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Tigers leave for New Zealand today

SPORTS REPORTER

With a mission to put on a better performance than their first trip six years back, Bangladesh cricket team leaves Dhaka today for their demanding tour of New Zealand.

During their 34-day tour down under, Tigers will play three one-day internationals and two Tests besides three limited-overs warm-up games and a charity Twenty20 match for the cyclone Sidr victims.

Only the one-day players will board the flight as the national selectors picked a 15-member squad first and are expected to announce the Test side after the second one-day match to be held at McLean Park in Napier on December 28.

Only Javed Omar, Mohammad Ashraful, Tushar Imran and Mashrafe Bin Mortaza have survived from the last visit in 2001 where the then newcomers to the elite club suffered innings defeat in both Tests.

Last time there were only two Tests but this time Ashraful's men are to play a full series as it includes the one-day matches.

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BD U-19s' 1-dayer today

SPORTS REPORTER

The impressive Bangladesh under-19 cricket team takes on visiting Sri Lanka Under-19s in the first one-day match of the five-match series at the Shaheed Chandu Stadium in Bogra today.

The junior Tigers, who returned home few days ago from Pakistan after a scintillating 3-2 series victory, will also play two more matches in Bogra on December 14 and 15.

The last two matches will take place on December 18 and 20 at the Fatullah Cricket Stadium.



Did U Know?

American track and field legend Carl Lewis won 10 Olympic medals including 9 golds.



Talk Turkey



Jerome Taylor

(West Indies fast bowler)

"I'm happy to play a leading role and perform at my best for the West Indies. I enjoy representing the people of the West Indies and will be striving to go from strength to strength."

What to Watch

DD National

India v Pakistan
Third Test, Day Five
Live from 10:00am

TEN Sports

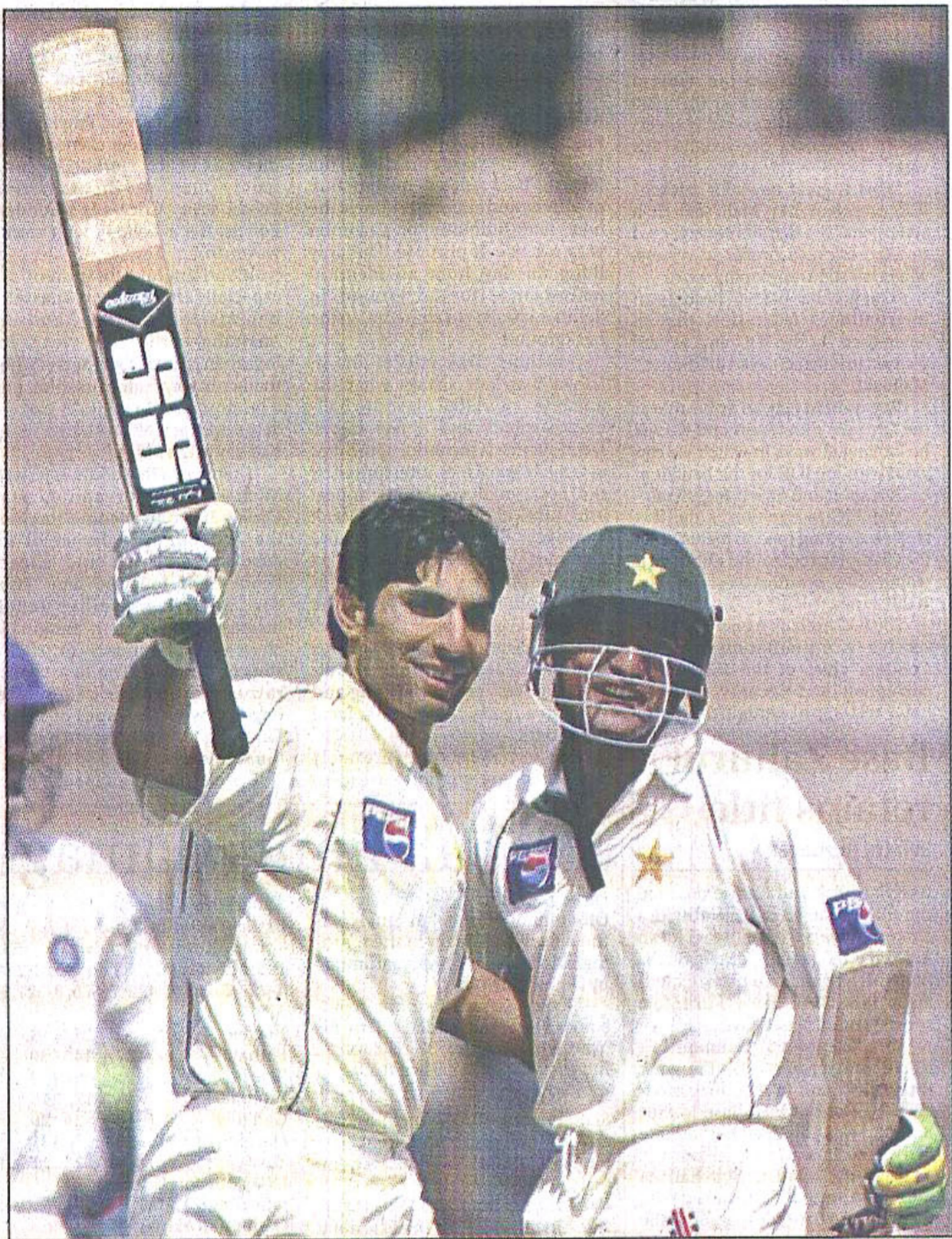
Sri Lanka v England
Second Test, Day Four
Live from 10:30am

