

## BCCI to act accordingly

PTI, Mumbai

The Board of Control for Cricket in India (BCCI) Wednesday said it will take an appropriate decision on the letter from Zee Television, seeking permission to start the Indian Cricket League.

"The president, of BCCI, Sharad Pawar has received a letter from Subhash Chandra, Zee Television, seeking permission to start the Indian Cricket League. An appropriate decision in this matter will be taken by the board," BCCI secretary Niranjan Shah said in a media release.

The release was a reaction to the announcement of a breakaway league made earlier in the day in Delhi by Essel Group Chairman Subhash Chandra, who said initially it will be played in the Twenty20 format.

Meanwhile, BCCI Vice President Shashank Manohar said from Nagpur that it was premature to react to the formation of a parallel body for the game.

"We don't want to react to this today. We will react at the appropriate time," said Manohar.

## Rebels eye big

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should object," he told reporters. "We have sought the BCCI's permission to go ahead with the league.

"It is not in conflict with the BCCI but would rather complement its efforts to unearth a pool of talented youngsters."

But asked if he will still go ahead with the series if the BCCI objected, Chandra said: "The Indian Cricket League is a reality, it will be held."

The BCCI, already reeling under the national's team's first round exit from the World Cup, was clearly not amused by Chandra's protest.

"If he (Chandra) is planning a local tournament, he can't use our sports facilities without our permission," BCCI vice-president Lalit Modi said.

"And if he is roping in international players, that requires the sanction of BCCI and the International Cricket Council.

"The BCCI does not give private parties permission to do anything like this."

BCCI secretary Niranjan Shah confirmed a proposal had been received from Chandra which will be discussed when the board meets in Mumbai on Friday and Saturday to take stock of the World Cup debacle.

## Oldham to arrive

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will help them hunt talents at junior age level and if possible take them to England for intensive training.

"Both Bangladesh and Oldham could be benefited from this deal," Hardy hoped.

"Obviously we are also promoting community spirit on multicultural level. We have a large Bangladeshi population in Oldham. We would obviously like to cement our relationships with the local community. We feel it is a better way to keep in touch with them."

The visitors will have a Bangladeshi player -- the 15-year-old centre-back Iqbal Alam -- in their squad, he added.

## Sachin shattered

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The board will hold a two-day meeting in Mumbai on Friday and Saturday to take stock of the World Cup debacle and also decide if Chappell's contract should be renewed.

Tendulkar is the first team member to go on record since returning from the Caribbean last week, although other players have also spoken to the media against Chappell on condition of anonymity.

Indian cricket chief Sharad Pawar is expected to hear the senior players' version of the defeat before he chairs the board meeting where Chappell and team manager Sanjay Jagdale will present their reports.

Pawar will also hold discussions with former captains like Sunil Gavaskar and Kapil Dev on what to do next.

India are due to tour Bangladesh in May for two Tests and three one-day internationals.

## WI can learn

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whose selection for West Indies' defeat against New Zealand caused a split in the Windies' ranks.

Simmons said he was unimpressed with West Indies' poor display in the field when they allowed Sri Lanka to post 303-5 in a 113-run loss on Sunday, a defeat which has virtually killed off the hosts' chances of making the semifinals.

"It's going to be hard, and after two games in three days they would have been tired, but sometimes you play back-to-back one-dayers and come out on top," said Simmons.



PHOTO: STAR

Abahani players, officials and sponsors pose for a photograph with their new jersey for the 2006-07 season at the club tent in Dhanmondi yesterday. Mutual Trust Bank, which also sponsored Abahani's jersey last season, will provide Tk 5 lakh for the new contract while Acme Limited has signed a deal to supply the club with drinks and water.

# LOCAL SNIPPETS

### SPORTS REPORTER

The National Sports Council (NSC) yesterday gave the go ahead signal to the Bangladesh Football Federation (BFF) to hold its election.

The BFF had earlier set April 27 as the date of the election but it needed the approval of the law ministry and the NSC.

The BFF can now start official works to hold the polls in May. It has already named a three-member Election Commission headed by the joint-secretary of the sports ministry.

### NATIONAL CHESS

Defending champion Enamul Hossain Rajib took sole lead in the Mercantile Bank 33rd National Chess Championship after third round. The International Master defeated Abdul Maleq to raise his collection to maximum three points.

GM Ziaur Rahman and FM Khondokar Aminul Islam, both on 2.5 points, now follow Rajib closely.

