

SL will tour Pak again

INTERNET, undated
Undeterred by the Lahore attack on its national cricket squad, the Sri Lankan government is willing to send the team to Pakistan again to play matches soon.

Speaking at a joint stakeout with his Pakistani counterpart Shah Mehmood Qureshi, Sri Lankan Foreign Minister Rohitha Bogollagama said "Any invitation if extended for Sri Lankan team to visit Pakistan in near future would receive our highest consideration."

It is believed that the encouraging statement of the Sri Lankan Foreign Minister will restore the shaken trust of cricket playing nations on Pakistan the future of cricket in the country is not bleak.

The Sri Lankan Foreign Minister did not mention the exact time frame of when the Sri Lankan team will pay a visit to Pakistan.

The visiting cricket team had ended the 14-month international cricket drought in Pakistan after the Indian team's refusal to visit Pakistan due to security concerns. Bogollagama said Sri Lanka would not like Pakistan to be isolated in the cricketing world.

The Sri Lankan Foreign Minister said: "We will play our role to further strengthen our ties in the cricketing world."

Pakistan, also the co-host of the cricket World Cup 2011, is under immense pressure from some cricket playing nations over security concerns while the recent terrorist attack on Sri Lankan cricketers raised their concerns.

Six police commandos were killed and at least two players were injured when gunmen attacked vehicles carrying the Sri Lankan players in Lahore on Tuesday.

"I hope Pakistan will rise up to expectations in terms of security a country has to maintain. It would be pity if we get cowed down after this attack" said the Minister.

He said Sri Lanka resiliently fought terrorism on its soil turning every terrorist strike into opportunity to defeat the menace and it would be unlike of a nation like Sri Lanka to be intimidated by such a cowardly attack.

Patel to cover for Vettori

CRICINFO, undated
Jeetan Patel, the New Zealand offspinner, has been called up to the ODI squad as cover for the captain Daniel Vettori, who is expecting the birth of his child.

The New Zealand team manager Dave Currie said Vettori, the solitary spinner in the squad, and his wife Mary were anticipating the possibility of minor complications related to the birth of their child, expected shortly. "In case Daniel is called away at short notice Jeetan has come in on standby," he said. "He will remain with the squad through the ODI series or until required."

Patel was a member of the New Zealand A squad, playing against the visiting England Lions. Bruce Martin, the left-arm spinner from Northern Districts, has taken his place. Patel last represented New Zealand earlier this year, in the five-ODI series against Australia. He managed just one wicket in three ODIs, conceding 110 runs.

ICC Women's

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girls' cricket," ICC Chief Executive Haroon Lorgat said on the occasion.

Although, this is the first World Cup since ICC's integration with the International Women's Cricket Council (IWCC) in 2005, interestingly the first women's World Cup was held in 1973, two years before the first men's World Cup.

PARTIAL FIXTURE

- March 7: England vs Sri Lanka, Canberra
- March 7: Pakistan vs India, Bowral
- March 8: Australia vs New Zealand, Sydney
- March 8: South Africa vs West Indies, New Castle
- March 9: Pakistan vs Sri Lanka, Canberra
- March 10: Australia vs South Africa, Newcastle
- March 10: England vs India, Sydney
- March 10: New Zealand vs West Indies, Bankstown
- March 12: Australia vs West Indies, Sydney
- March 12: England vs Pakistan North, Sydney
- March 12: India vs Sri Lanka, Bankstown



Australian batsman Phillip Hughes celebrates after reaching his century during the first day of the second Test against South Africa at Kingsmead in Durban yesterday.

Hughes, Katich

FROM PAGE 17
Katich had been caught behind off an inside edge off Morkel when he had 63. It was the first use of 'hot spot' technology, designed to show where a ball made contact, but the picture was inconclusive and Bucknor upheld Billy Bowden's not out decision.

Ironically the 'snickometer', which cannot be used in making decisions, later showed Katich had edged the ball.

