

Lanka name same side

PTI, Colombo

Sri Lanka on Monday announced a 15-member squad for the first three ODIs against India, the same bunch that beat Pakistan 2-1 in the recent cricket series.

The selection committee that met here decided to retain the same 15 players with Mahela Jayawardene as the skipper for the first three ODIs against India, the first of which is scheduled on Wednesday at Dambulla.

The selectors also put Malinga Bandara, Chamara Silva, Mahela Udawatte and Chanaka Welagedara on standby.

SQUAD
Mahela Jayawardene (captain), Kumar Sangakkara (vice captain), Sanath Jayasuriya, Upul Tharanga, Chamara Kapugedera, Jehan Mubarak, Tillakaratne Dilshan, Thilina Kandamby, Muttiah Muralidaran, Ajantha Mendis, Farveez Maharoof, Dilhara Fernando, Nuwan Kulasekera, Thilina Thushara and Angelo Mathews.

Stand by: Malinga Bandara, Chamara Silva, Mahela Udawatte and Chanaka Welagedara.

Bravo may miss England Tests

AFP, Bridgetown

Dwayne Bravo is likely to make his first appearance for West Indies following ankle surgery only in the five one-day Internationals against England.

Clyde Butts, chairman of the West Indies selection panel, disclosed that all-rounder Bravo, a key member of the Caribbean side since his international debut four years ago, is still recovering from an operation on his left ankle and will miss the preceding four Tests.

"I spoke to Dwayne last week," Butts said. "He's started to train about now, and is hoping to be ready about the middle part of the England tour."

"He wants to start playing club cricket before he starts playing for Trinidad and Tobago, so he can be fit and ready. Probably, we might see him in the ODIs."

Bravo, aged 25, has been out of cricket since surgery on a chronic ankle problem last November.

The procedure meant he missed the Stanford Super Series last October and November, the West Indies domestic limited-overs competition in Guyana last November, the West Indies' recent ODIs against Pakistan in Abu Dhabi, and the subsequent tour of New Zealand.

His last match for West Indies was the fifth and final ODI against Australia on July 6.

In 31 Tests, Bravo has scored 1,833 runs at an average of 32.73 with two hundreds and captured 70 wickets at 39.58 each.

Asif's claim

PTI, Islamabad

Suspended fast bowler Mohammad Asif on Monday claimed that the Indian Premier League (IPL) Drugs Tribunal has accepted his argument that the banned substance found in his urine sample was due to the herbal eye drops he had used.

"The IPL drug tribunal has accepted my argument that it was the eye drops which I used that contained nandrolone," Asif said on his return from Mumbai after his IPL hearing.

The hearing into the doping charges against him was adjourned on Saturday to a later date and he said he would be cleared.

