

Jilani asks ICC to reconsider

PTI, Karachi

Pakistan Sports Minister Pir Aftab Shah Jilani has asked the International Cricket Council (ICC) to review its decision to shift the 2011 World Cup matches from the country due to security reasons.

Describing the ICC's decision as a big blow to Pakistan cricket, he said it was taken in utter haste as there was still two years left for the tournament.

Jilani said the government was even willing to use the military to provide security and protection for the World Cup matches in Pakistan.

"That was an option available to us but I think the ICC has acted in haste and must reconsider its decision as this could have far ranging effects on Pakistan and its cricket set-up," Jilani, a former first class player said here.

Pakistan was scheduled to host 14 matches, including a semi-final, of the 2011 World Cup to be held in the sub-continent.

He also criticised the nation's Cricket Board (PCB) for failing to convince the ICC and its member countries to keep the World Cup matches in Pakistan.

Leverock hangs up big boots

CRICINFO, undated

Dwayne Leverock, Bermuda's most recognisable player, has hung up his boots after the side lost their ODI status and failed to qualify for the 2011 World Cup.

"I can always hold my head up and know that I gave Bermuda everything I have," Leverock said after the win over Uganda which secured Bermuda ninth place in the ICC World Cup Qualifiers. "I'm speechless right now. I shed a few tears early this morning and late on after the game when we won. It's hard for me. This is what I love to do. It's all in my heart, but this is the right time."

"There comes a time in your career when you need to take a step back. You've given all you can and your body sometimes tells you, with the aches and pains after games, that it is time to slow down. Even though my heart is still in it, the body says slow down."

"It is time to take a backseat especially with the youngsters coming through. I want to try to give them an opportunity to play and maybe I can spend some more time with my daughter. I haven't seen her as much as I would have liked to over the last four or five years."

Although the unlikely looking sportsman, his bulk has often overshadowed his undoubted ability with the ball and he has repeatedly been Bermuda's most consistent bowler in both limited-over and first-class cricket. While his batting was poor and fielding less than agile, his weight was no barrier to him bowling lengthy spells and he missed very few games.

He will, inevitably, be best remembered for his diving slip catch against India at the 2007 World Cup and the remarkable and earth-shattering victory sprint which followed.

He is not likely to be lost to the game altogether as he has plans to go into coaching and is aiming to get the necessary qualifications to help the next generation come through.

In 32 ODIs he took 34 wickets at 33.02 with an economy rate of 4.00, and in 15 first-class outings he captured 71 wickets at 26.47.

U-15s' cricket

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71.3 overs after resuming the day on 58 without loss. The home team had made 230 runs in their first innings.

Tazim claimed three wickets while Rony, Sajid and Shakil took two wickets each. The BCB side scored 90 for 4 in their second innings before the captains accepted the result.

Amin topscored with 31 off 44 balls that featured five boundaries while opener Anik added 23 off 48 balls.

Satyki Dutta and Kuntal captured two wickets each.

Rayer Bazar

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Nobin Sangha (309-5) crushed Kakrail Boys Club (218 all out) by 91 runs at the Fatullah Cricket Stadium. Ratul topscored with 95, Sagar slammed ten sixes in his 50-ball 83 and Faruque took three wickets for the Mohammapur-based side.

In another high-scoring match, Al-Rashid Cricket Club (313-8) beat North Bengal Cricket Academy (272 all out) at the City Club ground. North Bengal's Liton slammed a 90-ball century.

Young Cricketers (229 all out) beat East End Club (193-8) by eight runs through the Parabola method after rain intervened in the afternoon at the Dhaka University Ground.



Anil Kumble (2nd from L) of Bangalore Royal Challengers and his teammates rush to congratulate Virat Kohli (unseen) who has taken a running catch at deep to dismiss Rajasthan Royals' Ravindra Jadeja during their IPL Twenty20 league match at Newlands in Cape Town on Sunday.

KP makes perfect start

CRICINFO, undated



No one can accuse Bangalore Royal Challengers of not preparing properly. Their new captain, Kevin Pietersen, was on the phone repeatedly with their new coach, Ray Jennings, ahead of the tournament. Tactics were discussed, names learned. Earlier today, as Mumbai Indians got things under way against Chennai Super Kings, the pair of them were side by side in the media centre, watching, analysing, possibly fine-tuning. Neither was involved last year, when Bangalore lost 10 games out of 14, but they share a sense of responsibility now. And how. The champions didn't know what hit them.

For a while it looked as if the planning would go to waste. Pietersen had won the toss, but the pitch was drier than when MS Dhoni chose to insert Mumbai in the opening match. In that respect, Pietersen's decision to bat first was fair enough, but it may have ignored the problem of contending with Newlands as the lights come on and batsmen struggle to pick up the ball in conditions that are neither day nor night.

Nought for two after three balls with Dimitri Mascarenhas on a hat-trick was not the dimension he had in mind. Pietersen did, though, survive the hat-trick ball before whipping the next through midwicket with a trademark flourish, but Robin Uthappa soon became Mascarenhas' third victim. At 17 for 3, memories of 2008 had returned with indecent haste. At 88 for 6, they seemed to be setting in for the duration.

