

Borde ready to Vengsarkar

PTI, New Delhi

Front-runner to replace Dilip Vengsarkar as the chief selector in case the incumbent steps down from the post, former captain Chandu Borde today indicated he was not averse to the idea if BCCI approaches him.

Vengsarkar and the Board have been on collision course for quite a while and with BCCI announcing that the chief selector was free to quit if he has problems with the Board's guidelines that prevent him from writing columns, Borde's name started doing the rounds as a possible successor to the Mumbaier.

"It is premature to say anything about the job but I can confidently say that I have always delivered the goods in different capacities in the past -- be it as chief selector or cricket manager," said the 73-year-old former allrounder, indicating his willingness to give it one more shot.

Balubari win

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Dinajpur

Balubari Procheta Cricket Club registered a 39-run victory over Renaissance Cricket Club in the opening match of the First Division Cricket League here yesterday at the local ground.

Balubari scored 126 runs and then wrapped up their opponents' innings for 87 runs.

AM Saiful Hasan, Deputy Commissioner of Dinajpur, inaugurated the 12-team meet.

Asif off to Australia

REUTERS, Karachi

Pakistan fast bowler Mohammad Asif has been sent to Australia by the Pakistan Cricket Board (PCB) to seek treatment for his nagging elbow injury.

Asif will meet with Dr Paul Allot, a specialist in sports medicine injuries, to decide if he requires surgery for his chronic joint problem.

"The purpose of sending him is to get a third opinion so that Asif can make a comeback free of this problem," a PCB spokesman said on Monday.

Asif is hoping to find the root cause of his injury, which ruled him out of the current tour of India.

"It has troubled me time and again for the last two years and it was terribly disappointing to miss the Indian tour," he said.

Asif, 24, has taken 51 wickets in 11 Tests.

Modest Lanus

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Three minutes later, Boca had Colombian midfielder Fabian Vargas sent off for a wild tackle on Sebastian Blanco.

Tigre, back in the top flight after a 27-year absence, fell to a 56th-minute penalty converted by Pablo Barzola at Argentinos Juniors.

Tigre's Juan Blengio was sent off after being given a second yellow card for the foul which resulted in the penalty. The visitors also had Santiago Morero dismissed in the 84th minute for a second bookable offence.

In matches played on Saturday, River Plate's misery continued as they lost 4-0 at lowly Olimpo while Racing Club had three players sent off in a 3-0 defeat by Osvaldo Ardiles's Huracan.

Mohammedan

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In the shootout, Arif shot the ball over but Arman Aziz, skipper Biplab, Ripon, Sharif and Rony hit home from the spot.

Nazrul, Emily, Mintu and Abul scored for the sky-blues but the party belonged to Aminul who parried penalties by Moni and Abdullah Parvez to give Mohammedan a 1-0 lead in the series.

The next match will be held tomorrow.

TEAMS

Mohammedan: Aminul, Arif, Hassan Al Mamun, Biplab, Kamal, Ripon, Sharif, Arman Aziz, Mithu (Manjimin), Farhad (Rony) and Figo.

Abahani: Biplab, Obaidur, Nazrul, Dominic, Mintu, Abul, Pranotosh (Parvez), Joy, Munna (Zahed), Moni and Emily.

Cuper gets

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Cuper first made his name with Real Mallorca, where he had a spell from 1997 to 1999, taking them to the finals of the Spanish Cup and European Cup Winners' Cup as well as a club record third-place finish in the league.

He then moved to Valencia in 1999 and took them to successive Champions League finals in 2000 and 2001 but his recent performances have been less notable.

He joined Mallorca for a second spell in 2005 but quit midway through last season.



Belgian world number one Justine Henin smiles as she holds a giant racket during a tennis show celebrating the opening of her new tennis club and school in Limelette on Sunday.

Hosts in control of Eden

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where our openers give us a good start, maybe then we can decide whether to chase the target or just play out the day."

Needing 417 to avert the follow-on, Pakistan were a shaky 358-6 at stumps on Sunday, but achieved their objective in the morning when Misbah turned part-time seamer Ganguly to square-leg for two runs.

The 33-year-old Misbah, playing only his ninth Test, faced 351 balls and cracked a six off spinner Harbhajan Singh and 14 fours in his maiden century. He added 53 to his overnight score of 108.

Pakistan were bowled out for 456 in the afternoon in reply to India's first-innings total of 615-5 declared, with Misbah and Sami adding 91 crucial runs for the seventh wicket.