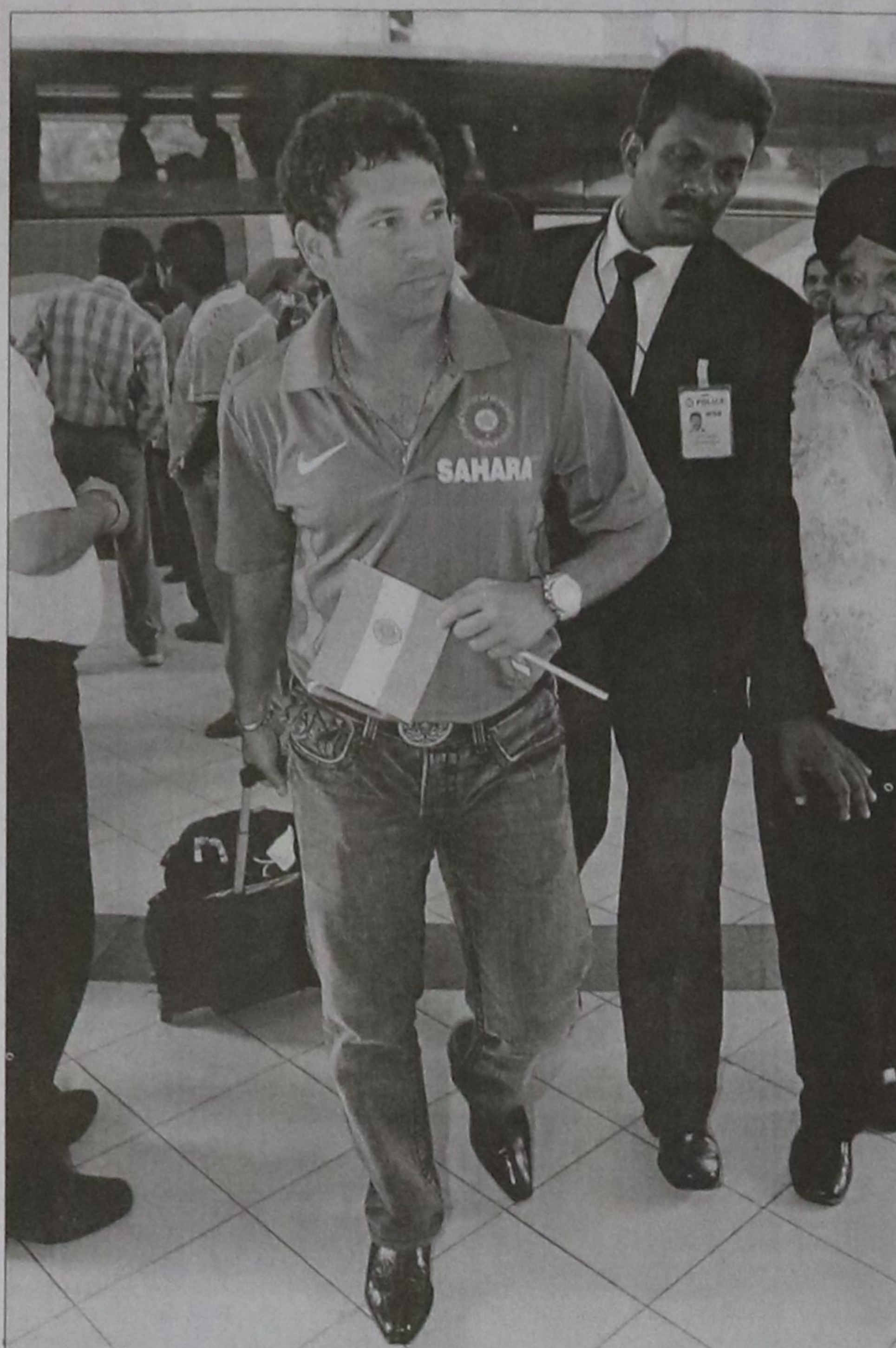
"I am quite hopeful that I will be cleared. It's up to the tribunal now, but my doctors and lawyers have strongly pleaded the case," Asif said.

The tribunal, which included former India captain Sunil Gavaskar, lawyer Shirish Gupte and Dr. Ravi Bapat, heard the Pakistan paceman's case for more than four hours on Saturday before deciding to meet again.

Asif, who has denied any wrongdoing at the hearing, was granted a release from his IPL contract with the Daredevils last Monday, and he said he requested for it as he wanted to devote time to play for Pakistan.

"I just want to focus on playing for Pakistan and that was the only reason I quit my IPL contract," Asif said.

Asif was embroiled in another drug controversy last year, being detained in the United Arab Emirates for 19 days in June after 0.24 grams of opium were found in his wallet at Dubai Airport.



Master India batsman Sachin Tendulkar steps into a Colombo hotel yesterday. India arrived in Sri Lanka to play five one-day internationals and a Twenty20 international.

PCB's soul-searching

Cricket

AFP, Karachi

Pakistan cricket authorities have asked captain Shoaib Malik and coach Intikhab Alam for a detailed report on their team's loss against Sri Lanka in the recent one-day series, an official said Monday.

Pakistan suffered their heaviest one-day defeat when they went down by 234 runs against Sri Lanka in the third day-night international at Lahore on Saturday, handing the visitors a 2-1 win in the three-match series.

The home team won the first match by eight wickets in Karachi before losing the second by 129 runs, also in Karachi.

Pakistan Cricket Board chairman Ijaz Butt confirmed that he had demanded a detailed report on the reasons for the defeat.

"I have instructed coach Intikhab Alam and manager Yawar Saad to give a detailed report on the defeat in the next few days so that we can find out what happened," Butt told reporters in Lahore.

"The board wants to know what has to be done to rectify the situation and set things right," he added.

