



Female booters of Maldives are being received with garlands upon their arrival at Cox's Bazaar for the SAFF Women's Football Championship that begins tomorrow.

## Pakistan pledge on anti-corruption drive

Cricket

AFP, Karachi

Pakistani cricket used international anti-corruption day Thursday to pledge zero tolerance on graft and bounce back from a series of damaging scandals that have hammered the team.

Cricket, almost the only entertainment that unites Pakistanis across the social divide, from Karachi in the south to the lawless tribal belt on the Afghan border, is fast shedding popularity because of corruption.

Three Pakistani players -- Salman Butt, Mohammad Asif and Mohammad Aamer -- were suspended by the International Cricket Council (ICC) on charges of spot-fixing during team's Lord's Test against England in August.

The trio appear before an ICC anti-corruption tribunal in Qatar from January 6-11 and face severe punishment, including lengthy bans.

Four other players -- Kamran Akmal, Umar Akmal, Wahab Riaz and Imran Farhat -- are under suspicion of spot-fixing, while Shoaib Malik and Danish Kaneria have not been cleared for selection, apparently over wrongdoings in the past.

Pakistan's surprise defeat against Australia in January's Sydney Test also formed the basis of an ICC inquiry, resulting in a notice to Kamran.

The slew of allegations forced the ICC to chastise Pakistan, ordering them to take strict measures to curb corruption, or risk sanction.

Pakistan Cricket Board (PCB) spokesman Nadeem Sarwar said Thursday that the authorities were committed to rooting out graft.

"PCB has taken strict measures in its fight against corruption with a stricter code of conduct,

increased stress on its programmes of player awareness and implementation of the anti-corruption code in domestic cricket -- efforts which have been appreciated by the ICC," said Sarwar.

"We are committed to maintain our zero tolerance policy towards corruption."

Former Supreme court judge Fakhruddin Ibrahim blamed money for corrupting Pakistani sportsmen, many of whom come from impoverished backgrounds.

"Corruption is not only confined to Pakistan, but it is more obvious here than anywhere else in the world," Ibrahim told AFP. "I think with the influx of money our players became greedy and were trapped in corruption."

Ibrahim, who conducted a match-fixing inquiry in 1995, blamed the PCB for failing to steer players in the proper direction.

"PCB is the guardian of players who come from poor backgrounds and because some of them are uneducated, they need proper guidance, which wasn't there and hence they fall into the trap," said Ibrahim.

Former captain Ramiz Raja believes that corruption in cricket is the product of a society that "lacks leadership".

"It is the mindset of making a quick buck rather than working for the long haul," he wrote in British newspaper The Telegraph last August.

Kashif Raza, a college student, believes corruption has brought Pakistan cricket to its lowest ebb.

"Anger among the people is particularly acute because the players are alleged to have been filling their pockets while tens of thousands of their countrymen suffer because of inflation and lack of income," said Raza.

"I was a big fan of cricket, but not anymore."

## Miandad to consult for Pak

Cricket

CRICINFO

Javed Miandad will work with the Pakistan team as a batting and fielding consultant to help them prepare for their upcoming tour of New Zealand and the 2011 World Cup. This is the latest of his roles in Pakistan cricket, having been captain and coach and currently also director-general of the PCB.

"It is a great feeling to be back in cricket gear," Miandad told Reuters on the sidelines of a preparatory camp ahead of the upcoming New Zealand tour. "Coaching has always been a passion for me and I can help our players. It is all about fine-tuning them and preparing them mentally for difficult conditions and situations, since they have the talent."

Miandad, however, will not be travelling with the team to New Zealand later this month. "I have full confidence in the abilities of Waqar Younis (the Pakistan coach), and if there are two men dealing with the players, it may cause a

conflict," he said. "So, I have decided not to go with the team and prefer to give coaching tips to the players in the training camp here."

"I hope the wickets at Christchurch and Eden Park and other venues are conducive for batsmen. But our batsmen will have to read their bowlers carefully. Pakistan must do well in New Zealand to enter World Cup in right frame of mind."

The New Zealand series is Pakistan's last opportunity to finalise their World Cup plans. In recent times, they have been bogged down by controversies on and off the field, prompting one-day captain Shahid Afridi to play down the side's World Cup hopes. Miandad, who holds the record for having appeared in most World Cups (six), could prove to be a valuable addition to the team as they search for stability ahead of the marquee event.

Miandad has coached the team three times in the past, each association ending in acrimonious circumstances. In January, he was involved in a war of words with Ijaz Butt after the PCB chairman indicated that Miandad was costing the board almost Rs 1 million (\$11,820) for his services as director-general.

