



Bangladesh pace spearhead Mashrafe Bin Mortaza celebrates his wicket of West Indies opener Devon Smith (L) with an excited captain Habibul Bashar during their World Cup Super Eights match at the Kensington Oval in Bridgetown on Thursday.

Dav will have the final say

Cricket

SPORTS REPORTER

Bangladesh Cricket Board (BCB) desired that national coach Dav Whatmore stay for the upcoming home series against India to be held next month.

It was understood that it is for Whatmore to decide his short-term future with the Tigers but the board has maintained that a six-member committee, named at an executive meeting Wednesday night, will negotiate the issue.

BCB president M Abdul Aziz spoke at a press conference after the meeting held at a local convention centre where general secretary Mahbubul Anam also spoke.

"There were discussions regarding the coach but no, we haven't made any decision yet," said the BCB chief.

"We have a six-member committee which will negotiate with the coach upon returning from the World Cup. The committee will also decide on the captain and vice-captain since there is no executive meeting before the tour," said Aziz, who is also the agriculture secretary.

The current contract of the Sri Lankan-born Australian coach runs till April 30 but as his arrival from the West Indies with the national side is not until April 26, the parley will be quite high because of the short timeframe.

He will convey his wishes regarding extension as well as negotiations after the West Indies match, it was learned.

When asked about his recent comments regarding his aspiration to be India's next coach, the president said: "We condemned the remarks but the scale of action was not up to the mark because the World Cup is still on."

After Greg Chappell announced his resignation as coach of India following their failed World Cup campaign, Bangladesh coach Whatmore said that he was interested in coaching India.

But the board members insisted that it was clearly Whatmore's decision whether he will stay on as the Tigers coach.

BCB has a shortlist of possible new coaches but again, they would wait for Whatmore's assessment.

The six-member committee includes vice-president Shah Nurul Kabir, Mahbub Anam, joint secretary Rafiqul Islam, cricket operations vice-chairman ASM Faruque, member of disciplinary committee Shamim Kabir and marketing committee vice-chairman Salman Ispahani.

The first order of duty for the six members would be to extend Whatmore's stay till the end of May to see the India series through.

Regarding the captain and the strong view that there might be a split in captaincy for both versions of the game, the BCB general secretary gave a clear signal that Habibul Bashar may not stay on as one-day captain.

"We have no difference of opinions with the media in this regard," was all Mahbub Anam said, making it sure that the position of Bashar as a one-day player is also under the scanner.

The Board also announced that two giant screens will be assembled at the Sher-e-Bangla National Stadium in Mirpur by a local company who have also given the board 10,000 US dollars. The screens, which will show instant replays and other information, will be in place for the India series. Mirpur will host two one-dayers and a Test match.

India are due to arrive in Dhaka on May 7 to play two Tests and three one-day internationals.



Did U Know?

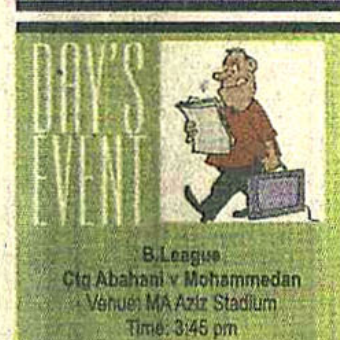
The Kensington Oval at Bridgetown in Barbados will hold the grand final of the Cricket World Cup 2007 on April 28. The venue, affectionately called as "the Mecca of Caribbean cricket", is steeped in history as it was the venue for the first Test in the Caribbean in 1930.



Michael Vaughan
(England cricket captain)
"I won't be retiring from one-day cricket. I am not stupid."



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AUSTRALIA v NEW ZEALAND

Cracker of a match

AFP, St George's



New Zealand captain Stephen Fleming insisted he won't copy Sri Lanka's controversial tactics and rest key bowlers for Friday's World Cup clash against champions Australia.

Both sides, whose match at Grenada's National Stadium is their last in the Super Eights, are already through to the semifinals and won't face each other in the last four.

Sri Lanka, in a similar position to New Zealand, omitted left-arm quick Chaminda Vaas and off-spinner Muttiah Muralidaran from a side that suffered a seven-wicket defeat against Australia on Monday in Grenada.

Mahela Jayawardene, the Sri Lanka captain, defended the decision on the grounds of rest and injury-prevention.

But it also had the effect of denying Australia's batsmen a fresh look at Sri Lanka's two senior

bowlers ahead of a possible meeting in the April 28 final in Barbados.

However, Fleming insisted New Zealand wouldn't compromise their chances of making it four straight one-day international wins against Australia after a 3-0 Chappell-Hadlee triumph on home soil in February.

"We'll go in with the best possible team bar injury scares," said Fleming in a clear indication that strike fast bowler Shane Bond would play.