A Senate standing committee on sports has also summoned Alam, Malik and chief selector Abdul Qadir for a hearing in Islamabad on February 9.

Butt, who became chairman last October, said the defeat was surprising.

"I am also surprised at the way our batsmen played but I can't make any further comment until receiving a detailed report. We can't tolerate such poor performances from anyone," said Butt.

"There is no excuse to be bowled out for just 75," Butt said of Pakistan's collapse in the third match -- their lowest one-day total at home.

Senate committee member Enver Beg also expressed disappointment.

"The whole nation loves cricket and they are disappointed, so there should be an inquiry and we must find out the reasons for defeat," said Beg.

"I take full responsibility of the defeat," said coach Alam. "The manner in which we succumbed in batting in the last two matches needs scrutiny and we must look into the matter and solve it," he told AFP.

"It can't get worse than this so we will recover with the best effort."

Pakistan will play two home Tests against Sri Lanka next month before travelling to Bangladesh for five one-day matches in March.

Kevin leaves everything

FROM PAGE 17

New England vice captain, repaired the early setback with a stand of 96 for the second wicket before Willett removed them both in the final half-hour before lunch.

Bell was caught and bowled for 36, and in Willett's next over, Cook was bowled to leave the visitors on 118 for three at lunch.

Pietersen and Shah held centre stage after the interval, when they added 154 for the fourth wicket to add beef to England's innings.

But Pietersen fell just before tea when he charged at a delivery from Willett outside his off-stump, missed, and was stumped.

Flintoff joined Shah, but

failed to take advantage of a let-off and before he was caught at deep mid-on off Steve Liburd's uncomplicated spin for 11 as England reached 302 for five at tea.

But the big all-rounder will take no further part in the match, after he picked up a left-side strain bowling in the nets. Stuart Broad will take his place for the remainder of the game.

In the final session, Matt Prior failed to ease worries about his batting when he fell for 16, and Adil Rashid made six before Harmison entered and scored all but six of his runs in boundaries before he was dismissed in the final over of the day.

England also has a three-

day tour match against West Indies-A, starting on Thursday at the same venue, before travelling to the Jamaica capital of Kingston for the first Test which opens on February 4.

BRIEF SCORES

England XI: 424 for eight (Owais Shah 125 not out, Kevin Pietersen 103, Steve Harmison 58, Alastair Cook 52, Ian Bell 36; Akito, Willett 24-3-118-5) v St. Kitts and Nevis XI.

Niaz slips

FROM PAGE 17

drew with IM Akshayraj Kore of India, Monir beat Joydeep Sharma of India, Javed lost against IM R.R. Laxman of India and Ali lost against IM Himanshu Sharma of India.

Ash's all-round show

FROM PAGE 17

permission and took two wickets for 19 runs as Biman won against City Club by 16 runs.

Biman made 115 for seven in 20 overs thanks to a 45-ball 60 by veteran Sanwar Hossain and then restricted City for 99-6.

At the same venue, Rajesh smashed an unbeaten 60-ball 66 that contained eight boundaries as Pegasus scored 105 for 5 in reply to Partex's 104 for seven to secure a five wicket victory.

BRIEF SCORES

DOHS: 124-8 in 20 overs (Newaz 28, Riyad 36, extras 10; Sunny 2-23)

ABAHANI: 125-6 in 19.4 overs (Nasir 37, Nadif 24, extras 10; Abul 2-27, Mehrib 3-15). Result: Abahani won by four wickets.

MOHAMMEDAN: 154-9 in 20 overs (Shamsur 39, Nasir 30, Shuvo 22, Farhad 21, extras 14; Taposh 3-23, Sharifullah 3-32). VICTORIA: 120 all out in 19.4 overs (Sharifullah 31, Salahuddin 44, extras 8; Tareq 2-18, Dollar 2-19, Murad 3-30). Result: Mohammedan won by 34 runs.

BIMAN: 115-7 in 20 overs (Sanwar 60, Tushar 25, extras 3; Golam Hossain 2-23, Serajullah 3-17). CITY: 99-6 in 20 overs (Rabiul 44, Serajullah 25, extras 8; Shahadat 2-10, Razzak 2-19). Result: Biman won by 16 runs.