## ICC inspection

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including two quarterfinals. The other two matches will be held in Chittagong.

"I am eager to see the Mirpur ground," said Tetley.

The team has finished the inspection in India and Sri Lanka and they will file their report to the concerned authority after completing the inspection in Bangladesh; one of the co-hosts along with India and Sri Lanka.

## Washout

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spinner has to wait till the World Cup opener against India in Mirpur on February 19.

While the Sher-e-Bangla National Stadium can hold a match an hour or two after rain clears out, the situation in Chittagong is completely the opposite. Yesterday's call-off due to the poor outfield has put the ground's status as an international venue facing a lot of questions ahead of the World Cup and the inspection by the ICC delegations that is set to take place today.

## Eng fumble in tour game

Cricket

AFP, Melbourne

A sloppy England dropped five catches then forced a Victorian bowler to remove his headband during an eventful start to the three-day tour game at the Melbourne Cricket Ground on Friday.

Victoria declared their first innings at 216-2 with opener Michael Hill unbeaten on 105 after being dropped four times in his five-hour knock.

David Hussey was 67 not out from 104 balls. He was dropped on 43.

England reached 50-1 at the close with skipper Andrew Strauss unbeaten on 17 and Ian Bell on six.

Ashes Test star Alastair Cook (27) had demanded Victorian paceman Jayde Herrick remove a black sweatband around his bald head in the fourth over of the innings. It appeared the headband was distracting Cook.

Victoria had their revenge against Cook, who was caught behind off the bowling of spinner Jon Holland.

After winning the toss, Victoria made slow progress in the first session to reach 58-1, losing debutant Ryan Carters (16).

Tim Bresnan (1-56 from 18 overs) made an early bid to take the place of injured quick Stuart Broad in the England team for next week's third Ashes Test in Perth, removing Carters.

Carters was caught behind in Bresnan's first over and the 10th of the innings.

Victorian skipper Cameron White (23) was out when he charged down the pitch to spinner Monty Panesar (1-53) after lunch, lobbing a catch to mid-off.

## FIFA warns Ghana

AFP, Accra

FIFA has warned Ghana after authorities raided its football association, giving it until Sunday to stop what it called interference in the sport's management, according to a statement on the association's website.

The statement on the Ghana Football Association (GFA) website said that authorities must "allow GFA to work again". It said that meant returning "all necessary material to GFA before Sunday 12 December 2010."

Should that not happen, "we will be obliged to refer the case to the FIFA Emergency Committee."

On Tuesday, the west African country's anti-graft authorities raided GFA headquarters, taking away computers and mobile phones.

"For FIFA, it is not acceptable if the GFA is not in a position anymore to exercise the core of its mandate, which is to run football in the country, because of government intervention," the statement said.

Ghana was the only African nation to make it to the quarterfinals of this year's World Cup.

## Collingwood

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Cricket Board said Friday that Warwickshire bowler Chris Woakes was the only uncapped player named in the squad and he will be joined by Craig Kieswetter for the Twenty20 series only.

England national selector Geoff Miller said that while England remained focussed on winning the Ashes -- they lead the five-Test series 1-0 after two Tests -- "we are excited by the prospect of taking on Australia in the limited-overs format."

"We believe we've picked a well-balanced squad to cover both the two Twenty20 matches and the ensuing seven-match ODI series against Australia," Miller said. "This series will be the ideal lead up to the ICC World Cup which immediately follows the tour of Australia."

England one-day and Twenty20 squads: Andrew Strauss (one-day captain), Paul Collingwood (Twenty20 captain), James Anderson, Ian Bell, Tim Bresnan, Steven Davies, Eoin Morgan, Craig Kieswetter (Twenty20 only), Kevin Pietersen, Ajmal Shahzad, Graeme Swann, James Tredwell, Chris Tremlett, Jonathan Trott, Chris Woakes, Luke Wright, Michael Yardy.

## Kiwis

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New Zealand are next slated to play Pakistan at home.

### SCORES IN BRIEF

NEW ZEALAND: 103 all out (McCullum 14, How 23, Styris 24, Franklin 17 not out; Nehra 2-34, Ashwin 3-24, Yuvraj 2-5, Pathan 2-11)

INDIA: 107 for 2 (Patel 56 not out, Yuvraj 42 not out)

Result: India won by eight wickets and clinched five-match series 5-0.

Man-of-the-match: Yuvraj Singh.

Man-of-the-series: Gautam Gambhir.

## Aussies' Beer gamble

Cricket

AFP, Sydney

Australia dropped three players on Friday and gambled on left-arm spinner Michael Beer after just five first-class games for next week's crucial third Ashes Test against England in Perth.

