

Local coach for SL tour

SPORTS REPORTER

Bangladesh Cricket Board (BCB) will appoint local coaches for the Tigers' Sri Lanka tour in June-July.

"We are still negotiating with foreign coaches and they have taken two weeks' time to convey their decision. That's why we will not be able to appoint a foreign coach for the Sri Lanka tour," said BCB general secretary Mahbubul Anam yesterday after meeting of the board's special committee for appointing new coach.

"We might appoint more than one coach for the Sri Lanka trip from our own pool. And the announcement will be made after the executive committee meeting on June 2," the bearded organiser added.

Bangladesh will leave for Colombo on June 17 to play three Tests and three one-dayers.

The executive committee will also announce names of the captain and vice-captain for the tour.

The BCB general secretary, also the chairman of the cricket operations committee, however did not clear whether they will go for separate captains after Habibul Bashar expressed his desire not to continue as one-day captain.

"The two-captain theory is nothing new for us but everything will be discussed in the next meeting," was the answer of Anam.

But vice-president Shah Nurul Kabir Shaheen informed that the board is in favour of having one captain.

"I think there is no scope for us to look back about the captaincy issue. Now time has come to decide about the matter eyeing on future. The board wants to stick to the one-captain policy but everything will be decided in our next meeting," Shaheen said.

He also informed that they have decided to extend the contract of team physio Paul Close till the Sri Lanka tour.

Acting ICC boss soon

PTI, Dubai

The International Cricket Council (ICC) will soon appoint an acting president in place of Percy Sonn, who died of complications from a colon operation.

Sir John Anderson of New Zealand and Malaysian Prince Tunku Imran are said to be in the running for the post vacated after the demise of the 57-year-old South African.

The acting chairman would chair the ICC's annual meeting in London in the third week of June.

Sonn was critically ill for the past few days and was admitted to the Durbanville clinic in Cape Town last Monday after developing complications from a colon surgery.

A former president of the South African cricket board, Sonn took over as ICC president from Ehsan Mani of Pakistan in June 2006.

His tenure, which was original to end in 2008, was extended till 2009 after the Executive Board had a split vote between Indian Cricket Board President Sharad Pawar and ECB Chief David Morgan last year.



Ravi Shastri

(India's interim cricket manager)
"He is one quality player in this team. He has a lot of cricket ahead of him and I hope he shows his class to the world."

What to WATCH

ESPN

England v West Indies
Second Test, Day 5
Live from 4:00 pm
Sportscentre India
Live from 11:00 pm

STAR Sports

French Open
First Round
Live from 3:00 pm



Indian stars Rahul Dravid (R) and Sachin Tendulkar (C) about to board the team bus on way to the airport to catch a flight to Calcutta in the early morning hours of yesterday.

PHOTO: ANISUR RAHMAN

Mere speculation: Dav

Cricket

AFP, Dhaka

Bangladesh's outgoing coach Dav Whatmore on Monday denied as "mere speculation" reports he had been offered a job with India, saying nothing had been finalised yet.

Indian media had reported for the past week that Whatmore, 53, had been offered a one-year contract by the Board of Control for Cricket in India (BCCI), which could be extended by another two years.

"I am not India's coach, it is mere speculation," he told reporters a day after completing his four-year tenure with Bangladesh following the conclusion of the Indian tour.

"I have had discussions with BCCI officials where I told them I was interested but that's all there is to it. I have not heard from them since."

A seven-man committee appointed by the BCCI to pick a new coach will meet in Bangalore on June 4 to choose a successor to Australian Greg Chappell, who quit after India's first-round exit from the World Cup.

Former captain-turned-commentator Ravi Shastri acted as interim coach for the Bangladesh tour, where India won both the one-day and Test series.

Shastri declined to take up the assignment on a long-term basis, citing media commitments.

Whatmore, a Sri Lanka-born Australian, said he was "very interested" in coaching cricket-mad India, regarded as one of the most

demanding jobs in the sport.

"It will be a logical extension to bigger challenges," he said. "It will help to accumulate more knowledge of the game I love so much."

