

No security meeting with IPL boss?

CRICINFO, undated

Hardly two days after the Indian Premier League (IPL) organisers were told to recon- sider dates a second time, the Indian government has said that the concerned states should not expect any help from central paramilitary forces during games. India's home ministry, which had initially wanted the tournament to be postponed, has also said that meetings were not held with IPL commissioner Lalit Modi, according to the Hindustan Times.

"States should give their clearance to the match dates if they can provide security on their own," a MHA (ministry of home affairs) official told the newspaper. "MHA will not be able to spare any personnel to supplement them in this regard."

P Chidambaram, India's home minister, recently vowed that security would be provided for IPL matches though the dates would have to be reworked to avoid a direct clash with general elections in the country.

However, the Bangalore police have declined to provide security cover for the IPL until May 3 and advised the tournament organisers to hold off on hosting games in the city until after May 4. "Bangalore City police will not be in a position to give security for IPL matches until May 3 in view of our commitments regarding Lok Sabha elections in Karnataka on April 23 and April 30," police commissioner Shankar Bidari said. Bidari said security could be provided if games were played on May 4, 7, 10, 11, 14, 19 and 20.

The IPL is in discussions with India's security officials to resolve the clash in dates amid growing anxiety among the league's foreign players over the security measures for the tournament following the terrorist attack on the Sri Lankan team in Lahore.

Amid the tension over rescheduling of games and alternate venues in the wake of the Lok Sabha elections, the Chhattisgarh State Cricket Association said it was ready to host league matches, reported PTI.

Uthappa eyes WC comeback

CRICINFO, undated

Robin Uthappa, the Indian batsman, has hopes of making a comeback to the national team for the World Twenty20 to be held in England in June. Uthappa was left out of the Indian team after a relatively disappointing run of performances where he managed just one half-century in his last ten innings and averaged 21.75. However, he has since struck form with a century for Karnataka in their Ranji Trophy match against Andhra Pradesh, and a couple of impressive knocks while representing South Zone in the Duleep Trophy.

Bolt back to track

AFP, Jamaica

Olympic champion Usain Bolt, the world's fastest man, ran his first 100 metres of the season here Saturday in a wind-aided 9.93 seconds in a meet at Foster College.

Bolt, who set world records to win the 100m and 200m at the Beijing Olympics last August, won with a tailwind of 2.3m/sec, edging his training partner Daniel Bailey of Antigua, who crossed in the same time.

Yohan Blake, Jamaica's national junior record holder, was third in 10.08, a personal best.

While it was the first 100 of the year for Bolt, it was far from the first race of the season for the Jamaican sprint star, who also helped Jamaica's 4x100 relay to a world record at Beijing.

