

Federation Cup qualifiers outside Dhaka?

UNB, Dhaka

Bangladesh Football Federation (BFF) is considering to hold the qualifying rounds of the Citycell Federation Cup outside Dhaka.

The 11-team competition is scheduled to begin July 26 at the Bangabandhu National Stadium (BNS) and the finals from July 31.

Talking to reporters at the BFF Bhaban, BFF president Kazi Salahuddin said that they are thinking to roll the qualifiers in Narshingdi and Gazipur.

Explaining the reasons, he said that if they hold the matches at BNS during the spell of heavy rains, the ground would become unplayable.

"Actually we are thinking to spread football outside the capital so that the local spectators are attracted more. In the meantime, the BNS will remain smooth for holding the next round matches," Salahuddin said.

The BFF chief also opined that it would be better to organise the Federation Cup finals after the Olympic Games (August 8-14) to bring more focus on football, adding that he may discuss the issue with all participating clubs.

Ad-hoc committee for BWSF

SPORTS REPORTER

The National Sports Council (NSC) yesterday replaced the temporary executive committee of the Bangladesh Women's Sports Federation (BWSF) with an ad-hoc committee.

The government will soon name head of the 9-member ad-hoc committee, which will be responsible for holding an election within three months.

An NSC circular also said that no member of this ad-hoc committee would be able to participate in the polls.

Reena Parveen, deputy secretary of Jute Ministry, has been named general secretary. The members are: Sufia Khatun, Hosne Ara Hashi, Khurshida Akhter Khushi, Hatemun Nahar, Lubna Mahmud, Feroza Begum and Hosne Ara Habib.

One more record

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(200m freestyle, 50m freestyle), Mahmudunnabi of BKSP (200m backstroke), Raseel Ahmed of Anisar (50m freestyle), Rumana Khan of Nikli Swimming Club (50m freestyle), Alaudin Titus of BKSP (200m IM) and Rumpa Khatun of Alamgir Swimming Club (200m IM).

It's upto Flintoff

FROM PAGE 17
Mark Boucher his eighth catch of the match.

England resumed on Monday on 50 for two after fast bowler Makhaya Ntini had removed opener Andrew Strauss and captain Michael Vaughan with two superb deliveries late on Sunday.

Cook was 23 not out and Anderson unbeaten on nought after the Proteas had built a first innings lead of 319 on the back of a South African fifth-wicket record stand against England of 212 between de Villiers and Ashwell Prince, who made a Test-best 149.

The left-handed England pair got through the first hour as the hosts tried to replicate South Africa's feat in batting for two days to draw the first Test at Lord's.

Indeed paceman Anderson, cover-drove successive balls from Paul Harris for four in the spinner's first spell of the match.

SCOREBOARD

Scoreboard at tea on the fourth day of the second Test between England and South Africa at Headingley in Leeds on Monday:
ENGLAND: First innings 203 (Pietersen 45, Bell 31, Strauss 27; Morkel 4-52, Steyn 4-76)

SOUTH AFRICA: First innings Smith c Strauss b Flintoff 44, McKenzie c Flintoff b Anderson 15, Ambrose b Pattinson 38, Kallis b Anderson 4, Prince c Ambrose b Pattinson 149, De Villiers c Flintoff b Broad 174, Boucher b Anderson 34, Morkel b Panesar 0, Harris c Anderson b Panesar 24, Steyn not out 10, Ntini c Pietersen b Panesar 1

Extras: (b-2, lb-19, w-1, nb-7) 29
Total: (All out in 176.2 overs) 522
Fall of wickets: 1-51, 2-69, 3-76, 4-143, 5-355, 6-422, 7-427, 8-511, 9-511

Bowler O M R W
Anderson 34 9 136 3
Pattinson 30 2 95 2
Flintoff 40 12 77 1
Broad 29 2 114 1
Panesar 29.2 6 65 3
Pietersen 4 0 14 0
ENGLAND: Second innings (over-
night 50-2)

Strauss c Boucher b Ntini 0
Cook c Ambrose b Kallis 60
Vaughan c Boucher b Ntini 21
Anderson lbw b Steyn 34
Pietersen c Boucher b Kallis 13
Bell c de Villiers b Morkel 4
Ambrose not out 16
Flintoff not out 9

Extras: (b-4, lb-7, w-2, nb-12) 25
Total: (For 6 wickets in 77 overs) 182
Fall of wickets: 1-3, 2-50, 3-109, 4-123, 5-140, 6-152

To bat: Broad, Panesar, Pattinson
Bowler O M R W
Steyn 19 7 51 1
Ntini 20 7 34 2
Morkel 17 3 39 1
Kallis 12 2 27 2
Harris 9 3 20 0



England batsman Alastair Cook (C) cuts the ball away through the cover region during the fourth day of the second Test against South Africa at Headingley on Monday.

