Pakistan keep Afridi as ODI captain

AFP, *Lahore*

Pakistani selectors on Wednesday retained Shahid Afridi as captain for the upcoming one-day series against New Zealand, boosting his chances of leading the side in next month's World Cup.

The selection committee kept Afridi on as captain in the finalised the 16-man squad, a Pakistan Cricket Board (PCB) release said.

Local media reports had said PCB chairman Ijaz Butt was ready to strip Afridi off the captaincy, angry at comments made by the all-rounder about three Pakistani cricketers at the centre of a spot-fixing scandal.

But the 30-year-old Afridi kept the role despite losing the Twenty20 series against New Zealand last month.

Misbahul Haq, who led Pakistan in the two-Test series against New Zealand, will be Afridi's deputy.

Veteran batsman Mohammad Yousuf was left out, raising fears the 36-year-old will not make the final World Cup squad.

Wicketkeeper Kamran Akmal, who was cleared by the PCB for selection after he too fell under the spotlight of the investigation into spot-fixing, was restored to the side for the New Zealand series.

SQUAD

Shahid Afridi (captain), Misbahul Haq, Mohammad Hafeez, Kamran Akmal, Younis Khan, Asad Shafiq, Umar Akmal, Abdul Razzaq, Abdur Rehman, Saeed Ajmal, Shoaib Akhtar, Umar Gul, Wahab Riaz, Sohail Tanveer, Tanveer Ahmed, Ahmed Shahzad.

Tk 135 cr

FROM PAGE 16

of cantonment for cricketers and other World Cup officials, helicopter services for emergency needs, prepare the CMHs at Dhaka and Chittagong to provide treatment to the players.

The home ministry will also declare the match venues as no-flying zone to ensure security, while the Bangladesh Cricket Board (BCB) will request for army deployment in case of emergency.

The lists of international guests, officials and cricketers will be provided to the home ministry and other intelligence agencies. The hotels and vehicles that will be in use during the tournament will be vetted before the World Cup begins on February 19.

The opening ceremony of the showcase event will however take place on February 17 at the Bangabandhu National Stadium.

State Minister for Home Affairs Shamsul Haque Tuku told The Daily Star yesterday that the government would deploy all law enforcing agencies to ensure security for the eight World Cup matches including two quarterfinals as desired by the ICC (International Cricket Council) and BCB.

Mashrafe

FROM PAGE 16

A fit Mashrafe is always an automatic choice for the team and he might be match fit before the World Cup but right at this moment there is no scope for the selectors to include Mashrafe in the team unless they break with normal practice to accommodate an unfit player in the side.

"We think one must, no matter he is Mashrafe or any other player, be declared match-fit before he is included in the team. It's a simple thing," said BCB's media committee chairman Jalal Yunus to clear the air, as there has been a whispering that Mashrafe may be included in the team through special consideration.

PHOTO: STAR

Players of A Latif Charitable School go on a victory lap after becoming champions in the Ashiyan City Dhaka School Football Tournament defeating Dhaka Residential Model School 3-1 in the final at Birshreshtha Mostafa Kamal Stadium in Kamalapur yesterday.

SCHOOL FOOTBALL

Debut delight for A Latif

SPORTS REPORTER

It was a tiebreak delight for A Latif Charitable School in the Ashiyan City Dhaka Metropolis School Football Tournament final at the Birshreshtha Mostafa Kamal Stadium in Kamalapur yesterday.

The educational institution from Keraniganj emerged champions with a 3-1 win in the shootout against Dhaka Residential Model School after the regulation 60 minutes failed to produce a goal.

The triumph completed a dream run for the students from across the River Buriganga who were featuring in tournament for the first time.

Mohammad Masum of A Latif Charitable School became the highest scorer of the tournament with 13 goals while Raisul Islam Rimu of Dhaka Residential Model won the best player award.

The celebration of A Latif Charitable School however was marred a little following the protest from the officials of Residential Model that alleged that their opponents fielded players who do not study in that school.

Beaten semifinalist BAF Shaheen School & College also brought the same allegation against the same team but the tournament committee ruled that null and void.

Masum was one of the players fingers were raised against. But he dismissed the allegation saying he is student of class eight of Latif Charitable School.

Tournament committee vice-chairman Sheikh Mohammad Aslam admitted some flaws but vowed to fleece it out the next time around.

"Placing the allegation at the eleventh hour is not acceptable. We admit that we have some limitations but we hope to make it correct from the next addition," said Aslam, a former national striker.