"If someone needs to be rested from an injury point of view we'll be cautious with that."

"We want to continue where we left off against Australia in New Zealand. They're a tough side if they get on top of you and they've got a point to prove."

New Zealand bounced back from defeat by Sri Lanka, their only loss in the tournament so far, with a five-wicket victory against South Africa in Grenada on Saturday.

Now, barring an extraordinarily huge win against Australia which would see them change places in the table, they will face Sri Lanka in the first semifinal in Jamaica on Tuesday.

Australia are set to take on South Africa in the other semifinal in St Lucia on Wednesday.

"It's a great opportunity before the semifinals start to maintain the standards we had against South Africa," Fleming explained.

"Part of the selection (against Australia) is looking forward to Sri Lanka and assessing what conditions we'll get in Jamaica and Barbados and just make sure the team picked for Australia covers those bases."

Australia, defending a 26-game unbeaten record at the World Cup, face a key decision over all-rounder Shane Watson.

The pace bowler whose presence gives Australia a genuine fifth option in their attack, sustained a calf strain while bowling against Bangladesh in Antigua on March 31 and has missed his side's last three matches.

If he doesn't take the field against New Zealand that will place a huge question mark over his participation in the rest of the tournament.

New Zealand have never won a World Cup, or even reached the

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Hayden's catch

INTERNET, undated



Matthew Hayden on Wednesday had the ultimate sporting day: he watched England get smashed on television then caught a 136kg marlin.

Hayden, Adam Gilchrist and Ricky Ponting were among a group of players who went fishing off Grenada.

The players thought watching England get thumped by South Africa on the fishing boat's television would be the highlight of their day... until the marlin struck.

Hayden was asleep when the marlin hit and woke to the sound of a wildly hissing ratchet.

The players watched in awe as the fish leapt twice out of the water beside the boat as an exhausted Hayden hauled it in after a 25-minute duel.

"Marlin attract a lot of attention, especially big marlin," Hayden said.

"We had about 80 people there to greet us when we got to shore."

"It was just magnificent. My arms are sore. I might have to get a massage later this afternoon."

The landing of the marlin

prompted a brief celebration, with a bottle of Moët being cracked open and Hayden had a quick swig as he posed with the fish before it was sent away to local charity houses.

World Society for the Protection of Animals spokesman Jordan Burke raised concerns about the catch.

"The capture of marlin is often a long and protracted ordeal for the fish. That's why we not only oppose it, but all sports fishing," Burke said.

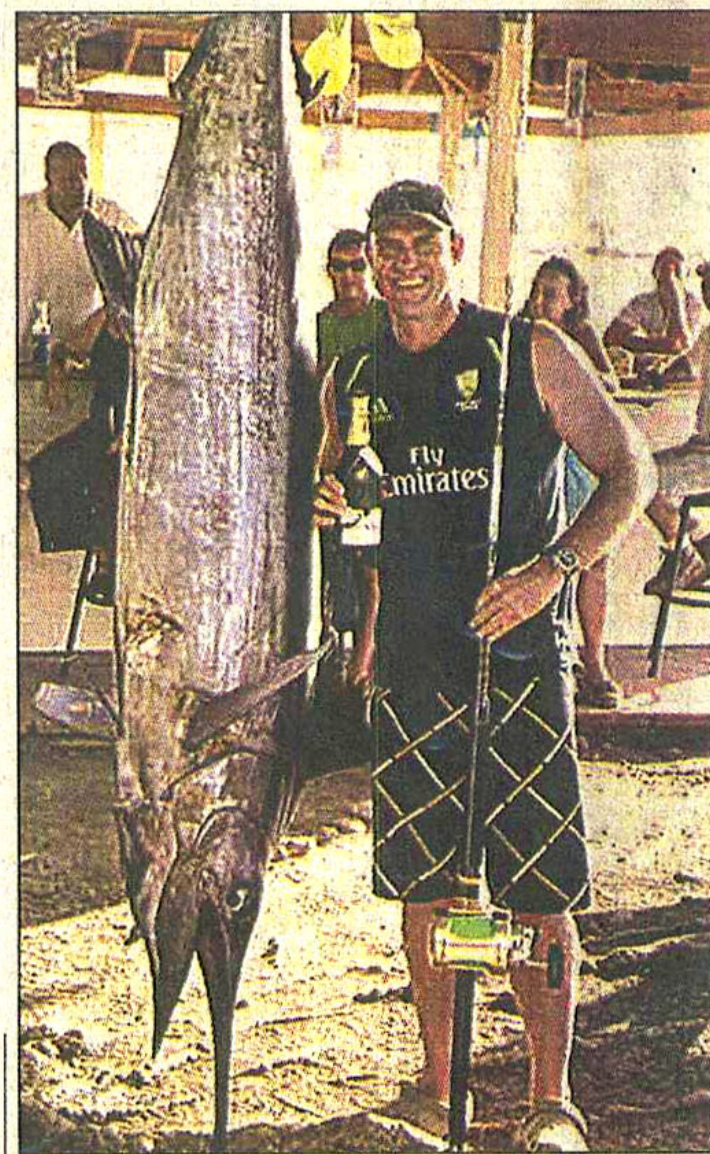
In New South Wales there is a two-bag limit for striped marlin, while not releasing black marlin is illegal.

