

Gautam, Bhajji not in for 1st two ODIs

Cricket
AFP, Kolkata

Batsman Gautam Gambhir and off-spinner Harbhajan Singh were on Wednesday left out of India's squad for the first two one-day internationals against South Africa.

Gambhir was suffering from a groin injury and Harbhajan opted out due to personal reasons, the Board of Control for Cricket in India (BCCI) said in a press release.

Both players are taking part in the ongoing second Test against the Proteas in Kolkata. All-rounder Yusuf Pathan earned a recall after his impressive performance in recent domestic games and uncapped off-spinner Ravichandran Ashwin replaced Harbhajan.

The one-dayers will be played in Jaipur (February 21), Gwalior (February 24) and Ahmedabad (February 27).

SQUAD
Mahendra Singh Dhoni (captain), Sachin Tendulkar, Virender Sehwag, Virat Kohli, Dinesh Karthik, Suresh Raina, Ravindra Jadeja, Ravichandran Ashwin, Zaheer Khan, Ashish Nehra, Sudeep Tyagi, Praveen Kumar, Abhishek Nayar, Yusuf Pathan, Amit Mishra.

Wozniacki sent packing

Tennis
AFP, Dubai

Shahar Peer increased the security dilemma surrounding her presence in the United Arab Emirates by producing a stunning 6-2, 7-5 win over the top-seeded Caroline Wozniacki to reach the quarterfinals of the Dubai Open.

The former Israeli soldier is the first woman athlete from her country to compete in the UAE and all three of her matches have been scheduled in the easier-to-protect outside courts.

But after victories over Yanina Wickmayer, the 13th seed, Virginie Razzano, last year's runner-up, and now Wozniacki, the world number three from Denmark, the pressure to take the risk of scheduling her on the centre court has increased.

With Hamas having alleged that a founder member of its organisation was assassinated last month, and fears of tit-for-tat reprisals, Peer has been operating with guards everywhere, separate changing facilities, cameras filming everyone coming in and out of the arena, and secret interviews at hidden locations.

But once again she played with an icy intensity devoid of someone having a cause beyond herself and, apart from slightly wavering in the second set, she was more consistent, more tactically varied, and more calmly determined than the favourite.

Peer broke at once and dominated the first set with her rhythmic driving, tremendous court coverage and sudden dangerous changes of pace and direction, especially with her excellent backhand drive.



China's Li Na makes a return against Marion Bartoli of France during their WTA Dubai Tennis Championship on Wednesday.

FIELD HOCKEY WORLD CUP India reassures safety

AFP, New Delhi

India sought on Wednesday to reassure foreign teams that it would host a safe field hockey World Cup this month after a weekend bombing and alleged new threats raised fresh concerns over security.

"We have made elaborate arrangements for the entire World Cup hockey event," Delhi police spokesman Rajan Bhagat told AFP. "The arrangements are foolproof."

Home Secretary GK Pillai said late Tuesday that the government had put in place elaborate security measures to ensure an incident-free hockey tournament and Commonwealth Games in October in New Delhi.

"We are in close touch with security liaison officers of all countries that are coming here to participate," Pillai told reporters.

"So far, all of them have seen the preparations done by the Delhi Police and the MHA (Ministry of Home Affairs). They are quite satisfied."

New security concerns rose after last Saturday's bombing at a restaurant in the western city of Pune which killed 11 people, including an Italian woman and an Iranian man.

A previously unknown Islamist group that splintered from a larger Pakistan-based organisation claimed responsibility for the attack in a call to an Indian newspaper.

The group, calling itself Lashkar-e-Taiba al-Almi, linked the attack to upcoming peace talks between India and Pakistan, set for February 25.

The India and Pakistan teams are set to meet on the first day of the hockey tournament which runs from February 28-March 13.

On Tuesday, the Hong Kong-based Asia Times Online news website said it had received a warning from Al-Qaeda-linked militant Ilyas Kashmiri about attacking sporting events in India.

The Pakistan-based extremist reportedly warned international competitors against going to the hockey World Cup, the Indian Premier League (IPL) cricket tournament that begins in March and the Commonwealth Games.

The report could not be verified by AFP, but the threat led New Zealand officials to delay the hockey team's departure for India until a security update had been received.

"While Hockey New Zealand still plans for the Black Sticks men's team to attend the Hockey World Cup in Delhi, it has decided to keep the team in Perth until further notice," Hockey New Zealand chief executive Hilary Poole said.

Australia and England said they still planned to attend unless advised otherwise by their governments.

"There should be no apprehension in anyone's mind about the safety and security of the stakeholders," another senior New Delhi police officer told AFP, adding that 100 snipers and a thousand paramilitary troops would be deployed.

