

Mollah not in new ad-hoc committee

SPORTS REPORTER

The National Sports Council (NSC) on Sunday approved the new ad-hoc committee of the Dhaka Divisional Sports Association.

The previous committee submitted by the association was rejected by Sports Adviser Tapan Chowdhury, who is also the chairman of the NSC, due to presence of 'controversial organisers', an NSC source told.

The NSC source added that the new committee represented as many districts of Dhaka division as possible and organisers who have a clean image.

From the old 15-member committee, secretary Golam Rasul Mollah and members Ali Imam Tapan, Iqbal Ahmed, Shamsul Alam Anu and Shahiduzzaman Reza were not included in the new list.

The new committee: President (Divisional Commissioner), vice-presidents: (DIG Police, additional divisional commissioner), secretary: Tariquzzaman Nannu (sports officer of Sports Directorate), treasurer: Kazi Golam Kuddus Nabi (Dhaka DSA), members: Fakhruzzaman (Faridpur), Amir Ahmed Chowdhury (Mymensingh), Anwar Hossain (additional district commissioner, Gazipur), AZM Ismail Babul (Narayanganj), MA Bari Khan (Kishoreganj), Khorshed Alam Chowdhury (Manikganj), Sohrab Hossain (Gopalganj), Muksedur Rahman Himu (Sherpur), Abdus Salam (Shariatpur) and Moajjem Hossain (Rajbari).

WI, Eng fined

AFP, Bridgetown

England and the West Indies have been fined for slow over-rates during their World Cup Super Eights match here on Saturday.

Match referee Ranjan Madugalle imposed the fines after Michael Vaughan's side was ruled to be two overs short and Brian Lara's side one over short of their targets at the scheduled finish when time allowances were taken into consideration.

"In accordance with the ICC Code of Conduct regulations governing over-rate penalties, players are fined five per cent of their match fees for every over their side fails to bowl in the allotted time, with the captain fined double that amount," said an ICC statement.

Inter insist

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All season speculation has surrounded the future of Mancini, whose original deal was due to expire at the end of the current season.

But Moratti said Mancini had been offered a new contract.

"We're talking about a four or five year deal, four years plus the option of another 12 months," Moratti said.

Mancini was delighted with Moratti's offer.

Barca leave

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used his left foot to get Zaragoza's second strike. Celta stay one place above the relegation zone despite the loss but are now only ahead of Levante on goal difference after the Valencia-based side drew 1-1 with Getafe.

Levante's Ghanaian winger Riga Mustapha stabbed a loose ball home in a goalmouth scramble after just four minutes but Getafe equalised just before the hour through David Belenguier.

Gimnastic Tarragona's chances of avoiding an immediate return to the Spanish second division worsened when the bottom club went down 1-0 at Real Mallorca.

"We are going to carry on playing as well as we can but I don't have a crystal ball. If we play as well as we did last week (when they beat Zaragoza) then we can still survive," said Gimnastic coach Paco Flores.

"But I'm not going to try and trick anyone nor build up anybody's dreams," added Flores, well aware that time is running out.

Mallorca's Victor Casadesus got the only goal of the match after 20 minutes with a low hard-driven right foot shot from just inside the area.



Did U Know?

Former England captain Graham Gooch became the only player to win three consecutive man-of-the-match awards in the 1987 World Cup.



PHOTO: COURTESY

Chairman of AKTEL Salahuddin Kasem Khan (back row 2nd from R) is seen alongside guests Major General Masud Uddin Chowdhury, Malaysian High Commissioner Dato' Abdul Malek Bin Abdul Aziz (back row 2nd from L) and the winners of the AKTEL Cup golf tournament at the Savar Golf Club on Saturday.

India in a hurry



AFP, New Delhi

Three former India captains, including batting legend Sunil Gavaskar, were Monday named as members of a high-powered panel to select Greg Chappell's successor as national coach.

Srinivas Venkatraghavan and Ravi Shastri are the other ex-captains on the seven-member committee headed by Indian cricket chief Sharad Pawar, the Board of Control for Cricket in India (BCCI) said.

