

## Selectors quit & president follows?

AFP, Islamabad

Pakistan's chief cricket selector and the rest of the national selection committee have resigned following the national team's humiliating exit from the World Cup, a statement said Tuesday.

However the Pakistan Cricket Board (PCB) would not comment on newspaper reports that PCB chairman Naseem Ashraf had tendered his resignation to President Pervez Musharraf.

Protests erupted in several Pakistani cities after the team lost to outsiders Ireland on Saturday. Coach Bob Woolmer, who apologised for the defeat, died on Sunday in Jamaica.

A PCB statement said chief selector Wasim Bari had tendered his resignation and those of the rest of the national selection committee to the board.

The resignation notice stated "that the committee's tenure was up to the 2007 World Cup and that it shares responsibility for the team's performance in the World Cup," the statement said.

"Our team has not performed well and for this reason the entire selection committee has resigned," Bari told private AAJ television.

"I had sent the resignations two days ago to the PCB, but the chairman was touring interior Sindh (province). I spoke to him briefly," he said.

Bari told the television station he had "heard about" Ashraf's resignation -- which several newspapers here reported without giving a source -- but could not confirm it.

Captain Inzamamul Haq on Sunday announced he would retire from one-day cricket after the game against Zimbabwe on Wednesday -- a match dedicated to the coach -- before Pakistan return home.

## Pakistan eye

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clear second dope tests. They were finally withdrawn hours before the team's departure for the Caribbean on fitness grounds.

"The whole build-up was poor and created fears that Pakistan might not do well in the World Cup. Now heads must roll to bring Pakistan cricket back on track," said former captain and chief executive Rameez Raja.

Pakistan has time to pick up the pieces.

They do not have a major assignment until the Twenty20 World Cup in South Africa in September this year. They also host South Africa in October before welcoming Australia early next year.

Younis is likely to take over as captain from Inzamam and Pakistan has depth of talent in reserves to get back on top of their game.

However, finding a new coach could prove difficult.

"Bob's greatest strength was that the atmosphere in the changing room was harmonious. The team was well knitted together and that was to his credit," said Imran.

There were reports that the PCB has contacted former New Zealand opener and ex-Indian coach John Wright to take the job after the World Cup.

## Effigies get

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"Obviously, there is a huge exposure in the media," he said. "They compete with each other for space, eye-balls.

"It is probably a trend which is going to be there and is probably going to get worse. It is not for me to say whether it is right or wrong.

"There are people who make these decisions on what to put on air, what to write or what sort of lines to take. We have to accept it and learn to cope with it.

India has a history of boorish fan behaviour.

Before the last World Cup, crowds attacked batsman Mohammad Kaif's house after the team lost a warm-up game and struggled to beat the Netherlands in the opening match.

Leading batsman Sachin Tendulkar had to read out a statement condemning such actions and urging fans to support the team.

At the 1996 World Cup, a violent Eden Gardens crowd forced the semifinal against eventual champions Sri Lanka to be abandoned with hosts India on the verge of defeat.

Three years later, Pakistan beat India in front of stands at the same venue after rioting fans were ejected during an Asian test championship match.

Pakistan coach Bob Woolmer died in a Jamaican hospital on Sunday after he was found unconscious in his room, the day after his team were knocked out of the World Cup after losing to debutants Ireland.

David said it was not fair to discuss whether Woolmer had to deal with excessive pressure in his job, lavishing praise on him as "a man of cricket".



PHOTO: AFP

IN MY DAYS... South African batsman Herschelle Gibbs (R) smiles as West Indian cricket legend Sir Garfield Sobers recalls his six sixes at a ceremony in St Kitts and Nevis on Monday.

# Gibbs, Sobers recall 6 feats

AFP, Basseterre



West Indian cricket legend Sir Garfield Sobers and South African Herschelle Gibbs remembered their feats of six sixes in an over during a charity function here on Monday.

Gibbs became the first man to hit six sixes in an over in one-day cricket during South Africa's Group A match against the Netherlands at Warner Park on Friday.

His historic feat cost leading drinks firm Johnnie Walker one million dollars had announced they would donate the money to charity in honour of the first player to register the landmark.