India needed early wickets to put Pakistan under pressure, but had to wait for more than a session before tasting the first success.

Skipper Anil Kumble kept rotating his bowlers to break the Misbah-Sami stand, but it was part-time spinner Venkatesh Laxman who provided the breakthrough.

When Laxman had Sami (38) caught by Jaffer at mid-off, Pakistan had already averted the follow-on. Sami struck a six off leg-

spinner Kumble and two fours.

Nothing went right for India in the first session as their bowlers failed to trouble Misbah and Sami on an easy-paced track. The hosts also missed an opportunity to get an early wicket.

Sami was on seven when Rahul Dravid dropped a catch at slip, the unfortunate bowler being Kumble. He went on to provide valuable support to Misbah with his disciplined knock.

India then made short work of Pakistan's innings, grabbing the remaining three wickets in the space of seven runs. The last three batsmen failed to open their accounts.

Harbhajan finished with 5-122, his 20th haul of five or more wickets in a Test innings. Kumble took three wickets.

West Indies umpire Billy Doctrove was off the field for an hour in the morning after feeling unwell. He was replaced with third-umpire Amish Saheba of India.

SCOREBOARD

Scoreboard at stumps on the fourth day of the second Test between India and Pakistan on Monday:

INDIA: First innings 615-5 decl (Jaffer 202, Laxman 112 not out, Ganguly 102; Tanvir 2-166, Kaneria 2-194)

PAKISTAN: First innings (overnight 358-6)

Butt c Dravid b Harbhajan	42
Hameed lbw b Kumble	21
Younis c Dhoni b Patel	43
Yousuf b Harbhajan	6
Misbahul not out	161
Iqbal lbw b Kumble	0
Akmal b Harbhajan	119
Sami c Jaffer b Laxman	38
Tanvir c Dravid b Kumble	0
Akhtar c Dravid b Harbhajan	0
Kaneria b Harbhajan	0
Extras: (b-8, lb-7, nb-10, w-1)	26
Total: (All out in 151.1 overs)	456
Fall of wickets: 1-38, 2-77, 3-85, 4-134, 5-150, 6-357, 7-448, 8-449, 9-452	

Bowler	O	M	R	W
Zaheer	25.2	8	69	0
Patel	21	4	85	1
Harbhajan	45.5	9	122	5
Kumble	47	14	122	3
Tendulkar	7	1	32	0
Ganguly	4	1	9	0
Laxman	1	0	2	1

INDIA: Second innings	
Jaffer b Kaneria	56
Karthik c Misbah b Kaneria	28
Dhoni not out	28
Ganguly not out	24
Extras: (lb-2, nb-3)	5
Total: (For two wks in 36 overs)	141
Fall of wickets: 1-75, 2-95	

Bowler	O	M	R	W
Akhtar	9	0	24	0
Tanvir	9	0	41	0
Sami	5	1	28	0
Kaneria	12	0	41	2
Butt	1	0	5	0

Murali above all else

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He said in a recent interview he wants to take 1,000 Test wickets and hopes to play for Sri Lanka till the 2011 limited-overs World Cup to be hosted in the Indian sub-continent.

"I want to achieve a little bit more because I am still hungry for wickets," Murali said.

Warne, paying rich tributes to his fellow-spinning great, said in Australia that Murali's record will stand for ever.

"I congratulate Murali for breaking the record I had," said Warne.

"Murali has said he wanted to take 1000 Test wickets and he is every chance of getting there."

"If he does I don't think anyone else will catch him."

"Despite what people say he'll be remembered as one of the game's great bowlers."

FACTBOX

Born: April 17 1972, Kandy
Test debut: 1992 v Australia in Colombo.
Tests: 116
Wickets: 710

Five wickets in a Test innings: 61 times
Ten wickets in a Test match: 20 times

Was called for throwing by Australian umpire Darrell Hair in 1995, triggering a continuing debate about the legality of his

unusual action.

Was called again on a 1998-99 tour of Australia but was cleared of any wrongdoing after scientific tests proved his innocence.

Broke West Indian Courtney Walsh's world record of 519 Test wickets in 2004 before injuries struck, forcing him to take an extended break from the game.

Loses his world record to Shane Warne later that year but reclaims it in 2007 after the Australian leg-spinner retires with 708 Test wickets.

Murali also holds the world record for the most international wickets (combining Tests and one-dayers) as well as the most 10-wicket hauls in a Test match and five-wicket hauls in an innings.

