

'ODIs to be extinct'

PTI, Karachi

Former Pakistan captain Zaheer Abbas fears the 2011 World Cup might be the last 50-overs event before the ODI format dies a premature death.

The traditionalist in Abbas is alarmed by the overwhelming success of Twenty20 and the way Indian and English cricket boards are promoting the slam-bang format.

If such thing continues, one-day cricket would die in two year's time, warned Abbas.

"If powerful boards like India, Australia and South Africa push for more Twenty20 cricket, I fear it might be the end of one-day internationals in the next two years time," Zaheer said on Friday.

Former players like Shane Warne are demanding ICC to do away with the one-day format, while the England and Wales Cricket Board has already dropped the 50-overs format from its 2010 domestic calendar.

"I remain a traditionalist at heart and I don't like what I see."

Fan sells business to meet Dhoni

AGENCIES, Chennai

A cricket-crazy Indian fan has sold his business to fund a dream of meeting Mahendra Singh Dhoni, domestic media reported on Friday.

Ravindra Kumar Saini from the northern Indian state of Uttar Pradesh sold his audio and video disc business for 15,000 rupees (about 307 dollars) last month, Times of India reported.

The 23-year-old then stayed in the Indian captain's hometown of Ranchi in eastern India for 35 days before finally meeting Dhoni on

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Did U Know?

The longest chess game ever recorded was between Nikolic and Arsovic, held in Yugoslavia in 1989. This game involved 269 moves and took over 20 hours and no one won.



Andrew Flintoff

(England all-rounder)

"If I had known it was so easy to get this kind of reward, I think I would have practised the fielding a bit more."

On receiving a magnum of champagne for his crucial run-out of Ricky Ponting during the fifth and final Ashes Test recently.



TEN Sports

Sri Lanka v New Zealand
Second Test, Day Four
Live from 11:30am

ESPN

English Premier League
Chelsea v Burnley
Live from 6:40pm
Bolton v Liverpool
Live from 8:55pm
Man United v Arsenal
Live from 11:10pm

STAR Sports

English Premier League
Tottenham v Birmingham
Live from 8:55pm



Sri Lanka skipper Kumar Sangakkara (R) sweeps one down to fine-leg as New Zealand wicketkeeper Brendon McCullum looks on during the third day of the second Test at the Sinhalese Sports Club in Colombo yesterday.

PHOTO: AFP

SL turn the screws

Cricket

AFP, Colombo

Skipper Kumar Sangakkara hit a second successive half-century as Sri Lanka seized control of the final cricket Test against New Zealand here on Friday.

The hosts, who led by 182 runs in the first innings, were 157-2 in their second knock when heavy rain ended play 12.4 overs early on the third day at the Sinhalese Sports Club.

Sangakkara followed his 50 in the first innings with a fluent unbeaten 64, having shared an unbroken third-wicket stand of 68 with former captain Mahela Jayawardene (23 not out).

Sri Lanka will resume on the fourth day with an overall lead of 339 runs with eight wickets in hand, looking for quick runs before giving their bowlers enough time to dismiss New Zealand a second time.

Sri Lanka won the first Test in Galle by 202 runs last week and a 2-0 sweep of the series will make them number two in the official Test rankings behind South Africa.

Sangakkara's men currently share the second spot with India.

Openers Tillakaratne Dilshan and Tharanga Paranavitana gave Sri Lanka a flying start with a stand of 56 runs.

Dilshan, hero of the first Test win with knocks of 92 and 123 not out, made 33 before holing out in the deep off Jeetan Patel.

Paranavitana fell in the penultimate over before tea, caught down the leg-side by wicketkeeper Brendon McCullum off Daniel Vettori for 34.

Sangakkara hit seven fours and a six despite a defensive leg-side field set by Vettori to contain the runs.

Earlier, Sri Lanka spinners Muttiah Muralidaran and Rangana Herath shared six wickets as New Zealand were bowled out for 234 in their first innings in reply to Sri Lanka's 416.

Off-spinner Muralidaran, the world's most successful bowler, finished with three for 71 runs to take his record tally to 780 wickets.

Left-arm spinner Herath chipped in with three for 70, while seamer Thilan Thushara claimed two for 37.

New Zealand added 24 runs to their overnight score of 159-5 when the overnight pair of Ross Taylor and McCullum were dismissed in successive overs.

McCullum, who made 18, edged Muralidaran to the slip region where Mahela Jayawardene picked up his 150th Test catch.

Taylor, who survived at least three close appeals for leg-before during his knock of 81, was finally removed by Herath to a catch by

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Foreigners leading GM chess

SPORTS REPORTER

FIDE Master Mehdi Hasan Parag is likely to earn his first norm for International Master when he takes on Grand Master Anuar Ismagambetov of Kazakhstan in the 10th and final round of the 9th United Insurance & United Leasing Grandmasters Chess tournament at the NSC Tower Auditorium Lounge today.

Parag drew with GM Abdullah Al Rakib in the eighth round tie to share the third spot with six other players with 5.5 points.

