



PHOTO: AFP

South Africa pacer Morne Morkel (C) celebrates with teammates after dismissing Afghan batsman Karim Sadiq (not in picture) during the World Twenty20 Group C match at the Kensington Oval in Bridgetown on Wednesday.

Thushara in for Murali

CRICINFO, Bridgetown

Thilan Thushara, the left-arm seamer, has been called in as cover for Muttiah Muralidaran in the Sri Lankan squad for the ICC World Twenty20.

Murali injured his groin in the tournament opener against New Zealand and missed the game against Zimbabwe. He has been given time to recover and Thushara will only play if he is ruled out of the tournament.

"Thushara will join the national team as additional cover for Muralidaran, who is recovering from a groin injury," Ashley de Silva, Sri Lanka Cricket's head of operations, told PA. "However, he will only be considered for selection if Muralidaran is unable to take further part in the World Twenty20."

Sri Lanka play their first Super Eight game on May 7, against West Indies in Barbados.

SA Academy

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wickets for 20 runs but a 143-run sixth wicket stand between Shuvagoto Hom and Nasir Hossain revived their hope although their effort ultimately went in vain as they were bundled out for 222 runs in 46.4 overs.

Hom hit a rapid 69-ball 84 that contained seven fours and three sixes while Nasir contributed 82 off 95 balls that featured nine boundaries and a six.

Keshav Maharaj was most successful bowler with four for 30.

Qualifiers

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secretary Khondaker Jamiluddin and sponsor Robi's chief marketing officer Biddut Kumar Basu were present among others.

All the participating nations except Chinese Taipei, who are scheduled to arrive in the capital yesterday night, took part in the march past in front of a 2000-strong crowd at the big bowl.

After the march past, Banglar Mukh Shilpi Goshthi presented a cultural show that upheld the country's rural culture as well as Bangladesh's independence war.

Seven countries -- Chinese Taipei, Hong Kong, Singapore, Oman, Sri Lanka, Thailand and hosts Bangladesh -- will compete in the qualifying meet.

Later, the two top teams of the meet will qualify for the eight-team final round of the Asian Games Hockey competition.

Hosts Bangladesh will begin their campaign on Sunday taking on Thailand at 2pm.

Crouch seals

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There were chances at both ends in an open encounter and it took fine stops from Marlon Fulop to deny Spurs duo Crouch and Jermain Defoe in the second half.

Crouch finally broke the deadlock in the 82nd minute when he headed home from close-range after Fulop could only push Younes Kaboul's cross into his path.

Elsewhere, Stoke moved into 10th place with a 1-0 win over Europa League finalists Fulham.

Tony Pulis's side took the points when winger Matthew Etherington lashed in Ricardo Fuller's cross in the 83rd minute at Craven Cottage.

SA too hot for Afghans

AFP, Bridgetown



South Africa won through to the second round of the World Twenty20 with a 59-run win as newcomers Afghanistan were bowled out for just 80 at the Kensington Oval here on Wednesday.

The Afghanistan top order had no answer to fast bowlers Morne Morkel, the man of the match, with four wickets for 20 runs, Dale Steyn (two for six) and Charl Langeveldt (three for 12).

But the lowest record score in a Twenty20 international remains the 67 made by Kenya against Ireland in Belfast in 2008.

Kenya also hold the corresponding World Twenty20 record of 73, set against New Zealand in Durban in 2007.

Afghanistan fast bowler Hamid Hassan, who earlier took an impressive three wickets, took his team's score off 67 by swinging left-arm spinner Roelof van der Merwe for six.

Hassan (22) and fellow tailender Mirwais Ashraf (23) prevented what had looked like a record-breaking rout although South Africa still won with four overs to spare.

Afghanistan, who only a few years ago were playing the likes of Jersey and Denmark, had no answer to the pace of South Africa's quicks and collapsed to 12 for five in pursuit of a victory target of 140.

But Afghanistan coach Kabir Khan, the former Pakistan pace bowler, was proud of how his side had performed in their first major international tournament.

"With each stage they are going a step higher," Khan said.

"Today, to restrict a batting line-up like South Africa to 139 is a big achievement so there are all sorts of pluses for them.

