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## Did U Know?

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Live from 4:30pm

## Malik, Afridi unlikely?

PTI, Karachi

The embattled Pakistani team may have to take the field in Wednesday's do-or-die Asia Cup match against India without captain Shoaib Malik, who has been laid low by dehydration.

Pakistan coach Geoff Lawson said Malik had been in a bad state during the side's loss to Sri Lanka in their previous super-four stage match. Malik did not participate in the team's net session today (Tuesday).

"His hotel room is like a hospital ward and when he came off the field against Sri Lanka he was very ill. It is not something to joke about, athletes have died of dehydration so we can't take a risk with his health," Lawson said. "Only the doctors will decide whether he can play against India or not. That is for them to decide," he stated.

Already mired in controversies related to selection, the team may leave out all-rounder Shahid Afridi, who has so far come a cropper with bat, for Wednesday's match.

"We are going to make changes in the team because it is a must-win situation for us against India. Shahid Afridi, whose batting has not worked, and pacer Wahab Riaz will probably be dropped to accommodate opener Nasir Jamshed and pacer, Abdul Rauf," a selector conceded.

## Kirsten agrees with Dhoni

CRICINFO, undated

India's coach Gary Kirsten has backed Mahendra Singh Dhoni's views on the Asia Cup's hectic schedule.

"I think that three games in four days in this heat took a toll on the players," he said after India's net session on Tuesday. "It is unfair to expect players to play that amount of cricket in such short space of time in 35 degrees heat."

Dhoni had blamed India's listless performance on the field against Bangladesh in the ongoing Asia Cup by schedule which has teams playing matches on consecutive days. "We have played cricket for 36 of the last 84 hours," Dhoni said. Rajiv Shukla, the Indian board vice-president, responded by saying if a player wanted rest, he could inform the

## INDO-PAK CLASH TODAY

# Pathan returns

AFP, Karachi

All-rounder Irfan Pathan returns to India's squad for their crunch match on Wednesday against archrivals Pakistan here, with the hosts in a must-win situation in the Super League Asia Cup encounter.

The 23-year-old Pathan missed the start of the tournament with a side strain but coach Gary Kirsten said he has regained full fitness.

"Irfan is fine and available for selection," said the India coach.

He said the team had enjoyed their three-day rest after playing several matches in close succession.

"It was very important to give the guys some time off the cricket, so we did it, now the guys are back and focusing for the next two games," said Kirsten.

India, who have four points after carrying over two points from the first round, need to beat

Pakistan to set up a repeat of the 2004 Asia Cup final against Sri Lanka.

Sri Lanka, who beat India four years ago, qualified for the July 6 final with a comprehensive 158-run win over Bangladesh on Monday.

Kirsten said he hoped his team would be up to the challenge of winning the Cup.

"Sri Lanka are playing good cricket, they are a very well organised side. They have got a good balanced team and like Pakistan they're also going to be a tough opponent, we are also playing good cricket."

Kirsten said India have ideas on how to stop the flow of runs on the flat National Stadium pitch against Pakistan.

"Most of the sides have made big scores in the tournament, but we have come up with a couple of ideas on what we're going to do and have spent some time with the bowlers," said Kirsten, a former South African opener.

"We believe in these bowlers, they're the same bowlers who did exceptionally well in Australia," he said.

India showed their one-day credentials by beating Australia in their own backyard in a tri-series earlier this year. However they lost to Pakistan in the final of another tri-series in Dhaka last month.

Pakistan need not only to win their matches against India and, on Friday, against Bangladesh, but must also hope other results go their way.

The home team are further sweating on the fitness of captain Shoaib Malik, who suffered dehydration after his team's 64-run defeat against Sri Lanka on Sunday.

Team manager Talat Ali however said he hoped Malik, who was put on a drip after the match, would take the field on Wednesday.

"It is a crucial match for us on Wednesday, so we hope Malik gets fit. At the moment he does feel weakness but I am hopeful that he will play," said Ali.