In other third round games, Amin upset GM Niaz Murshed, Zia beat FM Syed Mahfuzur Rahman Emon, GM Reefat Bin Sattar beat Minhazuddin Ahmed Sagar, IM Abdullah Al Rakib beat Mohammad Ali, FM Taibur Rahman beat FM Abu Sufian Shakil and FM Sheikh Nasir

Ahmed shared points with Mohammad Javed.

### INDEPENDENCE DAY TENNIS

Henry Prithul Mondol clinched the singles title of the Independence Day tennis on its concluding day. He beat Amol Roy 6-3, 6-3 in the final at the Ramna Tennis Complex.

Amol had won the doubles trophy pairing with Ranjan Ram while the boys' titles went to Mofazzal Hossain (U-16) and Hanif Munna (U-13).

### KAI-ALTECH CRICKET

Gopibaghi Friends Association (213) recorded a huge 115-run win over Sinha Textiles (98) in the Kai-Altech Second Division Cricket League. In other matches, Kalabagan CA (233-6) beat Young Cricketers (230-9) by four wickets and Udayachal Club (229-7) defeated Gulshan Youth (228) by three wickets.

In third division, Uttara FC beat Dilkusha SC by six wickets while Sheikh Russel KC beat Dhanmondi Cricket Academy by 48 runs.

### DIPALI'S NEWEC

Khondokar Jamil Uddin was elected president of the Dipali Juba Sangha executive committee for 2007-09 earlier this week. Shafiqul Azam

Bhuiyan was elected general-

secretary and MA Taher the treasurer.

## Hair hearing October 1

CRICINFO, undated

Darrell Hair's claim that the International Cricket Council's decision to bar him from officiating in major international matches was racially-motivated will be heard by an employment tribunal in London starting on October 1.

The hearing is expected to last around a fortnight.

Hair has recently returned to Sydney after living for three years in England. He told the Australian media that it was "unsure but unlikely" he would umpire again, although James Sutherland, Cricket Australia's CEO, hinted that Hair might be offered a contract to umpire first-class cricket there.

## A questionable

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"If the latter is the case, notwithstanding the high reputation of the Cricket Australia, then in reality the ownership is on our part and we will simply be following what has been chalked up by an outside consultant," observed Sabar.

Meanwhile, the board CEO should have been the right person to provide all kinds of details about the deal but unfortunately he couldn't fulfil the demands that can justify the deal.

"Actually we made the deal because Cricket Australia expressed their unwillingness to provide service completely free of cost. I don't know about the background of the first deal and that's why I can't explain all sorts of assessment. What I can only say is that we have discussed about the issues at different levels," he said.

It also came as a surprise when Rahman admitted that the board was yet to set up details of the programme, which many feel should have been done well before the signing of the agreement.

"Ross Turner (global development manager of Cricket Australia) will come here this month to set up the programme," informed Rahman.

# Pigeon's one last chance!

AFP, St John's



ICC Cricket World Cup WEST INDIES 2007

Glenn McGrath has made almost as much a speciality of rubbishing the England cricket team as he has of taking their wickets during his long career.

And ahead of what could be his final meeting with the 'Poms', in Sunday's World Cup Super Eights clash, the Australia fast bowler was at it again.

"The way England have been playing and the way we have been playing, we should win this game pretty well," McGrath said on Tuesday.

Reigning champions Australia, unbeaten in the World Cup so far, have been in commanding form since coming to the Caribbean.

England, shock 2-0 winners in the CB series final over the Aussies in February, have, by contrast, been unimpressive.

They have lost to the only Test side they've played so far, New Zealand and, come this weekend, their World Cup campaign could be on the line if they lose to 1996 champions Sri Lanka here on Wednesday.

This is the 37-year-old McGrath's final tournament before retirement.

Test cricket's most successful fast bowler bowed out of the five-day game by taking a wicket last ball on his Sydney home ground as Australia completed a 5-0 Ashes series thrashing of England earlier this year.

But he admitted he was surprised by the way England then recovered in the one-dayers.

"They played well to finish off the summer in Australia, we probably let our guard down a bit," said McGrath, who in 32 one-dayers against England has taken 50 wickets at just over 23 apiece.

"Since we've been over here we've prepared exactly the way we wanted to prepare and we've played some awesome cricket.

"To be honest, no team has really got close to us."

Only occasionally has McGrath, nicknamed Pigeon, had to eat his words when it comes to his clashes with England, notably two years ago when he predicted an Australia clean sweep of the Ashes only for England to win the 2005 series 2-1 instead.