"Gibbs' feat was a wonderful achievement and more cherishing is the fact that it going to help enhance charity," said Sobers, who hit six sixes in an over in a first-class match for Nottinghamshire against

Glamorgan at Swansea in 1968.

The donation will help Habitat for Humanity in Trinidad to build 70 houses for 500 homeless people, a cause Gibbs said he was happy to contribute.

"It's a huge privilege to have helped a noble cause, more so getting this honour in the presence of a man who did the feat first, a true legend of the game. I am satisfied to give smiles to people," said Gibbs, who recorded his feat against leg-spinner Dan van Bunge.

Sobers said South African players were after his records.

"(Jacques) Kallis topped my all-rounder's record, but as they say, the records are meant to be broken and if they are for the enhancement of charity they are more welcoming," said Sobers, a world class all-rounder.

Remembering his six sixes feat, Sobers said his was different from that of Gibbs.

"There was no pressure and we wanted some quick runs in that match. I used to follow (former West

Indian great) Lord Constantine's saying that 'if you want quick runs hit in the air where there would be no one to catch you'.

"I decided it (to hit six sixes) after the fifth ball which was a doubt but the umpire cleared it as six.

"Gibbs created history in a different arena. The World Cup is a different category. What is the common thing is that Gibbs put St Kitts on the map as I did to Glamorgan and I keep reminding them that nobody knew Glamorgan before my feat."

Sobers, who held the record of highest Test innings with 365 which stayed until Brian Lara (376) broke that record in 1994, laughed off the feat.

"Wherever I have gone since 1968 people recognised me by saying that he is the man who hit six sixes and it left me thinking that it was the only thing I have done in cricket."

## Pawar slams part of media

REUTERS, Mumbai

President of the Board of Control for Cricket in India (BCCI) Sharad Pawar has slammed sections of the country's media for stirring up unrest following the national team's shock defeat to Bangladesh in their World Cup opener.

Irate fans hurled stones at a house being built by wicketkeeper Mahendra Dhoni in his hometown of Ranchi and burnt effigies of captain Rahul Dravid and coach Greg Chappell after that defeat.

India rebounded on Monday with a record victory over Bermuda but still need to beat former champions Sri Lanka on Friday to ensure they qualify for the next round.

"A section of the electronic media goes to town on the blame game, trying to find out who is responsible for the defeat. It is not good," Pawar was quoted by local media on Tuesday.

"The media gives disproportionate coverage to cricket and it goes a long way in raising expectations. They praise the team sky high when it wins... sometimes things go wrong."

India's World Cup-frenzy has been fuelled by television channels and media outlets touting the team as favourites. Since their arrival in the Caribbean last month, India's every move has been tracked minute-by-minute.

## Batsmen

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### SCORES IN BRIEF

**SRI LANKA A:** First innings 547-6 in 139 overs (overnight 335-2) (Vandort 10, Udawatte 5, Warnapura 242, Samaraweera 162, Kapugedera 22, Mubarak 32, Chandana 50 not out, Silva 8 not out, extras 16; Nazmul 3-89, Enamul 1-154, Mehrab 1-75).

**BANGLADESH A:** First innings 123-6 in 39 overs (Jahurul 18, Mehrab 9, Nazimuddin 10, Tushar 18, Sahagir 17, Nadif 17, Mashud 6 not out, Riyad 22 not out, extras 6; Ganegama 1-30, de Silva 1-34, Amerasinghe 2-31, Chandana 1-18).

## Utseya admits

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"The pitch was very good, and the kind of pitch that once you get in, you stayed in, and you placed a value on your wicket," said 20-year-old Williams.

"The West Indies bowlers hit some very good lines and lengths, and it was not easy, but they just gave me a little bit too much width every now and again, and I capitalised on it."

Williams concluded that if his side had been able to score a few more runs, the finish to the match might have been tighter.

"We lost too many early wickets, and it was kind of tough on the batsmen coming lower down the order to have a go, and try to get a larger total," he said.