UEFA Champions League

Roma v Man United
Live from 1:00am (Thursday)
Arsenal v Steaua
Delayed from 3:45am (Thursday)

ESPN

Sportscentre India
Sports News
Live at 8:30pm



IN PURPLE PATCH: In-form Pakistan batsman Misbahul Haq salutes the dressing room while being congratulated by Yasir Arafat for his second Test century on the fourth day of the third Test against India at the Chinnaswamy Stadium in Bangalore on Tuesday.

Sultan to talk to FIFA

Football

SPORTS REPORTER

The ice surrounding the relationship between football organisers inside and outside the Bangladesh Football Federation (BFF) has seemingly begun to melt after a delegation of organisers and ex-players met federation president SA Sultan yesterday.

Ex-BFF general secretary Harunur Rashid, former national captain and BFF high-up Badal Roy, organisers Fazlur Rahman Babul, Shawkat Khan Jahangir, Nurul Alam Chowdhury and ex-national booters Sheikh Mohammed Aslam and Kaiser Hamid were part of the delegation that met the BFF boss at his office last afternoon.

The main point of discussion was the formation of DFAs (district and divisional football associations) ahead of the BFF elections.

"There have been some talking

recently but I want to make one thing clear that the BFF has so far done everything under the directive of its controlling organisation FIFA. However, considering the socio-economic condition of the country, I have realised that there are many problems in implementing the FIFA directives," Sultan told reporters after the meeting.

"Although this realisation has come late, there is time to correct the mistakes.

"Today's discussion has been productive and I have received some constructive suggestions which I intend to take to FIFA," promised Sultan.

"The reality is that there would be legal and technical problems if we continue with the ongoing procedures of forming the DFAs.

"We all want to release the tension and make a level playground so that a strong and good committee comes out of it to run the game in the future," said Sultan, who denied daylong rumour of his

resignation.

"I am still in the chair. My personal view is that the BFF is an autonomous body. In the past, however, the government had controlled this particular chair and it is natural that it would want the same again.

"I admit that there has been pressure on the BFF but we created this. Although we will have to open talks with the FIFA again, I still believe this delay would not hamper our election date," he added.

Harunur Rashid said on the part of the organisers and players that they were happy about the president's realisation.

"All we wanted to convey to him was that the steps taken by the BFF to form the DFAs are not practicable in the context of our socio-economic condition. The FIFA's design for the DFA is not applicable in a country like us due to lack of infrastructure," said Harun.

"It is better the BFF president himself tells this to the FIFA. We

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Aussies too pacy for NZ

Cricket

AFP, Perth

A fast bowling blitz saw Australia thrash New Zealand by 54 runs in a Twenty20 international at the WACA Ground here Tuesday.