# Records matter little

CRICINFO, undated

The beauty about Sanath Jayasuriya, Virender

Sehwag and Adam Gilchrist is that there are certain records they are the most likely to set -- and they don't give a damn about it. For them the journey is the thing. They can't bear to take the joy out of their batting just because they are close to a record -- in that sense, they derive a Keith Miller-like sense of pleasure from their cricket.

For some reason, in our consciousness, the difference between 200 and 190 is more than just the 10 runs. For these batsmen, though, nearing a landmark is not reason enough for them to not hit a ball that is there to be hit. Scoring, and not records, is their primal emotion. It could have been the ease with which Jayasuriya was playing, it could have been the pace of his devastating hitting, it could have been the flatness of the track, or it could have been how he suddenly

exploded in the 10th over, but one sensed a special innings in the making and a threat to Saeed Anwar's record for the highest score in ODIs.

From 29 off 23 balls, he reached his century in 55 balls -- in the 18th over. The wicket was placid, so was the bowling, the fielders demoralised and Jayasuriya going strong. Kumar Sangakkara, his opening partner, gave him most of the strike, and 200 no longer seemed a fantasy. Off went the helmet and, after a brief calm Jayasuriya cut loose again. The journalists in the press box rummaged for Anwar's contacts. Two fours and a six later, Jayasuriya had reached 130 off 87 balls, with 22 overs still to go. Then came a short one outside off, and Jayasuriya, perhaps going for a four and slightly misplacing, or going for a six but not getting the power, was caught at sweeper-cover. Had there been a crowd here, a loud sigh would have been followed by generous applause.

"I think it's more natural about instincts than milestones," Mahela

Jayawardene, Sri Lanka's captain, said of Jayasuriya's batting. "He just looks to contribute to the team. If he is in his groove, he can score 250 on his day. But that's how he plays. If he changed his game, he probably would get out anyway. He knows exactly how he has been playing for 18-odd years. It's amazing to watch him bat." Jayasuriya has himself said previously that his batting is all natural; he doesn't even think about hitting fours or sixes, they come instinctively to him.

In the past, against India in Sharjah in 2000-01 (189 off 161 balls), against Pakistan in Singapore in 1995-96 (134 off 65), against Netherlands in Amstelveen in 2006 (157 off 104), he has looked he would get to the record, but the approach didn't change with the record in sight.

Not long ago, though, Jayasuriya was too old and too out of form to be playing the young man's game of limited-overs cricket. When he was dropped for the West Indies ODIs earlier this year, he had gone

# 'ICC not to blame'

Cricket

AFP, Karachi

Cricket's governing body on Tuesday dismissed a suggestion from an Indian official that it was responsible for their country's tough schedule during the Asia Cup.

Rajiv Shukla, vice-president of the Board of Control for Cricket in India (BCCI) said on Sunday that the schedule made by the International Cricket Council (ICC) was "hectic".

"The International Cricket Council monitors the volume of cricket on an ongoing basis," said an ICC spokesman.

"The Future Tour Programme (FTP) recommended maximum volume of matches over a 12-month period is 15 Tests and 30 one day internationals. However, each board determines whether it

wishes to adhere to that mark or arrange extra matches."

After India's seven-wicket win over Bangladesh in the Asia Cup on Saturday, captain Mahendra Singh Dhoni complained of almost back-to-back matches for his team. His team beat Pakistan on Thursday.

"We were a bit disappointing, but one of the reasons for it is that we have played cricket for 36 of the last 84 hours," said Dhoni whose team plays Pakistan and Sri Lanka respectively on Wednesday and Thursday.

"Back-to-back games make it really tough for the players. I am not really happy with the schedule: two teams are playing back-to-back games, and two teams are not."

The BCCI's Shukla also raised queries over the fixtures.