Williams starred in a fifth-wicket stand of 83 with Brendon Taylor, who scored 50, and put on 60, unbroken, for the sixth wicket with Elton Chigumbura to give Zimbabwe a late boost.

## Dravid decision

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with the net run-rate likely to come into play. India are ahead of Bangladesh on the points table on run-rate and the result of Wednesday's clash between Sri Lanka and Bangladesh will have a bearing on India's future in the tournament.

"The real challenge is ahead of us," Dravid said. "We had two must-win matches, but have won just one. The guys know what they have to do. What is in our control is to go and try to win the next game and win it as well as possible."

# Sunny regrets himself

AFP, Melbourne



Indian cricket great Sunil Gavaskar has apologised for referring to David Hookes's death when criticising the Australian team's on-field behaviour.

Former India captain Gavaskar hit a raw nerve here by linking the death of former Test cricketer Hookes, who died after he was punched outside a Melbourne hotel, with the treatment the Australians could expect if they behaved as boorishly in a bar as he claimed they did on the field.

Gavaskar said his Hookes comments were "uncalled for and inappropriate" but he did not back away from his claim that the Australian team would be more admired if they curbed their behaviour in matches.

"I do regret it ... on the breakfast show I do with ESPN, I read out a statement regretting what I had

said," Gavaskar told a Melbourne radio station Tuesday.

"On live television and radio, sometimes you respond on the spur of the moment with a remark that can cause hurt and pain to others.

"I realise and I accept that what I said was uncalled for and inappropriate.

"Having said that, I hope they (Hookes' family and friends) have the bigness of heart to forgive me for what I said about David Hookes."

Gavaskar said he has not spoken to Australian captain Ricky Ponting since making his comments about Hookes.

"I am not at loggerheads with Ricky Ponting, I admire him for his batting and for the way he has come back after the (2005) Ashes loss (to England)," he said.

"Cricketers hardly ever hold too much against each other. I'm pretty certain the next time Ricky and I meet up, we'll be fine, we'll be able to shake hands, share a joke and carry on with our lives."

Gavaskar clarified his earlier comments about the Australian

team -- that they were "not popular winners" because of sometimes "awful" on-field behaviour -- which was rebuked by Ponting, currently playing in the Caribbean World Cup.

"What I was trying to say, the West Indies in the 1970s and '80s ... they were winning just about everything, but they were universally admired," he said.

"There are so many champions who are universally admired, like your (Australian tennis great) Rod Laver, today there is (world No.1 tennis player) Roger Federer.

"The Australian team can also be universally admired if they can only curb their behaviour on some occasions."

Australia and India are seeded to meet in a potentially volatile Super Eight match in Antigua on March 31, a repeat of the 2003 World Cup final.

# Script made in Ireland

INTERNET, undated



About a year back, when Paul Davey decided to make the World Cup-bound Irish cricketers the heroes of his documentary, he didn't realise that he had just managed a casting coup.

A chance meeting with Ireland's wicketkeeper Niall O'Brien in Australia made the Sydney-born budding Irish film-maker conscious of the fact that the country of his birth didn't just have a cricket team but had also qualified for the 2007 World Cup.

Today Davey sits on about 10 hours of exclusive footage that tells the incredible story of 15 no-hopers who have caused one of the biggest upsets in World Cup history. The three-wicket win over once-world champions Pakistan means Ireland, who had confirmed their Kingston to Dublin booking after the group stage, have got a one-month extension in the West Indies as the Super 15 have almost made their entry into the Super Eight.

This also means a healthy headache for Davey, who wonders how his limited budget would see him survive in the West Indies till April-end. "I will have to use the Irish charm and hope that Saint Patrick will be on my side," he says.

Though Davey plans to edit his work to about 50 minutes for the festival circuit and eventual television release in cricket-playing countries, the heart-warming and still-evolving storyline could interest even some Hollywood big-wig. This Irish story, with various plots and sub-plots, is

Oscar-material. The game against Pakistan certainly had all. A simple, sheep farmer's son -- Boyd Rankin -- takes three wickets. Andre Botha, who left South Africa as he thought he wasn't good enough to play international cricket, comes up with dream figures of 8-4-5-2. "Never ever dreamt of a spell like that, forget on a day like that," he says. The O'Brien brothers -- Niall (72) and Kevin (16 not out) -- combine forces for an inspirational match-winning partnership. Coach Adrian Birrell, who all his life worked in grassroots cricket, finally getting global recognition just a few months before amicably parting ways with his boys, who lovingly call him 'AB'.

