

## Inzamam for one captain

PTI, Karachi

Inzamamul Haq, who has stepped down as captain after Pakistan's humiliating exit from the World Cup, on Thursday suggested to have one captain for both the Test and one-day sides for practical reasons.

Inzamam said he was not in favour of having separate captains for Pakistan's Test and one-day sides as other countries had experimented in the past but failed.

"I just feel that when you have one captain the players are also comfortable in both formats of the game as they know their captain's style and thinking. It is not easy adjusting for players to playing under different captains in different forms of the game," he said.

Inzamam, who has also retired from ODIs but has made it clear he wants to continue playing Test matches, said he was not surprised by allegations levelled against him after Pakistan's poor performance in the World Cup.

On the charges that he was an autocratic captain and ran a one-man show, Inzamam said in the Pakistan cricket history there were quite a few captains who were strong and did things their own way.

"Imran Khan is a prime example. He was a very strong captain compared to others. So if I tried to be strong which is wrong with that. But to say I didn't consult the selectors or other players while taking decisions is wrong. I always believed in seeking other opinion before deciding on something important regarding the team."

## Imran to sue Sarfraz

PTI, Karachi

Fed up with Sarfraz Nawaz making "defaming" allegations time and again, former Pakistan captain Imran Khan on Thursday promised to take legal action against the ex-teammate and ask him to prove his unsubstantiated and baseless statements.

"This man (Sarfraz) thinks he can say anything against anyone and get away because people don't like to associate themselves with someone of his calibre and low character. But this time he has said enough I am going to take him to court and file a defamation suit against him for damages or else he prove his allegations in court," Imran told a popular radio channel on Thursday.

Imran and Sarfraz formed one of the most lethal bowling attacks for Pakistan in their prime in the late 70s and early 80s and Imran has generally credited his teammate for making him a world class bowler.

But in recent years both have fallen out and Sarfraz has developed a knack of making loud statements and serious allegations against anyone under the sun.

In his latest outburst he told a television channel that Imran had demanded money from former Pakistan player Younus Ahmed to play him in the side on a tour.

### BCB's clarification

**FROM PAGE 21**  
a copy of the document that shows the CA has sent a 'Tax Invoice' to the BCB on February 28, 2007. Besides, a board high official while talking to the reporter admitted that the first instalment has already been disbursed.

In our report it was mentioned that board officials knew about the progress of the negotiation but were unaware of the signing of the agreement.

## Reza flies out

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following further investigation, it has been found that the injury is more serious than it was first thought and he would require 6 to 8 weeks of rehabilitation. It is expected that Baisya would make a full recovery within the period mentioned.

Baisya would return home on the first available flight from the West Indies.

All-rounder Forhad Reza will be flying in to join the squad as Baisya's replacement. Reza, who played for Bangladesh A in their recent tour of Sri Lanka, has played twelve one-day internationals for the Tigers. A right-handed batsman who bowls medium-pace, Reza made his international debut against Zimbabwe in Harare last year.

## BCB slams

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Reazuddin Al Mamun, a joint-secretary of the BCB, said.

"He should not have said so when we have a contract with him."

Whatmore's contract with BCB ends in May.

Whatmore conveyed his keenness to coach India after Chappell handed in his resignation on April 4.

"If there is a position and an opportunity there, I will be very interested," he told the television channel CNN-IBN.