"The international calendar is made by the ICC, which is very hectic. Even the schedule for the Asia Cup has been made by the ICC. Even if there are bilateral

series, teams have to fulfill their commitments," Shukla said in India.

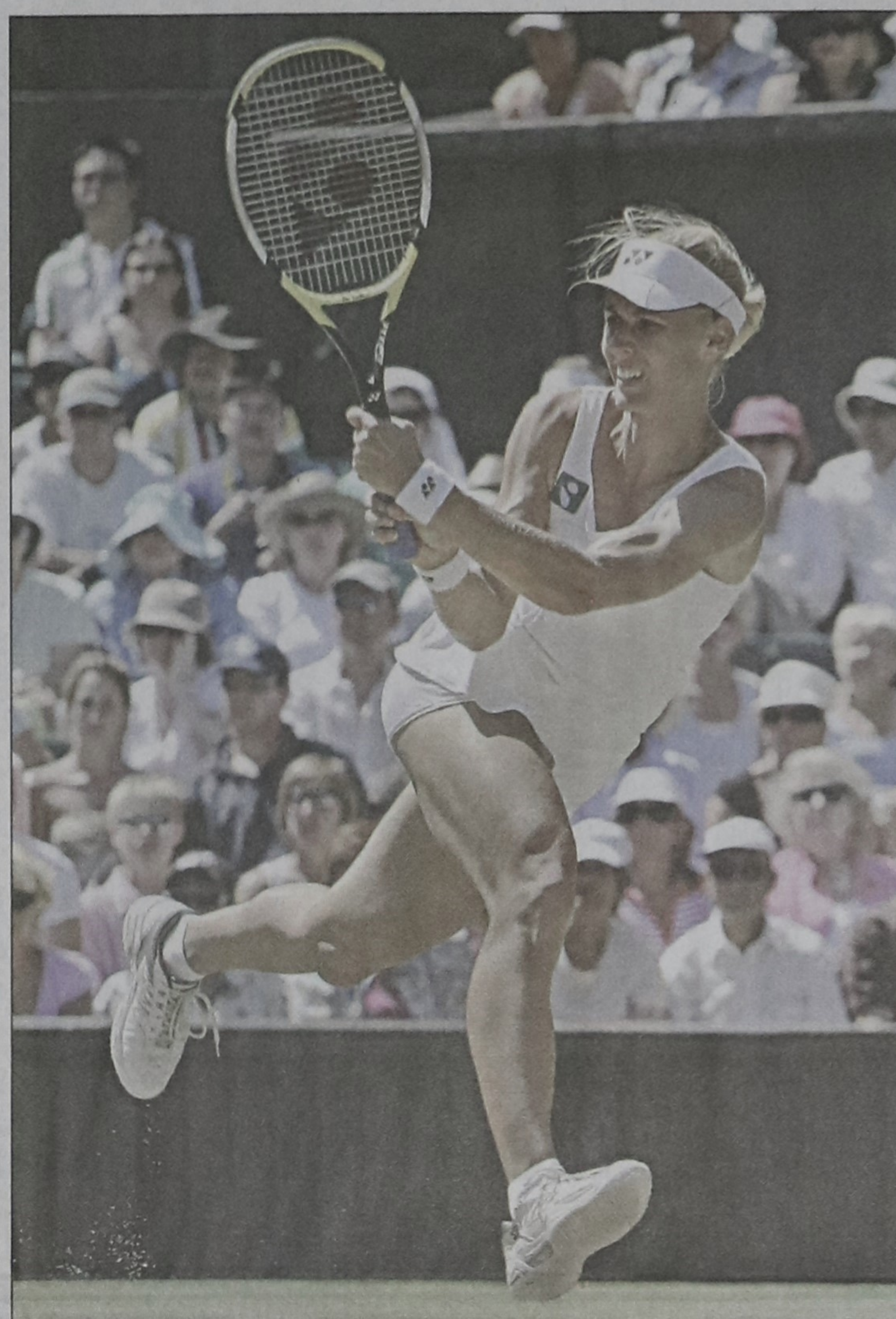
The ICC spokesman said however that the Asia Cup schedule was drawn up by the game's Asian administrators.

