

## Dhoni differs with chief selector

PTI, Chandigarh

In complete contrast to chief selector Dilip Vengsarkar's remarks about the senior players in the side, Indian captain Mahendra Singh Dhoni yesterday sided with the ageing stalwarts and said they are irreplacable.

After his side beat Australia by eight runs in a cliffhanger here, Dhoni said the team needed to groom the youngsters but at the same time insisted that the ageing trio of Sachin Tendulkar, Sourav Ganguly and Rahul Dravid was an indispensable part of the side.

"I think none said they are no longer needed. Frankly, you can't replace the seniors, given the amount of talent they have. They have proved themselves in this match as well," Dhoni said.

"Of course we need to groom the youngsters side by side. Because if one day the senior players decide to leave the arena, you would be at sea. So you have to keep the juniors ready," he said.

Vengsarkar in a recent interview had told that seniors should not take their place for granted.

Tendulkar and Ganguly gave India their best start of the series, forging a 91-run stand in 20 overs and saw through the difficult early hour when the ball was swinging a lot.

Asked if he felt that it was a tardy start, Dhoni said that was not the case.

"(On the contrary) I think we went on to score 291 just because of the start they gave us. They played really well against the Australian bowlers who were bowling so well and credit goes to Sachin and Sourav," he argued.

Dhoni had also asked for Murali Kartik in the side and he was delighted when the left-arm spinner played a crucial role in the team's thrilling victory.

## More to come

FROM PAGE 20

Messi's goal was his sixth of the season, and saw him go clear at the top of the Primera Liga scoring charts.

Rijkaard said of the brilliant youngster: "He is a key player, capable of doing great things. It is a pleasure to watch him on the pitch."

Barca now have an enforced two-week break due to the international matches, and when they return to action they will face one of La Liga's form teams in Villarreal.

Although they suffered a 3-2 defeat to Osasuna on Sunday, Villarreal had won 15 of their previous 16 matches and Barca goalkeeper Victor Valdes admits it is unlikely to be easy for them at El Madrigal.

"It will be a difficult game like always when players come back from international duty," Valdes said.

Barca midfielder Andres Iniesta added on his club's website: "We have shown a good image and attitude (against Atletico), and that is the line that we must follow."

"We are playing good football, and doing things well. After the break we will return with the same desire to continue our good form."

## Ajax agree ten

FROM PAGE 20

at Ten Cate, club chairman John Jaakke and defender Jurgen Colin.

Regular chants of 'Henkie, get lost and take Jaakke and Colin with you' rang around the away end as Ajax struggled to gain a point.

Ten Cate, who previously worked under Barcelona, responded by defending his record in charge, which has yielded two trophies - last season's KNVB Beker and the Dutch Super Cup.

He said: "What must I say about that? Under my leadership we have played 41 games, gained 92 points and scored over a hundred goals."

Ten Cate was non-committal when asked whether the Sparta clash would be his last in charge with a two-week break for international fixtures now looming.

He added: "I can't say if I was sitting on the Ajax bench for the last time."

"That's not up to me. It's now something between Ajax and Chelsea."

"I don't know more than that the clubs are speaking."

"And if they don't come to an agreement I will gladly be coach of Ajax until the end of the season. And if they reach a deal I will go to Chelsea."

Reports in Holland have suggested Ajax would approach Marco van Basten should Ten Cate leave and ask him to combine club duties with his existing job as Holland coach.

But the Dutch FA (KNVB) have ruled out a dual role for the former Ajax and AC Milan striker.

KNVB director Henk Kesler told De Telegraaf newspaper: "(It's) absolutely not something we want to speak about."

"We won't allow the coach and his assistant John van 't Schip to bet on two horses. Holland deserves their full attention in the run-up to Euro 2008."



PHOTO: STAR  
Bangladesh Cricket Board's tournament committee chairman Selim Bhuiyan (C) addresses a press conference in connection with the launching of the Ispahani Mirzapore Tea Ninth National Cricket League at Hotel Sheraton yesterday. The country's lone first-class competition commences on October 19.

## BCB reveals financial package

SPORTS REPORTER



Ushering in a new dimension, the Bangladesh Cricket Board (BCB) invited all the divisional captains during the unveiling ceremony of MM Ispahani Ltd, as the sponsor for the 9th National Cricket League, which starts from October 19, at a local hotel yesterday.

But the diverse intention was not carried out to the dot as both of the most sought after skippers, Dhaka's Mohammad Ashraful and Khulna's Habibul Bashar, were not present in the official media briefing, apparently due to a lack of coordination.