Marcus North, Xavier Doherty and Doug Bollinger paid the price for Australia's crushing innings and 71-run defeat to England in this week's second Adelaide Test, while opener Simon Katich was forced out with injury.

Beer, 26, who is playing his first Sheffield Shield season with Western Australia, gets a surprise call-up in Australia's hour of need ahead of former first choice Nathan Hauritz.

Selectors admitted they were taking a huge gamble on unheralded spinner Beer, who was last season playing club cricket, for the make-or-break Test against England.

Beer -- along with Phillip Hughes and all-rounder Steve Smith -- were summoned for the Perth Test starting on

Thursday.

But there was no place for spin legend Shane Warne, with some fans and media calling for the 41-year-old to make a sensational -- albeit unlikely -- return.

"The reality is, he's got no international experience and it's a big call from us to throw him into this position," Australian chairman of selectors Andrew Hilditch said of Beer's call-up.

"But everything we get back is (he is) someone who is going to handle that pressure, which is critical."

Hilditch denied Beer's selection, the biggest stunner since Peter Taylor was given a baggy green cap against England in 1986/97, was desperate.

"We think a left-arm orthodox spinner is the right thing both for the Ashes but also for our future," said Hilditch, adding Beer would play in the third Test.

"Michael Beer has, I suppose, come from nowhere."

"But he has had a good start to the domestic season, someone we were very interested in even before the season started

with some really good feedback from our talent management system and people in WA."

Beer played against England in their tour opener last month, taking 3-108 and 2-99.

His first-class average is a modest 16 wickets at an average of 39.93, with all his games coming since crossing to Western Australia from Melbourne.

Smith replaces the out-of-form North at number six in the batting order, while Mitchell Johnson and Ben Hilfenhaus, discarded for the second Test, come back into Test reckoning ahead of Bollinger.

Bollinger struggled after taking the early wicket of Andrew Strauss in the England first innings to finish the Adelaide Test with figures of 1-130.

Hughes will replace Katich, who will miss the rest of the Ashes series with a torn Achilles tendon.

Hilditch said Smith will replace North after scores of 1, 26 and 22 in the first two Tests.

"This is obviously disap-

pointing for Marcus, who has played some outstanding Test innings for Australia but it was felt to be the right time to bring the exciting prospect Steve Smith into the Test team," he said.

"Steve has already had success at international level and will also add to the bowling depth with his leg spin bowling and dynamic fielding."

"The squad is a very exciting one with a blend of talented young players and experienced international cricketers," he said.

"We are confident it will play an aggressive brand of cricket as we try to change the momentum of the Test series in this critical Ashes Test match."

England, as the Ashes holders, can retain the trophy if they win in Perth.

## SQUAD

Ricky Ponting (captain), Michael Clarke, Michael Beer, Brad Haddin, Ryan Harris, Phillip Hughes, Ben Hilfenhaus, Mike Hussey, Mitchell Johnson, Peter Siddle, Steven Smith, Shane Watson.

## 'Eng want to make history'

Cricket

ANI, London

England wicketkeeper Matt Prior has said the squad wants to keep breaking records and leave a legacy for the future.

Prior said the players have spoken about becoming one of the all-time great teams alongside the West Indies of the 1980s and Australia of the 1990s.

"In this team, we try to target records - it's great to be part of a team that keeps ticking off records. We speak a lot about individual achievements but every member of this team would love to be part of an English legacy," The Sun quoted Prior, as saying.

"We want to be a team that does things differently and wins games that maybe we wouldn't have won in the past," he said.

"You look at the best teams in history, the

ones that have been good not just for a year or two but for a generation. You go back to the West Indies in the 1980s and the Aussies in the 1990s," Prior said.

"You look at how they dominated world cricket. If you could be part of a team like that, it would be amazing. For me, that would be the biggest achievement of all," he added.

Prior said the team's success is down to practice, preparation and a strong team spirit.

"The thing about breaking records started when we won a one-day series in West Indies last year for the first time in many years. Then we beat Australia in a Test at Lord's for the first time in 75 years. England won the World Twenty20 - our first victory in a global tournament," he said.

"To be part of a team that does things that have never or seldom been done before is very special. Even in Adelaide this week, our total was the highest total by an England team in Australia since the 1920s," Prior added.

## Dudek out for 6 weeks

AFP, Madrid

Real Madrid's Polish goalkeeper Jerzy Dudek will be sidelined for six weeks after he fractured his jaw during his side's 4-0 Champions League win over Auxerre, the Spanish club said on Thursday.

The 37-year-old, who was making a rare appearance for Real in place of Iker Casillas, was replaced just before half-time in Wednesday's match and taken to hospital after colliding with Auxerre forward Roy Contout.