The home side made 186 for six from its 20 overs, led by an unbeaten 85 from powerful all-rounder Andrew Symonds, and the Black Caps managed just 132 in reply in front of 17,344 spectators.

Although Twenty20 is viewed as a batsman's game, the Australian pace attack derailed New Zealand's run chase from the start with some extremely hostile bowling in another tough match for New Black Caps captain Daniel Vettori.

On a lively wicket, Brett Lee (17-2) claimed the wicket of dangerous opener Lou Vincent from the first ball of the innings, the Kiwi batsman getting a top edge to a rising ball and skying it to wicketkeeper Adam Gilchrist.

Lee then dismissed Brendon McCullum, who had survived a close third umpire run out decision and audaciously slashed the Australian quick over point for six in his previous over, in similar fashion, caught behind from a leading edge for 13.

Fellow tearaway Shaun Tait (22-2) was brought into the attack and claimed a wicket with his first ball, Jamie How (4) gloving a bouncer through to Gilchrist, who pulled in

a stunning catch. Gilchrist leapt high to get a hand to the ball, and then wheeled around and dived full length to snare the ball in one hand.

The first three New Zealand wickets had all fallen to express, rising deliveries.

Three deliveries later, Tait removed Ross Taylor for a duck off

an inside edge.

When Gilchrist took his fourth catch to remove Mathew Sinclair for a duck, the third of the innings, and give Mitchell Johnson (19-2) his first wicket, the Black Caps were 31 for five and the game was as good as over as a contest.

Another quick, Ashley Noffke,

SEE PAGE 18 COL 2



CAN YOU BELIEVE THAT? Australia's surprise call-up Luke Pomersbach reflects on a most unlikely debut in the Twenty20 International against New Zealand at the WACA in Perth on Tuesday.

Misbah limits damage

Cricket

AFP, Bangalore

Misbahul Haq relished India's attack with a second successive century to boost Pakistan's hopes of forcing a draw in the third and final Test here on Tuesday.

The middle-order batsman followed his second-Test 161 with a brilliant 133 not out as Pakistan warded off a threat of follow-on to post 537 in their first innings in reply to India's 626.

India were strongly placed to clinch their first Test series against Pakistan at home since 1980 after reaching 131-2 in their second innings at stumps on the penultimate day for an overall lead of 220.

The hosts lead 1-0 in the series, with the final Test heading for a draw.

India lost openers Gautam Gambhir (three) and Wasim Jaffer (18) before former captains Sourav Ganguly (63 not out) and Rahul Dravid (35 not out) steadied the innings with an unfinished 105-run stand for the third wicket.

Ganguly, who smashed a maiden Test double-hundred in the first innings, raced to his half-century off 57 balls with a six off leg-spinner Danish Kaneria and nine fours.

The hosts needed a couple of

early wickets in the morning to raise victory hopes after Pakistan had resumed at 369-5, but had to wait for two sessions to wrap up the innings on a track where the ball sometimes kept low.

"Our first target was to avoid the follow-on and we did that. If India set a target then we will go after it. The pitch surprises me as the odd ball keeps low, but it's getting better and better," said Pakistan's coach Geoff Lawson.

"I think this needs to be a five-Test series. It's little unsatisfactory to have three Tests because it's tough to come back after losing the first. India and Pakistan deserve a five-match series."

India also earned a dubious distinction of conceding a record 76 extras in a Test innings, surpassing the previous highest of 71 by the West Indies against Pakistan at Georgetown in 1988.

The sundries were the third-highest contributor in the innings after Misbah and stand-in captain Younis Khan (80).

Misbah, who had played just seven Tests before this series since his debut in 2001, was Pakistan's find of the tour as he remained a thorn in India's flesh with scores of 82, 45, 161 not out, six and 133 not out in five innings.

The 33-year-old played a key role in two useful partnerships to thwart

India, adding 144 for the sixth wicket with wicketkeeper Kamran Akmal (65) and 93 for the next with debutant Yasir Arafat (44).