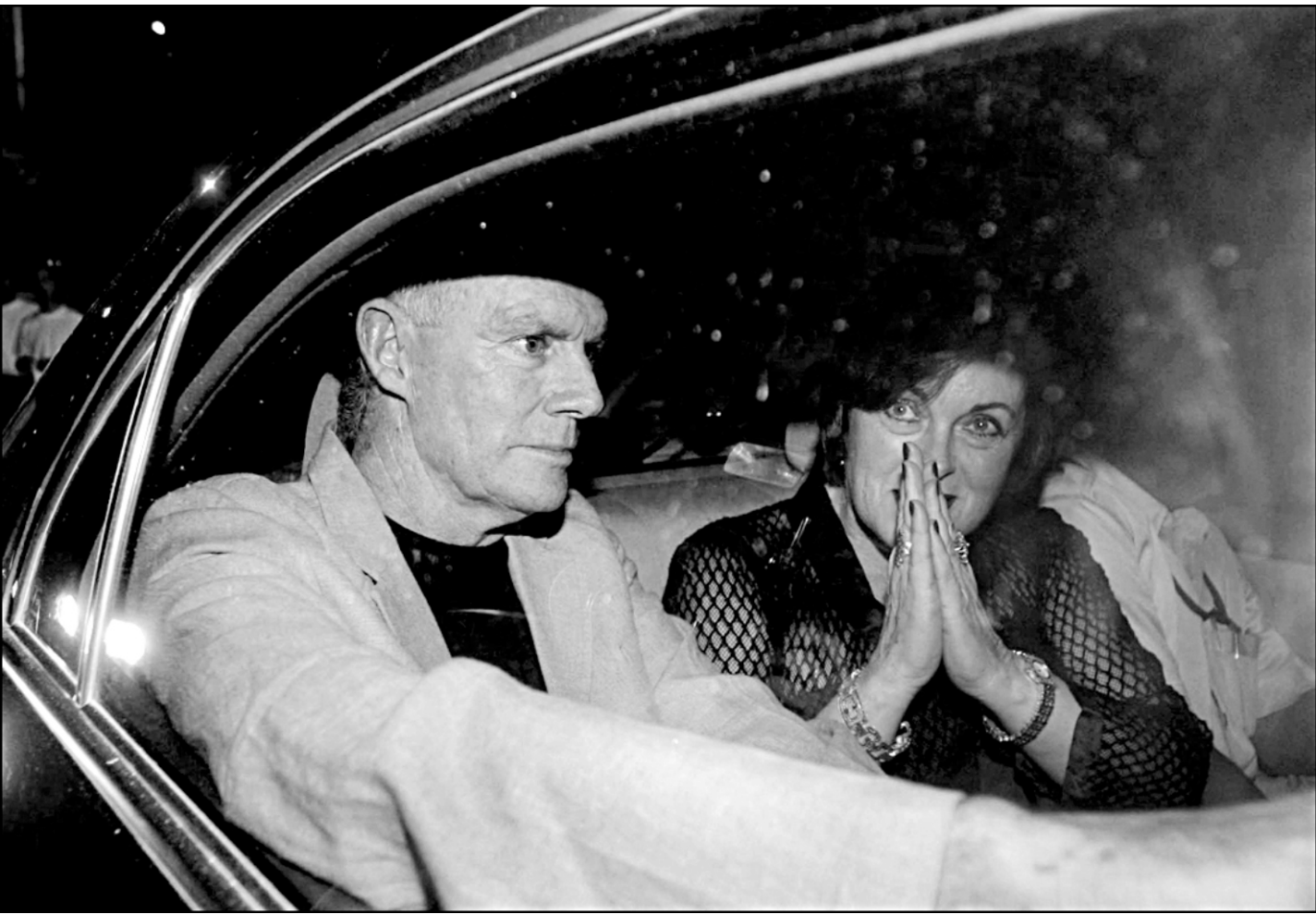


PHOTO: AFP

LEAVE US ALONE: Indian cricket coach Greg Chappell (L) and his wife Judy leave a city hotel in Mumbai on Wednesday.

## Players drove coach out?

AFP, Mumbai



Greg Chappell chose to walk out than be shown the door after it became increasingly evident that India's cricket chiefs would not extend his tenure as coach.

Chappell, the former Australian captain, sent an e-mail to the Board of Control for Cricket in India (BCCI) on Wednesday saying he did not want to seek an extension due to "family and personal" reasons.

The decision came ahead of crucial BCCI meetings here on Friday and Saturday to take stock of India's dismal World Cup performance where they were knocked out of the first round.

Just last week, Chappell had told confidants he would not resign and was keen to renew his two-year contract as coach that ended with the World Cup.

BCCI insiders say Chappell changed his mind after growing media speculation that he had fallen out with senior players, whom he is reported to have described as "a mafia" in one newspaper report.

Chappell distanced himself from the snowballing controversy, saying he will not speak till he had submitted his report to the BCCI on Friday.

The link finally snapped when senior pro Sachin 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 said he would be hurt if Chappell had questioned his or the team's commitment.

"No coach had mentioned even in passing that my attitude was not correct," said Tendulkar, statistically the most successful batsman ever with a world record 35 Test and 41 one-day centuries.

"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."

Former India players and television experts, Ajay Jadeja and Arun Lal, were convinced Chappell's days were numbered ever since the World Cup ended.

"If Tendulkar was forced to speak, things must have been really bad between Chappell and the senior players," said Jadeja.

"I will believe Tendulkar more than Chappell. And the BCCI also would rather stick with the players."

Lal said he had also not expected Chappell to continue.

"His mandate was to make a team for the World Cup. Maybe two years was not enough, but no one also expected such a poor performance," he said.