GAZI: 168-8 in 20 overs (Kayes 47, Nafis 20, Ashraf 32, Mukter 28 not out, extras 10; Shafiu 2-16, Mahub 2-23, Sabbir 2-37).

SURJO TORUN: 115 all out in 19.3 overs (Zunaed 28, Sabbir 28, Shafiu 25 not out, extras 9; Kamrul 2-19, Mukter 2-29, Ashraf 3-21). Result: Gazi Tank won by 54 runs.

BKSP: 123 all out in 20 overs (Atiqur 37, Zabit 28, extras 5; Bishwanath 3-23). CCS: 125-4 in 19.1 overs (Shuvagoto 20, Nazmul 30, Ripon 30 not out, extras 4; Niyamul 2-22). Result: CCS won by six wickets.

PARTEX: 104-7 in 20 overs (Wasir 20, Ariful 27, extras 6; Raju 2-20). PEGASUS: 105-5 in 18.1 overs (Rajesh 66, Bashir 27, extras 2; Faruque 2-10). Result: Young Pegasus won by five wickets.

BSJA condoles death

SPORTS REPORTER

Kohinoor Rahman, mother of BSJA vice-president and special correspondent of Dainik Janakantha Arifur Rahman Babu, died of old age complications at her village home in Manikganj Sunday night. She was 72.

She was buried at the family graveyard in Garpara village following a namaz-e-janaza at the Imam Bari Mosque after Zohr prayers yesterday.

President, general secretary and the members of Bangladesh Sports Journalists Association (BSJA) have condoned the death of Kohinoor Rahman and prayed for the salvation of the departed soul.

Afghans back on track

AFP, Buenos Aires

Afghanistan recovered from their first day defeat to Uganda to beat Hong Kong by 13 runs on Sunday and get their World Cricket League Division Three campaign back on track.

The win also kept their hopes of reaching April's 2011 World Cup qualifier alive.

Hong Kong, who beat hosts Argentina on Saturday, were reduced to 90-8 at one stage as they chased a 202-run victory target but came close to an unlikely win with a ninth-wicket stand of 62 and 36 for the final wicket.

"There were plenty of nerves, but I was very confident in my team and it was a good win for us as it kept alive our hopes in the tournament," said Afghanistan coach Kabir Khan.

Afghanistan openers Karim Khan (36) and Shafiqullah Shafaq (24) put on 72, but when both fell within the space of three balls, Hong Kong managed to get back into the game.

Some excellent spin bowling from Nadeem Ahmed (2-23) and Najeib Ahmed (2-35) helped contain the middle order although Mohammad Nabi (40) and Norooz Mangal (35) made crucial contributions.

Samiullah Shenwari, who made a half-century against Uganda, hit 25 off 39 balls to help Afghanistan to 201 all out off 49.5 overs.

None of Hong Kong's top eight batsmen got beyond 20 but some late-order hitting from Moner Ahmed, who scored 49 off 38 balls, including three consecutive sixes off Mohammad Nabi, threatened a dramatic finish.

Number eleven Nadeem Ahmed then scored 27 off 18 balls, only to be dismissed by Nabi when a top-edged hook was caught on the boundary by Mawais Nazari.

"In the end it was a good effort, especially from Moner, as he looked like he was desperate to win the game and it could have gone either way," said Hong Kong skipper Tabarak Dar.

Papua New Guinea made it two wins in two with a 21-run victory against Argentina. Uganda, who enjoyed a comfortable nine-wicket over Cayman Islands, also have two wins.

South African

FROM PAGE 17

Adelaide Oval yesterday:

AUSTRALIA
Marsh c Morkel b Steyn 13
Warner c Morkel b Ntini 1
Ponting c McKenzie b Ntini 63
M Hussey lbw b Botha 28
D Hussey c Gibbs b A Morkel 24
Haddin c Kallis b Botha 3
White c de Villiers b Steyn 30
Hopes c McKenzie b Steyn 42
Johnson c Morkel b Ntini 0
Hiffenhaus c de Villiers b Morkel 5
Tait not out 4
Extras: (lb-2, w-5, nb-2) 9
Total: (All out in 48 overs) 222
Fall of wickets: 1-9, 2-17, 3-110, 4-114, 5-128, 6-151, 7-188, 8-189, 9-216

