent today, will be a tougher proposition.

"We haven't had a chance to watch Canada in action but from the information I have received they seem like a decent side," said Bashar on phone from Antigua.

"Gus Logie (Bermuda's coach) told me that he thinks this Canadian team is better than the one that appeared in the 2003 World Cup. Also, they have won a practice game here against Antigua where they chased 231 with five wickets and more than seven overs to spare. Bermuda were okay but I believe Canada will be stronger," added Bashar about his opponents which had stunned Bangladesh in their last meeting in the 2003 World Cup.

The 34-year-old skipper said that there will be changes in the Bangladesh team for today's game but his only cause for concern was the fitness of premier fast bowler Mashrafe Bin Mortaza.

"Mortaza had a minor foot injury before the last match and

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Did U Know?

Anil Dalpat Sonavaria was the first Hindu cricketer to play Test for Pakistan when he made his debut against England in 1984.



Virender Sehwag
(India batsman)
"My goal is to give a good start to the team and if I get that, to just carry on and get a big one."
His plan for next month's World Cup.



STAR Sports
FA Cup
Blackburn Rovers v Arsenal
Live at 2:00 am (Thursday)



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

Ctg scale new height

SPORTS REPORTER



Chittagong achieved a milestone in Bangladesh first-class history by reaching 600 runs in an innings on the second day of the eighth round Ispahani Mirzapore Tea 8th National Cricket League at the Chittagong Divisional Stadium yesterday.

Sarker made a confident in reply to the towering total but Gazi Alangir broke the 82-run opening stand removing Hannan, who scored 43 off 41 balls with nine hits to the fence.

Barisal then lost two quick wickets but Imran kept one side with 75 off 136 balls while Ali Arman accompanied him with 10.

DHAKA-RAJSHAHI

Forhad Reza returned with figures of five for 70 as Rajshahi wrapped up the home side's innings quickly by taking remaining four wickets in the morning as Dhaka were dismissed for 357 after resuming the day on 329-6.

But their early success faded by the poor batting show when they tottered at 37-3 before Junaid Rana (53 off 126 balls) and

Four called up for one-dayers

SPORTS REPORTER

Four players have been called up to the Bangladesh A side that play three one-day matches against visiting England A that begins at the Shaheed Chandu Stadium in Bogra on March 7.

Batsmen Nazimuddin and Junaid Siddique, all-rounders Mahmudullah Riyad, Manzur Rana and Forhad Reza and paceman Mohammad Shahjada have been included in the A side in place of Mosharraf Hossain, Ziaur Rahman, Enamul Haque and Nasiruddin Faruque.

The players are requested to report to coach Shaun Williams at the Naz Garden Hotel in Bogra at 5pm on March 4.

The selected cricketers will miss the Ispahani Mirzapore Tea 8th National Cricket League matches between March 4 and 13.

SQUAD

Tushar Imran (captain), Sahagir Hossain (wk), Junaid Siddique, Mehrab Hossain, Marshall Ayub, Nadir Chowdhury, Mahmudullah Riyad, Jahurul Islam, Manzur Rana, Mohammad Shahjada, Nazmul Hossain, Dollar Mahmud, Forhad Reza, Nazimuddin.

B.KSP, Rupali keep winning

SPORTS REPORTER

B.KSP continued their brilliant start in the Kai-Altech First Division Cricket League when they dismantled Uttara Sporting Club by seven wickets at the City Club ground yesterday.

Batting first, Uttara crawled to 151 before being all out in 48.2 overs. In reply, B.KSP reached their target in 36.4 overs.

Riaz Mahmud, Raihan Anas, Golam Kibria and Latiful Azam all took two wickets each when B.KSP bowled.

Ashraful Aziz struck a sedate unbeaten 58, with nine hits to the fence. Mushtaq, Gary and Zahid took a wicket each.

In the battle of the banks, Rupali Bank came out on top with an 8-run win over Agrani Bank at the Dharmundi Cricket Stadium.

Half-centuries from Shumon Shaha (70) and Kamru Hasam (50) propelled Rupali to a competitive 235-7 in 50 overs, thanks mainly to some poor fielding from Agrani.

Prosenjit Bose (61) could not make sure that his side won as they Agrani were restricted to only 227-8 in 50 overs.

Zakir slams double ton

SPORTS REPORTER

Zakir slammed the first double-century of the season in school cricket as Kalindi High School dumped Bangladesh International School at the Kalindi Club ground yesterday.

Kalindi could not beat the total scored by National Bangla on January 25, but they piled 454 in 49.3 overs. BIS followed that up with only 81 runs, before being bowled out in 23.5 overs.