Hockey India, which is organising the World Cup in New Delhi, said no team had threatened to pull out of the World Cup.

"As far as we know, all the 11 international teams are coming," said spokesman Anupam Ghulati. "There are no concerns at all."

Any pull-out or disruption for India would be major blow as it gears up to host the Commonwealth Games in October, the biggest event on Indian soil since the Asian Games in 1982 which organisers hope could open the way to an Olympics bid.

England's badminton team angered Indian sports officials by pulling out of the World Championship in August last year, saying security in the host city of Hyderabad was lax.

The event passed off without incident.

In an interview to the Australian Broadcasting Corporation, Australian field hockey coach Ric Charlesworth brushed aside the security concerns.

"Having lived in India, there are all sorts of threats every day and there are 80 news channels," Charlesworth told the Australian Broadcasting Corporation.

"Everyone is looking for a story. There is always a story like that. I don't think we can distract ourselves with that."

A ton to cherish

FROM PAGE 17

Southee	16	2	62	1
Patel	10	3	53	0
Tuffey	18	2	84	2
Vettori	28.3	7	88	3

NEW ZEALAND: Second innings

Watling run out	1
McIntosh not out	5
Ingram not out	2
Extras: (lb-1)	1
Total: (For 1 wkt in 5 overs)	9

To bat: Taylor, Gupill, Vettori, McCullum, Tuffey, Patel, Southee, Martin.

Fall of wickets: 1-2.

Bowler	O	M	R	W
Shahadat	3	1	3	0
Shafiq	2	1	5	0

Sunny routs Rajshahi

FROM PAGE 17

four and five sixes during his 100-ball essay while captain Nafis Iqbal added 23 off 47 balls with three fours.

At the Zahur Ahmed Chowdhury Stadium in Chittagong, pacer Robiul Islam continued to trouble Dhaka batsmen by taking three second innings wickets as Khulna were smelling outright victory.

Robiul, who demolished Dhaka in the first innings with a five-for, claimed three wickets and his new ball partner Dollar Mahmud took the other wicket as Dhaka were reduced to 141 for four in chase of a mammoth target of 459 runs.

After dismissal of three quick wickets Marshal Ayub and Shuvagoto Chowdhury came up with half-centuries to salvage the complete blushes. Marshal score 57 while Shuvagoto remained not out on 52 along with Nadif Chowdhury (3).

Earlier, Khulna scored 325 in their second innings after resuming the day on 198 for three. Rezwan (43) and Tushar Imran (48) were the notable scorers on the day.

MARATHON FIASCO Ratan, Yahia banned

SPORTS REPORTER

The Bangladesh Athletic Federation (BAF) yesterday banned chief judge Jahirul Haque Ratan and measurement expert Mohammad Yahia for different periods following the marathon fiasco on the concluding day of the 11th South Asian Games.

Nepalese Rajendra Bahadur Bhandara won gold in the event on February 9 with a world record time. But later it could be known that the route the runners followed was seven kilometres short of the standard distance of 42.195km.

The executive committee of BAF took this decision.

Ratan has been slapped with a life ban from the federation while Yahia has been suspended for two years from all marathon-related activities. Referee Moeen Uddin Ahmed was served a warning, said a press release of the BAF.

Rooney

FROM PAGE 17

Nani was having one of his more erratic days and Ferguson replaced him with Antonio Valencia halfway through the second period, a move that bore fruit within a minute as the Ecuador flyer got to the byline and crossed for Rooney at the back post to flick a floating header over Dida for his 25th goal of the season.

United were now content to hit Milan on the counter and Rooney flashed a shot just wide on 73 minutes but a minute later he ran onto Fletcher's dink into the box past a static defence to head easily past Dida.

United were cruising until a late lapse allowed in Seedorf, who had replaced Beckham, to lift the crowd and give the visitors a nervous last few minutes.

Tigers put up

FROM PAGE 17

instances of deft touch, Shakib in particular using the lap-sweep and the scoop shot productively. Jeetan Patel was the primary victim of the duo's assault, ending wicketless in the innings after having conceded 53 runs in 10 overs.

Chris Martin broke the resistance soon after tea with the second new ball, though replays showed that Shakib's under-edge bounced well short of Brendon McCullum, who claimed the catch instantly. It was an unfortunate end to a special innings from Shakib, who had overseen Bangladesh's rescue operation only to fall in sight of a well deserved maiden ton. Mahmudullah however, was not to be denied and, reached the landmark soon after Shakib's departure with a boundary to square leg. He was eventually trapped in front by Shakib for 1. The hosts are still well in control of the test match, ending the day effectively at 154 for 1, but Bangladesh showed encouraging signs of fight, and will hope for early wickets tomorrow if they are to challenge a New Zealand, who will hope they have seen the best that their opponents have to offer.