"I was with Bangladesh for four years and they wanted me to continue. But a coach has a shelf life. One needs a different challenge after a few years. I need to move on."

Whatmore said coaching teams

from the sub-continent was different from doing the job with England or Australia.

"One has to understand the culture here is fundamentally different," he said. "The key is effective communication. You have to understand the subtle differences that exist here."

"But what will never change is

SEE PAGE 18 COL 5



PHOTO: STAR

Outgoing Bangladesh coach Dav Whatmore addresses a press conference at a local hotel yesterday.

England closer to win

Cricket

AFP, Leeds

Ryan Sidebottom inflicted further misery upon West Indies as England moved closer to an innings victory in the second Test at Headingley here on Monday.

The 29-year-old pace bowler, making his second Test appearance six years after his debut, struck twice on the fourth day as West Indies reached tea on 137 for six -- still 287 short of making England bat again -- after they'd been made to follow-on.

That left West Indies in danger of surpassing their record defeat of an innings and 237 runs against England at The Oval in 1957.

England were held up by a sixth-wicket stand of 63 between Runako Morton (25) and Dwayne Bravo, an impressive 50 not out.

But that ended shortly before tea when Morton top-edged a hook off a short, straight ball from Stephen Harmison and was caught

by wicketkeeper Matthew Prior.

Harmison almost had another wicket when Denesh Ramdin, on one, was dropped in the gully by Durham team-mate Liam Plunkett.

Bravo, undaunted, hooked England's quickest bowler for four to bring up a 61-ball fifty with a six and six boundaries.

At tea, Sidebottom, 29, had innings figures of four for 44 and a match return of eight for 86, having taken four wickets in West Indies' meagre first innings 146.

That followed England's 570 for seven declared, featuring Kevin Pietersen's Test best 226 and 103 from captain Michael Vaughan in his first Test after 18 months sidelined with injuries.

Vaughan, with West Indies on 104 for five, switched on Monday to the spin of Monty Panesar.

But his first ball was confidently on-driven for four by Bravo, one of the few West Indies' batsman to use his feet against the left-arm in the drawn first Test at Lord's,

where Panesar took a career-best six for 129.

Bravo followed that up with a six over long-off.

West Indies, 31 for three at lunch, declined to 47 for four when Sidebottom, who began his career at Headingley with Yorkshire before moving to Nottinghamshire three years ago, had Sylvester Joseph lbw for one.

Sidebottom, in for the injured Matthew Hoggard, saw Devon Smith become the latest flat-footed West Indies batsman to lose his wicket against him when he edged to first slip where Andrew Strauss held on at the second attempt.

West Indies task of saving the match had been made all the more difficult by knowing that captain Ramnaresh Sarwan, who hadn't batted in the first innings after sustaining a potentially tour-ending shoulder injury while fielding on Friday, would only bat in the second innings in an emergency.

SEE PAGE 18 COL 2

Aslam, Kaiser made NSC ambassadors

SPORTS REPORTER

The National Sports Council (NSC) yesterday wrested responsibilities on former national footballers Sheikh Mohammed Aslam and Kaiser Hamid to find a united and workable committee for the Bangladesh Football Federation (BFF).

Kaiser and Aslam are NSC nominated councillors for the BFF, which had to cancel its next month's scheduled election due to a FIFA restriction.

There has been lot of talks and confusions about the polls at the governing body of football in the country as different quarters reportedly waged war against each other in a bid to take control.

The present committee's tenure expired in April but it not only sat tight but also reportedly began negotiations to return to power.

There have also been allegations of manipulation in selection of councillors and tampering in the constitution.

The FIFA barred the election as it wanted clarification on some points of the constitution. The BFF high-ups are expected to present their reply to the world football bosses in Zurich by this month.

NSC secretary Aminul Islam Khan yesterday informed that he received instructions from Sports Adviser Tapan Chowdhury to give Kaiser and Aslam the duty to unite the real organisers to find a solution for the problem.

"The sports adviser told me to talk with Aslam and Kaiser and try to convince them to go for a last ditch attempt to solve the crisis around football. I talked with them today and they agreed to bring people together, who will work for the better of the game," told Aminul yesterday.

