



Mohammedan's Nigerian striker Alamu Bukola (front) dances on the stage as his teammates cheer during a reception at the club premises yesterday.

Sachin's wax figure to open on Monday

PTI, Mumbai

Indian batting maestro Sachin Tendulkar will launch his new wax figure, flown directly from Madame Tassaud's museum in London, on April 13 at a city hotel in Mumbai.

Tendulkar is the first Indian sports personality to be featured in the famous Madame Tassaud's museum. Incidentally, it is also the first time that a Madame Tassaud figure will be launched overseas.

The museum decided to flew Tendulkar's wax figure 7000 kms to Mumbai just for a meeting with the cricketing legend.

The wax figure has taken only three months to create and is dressed in the master blaster-donated white cricketing jersey.



- ESPN**
- English Premier League Liverpool v Blackburn Live from 5:40pm
 - Chelsea v Bolton Live from 7:55pm
 - Primera Liga Barcelona v Recreativo Huelva Live from 12:30am (Sunday)
 - Villarreal v Malaga Live from 2:00am (Sunday)
- STAR Sports**
- English Premier League Sunderland v Man United Live from 7:55pm
 - Stoke City v Newcastle Live from 10:25pm



Guus Hiddink (Chelsea manager)
"To be honest to play Liverpool at Anfield is always a hard job, so at the end we were very happy with this result. It is unexpected to be honest but I think well deserved." After beating Liverpool in the Champions League quarter-final on Wednesday.

MSC to go limited

Super Cup heroes honoured

Football

SPORTS REPORTER

Mohammedan Sporting Club yesterday accorded a hearty and warm reception to their Super Cup heroes and also promised better future for the most popular club in the country.

Despite missing out the B. League glory for the second successive year, the Mohammedan footballers bagged Tk one-crore as prize money of the richest ever tournament in the country last month.

And the club paid respect to the booters and coaching staff by giving them 25 percent of the prize money as bonus.

Each of the 25 members of the Super Cup champion team received a cheque of Tk one lakh and crests and club officials announced they would go all out for the professional league title in the next season.

The programme started without the top Black and Whites, who had to attend the national team's training camp, but when the footballers entered the club premises along with national team's Brazilian coach Edson 'Dido' Silva, Bangladesh Football Federation president Kazi Salahuddin and his colleagues, the 1,000-strong audience that gathered at the tiny training ground gave a standing ovation.

Mohammedan president Mosaddek Ali, who was chief guest, declared that they will make Mohammedan a limited company within the next three

months. "We want to do this for the development of the club. There's a meeting of the club's governing body where it would be discussed," said Mosaddek.

He also informed that the Caretaker Government had allotted them 25 acres of land where the club would build a stadium.

"We have been allotted a piece of land in Savar. As soon as we get possession, we will start the works."

"Once companies used to crowd the club for sponsoring Mohammedan but things have changed recently. It is also difficult to say in the morning where our team

would in the afternoon as we don't have a permanent practice ground. Its unfortunate but we need the government to look after these problems.

"Still we think that if our team try hard like this year, we will get better results in the coming years. I also believe that the way Kazi Salahuddin is leading football's revival, its bound to improve. We all need to extend our support to him."

Mohammedan captain Arman Aziz, also a key player in the national team, also praised the BFF for its activities.

"The BFF is doing its duty. Now we, the players, have to perform to keep football on the track," the midfielder said.

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Mohammedan Sporting Club president Mosaddek Ali (L) shakes hands with coach Maruful Haque at a reception at the club premises yesterday.

BCB directors meeting today

SPORTS REPORTER

Directors of Bangladesh Cricket Board (BCB) could decide on what could be good news for the country's top cricketers when they meet at the board headquarters in Sher-e-Bangla National Stadium today.

The number of contracted players could go up to 17 from the previous thirteen who were given salary by the board last season. It could even go up by five to six players if the directors decide.

Apart from the contract issue, the directors are also going to give decisions on various domestic tournaments, a permanent CEO as well as the infrastructure for World Cup 2011.

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LOCAL SNIPPETS

SPORTS REPORTER

Bangladesh Army lifted the title of the Inter-Service Hockey Championship at the Matir Rahman Hockey Ground at the Bangladesh Air Force Base in Jessore yesterday.

Army defeated Bangladesh Navy 3-1 in the final match and Sergeant Shirajul Islam of Army was adjudged the best player of the meet.