Dilip free to

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to take his decision."

The board recently issued guidelines for the five national selectors following media controversy over Vengsarkar continuing with his syndicated column while heading the panel.

India media has speculated Vengsarkar could step down before Wednesday, when the selectors are due to meet in Bangalore to choose the Test squad for the final game against Pakistan starting on Saturday as well as the following Australian tour.

Shane applauds

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spinner Warne's world record tally of 708 wickets in 145 matches.

"I congratulate Murali for breaking the record I had," Warne said Monday.

"I knew I would only have it for a short time. Murali has said he wanted to take 1000 Test wickets and he has every chance of getting there."

"If he does I don't think anyone else will catch him."

Murali's career has been blighted by concerns over the legitimacy of his action but Warne refused to denigrate the achievement.

"Despite what people say he'll be remembered as one of the game's great bowlers," Warne said.

"He's an excellent competitor and has been great for Sri Lankan cricket. He's a great bloke too. I've been to Sri Lanka to help him after the (December 2004) tsunami and we now even have a trophy named after the two of us. I'd just like to say 'well done on the record'."

Tom Moody, who coached Sri Lanka for two years before departing after the World Cup in April to take charge at Western Australia, believes Murali could reach 1000 Test wickets.

"If his body holds together and he's still got the burning desire to achieve those personal milestones, he's going to do it, simple as that," Moody said.

SL's old guard stand up

Cricket

AFP, Kandy

Muttiah Muralidaran shattered the Test bowling mark and Sanath Jayasuriya exploded with the bat as Sri Lanka took charge of the first Test against England here on Monday.

Sri Lanka, trailing by 93 runs on the first innings, easily wiped off the deficit and ended the third day's play on 167-2 in their second knock, a lead of 74 runs with eight wickets in hand.

Muralidaran, 35, took 6-55 to surpass retired Australian Shane Warne's world record of 708 wickets as England, resuming at their overnight score of 186-6, were bowled out for 281 just before lunch.

Jayasuriya, 38, then made a spectacular 78 -- including six boundaries in one over from James Anderson -- in what turned out to be his last Test innings.

The left-hander, Sri Lanka's top scorer in both forms of the game, said later he was retiring from Test cricket after this match, but would continue to play one-day internationals.

Jayasuriya's 78 on Monday was his highest Test score in 16 Tests since the last of his 14 centuries in Karachi in 2005 and was reportedly under pressure to call it a day or be axed.

Michael Vandort, who watched Jayasuriya blaze away at the other end, contributed 31 in an opening

stand of 113 that was Sri Lanka's best against England for the first wicket.

Jayasuriya was trapped leg-before by Matthew Hoggard and Vandort (49) was caught in the slips off Anderson, but Kumar Sangakkara (30 not out) and captain Mahela Jayawardene (zero not out) played out the day.

Muralidaran, who took four wickets on Sunday to equal Warne's record, bowled Paul Collingwood with the fourth ball of his second spell in the morning session to become Test cricket's leading wicket-taker.

Some 6,000 fans at the Asgiriya Stadium, including his Indian wife Madhimalan and former Sri Lankan captain Arjuna Ranatunga, rose to applaud the off-spinner as firecrackers burst in the stands.

Muralidaran had previously held the record briefly in 2004 when he overtook West Indian fast bowler Courtney Walsh's 519-wicket mark, before Warne surpassed him.

The Sri Lankan claimed his 61st five-wicket haul in an innings, already the highest by any bowler with Warne trailing a distant second with 37 such feats.

Collingwood and Ryan Sidebottom grabbed the spotlight at the start by adding 57 for the seventh wicket that helped England take the lead.

The former made 42 before he became Muralidaran's record victim, while left-handed

Sidebottom contributed 31.

Muralidaran bowled nine overs on the third morning without success as Collingwood and Sidebottom played him comfortably.

Sidebottom gave England the lead in the day's first over when he drove seamer Dilhara Fernando for a boundary and then flicked Muralidaran for another four to bring up his side's 200.

Collingwood, looking at ease against Muralidaran, cut the spinner for a boundary and even reverse swept him for three runs.

Jayasuriya signalled the end of Muralidaran's first spell when he claimed the second new ball in the 81st over, the 19th of the morning.

The old ball had produced 52 runs in 18 overs on the third day with Sidebottom contributing 28 of them, including three fours.