To add insult to South Africa's unsuccessful use of referrals, Hussey referred a decision by Rauf to give him out lbw to Morkel when he was on four. Replays showed the ball had pitched outside the leg stump and Hussey won a reprieve.

SCOREBOARD

Scoreboard at stumps on the first day of the second Test between South Africa and Australia at Kingsmead in

Durban on Friday:

AUSTRALIA: First innings
Hughes c McKenzie b Kallis 115
Katich c Smith b Steyn 108
Ponting c McKenzie b Harris 9
Hussey not out 37
Clarke b Harris 3
North not out 17
Extras: (b-4, lb-1, nb-8, w-1) 14
Total: (For 4 wickets in 89 overs) 303
To bat: Haddin, McDonald, Johnson, Siddler, Hilfenhaus.
Fall of wickets: 1-184, 2-208, 3-269, 4-266.

Bowler	O	M	R	W
Steyn	18	1	63	1
Ntini	17	3	55	0
Morkel	17	2	68	0
Kallis	13	4	41	1
Harris	21	5	66	2
Duminy	3	1	5	0

SOUTH AFRICA: Smith, McKenzie, Amla, Kallis, De Villiers, Duminy, Boucher, Morkel, Harris, Steyn, Ntini. Umpires: Asad Rauf (PAK), B. Bowden (NZL). Match referee: J. Crowe (NZL).

Khan makes Eng debut

INTERNET, undated

England handed a debut to fast bowler Amjad Khan and recalled left-arm spinner Monty Panesar for the fifth Test against West Indies in Trinidad.

The tourists reverted to a five-man attack for the must-win match at Queen's Park Oval, which meant Ravi Bopara was dropped despite hitting a maiden hundred in the drawn fourth Test.

Danish-born Khan joined the tour alongside Bopara just a fortnight ago as joint cover for injured all-rounder Andrew Flintoff and impressed in claiming five wickets in the two-day match in Barbados.

He took the place of left-arm Ryan Sidebottom while first-choice wicketkeeper Matt Prior displaced Tim Ambrose behind the stumps.

Dhoni happy with Sachin

PTI, Wellington

Rain might have played spoilsport in the second cricket one-dayer between India and New Zealand here, but visiting skipper Mahendra Singh Dhoni feels the positive thing which emerged from today's abandoned match was Sachin Tendulkar's return to runs.

Tendulkar scored 61 runs off 69 balls and shared a 76-run opening wicket stand with Virender Sehwag (54) to provide India a blistering start.

"It is a pleasure watching him (Tendulkar) score runs. It is definitely a good sign for our side. If the top order provides a good start, then the rest of the batsmen can play their natural game," Dhoni said after the match was called off following third successive rain interruption at the Westpac stadium here.

India were rocking at 130 for one in 19 overs when rain disrupted the proceedings. After two restarts, the tourists had surged to 188 for four from 28.4 overs when the skies opened yet again, thereby washing out the game.

The India captain also expressed happiness on learning about Rahul Dravid's century for Canterbury Wizards against Central Stags in a New Zealand Cricket first class match at the Mainpower Oval in Rangiora.

LOCAL SNIPPETS

SPORTS REPORTER

A Bangladesh U-20 football trial camp will start tomorrow at the Bangladesh Kira Shikha Protisaha (BKSP), for the 2010 South Asian (SA) Games in Dhaka. A list of 30 players have been asked to report to national coach Edson Silva Dido at the Bangladesh Football Federation office in Motijheel.

NAT'L BANK

VOLLEYBALL

Dhaka Green beat Dhaka Sporting Club 3-0 (25-15, 25-16, 25-22) and Bhai Bhai Sangha defeated Shablombi Society by the same margin (25-11, 25-23, 25-11) in the first division National Bank Premier and First Division Volleyball League in the Dhaka Volleyball Stadium yesterday.

East End Boys meet East End Club and Bhai Bhai will play Sporting Club today.

PABNA CRICKET

Mobarak Hossain Ratna Smriti Premier Cricket League organized by Pabna district sports association started in the Pabna Stadium yesterday.

12 local cricket teams in two groups take part in the tournament and the teams will play in round robin league system.