Parag just needs to complete his 10th round game in a bid to earn his first IM norm and he is supposed to achieve the norm even if he is defeated as participation will be good enough to secure the norm, said a Bangladesh Chess Federation official.

Meanwhile, Indian duo of Bitan Banerjee and Praveen Kumar got the nine-game IM norm after the ninth round, despite Bitan losing to Gagunashvili and Praveen drawing with Bakre.

Three players -- Indian GM Dibyendu Barua, Georgian GM Mchedlishvili Mikheil and his compatriot GM Gagunashvili Merab -- shared the lead with six-and-a-half points.

As many as six players followed the leaders securing six points each. They are GM Reefat Bin Sattar, GM Igor Gaus of Czech Republic and GM Khushnutdinov Rustam of Kazakhstan.

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Aussies ride on Hussey

AFP, Edinburgh

David Hussey smashed his first one-day international century as Australia began life without the Ashes by scoring 345 all out in Friday's one-day international against Scotland in Edinburgh.

Hussey bludgeoned the Scotland attack for 111 from just 83 balls as the Australians played for the first time since losing the Ashes to England in the final Test at the Oval on Sunday.

A 114-run stand between Hussey and Adam Voges, who scored 72, came in 83 balls and paved the way for Australia's total, their biggest in a one-day game on British soil, after Shane Watson's 68 at the top of the order set the tone.

A late flurry of Australia wickets saw the tourists bowled out from the final ball of the 50 overs, with Gordon Goudie bowling debutant Dirk Nannes -- who played for Holland at the World Twenty20 in June -- to finish with figures of five for 73.

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MSC yet to start camp

Football

SPORTS REPORTER

Liberal-spending Mohammedan SC have yet to start their proposed conditioning camp for the season's curtain-raising tournament Federation Cup in Mymensingh, reportedly due to a fund crisis.

The Motijheel-based outfit vowed to begin the conditioning camp in Mymensingh, much like last year's in Comilla. The boys of Black and Whites started training in Dhaka under the supervision of coach Maruful Haq from August 24 instead of Mymensingh, but it is apparently hampering the training due to the lack of an available ground.

"The coach cannot follow the schedules fully due to the lack of a practice ground and it definitely slows down the preparation," said defender Wali Faisal.

After being reappointed, coach Maruful wished to make the players ready in Mymensingh through a specially tailored training program and the officials in the first meeting with the coach also assured him to meet the issues he raised.

It was, however, learnt that it would take the Motijheel-based outfit to only Tk 2 lakh for a two-week training in Mymensingh, but the club officials were yet to amass the amount, apparently triggering the deferment of the Mymensingh camp.

Football manager Amirul Islam Babu, however, said that they needed at least 12 rooms with the facilities of air condition at the Mymensingh Circuit House for 24 to 25 persons, but there were eight rooms available at the moment and it was the main reason behind the deferment of the Mymensingh camp.

In a bid to win the elusive B. League title, Mohammedan so far signed up 14 players including last season's star striker Zahid Hasan Emily and star defender Wali Faisal, but are yet to complete the formalities of the rest of the squad with only three days in hands.

"The conditioning camp in Mymensingh will get underway within a couple of days. Besides, we are yet to complete all players' registration formalities. That's why it is taking a little more time to start the camp in Mymensingh," said MA Salam, the chairman of the football committee.

Salam, however, vowed to send the squad to Mymensingh in a bid to prepare the players as well as repair the rooms of the players at the clubnet.

Though Mohammedan signed up most of the players in the first week of the month-long transfer, then two weeks later it started to practice at Bangabandhu National Stadium, which was used for the first two days and then had training at the tiny ground of the club because they are yet to get allotment of the BUET ground. The BUET authority reportedly asked the Mohammedan to pay in advance to get the ground following their due payment of the last season.

Pakistan wants \$18m

AFP, Lahore



Pakistan Friday said that it hoped to get 18 million dollars in compensation for losing its share of World Cup 2011 matches over security fears.

The International Cricket Council (ICC) Thursday announced the World Cup matches dispute with Pakistan was resolved after its President David Morgan and Pakistan Cricket Board (PCB) Chairman Ijaz Butt met in Dubai.

Butt said Pakistan expects to get 18 million dollars in all.

"Apart from our hosting rights fee of 10.5 million dollars, we expect to get some additional amount in compensation which, after calculation, will come to 18 million dollars," Butt told a press conference on his return from Dubai.

In April this year, the ICC was forced to relocate Pakistan's share of 14 matches

because of security fears after attacks in its eastern city of Lahore on the Sri Lankan team on March 3.

The attacks injured seven players and their assistant coach and killed eight people.

The PCB served a legal notice on the ICC, saying the relocation was unjust, but after Thursday's agreement they have withdrawn the legal case.

The Central Organising Committee of the World Cup 2011 last month awarded eight of Pakistan's matches to India, four to Sri Lanka and two to Bangladesh.

World Cup matches, the Champions trophy 2008 was also moved out to South Africa after several teams refused to tour Pakistan over security fears.