Lasith Malinga broke the stand in his second over with the new ball when he forced Sidebottom to edge a low catch to wicketkeeper Prasanna Jayawardene.

Muralidaran removed Collingwood and had Hoggard stumped for his 710th wicket before Chaminda Vaas ended the innings by trapping Anderson leg-before.

SCOREBOARD

Scoreboard at stumps on the third day of the first Test between England and Sri Lanka at the Asgiriya Stadium on Monday:

SRI LANKA: First innings 188 (Sangakkara 92, P Jayawardene 51;

Hoggard 4-29, Panesar 3-46)

ENGLAND: First innings (overnight 186-6)

Cook lbw b Vaas	0
Vaughan c Silva b Muralidaran	37
Bell c Silva b Muralidaran	83
Pietersen lbw b Muralidaran	31
Collingwood b Muralidaran	45

Bopara c P Jayawardene b Muralidaran	8
Prior c Mubarak b Fernando	0
Sidebottom c P Jayawardene b Malinga	31

Hoggard st P Jayawardene b Muralidaran	15
Anderson lbw b Vaas	9
Panesar not out	2

Extras: (b-6, lb-1, nb-11, w-2)	20
Total: (All out in 93.1 overs)	281

Fall of wickets: 1-0, 2-107, 3-132, 4-170, 5-182, 6-185, 7-242, 8-266, 9-272	
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Bowler	O	M	R	W
Vaas	18.1	3	76	2
Malinga	20	2	86	1

Muralidaran	35	14	55	6
Jayasuriya	2	0	9	0
Fernando	18	2	48	1

SRI LANKA: Second innings	
Vandort c Bell b Anderson	49
Jayasuriya lbw b Hoggard	78

Sangakkara not out	30
M Jayawardene not out	0
Extras: (b-5, lb-5)	10

Total: (For two wks in 52 overs)	167
Fall of wickets: 1-113, 2-166	

Bowler	O	M	R	W
Hoggard	11	3	28	1
Sidebottom	11	2	22	0

Panesar	18	1	53	0
Anderson	9	2	50	1
Bopara	3	1	4	0

Vettori all praise for Gibbs

REUTERS, Cape Town

New Zealand captain Daniel Vettori acclaimed South Africa opener Herschelle Gibbs as the difference between the sides after his brilliant century gave the home team victory in their one-day series on Sunday.

Gibbs scored 119 from 101 balls with 10 fours and seven sixes to give his team a five-wicket win with 28 balls to spare in the third one-day international for a 2-1 series win. South Africa won the Test series 2-0.

"We were beaten by one man today, he played really well," Vettori told reporters. "That's one of the best one-day innings I've ever seen."

Gibbs mixed the orthodox with the innovative in a breathtaking innings but said he had not been unusually aggressive.

"I don't know if I had a go, the ball was just there to be hit," Gibbs told a news conference. "It's nice when it comes off, especially in front of your home crowd."

"It's not often that you can get into the zone and play like that. If you hit a few in the middle early doors, you just get on that sort of a roll."

Gibbs also praised the Newlands groundstaff.

"I've got to thank the groundsman for producing one of the better wickets we've had here for a few years," he said.

"Combine that with a really nice day and it makes for a really good spectacle."

South African captain Graeme Smith was satisfied with his team's showing.

"Winning a home series is what everyone expects you to do, so it's fantastic to win the way we have done," Smith told a news conference. "I'm very happy with the way the guys performed."

Akhtar played

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admitted to hospital I had 102-degree fever. My fever kept on coming back. I was shivering. I had cough also. I couldn't breathe normally."

"In the hospital, I was administered three to four drips and given four injections," he said while interacting with the media.

Akhtar said when he took the field on Friday, he had a splitting headache.

"My head was reeling so much that I couldn't see anything," he said.

Akhtar had fallen sick on the fourth day of the first Test in Delhi and spent one and half days at a private hospital here.

India to bat

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could have played a bit more aggressively, Dhoni said. "Because of the slow nature of the track, it is hard to score runs. On this pitch, it is hard to hit all the balls for fours and sixes. I must say we were ready to bat the full quota today. But since the umpires thought otherwise, we had to come back."

After the Pakistan second innings folded for 456, India finished the day at 141 for two, with Dhoni (28) and Ganguly (24) in the middle.

On the Indian bowling strategy on the final day, Dhoni said the spinners will have to fox the Pakistan batsmen in flight, turn and bounce.