"It surprises me that he (Misbah) has not played much, but he has been outstanding in this series. It needs an unplayable ball to get him out. He concentrates hard and has shown he is a world-class player," said Lawson.

India's 19-year-old seamer Ishant Sharma, playing only his second Test, claimed the last four wickets to finish with 5-118, but Pakistan had already saved a follow-on at that stage.

Needing 427 to make India bat again, Pakistan achieved their objective in the second hour of the morning during the Misbah-Akmal partnership.

There was no stopping Misbah, who continued to frustrate the Indian attack with a solid defence and a flawless shot-selection. He hit 17 fours in his 322-ball knock.

It was the second successive time Misbah and Akmal helped their team avoid the follow-on, having already done so in the drawn second Test in Kolkata with resolute centuries.

With the pitch offering little help to seamers and spinners, India found wickets hard to come by as they got just one in the morning.

SEE PAGE 18 COL 6

Impending delay worries Ashraful

SPORTS REPORTER

Bangladesh captain Mohammad Ashraful expressed concern about club cricket's uncertainty this season.

At a press conference organised by Cricketers' Welfare Association of Bangladesh (CWAB) yesterday, the ace batsman said that almost 90 per cent local players would suffer if the legal trouble was not settled soon.

"I hope we can have a solution. There must be a way to end this problem before it gets out of hand for us cricketers," said Ashraful, who flies out to New Zealand this afternoon.

He continued, "They (players) look after their families with the money earned through league cricket. For the national team players, it is fine because we have financial security but we are only a few among the large number of cricketers."

A division bench of High Court ordered a two-month stay on any further activities of the Premier Cricket League following a writ petition signed by Brothers Union last month, but Cricket Committee of Dhaka Metropolis (CCDM) had announced Premier and First Division League's players' transfer

SEE PAGE 18 COL 1

Rakib clinches 9th place in C'wealth Chess

SPORTS REPORTER

Abdullah Al Rakib finished ninth and his fellow Bangladeshi Grand Master Niaz Murshed 11th in the Commonwealth Chess Championships which concluded in New Delhi on Monday.

After ten rounds, both the GMs won their respective games to total 7.5 points each.

Rakib defeated local WGM Nisha Mohota while Niaz beat Malaysia's International Master Mas Hafizullah.

Refaat Bin Sattar, the other GM from Bangladesh, finished 29th with 6.5 points after losing to Indian IM RR Laxman.

FM Khondokar Aminul Islam (5.5 points) finished 95th and IWM Rani Hamid (3.5) 209th.

The title went to Indian GM RB Ramesh, who edged his compatriot GM Surya Shekhar Ganguly in tiebreakers after both were level on 8.5 points.

Shorter WC in the offing

REUTERS, Karachi

The four host countries of the 2011 Cricket World Cup will ask the International Cricket Council (ICC) if they can hold the tournament over a shorter period of time, an official said on Tuesday.

Representatives of Pakistan, India, Sri Lanka and Bangladesh met in Bangalore and have reached a consensus on a format for the 2011 tournament, which they will submit to the ICC for discussion and ratification, a Pakistan cricket board official told Reuters.

"We want to have the eight team quarter finals directly after the preliminary round of matches between the two groups of seven," he said.

SEE PAGE 18 COL 5

What a big surprise!

REUTERS, Sydney

A boozy night provided an unexpected dividend for Luke Pomersbach when he was called up to make his international debut for Australia in Tuesday's Twenty20 match against New Zealand at the WACA in Perth.

The 23-year-old is currently banned from playing in the Australian domestic first-class competition after breaching his team's strict rules on late-night drinking, but the suspension proved a blessing in disguise.

While his Western Australian teammates were preparing for their next match, Pomersbach decided to fill in his spare time by watching Tuesday's Twenty20 international from the ground.

But when he arrived at the WACA with his girlfriend, he received a surprise call from the Australian team management asking him if he could play because middle-order batsman Brad Hodge had suffered a bizarre back injury in the changing room.

"The Australian manager rang me just as I was parking my car, and

SEE PAGE 18 COL 1

Masterly Mahela

Cricket

AFP, Colombo

Sri Lankan captain Mahela Jayawardene took over from Sanath Jayasuriya as his country's leading run-maker as the hosts pulverised England in the second Test here on Tuesday.