In the opening day Sangram defeated Nurpur Friends Club by 7 wickets.

Earlier the lawmaker of Pabna-5 constituency Golam Faruk Khandakar Prince inaugurated the tournament.

National TT camp ends

SPORTS REPORTER

The month-long AB Bank national table tennis camp concluded yesterday at the Woodenfloor Gymnasium.

A total of 27 paddlers including ten females took part in the camp under Pakistani coach Arif Khan as part of Bangladesh's preparation for next year's South Asian Games.

Secretary for Youth and Sports Ehsan Ul Fatah distributed certificates and witnessed exhibition matches on the final day of the camp. AB Bank's deputy managing director Faruk Moineddin Ahmed and Bangladesh Table Tennis Federation officials were also present.

Before the concluding ceremony, a minute's silence was observed to show respect to those who died in the BDR mutiny last week.

IPL will go ahead

AFP, Mumbai

Indian Premier League chief Lalit Modi insisted Friday the billion-dollar tournament will go ahead as planned from next month, but with an altered schedule.

The Twenty20 tournament featuring leading cricketers from around the world was thrown into doubt when the Indian government said it wanted the event postponed to avoid a clash with general elections.

But Modi said he was confident it would go ahead and hoped to get clearance from the government next week.

"We are working on a revised schedule where matches do not clash with elections in a particular city," Modi told reporters after a meeting of the IPL governing council.

Miandad calls for Broad ban

Cricket

AFP, Karachi

Pakistan great Javed Miandad urged cricket bosses Friday to ban match official Chris Broad after he criticised security provision following the Lahore attacks on the Sri Lankan cricket team.

Match referee Broad said television footage of the attack showed "not a sign of a policeman anywhere," leaving him and fellow officials "sitting ducks" when armed men began shooting and throwing grenades at them on Tuesday.

"We were promised high-level security and in our hour of need that security vanished," said Broad following his return to England.

But Miandad, who played 124 Tests for Pakistan, criticised the comments of the former England batsman.

"How can Broad, an official of the ICC (International Cricket Council), make such remarks in public? I demand from the ICC that they ban Broad for life," said Miandad, who resigned recently as director general of the Pakistan Cricket Board over differences with PCB chairman Ijaz Butt.

Butt himself Thursday accused Broad, who was the ICC's match referee for the second Test between Sri Lanka and Pakistan, of lying over poor security.

Miandad also accused Broad of declining to make positive comments in public about Pakistani security for the one-day series in January, in contrast to his willingness to speak out now.

"I was the head of the organising committee when Broad was here for the one-day series between Pakistan and Sri Lanka and at that time he praised the security arrangements but refused to say that in public.

"Broad told me that he was not supposed to talk before the media as he was an ICC official. So how can he speak to the media now?" said Miandad.

"Policemen gave their lives to save the Sri Lankan team and the officials' van. If they vanished from the scene how come they were killed?" asked Miandad, also a former coach.

Miandad urged Asian nations to support Pakistan in its hour of need.

"Terror can happen anywhere. Terrorists hit Mumbai," said Miandad, referring to attacks on India's commercial hub last November which killed 165 people and which New Delhi blamed on Pakistan-based militants.

"Asian countries must support each other and fight this."

"I think India, Sri Lanka, Pakistan and Bangladesh must join hands to curb all such incidents and keep the game alive," said Miandad.

"I salute Sri Lanka. They agreed to come here when no team wanted to come here. The way the Sri Lankan players have reacted to the attacks was positive but others like Broad are adding fuel to the fire."

Tuesday's attacks, which killed eight people and left seven players injured, were a serious blow for cricket in Pakistan, where millions follow the game passionately, and has deepened the isolation of a country now shunned by much of the world cricket community.

SL cricketers still in hospital

AFP, Colombo

Three Sri Lankan cricketers were under observation in hospital Friday after they underwent surgery following the gun and grenade attack in Pakistan, a doctor said.