Zakir slammed 238 off only 145 balls, crashing twenty-five fours and five sixes. Ashraful took three wickets.

At the Dharmundi Club ground, Ashiqur hit a superb 112 off 118 balls as Motijheel Ideal School destroyed National Bank Public High School by 186 runs.

Mirpur Bangla High School and Iqra Model School also won their respective matches.

Down The World Cup Lane

1983: Surprise! surprise!!

The third World Cup, the last to be sponsored by the Prudential Assurance Company, began in England with two fine surprises, when India beat West Indies and newcomers Zimbabwe upset Australia in the opening round of matches, and ended with the greatest surprise of all, when India beat West Indies again, this time in the final Lord's. None of the eight sides had to make do without a victory.

The competition differed from its two predecessors in format, partly to increase revenue but also to lessen the chances of a side being eliminated through having greater misfortune with the weather than its rivals. In the event, no sooner had the sides started to arrive in England for the 1983 World Cup than the rain, which had made the month of May one of the wettest on record, cleared away.

Most of the matches were played in warm sunshine, and throughout the competition, from June 9-25, interest ran high. After losing their opening match, West Indies carried all before them until failing, for the first time, to win the final. Australia had a disappointing fortnight, and with Imran Khan unfit to bowl for them, Pakistan were a shadow of the side which had trounced India and Australia in the previous winter.

New Zealand's main batting provided them with insufficient runs for a consistent challenge, while Sri Lanka, though they won their return match against New Zealand, were too short of bowling to be a serious threat. Zimbabwe, playing for the first time, having qualified as winners of the ICC Trophy in 1982, made a welcome contribution. Their side included several players with first-class experience, acquired

when, as Rhodesia, their country played in the Currie Cup. Apart from beating Australia they gave West Indies a run for their money at Worcester.

India's unexpected success (they were quoted at 66 to 1 before the competition began) came under a young and relatively new captain (Kapil Dev) and owed much to the presence in

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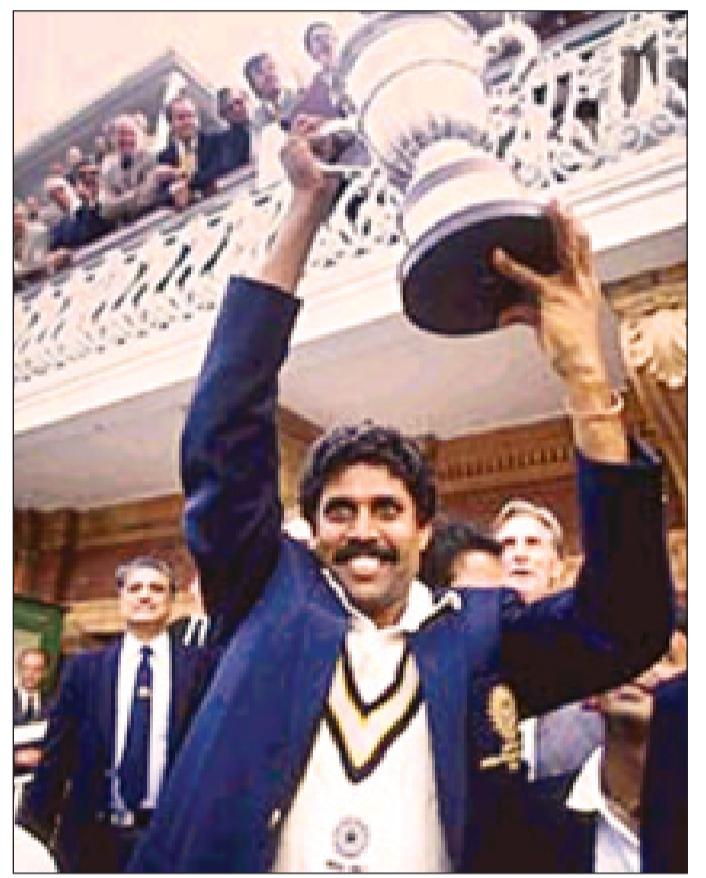


PHOTO: INTERNET

Razzaq blow for Pakistan

AFP/PTI, Lahore



Injury-hit Pakistan suffered a fresh World Cup blow Tuesday when all-rounder Abdul Razzaq was ruled out for three weeks with a fractured knee.

Razzaq was hit on the left knee by a ball during practice on Monday and doctors have advised him to take three weeks of rest, followed by another two to three weeks of physiotherapy.