"The ICC has nothing to do with the Asia Cup schedule, which is drawn up by the Asian Cricket Council in partnership with the teams taking part," the spokesman said.

"Similarly, the FTP is a series of bilateral arrangements between our members and the ICC's role there is to administer those arrangements rather than draw up the schedule," said the spokesman.

The FTP is a schedule of Tests and one-day cricket for all Test-playing nations which runs from 2006 to 2012. The ICC currently has nine Test-playing countries, with Zimbabwe's status being suspended last year.

SEE PAGE 18 COL 4



Russian Elena Dementieva plays a backhand return against compatriot Nadia Petrova in the quarterfinal match of the Wimbledon Championships at the All England Club in London yesterday.

## Dhaka-Ansar handball final

SPORTS REPORTER

Dhaka and Ansar VDP moved into the final of the Exim Bank 19th National Women's Handball competition by winning their respective semifinals at the Mirpur Shaheed Suhrawardi Indoor Stadium yesterday.

The final will take place at the same venue today.

In the day's semifinal, Dhaka handed a 30-18 defeat to Narail after leading the first-half 15-6.

Khaleda and Happy scored six goals each for the winners while Sathi needed seven for Narail and was later named player-of-the-match.

In the second semifinal, Ansar defeated Faridpur 37-9 goals after dominating the first-half 13-4.

Player-of-the-match Moyna notched nine goals for Ansar while Shahida scored seven goals. Earlier in the group matches, Dhaka defeated Jessore 33-10, Faridpur beat Rajshahi 17-13 and Ansar outplayed Chittagong 30-4.

# Venus ends Tamarine run

AFP, London



Four-time champion Venus Williams cruised closer to a seventh Wimbledon final on Tuesday as she set up a last four showdown with brittle Russian Elena Dementieva.

Williams, the seventh seed, brushed aside Thai veteran Tamarine Tanasugarn 6-4, 6-3 and is now just one victory away from an All England Club final and the possibility of a third title showdown with sister Serena.

Tamarine, ranked 60 in the world, was the first Thai to reach a Grand Slam quarterfinal but the 31-year-old, who considered quitting last year, was left to regret only converting one of her 10 break points.

Dementieva reached her first Wimbledon semifinal with a 6-1, 6-7 (6/8), 6-3 over Nadia Petrova in a rollercoaster tie where searing temperatures sent both Russians

into meltdown on Centre Court.

It was a hard-earned victory for the 26-year-old fifth seed, the highest ranked player left in the tournament after the top four seeds had been culled. Dementieva had led by a set and 5-1 and threw away two match points in a virtual carbon copy of her collapse against Dinara Safina in the French Open quarterfinals.

American sixth seed Serena Williams reached the Wimbledon semifinals with a 6-4, 6-0 win over Poland's Agnieszka Radwanska.

Serena, the 2002 and 2003 champion, will face China's Zheng Jie for a place in the final.

Zheng reached last four with a 6-2, 5-7, 6-1 win over Czech 18th seed Nicole Pietrangeli.

Former world number three

**SEMIS LINE-UP**  
Wimbledon women's singles semi-finals line-up (x denotes seeded player):  
Zheng Jie (CHN) v Serena Williams (USAx6)  
Elena Dementieva (RUS x5) v Venus Williams (USAx7)

## Shakil, Alamgir made BCB members

SPORTS REPORTER

National Sports Council (NSC) named Shakil Kasem and Golam Mohammad Alamgir as new ad-hoc committee members of the Bangladesh Cricket Board (BCB).

It was learnt that BCB were desperately looking for the manpower in the board after Lt Col (ret'd) MA Latif resigned from the executive committee while another member is now detained.