"They key is they need to be exposed to that pressure again and again and then they'll get used to it.

"We were talking about practising for the pace bowlers and on a bowling machine you can put it to 90mph but you can't have Dale Steyn bowling at you and swinging the ball."

Meanwhile Morkel was looking forward to bowling again on the Kensington pitch when South Africa begin their Super Eight campaign here on Thursday against New Zealand.

"Hitting the deck hard is my strength and I'm preparing for the games ahead as well so it

was about doing the basics right.

"With the new ball, it's going through quite nicely and it was much quicker than the pitch at St Lucia."

South Africa coach Corrie van Zinger added: "The New Zealand team is always a dangerous team in this format and we haven't got a lot of time to prepare.

"We have to rest well then hit our straps from the start."

Steyn did the initial damage having Noor Ali, who made 50 in Afghanistan's tournament opener against Group C winners India, caught behind for nought with an 88 miles per hour delivery.

Mohammad Shahzad struggled to get bat on ball and, when he did, he too was caught behind by wicketkeeper Mark Boucher off Steyn.

Morne Morkel then accounted for Afghanistan captain Nowroz Manga with his first ball and removed Karim Sadiq with his fourth as the collapse continued under the floodlights.

No 8 Samiullah Shenwari became the first Afghan batsman in the innings to make 11 but was then run out after by AB de Villiers's direct hit.

Hassan showed defiance by lofting Albie Morkel's first ball for six over long-off and Ashraf struck the seamer for an even bigger six over long-on.

Ashraf gave van der Merwe the six treatment before he was bowled by Langeveldt.

Earlier, Hassan, red headband and all, was every inch the image of a fiery fast bowler as he took three for 21 in South Africa's total of 139 for seven.

Hassan's scalps were all 'proper' batsmen in Jacques Kallis, Boucher and JP Duminy.

No batsman made more than Kallis's 34 but if the conditions were helpful to Hassan, they were always likely to be even more favourable to South Africa's pace attack.

SCORES IN BRIEF

SOUTH AFRICA: 139 for 7 in 20 overs (Smith 27, Kallis 34, De Villiers 17, Duminy 25, A Morkel 23; Hassan 3-21)

AFGHANISTAN: 80 all out in 16 overs (Samiullah 11, Mirwais 23, Hassan 22; M Morkel 4-20, Langeveldt 3-12)

Result: South Africa won by 59 runs. Man-of-the-match: Morne Morkel.

Modi preparing reply

AFP, New Delhi



India is bracing for the next round of mudslinging in the Indian Premier League (IPL) corruption scandal as the cricket tournament's chief prepares to take on the establishment to save his job.

Tension is mounting as the clock ticks down to a May 10 deadline set by the Board of Control for Cricket in India (BCCI) for suspended IPL boss Lalit Modi to respond to the charges against him.

Modi, 46, was removed as head of the glitzy IPL last week pending an internal BCCI probe into allegations of corruption, tax evasion and money-laundering that sparked a federal tax investigation.

BCCI also stood down as a BCCI vice-president and as chairman of the T20 Champions League, a separate club tournament organised jointly by India, Australia and South Africa.

Modi has been unusually quiet over the past week, even keeping away from his account on microblogging site Twitter, as he consults friends and lawyers while drafting the reply to the BCCI charges.

"Sorry, not been tweeting as been working on my reply to the show cause. So have had no time," said Modi's last post on

Twitter on Monday. Modi needs all the help he can get, for he appeared to be fast losing support both in the BCCI, which owns the cash-rich Twenty20 tournament, and the IPL's governing council.

Former India captain Mansur Ali Khan Pataudi, a member of the governing council, admitted Modi will find it difficult to be reinstated as the IPL chief and BCCI vice-president.

"We are awaiting answers to several questions put to him and, yes, it would help if he answers them to everyone's satisfaction," Pataudi told the Indian Express newspaper recently.

"But even so, coming back would be difficult as the problem with him was his style of functioning, which a lot of people had problems with."

The brash and aggressive Modi, the scion of a wealthy north Indian business family, has run the IPL as a virtual one-man show since its inception three years ago.