Photos of the marlin became a curiosity piece at the hotel shared by teams by the Australia, Ireland, New Zealand and Sri Lanka World Cup squads.

Sri Lanka coach "Long Tom" Moody came over to inspect it after Ricky Ponting told him "the fish was as big as you".

The landing of the giant fish capped a memorable tournament for Hayden, who has been one of the Cup's leading run-scorers and was granted honorary citizenship of St Kitts for scoring the event's fastest century.

He was also given a greyhound by an St Kitts resident for the same achievement. He will fly home soon after the tournament ends to join wife Kellie for the birth of their third child.



Australia player Matthew Hayden displays a 135kg marlin he caught off the Grenada coast on a fishing trip with teammates on Tuesday.

Reds blank Brothers



SPORTS REPORTER

Muktijoddha came alive in the second half as Ibrahim Bozaz and Saiful Islam Moni complimented each other to score a goal apiece in their 2-0 win over Brothers Union in yesterday's B. League clash of the titans at the Bangabandhu National Stadium.

The victory, their fourth in seven matches, helped the Reds join Abahani at second place with 14 points and stay on the heels of leaders Sheikh Russel, who now have the benefit of just one point.

Brothers, however, stayed among the bottom half after two defeats. The defending two-time Premiership champions, who have dropped ten points so far to remain on eight points from six outings, have a tough task to bounce back in the race.

"Yes, it's getting difficult but never lose hope. I keep trying and trying," said the Oranges' wily Indian coach Sayeed Nayeemuddin after the loss.

"We not only missed goals but gave away goals too," repented the former Indian international and national coach.

Brothers' ageing backline fought well to keep their rivals at bay in the first half after Muktijoddha, who drew 2-2 in the previous round against Farashganj, had an edge in the midfield.

Inspired defending by veteran

centre-back Jewel Rana denied Moni and Munna from converting early chances while Alfaz shot the ball wide from a difficult angle as the Reds built pressure in the first half hour.

Moroccan midfielder Ibrahim then forced a fine save by Mohammed Ali at the Brothers goal before Muktijoddha defence was tested for the first time. Two minutes from the short whistle, Brothers' Nigerian striker Junior beat goalkeeper Titumir with a cross from the left but fullback Titu cleared the ball from the goalmouth to deny Faisal a shot.

Nayeemuddin made one change shortly before the break, replacing forward Manju with midfielder Mamun in a bid to pack the midfield. The play succeeded as the Oranges created a number of chances in the early second period.

Rintu almost caught Titumir napping with a 40-yarder but the Muktijoddha keeper managed to keep the ball out. Tapu then came in for Faisal to strengthen the attack and the substitute striker almost scored with a header on a

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Young team on the cards

Cricket

PTI, Mumbai

Ageing warriors Sachin Tendulkar and Sourav Ganguly are likely to be retained but a few other senior cricketers may not be so lucky when the Indian team for the upcoming tour of Bangladesh is picked here on Friday.

The national selectors have an unenviable task given the turmoil in Indian cricket following the team's dismal performance in the World Cup and the subsequent unceremonious exit of coach Greg Chappell.

The Cricket Board's directive, after the meeting of the all-powerful Working Committee here on April 7, to choose a young team has put the five 'wise men' under severe pressure.

Selection panel chief Dilip Vengsarkar and his colleagues

Venkatapathy Raju, Bhopinder Singh, Sanjay Jagdale and Ranjib Biswal will hold discussions with captain Rahul Dravid, already appointed skipper for the tour as well as the subsequent visit to England and Ireland, and newly appointed cricket manager Ravi Shastri before deciding the squads for the tour from May 7 to 29.

Vengsarkar has already indicated that around 20 players would be chosen for the two teams, but a wholesale sacking of the seniors appears unlikely. Chappell had reportedly questioned the commitment of the seniors in the World Cup and had called for younger players to be inducted in the team.

The biggest name in Indian cricket -- Tendulkar -- is expected to be chosen along with another ex-captain Ganguly after having given a satisfactory explanation to the Cricket Board for his outburst in the media against Chappell.

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TODAY'S MATCH

Team	Time	Venue
Australia v New Zealand	7:30 pm	Grenada

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