Add to that the suspense because of the rain delay, the subsequent fall of wickets, the roller-coaster run-chase, emotionally-attached wives and die-hard slogan-shouting fans from the stands, and, finally, the ultimate climax. Captain Trent Johnston, despite a suspected fracture in the arm suffered while taking a breathtaking catch, coming up with a six to score the winning runs.

The screenplay too is impressive as one finds out while talking to new-ball bowler David Langford-Smith who, as a farm equipment salesman, has the normal middle-class cash-crunch because of his 300-dollars-a-week pay check. "We are ordinary people who play cricket only because it's our passion, but we defeated the multi-millionaire pros who stay in palaces," he says.

It's stories like these that inspired Davey to pick up his camera and follow the Irish cricketers. "It's something I can relate to, since I have got an ordinary job in Sydney. I am an IT

guy, but during the World Cup here I have turned into a film-maker. The key thing is the fact that these guys will go to their normal lives after all this," he says.

To stress his point, he narrates the shooting schedule he had with pace bowler Paul Mooney. "I had gone to meet Mooney during Christmas and he got off from his tractor to come and meet me. And I tell you, he was quite nervous since this was during the lunch break," he says with a smile.

What makes Davey sound excited about his movie is the capacity of the players to touch the right chord with their attitude. He talks about the catch that John Mooney took at the end of the Pakistan innings, close to the fence that had a bunch of Irish fans on the other side. "He soloed the ball after catching it. It is a move in Gaelic football -- the most popular game in Ireland. It was a tribute to the Irish fans. They loved it. These guys don't just limit themselves to cricket, they are multi-talented," he says.

Nor does the movie, as Davey reveals how this is a cricket story with many folds to it. "It is cricket-centric but it is also about the political situation in Ireland and the religious divide. Today at the ground, one saw the Northern Ireland and the Republic of Ireland supporters mixing with each other. This has broken some borders and barriers".

Forget Hollywood, this is a Bollywood kind of script.

## Cricket

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chief executive James Sutherland.

It is the first time the game has been organised for Harmony Day and "we've been quite overwhelmed by number of people who have signed up," a spokeswoman told AFP. "We had projected only 25,000."

Cricket Australia claims in its statement that "the participation figure is a record for the most people playing informal cricket on one day".

The game comes as the government prepares to pass new laws making it harder to become an Australian citizen, including a pledge of commitment to "Australian values".

# WI into last eight

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Gayle 10 1 32 0

Samuels 10 1 48 0

### WEST INDIES

Gayle c Sibanda b Mpofo 40

Chanderpaul c Sibanda b Chigumbura 21

Sarwan c and b Ireland 12

Samuels c Chibhabha b Mupariwa 28

Lara not out 44

Bravo not out 37

Extras: (lb-10, w-10, nb-2) 22

Total: (For 4 wkts in 47.5 overs) 204

Did not bat: Ramdin, D Smith, Powell, Taylor, Collimore.

Fall of wickets: 1-73, 2-73, 3-106, 4-129.

Bowler O M R W

Mpofo 9 1 34 1

Ireland 7 0 38 1

Mupariwa 9 2 34 1

Chigumbura 9.5 0 45 1

Utseya 10 1 26 0

Williams 3 0 17 0

Result: West Indies won by six wickets.

Man-of-the-match: Sean Williams.

Toss: West Indies

Umpires: Simon Taufel (AUS) and Ian Gould (ENG).

Match referee: Roshan Mahanama (SRI)

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were going to be up against it. They were going for the run-rate. You never know, if we get 250-plus against Bangladesh (in the last match), then it's a game on."

The Indian batting might was earlier on view against the weakest side in the group as Sehwa, Yuvraj, Ganguly and Tendulkar gathered runs with consummate ease on a good batting track.