Driven by boo-boys

AFP, Leeds

AB de Villiers said the taunts of the Headingley crowd provided all the motivation he needed to score a century that put South Africa firmly in command of the second Test against England.

De Villiers's 174 out of a total of 522 helped give the Proteas a first innings lead of 319 after they'd bowled England out for 203.

Makhaya Ntini then struck twice before stumps on Sunday to leave England 50 for two in their second innings, still 269 behind.

That meant England had to bat two days to save this match and prevent the Proteas taking a 1-0 lead in this four-match series.

The 24-year-old de Villiers's sixth Test hundred was a study in concentration and application. Together with Ashwell Prince, who made a Test-best 149, he shared a South African record fifth-wicket stand against England of 212.

However, even before he'd faced his first ball, de Villiers had to endure boos from fans unhappy with the way in which he appeared to claim a catch, which would have seen Andrew Strauss dismissed on Friday's first day, only for replays to show he'd dropped the ball.

Strauss was relieved by the third umpire and, in any event, was out soon afterwards. But the incident created lingering ill-feeling towards de Villiers amongst both spectators and the England team.

"It was the first time ever I have been booed to the field and if anything it motivated me to do better," de Villiers said after Sunday's third day.

"I've never been booed onto the field before. It was very disappointing. It hurt a lot and I don't think I deserved it."

He added: "I don't understand it. The truth of what happened was that the ball went into my right hand and straight into my left hand."

"I went straight to my captain (Graeme Smith) and told him I wasn't 100 per cent sure. I saw a bit of grass on my left pinky (little finger) but the umpires were already referring it."

"There was no way I was going to let Andrew Strauss walk off the field without telling the umpires I wasn't sure."

At the subsequent lunch break de Villiers, according to South Africa coach Mickey Arthur, was on the receiving end of some harsh words from England captain Michael Vaughan.

However, a somewhat more diplomatic de Villiers, added: "It's a

true gentleman's game, and whatever is said on the field or in the changing room is all right and I'm happy with what happened."

And he insisted the reaction of the England team when he took guard had come as no surprise.

"I did get my fair share of words when I walked on and I wasn't expecting anything less. That is part of the game, and if anything it played into my hands. It motivated me to stay there as long as possible," said de Villiers, who batted for more than eight-and-a-half hours and faced 380 balls.

England nightwatchman James Anderson, who bowled a marathon 44 overs, said de Villiers's innings: "He showed really good concentration. Hats off to him -- he really did play well."

Looking ahead, Anderson said England could still save the game.

"We're going to have to bat well," he said.

"They're going to come out all guns blazing, and we're going to have to battle hard and put in a similar performance to what they did both here and at Lord's (where the Proteas batted for two days to draw the first Test)."

"Stuart Broad is going to be at No 9, so we've got plenty of batting left. Obviously, a couple of guys are going to need to get big hundreds."

Healy in hot water

AFP, London

Northern Ireland striker David Healy came under fire on Sunday after he mimicked an Orange marcher in Fulham's 3-1 friendly against Celtic on Saturday.

Healy pretended to play a flute after coming on in the second half with the incident reviving memories of former England star Paul Gascoigne's gesture when he played for Rangers in a 1998 Old Firm game.

Gascoigne's actions were viewed as provocative because Celtic's fans, predominantly Catholic, are usually sympathetic to the Irish nationalist cause.

But Healy's agent, Stephen Hughes, insists his client was merely responding in kind after he was targeted by the visiting supporters at Craven Cottage.

Hughes told the Daily Mail: "David has told me he was wearing boots with a Northern Ireland flag on the back."

"They had been made for him to celebrate being the leading scorer in the Euro 2008 qualification matches. The Celtic fans saw that and know he's a Rangers fan."

"They were chanting, 'Where were you on the 12th', which is the day of the Orange marching bands in Belfast."

"So he simply pretended to play the flute - there was no attempt to inflame the fans. Afterwards, some of the fans who had been giving him stick sent over programmes for him to sign which he did quite willingly."

Promise modern football

FROM PAGE 17
playing the modern football I want them to show in the professional league.