Under Chappell, India won 32 of their 62 one-day internationals and seven of 18 Tests. But the team faltered when it mattered most.

India, one of the pre-tournament favourites, were upset by Bangladesh in the first match and also lost to Sri Lanka to record their worst World Cup performance since

1979.

Chappell will get his chance to apprise the BCCI of what went wrong in the Caribbean -- including his assessment of all players -- at the brainstorming session here on Friday.

The outspoken Australian batting great generated more heat, controversy and headlines in two years as India's coach than his genial predecessor John Wright did in five years on the job.

Chappell became the media's whipping boy early in his tenure when criticism of Sourav Ganguly's laid-back attitude saw the country's most successful captain being thrown out of the team.

Chappell's displeasure at the exclusion of juniors like Suresh Raina for the World Cup, as revealed in a text message to a journalist, raised the heckles of both the selectors and senior players.

"If Greg had his way, even Sachin Tendulkar would have been dropped," the Kolkata-based Telegraph newspaper quoted an unnamed selector as saying.

Influential cricket officials believe the team has not moved forward in the two years that Chappell has been coach. Many say the 2003 World Cup finalists have fallen behind other teams.

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

## GP, Nimbus

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Al Mamun and CEO Mahmudur Rahman were also present.

The sponsorship deal have three packages: Title sponsorship for three one-day internationals and two Tests including five awards (highest scorer Test and ODIs, highest wicket-takers Tests and ODIs and fastest fifty in ODIs), perimeter boards and the mid-wall of the galleries at the Sher-e-Bangla National Stadium in Mirpur and rights for bowling ends, mid-wicket mats and branding the boundary rope.

India arrive in Dhaka on May 7 and open their campaign with the first ODI in Dhaka on May 10. The next limited-overs matches are scheduled for Dhaka and Chittagong on May 12 and 15 respectively.

The first Test will begin in Chittagong on May 18 while the two teams return to Dhaka for the second and final Test from May 25.

## Day seeks

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forward to a better performance from his batsmen in the remaining Super Eights games.

"We need to make more runs. We were not able to score upfront in the last two matches," said the Bangladesh coach, whose side made 104 against Australia and 174 against New Zealand.

Whatmore was the coach of Sri Lanka's 1996 World Cup-winning squad in the sub-continent, but said the current Sri Lankan and Bangladeshi squads were different from the champion team.

"We needed to create match-winners (in Bangladesh), but Sri Lanka already had match-winners in 1996. That tournament was in the sub-continent," he said.

"Sri Lanka have more fast bowlers than they had in those days. They have players who play well in conditions outside the sub-continent. I think that is main reason why they have been more consistent in the past 12 months or so."

## Mahela sick of tight matches

AFP, St John's

Sri Lanka captain Mahela Jayawardene said he wasn't sure how many more tight finishes he could take at this World Cup after his side's nerve-jangling two-run win against England in the Super Eights.

The 1996 champions survived a dramatic England rally at the Sir Vivian Richards Stadium when pace bowler Dilhara Fernando clean bowled Ravi Bopara off the last ball of the match.

England, who'd collapsed to 133 for six in pursuit of 236 for victory, finished on 233 for eight.

For Sri Lanka, who'd lost by one wicket to South Asia last week after fast bowler Lasith Malinga's record four wickets in four balls almost set up an astounding win, victory meant they'd taken a step nearer the semifinals.

"I don't want to play this kind of cricket," a relieved Jayawardene told reporters. "There was no strategy, I can't even remember what I was thinking."

"The guys have a lot of character in the team and they showed it today (Wednesday) again. I'm very happy with the two points."

Bopara, who made a career-best 52 off 53 balls, put on 87 for the seventh wicket with Paul Nixon (42) that nearly saw England home.

"The South Africa game was also too close for comfort but it just shows that everyone is fighting for it. It's an important tournament and finishes like this are good for cricket," said Jayawardene.

"We had them at 133 for six and thought we were just one ball away from exposing the tail. But Paul Nixon and Ravi Bopara batted really well and took it to the last few overs."

One concern for Sri Lanka was the way in which their innings stalled after dangerous Sanath Jayasuriya went for a brisk 25.

Opener Upul Tharanga top-scored with 62 and Jayawardene himself scored 56. But the skipper was concerned by his side's failure to press on.

"We were probably 20 runs short again today," he said after Wednesday's match. "I threw away my wicket. In the last 10 overs we did not capitalise and lost quite a few wickets. We need to iron out all those problems," he said.