In an earlier Twitter post, Modi said: "I am still chairman of IPL. Just suspended. Wait -- we have just begun."

He also threatened to "reveal the men who have tried to bring disrepute to the game."

But as Modi wrenched on his reply, the media frenzy around the IPL scandal died down as newspapers and television shows turned their attention towards the World Twenty20 being held in the Caribbean.

Even the tax investigations disappeared from the media, but it could be just the lull before the storm rises up again.

Noted cricket commentator Harsha Bhogle said he is convinced the IPL will be back in the news once Modi submits his reply and the BCCI moves to take action on it.

"By the 10th of May, Lalit Modi will have emerged with his defence and we will know then if people want to watch the news or the cricket," Bhogle wrote in the Indian Express.

Praveen out FROM PAGE 17 Indian team's bowling consultant.

"I am completely surprised. And that, too, for a World Cup, I really find it hard to believe," Yadav told Cricinfo from the Nagpur airport. "But I have been enjoying my bowling especially in the last year so it is bearing the fruits now."

Yadav was not part of the pool of 30 probables but needs a nod from the tournament's technical committee, which should be a formality.

Praveen bowled only one over in the victory over South Africa in St Lucia, but his services will be missed in Barbados, where the pitches have plenty of pace and bounce. If India decide to go with three fast bowlers against Australia on Friday, Karnataka seamer Vinay Kumar could make his international debut.

Asia Cup cricket in Dambulla

CRICINFO, undated

The 2010 Asia Cup will be held in Dambulla, Sri Lanka, between June 15 and 24, the Asian Cricket Council has announced. The tournament comprises India, Pakistan, Bangladesh and hosts Sri Lanka.

The tournament gets underway with Sri Lanka taking on Pakistan. Each team plays the other once in a league format after which the top two sides meet in the final. There is also a provision for three reserve days during the league phase, and one for the final. All matches are day-night fixtures.

"Funds raised from this tournament will be utilised to support and develop the game in the Asia region," ACC chief executive Syed Ashraf Haq said in Colombo. "We are already seeing good progress in Afghanistan and Nepal."

Sri Lanka are the current holders of the Asia Cup, having beaten India by 100 runs in the final of the 2008 tournament in Karachi.

SCHEDULE

Table with 2 columns: Date and Match. June 15 Sri Lanka v Pakistan, June 16 India v Bangladesh, June 17 Reserve day, June 18 Sri Lanka v Bangladesh, June 19 Pakistan v India, June 20 Reserve day, June 21 Pakistan v Bangladesh, June 22 India v Sri Lanka, June 23 Reserve day, June 24 Final, June 25 Reserve day.

Pietersen stars

FROM PAGE 17 fours in three balls and he was given a life on 34 when a drive off Ajmal was tipped over the boundary for six by Fawad Alam.

He completed a 37-ball fifty with a straight six off leg-spinner Afridi.

Earlier, Pakistan started well after being sent in but lost three wickets for six runs as they collapsed from 71 for one to 77 for four with the hard-hitting Afridi run out first ball for nought.

Umar Akmal went on to make 30 before he was well caught on the boundary by Pietersen, running round from long-on, off left-arm quick Ryan Sidebottom.

England put the break on Pakistan's scoring rate until an expensive final over from seamer Tim Bresnan went for 15 runs, with tailender Ajmal striking a six over the wicketkeeper's head.

Afridi's first ball run out summed up Pakistan's day.

He pushed the ball straight to cover, set off for a non-existent single and was sent back before giving up as Kieswetter collected Luke Wright's throw.

BRIEF SCORES

PAKISTAN: 147-9 in 20 overs (Salman 34, Umar 30, Yardy 2-19). ENGLAND: 151-4 in 19.3 overs (Pietersen 73; Ajmal 2-18). Result: England won by six wickets.

Clarke ready for spin

AFP, Bridgetown



Michael Clarke admitted his bowlers were ready for a trial by spin when they faced India in their opening Super Eight clash at the World Twenty20 here on Friday.

Australia collapsed to 65 for six against Bangladesh with the Tigers' spinners taking four wickets between them after fast bowler Mashrafe Bin Mortaza removed opener Shane Watson on his way to figures of two wickets for 28 runs.