"I have always enjoyed playing England. Potentially, it could be the last time I come up against these guys before I hang the boots up so it would be nice to finish on a good note."

McGrath has shown no sign of winding down as he bids for a third straight World Cup winners' medal

after starring in Australia's 1999 and 2003 triumphs.

In Saturday's 10-wicket rout of Bangladesh, he broke Wasim Akram's record of 55 World Cup wickets during a typically miserly spell of three for 16.

But McGrath, who has cited a desire to spend more time with his young family and wife Jane, who has suffered several bouts of cancer, as the reasons behind his retirement, said deciding to call it a day was about more than cricket.

"For me, I could keep playing, the body's feeling great," McGrath, bidding for a fourth straight appearance in the final after losing to Sri Lanka 11 years ago, added.

"I've still got that competitive edge when I'm out there but it's everything else that goes with it and that's the reason I retired. They're the things you have to weigh up."

Australia will have had eight days between games by the time they play England and McGrath said there were pros and cons to such a lengthy lay-off.

"It's good you can get around the islands and have a bit of a break. But when you are in a tournament like this and playing well, you want to keep the momentum up.

"Eight days off in between games, that's probably a bit too long."

# Mahela's satisfaction

AFP, St John's



ICC Cricket World Cup WEST INDIES 2007

Sri Lanka captain Mahela Jayawardene believes the side's current bowling attack is the best he's

known in 10 years as an international player.

As well as unique off-spinner Muttiah Muralidaran, left-arm pace bowler Chaminda Vaas and the often under-rated left-arm spinner Sanath Jayasuriya, who all played in the Sri Lanka side that won the 1996 World Cup, the attack now features extraordinary pace bowler Lasith Malinga.

"Right now with the combinations we have, I think we have a better bowling attack than I've ever known in the 10 years I've been in the side because we have so many attacking options nowadays," said Jayawardene.

Muralidaran, 34, has long been the fulcrum of the Sri Lanka attack, with over 1,000 wickets combined in Tests and one-day internationals.

Jayawardene said the secret of his success was a remorseless desire to improve.

"Murali for me is a guy who'd always liked challenges. He's now

trying new things in his career because he feels he needs to a stay a step ahead of the opposition.

"He's coming up with new ideas at practices, he's trying things out with us. He's always been like that."

"I've played with him for the last 10 years," Jayawardene added. "He's not satisfied with where he is, he always wants to try something new. It's not a surprise to see that he's still dominating world cricket."

However, he insisted that Sri Lanka's batsmen could pick Murali -- at least some of the time.

"We've been playing him for so long. But it's quite difficult now because he's turning it differently to be honest. He's not turning it as much although, if he wants, he can turn it a lot."

"But he feels that sometimes when he turns too much he's not getting the advantage. But with the straighter one yes, we can definitely pick him."

And now Jayawardene has an extra attacking option in 23-year-old Malinga whose distinctive slinky, round-arm action makes him especially difficult to face.

Malinga came to prominence during Sri Lanka's tour of England last year where, after squaring the Test series 1-1, Jayawardene's team thrashed their hosts 5-0 in the

subsequent one-dayers.

Last Wednesday, Malinga became the first bowler in one-day international history to take four wickets in four balls in a burst that so nearly gave his side an improbable Super Eights success against South Africa.

"He's developed very nicely in the last 12 months," Jayawardene said of Malinga. "Ever since England, that's where he took the new ball, especially in one-day cricket."

"He's had a brilliant impact for our team because he is a guy I can throw the ball to and ask him to bowl one over at any particular time and he will give me 100 percent."

"I don't have to ask him 'do you need a couple of overs to get going?'. That's something really good to have, because he can come in first ball and at 140 kph and be on the spot. You can't ask for anything else."

**Top-order batsman** Jayawardene said facing Malinga in the nets was sometimes even worse than playing him in the middle.

"Because we've played him so many times, our guys are finding it a bit easier. But, all of a sudden, he'll give you one out of the blue and either it will go just past your face or hit your toes."

## Solid South Africa

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The 32-year-old Langeveldt, who took five wickets in South Africa's win over Sri Lanka, led the attack after Smith won the toss and put Ireland in.

Andrew White top-scored with 30 and added 39 for the fifth wicket with Andre Botha (14) to lift Irish hopes after their tempo was broken by the rain interruptions.