AFRO-ASIAN CUP Sourav in for Sachin

CRICINFO, undated

Sachin Tendulkar has opted out of the Afro-Asian Cup starting on June 6. He will be replaced by Sourav Ganguly in the 14-member squad.

Zaheer Khan has also been included in the revised squad, joining Dilhara Fernando and Mashrafe Bin Mortaza as the replacements for Shoaib Akhtar, Chaminda Vaas and Lasith Malinga.

"Following the unavailability of some players named in the original squads on May 11, the selectors have named their final squads for the three ODI matches in Bangalore and Chennai on June 6, 9 and 10 and the Twenty20 match on June 5," a statement clarified.

SEE PAGE 18 COL 4

Time to go home

SPORTS REPORTER



temporary residence yesterday at the conclusion of the series against India.

The victorious Indians, who clinched the one-day series 2-0 and the Tests 1-0, left the hotel in the crack of dawn to catch a Kolkata-bound flight after the series deciding second and final Test in Dhaka ended a couple of days ahead of schedule.

Rahul Dravid's side were due to leave the capital tomorrow but gladly accepted a change of schedule to have the chance to spend extra two days with their families before a long tour of England.

The Tigers, who have endured a long season, will get hardly a week's break before regrouping for a tough trip to Sri Lanka, where they play three Tests and as many one-day internationals in June-July.

The camp, however, will begin under a new coach as Whatmore's job with Bangladesh has finally ended. The Sri Lanka-born Australian coach's contract ended after the

World Cup but he accepted a short renewal for the home series against India, his probable future.

In an emotional gathering of cricketers Whatmore, their mentor for the past four years, and Bangladesh skipper Habibul Bashar both spoke at the hotel.

"We had decided earlier that we would give him an unofficial farewell. It was just a simple gathering and the players, with their bags packed, did not want to miss the chance to bid him goodbye," told Bashar.

"With his departure, it's the end of an era for our cricket. Under his guidance we have developed as a unit and he has had many contributions for our improvement.

"He is definitely a big name in world cricket and I feel we've been lucky to be with him for this long," he added.

Whatmore, who leaves Dhaka on Friday, will carry a dinner set with him as memento of the Tigers.

"Whatmore also told us that he has had nice times with us. He reminded us that we have had ups and downs during the period but still, there is scope of more improvement," said Bashar.

"Four years is a long time and I have nice memories. Wherever I go, I'll always keep an eye on you guys," he said quoting Whatmore.

Tigers' selection dilemma

Cricket

SPORTS REPORTER

The much-talked about home series against India ended on Sunday leaving more questions to answers, especially in Test cricket, ahead of Bangladesh's next assignment in Sri Lanka.

It was not because of the Tigers' loss in both the one-day and Test series rather the way the batsmen responded in the longer version of the game, which looks to be the real concern for the national selection panel.

It would not be an easy task for chief selector Faruque Ahmed and his committee including new member Akram Khan to select for the upcoming series, involving three Tests and as many one-dayers against the Lankans, when they sit within a couple of days.

The team is expected to be announced on June 4, after naming new captain and vice-captain in the June 2 executive committee meeting of the Bangladesh Cricket Board (BCB).

Faruque said that the one-day performance was not at all satisfactory despite a 2-0 defeat to India in the three-match series with the final match washed out in Chittagong, but he was worried with the outcome of the two Tests.

"I think we are more or less in the right track in one-day cricket but the Test performance has made our task difficult with a tough series in sight. But it was not unexpected as the boys played Tests after a long gap," Faruque said.

"It is not an excuse though, it is the fact. The important thing is we should have changed our approach in the longer-version but it is not easy as we played too much one-day cricket in the last one and half years."

Habibul Bashar's one-day fate is in the midst of all problems. The 34-year-old Bangladesh skipper has already expressed his desire not to captain the one-day team but his decision means nothing as the board had already showed its intention not to continue him as one-day captain after his poor performance in the World Cup.

SEE PAGE 18 COL 8



PHOTO: STAR

Popular Indian ex-captain Sourav Ganguly and his family leave a local hotel to board the team bus on their way to the airport early yesterday morning.