

Tigers' dismal show under probe

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The Bangladesh cricket team's dismal performance in the ICC World Twenty20 in England was discussed in the parliament yesterday and it was decided that necessary steps would be taken for an inquiry into the failure which broke the hearts of millions of fans.

On behalf of State Minister for Youth and Sports Ashraf Ali Sarker, who is now in England, State Minister for CHT Affairs Dipankar Talukder informed the House about the inquiry in response to a query from Awami League lawmaker Mostaque Ahmed Rumi.

A number of lawmakers expressed their disappointment over the heartbreaking performance of Mohammad Ashraful's men, who made an early exit from the showcase event following a six-wicket defeat to minnows Ireland.

Talukder however said that steps would be taken so that the team could perform better in the upcoming World Cup.

Replying to another AL lawmaker Abdul Rahman, the minister said: "We all feel sad when our cricket team performs poorly."



Did U Know?

Robin Soderling became the first and only tennis player to defeat Rafael Nadal in the French Open.



BTV & STAR Cricket

ICC World T20 Cup (SUPER EIGHTS)
New Zealand v Ireland
Live from 6:30pm
England v South Africa
Live from 10:30pm



Younus Khan

(Pakistan cricket captain)
"It would be sad if we don't make it, but I have never attached too much importance to Twenty20 cricket, as it is fun cricket. I mean it is more for entertainment, even if it is international cricket. It is all for the crowd."

TODAY'S T20 MATCHES

(SUPER EIGHTS)
New Zealand v Ireland
Venue: Trent Bridge
Time: 6:30pm
England v South Africa
Venue: Trent Bridge
Time: 10:30pm

Conditioning camp delayed for booters

SPORTS REPORTER

The conditioning camp for the Bangladesh national football team has been delayed by five days due to the unavailability of accommodation at BKSP where the team will be headed after their camp in the resort city of Cox's Bazar.

BKSP hostel will be occupied by SAF shooters till July 9 which has deferred the condition.

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PHOTO: STAR

UP THEY WENT, DOWN THEY RETURN: A sombre Bangladesh vice-captain Mashrafe Bin Mortaza (R) comes out of the Zia International Airport on Wednesday morning. Bangladesh made an early exit from the ICC World Twenty20 in England after conceding a stunning defeat against Ireland on Monday.

India warm up well for Super Eights

AFP, Nottingham



Reigning champions India warmed up for the Super Eights of the World Twenty20 by crushing hapless Ireland by eight wickets on Wednesday.

Left-arm seamer Zaheer Khan claimed four for 19, including three wickets in seven balls, to restrict Ireland to 112-8 in a match reduced to 18-overs-a-side due to rain.

Young opener Rohit Sharma then hit an unbeaten 52 off 45 balls as India romped home with 15 balls to spare to end the preliminary league with two successive wins.

Gautam Gambhir chipped in with 37 in a first-wicket stand of 77 with Sharma in front of a sell-out crowd at Trent Bridge.

The Irish, surprise qualifiers for the Super Eights, never recovered from Zaheer's triple strike which reduced them to 28-4 by the seventh over.

Andrew White top-scored with 29 as four of the top six batsmen failed to reach double figures.

Left-arm spinner Pragyan Ojha picked up two for 18 in his four overs.

Both teams had already advanced to the Super Eights after knocking Bangladesh out of

the competition.

Ireland took the field without star batsman Niall O'Brien, who was resting a sprained ankle, and burly seamer Trent Johnson also missed out to freshen up for the second round.

Zaheer said he enjoyed the four-wicket boost as he continued his rehabilitation from a shoulder injury.

"I had not played for four or five weeks so it's great to be back in the wickets," he said. "It's a real confidence-booster. I'm very pleased with my performance."

"The shoulder is coming along well. I feel better day by day and I am improving. I feel 100-percent now."