Bowler O M R W
Steyn 10 1 49 3
Ntini 10 1 52 3
A Morkel 6 0 35 1
M Morkel 9 0 41 1
Botha 10 0 28 2
Duminy 3 0 15 0

SOUTH AFRICA
Amla not out 80
Gibbs c M Hussey b Hiffenhaus 38
Kallis c Marsh b Hopes 13
de Villiers not out 82
Extras: (lb-5, w-5) 10
Total: (For 2 wts in 38.1 overs) 223
Fall of wickets: 1-58, 2-79
Did not bat: Duminy, McKenzie, A Morkel, Morkel, Botha, Steyn, Ntini

Bowler O M R W
Tait 9 0 49 0
Hiffenhaus 8 0 49 1
Johnson 10 0 63 0
Hopes 7.1 0 28 1
D Hussey 4 0 29 0

Result: South Africa won by 8 wickets.

Man-of-the-match: AB de Villiers.

Toss: Australia.

Umpires: Ian Gould and Daryl Harper.

History awaits Murali

Cricket

AFP, Dambulla

Ace Sri Lankan spinner Muttiah Muralidaran is poised to complete a record bowling double during the one-day series against India starting on Wednesday.

The off-spinner is just three wickets short of surpassing former Pakistani paceman Wasim Akram's world record of 502 one-day scalps, having grabbed 500 in 324 matches so far.

Muralidaran, already the world's leading bowler in Tests with 769 wickets in 125 matches, will become only the second player after Indian batsman Sachin Tendulkar to hold two major cricketing records.

Tendulkar is the top run-getter in both Tests (12,429) and one-day internationals (16,422).

Muralidaran will once again be the focus during the five-match series against India as Sri Lanka pin their hopes on him to avenge their 3-2 defeat against Mahendra Dhoni's men at home last August.

The off-spinner appeared in good form in a recent series in Pakistan, taking six wickets in three matches which Sri Lanka 2-1.

The spinner said he was focused more on winning matches for his team than the world record.

"The milestones are not that important for me. Winning as a team is far more important. If these milestones come along, I am happy," Muralidaran said in a recent interview.

India will have to deal with a pair of quality spinners as Ajantha Mendis has formed a formidable combination with Muralidaran since making his one-day debut in the West Indies last year.

Unorthodox spinner Mendis played a major role in his team's 2-1 Test series victory over India at home last year when he claimed 26 wickets -- the highest by a debutant in a three-

match series.

India opener Gautam Gambhir, one of the few batsmen to keep Mendis at bay in the Test series, said the team were better prepared this time to counter the Sri Lankan.

"We did not know what was coming out of his hand and how much variations he had," said Gambhir.

"But when you play constantly against the same bowler, tackling him becomes easier. This time, we will start on an even platform against him."

Mendis recently became the fastest to complete 50 wickets in one-dayers, achieving the feat in only 19 matches. He has also claimed 19 wickets in six one-dayers against India.

Sri Lankan captain Mahela Jayawardene was happy his team's faltering batting line-up came good in Pakistan where they posted 309-5 in the deciding match in Lahore on Saturday.

"The batting has started to click again and this is a good sign before we take on India," said Jayawardene.

India's batting will be boosted by the return of Virender Sehwag and Tendulkar, who both missed the last one-day series in Sri Lanka due to injuries.

The tourists also hold an edge in pace bowling with Ishant Sharma and Zaheer Khan in impressive form. The duo were instrumental in India's recent home Test series wins against Australia and England.

"India is shaping well in both forms of the game," said Jayawardene. "We beat them in the Tests, but lost the one-day series. Hopefully, we will turn things around this time."

The Sri Lankan captain is himself searching for form with 28 being his top score in the last 12 one-dayers.

The series was finalised to partly fill the gap created by India's cancelled tour of Pakistan in January-February following the Mumbai attacks in November.

Murray's dream over

FROM PAGE 17

all morning and just felt weak," she said.

"It's very disappointing for me that I played that well and I couldn't handle a little bit more because it was really close games -- could have been up 2-0 in the second."

Williams was sympathetic.

"I feel so bad, she was playing so well," she said. "She can't risk it so I hope she did the right thing. Obviously she was playing really well and she has so many Australian Opens ahead of her."