"To me, modern football is not only entertaining but also effective. When my team will defend, 8-9 players will be behind the ball and when they will attack, we will try to take numerical advantage. We are working on that and hope to reach the pick by the time the B. League starts," said Maruf adding that he is feeling the absence of a quality striker.

The black and whites have signed two youngsters, Robin and Komol, and are looking for African forwards to cover the duo's lack of experience. Apart from talking with four Nigerians,

the club officials have also contacted a midfielder from Egypt who are due in Dhaka shortly.

Maruf, who began his coaching career with Mymensingh Mohammedan in 1995, was with former Premier League club Badda Jagarini in 2001-02 and last served Bangladesh Army's Signal Brigade.

Aware of the questions about him due to lack of experience at top level, Maruf says he is not experimenting with Mohammedan. "It is a challenge because they are meant to be champions. The players realise this and they are positive. Besides physical training, we have also worked on the psycho-

logical part. I will tell the fans to keep faith in me because the team will not upset them."

Maruf, who prefers the 4-5-1 formation but said will be flexible, said that speed would be the element of surprise. "I am working on individual and team speed. When that goal is achieved, I will know that I am going the right way."

SQUAD

Aminul, Himel, Kamal, Jewel Rana, Rajani, Hassan Al Mamun, Saikat, Nasir, Munna Lyeamin, Murad, Arman Aziz, Sharif, Mithu, Maruf, Faisal Mahmud, Ripon, Pappu, Komol, Roni, Robin and Nehal.

Yuvi's mom gives Kapil a piece of her mind

PTI, New Delhi

Yuvraj Singh's mother Shabnam on Monday lashed out at Kapil Dev for criticising her son's party animal image, saying the former India captain is no angel himself.

"I was indeed pained to read Kapil Dev's highly provocative comment on Yuvi's party life. As a mother, I am hurt mainly because Kapil has known Yuvi ever since he was born," an enraged Shabnam said in a statement.

"He has obviously gone by the media reporting which was proved wrong," she added, referring to the late night party that Yuvraj allegedly attended during the Asia Cup.

Kapil had yesterday criticised Yuvraj for putting parties over cricket and had urged him to concentrate on his game to realise his potential.

Shabnam said Kapil had a past of his own and should therefore refrain from taking a high moral ground.

"All I want to remind Kapil is that people who stay in glass houses shouldn't throw stones at others," she fumed.

"He should introspect his misdeeds during the time he played cricket. If he rewrites his life, he will find that he wasn't an angel," she said.

According to Shabnam, Kapil's comments are stunning, considering her son has won applause from several former greats for his game.

"Sad that such a great cricketer should stoop so low when across the border Hanif Mohammad has been comparing Yuvi with Sir Garfield Sobers," she said.

Lanka ready

FROM PAGE 17
tournament, if it comes to us."

Mendis said that speculation about South Africa or England being asked to step in as alternate hosts was "unnecessary" at this point of time, as "Sri Lanka is the official alternate venue".

The ICC's executive board is expected to take a decision this week on Pakistan's status as host after the governing body conducted a security briefing on Sunday for board officials of the eight participating countries, broadcast executives, and players' association representatives.

An official who attended that meeting pegged Pakistan's chances of hosting the tournament, starting on September 11, at "50-50" and told Crinfo that players from Australia, New Zealand, England and South Africa expressed concerns over playing in that country due to the prevailing security situation.

The ICC maintained that Pakistan will remain the host till the executive board takes a final decision and Haroon Lorgat, the ICC chief executive, confirmed at a press conference after the briefing in Dubai that Sri Lanka is the back-up venue.

The security situation in Sri Lanka was a subject of focus two years ago when the South African team pulled out of a one-day tournament following a blast that occurred a few kilometres away from their hotel in Colombo.

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BFF names

FROM PAGE 17
crore from four contracts including ground development at Kishoreganj stadium, supplying building materials for the Dhammondi Women's Complex and upgrading the Dhammondi Gymnasium -- with the National Sports Council while being a BFF member.

This act is termed unethical, if not strictly illegal, by sports organisers as a conflict of interests exists where the office of national federations are being used to generate private incomes.

The other members are: Golam Rabbani Helal, Khurshid Alam Babul, Sheikh Mohammed Aslam, Hasanuzzaman Babloo, Intiaz Sultan Johnny and Ekramul Karim Chowdhury.