Jessore Area Commander and General Officer Commanding of 55 Infantry Division Major General Mohammad Matir Rahman witnessed the final match as the chief guest and later gave away trophies.

NATIONAL WOMEN'S HANDBALL

Panchagarh and Rangpur will meet in the 'Ka' zone final of

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SA take 2-1 lead

Cricket

AFP, Cape Town

Jacques Kallis and AB de Villiers shared a century partnership to set up a comfortable 25-run win for South Africa in the third one-day international against Australia at Newlands on Thursday.

Kallis (70) and De Villiers (80) laid the foundation for a South African total of 289 for six, putting on 114 off 131 balls for the third wicket. With wickets in hand, South Africa were able to score 94 off the last ten overs.

Australia made 264 for seven but were effectively out of the game after slumping to 114 for five with less than 20 overs remaining.

"It was a clinical performance," said South African captain Graeme Smith.

"We set up the innings well and had wickets in hand for the closing overs. 'Jakes' (Kallis) and AB showed a lot of skill and 289 was way above par."

Smith hailed the performance of spinners Johan Botha and Roelof van der Merwe, who strangled the Australian batsmen in the middle overs on an unusually dry Newlands pitch.

Off-spinner Botha ended a promising innings of 20 by Australian skipper Ricky Ponting before left-armers Van der Merwe took the wickets of Michael Clarke and Mike Hussey in one over.

Van der Merwe, in his second one-day international, took three for 37.

Part-time off-spinner JP Duminy had David Hussey caught at long-on as Australia's hopes were effectively extinguished.

"The team leadership have identified slow bowling looking ahead to the World Cup in Asia in 2011," said Smith.

"We've got to back the spinners to do a good job. Johan has been doing it on his own and Roelof stepped up tonight and bowled really well in his second one-day international."

Callum Ferguson (63) and James Hopes (63 not out) gave the Australian innings respectability with a sixth wicket stand of 97.

Australia finished with 264 for seven.

"They just got too many," admitted Ponting. "Not very much went our way tonight but we got within 25 runs. We know what we need to do, especially the top three batsmen, but we need an all-round better team performance."

The win gave South Africa a 2-1 lead in the five-match series, which continues in Port Elizabeth on Monday.

Kallis was solid in making his 70 off 87 balls before a powerful pull off Brett Geeves picked out James Hopes at midwicket.

De Villiers batted with flair but had some luck with three edged boundaries just wide of the wicketkeeper as he made his 80 off 87 balls before he fell to Johnson in the first over of the final power play.

South Africa had only scored 233 after 45 overs at the end of their power play but some powerful hitting by Albie Morkel and Mark Boucher enabled them to add 56 in the last five overs.

Smith ended a streak of seven successive losing tosses against opposite number Ponting. He had no hesitation in batting on a ground where the side batting second under lights has often struggled.

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South Africa's Roelof van Der Merwe exults after dismissing Australia's Mike Hussey (not in picture) while teammates congratulate him during the third ODI at Newlands Stadium in Cape Town on Thursday. Van Der Merwe eventually finished with figures of 3-37.

PHOTO: AFP

Inzy slams PCB turnaround

Cricket

CRICINFO, undated

Inzamam-ul-Haq, the former Pakistan captain, has slammed the Pakistan Cricket Board's "unprofessional thinking" for dropping three ICL players from its list of probables for the World Twenty20 in June after initially naming them in the squad.

Inzamam, who is also captain of ICL's Lahore Badshahs, said the Pakistan board and the selectors should have shown more respect to the three players who have represented the country.

Inzamam also criticised the ICC's move to implement stringent guidelines on unofficial cricket from June 1 to prevent future ICL mod-

els, and said the governing body was only scared of losing sponsorship money to independent organisers.

On Tuesday, the PCB backed out of a potential face-off with the ICC by dropping three ICL players - Abdul Razzaq, Imran Nazir and Rana Naved-ul-Hasan - from its list of 30 probables for the ICC World Twenty20 in June. Nazir and Naved-ul-Hasan played under Inzamam last season and Razzaq appeared for ICL's Hyderabad Heroes.