After the completion of the 41-school competition, a question was inevitable whether the game's governing body would continue the Dhaka Metropolis School Tournament as they could arrange it only for the third time since its introduction in 2003.

JUDGEMENT ON PAKISTANIS' SPOT-FIXING

Delay disappoints all

Cricket

AFP, *Karachi*

Former Pakistan players and fans on Tuesday expressed their disappointment after an anti-corruption tribunal against three cricketers ended in Doha without a decision.

The tribunal hearing allegations against Salman Butt, Mohammad Asif and Mohammad Aamer decided to continue its deliberations and hold a further hearing in Doha on February 5.

The trio face charges of spot-fixing during Pakistan's tour of England last year in a scandal that rocked the sport. It is alleged that they conspired in the bowling of deliberate no-balls -- claims they all deny.

Pakistani media reported on Tuesday that Aamer's lawyer, Shahid Karim, had asked the tribunal headed by Michael Beloff to defer announcing its verdict.

Former Pakistan captain Zaheer Abbas criticised the delay in the decision.

"It's absurd," Abbas told AFP. "The International Cricket Council (ICC) has kept the players hostage for the last five months and now they have deferred the decision, which is inexplicable."

Abbas said the three key players cannot participate in the World Cup, to be jointly hosted by India, Sri Lanka and Bangladesh from February 19 to April 2.

All 14 competing countries have to announce their final 15-man squad by January 19.

"Because the players will continue to remain suspended they cannot play at any level, cannot practice so they are virtually out of the World Cup," said Abbas.

Another former captain Asif Iqbal was also surprised at the delay.

"The ICC has taken so much time on this case and have spent so much money on it and yet could not take a decision... it is strange," said Iqbal.

"I am surprised at the delay."

Former spin bowler Iqbal Qasim, however, backed the decision.

"Since it is a high-profile case, so any judgement needed to be properly gauged and legal opinion is also required and that's why they have delayed the decision," said Qasim.

Fans also criticised the delay.

Eng set T20 record

FROM PAGE 16

one wicket in hand.

He slashed the next delivery to the cover boundary for two, then drove Watson through the infield for what would have been a boundary had he and number 11 Ajmal Shahzad not completed the winning run first.

Woakes' innings came after Eoin Morgan put England on the path to victory with 43, but the match turned when the left-hander holed out to Watson, who then removed Michael Yardy with the next ball to be on a hattrick.

Watson could scarcely have done more for the home side, with 4-15 from his four overs after his solo effort with the bat.

The powerful right-hander hit three sixes from the first three balls England spinner Graeme Swann bowled and took 26 off the over.

But he was bowled by Yardy (2-28) and Australia failed to build on the foundation he had provided after being 76-0 after eight overs.

None of the other Australian batsman looked comfortable, with new captain Cameron White, taking over from Michael Clarke, making just six.

The two teams meet again on Friday at the MCG, before playing a seven-match one-day series.

SCORES IN BRIEF

AUSTRALIA: 157 for 4 (Warner 30, Watson 59, Hussey 28, Finch 15 not out, Smith 15 not out; Yardy 2-28)

ENGLAND: 158 for 9 (Bell 27, Pietersen 25, Collingwood 16, Morgan 43, Woakes 19 not out; Watson 4-15)

Result: England won by one wicket.

Man-of-the-match: Shane Watson.

Canada loss

FROM PAGE 16

Eid very happily. Altogether the atmosphere was not so good.

DSS: Then again, recall your favorite memory of the tournament.

SH: My favorite memory would be the opening ceremony. The total atmosphere (at the Newlands in Cape Town) was different with all the national teams in one place. It was like a get-together of cricket players.

DSS: What is your expectation from the 2011 World Cup?

SH: Lots of expectations! What never happened, can happen this time. We are one of the hosts of the World Cup and our team is a lot balanced now.

Previously we only hand two or three match-winners, but now we have a lot of world-class players in our team who can win the match from any situation.

Lara to train with Zim

AFP, *Harare*

Former West Indies batsman Brian Lara will join the 15-man Zimbabwe cricket squad for preparations ahead of the ICC World Cricket Cup to be held in India, Bangladesh and Sri Lanka beginning in February.

Lara, who holds the world record first class score of 400 runs, will be joined by Hampshire's high scoring all-rounder of seven years standing, Sean Ervine, when they train in Dubai and also at an India venue from February 1.