Sri Lanka's next match is against New Zealand, also on course for the last four, in Grenada a week on Thursday.

## Cricket losing

**FROM PAGE 24**  
"We had basketball in the 1970s and 1980s and even people like Michael Jordan couldn't convince us we should all change to basketball," said Richards.

"It's just for us to try and get certain things in place, our preparation, our development programme. If we can give an avenue for young individuals to play and make a decent living out of it, then we could be back again."

## A cricket

**FROM PAGE 24**  
"One thing struck me, even at that time, he never made any excuses and stood by his troops," he said. Ashraf announced that an indoor cricket centre in the Pakistani city of Lahore would be named after Woolmer.

"He lived cricket, he loved cricket and he died for cricket," he added.

Mourners including leading crickets such as former South African vice-captain Nicky Boje, spinner Paul Adams and opening batsman Gary Kirsten.

Bert Erickson, of the Avondale cricket club in the Western Cape, told mourners how Woolmer had defied apartheid era racial barriers by coaching teams of colour and setting up the first mixed-race boys' cricket team in the province.

"The great umpire has called time and lifted the balls and our captain has gone back to the pavilion," he said.

## Vaughan eyes semis spot

AFP, St John's



England captain Michael Vaughan insists his team can still reach the World Cup semifinals despite an agonising two-run defeat against Sri Lanka and a looming Sunday showdown with old rivals, and defending champions, Australia.

"It's a big game. But not many people gave us much hope of turning up and putting Sri Lanka under pressure. We'll try to do the same on Sunday and hopefully get the two points," said Vaughan.

Set 236 to win against Sri Lanka, England finished on 233 for eight after 21-year-old all-rounder Ravi Bopara, in only his fifth match at this level, was bowled off the last ball by Dilhara Fernando needing just three to win.

Defeat was especially tough on Bopara, whose career-best 52 not out nearly guided England, who'd collapsed to 133 for six before his stand of 87 with wicket-keeper Paul Nixon (42), to an improbable win.

But defeat left England fifth in the standings on two points ahead of their return to the Sir Vivian Richards Stadium to take on table

toppers Australia.

Sri Lanka, New Zealand and South Africa -- the other teams widely tipped to make the semis -- occupy the next three spots.

If England are to have a realistic chance of joining them, they need to beat either Australia here on Sunday or world number one South Africa in Barbados on April 17.

England held Sri Lanka to 235 all out, with fast bowler Sajid Mahmood taking a career-best four for 50.

But that was always likely to prove a tough target for a side with a faltering top three.

Vaughan was caught behind for nought as England slumped to 11 for two.

Then the unlucky run out of Ian Bell for 47, after bowler Sanath Jayasuriya deflected the ball onto the stumps, sparked a collapse that saw England lose four wickets for 32 runs as 101 for two quickly became 133 for six.

"We lost two early wickets but we were 101 for two with 25 overs left -- that's a position you'd buy every game," said Vaughan.

"But we just didn't get a guy to that 80 or 100 which we keep talking about," he added of an innings where Kevin Pietersen, rated the world's leading one-day batsman, top scored with 58 before being caught and bowled by off-spinner Muttiah Muralidaran.

Vaughan hinted that opener Andrew Strauss, close to selection for this match, could come in after Ed Joyce made just 10.

"It was a difficult decision but we are going to discuss what we feel is the best formula going into the game on Sunday," said the captain.

Bopara, asked what his plan was when he came to the crease, said: "I had a quick chat with 'Nicko' about knocking it about for the next 10 or 15 overs and then seeing where we were at for the last five."

There was added tension when Fernando stopped in delivery as he prepared to bowl the final ball before re-starting his run and dismissing Bopara.

"I think he was just trying to see which way I'd go. But I can't stop him from stopping," said Bopara.

Vaughan admitted he thought the game was up when Bopara came in.

"It was looking a long shot to be honest," he said.

"The way Bopara played a gem of a flick over fine leg (for four in the last over off Fernando), I thought it was there. Full credit to Fernando. He held his nerve in the last two balls."

## Acting coach on cards

ICC Cricket

CRICINFO, undated

The extreme developments of the last couple of days have prompted the Board of Control for Cricket in India (BCCI) to take no chances with the high-powered meetings set to take place in Mumbai on April 6 and 7.

While it debates -- and hopefully decides -- on the various crucial issues it has suddenly been faced with, there will be measures in place to ensure secrecy is maintained.

