

Star SPORT

DHAKA WEDNESDAY MARCH 2, 2011, E-MAIL: sports@thedailystar.net

Saha escapes unhurt

Everton striker Louis Saha escaped unharmed after crashing his Ferrari on a country road, police confirmed on Monday. The 32-year-old French player was driving his blue Ferrari 458 in Wilmslow, Cheshire, on Sunday evening when he lost control and collided with a fence. A spokeswoman for Cheshire Police said: "Officers attended the scene where a blue Ferrari 458 had collided with a fence outside the tunnel. "The 32-year-old driver was uninjured. Inquiries are continuing." The accident happened near a tunnel where Saha's former Manchester United



Tickets available for WI game

SPORTS REPORTER

For those spectators who selected their ticket pick-up point as 'venue and banks' during purchase, they can collect their tickets of the Bangladesh-West Indies match at the Shaheed Sohrwardi Indoor Stadium in Mirpur on March 2.

This was informed by a press release of the Local Organising Committee (LOC) of the tournament.

Tickets will be distributed on presentation of the document provided from the banks. No tickets are available for sale as all tickets of the Group B game has been sold out.

Meanwhile, Bangladesh Cricket Board has made a request to the spectators and fans to give utmost importance to their own safety and to be respectful of fellow supporters. The board urged everyone to practice common sense and discipline while celebrating.

The plea came after news of a road mishap during victory celebrations after the win against Ireland that resulted in the tragic death of 14-year-old Azad.



TIME TO CHOOSE THE RIGHT ONE: Bangladesh batsman Mohammad Ashraful (L) carries along two bats after enjoying a full length batting session in the nets at the Mirpur Indoor facility yesterday. PHOTO: ANISUR RAHMAN

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Ahsraful thinks WI beatable

BISHWAJIT ROY



The West Indies have emerged as the opponents most likely to prove the third scalp that would propel Bangladesh into the quarterfinals of the ICC World Cup 2011 and former Bangladesh captain Mohammad Ashraful found a lot of logic behind the belief.

The Tigers will take on West Indies on Friday at the Sher-e-Bangla National Stadium in Mirpur in their third Group B match with a hope of brightening their chances of making the last eight.

"Without any doubt West Indies is a very good team and they have some experienced players like Chris Gayle, (Ramnaresh) Sarwan and (Shivnarine) Chanderpaul and as well as a very good number three in Darren Bravo. But still I believe that we have a very good chance against them if you consider the conditions and our spin attack," said Ashraful, who came to Mirpur yesterday along with a few other players for practice despite it being an optional day for the players.

The Tigers lost the opening game to favourites India by 87 runs but strongly came back against Ireland with a 27-run victory in their second group encounter and Ashraful said that they must ensure that all three departments click together in the third game.

"It's very much possible to beat West Indies if we can put up a good score on the board. We have a very good spin attack and it

will not be easy for the West Indians to handle our spinners in these conditions if our batsmen click. I hope 250-plus runs will be a good score for us," he said.

"You know our bowling was not good against India but we batted well while in the second game we had a poor batting show despite a good start but our bowlers did well to snatch the victory. We must ensure that all three departments click together in the third game against West Indies," continued Ashraful.

The experienced campaigner singled out Gayle as the most dangerous player for the Tigers.

"In my opinion half the job will be done if we can dismiss Gayle early because he is a very dangerous batsman. And I believe we have the weapons in our hand to dismiss him early and it will also not be an easy task for him to bat well in our conditions especially against our spinners," observed Ashraful.

Branding himself as a batting all-rounder, Ashraful said that he had regained his confidence after an impressive bowling performance against Ireland in the second match at Mirpur. Ashraful had featured in the team for the second game with an idea of making some quick runs during the batting Powerplay but he had got a good platform to prove himself as a batsman following a middle-order collapse. Ashraful however frustrated the capacity crowd by making only one run in six balls but apparently he got a second life following his impressive spin

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We're better: Roach

AFP, New Delhi

West Indies will have nothing to fear when they take on Bangladesh in a crucial World Cup game in Dhaka, says fast bowling hattrick star Kumar Roach.