But Rahul Dravid was not giving up. Last year Bangalore opened themselves up to ridicule by picking what quickly became dubbed a Test team. This was a bit unfair on Dravid, who was captain then and overcame a sticky start to become the franchise's leading run-scorer by a distance. Today he eased into the senior role again with a clever 66 off 48 balls to put Pietersen's attractive 32 in the shade. A score of 133 for 8 was at the very least a basis for negotiation.

It quickly became more than that. Swapnil

Asnodkar, an unexpected star in 2008, carelessly tried to pull his second ball but instead top-edged Praveen Kumar to point, and it was 7 for 2 when Graeme Smith poked Praveen to Dravid at slip. Pietersen, who moments earlier had spoken to umpire Tiffin for apparently awarding Rajasthan a wide after a meaningful stare from Smith, enjoyed that moment.

The runs dried up completely. Ryder nipped in with the wickets of Niraj Patel and Tyson Henderson, and Mascarenhas was run out first ball. There may not be a worse time-out score all tournament than the champions' 32 for 5. The rest, including a double-wicket maiden for Anil Kumble, who finished with the astonishing figures of 3.1-1-5-5, needn't have bothered.

Pietersen has been keen to play down the storyline that has him proving his leadership credentials to a chastened England and Wales Cricket Board. But if, for the sake of argument, Bangalore win six out of six before he flies home for Test duty... well, you can imagine the pieces that will be written. Twenty20 captaincy feels like a lottery at times but pretty much everything he did here -- including the introduction of the medium-pace of Ryder as early as the seventh over -- came off. He may as well just ride the wave.

Victory was presumably all the sweeter for coming against his old friend-turned-lukewarm-acquaintance Shane Warne. For a while, Warne had threatened to do what he does best and steal the show. He bowled Virat Kohli with his fifth delivery, a very full leg-break, then tempted B Akhil down the pitch and bowled him too past the inside edge with one that turned only a fraction. A diving catch at extra cover off Dravid was proof that his 39-year-old limbs still respond to orders.

But the man nicknamed Hollywood doesn't write all the scripts. "We weren't smart enough with our shot selection," he said. "We've got to have more common sense. We weren't up to scratch and we expect better of ourselves." Pietersen 1 Warne 0, and Rajasthan Royals all out for 58 were certainly not the headlines he had in mind.

Glitzzy IPL off

FROM PAGE 17

defeated at the start of the five-week tournament moved from India because of security concerns.

The Rajasthan Royals, the defending champions, crashed to a 75-run defeat against the Bangalore Royal Challengers, while the Chennai Super Kings were beaten by 19 runs by the Mumbai Indians.

For the entertainment gurus, though, that was just the prelude to a spectacular opening ceremony.

After a presentation by the captains of the eight competing teams dedicated to the spirit of cricket, there were speeches by IPL commissioner Lalit Modi and South African President Kgalema Motlanthe.

Then came pop group Snow Patrol, acrobats, a laser show, fire dancers and a fireworks display.

Batteries of multi-coloured lights and a high-tech sound system turned the ground into a giant stage.

Modi proclaimed: "We have brought a taste of modern India to sports-mad country." But he promised: "To the hundreds of millions of cricket fans in India -- we haven't forgotten you. We will be

back."

Earlier the cricket was threatened by morning rain and the games were played under cloudy skies.

A black dog managed to penetrate the security cordon around the ground and caused an interruption of 11 minutes during the first match between Mumbai and Chennai.

Three of India's greatest stars outshone the international players on display.

Sachin Tendulkar made a skilful 59 not out in leading Mumbai to victory, while Rahul Dravid and Anil Kumble shone for Bangalore.

Dravid made the day's top score with 66 while Kumble took five wickets for five runs.

Yet Tendulkar's calmness had quietly built the kind of total -- 165 for 7 -- that commentators had decreed in advance would be a match-winner. And so it proved.

Matthew Hayden enjoyed himself for a while to hit 44 from 35 balls, and Flintoff contributed a muscular but flawed 24 off 23, but not even Dhoni's notoriously broad blade could keep up with a mounting asking rate. "We were let down by our bowlers," Dhoni said afterwards. "We didn't bowl as we planned."

Tougher conditions for batsmen here in South Africa could place a greater onus on tried and tested techniques. To the relief of the purists, the sloggers might not have everything their own way. It was a strange kind of start, but Tendulkar's thoughtfulness made it an intriguing, and possibly tone-setting, one.

FROM PAGE 17

meant they needed only another 30 runs off 4.1 overs.

SCORES IN BRIEF
KINGS XI PUNJAB: 104-7 in 12 overs (Gael 38; Vettori 3-15).
DELHI DAREDEVILS: 58-0 in 4.5 overs (Sewag 38 not out).
Result: Delhi Daredevils won by 10 wickets (Duckworth/Lewis method).
Man-of-the-match: Daniel Vettori.

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Pakistan to decline games in India?