Williams now plays eighth seed Svetlana Kuznetsova, with the Russian also benefiting from a retirement when China's Zheng Jie pulled out with a wrist injury while losing 4-1.

"I feel sorry for her because she was in great shape, she was playing good. This pain I hope is not very dangerous," she said of Zheng, who enjoyed her strongest run yet at the season-opening Grand Slam.

Looking ahead to Williams,

she added: "It's definitely going to be hard."

"But I'm confident in myself, and I just want to play my best and will go there with motivation, just fight with spirit hopefully."

Fellow Russian Elena Dementieva set up a quarterfinal against unseeded Spaniard Carla Suarez Navarro.

Dementieva is on a 14-match winning streak this year, with titles in Auckland and Sydney along the way, and has hardly been troubled, blasting past Slovak 18th seed Dominika Cibulkova 6-2, 6-2.

Her next opponent, Suarez Navarro, reached her first Australian Open quarterfinals with a businesslike 6-3, 6-2 win over 21st seed Anabel Medina Garrigues.

Nadal, who is yet to drop a set, dominated 2007 finalist Gonzalez 6-3, 6-2, 6-4, with the Wimbledon and French Open champion yet to be challenged here after easy

wins in all his matches.

"I'm playing well and happy with how I'm playing so far but you never know whether it is going to be enough," he said.

It was a different scenario for Murray. The Scottish pre-tournament favourite hasn't been feeling well but refused to make excuses.

"If I say that I'm sick and it affected me, I know it's going to be like, 'Well, he's making excuses for losing'," he said.

"I don't feel that was the reason why I lost. I definitely did have my chances, and he played too well."

Simon went through on a retirement as fellow Frenchman Gael Monfils pulled out with a wrist injury when losing 6-4, 2-6, 6-1.

It was not the way Simon wanted to beat his friend and he must now regroup with Nadal waiting in the last eight.

"You never want to win like this," he said.

Russel hope dented

FROM PAGE 17

national forward, who scored three minutes later.

This time, Alfaz chased a long through by Omari and side-footed the ball past an outstriking Zia for a clinical finish just inside from the penalty box.

Monwar should have made it 3-1 two minutes into the second half but the Russel midfielder blasted his chance over the bar from six yards after Alfaz had picked him up unmarked with a superb back pass.

Omari then got the better of Oranges captain Shuvra but failed to keep his effort on target four minutes later as Brothers began to take over.

Shakil fluffed a chance in the 53rd minute when the midfielder failed to keep his volley under the bar from 20 yards while Ghanaian striker Henry Quaye's powerful drive from similar range was palmed away by Azam for a corner in the 65th minute.

Russel defended doggedly but Brothers won another corner a minute later to get back in the game. This time, Zahid rose above the Russel backline to meet Liton's right-side corner and put a drop-header into the near post for his fifth goal in the competition.

Wasim Iqbal's men kept the pressure and Zahid almost snatched a winner four minutes from time but his drop-volley was gripped by an alert Azam.

Yellow cards: Reda, Omari (Russel) and Ariful (Brothers)

TEAMS

RUSSEL: Azam, Aminul, Sohel, Zahirul, Hassan, Mobarak (Morshead), Moujahid, Reda, Monwar (Rajan), Omari and Alfaz. BROTHERS: Zia, Akramuzzaman Liton, Shuvra, Ariful, Mishu, Zahid, Aurup (Rikto), Liton, Shakil, Henry and Nicodemus. Referee: Abdul Hannan.

CROSSWORD By Eugene Sheffer

ACROSS	41 initial chip	2 Ellipse	25 Literary collection
1 Lysol target	43 'African Queen', star	3 Jeans-maker	26 Japanese pond carp
5 Rage	46 Nixon's veep	4 Com-pelled	27 Water
8 Dreary	50 Verve	5 Mrs. McKinnley	29 Secluded valley
12 Finished	51 Bind	6 Snitch	31 Vast expanse
13 Rotation	54 Baptism, e.g.	7 Ogled	32 Height of fashion
14 Mature	55 Hallow- een call	8 Somber	34 Scott (al)
15 Steer	56 Hebrew month	9 Battle in court	38 Pan-handler
17 Small bit	57 Leaves	10 "Once a time..."	40 Some Christmas candy
18 Martini	58 Deviate	11 Fast-spreading concept	42 Skater