Zaheer had missed most of the Indian Premier League in South Africa and the two practice matches ahead of the World Twenty20 due to the injury in his left shoulder.

India play the West Indies in their first Super Eights match at Lord's on Friday. South Africa and England are the other teams in the group, from which the top two advance to the semi-finals.

Ireland return on Thursday to face New Zealand here with Pakistan and Sri Lanka also in the same group.

SCORES IN BRIEF

IRELAND: 112 for 8 in 18 overs (White 29, SEE PAGE 18 COL 8)

PCB plans to draft in Razzaq!

AFP, Karachi

Pakistan on Wednesday sought special permission from the organisers of the World Twenty20 to include all-rounder Abdul Razzaq in their squad to replace injured Yasir Arafat, an official said.

The 29-year-old Razzaq cut his ties with the unrecognised Indian Cricket League (ICL) earlier this month and was cleared by the Pakistan Cricket Board to play for the national team.

Fast bowler Arafat suffered a hamstring injury during Pakistan's 48-run defeat against England in their opening match on Sunday and could be ruled out of the remaining matches.

"Yes, we have requested for Razzaq's inclusion as replacement," PCB chairman Ijaz Butt told AFP.

The technical committee of the World Twenty20 will take a final decision on the inclusion of Razzaq.

Razzaq, who played 46 Tests and 231 one-day internationals for Pakistan, joined the unrecognised ICL as a protest for his omission from the squad selected for the inaugural World Twenty20 in South Africa in 2007.

The PCB barred all the 23 players who signed for the rebel league from domestic and international cricket as the ICL was not recognised by the ICC and Board of Control for Cricket in India.

But all but two of Pakistan's ICL players got their bans suspended by Sindh High Court.

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Ansar clinch women's table tennis title

SPORTS REPORTER

Bangladesh Ansar clinched the AB Bank 30th National Table Tennis Championships beating Dhaka district 3-0 in the final at the wooden floor gymnasium yesterday.

Ansar's Saleha won the first two sets 11-7, 11-5 against Dhaka's Seema, who later bounced back winning two straight sets 11-7 and 12-10 to level the match before Saleha won the fifth and deciding set 14-12.

Saleha's teammate Rumi and Soma also won against Rahima and Nahim by 3-0 sets to seal the victory for Ansar.

Earlier, Ansar moved into the final beating Biman 3-0 while Dhaka advanced to the final thrashing Rajshahi also by the same margin.

In the boy's section, Biman became champions in Group A beating Rangpur 3-0 while Dhaka won Group B title defeating Manikganj also 3-0 in the finals.

Bangladesh Ansar and Feni moved into Group A women's team final defeating Rangpur and Sylhet Division respectively.

Tigers return sans Ash

Captain avoids public wrath?

SPORTS REPORTER



The lacklustre Bangladesh cricket team returned home silently on Wednesday following their first round exit from the ICC World Twenty20 without Mohammad Ashraful, the under-fire Tigers captain.

The performance of the Tigers in the second version of the showcase event broke the hearts of millions of fans and fingers have already been pointed to the unnerved skipper, Ashraful.

When all the wrath of the public is on the captain, it appears that he chose not to fly with his teammates to skip the heat: an uncourageous move indeed.

The job was then left to his deputy, Mashrafe Bin Mortaza, to face the media at the Zia International Airport.

Coach Jamie Siddons went to Australia to be with his girlfriend Kim, who is expected to give birth to their first child next week, while Ashraful and all-rounder Shakib Al Hasan stayed back in England for treatment.

Shakib has a prior appointment with a doctor, but it was learnt that Ashraful suddenly informed the team management after the shocking six-wicket defeat against Ireland that

he needed to visit an eye specialist.

It was however not very hard for the Bangladesh skipper to get the permission to give the impression about how inept the cricket management is.

"Siddons and Shakib took the permission beforehand, but Ashraful requested the team management about his treatment only after the Ireland loss. Actually we grant this kind of leave on team management's recommendation during the tour," said BCB's acting CEO Nizam Uddin Chowdhury.