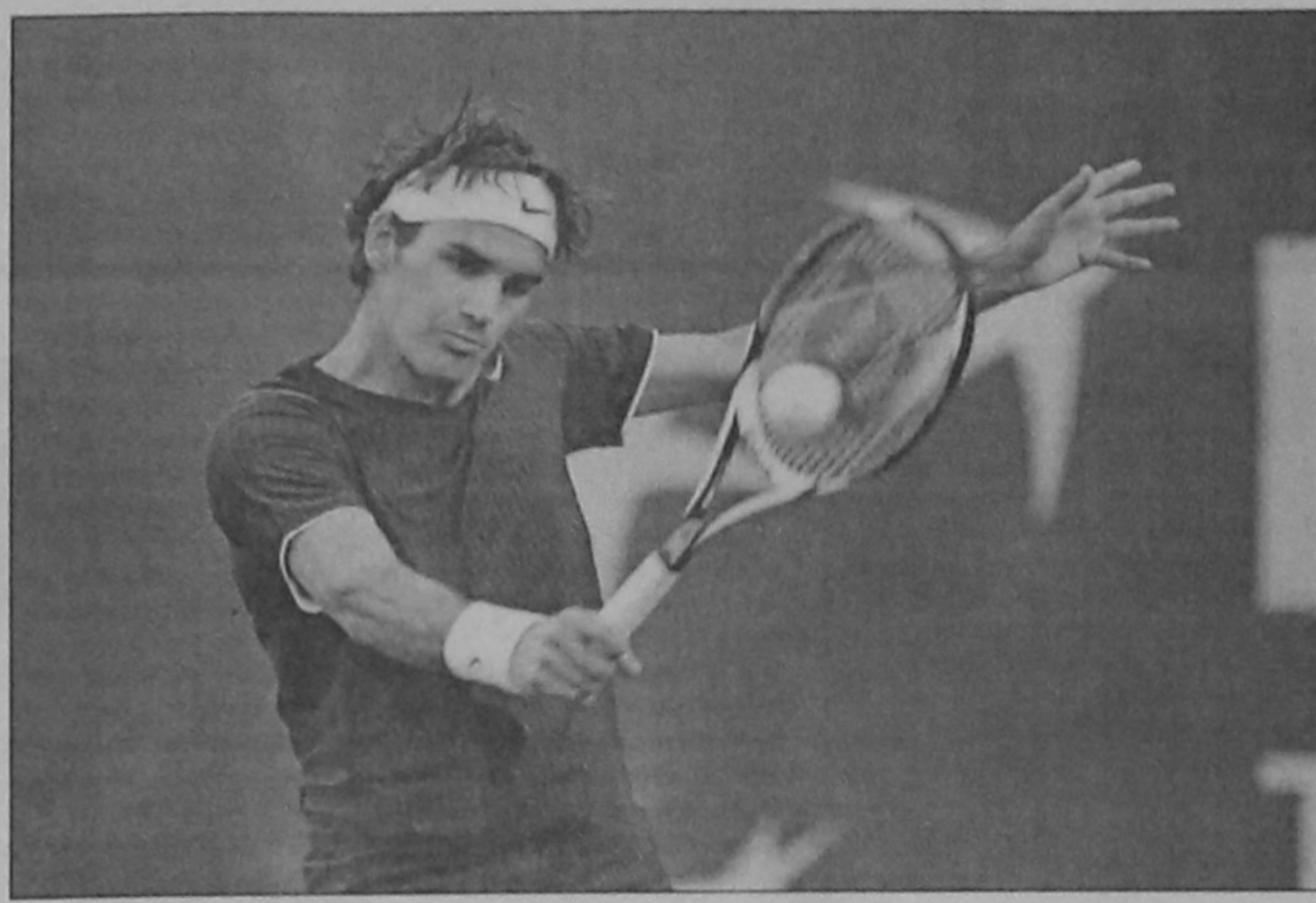


PHOTO: AFP

Swiss tennis superstar Roger Federer plays a backhand to Marc Gicquel of France at the Indian Wells tournament on Saturday.

Federer advances as women's seeds tumble

Tennis

AFP, Indian Wells

Roger Federer shook off the rust of a six-week break on Saturday, his smooth progress into the third round at Indian Wells a marked contrast to turmoil in the women's draw.

Two of the top three women's seeds crashed out of the second round on Saturday - second-seeded Jelena Jankovic and third-seeded Elena Dementieva.

Russian 17-year-old Anastasia Pavlyuchenkova, ranked 42nd in the world, stunned Jankovic 6-4, 6-4.

It was another setback for the Serbian, who finished 2008 ranked number one in the world but has now fallen to number three.

"I'm excited," said Pavlyuchenkova, a former junior world number one. "As long as you win you're happy. But I tried not to be very overexcited, because I still have to continue in this tournament."

Czech qualifier Petra Cetkova ousted Dementieva 7-6 (7/2), 2-6, 6-1. The fourth-ranked Russian blamed fatigue, saying early season success that included titles at Sydney and Auckland and a semifinal appearance in the Australian Open had taken a toll.

In all, 15 of the 32 seeded women failed to make it out of the second round.

Defending champion Ana Ivanovic, the fifth seed, avoided the trend, defeating Anastasiya Yakimova of Belarus 6-4, 6-3 to join top-seeded Russian Dinara Safina in the third round.

Seventh-seeded Agnieszka Radwanska of Poland also advanced, beating Australian Samantha Stosur 3-6, 6-3, 7-5.

Federer's decision to take a break, rest his ailing back and get in some quality practice paid dividends.

The world number two, playing for the first time since losing an emotional five-set final to Rafael Nadal at the Australian Open, defeated France's Marc Gicquel 7-6 (7/4), 6-4.

"It was OK," Federer said. "I was happy. A bit rusty maybe, coming back from not having played. I'm happy I've won. That's always most important."

Sky Blues, Ctg MSC

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machine Emeka reached the ball but was dispossessed by centre-back Aminul.

Russel's only chance came when Rachid cleared fellow Moroccan striker Samir Omari with a long pass from their own half but the latter lost control under challenge from Samad Yussif, Abahani's defender from Ghana, who recovered from behind.