PTI, Karachi

The 2011 World Cup, scheduled in the sub-continent, ran into fresh trouble with a senior cricket board official here indicating that Pakistan might decline to play its matches in India.

Saleem Altaf, chief operating officer of the Pakistan Cricket Board, said PCB would take its time before deciding where it would play its 2011 World Cup matches.

"It is our right to decide where we play our World Cup matches now that the games have been relocated from Pakistan," he said.

PCB officials and former players remain upset after the International Cricket Council decided on Friday to shift the World Cup matches from Pakistan due to security reasons.

Pakistan was due to host 14 games, including one semi-final, and the home side was supposed to play all its matches in front of home crowds.

But the ICC now has to reschedule and allocate new venues for these 14 matches with India, Sri Lanka and Bangladesh, the joint hosts of the tournament, vying to get those games.

A Red Bull 1-2

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"Yes! Yes, we made it," Vettel said on the team radio after crossing the line.

"Thank you for working so hard on the car. It was a dream to drive today. Together we made it. Thank you, thank you, thank you so much."

Webber completed Red Bull's supremacy with second place, ahead of the Brawn pair Button and Barrichello and the McLaren-Mercedes duo Heikki Kovalainen and reigning champion Lewis Hamilton.

Swiss newcomer Buemi - seventh in the Australian GP - was in the points again in eighth place, one behind German Timo Glock in a Toyota.

The Force India team was close to its first F1 points but German Adrian Sutil crashed out in sixth place with five laps remaining.

Ferrari missed out on the points again in what is now the team's worst start to a F1 season for 27 years.

PCB considers

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Zealand we can save a lot of money on security arrangements and on various other things," said Butt, who took over as chairman last year.

Pakistan is spending a huge amount on private security guards for its limited over series against Australia, starting here on Wednesday.

The series was relocated to the United Arab Emirates (UAE) after Australia refused to send its team to Pakistan on security grounds.

"If we play in New Zealand, the cost of the security comes to zero, and further the hotels are cheaper than in the UAE. And after playing in New Zealand our team can move to Australia for another series," said Butt.

Pakistan is due to start a tour of Australia in late December.

Butt said all the factors will be considered before taking a decision.

"We also have the option of playing in the UAE, but we want to take all the factors into consideration. Not playing at home is frustrating but we have to give our players some cricket, wherever it may be."

Vaughan said touring Pakistan is not a viable option.

"We are keen to host their series and will seek no profits if it is played on our grounds."

New Zealand's last tour to Pakistan in 2002 was hit by a suicide attack outside their hotel which killed 14 people. They abandoned the tour without playing the second Test.

Boro look

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the 40-point mark that is usually enough to ensure survival.

Stoke are just one point away from that tally after Liam Lawrence's 75th-minute strike settled their contest with Blackburn, who will drop into the relegation zone if Newcastle beat Tottenham on Sunday.

Hull are also in deep, deep trouble after a single goal defeat at Sunderland in a match they dominated for long periods.

Sunderland had needed a fantastic save from Scotland goalkeeper Craig Gordon to avoid falling behind before Djibril Cisse got his head to an Andy Reid cross to claim the decisive goal just before half-time.

Nadal's fifth in a row

AFP, Monte Carlo

World number one Rafael Nadal survived a battling Novak Djokovic to clinch a fifth successive Monte Carlo Masters title on Sunday and equal a century-old record at the Country Club.

Nadal turned on the after-burners at the start of the third set, winning a 13-minute game to set the tone for his 6-3, 2-6, 6-1 victory.

The Spaniard joined New Zealander Anthony Wilding from a century ago, who also won five (non-consecutive) titles at the premier clay event starting in 1908.

Nadal lost his first set here since the 2006 final against Roger Federer, but barely noticed as he powered past his third-ranked Serb opponent for the 12th time in 16 meetings, including seven for seven on clay.

"Confidence was important. I had to fight all the time and put the balls inside the lines," said Nadal, who won his 14th Masters title to now stand alongside Federer.

"I needed to play aggressively without mistakes. I was very focused on the moment, that's why I was able to win," said the four-time Roland Garros champion who will now travel to Barcelona to attempt five in a row at the Catalan venue next week.

"It is very emotional for me here, winning five in a row. I'm very, very happy."

"He's stronger than me, but I felt well throughout the match,"

participation. Another team from Dhaka might fill up the other spot in the eight-team competition.

Chittagong Divisional Commissioner and CDKS president MAN Siddique, Deputy Commissioner Fariduddin Ahmed Chowdhury and Habib Group director Salman Habib signed the agreement on behalf of their respective sides.

"Someone has to take sort of responsibility to boost up sports and come forward with financial assistance to this end. So, we thought this was the right time to step in," said Yeasin Ali, managing director of Habib Group.

"The list of sponsors will hopefully get large in next few days and different companies have already shown keen interest in the tournament," said CDKS vice-president Ali Abbas.

Chittagong Mohammedan, Chittagong Abahani, Chittagong Brothers Union, Isphani Group, Continental Group, Noakhali Top Sports and Laxmipur Dhaka Sports have already confirmed their

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