Cricket Operations Committee chairman Gazi Ashraf Hossain Lipu expressed his disappointment but both the skippers had their own reasons behind the non-attendance.

"We had a practice game today against the Under-19 team, which is why it was not possible for me to attend the briefing. Only one of our

divisional officials told me about the session but he also said that it is better to play the practice match," said Ashraful.

"I am sick," was Bashar's explanation.

The tournament committee was however hopeful about the great success of the tournament as they almost doubled the budget by increasing the amount to Tk 4.15 crore from Tk 2.56 crore.

Ispahani won the sponsoring rights for the seventh consecutive occasion as a lone bidder and they are providing Tk 40 lakhs, ten lakhs higher than the previous year.

"They actually offered Tk 35 lakhs in the bid but we increased the amount later in negotiations," said tournament committee chairman Selim Bhuiyan during the press conference.

He also said that they allotted more money for the players to make the tournament attractive and competitive.

The tour-day champions will get Tk 10 lakhs, six lakhs more than last year's amount while the runners-up will pocket Tk 5 lakhs up from

one lakh the previous year. The 3rd placed team will receive Tk 3 lakhs.

The highest run scorer and the highest wicket taker in the four-dayers will receive Tk 20,000 each.

In the one-day version, the champion team will collect Tk 4 lakh while the runners up team Tk 2 lakh. Besides, the highest scorer and the highest wicket taker will receive Tk 20,000 each.

The tournament committee has also increased the prize money for man of the tournament (Tk 40,000), best all rounder (Tk 30,000) and best fielder (Tk 20,000).

Besides, any batsman scoring 1000 runs or any bowler scalping 60 wickets (in the four-day version) will get Tk 1 lakh while a batsman will receive Tk 20,000 for scoring a double century in a four-day match.

The tournament committee has also increased the prize money for man of the tournament (Tk 40,000), best all rounder (Tk 30,000) and best fielder (Tk 20,000).

In other matches, Genoa are up to fifth after beating Cagliari 2-0 at home while Livorno remain rock bottom on two points from seven games after a 1-0 loss at Catania.

On Saturday Julio Cruz scored both goals in a 2-1 victory over Napoli at the San Siro as champions Inter consolidated their lead at the top of the table.

Also the TA/DA have also been increased.

Media committee vice chairman Iftikhar Ahmed, Ispahani Group chairman Mirza Behrouze Ispahani were also present on the occasion.

## Spinning

FROM PAGE 17

make runs dear. He has done this many times before and didn't stop doing it till well after tea, a shoulder-yanking 27-over spell later. Only in his last two overs did he look fatigued.

He also procured into the bargain two key wickets; what little gap there was in Graeme Smith's defence, he found it with a sharply-spun leg-break but given his form, Jacques Kallis for 59 was not just key, it was Christmas, Eid and Diwali all at once. And it was just reward too, for Kallis had Kallis in more trouble than he has been in since setting foot at Jinnah International Airport in Karachi last week. It was the wrong 'un too. But during that hour from the mid-day drinks break right up to tea, when Kallis fell, Kallis had some heat from the skies and put it onto the batsmen.

Ultimately it kept Pakistan in the hunt, even tilting it as Ashwell Prince said later, a little in the host's favour. Even when they didn't look like getting wickets, South Africa were looking like getting away. Prince, who played Kallis with the same left-handed bluntness that has so annoyed him through his career, assessed Kallis bestatter in the day. "It's hard for him to come on so early on the first day, but he did a good job of it."

A good job is exactly what it was, not the art form legspin is stereotyped as but something that needed to be done. Shoaib Malik will not be complaining. And tonight Kallis will bring out the other smile like he brings out the other one: not of mischief, but content.

## Hosts hold

FROM PAGE 17

away goal ahead of the second leg match to be held in Tajik capital Dushanbe on October 28.

Abul had a great chance to seal the victory for Bangladesh afterwards but the midfielder hammered the ball onto a defensive wall while goalkeeper Mukann palmed away Moni's curling freekick in the remaining time.

Yellowcard: Moni (Bangladesh)

TEAMS  
BANGLADESH: Biplob, Hassan Al Mamun (Shuvra, 90th minute), Nazrul, Rajani, Wali, Zahid (Shari, 62), Arman Aziz, Abul, Mithu, Emrul and Moni.