Zimbabwe will play two warm-up matches there and two more in India, prompting national coach Alan Butcher of England to state that they will be better or as well prepared for the World Cup as any of their 13 rivals.

Ervine will join his young brother Craig in the squad on a three-year contract, signed over Christmas, but will remain with the England County side as an overseas player.

He has been with Hampshire since soon after the racial and financial dispute between the Zimbabwe Cricket Union and its players in 2002/3 which all but destroyed top level cricket here.

Not selected is Zimbabwe's best known batsman Hamilton Masakadza, whose form has deteriorated. Masakadza scored a century against West Indies on his Test debut at 18 years old and was player of the year here in 2009.

Commenting on the squad, Alan Butcher said it includes world class spinners in Graeme Cremer, Ray Price (nephew of three-time major golf champion Nick Price) and Gregory Lamb and there was decent depth to the batting.

Even after its 2010 ODI record of six victories (two of these against India and Sri Lanka) and 15 defeats, he expected Zimbabwe to perform well, especially following recent ODI tour experience in Bangladesh, one of their Group venues.

SQUAD

Elton Chigumbura (captain), Regis Chakabva, Charles Coventry, Graeme Cremer, Craig Ervine, Sean Ervine, Gregory Lamb, Shingirai Masakadza, Chris Mpofu, Ray Price, Edward Rainsford, Tatenda Taibu, Brendan Taylor, Prosper Utseya and Sean Williams. Manager Lovemore Banda.

Islami Bank pays big for decorations

SPORTS REPORTER

Islami Bank Bangladesh yesterday signed a Tk 10 crore agreement with Bangladesh Cricket Board for the beautification of the capital city ahead of the World Cup.

This was revealed in a signing ceremony at the Pan Pacific Sonargaon, chaired by BCB CEO Manzur Ahmed.

Islami Bank chairman Professor ANM Abduz Zaher and BCB president AHM Mustafa Kamal were present on the occasion.

The BCB chief informed that the huge amount would be spent on adorning the streets from Hazrat Shah Jalal International Airport to Bangabandhu National Stadium as well as around the Sher-e-Bangla National Stadium in Mirpur. Kamal said that the beautification work would be akin to Orchard Road in Singapore.

A number of gates, welcoming the World Cup guests, will also be built.

Street Cricket

FROM PAGE 16

general secretary Debabrata Paul, Polar Ice-cream CEO Toufiqur Rahman and Spellbound CEO Sadequl Arefin also spoke at the press conference.

The six-a-side tournament, to be held at the Dhanmondi Club ground, will be an under-21 event, orgnanised jointly by CWAB and Spellbound.

Registration can be done from any Polar outlet or online from www.streetcricketbd.com till January 18. The winning team will receive Tk 50,000 while the runners-up and third placed teams will get Tk 25,000 and Tk 15,000 respectively.

Kim in Sydney semis

Tennis

AFP, *Sydney*

Kim Clijsters stormed into the semifinals of the Sydney International with a straight sets demolition of Victoria Azarenka on Wednesday.

The Belgian world number three reaffirmed her status as favourite for next week's Australian Open with five service breaks on the way to a 6-3, 6-2 win over the seventh-seeded Azarenka in 85 minutes.

Clijsters will face the winner of unseeded pair, Dominika Cibulkova of Slovakia and Russia's Alisa Kleybanova in Thursday's semifinals.

China's Li Na will take on Serbian qualifier Bojana Jovanovski in the other semi, after Jovanovski beat Flavia Pennetta 6-4, 6-1 in their quarterfinal.

With no Serena Williams in Melbourne and the patchy early season form of the two top-ranked women, Caroline Wozniacki and Vera Zvonareva, Clijsters was in devastating form.

The Belgian mother controlled the match from the baseline in swirling winds with her deep groundstrokes putting Azarenka on the defensive.

Clijsters raced to a 5-1 lead before briefly allowing Azarenka back into the set, then closed out the second set with two breaks.

Li was the first player into the semifinals after a gruelling dogfight with Russia's Svetlana Kuznetsova.

The 11th-ranked Li wore down the two-time Grand Slam champion, 3-6, 7-6 (7/4), 6-3 in almost two and a half hours on a warm day to book her spot in the last four of the tournament.

Li will be bidding to go one better in Sydney than her losing semifinal appearance to Clijsters in the 2007 tournament.

Li, who became the first Chinese player to break into the world top 10 rankings after reaching the semifinals of last year's Australian Open, was pleased to have got past Kuznetsova.