Chappell, a former Australian skipper, declined to renew his two-year term for "family and personal reasons" after India crashed out in the first round of the World Cup in the Caribbean.

Shastri, now a popular television commentator, was named interim coach-manager for next month's tour of Bangladesh, but he declined to continue after that, citing media commitments.

India must find a new man before the tour of England in July; with reports suggesting that outgoing Bangladesh coach Dav Whatmore and Sri Lanka's Australian coach Tom Moody are serious contenders.

Gavaskar, Venkatraghavan and Shastri were members of the panel that picked Chappell as coach in May 2005.

The influential Gavaskar said in his syndicated newspaper column last weekend that appointing Chappell

had not served the team's purpose.

"When Chappell took over, there was optimism all around that Indian cricket would be ready to challenge Australia for the title of the best team in the world," Gavaskar wrote.

"Instead, at the end of his tenure, Indian cricket is down in the dumps with a first-round exit in the World Cup, and is as fractured and divided as seldom before.

"Despite all this, and him (Chappell) saying in an interview that the BCCI is run like Zimbabwe, the BCCI is reportedly offering him a place as a consultant to the National Cricket Academy.

"It's never easy sacking somebody, however incapable and inefficient, but to give another job which deals with the future of Indian cricket, makes one wonder if we will ever get out of the inferiority complex syndrome."

Gavaskar, the first batsman to reach the 10,000-run mark in Test cricket, also took a dig at reports that Chappell was going to head the Australian Cricket Academy.

"If true, then it could be the best thing that has happened for world cricket," the former Indian opener wrote.

"Now even Ireland have a chance of beating Australia sooner (rather) than later."

BCCI secretary Niranjan Shah, treasurer N. Srinivasan and joint secretary Mohinder Pandove were the others named on the new panel to pick the coach.

Officials for semifinals

AFP, Kingston

Umpires for the World Cup semifinals have been announced by the International Cricket Council.

In Tuesday's first semifinal between New Zealand and Sri Lanka, at Jamaica's Sabina Park, the on-field umpires will be Rudi Koertzen of South Africa and Australia's Simon Taufel.

The TV umpire will be Daryl Harper, also of Australia, and the fourth umpire will be Pakistan's Asad Rauf with Mike Procter, the former South Africa all-rounder, and the match referee.

Wednesday's second semifinal between champions Australia and South Africa will be under the control of experienced West Indies official Steve Bucknor and Pakistan's Aleem Dar.

New Zealand's Billy Bowden will be the TV umpire with England's Mark Benson the reserve official. Jeff Crowe, the former New Zealand batsman, will be the match referee.

An ICC statement said a decision on the officials for Saturday's final in Barbados would be made in due course.

The line-up for that match will be dependent upon the finalists, the ICC's policy of 'neutral' umpires meaning it is no longer possible for officials to stand in a match in which their own country is playing.

For example, were Australia -- bidding for a third straight World Cup title -- to reach the final, the 36-year-old Taufel would be prevented from officiating regardless of the fact that in November he won his third successive ICC Umpire of the Year award.

Koertzen, 58, set a new one-day international umpiring record on Saturday when he stood in his 173rd match during the Super Eights match between England and the West Indies in Barbados.

That beat the record set by David Shepherd of England who stood in 172 one-day matches before retiring in 2005.

Razzak in ODI

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wickets in the tournament.

BATSMEN
1. Kevin Pietersen (ENG) 827, 2. Ricky Ponting (AUS) 804, 3. Sanath Jayasuriya (SRI) 769, 4. Mike Hussey (AUS) 766, 5. Graeme Smith (RSA) 753, 6. Ramnaresh Sarwan (WIS) 746, 7. Matthew Hayden (AUS) 743, 8. Mahendra Dhoni (IND) 739, 9. Jacques Kallis (RSA) 733, 10. Andrew Symonds (AUS) 720.

BOWLERS
1. Shaun Pollock (RSA) 900, 2. Shane Bond (NZL) 807, 3. Nathan Bracken (AUS) 784, 4. Chaminda Vaas (SRI) 775, 5. Glenn McGrath (AUS) 765, 6. Muttiah Muralidaran (SRI) 752, 7. Daniel Vettori (NZL) 703, 8. Makhaya Ntini (RSA) 697, 9. Brett Lee (AUS) 693, 10. Abdur Razzak (BAN) 685.