The Caribbean side posted a thumping 215-run victory over the Netherlands on Monday to revive their campaign after having lost to South Africa in their opening game.

The West Indies, who have slipped to a dismal ninth place in the one-day rankings below Bangladesh, take on Shakib Al Hasan's men on Friday in a match where the result could be vital in the quarterfinal shake-up.

"We take a lot of confidence into the game against Bangladesh," said 22-year-old Roach, who grabbed only the sixth hattrick in World Cup history against the Dutch.

"This match was good preparation for the Bangladesh game. We'll go there on a high. Bangladesh are an improving team but we are better than them."

Bangladesh are tied with West Indies on two points in Group B. They lost to India by 87 runs but fought back to beat Ireland by a 27-run margin.

Roach's confidence stemmed from his own stellar performance against the Netherlands which saw him grab a career-best 6-27

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BISHOO FOR BRAVO ICC approves replacement

AFP, New Delhi

The International Cricket Council (ICC) has approved Devendra Bishoo as a replacement player for the injured Dwayne Bravo in the West Indies World Cup squad.

Bishoo, a 25-year-old leg-spinner, has not been capped by the West Indies. He has played 21 first-class matches and 13 domestic Twenty20 games while the Guyanese-born bowler also played for the West Indies A team last year.

Bravo is the 11th player to be replaced in the tournament and the third for the West Indies after Adrian Barath and Carlton Baugh.

The eligibility of a replacement player is subject to approval by the ICC before he can be officially added to the squad.

Calypso in town for crucial tie

SAKEB SUBHAN



Even though every game in a World Cup is important, perhaps Bangladesh's most crucial match will take place this Friday at the Sher-e-Bangla National Stadium when they take on the West Indies.

Placed in the tougher of the two groups, Bangladesh must notch up three victories to have a chance, and four wins to be sure of a place in the quarterfinals of the global event. With the potential banana skin of a defeat to Ireland narrowly avoided the other Friday, the team is now in need of at least two more wins to repay the fantastic support that their countrymen have shown them over the past weeks.

The West Indies team arrived in the capital yesterday evening and went straight to their hotel to rest and recuperate from their day-night fixture against the Netherlands the day before.

Today they will have their first practice session in the country at noon, which will incidentally also be their first look at Mirpur's Sher-e-Bangla National Stadium, as it was still being built when they last toured the country in December 2002, when they won two of their three matches with one being washed out.

Things have changed in the intervening eight years. In 2002, West Indies were clearly the stronger team with Bangladesh struggling to find their feet in international cricket, having been granted full membership of the ICC only two years before. Now, Bangladesh have entered the World Cup one place above the West Indies in ICC's official rankings.

There might also be some leftover bitterness from the West Indies' series defeats at home in both Tests and one-dayers against the newest Test nation in 2009. West Indies cricket was then torn by contractual disputes between the board and the first-choice players, resulting

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TODAY'S MATCH

Match	Time	Venue
England v Ireland	3:00pm	Bangalore



WELCOME TO DHAKA: West Indies star batsman Chris Gayle walks into the Sheraton Hotel yesterday. The Caribbeans are now in Dhaka to play a crucial World Cup match against the Tigers at the Sher-e-Bangla National Stadium in Mirpur on Friday.

PHOTO: STAR

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by: Divum

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England - Ireland

It has been an interesting initiation for the English side in this tournament. They were taken to the distance by the minnows in their first game of the tournament before they chased down 293 with an over to spare. This was followed by the India-match which ended in a tie thanks to the superb century by Andrew Strauss. On the other hand, Ireland had a golden opportunity to beat Bangladesh but they failed to chase down the smallest target in the face of some quality bowling by Shafiqul Islam. Given that the game will be played at Bangalore again, it will be interesting to see how the Irish adjust to the track, which is a far cry from the one at Mirpur.

Md. Sarwar Imtiaz Islam

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