SL tough at home: Dravid

Cricket

AFP, Colombo

Former captain Rahul Dravid says India need to be at their best to beat Sri Lanka in home conditions in a three-Test series starting here on Wednesday.

"They have got the right balance in these conditions. They are always a big threat at home. Muttiah Muralidaran is a big impact and Chaminda Vaas is a clever bowler in these conditions," Dravid said on Monday.

"They have a good batting lineup that adapts well in these conditions. They can bat for long periods. But we have come here with a good team as well. If we play to our potential, I think it will be a good Test series."

Dravid, one of the seven batsmen to have completed 10,000 Test runs, was part of the Indian side that lost a three-match series 2-1 on their last Test tour of Sri Lanka in 2001.

Sri Lanka have also beaten South Africa, England, the West Indies and Bangladesh at home in the past four years, with off-spinner Muralidaran and left-arm seamer Vaas playing major roles.

They have lost just one of their 16 home Tests since August 2004,

the lone defeat coming against Pakistan at Kandy two years ago. Muralidaran is the world's leading wicket-taker with 735 scalps in 120 Tests, while Vaas has grabbed 343 wickets in 104 matches.

The hosts also have a surprise weapon in Ajantha Mendis, who is likely to make his Test debut here after his match-winning performance in the Asia Cup final against India in Karachi early this month.

Mendis grabbed six wickets for 13 runs with clever variations to power his team to a 100-run victory.

But Dravid said his side was not concentrating on Mendis alone.

"Sure, he is going to be one of their four or five bowlers, but you cannot just focus on Mendis. They have got a couple of other guys (Muralidaran and Vaas) who have got 1000 wickets between them," he said.

"It will be a big mistake to focus just on Mendis. We will just play it as we see it. We have come against a lot of bowlers in our times and we have succeeded against them."

Dravid was one of the five veterans who was not part of the Asia Cup one-day side, others being Test skipper VVS Laxman and Sourav Ganguly.

Tendulkar is just 172 short of

breaking retired West Indies captain Brian Lara's world mark of 11,953 Test runs, but Dravid said the team was focused more on winning the series than the record.

"There has been no talk in the dressing-room of either the record or anything like that. We are focused on winning the series and so is Sachin," said Dravid, who quit captaincy last year.

"I hope he (Tendulkar) achieves the landmark here. We are hoping it is in the first innings of the first Test on the first day itself, so we can have a big celebration."

"It would really help the team and him as well. It's obviously a great achievement for him and the team when he eventually gets there."

Dravid said he had been looking forward to playing his first Test after seven years in Sri Lanka.

"We have not played (a Test) here since 2001. It is nice to be back. I am looking forward to playing a Test series in Sri Lanka. The wicket here is very good," said Dravid.

"I enjoy batting here. There is something in it for bowlers and stroke-players. If you get set you can play your shots and there is good value for your strokes. I have done quite well here in Tests and one-dayers."

Fight spin with spin

Cricket

AFP, Colombo

Spin bowlers will be centre of attention during the Test series between India and Sri Lanka starting here on Wednesday as three stars with a combined tally of more than 1,600 wickets do battle.

Sri Lankan off-spinner Muttiah Muralidaran leads the trio with a record 735 Test scalps, followed by the Indian duo of leg-spinner Anil Kumble (608) and off-spinner Harbhajan Singh (275).

Rarely has a Test series seen such a combination of spinners with so many wickets under their belts and, although they have different styles each is a proven match-winner.

And adding to the talent is Sri Lanka's latest sensation Ajantha Mendis, who is expected to make his Test debut after commendable performances in one-day internationals.

Mendis, 23, made a mockery of the famed Indian line-up in the Asia Cup final in Karachi this month, grabbing 6-13 with shrewd

variations to guide his team to an emphatic 100-run victory.

However, Harbhajan recently said Muralidaran would be a bigger threat in the series than Mendis, despite the youngster's impressive show in the shorter version of the game.

"It was a treat to watch Mendis bowl during the Asia Cup final," said Harbhajan. "There is so much to learn from him."

"But Muralidaran will pose a bigger challenge. You cannot compare Murali and Mendis. Murali has been doing it for so many years whereas Mendis has just started."

Muralidaran has been his side's key spinner since his Test debut in 1992 and has contributed immensely in making Sri Lanka a formidable bowling outfit away from home.

He is a big turner of the ball and has outwitted the world's best batsmen with the "doosra", a delivery that turns away from the right-handers instead of coming into them like a conventional off-break.