Emily, who fluffed a chance shortly afterwards, finally scored his first goal of the meet in the 68th minute when he nodded the ball into the right hand post of Russel's substitute goalkeeper Titumeer after a pinpoint centre from leftback Waly Faisal.

Russel, reduced to ten men just 11 minutes from time when referee Abdul Hannan gave a straight marching order to Prashanta for a clumsy challenge on Zahed Parvez, went further down in the 89th minute.

Emeka -- who scored two goals in each of the previous games -- dashed down the left wing, exchanged a pass with

Tipu and volleyed into the back of the net from ten yards.

The Sky Blues, however, left the field with some discomfort as their holding midfielder Arif Khan Joy, who escaped a red card last time out, was booked for the second time in as many matches. He will miss the team's first-leg of the semifinals.

Earlier, Chittagong Mohammedan ensured the port city's presence in the championship leg of the Tk 2-crore tournament with yet another impressive performance.

Anthony Doe and skipper Kaiser forced fine saves by Rahmatganj keeper Himel before Guinean forward Raphael broke the deadlock in the 40th minute after a series of passes following a freekick by Kaiser.

Raphael struck again in the 75th minute when he chased a long ball from the middle and sneaked through the defensive wall to toe-poke the ball beyond an outstretching Himel for his fourth goal of the tournament.

Essien the difference

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Frank Lampard helped Deco's deflected shot past Given only to be ruled offside.

Then minutes later Ricardo Carvalho should have done a lot better when he rose unchallenged to meet Lampard's left-wing corner and wastefully headed wide.

The opening barrage was certain to bring some reward, however, and that came in the eighteenth minute when Essien connected first time with Lampard's drilled freekick, looping the ball over Given's head.

The strike may have carried more than stroke of luck but it was no more than Chelsea's vibrant opening deserved. The only surprise was that they failed to maintain the momentum and add to their tally.

Chelsea had the ball in the net after just 90 seconds when

Nicolas Anelka felt he

Bordeaux

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the second half and been more disciplined when we lost the ball. That didn't happen."

Andre-Pierre Gignac scored for Toulouse and Frederic Nimani equalised for Monaco to leave the match 1-1 at the break. Mauro Cetto put Toulouse ahead but goals from Francois Modesto and then Igor Lolo in the second minute of injury time earned Monaco the win.

Juve bounce

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at his nearest.

He then wrapped things up three minutes from time, poking the ball home at the near post at the second attempt before missing out on a last minute hatrick when crashing a shot against the bar.

In the day's other game, Ruben Olivera scored the only goal six minutes from time as Genoa won 1-0 at Cagliari, for whom Andrea Cossu was sent off in the first half.

The win moved Genoa up to fourth place in the final Champions League qualifying position.

Klose's season

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thick of the Bundesliga title race against Karlsruhe next weekend.

Germany coach Joachim Loew will also be anxious to find out the extent of Klose's injury.

He names his squad for the World Cup qualifying matches against Liechtenstein and Wales next week and Klose is usually one of the first names on his list.

The injury overshadowed Bayern's comfortable win which took them back up to second in the Bundesliga, four points behind leaders Hertha Berlin.

DIV I CRICKET

Wins for Orient, Baridhara & Wanderers

SPORTS REPORTER

Dhaka Wanderers Club earned a five-wicket victory over Badda Ekota Sangha in a First Division Cricket League match at the Dhaka University ground yesterday.

Sent in to bat, Badda scored 183-9 in 50 overs with Sumon making 54 and Belal taking four wickets for 32 runs for Wanderers.

In reply, Wanderers easily scored the match-winning 184 runs in 43.1 overs for the loss of five wickets, with Rubel contributing 58 runs and Sirajul 50.

In the day's other two matches, Orient SC (182/6 in 45.3 overs) beat Motijheel T&T Club (181/10 in 48.4) by four wickets at Dhanmondi Cricket Stadium while Baridhara Dazzlers (176/3 in 29) defeated Lalmitia Club (173/10 in 48.2) by seven wickets at the City Club ground.

LOCAL SNIPPETS

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Club, Quamruzzaman Imran of Habiganj Chess Club and Giasuddin Mithu of Muktiyoddha Sangsad KC, Nasim Hossain Bhuiyan, Salehin Sumon and Imrose Uddin are in the third position with 5.5 points each.

In the seventh round Siraj drew with Shamim.

NAT'L BANK' BALL

Power Development Board (PDB) won a marathon five setter 3-2 against Titus Club in a National Bank Metropolis Premier Division Volleyball League match at the Dhaka Volleyball Stadium.