"The reports say it's a suspected knee fracture and he'll be out of cricket for three weeks. Azhar Mahmood will take his place in the squad," Pakistan cricket team media manager Pervaiz Mir said.

"Razzaq was hit on the knee during a nets session which left a fracture. Razzaq is out and Mahmood comes in his place. It is something we were not expecting but these things happen," he said.

"I am simply devastated. One moment we are practicing and planning for the big tournament and next moment doctors tell me I am out of it," Razzaq said.

"It is hugely disappointing for me

to go out this way," said the all-rounder.

It is a major blow for us because Razzaq is one of our main players," said Pakistan captain Inzamamul Haq.

The 27-year-old Razzaq missed Pakistan's Test series in South Africa earlier this year due to an ankle problem and only returned to play in the one-day series. He was

ruled out for three weeks with a fractured knee.

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Coach Bob Woolmer said Razzaq would be missed in the World Cup.

"It is a big blow. We were celebrating Umar Gul's fitness boost when this sad news came," Woolmer told AFP.

Paceman Gul fully recovered from an ankle injury which had threatened his chances of playing in the World Cup. Gul was given the go-ahead by doctors on Tuesday.

Pakistan is already doubtful about key pacemen Shoaib Akhtar and Mohammad Asif for the World Cup, which starts on March 13 in the Caribbean.

Akhtar is battling with a knee and hamstring injury, while Asif has a recurrence of an elbow injury sustained last year.

Both Akhtar and Asif must also clear mandatory drug tests to feature in the World Cup. Pakistan fly out to the Caribbean on March 1.

Pakistan are in Group D alongside the hosts West Indies, Zimbabwe and first-timers Ireland. Their match against the West Indies on March 13 in the Caribbean.

He has played 229 one-day internationals for Pakistan and has 245 wickets. As a lower middle-order batsman he is known for his clean hitting, scoring 4,449 runs

to appear in his third World Cup.

He is the most successful man of Indian cricket last year, but has now become the key to his team's campaign in the World Cup tournament in the Caribbean.

The stylish left-handed batsman has not changed after spending a year in wilderness. His appetite for runs is as insatiable as it was when he made his one-day debut more than a decade ago.

When Ganguly returned to the Indian squad after 16 months in January, he hammered a robust 98 against the West Indies at Nagpur to remind his critics that they would have to wait before writing his cricketing obituary.

He was the most successful Indian Test captain when he was dumped in 2005, first as a skipper and then as a player. He was forced to play domestic cricket to prove he

was not past his sell-by date.

Ganguly had scored more than 10,000 runs in the shorter version of the game when the fate suddenly started playing tricks with him. His public spat with coach Greg

squad.

Ganguly returned as a man with a point to prove.

He was the top Indian scorer with 214 runs in a three-Test series in South Africa, where many of his teammates struggled against pace. India lost the series 2-1, but realised that old was still gold.

Ganguly's triumphant return to international cricket solved India's major problem of finding effective openers in both forms of the game, especially after Virender Sehwag's poor form.

The former Indian captain played a major role in his team's winning the one-day series against Brian Lara's West Indians, scoring 179 runs in three matches.

He continued his form with knocks of 62, 48 and 58 in the series win over Sri Lanka.

Ganguly is now expected to open the innings in the World Cup, a job he has already done with great efficiency in his illustrious career. He has the shots and temperament to make the most of fielding restrictions in early overs.

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SOURAV GANGULY

Chappell also did his reputation no good.

But he just refused to fade away and the selectors were forced to recall him after repeated failures of those who had replaced him in the

men's 50-over team.

He has the shots and temperament to make the most of fielding restrictions in early overs.

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West Bengal on top

Indo-Bangla Games conclude today

BSS, Kolkata

Bangladesh finished behind West Bengal in the first Indo-Bangla Games at completion of all competitions here yesterday.

Bangladesh tallied 30 gold, 34 silver and 18 bronze compared to the hosts' haul of 38-34-32.

The Games will be officially concluded today at the Salt Lake Stadium.

SWIMMING

On the final day of competition yesterday, Bangladeshi swimmers Shahjahan Ali Rony and Doly Akther clinched their third individual gold.

Rony claimed gold in 100m breaststroke after his success in 50 and 200m metres breaststroke to establish himself as the undisputed king of the event in the region. He took 1:08.45s to win the 100m event at the Subhas Sarobar swimming pool with fellow swimmers Niaz Ali and Karar Samedul Islam bagging silver and bronze respectively.

Doly, who became the fastest woman swimmer at the Games after winning the 50m freestyle on Monday, won the 100m breaststroke in 1:20.83 seconds yesterday.