Muralidaran's action has been questioned in the past, but the controversy did not affect his performance. He has bagged five or more wickets in a Test innings 63 times and 10 or more in a match on 20 occasions, both records.

Kumble, the Indian Test captain, is a bowler with a difference.

He is not a big turner of the ball like Muralidaran or retired Australian leg-spinner Shane Warne, but has consistently won matches for his team.

Kumble is faster through the air and always difficult to get away because of his accuracy. He is only the second bowler in Test history to take 10 wickets in an innings after England's Jim Laker.

He took over as India captain last year, losing a four-Test series in Australia after a close contest but winning at home against Pakistan and drawing against South Africa.

Kumble has found an able ally in Harbhajan, who rose to fame in 2001 when he took 32 wickets in three home Tests to script his team's 2-1 victory over Steve Waugh's formidable Australians.

Like Muralidaran, Harbhajan's career has had its controversies. His action has also been called into question on a couple of occasions, especially when he bowls the "doosra".

He also recently served a ban for five one-day internationals after shapping India teammate Shanthakumar Sreesanth during a domestic Twenty20 match in April.

Hayden wants safety

Cricket

AFP, Sydney

Senior Australian opening batsman Matthew Hayden said Monday he wants to play in September's Champions Trophy, but not if his safety is compromised in host nation Pakistan.

The year's biggest one-day tournament, featuring the top eight Test nations, is due to be held from September 11 to 28, but Australia, England and New Zealand have raised fears about playing in Pakistan.

International Cricket Council chief executive Haroon Lorgat said Monday the ICC would soon decide whether to go ahead with the tournament in Pakistan, or move it elsewhere.

Hayden said he is backing Cricket Australia and the Australian Cricketers' Association to make the correct call -- in the same manner they did when they opted against touring Pakistan in March-April this year.

"It's certainly one I want to be

involved in if my safety is not compromised," Hayden told reporters.

"I think the process is an important one in this."

"Like the last time we went there, we had a full security briefing independent of all parties and we at that point decided it wasn't safe to travel there and Cricket Australia and the ACA supported the players on that so the tour didn't proceed."

But Hayden said he hoped it wouldn't come to that, adding: "It's going to be disappointing if the tournament gets wiped all together."

Fears about security in Pakistan were raised earlier this month when a suicide bomb blast in the capital Islamabad killed 19 people. The next day, a series of small bombings rocked the port city of Karachi.

Sri Lanka is a stand-by venue if Pakistan is considered unsafe, but the ongoing civil war between government forces and Tamil separatist rebels has raised concerns as well.

The 36-year-old Hayden missed the entire recent West Indies tour with an Achilles problem, and said he is not sure to be ready for Australia's three one-dayers against

Bangladesh in Darwin from August 30 to September 6.

Hayden hinted he would be prepared to miss the Darwin series in order to make the Champions Trophy, but said: "Both of those tournaments are a target for me. I would have to say I am on track for both of those tournaments."

Tendulkar's

FROM PAGE 17

"We enjoy playing India at home or away. It's always been a tough challenge. There is good rivalry with our neighbours," he said.

Off-spinner Muttiah Muralidaran, Test cricket's leading bowler with 735 wickets, is prepared to unsettle the Indians on his country's low, slow pitches.

The hosts have another surprise weapon in Ajantha Mendis, a spinner with clever variations who could make his Test debut after proving his credentials in one-day internationals.

India have already failed once against Mendis, who grabbed 6-13 to script Sri Lanka's victory in the Asia Cup final in Pakistan earlier this month.

CROSSWORD By Eugene Sheffer

ACROSS
1 Star-spangled banner
5 Baseball headgear
6 Sunrise
12 Suave
14 Arthur of tennis
15 Capital of South Australia
16 Come-dance
17 \$5 bill
18 Twain lad
20 Flat
23 Big rig
24 Winged
25 Voiced
26 pho-nemes
28 Omega precursor
29 Capital of Western Australia
30 Owns
32 Stores grain
33 Minimal change
35 Holler
36 Allen or Harrelson
37 Treeless plain

DOWN
1 Con-sumer watchdog org.
2 Started
3 34-
4 Across the face
5 Tiger Woods, e.g.
6 Slayer
7 Santa's sackload
8 Capital of the Northern Territory
9 Wan
10 Roller-coaster
11 Approach
13 Perform perfectly
19 Asian nurse-maid
20 Once around
21 Other-wise
22 Con