Bangladesh were the first team to reach England to acclimatise to the condition and interestingly they were the first team to return home as well, as they had to board the first available flight after their meek surrender to the spirited Irish.

"We failed to qualify for the second round for simple mistakes that we made against Ireland. And we understand that we disappointed our supporters and we apologise for that. Hopefully in future we will not repeat our mistakes and come out stronger and we will try to make up for the shock," Mashrafe responded.

Like his coach Mashrafe also said that poor batting was the main reason behind the disastrous performance.

"The batsmen failed to do their jobs. Our

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SL keep WI in check

AFP, Nottingham



Sanath Jayasuriya and Tillekeratne Dilshan hammered an opening stand of 124 as Sri Lanka beat the West Indies by 15 runs in the World

Twenty20 here on Wednesday.

The duo lifted Sri Lanka to 192-5, a total the West Indies chased bravely despite the absence of explosive opener and captain Chris Gayle, who missed the Group C match due to a knee injury.

The West Indians ended at 177-5, fired by a spectacular counter-attack by Dwayne Bravo and Ramnaresh Sarwan, who put on 77 off 59 balls for the fifth wicket.

Bravo hit a 38-ball 51 that included five fours and two sixes, while Sarwan remained unbeaten on 28.

The match, watched by a sell-out crowd at Trent Bridge, held only academic interest since both teams had already qualified for the Super Eights at Australia's expense.

Sri Lanka, who thumped Australia by six wickets in their first match, are hot favourites to make the semifinals from Super Eights Group F which includes Pakistan, Ireland and New Zealand.

The West Indies are drawn in the tougher Group E which also has defending champions India, South Africa and hosts England.

Two teams from each group will advance to the semifinals.

Left-handed Jayasuriya, at 39 the oldest player in the 12-nation tournament, smashed 81 off 47 balls that was studded with 10 boundaries and three sixes.

Dilshan, who contributed just 38 in the

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PHOTO: AFP

GETTING BETTER WITH AGE! A vintage Sri Lanka opener Sanath Jayasuriya plays one on the on-side during his blistering knock of 81 off 47 balls against the West Indies in their ICC World Twenty20 group game at Trent Bridge in Nottingham yesterday.

Win it for fans: Younus

AFP, London



Pakistan captain Younus Khan challenged his side to win the World Twenty20 for their cricket-starved fans after they booked their place in the second round here on Tuesday.

Victory over the Netherlands - who stunningly defeated England in the opening match of the tournament - by 82 runs at Lord's saw Pakistan bounce back from their 48-run loss last weekend to the hosts at the Oval.

Now Younus wants Pakistan, finalists at the inaugural World Twenty20 two years ago in South Africa, to go all the way and give their supporters something to celebrate after the Asian nation became a virtual no-go zone for international cricket following an armed attack on the Sri Lanka team bus in Lahore in March.

"We have no international cricket so if we reach the semifinal or win the tournament, the nation will stand up for us," Younus told reporters.

"I need a cup for Pakistan. If I bring one cup for Pakistan that will be an achievement for me."

The Dutch, who began the match with a better run-rate, needed to stop Pakistan winning by at least 25 runs to go through to the Super Eights.

But, after holding Pakistan to 175 for five and so needing to make at least 151 to get into the second round, the Dutch were dismissed for just 93. Leg-spinner Shahid Afridi did the bulk of the damage with four wickets for just 11 runs - the fourth best figures in all Twenty20 internationals.

"If we bowl like that in every game, we will go through to the semifinals, said Younus.

"Everybody knows we are slow starters, I just hope we have performances like this in every game."

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PHOTO: AFP

Wayne Parnell (L) and Dale Steyn of South Africa celebrate after beating New Zealand in their ICC World Twenty20 match at Lord's in London on Tuesday.