SL keep faith

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the highest scorer with 65 against India."

De Mel, who opened the bowling in Sri Lanka's inaugural Test match in 1982, said it was difficult to fit the seasoned Atapattu into the batting order.

"There is no room for him at number five since Chamara Silva has secured that place by playing so well."

De Mel said he had spoken with the team management and they agreed that Tharanga should not be axed.

Atapattu could miss out on a World Cup game in the Caribbean despite being in the squad, just as he did in the 1996 edition in the Indian subcontinent, which Sri Lanka won.

Atapattu is Sri Lanka's third-highest run getter in one-day international cricket with 8,529 runs from 268 games and 11 centuries.

LOCAL SNIPPETS

SPORTS REPORTER

Accounting and Applied Physics won their respective matches in the opening day of the Dhaka University Inter-Department Basketball competition at the Jahurul Haq Hall Court yesterday.

Applied Physics were led by a sterling show by Imdad as they beat Peace and Conflict 39-24 while Accounting had Abdullah to thank as they trounced Geology 42-16.

The sixteen-day tournament was opened by Pro-VC of Dhaka University AFM Yusuf Haider, who was present as chief guest.

DIV 3 CRICKET

Dhanmondi Cricket Academy clinched a place in next season's second division with a 40-run win over Mutaiul Cricket Academy in the Kai-Altech Third Division Cricket League at the Dhaka University ground.

All-rounder Asad struck an unbeaten 73 as DCA posted 240 for 8 in 32 overs after the match was delayed due to overnight rain. MCA managed to score 200 runs in 32 overs, losing eight wickets as they failed to gain promotion in a do-or-die match. Paceman Adil took three wickets for the winners.

Rayer Bazar were the other promotees alongside DCA.

DIV 2 CRICKET

Mirpur Cricket Club, Khelaghar SKS and Young Cricketers won their Kai-Altech Second Division Super League matches.

Mirpur and Khelaghar had identical five-wicket wins while Young Cricketers beat Dhanmondi Progoti by 40 runs via the D/L method.

Sajjad took five wickets to fashion Mirpur's win against Green Leaf while it was Babul's four-wicket haul gave Khelaghar their victory over Kakrail Boys.

MA JABBAR TENNIS

Amal Roy beat Laxman Lal 6-2, 7-5 and moved into the quarterfinals of the Engineer MA Jabbar Memorial Tennis tournament at the ERC-NTC tennis court.

In other matches, Alamgir Hossain beat Delwar Hossain 6-3, 7-5 while in the girls' under-16 event, Masuma Sultana trounced Tanima Das 6-1, 6-2.

Queen an

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November due to a bad back.

"It seems the queen follows football and she told us she was an Arsenal fan," the Gunners' Spain midfielder Francesc Fabregas, 19, was quoted as saying.

"She appeared to definitely know who I was and we exchanged a few special words."

As the crowd flies, Chelsea is the nearest club to Buckingham Palace, the queen's official London residence.

However, the queen considers Windsor Castle, west of London, to be her home -- which would make lowly Wycombe Wanderers and Brentford her nearest league clubs.

The first match the queen attended was the 1953 FA Cup final. The game is considered an 'all-time classic' and was dubbed the 'Matthews Final' after legendary England winger Stanley Matthews, who inspired Blackpool to come from behind to beat Bolton Wanderers 4-3.

Arsenal court Queen Elizabeth's youngest grandson Prince Harry among their fans and were indeed called Royal Arsenal between 1886 and 1891.

Queen Elizabeth, the queen mother, who died in 2002, revealed her love of Arsenal to a schoolboy in 1955.

Chatting about Compton, an England football and cricket international, she said: "I'm an Arsenal supporter! Didn't you know?"

Harry's brother Prince William, second in line to the throne, supports Aston Villa. He is the president of the Football Association, English football's governing body.

Milan wary

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met -- winning both legs 1-0 in the first knockout round of the tournament two years ago.

