

PAKISTAN SERIES BCB to name teams today

SPORTS REPORTER

Bangladesh Cricket Board (BCB) will announce today two separate teams for the coming home series against Pakistan.

Pakistan will arrive in the capital on March 7 to play two Twenty20 matches and five one-day internationals in Dhaka and Chittagong.

It was learnt that there would be a few changes in the national team and fresh faces are not unlikely, especially in the Twenty20 team.

The BCB is yet to get any message from International Cricket Council (ICC) about the fate of left-arm spinner Abdur Razzak, now suspended from international cricket by the game's governing body for illegal action and it could make way for a new spin all-rounder.

"There is no update about Razzak, so he is not in our consideration," said chief selector Rafique Alam.

Meanwhile, BCB will also announce the title sponsor for the series today in a press conference at the Sher-e-Bangla National Stadium in Mirpur.

The board will also inform about the security arrangements for Pakistan's tour after a deadly gun attack on the Sri Lankan cricket team bus Tuesday morning in Lahore, which stunned the world cricket fraternity and forced the organisers to rethink about the security measures for the cricketers.

MSC's Sanath surprise

Cricket

SPORTS REPORTER

A day after the mayhem in Lahore, dashing Sri Lankan opener Sanath Jayasuriya arrived in the capital yesterday to play in the ongoing Premier Cricket League.



ARRIVED HERE SAFELY! Dashing Sri Lankan opener Sanath Jayasuriya is on his cell phone as he comes out of the Zia International Airport yesterday. He is in Dhaka to play for Mohammedan Sporting Club in the on-going Premier League.

Struggling Mohammedan Sporting Club pulled off the surprise by bringing in the first big name for this year in the most coveted domestic competition in a bid to salvage the complete blushes. They have only five points from six matches to seven points adrift of table-toppers Biman.

Jayasuriya is expected to

play his first match today against BKSP at the Fatullah Cricket Stadium.

It was highly unlikely to meet the former Sri Lankan skipper in Dhaka a day after a cowardly attack on the Sri Lankan cricket team's bus in Lahore, on Tuesday morning, which left eight men dead and several Lankan cricketers injured.

The obvious question for the veteran cricketer was how he felt about the terrorist attack on any sportsman for the first time.

"The incident was a shocking one. I'm very disappointed and for the first time this kind of attack has happened in cricket," responded the 39-year old Jayasuriya, who has so far played 110 Tests and 432 ODIs.

"But it is a relief for us that all the cricketers are alive and the injuries are not life threatening," said the Matara Hurricane, who got the news first from one of his friends and contacted his colleagues over phone.

There has been a lot of talking about the future of Pakistan cricket and hosting the 2011 World Cup that will jointly be hosted by India, Pakistan, Sri Lanka and Bangladesh. But Jayasuriya was not ready to comment on management issues.

Back to cricket, the experienced campaigner said that he would try his best for Mohammedan who are all but out of the championship race.

"I will try my best and I want to share my experience to help my team but it's a team

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Sri Lanka's young spinner Ajantha Mendis, with a bandage on his head, is seen coming out of the Colombo Airport on Tuesday night. A chartered plane flew the Lankan cricketers back home after a terrorist attack on them in Lahore in the morning.

DIV I CRICKET Mokammel lifts Sadharan Bima

SPORTS REPORTER

Riding on an unbeaten century by Mokammel, Sadharan Bima registered a six-wicket victory over Agrani Bank in the First Division Cricket League at the City Club ground yesterday.

Batting first, Agrani Bank were bowled out for 183 in 49 overs, Shahed top scoring with 47 runs. Mithun claimed four wickets for 44 runs in 9 overs. In reply, Sadharan Bima easily reached their target making 188 in 44.5 overs for the loss of just four wickets.

Mokammel contributed an unbeaten 106 with 12 fours and four sixes while Mithun scored 46 for the victors.

At the Dhaka University Ground, Khelaghar indexed a handy victory over Prime Dholeswar by 41 runs. Khelaghar, who won the First Division Twenty20 last month, lost the toss and were put in by the opponents. The T20 champions voyaged on Aslam's 75 and Asif's 60 to reach 227-8 in 50 overs, and later restricted Prime to 186 in 45.3 overs.

Kalabagan, who were the runners-up in last month's

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Broad angry with security arrangement

AFP, Manchester

Cricket match referee Chris Broad has slammed the Pakistan security forces for providing insufficient protection after he and fellow officials came under fire during the terror attack in Lahore on Tuesday.

The van carrying Broad to the Gadafi Stadium for the second Test between Pakistan and Sri Lanka came under fire as gunmen aimed at the nearby Sri Lanka team bus.