It has come as surprise as the two names were hardly discussed to fill the vacant posts.

Shakil Kasem is not only known as a former cricketer but also as a columnist while Golam Mohammad Alamgir is chairman of Mohammedan Sporting Club's cricket committee.

BCB's media committee chairman Ahmed Sajjadul Alam however said that they are yet to get the official circular from NSC.

"We don't receive any official circular regarding the new appointments," said Sajjadul.

In another recent move, NSC has demanded 15 per cent of the media marketing rights deal from BCB to take other sports disciplines ahead.

"It is still not clear to us and we have to discuss the issue with our legal experts. BCB already gives gate-money levy to the NSC for each tournament along with 15 per cent VAT and besides the board also pays handsome money as income tax," Sajjadul responded over NSC's demand.

## BHF names jr hockey team

SPORTS REPORTER

Bangladesh Hockey Federation (BHF) announced a 16-member youth team to take part in the sixth Junior Asia Cup Hockey to be held from July 11 in Hyderabad, India.

Eight teams, split into two groups, will take part in the eight-day meet that ends on July 18.

Bangladesh are pitted in Group B along with Pakistan, Oman and South Korea while Group A comprises of hosts India, Japan, Malaysia

SEE PAGE 18 COL 5



India batsman Suresh Raina (R) discusses with coach Gary Kirsten after batting in the nets in Karachi yesterday ahead of their clash against hosts Pakistan today.

# Zim issue divides opinion

Cricket

AFP, Dubai

World cricket chiefs were locked in delicate negotiations Tuesday to break the divide over strife-torn Zimbabwe and a face-saving compromise, sources told AFP.

While England and South Africa want Zimbabwe to be suspended from the International Cricket Council, the powerful Asian bloc led by the game's economic powerhouse India is opposing the move.

"It's a deadlock," a senior cricket official who is attending ICC's annual meetings here said. "Hopefully some sort of a compromise can be worked out."

One solution on the cards is that Zimbabwe, which is already barred from playing Test cricket, will also be omitted from one-day and Twenty20 internationals but retain its status as a full ICC member.

This will clear the way for England to host the Twenty20 world championships next June without Zimbabwe, as demanded by the British government.

It will also enable Zimbabwe

Cricket to retain its annual ICC funding of an estimated 10 million dollars and develop the game through 'A' team tours by other Test nations.

Cricket boards of South Africa and England last week suspended bilateral ties with Zimbabwe in protest at the deteriorating political situation in Harare where Robert Mugabe has been controversially re-elected as president.

The ICC's decision-making executive board will debate the issue on Wednesday and Thursday.

At least seven of the ICC's 10 full members -- including Zimbabwe -- must support any move to throw the African nation out of the sport's governing body.

But the four Asian Test nations -- India, Pakistan, Sri Lanka and Bangladesh -- are determined to block Zimbabwe's ouster, leading to a flurry of behind-the-scenes negotiations.

"There is no reason to remove Zimbabwe," Indian cricket board secretary Niranjan Shah had told AFP on Monday.

"We understand England's position because their government wants Zimbabwe out. Even our tour commitments are determined

by government advice.

"But we will back Zimbabwe to stay in the ICC."

If Zimbabwe retains its full membership, England risks losing the right to host the lucrative Twenty20 worlds in June next year if the British government denies visas to the Zimbabwean cricketers.

That will embarrass David Morgan, the former England cricket chief who takes over as the ICC president from South African Ray Maill this week.

Zimbabwe has not played Test cricket since hosting India in September 2005 after being told by the ICC to improve its playing standards.

But it retains an active one-day team which takes part in the World Cup.

Meanwhile, former Zimbabwean Test star John Traicos hoped the ICC will not ban his country from world cricket.

"If the principal reason for the moves towards banning Zimbabwe Cricket is the political situation in the country, then I do not believe that a ban is justified," Traicos wrote on the Cricinfo website.

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