Jayawardene made 167 not out and Michael Vandort hit 138 as Sri Lanka, replying to England's first innings total of 351, piled up 379-4 by stumps on the third day at the Sinhalese Sports Club (SSC).

Sri Lanka go into the fourth day's play leading by 28 runs with six wickets in hand and almost certain to put England under pressure when the tourists bat a second time.

Jayawardene surpassed the recently-retired Jayasuriya's career tally of 6,973 runs and also equalled Aravinda de Silva's Sri Lankan

record of 20 Test centuries.

The 30-year-old now has 7,030 runs from 92 Tests while Jayasuriya played 110 matches before retiring from the longer format of the game after the first Test in Kandy last week.

Jayawardene shone once again on his favourite hunting ground where he scored 374 against South Africa two years ago during a world record stand of 624 with Kumar Sangakkara (287).

The Sri Lankan captain has 2,034 runs from 19 matches at the SSC, the most by any batsman at a single venue, surpassing former England captain Graham Gooch's 2015 runs from 21 Tests at Lord's in London.

Jayawardene, who has hit 13 boundaries and a six, and Vandort put on 227 for the third wicket after coming together in the post-lunch session of the second day with Sri Lanka struggling at 22-2.

The pair batted through Tuesday's morning period before

left-arm seamer Ryan Sidebottom broke the stand with his fourth delivery with the second new ball an hour after lunch by trapping Vandort leg-before.

Vandort hit 18 boundaries, and a six off Monty Panesar, but failed by two runs to surpass his Test best of 140 against Bangladesh in 2002.

Chamara Silva helped his captain put on 128 for the fourth wicket, making 49 before he fended a short ball from Steve Harmison to Ravi Bopara at point.

England, who lost the first Test by 86 runs, were denied quick wickets after they had removed the prolific Sangakkara and Upul Tharanga cheaply on Monday.

Sangakkara's wicket had raised the tourists' hopes after the left-hander hit 152 in Kandy to become the first batsman in history to compile 150-plus scores in four consecutive Tests.

SEE PAGE 18 COL 2



SUBLIME SKIPPER: Sri Lanka captain Mahela Jayawardene plays his trademark square-cut during his unbeaten 167 against England on the third day of the second Test at the SSC ground in Colombo on Tuesday.

England's uphill task: Moores

Cricket

BBC ONLINE, undated

England coach Peter Moores admitted his team faced an uphill struggle after Sri Lanka closed day three of the second Test 28 runs ahead on 379-4.

Sri Lanka skipper Mahela Jayawardene hit a superb unbeaten 167 as England toiled hard for just two wickets.

"There's been no lack of effort. We're disappointed not to take wickets but we kept them to under three runs an over.

"The game's still on but we've got to take two wickets early and keep their lead to a minimum," said Moores.

England, who need to draw the

match to stay in the series, face the prospect of a large first-innings deficit as well as the threat of Muttiah Muralitharan's spin in their second innings.

Their chances will be boosted if they can remove Jayawardene early on Wednesday.

Jayawardene, supported by fellow centurion Michael Vandort, played magnificently on Tuesday to become the first Sri Lankan batsman to pass 7,000 Test runs.

Ryan Sidebottom and Steve Harmison were the only successful bowlers on a tough day for the tourists.

Harmison, playing his first Test since June after overcoming various injuries, got scant reward for his industry but did pick up the wicket of Chamara Silva in the last over before stumps.

"I'm glad he got a wicket at the end of the day," Moores said of the Durham fast bowler.

"He will bowl a lot worse than that and get wickets. I thought Jayawardene played him very well."

Jayawardene, who overtook the recently retired Sanath Jayasuriya as Sri Lanka's leading Test run-scorer, said: "I am very honoured to go above Sanath but every day you try to improve - that is what Test cricket is all about."

He also said he expected the wicket to deteriorate.

"If we can just try to bat for a couple more sessions and put 150 or 200 extra on the board we can give Murali something to play with."

"England will have to bat really well," said the 30-year-old.