Renovation

FROM PAGE 17

meeting of the NSC yesterday with its chairman and sports minister Ahad Ali Sarker in chair.

The meeting was informed that the renovation and development work at the BNS would be approved soon after the re-evaluation of the tender.

The meeting also thanked all for the successful completion of the South Asian Games where hosts Bangladesh won a record 18 gold medals.

What to WATCH

- SuperSport6**
New Zealand v Bangladesh
Only Test, Day Four
Live from 4:00am
- NEO Cricket**
India v South Africa
Second Test, Day Five
Live from 9:45am
- ESPN**
Sportscentre India
Sports News
Live at 8:30pm

DAY'S EVENT

National Cricket League
(Four-Day Match, Day Four)
Dhaka v Khulna
Venue: Zahur Ahmed
Chowdhury Stadium, Chittagong

Rain disrupts India's

FROM PAGE 17

"The guys have played the spinners well so far and there is no reason why we can't survive 90-odd overs. If we can just be positive and keep the pressure on India, anything can happen."

India declared their first innings on a mammoth 643-6, built on centuries by Virender Sehwag (165), Venkatesh Laxman (143 not out), Mahendra Singh Dhoni (132 not out) and Sachin Tendulkar (106).

Smith and Petersen played with caution after resuming at the overnight total of 6-0, when Mishra was brought into attack in the 13th over.

Mishra struck off his first delivery, trapping Smith in front of the wicket to cap a miserable outing for the South African skipper in the series. Smith scored just 30 runs in three innings.

fourth day of the second and final Test between India and South Africa at the Eden Gardens in Kolkata on Wednesday:

SOUTH AFRICA: First innings 296 (Amla 114, Petersen 100; Zaheer 4-90, Harbhajan 3-64)

INDIA: First innings 643-6 decl (Sehwag 165, Laxman 143 n.o., Dhoni 132 n.o., Tendulkar 106; Morkel 2-115)

SOUTH AFRICA: Second innings Smith lbw b Mishra 20
Petersen c Badrinath b Harbhajan 49
Amla not out 21
Kallis c Dhoni b Mishra 20
Prince not out 0
Extras: (nb-5) 5
Total: (For three wks in 35 overs) 115
Fall of wickets: 1-9, 2-54, 3-111.

Bowler	O	M	R	W
Zaheer	6	0	32	0
Harbhajan	13	3	31	1
Sharma	8	1	36	0
Mishra	7	3	15	2
Sehwag	1	0	1	0

SCOREBOARD
Scoreboard at stumps on the

CROSSWORD By Eugene Sheffer

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	
12					13			14			
15				16				17			
18							19	20			
			21				22				
23	24	25		26		27		28		29	30
31			32		33		34		35		
36				37		38		39		40	
			41			42		43		44	
45	46					47			48	49	50
51						52	53				
54						55			56		
57						58			59		

ACROSS

40 Tramcar load
41 The era of Shak.
43 Catch red-handed
45 Ornamental grating
47 Washing-ton neighbor
51 Stereo counterpart
52 Female singing voice
55 "Norma"
56 Feline, to Francisco
57 Old Dodge model
58 MGM motto start
59 Furry sci-fi critter
60 Picnic invaders
61 Tallow
63 Hebrew month
64 Danger
65 Groups of nine
66 Comprehend
67 Merchandise
68 Brightest star in Scorpio
69 Instigate
70 Shrek is one

DOWN

11 Oodles
16 Thought
20 Snitch
23 Lawyers' org.
24 Data storage site
25 Inherit
27 Despondent
29 Rowing need
30 "Catcher in the —"
32 Increase rapidly
34 "Mapped" hereditary matter
37 Goose egg
39 Distort
42 Marty, in "Mada-gascar"
44 Fed
45 Ecu
46 Portrayal
48 Rodents do it
49 "Beetle Bailey" dog
50 Corner
53 Eg. and Syr., once

CRYPTOQUIP
Y A M M N Y J U F L N A H P X P B N
H X J B P E Y A M P X - R N U F
F X E O P R L Y P X J N A Y R P B B P X
J Y J B E S E Y Y J O P S J Y Y J O P ?

Yesterday's Cryptoquip: DISNEY FILM ABOUT A BRUTE AND THE LOOT HE STEALS FROM HIS ENEMIES: "BOOTY AND THE BEAST"
Today's Cryptoquip Clue: J equals I