It was Li's fourth win against the former French and US Open champion in their 11 meetings.

"It was a tough match because the conditions were hot today," Li said.

PHOTO: STAR

BCB CEO Manzur Ahmed (sitting L) and Islami Bank chairman Professor ANA Zaher shake hands after signing a 10-crore taka agreement between the two parties for the beautification work of Dhaka city ahead of the ICC Cricket World Cup.

CROSSWORD *By Eugene Sheffer*

ACROSS

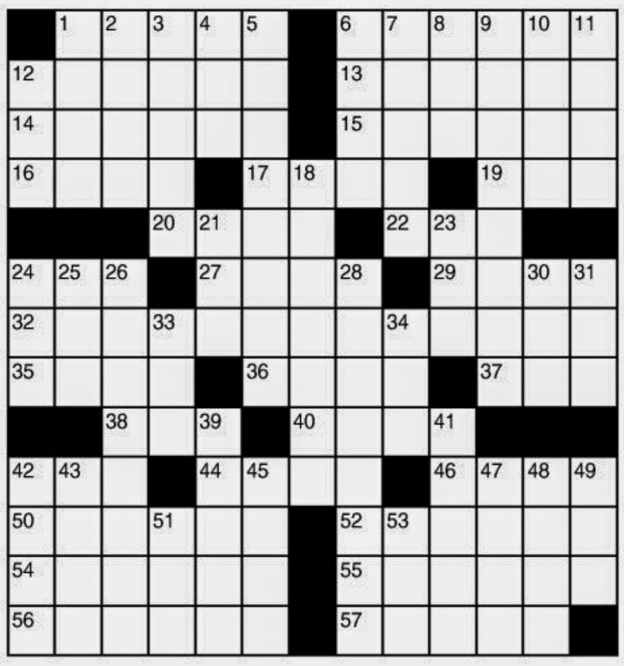
1 Pointy
6 Spoil via ineptitude
12 Insight
13 Spain + Portugal
14 Hood, often
15 Mountain ash trees
16 Gaelic
17 Study all night
19 Born
20 Appointment
22 Awful
24 Kramden's carrier
27 Figure skating jump
29 Gush forth
32 1968 Aviation Hall of Fame inductee
35 "Serpico" author Peter
36 Crow's-nest cry
37 Airline to Oslo
38 Pigpen
40 Despot
42 Interlaken interjection
44 Grades K-12
46 Columbus' place
50 Austrian capital
52 Pin
54 Coves
55 Supermarket sections
56 River mouth areas
57 Memory methods

DOWN

1 Boot attachment
2 Coop group
3 Like 14-Across, e.g.
4 HDTV brand
5 On time
6 Actress Sorvino
7 Nuclear weapon
8 Just out
9 White-bearded fellows
10 Queue
11 Relaxation
12 Candle count
18 Drill again
21 — Baba
23 Bonfire residue
24 Emeril's outcry
25 Ms. Thurman
26 Beach collectible
28 It joined with Tanganyika in 1964
30 Mound stat
31 Lbs., ozs., etc.
33 WWII craft
34 Vitamin amt.
39 Busybody
41 Perch
42 Eager
43 Film industry
45 Glaswegian girl
47 Pit
48 Summery desserts
49 Surprise cries
51 Profit
53 Carnival city

Solution time: 27 mins.

M	O	P		B	L	I	P		Q	U	A	D
A	D	O		E	I	R	E		U	R	G	E
C	O	L	O	S	S	A	L		E	N	O	L
E	R	S	A	T	Z		I	L	L			
			T	O	T		C	O	L	O	N	Y
S	H	R	E	W		F	A	X		P	E	A
P	E	E	R		M	E	N		P	U	R	R
E	R	E		B	U	Y		A	R	S	O	N
C	O	L	O	R	S		I	T	O			
			M	A	I		S	H	E	A	R	S
S	H	O	E		C	O	L	O	M	B	I	A
P	I	N	G		A	H	E	M		E	L	K
A	S	E	A		L	O	S	E		T	E	E



CRYPTOQUIP

NGYT DYUH WPWRNWNYIQ ID GIHAX'T OUWTTYO YT VIXNG VWNOGYQE. YN'T WQ IPFTTAF FIK IKEGNW TAA.

Yesterday's Cryptoquip: BECAUSE THE FELLOW FORGOT TO PICK OUT THE BEST PARTS, I WOULD THINK HE MISSED HIS CULLING.

Today's Cryptoquip Clue: A equals E