"The Pakistan board should not have announced the list if they were not clear about all aspects of the selection," Inzamam told Cricinfo. "One day they announced the list, and the next day they reversed it. This is the result of unprofessional thinking by the board and the selectors. If the PCB didn't have an ICC clearance, it had no right to name these players in

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'We could've held IPL'

Cricket

AFP, New Delhi

The Indian Premier League could have taken place in India if organisers had listened to suggestions and not put pressure on the government, a senior minister said on Friday.

The glitzy Twenty20 event, which starts in South Africa on April 18, was shifted out of India after the government said it could not provide adequate security due to the overlapping general elections.

Home minister P. Chidambaram, who had earlier publicly stated the tournament be postponed because of the elections, said IPL officials were to blame for taking it out of the country.

"We could have done it, but only if they (IPL officials) had reflected on the concerns of the police and not try to pressurise the (state) chief ministers," Chidambaram said during an interview on CNN-IBN news channel.

"I am not letting out any secret by that. If they had only listened to the concerns of the police, this tournament could have been played in two parts."

"First the league part and then give a break for the critical three or four week period and then the knock-out part."

"But they were trying to be too clever by putting the pressure on chief ministers and ultimately the police told the chief ministers that 'sorry, we cannot provide security'."

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Wastelands and yesteryear cricketers

SHAKIL KASEM

It is said old cricketers never die, they get run out. The mind stirred up memories uncontrollably, of days long gone into the dim past, yet looking back in retrospect those were heady days of innings' each of us played, alone or in tandem with colleagues and peers who we shall never part with. Certainly not in spirit, at least.

Rubbing shoulders each day with J.S. Badshah, chewing abstractions with A.S.M. Farooq, trying to change the cricket world with Roquibul Hasan and planning the future with Mainul Haq are activities almost as rewarding, if not downright as essential as the need to smack the half-volley square of the wicket past point. Add to it the emotional and sentimental exhortation of Ash Haq to attend Ayesha's wedding and relive, albeit temporarily the memories that are destined to stay. Memories that centred round Ash's own pavilion as it were, in Eskaton. The mind and body look forward with unabashed excitement to meet up

with Yusuf Rahman, now also in town. Ah, the pitch may well be a rotten grave but the ghost can still hit a hundred with the board of a coffin lid.

As we follow with pride our cricketers flying our flag in every corner of the globe, it is perhaps selfish of us in some ways to think that maybe, just maybe, the world may have had just passed us by. Circa the 70's, one still remembers the general attitude towards cricket then. It was one of frustration and despair. One did not even know if ever there would be the same set of people around to guide and encourage those who wanted to make a go of it. Sadly, some of the stalwarts, players and organisers alike had left us during those apocalyptic nine months never to return. They were either dead, in exile or just plain shattered by the holocaust. With no meaning left in life to continue with what was then considered a frivolous pastime.

One looks back in anger therefore at those wasted years of a cricketer's life. Fighting the pain, frustrations and

forces that stunted the progress of our cricket being. For us it was straight out of Dire Straits (sic) all along. There was that definite shiver in the dark, but all the while it was raining in the park.

Our cricket heroes were straight out of the contemporary novel of that era. A problematical hero. A figure symptomatic of a field where there was need to have a hero. Yet everything conspired to prevent him from being one. If the Bangladeshi cricketer was considered never to achieve the heights, the summits climbed each day by his contemporaries in other parts of the world, we had to assume that the ascent, the struggle was in itself enough. He was a happy Sisyphus in whites.

The danger lay within ourselves. The collective self in other words. Spare a moment to understand what transpires when human aspirations confront the outer world. True to form, when the rational and the irrational come face to face, a sensitive man is expected to discover not meaning but absurdity. It was such a tempting

pitfall that lay just around every conceivable corner, and into which, to a man, each of us existential cricketers fell headlong.

Cricketers as we were then, were adrift in a morass of indecision. There was no final purpose to things, no social aim worth the effort. We were condemned to play our parts in the fields as if there was no reality behind illusions. And hence we played to our illusions with an absurd flourish. A trip to England, a footnote in the official ICC Souvenir were the highpoints in our lives. An achievement that only those cricketers of that era would find the need to care about or appreciate. Looked at in retrospect, it was perhaps the most banal of human aspirations. Yet, we ruined budding careers, threatened marriages and in effect played truant with the most vital phase of our lives for just that much. One may well ponder now, whether we were not deluding ourselves, whether we were not indulging in collective hara kiri.

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