In a statement, the club said "a series of X-rays and a CAT scan revealed a fractured mandible."



Participants at the two-day Lancer Cup Golf Tournament 2010 pose for photographs at the Kurmitola Golf Course yesterday.

## PCB targets return of int'l cricket

AFP, Karachi

The Pakistan Cricket Board's (PCB) newly inducted chief operating officer Subhan Ahmed Thursday said bringing international cricket back to the country was one of his main targets.

"Pakistan cricket is currently facing multifaceted issues. The return of international cricket to our country will be amongst one of my most important goals," said Ahmed, who replaced the outgoing Wasim Bari.

Bari, a former Pakistan captain, had his tenure cut short last month by a government ruling which bars officials of over 60 years of age.

Ahmed said he wanted to work with the International Cricket Council (ICC) and its member countries to restore confidence in Pakistan.

International cricket has been suspended in the

country since a terrorist attack on the Sri Lankan team bus in Lahore in March last year. Eight people were killed and seven others, including several Sri Lankan players and their assistant coach, wounded.

Even before the attack, teams had refused to travel to Pakistan due to security fears sparked in the wake of the war on terror in neighbouring Afghanistan and parts of Pakistan's northwestern tribal belt.

"I am confident that we will be able to convince the world of the necessity of resuming international cricket to the levels of the past", said Ahmed.

"We will work closely with the ICC and our partners in other boards to help realise this critical goal."

Ahmed has been working with the PCB in various capacities since 1994 and also worked in the ICC on deputation in 2001.

## Warne pulls one out of the hat

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Stuart Law scored 72 and Michael Bevan 69. Ian Healy chipped in with a vital 28-ball 31 that took the Australian total to 207 at the end of fifty overs. At the halfway stage, it was the consensus that West Indies would not have much trouble in chasing the target.

For much of their innings, that seemed to be true. Lara came in at the fall of the first wicket and played flawless cricket in building a 68 run partnership with opener Shivnarine Chanderpaul, who had dropped anchor. Lara's run-a-ball knock of 45 was ended when Steve Waugh bowled him with a cleverly disguised slower googly. Skipper Richie Richardson had joined Chanderpaul, and the two progressed serenely in a partnership of 72. When a cramping Chanderpaul was dismissed for 80 by Glenn McGrath, West Indies had reached 165 for three, needing 43 runs from the last nine overs. That is when all hell broke loose.

In a strange move, lower order hitters Otis Gibson and Roger Harper were promoted ahead of specialist batsmen Jimmy Adams and Keith Arthurton. Harper fell for 2 and Gibson for 1, putt-

ing undue pressure on the specialists Adams and Arthurton, who duly crumpled. When Arthurton left West Indies were 187 for seven with Richardson still in. As wickets kept tumbling around him -- Warne was the chief engineer in a mesmerising spell of three wickets for 6 runs from three overs -- Richardson played well to reach 45 at the start of the fiftieth over, with West Indies needing ten to win with two wickets in hand.

Damien Fleming's first ball was hit for four by Richardson, whose fatal mistake was to attempt a single off the next ball. The non-striker Ambrose could not get home in time to beat the throw, and West Indies were left needing six runs to win off four balls with their only hope standing at the non-striker's end on 49. Walsh, the tail-end of tailenders, walked in with purpose, and was bowled first ball to the rapturous delight of the Australians. West Indies had lost their last eight wickets for 37 runs off fifty balls, with none of their last seven batsmen making more than three. West Indies have not played a World Cup semifinal since.

## All set

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for the teams.

"All the national football associations came up with a view of developing women's football and although no one will be awarded money initially, it is a consideration in the long-term," said Bachchu.

Our correspondent from Cox's Bazar adds: Cox's Bazar is ready to host the championship with the district sports association taking all possible steps to make it a success.

The opening ceremony is set to be a grand affair with some five hundred artists performing to uphold the local culture, along with a fair in association with the Bangladesh Tourism Board. There will also be sight-seeing opportunities for the visitors, said DSA general secretary Professor Jasim Uddin at a press conference yesterday.

Cox's Bazar is in a festive mood with the venue being decorated and the visitors have already been enjoying the benefits of the world's longest sea beach.

Worawi Makudi, chairman of FIFA women's committee and president of Thailand Football Association, will inaugurate the 12-day meet while Swedish women's footballer Johanna Frisk is expected to be present, informed Bachchu.

Besides, SAFF and BFF president Kazi Salahuddin, SAFF vice president and FIFA development officer Manilal Fernando and general secretary Alberto Colaco will also be present.