The PDB spikers won the first two sets 25-20, 25-13 and then clinched the deciding fifth game 16-14.

In another Premier League match, Bangladesh Police defeated Water Development Board by 25-18, 25-26, 23-25, 25-21 points at the same venue.

In a First Division match, Bhai Bhai Sangha beat Dhaka Sporting Club by 25-14, 25-21, 25-17 points at the same venue.

MUNSHIGANJ FOOTBALL

Sadar Upazilla blanked Gajaria Upazilla 3-0 in the opening match of the Munshiganj District Commissioner Football Tournament at the Munshiganj Stadium.

After a barren first-half Nigerian Patrick struck twice and his compatriot Dale netted the other goal for the winners.

Earlier, Deputy Commissioner of Munshiganj Biswas Afzal Hossain inaugurated the meet that features six upazillas.

DIV III FOOTBALL

Both the Super League matches of the CityCell Metropolis Third Division Football League ended in goalless draws at the Bishreshtha Shaheed Sepoy Mohammad Mostafa Stadium in Kamapura.

Rampura KC shared points with BKSP in the day's first match while Dilkusha SC split points with Swadheenata KC in the other match.

Zahid pilots

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and two sixes while Sarker was not out on 55 off 63 deliveries, laced with seven fours and a six.

BRIEF SCORES

CCS: 276-7 in 50 overs (Uttam 22, Butt 43, Sunny 44, Shuvagoto 75, Nazmul 58, extras 18; Mabbubul 2-43, Shahadat 2-65, Zahid 2-49). BIMAN: 280-6 in 49.1 overs (Zahurud 22, Javed 50, Zahid 117, Mushfiqur 36, Sajjad 28 not out, extras 14; Rasel 2-51). Result: Biman won by four wickets.

GAZI: 134 all out in 46 overs (Anwar 75, Ashraf 11, extras 7; Saikat 2-22, Tanvir 6-26). BS KP: 136-1 in 24.1 overs (Saikat 64, Sarker 55 not out, extras 9; Quamrul 1-25). Result: BKSP won by nine wickets.

Klose's season

Germany coach Joachim Loew will also be anxious to find out the extent of Klose's injury.

He names his squad for the World Cup qualifying matches against Liechtenstein and Wales next week and Klose is usually one of the first names on his list.

The injury overshadowed Bayern's comfortable win which took them back up to second in the Bundesliga, four points behind leaders Hertha Berlin.

Waiting in the wings

Cricket

CRICINFO, undated

Bryce McGain is used to waiting for his opportunities. This is a man who spent so long in the workforce before becoming a full-time professional cricketer that he took not one but two batches of long-service leave. His banking career lasted 17 years so a couple of months here or there doesn't make a great difference to him.

McGain turns 37 in less than a fortnight and for a player who is yet to wear the baggy green cap it's a birthday that could cause a flutter of panic. Will the chance ever arrive? His first tour with Australia was cut short in October when he was sent home from India with tendon damage in his armpit and on his second trip, to South Africa, he has been overlooked for the first two Tests.

The only member of the original touring party who now does not have a baggy green, McGain has been forced to watch on as debutants Marcus North, Phillip Hughes and Ben Hilfenhaus have thrived. It would have been easy for frustration to set in for the man who has been nominated as Australia's No. 1 spinner but he knows Australia's all-seam attack is being determined by conditions and that all he needs is patience.

"Of course I'd love to be playing -- that's what we all want to do and play our role on the field -- but if my role at the moment is running drinks around, that's okay, I'm happy to do it at the moment," McGain said. "As conditions change, the team make-up might change. Looking forward it's probably going to be hard to change a

winning combination, they're doing so well."

But while McGain has accepted that he may complete his first full tour without playing a Test, the chairman of selectors Andrew Hilditch has given an indication that a specialist spinner will be strongly considered for Thursday's third Test in Cape Town. Hilditch's comments came after Simon Katich's occasional wrist-spin picked up three key wickets in the second innings of the win in Durban, where McGain could only wonder what his own legbreaks could have



BRYCE MCGAIN

achieved.

"I'm rapt for him. I'm as excited as he is," McGain said of Katich. "I guess that's the way I am. If I don't get a chance, well, I don't get a chance. I can't control that. But I know that if I do get the chance I'm going to grab it with both hands and do the very best I can. I'll be mentally nice and clear in my mind what I need to do."