Sehwa, who had just one half-century in his previous 14 games, smashed an 87-ball 114 with three

sixes and 17 fours for his eighth hundred -- his first in two years.

The 28-year-old opener shared a 202-run stand for the second wicket with in-form Ganguly to virtually bat the debutants out of the match.

Ganguly, who scored 66 in his team's below-par batting performance against Bangladesh, struck two sixes and three fours in his 114-ball knock.

He looked set to become the first batsman to score five centuries in the World Cup when he was stumped attempting a big shot.

Australians Ricky Ponting and Mark Waugh, and Indian Sachin Tendulkar are others with four hundreds.

India, keeping an eye on the net run-rate after losing their opening match, sent in big-hitters Mahendra Dhoni and Yuvraj ahead of Tendulkar. The move paid off as runs came thick and fast.

The Indian innings contained 18 sixes, with Yuvraj hitting seven in his 46-ball knock and Tendulkar four in his 29-ball innings.

India were in a must-win situation after being upset by Bangladesh in their previous game, but found the going easy against Bermuda who looked clueless after early second-over celebrations.

New-ball bowler Malachi Jones, at 17 one of the youngest cricketers in the tournament, struck with his first delivery when he had opener Robin Uthappa caught by burly Dwayne Leverock, who dived to his right to hold the ball.

The Bermudan cricketers celebrated the early success as if they had taken more than just a wicket. But the joy was short-lived as their attack was soon put to the sword by Sehwa.

The opener made the most of the opportunity of regaining form against the minnows, dominating the seamers and spinners with a wide range of attacking shots.

Sehwa raced to his half-century off 43 balls with 11 fours and then took 38 more deliveries to complete his century.

## INDIA V BERMUDA SCOREBOARD

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Romaine lbw b Kumble 0

Tucker b Kumble 0

Minors c sub (Karthik) b Agarkar 21

Cann c Uthappa b Agarkar 0

Hurdle b Agarkar 0

Leverock c Dhoni b Tendulkar 9

Jones lbw b Kumble 1

Extras: (lb-12, w-12, nb-3) 27

Total: (All out in 43.1 overs) 156

Fall of wickets: 1-0, 2-18, 3-47, 4-57, 5-63, 6-106, 7-106, 8-110, 9-154, 10-156.

Bowler O M R W Econ

Zaheer Khan 10 1 32 2 3.20

Agarkar 10 0 38 3 3.80

Patel 8 2 20 1 2.50

Kumble 9.1 0 38 3 4.14

Sehwa 5 0 15 0 3.00

Tendulkar 1 0 1 1 1.00

Result: India won by 257 runs.

Man-of-the-match: Virender Sehwa.

Toss: Bermuda

Umpires: Aleem Dar (Pakistan) and IL Howell (South Africa)

Match referee: A Hurst (Australia)

AFP, Basseterre



South Africa captain Graeme Smith insists he won't be rattled by the Australian verbal barrage which will surely come his way when the two bitter rivals meet on Saturday.

The winner of the World Cup Group A game at Warner Park will not only take a vital two extra points into the Super Eights but also a huge psychological edge over a fellow favourite for the title.

Smith was targeted by the Australians when South Africa toured in 2005-2006 and he paid a heavy price.

His side lost the Test series 2-0 while he managed just 155 runs in six Test innings and 166 runs in his eight one-day innings.

"The Australia game is on everyone's mind, it is the big one everyone is looking forward to," said

Smith who is adamant that he is a more relaxed player now than he was on that tour.

"I'm a lot more experienced and comfortable with things. I went through a bad patch and I think once you go through a bad patch and get out of it you don't put as much pressure on yourself.

"I am a lot more relaxed than I was in Australia."

Smith disagreed that South Africa, who displaced Australia from the world number one spot last month, were nervous before the clash.

"We are not tense or nervous. We are just going to go out there and play to the levels we know we're capable of."

But he knows that victory over Ricky Ponting's two-time defending champions is crucial if South Africa are to go on and win a first World Cup title.

"With one or two big teams perhaps not going through (to the Super Eights), it does put more