CHRIS BROAD

Ex-England batsman Broad, who said he'd expressed concerns for his safety before the start of the tour, told a news conference here Wednesday: "I am angry at the Pakistani security forces."

"We were promised high level security and in our hour of need that security vanished and they left us to besitting ducks."

Lankans return in tears

Cricket

AFP, Colombo

Sri Lanka's wounded and shaken cricketers returned home Wednesday to tearful hugs, saying they were lucky to be alive after a deadly attack on their team bus in Pakistan.

"There were just these images of life flashing through my mind -- all the while bullets were being sprayed at our bus, people around me were shouting," spin maestro Muttiah Muralidaran recalled.

"I am glad to be back," he said, hugging his Indian wife Madhi Malar.

Sports Minister Gamini Lokuge welcomed the side's safe arrival under tight security at Colombo airport.

"I never thought I will be able to come home alive," admitted skipper Mahela Jayawardene as he was greeted by his relieved wife Christina.

Batsmen Thilan Samaraweera and Tharanga Paranavitana, who were treated in hospital in Pakistan, were among the first of the 25-member touring party to leave the airport to be taken to a private hospital in Colombo.

"Both of them may need further treatment and surgery," said Geethanjana Mendis, a sports medicine specialist who travelled to Pakistan to assess the wounded before their return flight.

He said the entire team needed medical evaluation while some would require more care, although none of the injuries was life threatening.

A total of seven players and an assistant coach were hurt in Tuesday's gun and grenade ambush in the Pakistani city of Lahore that left six policemen and two civilians dead.

Vice-captain Kumar Sangakkara, another of the wounded, described his terrifying brush with death.

"For some reason I moved my head to get a better view and a split second later I felt a bullet fizz past my ear into the vacant seat," he told the Cricinfo website.

"Tharanga announced he was hit as he sat up holding his chest. He collapsed onto his seat and I feared the worst.... Shortly afterwards Thilan complained of a numbness in his leg, which we later found out was a bullet wound."

The parents of injured medium pace bowler Suranga Lakmal embraced and wept as their son walked out of the airport lounge.

"He is our only son. We have not eaten anything since we heard the news," his father Albert said.

Assistant coach Paul Farbrace told the BBC how he discovered that he was bleeding.

"There was a lot of shouting and people hitting the floor and when I got to the floor I realised the blood that I could see was coming

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Did U Know?

Marathon world records were not officially recognised by the International Amateur Athletic Federation until January 1, 2004. Previously, the best times for the marathon were referred to as the 'world best'.



David Morgan

(ICC president)
"Things will have to change dramatically in Pakistan in my opinion if any of the games are to be staged there. I think that international cricket in Pakistan is out of the question until there is a very significant change, a regime change, I guess."

From an emergency ICC meeting in the aftermath of the terror attack on Sri Lanka players in Lahore on Tuesday.



ESPN
Sportscentre India
Sports News
Live at 8:30pm



Premier Div Cricket League
Mohammedan v BKSP
Venue: Fatullah Cricket Stadium
Biman v Surjo Torun
Venue: BKSP-2

No Akhtar for BD tour

Cricket

AFP, Lahore

Pakistan has omitted yet-to-be fully fit Shoaib Akhtar from a 16-man squad for this month's tour of Bangladesh, where they play two Twenty20 and five one-day internationals.

The team arrives on March 7 and play the first of two Twenty20 matches on March 10 in Dhaka. The other Twenty20 match and the first three one-day matches are also scheduled for Dhaka.

The last two one-day matches will be played in Chittagong.

All-rounder Shahid Afridi, and pacemen Sohail Tanveer and Rao Iftikhar were recalled after being dropped for the two-Test series against Sri Lanka earlier this month.

Chief selector Abdul Qadir said Akhtar had yet to prove his fitness.

"We asked Akhtar to play in a first-class match but he didn't play, so we did not consider him as he is still to attain full fitness," said Qadir.

Akhtar missed the Sri Lankan series due to knee injury.

The 33-year-old paceman was also dropped from the squad after he managed just one wicket in the two limited

over internationals against Sri Lanka last month.

Akhtar had said that he was hoping to use the Bangladesh tour to stage a comeback.

The squad has three uncapped players in opener Ahmed Shahzad, leg-spinner Yasir Shah and paceman Mohammad Aamir.

"We have included some youngsters with an eye on the future," said Qadir, who thinks Shah will be a future replacement for Danish Kaneria in the spin department.