But United are a vastly improved side since then and Milan's cause has not been helped by the fact that Ancelotti is sweating on the availability of his first-choice goalkeeper, Dida.

If the Brazilian, who is struggling with a shoulder injury, does not make it, Milan will be forced to deploy giant Australian Zeljko Kalac, who has just played four Champions League matches compared to Dida's 60.

Ancelotti will leave it until the last minute before making a decision on Dida's fitness -- a stance that casts doubt on his stated belief that Kalac has "rediscovered his confidence" and is "ready to step in" to an environment as demanding as Old Trafford on Tuesday night.

The Milan coach got his hands on the Champions League trophy when his side beat Juventus in a penalty shoot-out at United's fortress four years ago.

But he readily accepts that eliminating United represents a major challenge.

"They have great quality and they will look to exploit the pace of Ronaldo and Rooney. We will have to make the most of the ball when we are in possession. We have great respect for them, but we have no fear. We are in good shape."

Proteas leave '99 behind

AFP, Johannesburg



ICC Cricket World Cup

WEST INDIES 2007

Veterans of South Africa's 1999 World Cup insist they will not be haunted by the nightmare of their exit at the hands of Australia when they square up once again at the semi-final stage Wednesday.

The Proteas have been trying to shake off the tag of chokers ever since the infamous last ball run-out of Allan Donald at Edgbaston eight years ago when a single would have secured victory and a place in the Lord's final.

Four of that team will once again take to the field against Australia on Wednesday in St Lucia, including batsman Herschelle Gibbs, who was taunted by Steve Waugh that he had dropped the World Cup after he spilled a catch in an earlier group game between the two.

"It did leave one or two little

scars but as a cricketer if you're going to have a long career, you're going to have scars, every cricketer has had them," said wicketkeeper Mark Boucher.

"It's how you get up from those moments when you're down and bounce back," he told The Star newspaper.

The Edgbaston semifinal is widely regarded as the greatest ever World Cup game but many commentators believe the trauma dogged the Proteas for years, and was partly responsible for their lame first-round exit when they hosted the tournament in 2003.

Shaun Pollock, the team's captain in 2003 and who continues to open the bowling, said that lessons had been learned.

"The '99 World Cup was an exceptional game, the emotions swung from team to team," he said.

"One side had it wrapped up and then the other side had it won and it kept like that, to and fro.

"We've had some close

encounters over the years and we've learnt something from all the close encounters. From our side, an experienced side, we really are ripe for anything we have to deal with."

Batsman Jacques Kallis, the current tournament's leading run-scorer after Australia's Matthew Hayden, said the team had long ago put the result behind them.

"You move on from those games, you take what you can from them. Like Mark said, we woke up the next morning, the sun came up and we had lots of cricket ahead of us. So you've got to move on.

"I don't think about it, perhaps just take the positives out of it."

The carefree Gibbs meanwhile said that he had managed to put the defeat behind him within hours.

"I had a bit of a hangover the next morning and that took care of that," said the dashing batsman.

Watson stung by critics

AFP, Gros Islet



ICC Cricket World Cup

WEST INDIES 2007

but a desire to prove his doubters wrong has inspired the all-rounder to nail down a place in the champions World Cup side.

When the injury-prone Queenslander was out for three games with a calf muscle injury in the Caribbean many wondered what he was doing in a team that continued to win comfortably without him.

But his usefulness was on show for all to see with a dynamic 65 net out off just 32 balls in Friday's 215-run thrashing of New Zealand in Grenada.

Watson, who'd spent months working on his batting with Australia assistant coach Jamie Siddons, showed plenty of invention by it stepping across to the off-side to turn the ball over short fine leg or carving over the covers as he did to take Australia to 348 for six off the last ball of the innings.

"It has hurt at times," Watson said of the criticism. "It's human nature. You can take it to heart.

"In the end all I have tried to do is

be my best and I've tried to work extremely hard on my game to continue to improve. Having people doubt your ability and then to be able to put it together in a World Cup is truly satisfying for myself more than anything.

In an article for Indian magazine SportsStar two months ago, Simpson branded Watson as merely a "competent" cricketer.