But man-of-the-match Michael Hussey held firm with an unbeaten 47 and was well-supported in a seventh-wicket stand of 74 in seven overs by Steve Smith (27) as Australia finished on 141 for seven.

Left-arm fast bowler Dirk Nannes then took an Australian Twenty20 record four for 18 as Bangladesh were bowled out for 114.

But the way in which Australia's top-order slumped against Bangladesh raised questions about how they would cope with the seemingly stronger challenge of the India attack.

Australia are set to face an old antagonist in off-spinner Harbhajan Singh, and several other quality slow bowlers, as well as India left-arm quick Ashish Nehra.

"I think spin bowling is going to play a big part in this tournament, whether that's how you face spin or you bowl spin," Clarke said.

"India have got some good spin bowlers, Harbhajan is one of the best in the world, so we're going to have to work out a plan against him and back ourselves at that."

"Every player in our team plays spin bowling differently, you need to be confident with your plan and stick to that."

Reflecting on the Bangladesh match, Clarke said: "I think it is a very satisfying win. Our top order obviously didn't perform as well as we'd

like, the conditions were a lot different to St Lucia, we probably didn't adapt as well as we'd like.

"But to scrape our way to 140, Huss played a wonderful innings as he always seems to do when we're under pressure, and young Steve Smith batted really well.

"Our execution with the ball was spot on. I think these conditions are really going to help our fast bowlers, there was a lot of pace and bounce in that wicket.

"There was also a little bit of spin as well."

But what about that top order collapse which saw the captain exit for 16?

"I think the game has got a lot to do with it, Clarke said. "In your top six overs you trying to score as many runs as you can."

"Again, we didn't adapt to conditions as well as we would have liked."

"We probably should've bit the bullet a little bit and tried to put on more of a partnership."

"But in this form of the game it's hard, you're trying to score runs from every ball you face and you're disappointed when you don't."

"It comes at a cost when you bat like that, you take risks and sometimes it doesn't pay off."

"I like the way guys continue to play their way, back themselves. That's the game, on our day we play like that and get 200 in these conditions."

Clarke added: "I've always thought bowlers win Twenty20 matches. At the end of the day wherever the bowler lands the ball dictates where the batter hits it. I think we have a very talented bowling squad, it's just about being able to execute our plans."

Australia had to without Mitchell Johnson against Bangladesh because of an elbow infection, but Clarke was cautiously optimistic about the left-arm paceman's prospects.

"He was certainly improving, this [Wednesday] morning. Mitch is a huge part of our team with both bat and ball, hopefully he is fit."

LOCAL SNIPPETS

SPORTS REPORTER

Bangladesh Water Development Board continued their winning ways in the National Bank Limited Volleyball Premier League at the Volleyball Stadium yesterday.

BWDB beat East End Club 25-15, 25-9, 25-16 in the day's first match.

Earlier on Wednesday evening, they defeated Titas Club 25-17, 25-17, 25-9.

DIVI BASKETBALL

Josephites and Europa Youth Club registered wins in the Premier Bank First Division Basketball League at the Dhanmondi Basketball Gymnasium yesterday.

Josephites defeated Mohammadpur Basketball Club 52-44 with Michael and Fayeze netting 21 points between them.

In the day's other game, Europa crushed Raiths Club 106-47 with Amin scoring team highest 28 points.

MANIKGANJ CRICKET

Our Correspondent adds: Dashara Naba Jagaran Sangsad earned an exciting one-wicket victory over Bangladesh Cricket Academy and School in the Col (ret'd) Malek Smriti First Division Cricket League at the Shaheed Miraz-Tapan Stadium here yesterday.

Batting first, BCAS made 209-9 in 40 overs with Sajal hitting an unbeaten 50 from just 31 balls and Sujon making 38.

Bidyut picked up four wickets while Probal took three wickets.

In reply, Dashedara reached the winning target in 37.5 overs with Mahid scoring 45.

Tutul picked up three wickets for BCAS.

Barcelona coaches

FROM PAGE 17

Xavi, "but I am hopeful that it will be enough to at least introduce both the youngsters and the coaches to the unique philosophy and playing style of FC Barcelona."