Tharanga Paranavitana, who had a bullet removed from his chest, is expected to be discharged later Friday. Geethanjana Mendis, director general of the Sports Ministry medical unit, told AFP.

The left-handed batsman should be able to resume light training within about six weeks, Mendis said.

Thilan Samaraweera, who scored successive Test double centuries in Pakistan, was the worst affected. He underwent a near three-hour operation Wednesday to remove a bullet from his left thigh muscle.

Samaraweera will remain hospitalised for the rest of the week and is only expected to resume physical training in two months.

Mendis, who travelled to Pakistan to assess the wounded before their return said spin

bowler Ajantha Mendis also remains hospitalised, after two operations on Wednesday to remove shrapnel from his head and lower back.

"He is out of danger but he should be out of action for about six weeks," the doctor said.

Vice captain and wicket keeper Kumar Sangakkara was discharged on Thursday after doctors removed shrapnel from his shoulder.

Assistant coach Paul Farbrace is expected to remain in hospital for two to three days after having a large piece of shrapnel removed from his right arm. Mahela Jayawardene, who was playing his last Tests as Sri Lanka's captain, was treated for a minor leg injury, while players Thilan Thushara and Sampath Lakmal also underwent hospital treatment.

Security remained tight outside the privately-run Nawaloka hospital where the players were being treated. Uniformed police as well as plain-clothed officers were placed outside their hospital rooms.

Six policemen and two civilians were killed in Tuesday's ambush in the Pakistani city of Lahore.

Kuruppu, Tafel critical

Cricket

INTERNET, undated

A decision by the Pakistan team to delay their hotel departure spite the cricketers' security detail, leaving the Sri Lankan team bus exposed to terrorist gunmen at the flank, the Sri Lankan team manager, Brendan Kuruppu said yesterday.

Survivors of the attack, including the English referee Chris Broad, the Australian umpire Simon Taufel and player Muttiah Muralitharan, expressed anger at security failings that made them "sitting ducks" to gunmen. Mr Kuruppu said security lapses were caused by the Pakistani delay.

"On that particular day we had a couple of outriders in front and three or four jeeps in front of us but because the Pakistan team did not come at the same time there was no security back-up from behind

our convoy. Generally both teams leave together with the match officials as well in one convoy so we have security cover from all sides of the convoy."

Kuruppu said he had no information on why the Pakistan team planned to leave later.

Chris Broad, the International Cricket Council match referee, suggested someone had advance knowledge of the attack on Sri Lanka's cricket team in Lahore and held back the Pakistan players' bus by five minutes to keep them out of danger.

"On the first two days both buses left at the same time with escorts," Broad told reporters on arrival in Britain.

"On this particular day the Pakistan bus left five minutes after the Sri Lanka bus.

"Why? ... Did someone know something and they held the Pakistan bus back?"

The Lahore police commissioner, Khuro Pervaiz, has admitted security provided for

the Sri Lankan team on the day of the attack was inadequate.

"The gunmen were meant to be combated by back-up police support which didn't arrive," he told the newspaper Dawn. "All convoys are provided (with) outer cordons, but in this case the outer cordon did not respond, or it was not enough. The vehicles used for escorting the Sri Lankan convoy were not adequate."

He confirmed police had been warned that the team was at risk. "There were many pieces of information which came to us,"

The former Pakistan president Pervez Musharraf added to the chorus of criticism yesterday, saying he would have expected the security forces to gun down the attackers swiftly.

Simon Taufel said yesterday that he and his colleagues were left "helpless" and completely alone as bullets rained on the van carrying match officials.

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Rain spoils

FROM PAGE 17

Raina not out 13
Extras: (lb-3, w-4) 7
Total: (For 4 wickets in 28.4 overs) 188
Fall of wickets: 1-76, 2-139, 3-142, 4-166.

Bowler	O	M	R	W
Mills	7	0	46	1
O'Brien	6	0	44	1
Butler	7	0	38	1
Oram	4	0	29	0
Vettori	3	0	14	1
Ryder	1.4	0	14	0

Result: Match abandoned. Toss: India

New schedule

FROM PAGE 17
The tour for an indefinite period as advised by the government.