Butt said the solution was the best possible under the circumstances.

"We feel that this was the best possible solution and we will get additional amount and

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PHOTO: STAR

Indian Grand Master Dibyendu Barua (R) and his compatriot GM Neelotpal Das are engaged in a cerebral warfare during the ninth round of the 9th United Insurance Grand Masters Chess Tournament at the NSC conference room yesterday.

Stars shine bright in Spain

QUAZI ZULQUARNAIN ISLAM



Lock up your superstars, Florentino Perez is back in town.

Just three months ago, Catalan was the flavour in

Spain as Barcelona became the very first Spanish side in history to win the treble. And no, not the Liverpool sort. The La Liga title was followed by wins in the Spanish Cup and a masterclass in possession football in the Champions League final. Manchester United the unlucky recipients.

But all that is now forgotten. Like the new fall line from an illustrious brand, the Galacticos part two has put the brilliant Barcelona in the shade.

The Catalans are now so last season.

But then again that's what spending a mind boggling 150 million Euros on two players will do. If nothing else, it will garner attention.

The pursuit and subsequent captures of Kaka and Cristiano Ronaldo now means that two of the

world's three best players ply their trade in Madrid. The other is of course over in Barcelona, a state of affairs that now leaves the La Liga proudly proclaiming its status as the best league in the world. There can be no contention.

Over in Spain, its Real Madrid here, there and everywhere. The dynamic duo of Kaka and C'Ron aside, Perez's revolution has also netted Karim Benzema from Lyon, Xabi Alonso from Liverpool and (in a change from his past stance) the defender Raul Albiol from Valencia. Coach Manuel Pellegrini of the Villarreal fame has been entrusted with the (un)enviable task of forging these fantastic superstars into one unit.

The Dutch contingent of Bernd Schuster's reign have all but exited but Pellegrini faces the challenge of incorporating the current talent alongside club mascot Raul, outstanding upstart Gonzalo Higuain and Sergio Ramos. Only Iker Casillas seemingly has no danger of losing a place.

Nothing is set in stone, except that, there will be

goals, plenty of it.

Not all of that has to come from Real though. Despite what the notoriously pro Madrid rags of AS and Marca would have you believe, it's not all about Real Madrid.



CRISTIANO RONALDO

Barcelona may just have a nineteen-man squad but all of those nineteen are fantastic footballers (you have to stretch the definition to include Carles Puyol of course). And the arrival of the fantastically talented but as often fantastically disappointing Zlatan Ibrahimovic gives them the option of Plan B that they sometimes lacked. But

the sacrifice of Samuel Eto'o to achieve that plan may yet put Pep Guardiola's glorious high-octane, all triangles game at risk.

There is no denying that Zlatan is a superb player, but whether he can adapt himself



KAKA

to Barcelona's game of high pressing is yet to be seen. Lionel Messi however keeps stretching the boundaries of genius to galaxies beyond and if Xavi and Andres Iniesta keep up their form, Barca can yet blow this Real challenge out of the water.

But what of the rest.

Atletico Madrid somehow managed to retain the

services of Maradona's son-in-law and Diego Forlan which leaves them with a forward line of the duo plus Maxi Rodriguez and Simao Sabrosa. Their chairman calls it the best in the world. Close but no cigar, but



ZLATAN IBRAHIMOVIC

expect Atletico to ruffle a few feathers.

Villarreal will have to make do with the loss of their coach, but in Giuseppe Rossi have a young energetic forward prepared to capitalise on the inventiveness of Santi Carzola and the graft of Marcos Senna.

Valencia were however the story of the summer, Real

Madrid excluded. Takeovers without money, retake overs, stocks floated but after the dust settled they have somehow managed to retain the services of David Villa. And along with him the duo of Joaquin, David Silva. They



KUN AGUERO

are set to be a potent force.

Also Sevilla, recipient of the easiest draw in living Champions League memory, will look to hedge on the talents of Fredi Kanoute and Luis Fabiano. The latter made plenty of noises to go the route of Milan but as Silvio Berlusconi decided to spend the capital on his 'other' pursuits, the

Brazilian had to remain at Seville. The duo will look to benefit from the silky skills of the Italian Enzo Maresca and the surges of full-back Adriano.

The others are finely balance and on a whole La Liga is quite competitive.

But following the nine month slog in this World Cup year, count only on Barcelona and Real Madrid to be left standing.

And if Ronaldo's notoriety and Kaka's sobriety do not clash like yin & yang, expect a White Ballet.

FIXTURES

Saturday
Real Madrid v Deportivo La Coruna 20:00 (1800 GMT), Real Zaragoza v Tenerife 22:00 (2000 GMT)
Sunday
all 15:00 GMT unless stated
Malaga v Atletico Madrid, Real Mallorca v Xerez, Racing Santander v Getafe, Osasuna v Villarreal, Athletic Bilbao v Espanyol, Valencia v Sevilla (17:00 GMT), Almeria v Valladolid (1900 GMT)
Monday
Barcelona v Sporting Gijon (2000 GMT)