"I have doubts if he has the skills or flexibility to cope with cricket at the highest level," former opening batsman Simpson, Australia's 1987 World Cup-winning coach, wrote.

"He looks like an over-coached player, lacking in natural skills and movements. Perhaps this is one reason why he has had so many injuries."

But Australia captain Ricky Ponting, speaking after Friday's match, said the sight of Watson striking four sixes and four fours before taking one for 20 with his brisk medium-pace, ought to make the all-rounder's critics reflect.

"It might quieten a few people down, particularly back at home, that have been casting all these doubts about Shane Watson and his value to this team," said Ponting.

"You are not going to see striking like that from somebody who can't play the game. Shane is a very talented cricketer and someone who works extremely hard at his game.

King quits as coach



AFP, Kingston

Bennett King has quit as coach of the West Indies after the team's dismal World Cup campaign, it was reported here on Monday.

The 42-year-old Australian, who had been in charge of the national team since 2004, left just a day after skipper Brian Lara made his tearful farewell to international cricket.

In another blow for the West Indies, fast bowler Ian Bradshaw also announced his international retirement.

"King gave up his job as coach," West Indies Cricket Board (WICB) director Jackie Hendriks told The Gleaner newspaper.

"He has offered to stay on for a month to help with the setting up of the academy."

King is the fourth high-profile World Cup coach to resign following England's Duncan Fletcher, India's Greg Chappell and Dav Whatmore of Bangladesh.

There were unconfirmed reports that WICB president Ken Gordon has also resigned.

The West Indies, who won the first two World Cups in 1975 and 1979, enjoyed an impressive start to the 2007 tournament they were hosting for the first time by winning all three of their first round games.

But their campaign fell to pieces in the Super Eights where they managed just one win against Bangladesh before losing their final match by one wicket to England in Barbados on Saturday.

King took over from Gus Logie as coach in 2004 and had already said he would reconsider his position after the World Cup.

Bradshaw, who was in and out of the

team during the competition, played five Tests and 62 one-day internationals,

taking 78 wickets.

With the West Indies set to tour

England starting in May, King is understood to have recommended that his

assistant David Moore take over.

Bracken wishes early wrap-up

AFP, Gros Islet

Australian seamer Nathan Bracken said it was crucial to wrap up convincing wins over Sri Lanka and New Zealand to deliver a crucial psychological blow against potential World Cup final opponents.

The defending champions demolished Sri Lanka by seven wickets and then the Black Caps by a huge 215 runs as Ricky Ponting's side cruised into the semifinals with a 100-per cent record.

Australia, the two-time defending champions, face South Africa here on Wednesday with New Zealand clashing with Sri Lanka in the other semifinal in Jamaica on Tuesday.

"Seeing as New Zealand and Sri Lanka are both in the semifinals, we saw it as important to win those games," said left-arm seamer Bracken who shrugged off the significance of Sri Lanka resting Chaminda Vaas and Muttiah Muralidaran for their Super Eights clash.

Ireland 10th best team

AFP, Bridgetown

Ireland have been rewarded for their memorable World Cup debut by being confirmed as the 10th best team in the world.

In Group D in the first round in the Caribbean, Ireland beat Pakistan and tied with Zimbabwe at Sabina Park, earning them a place in the Super Eights. During that stage Ireland beat another Test team, Bangladesh, along the way.

"This really is a magnificent achievement by the Irish guys," said ICC Global Development Manager Matthew Kennedy.

"It shows that they have certainly worked hard, risen to the occasion, and made the very most of and learnt from their increased opportunities.

"It proves that serious cricketing achievement is possible from within this next tier of nations. Depth and sustainability, and continued opportunity and support, is obviously the key and that is what we will continue to strive for."

Ireland also has ODI status until 2009, a status also enjoyed by the top six Associate Members, the others being Kenya, Scotland, the Netherlands, Canada and Bermuda.

Ireland's promotion to 10th place has knocked Zimbabwe down into 11th.

Maradona having

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Maradona's career on and off the football pitch has been marred by repeated drug and alcohol abuse. He was hospitalised in 2000 and 2004 for heart attacks provoked by cocaine overdoses.