That has been the case for all the players, young and old, during Australia's tour. They have each known their roles and done what was asked of them and McGain said while many people outside the

squad had doubted Australia's ability to win the series, the players had always believed in themselves.

"We haven't really been following the press back home but we understand now that there were some murmurings that maybe we were the worst group to go away," he said. "I know that there was a lot of belief in the group before we went and it's just a good bunch of cricketers. We've played against each other domestically for a long time. We knew everyone had the talent to put it all together."

If McGain doesn't make his debut at Newlands his next opportunity would be on the Ashes tour, where he deserves to be a certainty in the touring squad if not in the first Test. One of the biggest challenges of McGain's new travelling lifestyle is spending long periods away from his nine-year-old son Liam, who spends half his time living with his mother and half with McGain.

"I obviously miss him a lot, hanging out and all those things," McGain said. "But with technology these days like Skype, we keep in touch pretty regularly. He loves that and he's chatting away. It gives me a good lift when I do it, so I do it as often as I can. Most days, every other day, we're in touch and it's good to hear his voice and hear what he's doing day to day. It's just simple stuff but it's good having a chat."

Liam will perhaps be the only person in Australia more excited than his father if a Test debut arises. But for now, McGain is happy to be surrounded by other success stories.

"It's fantastic to be involved," he said. "There are a lot of worse things to be doing than being 12th man for Australia. I've really loved it."

De Silva's dev plans

Cricket

CRICINFO, undated

The chairman of the new seven-member interim committee to run Sri Lanka Cricket (SLC), former leg-spinner Somachandra De Silva, has outlined his plan for the next two years. De Silva pinpointed the ICC World Twenty20, the Under-19 World Cup in 2010,

and the 2011 World Cup as targets for Sri Lanka and said that he will give the country's players full support.

"I am prepared to give the national cricketers everything they require to win these tournaments. I want them to be mentally and physically prepared for the challenge and I want them to be in a happy frame of mind," he said. "The other areas my committee and I will concentrate on are nego-

tiating for more cricket tours for the senior, A and junior teams, improving the standards of coaching and umpiring and promoting the provincial and club tournaments."

De Silva, 66, who held the post of schools cricket development officer at SLC, was also the cricket advisor to the country's president, Mahindra Rajapakse. He said he was given the task of resurrecting Sri Lanka cricket by Rajapakse because of the faith, trust and confidence the president had in him.

SL seniors' demand

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with ethnic Tamil Tigers rebels, who are now restricted to a narrow strip of land in the island's northeast.

The exposure to the conflict has also mentally toughened Sri Lankans, said Muralidaran, a Tamil.

Despite "feeling scared" when bullets and grenades fell on the team bus, he wants to play at home and abroad.

"You can't stop playing cricket because of one incident. If we all stop playing, you give in to terrorists," he said.

Sri Lanka's new cricket chief Somachandra de Silva said his board will seek the foreign ministry's help to ensure security is beefed up during future tours.

"What happened in Lahore was unfortunate, but that is the reality of the world today," de Silva, a former Test leg-spinner said.

Sangakkara, who replaced Mahela Jayawardene as captain, said it will take time for the boys to get back into the right frame of mind to play international cricket.

"Physically they are fine. But mentally they are yet to fully recover," he said. "Considering what we went through in the last two weeks there is a special significance and dimension to the responsibility as captain now."

The skipper said he was recovering well and appreciated the cricket board's efforts to give the players and their immediate families trauma counselling.

Luckily, the players have time on their hands to be mentally ready for international cricket.

Sri Lanka's next assignment is the World Twenty20 championships in England in June, although most of the top players will be involved in the Indian Premier League in April-May.

"The boys are raring to go. I think we are the only side that starts off with some of the toughest countries (Australia and West Indies) in round one," said Sangakkara.

"If we can get through that, it will be a huge morale booster for us," he said.

CROSSWORD By Eugene Sheffer

Crossword puzzle grid with clues for Across and Down.

Cryptogram puzzle grid with letters and numbers.

CRYPTOQUIP

CPNA TUDPO Z IFA DCFD QFW
UTT W ZI FJDRFBBA VTTW. IT
Z VRPII Z CFKP BTID
PWZQZBZDA JNPWZQZBZDA.

Yesterday's Cryptiquip: STANDING FAR ENOUGH AWAY TO AVOID THE PUGILIST'S PUNCHES, I'VE PLACED MYSELF OUT OF ARM'S WAY. Today's Cryptiquip Clue: T equals O