Shaun Pollock exploited the early wet conditions by dismissing openers Jeremy Bray (nought) and William Porterfield (14) to finish with 2-17.

Pollock, whose form was a worry after his costly and wicket-less bowling against Australia and Sri Lanka, now has 377 wickets in 279 matches -- joint fourth on the all-time

list with Sri Lanka's Chaminda Vaas.

Eoin Morgan (28) and Niall O'Brien (25) built the innings through a 32-run third wicket stand. Morgan hit four boundaries before he fell off a short Andrew Hall delivery.

Left-hander O'Brien, who made a brilliant 72 in Ireland's three-wicket win which dumped Pakistan out in the first round, hit four boundaries before he became the first of Langeveldt's victims.

Dave Langford-Smith hit out in the slog overs to finish with 17 not out including a four and a six.

Ireland, who lost to England by 48 runs in their first Super Eights match, now meet New Zealand in their next match here on April 9.

## TH AFRICA V IRELAND SCOREBOARD

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|                                                                     |     |    |   |   |
|---------------------------------------------------------------------|-----|----|---|---|
| Johnston not out                                                    | 13  | 14 | 0 | 1 |
| McCallan c Boucher b Langeveldt                                     | 3   | 6  | 0 | 0 |
| Mooney c Boucher b Langeveldt                                       | 0   | 1  | 0 | 0 |
| Langford-Smith not out                                              | 17  | 10 | 1 | 1 |
| Extras: (b-1, lb-3, w-4)                                            | 8   |    |   |   |
| Total: (For 8 wickets in 35 overs)                                  | 152 |    |   |   |
| Did not bat: Rankin                                                 |     |    |   |   |
| Fall of wickets: 1-0, 2-31, 3-63, 4-77, 5-116, 6-119, 7-124, 8-124. |     |    |   |   |

| Bowler                                                        | O   | M  | R  | W  | NB/W |
|---------------------------------------------------------------|-----|----|----|----|------|
| Pollock                                                       | 7   | 2  | 17 | 2  | -    |
| Ntini                                                         | 7   | 2  | 14 | 0  | w-2  |
| Langeveldt                                                    | 7   | 0  | 41 | 3  | w-2  |
| Hall                                                          | 7   | 0  | 37 | 2  | -    |
| Kemp                                                          | 3   | 0  | 14 | 0  | -    |
| Kallis                                                        | 3   | 0  | 20 | 0  | -    |
| Smith                                                         | 1   | 0  | 5  | 1  | -    |
| South Africa                                                  | R   | B  | 4s | 6s |      |
| De Villiers c Porterfield b Rankin                            | 0   | 3  | 0  | 0  |      |
| Smith c & b Johnston                                          | 41  | 45 | 6  | 0  |      |
| Kallis not out                                                | 66  | 86 | 8  | 0  |      |
| Gibbs c White b Rankin                                        | 6   | 15 | 1  | 0  |      |
| Prince not out                                                | 47  | 44 | 3  | 1  |      |
| Extras: (w-1, nb-4)                                           | 5   |    |    |    |      |
| Total: (For 3 wickets in 31.3 overs)                          | 165 |    |    |    |      |
| Did not bat: Boucher, Kemp, Pollock, Hall, Langeveldt, Ntini. |     |    |    |    |      |
| Fall of wickets: 1-1, 2-71, 3-85.                             |     |    |    |    |      |

| Bowler         | O   | M | R  | W | NB/W      |
|----------------|-----|---|----|---|-----------|
| Rankin         | 7   | 1 | 26 | 2 | nb-1, w-1 |
| Langford-Smith | 5   | 0 | 31 | 0 | -         |
| Mooney         | 3.3 | 0 | 40 | 0 | nb-3      |
| Johnston       | 3   | 0 | 15 | 1 | -         |
| Botha          | 6   | 0 | 18 | 0 | -         |
| McCallan       | 5   | 0 | 27 | 0 | -         |
| White          | 2   | 0 | 8  | 0 | -         |

**Result: South Africa won by seven wickets (D/L method).**  
**Man-of-the-match: Jacques Kallis.**  
**Toss: South Africa.**  
**Umpires: D Harper (Australia) and S Taufel (Australia)**  
**Match referee: R Madugalle (Sri Lanka)**

## Kallis's reply to critics

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"After the last game I think we wanted to make sure we finished properly," Kallis said, referring to the match against Sri Lanka when South Africa nearly lost their way in the final overs.