"Barcelona is much more than a club," he continued borrowing from the club's famous motto.

250 boys and girls between the ages of 10-12 and 30 coaches, who have been selected by the BFF, will attend the camp. In total there will be four training sessions held for the kids while the coaches will have an exclusive theoretical session.

The kids have been selected from schools around

the country with Scholastica and Viquarunnessa particularly well represented. Some street children would also be part of the camp.

The Barcelona coaches were in Bangladesh as part of the corporate social responsibility project of YKK Holding Asia Pte Ltd. YKK had previously bought in Italian club Roma for a similar program in 2008.

"I believe this event will bring great joy to the children in Bangladesh. It is important for YKK Bangladesh to contribute and work with the local community," said YKK Bangladesh Managing Director, Nakamura.

Maruf quits

FROM PAGE 17

cost before the start of the Federation Cup and helped them emerge as champions.

However, he was surprisingly summoned by the club officials to explain the team's poor performance in the tournament.

Maruf said that leaders Abahani have been playing extraordinary football and only made a draw against Mohammedan in 20 matches and this might be a unique instance in the world of football.

"In this circumstance, I would not be able to present this season's objective of three titles, as I had promised at the start of the season and it was also a reason behind my resignation," said Maruf.

"However, in last two years, I have never faced any interference forming the starting eleven as well as implementing my coaching programme and I am grateful to the club officials," said Maruf adding that he was not responsible for the failure of Mohammedan.

First win

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balls, hitting a couple of sixes in the process.

For South Africa, it was a curious affair as all five bowlers -- Lonwabo Tsotsobe, Ryan Bailey, Thandi Tshabalala, Vernon Philander and Paul Harris -- picked up two wickets each.

BRIEF SCORES

WEST INDIES A: 224 all out in 49.3 overs (Smith 39, Dowlin 39, Edwards 49; Tshabalala 2-36, Philander 2-32).

SOUTH AFRICA A: 213 all out in 47.5 overs (van Wyk 51, Bailey 35, Miller 26; Shillingford 4-22, Pascal 3-43). Result: West Indies A won by 11 runs.

CROSSWORD By Eugene Sheffer

Crossword grid with clues. ACROSS: 40 Water (Fr.), 1 Switch position, 4 Big name in early 1900s newsreels, 9 Secret agent, 12 Chum, 13 "Ghosts" playwright, 14 Sine — non, 15 Wastes, 17 Baseball arbirer, 18 Brazilian city, familiarly, 19 Upper-arm muscles, 21 Standard usage, 24 — gin fizz, 25 Lawyer's abbr., 26 Fresh, 28 Symbol of America, 31 God (Latin), 33 "To be or — ...", 35 Abound, 36 Figure of speech, 38 Charlotte's creation. DOWN: 57 Type squares, 58 "Give me liberty ...", 59 Biz deg., 21 100, 1 Chances, for short, 2 Oft-read Web page, 3 Winter ailment, 4 Wing, 5 Tummy, 6 Mao — -tung, 7 KFC additives, 8 Store grain computer savvy, 9 Window wipers, 10 Shoe style, 11 Shrill barks, 16 Illustrations, 20 Outer attire, 21 100, 22 Second-hand, 23 Curlicues, 27 "Holy mackerell!", 29 Jump, 30 Ostriches' kin, 32 Unaccompanied, 34 More computer savvy, 37 Honorable guy, 39 Unclear, 42 Suffix akin to "ish", 44 Spring mo., 45 Broad, 46 Astringent, 50 Coffee vessel, 51 Shade provider, 52 Science workshop, 53 Hot tub.

Solution time: 24 mins.

Grid for the solution to the crossword puzzle.

Cryptoquip grid with letters and numbers.

CRYPTOQUIP

JHIEL H VUVTDDQ CLJLJL AO VSHJ OHL ESTKV H TC EKLTVHIZ, QUA EUADN JIQ H CTNL T ZKTOS ZTRRL. Saturday's Cryptoquip: BECAUSE I MOVED A FLOWER FROM THE WINDOWSILL TO THE FLOOR, CAN YOU SAY I'VE LOWERED THE BLOOM? Today's Cryptoquip Clue: A equals U