TAJIKISTAN: Mukanin, Karimov, Farkhad Vasiev, Rustamov, Choriev, Barotov (Fatkholova, 64), Dzhabarov, Makhmudov, Ortikov (Dilshod Vasiev, 46), Saidov and Hakimov, 86).

Concussion

FROM PAGE 20

Portuguese coach Luiz Felipe Scolari last month.

Serbia are currently fourth in a four-way fight with Poland, Finland and Portugal for two places at the top of Group A in the Euro 2008 qualifiers.

Coach Javier Clemente has said Serbia must win its two upcoming matches, both of them away to Armenia on Saturday and to Azerbaijan on October 17.

The 37-year-old Badrinath, who is yet to make his international debut, drew the selectors' attention with a double century for India A in their recent series against South Africa A.

The off-spinner has contributed a modest 1,065 runs in 25 matches while Tendulkar has 1,026 from the same number of games.

Tendulkar has now achieved this seven times in his 18-year career, the most by any player and one more than his nearest rival on the list, Ganguly.

Ganguly has compiled 1,065 runs in 25 matches while Tendulkar has 1,026 from the same number of games.

Tendulkar has now achieved this seven times in his 18-year career, the most by any player and one more than his nearest rival on the list, Ganguly.

SCOREBOARD

Scoreboard at close on the first day of the second Test between Pakistan and South Africa at the Gaddafi Stadium in Lahore on Monday.

SOUTH AFRICA  
Gibbs c Misbahul b Gul 13  
Smith b Kaneria 46  
Amla b Asif 10  
Kallis b Gul 59  
Prince lwb b Rehman 63  
De Villiers run out 45  
Boucher not out 9  
Nel not out 0  
Extras: (nb-2, w-7, pn-5) 14  
Total: (For six wkt in 83 overs) 259

Fall of wickets: 1-24, 2-47, 3-100, 4-160, 5-243, 6-259.

Bowler O M R W  
Asif 23 5 55 1  
Gul 18 1 78 1  
Kaneria 27 4 73 2  
Rehman 10 3 28 1  
Malik 5 0 20 0

PAKISTAN: Shoaib Malik, Salman Butt, Younis Khan, Inzamamul Haq, Mohammad Yousuf, Misbahul Haq, Kamran Akmal, Mohammad Asif, Umar Gul, Danish Kaneria, Abdul Rehman.

Umpires: Mark Benson (ENG) and Simon Taufel (AUS); TV umpire: Nadeem Ghouri (PAK); Match referee: Alan Hurst (AUS).

"We can now go to Dushanbe with the mid set to win," he told.

Mithu, who for the first time entered international arena during the Merdeka Cup in August when he represented the second-string national side, was happy for a remarkable full international

## Concussion

FROM PAGE 20

African innings. Rehman finally brought an end to Prince's innings when he beat the batsman in the air to hit the stumps.

Prince hit five boundaries in his stubborn three-hour knock.

The Lahore Test is the swansong for Inzamamul Haq who is retiring from Test cricket.

The off-spinner has contributed a modest 1,065 runs in 25 matches while Tendulkar has 1,026 from the same number of games.

Tendulkar has now achieved this seven times in his 18-year career, the most by any player and one more than his nearest rival on the list, Ganguly.

Ganguly has compiled 1,065 runs in 25 matches while Tendulkar has 1,026 from the same number of games.

Tendulkar has now achieved this seven times in his 18-year career, the most by any player and one more than his nearest rival on the list, Ganguly.

SCOREBOARD

Scoreboard at close on the first day of the second Test between Pakistan and South Africa at the Gaddafi Stadium in Lahore on Monday.

INDIA  
Ganguly c Gilchrist b Hopes 41  
Tendulkar run out 79  
Yuvraj Ponting b Hopes 39

Dhoni not out 50  
David b Bracken 13

Uthappa not out 30  
Extras: (b-1, lb-7, w-31) 39

Total: (For four wkt in 50 overs) 291

Fall of wickets: 1-37, 2-122, 3-132, 4-190, 5-246, 6-268, 7-264.

Bowler O M R W  
Zaheer 9 0 68 0  
Rudra Pratap 10 1 66 2  
Pathan 10 0 46 1

Ganguly 1 0 7 0  
Habibul 10 0 43 2

Kartik 10 0 48 1

Result: India won by eight runs.

Man-of-the-match: Mahendra Singh Dhoni.

Toss: India

Umpires: Steve Bucknor (WI), Suresh Shastri (IND)

TV Umpire: G. A. Pratap (IND)