South Africa were strongly placed at 206-5 chasing a modest total of 210 before winning by just one wicket, following fast bowler Lasith Malinga's four wickets off successive deliveries.

"We didn't want to leave anything to fate. The wicket was a little bit slow, perhaps it got a little bit slower after the rain so it was one of those grinding days," said Kallis. "It was nice to get some runs again. It was important to get through that new ball and then we just had to get through the middle period."

Also encouraging for South Africa was fast bowler Shaun Pollock's sharp opening two-wicket spell which rocked Ireland in

the morning session.

Pollock, who went wicketless in his last two matches against Australia and Sri Lanka, finished with two wickets for 17 runs in seven overs.

South Africa captain Graeme Smith said he was never worried over Pollock's form.

"Before that (wicketless performances) he had two man-of-the-series awards. Today was a good day, and he has my full support," said Smith.

The South African skipper said his team needed to keep the momentum in the remaining matches to enhance their chances of qualifying for the semifinals.

"The six points here are crucial for us. We need to win against Bangladesh, hopefully convincingly, and then prepare for three tough games," he said.

## Magnificent Milon

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Mohammad Shahjada took a steeper at the boundary off left-arm Saqlain Sajib. Milon toyed with the Rajshahi seamers as well the spinners. He ended with 144 off 89 balls. He struck nine massive sixes and eleven fours.

Needing only 7 off the final over, Rashedul and number 11 Mohammad Shukran held their nerve with Rashedul finishing it off in style. The young left-arm spinner Rashedul, who played for Kalabagan in the premier league this season, struck 35 cool runs off 74 balls. He shared a vital partnership of 174 runs for the eighth wicket with Milon.

Rajshahi fielders were beset by shock after having reduced Dhaka to certain defeat only 90 minutes before.

Earlier, Rajshahi ruled the roost as they rode on half-centuries from Rafiqul Islam (59) and Nayeem Islam (67) but it was a Kamrul Hasan's (48 off 36 balls) late-order flurry that took Rajshahi towards the big score. Nazmul took the first wicket of Lalmonohar Hossain in the morning.

In the other matches of the day, Barisal (252-6 in 47.5 overs) beat Chittagong (249 all out in 49.4 overs) by four wickets at the Fatullah Stadium while Golam Rahman's 109 off 123 balls was enough to give Sylhet (312 for 8 in 50 overs) a 18-run win over Khulna (294 all out in 50 overs).

### BRIEF SCORES

**RAJSHAHI:** 299-9 in 50 overs (Rafiqul 59, Nayeem 67, Shukran 3-54).

**DHAKA:** 300-9 in 50 overs (Milon 144, Rashedul 35, Delwar 3-46).

**CHITTAGONG:** 249 all out in 49.4 overs (Ehsanul 117\*, Rezaul 52, Ariful 5-38).

**BARISAL:** 252-6 in 47.5 overs (Iftekhar 58\*, Rokibul 56, Aziz 2-45).

**Result: Barisal won by four wickets.**

**SYLHET:** 312-8 in 50 overs (Golam 109, Rahman 80, Farid 3-52).

**KHULNA:** 294 all out in 50 overs (Islam 87, Rahman 4-70).

**Result: Sylhet won by 18 runs.**



PHOTO: AFP

Former Sri Lanka cricket chief Thilanga Sumathipala (C) is being taken to custody by security personnel in Colombo on Tuesday.

the day senior pro Tendulkar responded to media reports that Chappell had blamed the unhelpful attitude of senior players for the disastrous World Cup campaign.

In a rare public outburst, the normally reticent Tendulkar, 33, said he would be hurt if Chappell had questioned his or the team's commitment.

"I've given my heart and my soul for 17 years," said Tendulkar, statistically the most successful batsman ever with a world record 35 Test and 41 one-day centuries

"No coach had mentioned even in passing that my attitude was not correct," he told the Times of India, which ran his comments as the lead front-page story.

"It's not that we are defending ourselves. We do realise that we played badly and, as a team, we take full responsibility for that. But what hurt us most is if the coach has questioned our attitude."

India need to find Chappell's replacement quickly since they are due to tour Bangladesh in May for two Tests and three one-day internationals.

## Jail term for Sumathipala

AFP, Colombo

A court sentenced Sri Lanka's former cricket chief Thilanga Sumathipala to two years in jail Wednesday for breaking the island's immigration laws, officials said.

Sumathipala was charged with taking an alleged underworld leader named Dhammika Amarasinghe to England on forged travel documents to watch the 1999 Cricket World Cup.