SQUAD

Younis Khan (captain), Salman Butt, Shahid Afridi, Nasir Jamsheed, Ahmed Shahzad, Shoaib Malik, Misbahul Haq, Kamran Akmal, Fawad Alam, Umar Gul, Sohail Tanveer, Mohammad Aamir, Yasir Arafat, Yasir Shah, Rao Iftikhar, Sarfraz Ahmed.

FIXTURES

March 7	Depart from Karachi
March 10	1st T20 in Dhaka
March 12	2nd T20 in Dhaka
March 13	1st ODI in Dhaka
March 15	2nd ODI in Dhaka
March 17	3rd ODI in Dhaka
March 20	4th ODI in Chittagong
March 22	5th ODI in Chittagong

Ump Raza in critical condition

CRICINFO, undated

The condition of Ahsan Raza, the Pakistani umpire who was severely wounded during Tuesday's terror attack, is improving, Raza underwent surgery at the Services Hospital in Lahore on Tuesday to repair a collapsed right lung and damaged liver, and a hospital spokesman described the procedure as successful.

The 34-year-old remains in a critical but stable condition, and hospital officials told Cricinfo he could be released from the intensive care ward in the next three-to-four days. Raza was travelling in a minibus with umpires Simon Taufel, Steve Davis and Nadeem Ghouri, and match referee Chris Broad, when

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Some action for Dido

Football

SPORTS REPORTER

Bangladesh Football Federation (BFF) will begin its preparation for the 11th South Asian Games to be held in Dhaka early next year.

With nearly one year left for the regional games to come to the country for the third time, the BFF will start the process of building its national team for the event on Saturday.

"We will hold a weeklong trial from March 7, which begins the process of making our team for the SA Games football competition," informed Badal Roy, BFF vice-president and chairman of the National Team Management Committee (NTMC) after yesterday's lengthy meeting.

"Thirty young players have already been selected for the camp but we would like to add more players after our head coach (Edson Silva) Dido takes over."

"The camp will be held at BKSP where Dido will see the players in action. He will test their standard and give some tips on their weaknesses," added Badal, also a former national footballer.

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CA offers to host CWC

Cricket

AFP, Melbourne

Australia would be ready to host matches in the 2011 World Cup following the attack on the Sri Lankan team in Pakistan, Cricket Australia chief executive James Sutherland said Wednesday.

But he stressed that he would prefer the tournament to go ahead as planned in Pakistan, as well as India, Sri Lanka and Bangladesh.

The International Cricket Council (ICC) cast doubt Tuesday on Pakistan's hopes of remaining a co-host of the four-yearly event, saying the Lahore attacks had changed the global landscape of the game.

"Officially, we are the standby hosts for the 2011 World Cup -- our strong preference is for the event to go ahead in Asia, hosted by the countries that the ICC sees fit," Sutherland was quoted as saying by Australian Associated Press.

"We're the hosts for 2015

and we're confident we can put on a fantastic event... but we want the appropriate lead time into that event because of all the planning considerations necessary for it."

New Zealand are also standby hosts for the 2011 World Cup.

The ICC's board will discuss the fallout from the Lahore ambush -- which killed eight people and left seven Sri Lankan cricketers wounded -- and the consequences for the World Cup at a meeting in Dubai next month.

PCB sees 'grim' future

Cricket

AFP, Lahore

Pakistan cricket chief Ijaz Butt Wednesday admitted chances of international cricket returning to his troubled country looked "grim" unless its security situation improved in coming months.

Tuesday's terrorist attacks on the Sri Lankan team bus -- which injured seven touring players and their assistant coach -- was a further setback for Pakistan cricket, making it virtually a no-go zone for international teams.

The attacks left six policemen dead and several people injured and forced the Sri Lankan team to abandon the second Test and return home.

New Zealand have already hinted they will not tour Pakistan in November-December this year and will instead consider playing at neutral venues.

Butt, chairman of the Pakistan Cricket

Board, said the outlook was bleak.

"The chances of staging international cricket look grim," admitted Butt, who took over in October. "We have to analyse the security situation in the next six months or year before hoping for anything."

"If situation does not improve then it is not possible to host matches in Pakistan. If you are in the place of those teams and the International Cricket Council (ICC) you can assess that easily."

Between April 22 and May 7, Pakistan and Australia will play five one-day internationals and one Twenty20 series at the neutral venues of Dubai and United Arab Emirates, after Canberra refused to clear an Australian tour to Pakistan last year.

Australia are also due to tour Pakistan for Tests in 2010 -- but talks are already under way to play those matches at neutral venues as well.

Butt denied that New Zealand had conveyed its intentions not to tour Pakistan this year.

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