Sources said, in the new proposal there would be one Twenty20 game in the tour and all the matches will take place at one venue (Sher-e-Bangla National Stadium in Mirpur) instead of two venues in Dhaka and Chittagong.

The security is now a big issue, especially after the terrorist attack on the Sri Lanka cricket team bus in Lahore on Tuesday.

Abahani target

FROM PAGE 17

"Football in a whole will be benefited through this tournament. People are already talking about this."

Abahani captain Nazrul Islam told he wants to continue with the team's B. League triumph.

"Apart from the Tk one-crore championship prize, different individual awards announced will be an added inspiration for the footballers. We are really happy about a tournament of such a big manner," the national defender said.

Unlike Abahani, old-Dhaka riversiders Farashganj have cut their foreign imports from three to one.

"We were not satisfied with our foreign collection in the B. League and decided to keep only defender Emeka Lucky out of the three. There is a chance we would add one more foreigner but we are going to rely on our local force," said Farashganj coach Kamal Babu.

"We were the last of the

eight teams to start preparation and I don't think it is adequate. But we needed rest after playing the B. League for 6-7 months. Now we are trying to correct our mistakes," said Babu.

Farashganj reached the semifinals of the season's curtain raiser Federation Cup but finished sixth in the B. League.

"Our Federation Cup success was built on local players and we are counting on that again. We are always treated as a medium-ranged team but our target is to upset one of the two giants in the group stage and make the last four," said Babu.

"The first match, I'd rather say winning one point in the first match for us is very crucial."

Farashganj are likely to recruit a few local rookies and captain Kabir Hossain thinks they would be a strong team.

"We will not give up easily. We are determined for results and want to at least repeat the Federation Cup achievement," the midfielder added.



National table tennis players and officials pose for a photograph on conclusion of the AB Bank national table tennis training camp at the Woodenfloor Gymnasium yesterday.

Cottagers plot an upset

AFP, London

TheFA
CUP

Roy Hodgson has been around long enough to remember the last time Fulham reached an FA Cup final.

That was 34 years ago and Hodgson was just a year away from embarking on a managerial career that has seen him fill 16 coaching posts in Denmark, England, Italy, Sweden and Switzerland.

Now 61, Hodgson has put all his experience to good use in lifting Fulham from the brink of relegation to within sight of European football in just over a year in charge.

And he is relishing the prospect of derailing Manchester United's charge for an unprecedented haul of five trophies by pulling off an upset in a quarterfinal meeting what is arguably the pick of this weekend's ties.

Fulham's run to the last eight has triggered thoughts of the club's last Wembley appearance, the 1975 final.

"This is my first time in the quarterfinals," Hodgson said. "It would be lovely if we could reach the semifinal and even

better if Fulham could recreate the magic of 1975."

Hodgson was a spectator at Wembley that day as Alec Stock's side went down to a 2-0 defeat by West Ham.

While United pursue their "quintuple" Chelsea will be looking to extend their winning start to life under Guus Hiddink to five matches.

The Dutchman watched his new charges dispatch Watford in the last round but had not formally taken over the team.

Three weeks later, his influence has been clearly stamped on a Chelsea side that looks better organised and significantly more motivated than it did under Luiz Felipe Scolari.

With Michael Essien set to feature for the first time since rupturing knee ligaments in September and Ricardo Carvalho also fit again,

Arsenal though appear to be on the up having put together an unbeaten run of 16 matches in all competitions and will expect to progress to a quarterfinal home tie against Hull.

The final clash of the weekend sees Middlesbrough -- inspired against Liverpool last weekend but woeful against Tottenham on Wednesday -- travel to Everton, for whom the Cup represents the last chance of silverware this season.

FIXTURES

Saturday	Quarterfinals: Coventry v Chelsea (1230 GMT), Fulham v Manchester Utd (1715 GMT)
Sunday	Fifth round: Arsenal v Burnley (1330 GMT)
Quarterfinal:	Everton v Middlesbrough (1600 GMT)