To that end, the board has decided to keep the media out of the Wankhede Stadium premises, where its offices are situated and where it is scheduled to meet. The board has also asked both Greg Chappell and Sanjay Jagdale, coach and manager for the World Cup, not to send the reports sought from them in any form -- fax or email -- to board members, but instead to table them directly before Sharad Pawar, the president, at the assigned time.

It has already instructed the players to refrain from making any remarks to the media, especially on the currently sensitive topics doing

the rounds in Indian cricket.

Rahul Dravid, who has steered clear of the limelight for the past few days, holidaying in Kerala with his family, will speak to the office-bearers at the meeting but submit no report. The word on Thursday was that Sachin Tendulkar had also been asked to attend the meeting but this could not be confirmed.

The two-day session will be the first time the BCCI would have met to discuss India's early exit from the World Cup and its fallout, including Wednesday's decision by Chappell not to seek an extension of his coaching contract. Rumours of an emergency meeting convened at Pawar's residence on Wednesday evening, soon after the Chappell news broke, proved to be just rumour.

And so, at 10am on Friday, Chappell and Jagdale will hand over their reports to Pawar. Also present will be Niranjan Shah, the secretary, Mohinder Pandove, the joint secretary, N Srinivasan, the treasurer, four vice-presidents, the chairman of selectors and the administrative head. Lalit Modi, who is in London at the moment, is the one vice-president unlikely to attend the meeting.



PHOTO: COURTESY

Winners of the Independence Cup Table Tennis tournament pose after the prize-giving ceremony at the Wooden Floor Gymnasium yesterday.

## LOCAL SNIPPETS

SPORTS REPORTER

GM Ziaur Rahman's win over defending champion IM Enamul Hossain gave him the solo lead in the 33rd National Chess Championship at the National Sports Council hall-room yesterday.

After four rounds, he has acquired 3.5 points, followed by Enamul, GM Refaat Bin Sattar and IM Abdullah Al Rakib who are all on three points.

Rakib take on leader Zia in today's fifth round match.

### INDEPENDENCE DAY TABLE TENNIS

Edison clinched the Independence Day Table Tennis competition after he beat Ripon 4-0 in the men's singles final at the Wooden Floor Gymnasium.

In the boy's singles final, Antu brushed aside Sabbir 4-2 while in the girl's final, Fatima beat Sharmin 4-1 at the end of the two-day meet.

### DIV I CRICKET

Orient Sporting Club took one step towards a possible promotion to the premier league after a crushing 111-run victory over rivals Surjo Torun in the Kai-Altech First Division League at the Fatullah Stadium.

In the crucial super league affair, Nadim (80\*) and Masum (76) propelled Orient to 252 for 6 in their 50

overs. In reply, Surjo Torun were bowled out for 141 runs in 33.2 overs with Raihan (4-25) and Aminul (3-49) being the bowling heroes. Only in form Nazim fired for the Dhanmondi-based side as he hit a polished 45.

At the Dhanmondi Cricket Stadium, Rupali Bank shocked BKSP by three wickets after they chased down 193 runs set by BKSP in 42.3 overs. Shumon was the top scorer for the bank side with 73 runs. In the other match of the day, Gazi Tank (225-4 in 38.4 overs) beat Azad Sporting Club (224-10 in 49.5 overs) by six wickets.

### BOXING CAMP

A month-long boxing coaching programme for school, college and university students will open at the Muhammad Ali Boxing Stadium from April 7. The training camp will be arranged by Khilgaon Progoti Sangsad with help from the Bangladesh Amateur Boxing Federation.

Interested participants can submit their passport-sized photographs to the Boxing Stadium authorities from 4 to 7pm from today.

## Hopes on standby

**FROM PAGE 24**  
been out of action for a month since he suffered a hip-flexor injury.

But despite the break he said the thought of making his World Cup debut was tantalising.

"If I had to walk into a World Cup semifinal it would be daunting but it's a challenge I'd like to face and it would be a place to make a name for yourself," he said.

"I've seen most conditions and played in them so I'll back myself to perform in one-day cricket wherever it's played and if it's in a World Cup semifinal it will be a World Cup semifinal."

Hopes, who played the last of his nine one-dayers a year ago in Bangladesh, was this summer shut out by Victorian Cameron White's explosive batting at number seven in the tri-series.

But despite being put on standby, he is not convinced he will get the chance to play in the World Cup.

"I'm preparing to play but I'm assuming Shane's injury isn't that bad," Hopes said.

"I'll be surprised. I think he'll stick this one out."

Australia still intend giving Watson as much time as possible to return for the semifinals in just over a fortnight but are aware they need a like-for-like replacement in case he fails to recover.