

INDIA COACHING JOB

Warne never said that !

Cricket

AFP, New Delhi

Australian spin legend Shane Warne on Wednesday denied media reports that he was interested in coaching World Cup champions India.

"Just got told on bus - apparently I put my hand up to coach India. Wow - first I have heard of it - Sorry to disappoint but never said that!!!" Warne tweeted.

Leg-spinner Warne, 41, is in the country to take part in the Indian Premier League where he leads the Rajasthan Royals franchise in the lucrative Twenty20 competition, starting on Friday.

Local media reports earlier Wednesday said Warne had shown interest in the job.

"It is a very difficult job to be India coach, it is never easy," Warne was quoted as saying in the Mail Today newspaper.

"But with India doing so well, it is a lot easier to take over right now than it has been in the past. I'll enjoy working with the Indian cricket team for sure."

India are without a coach after former South African batsman Gary Kirsten stepped down following the World Cup victory in Mumbai last week.

Warne said Kirsten had set high standards during a successful three-year stint with



SHANE WARNE

Mahendra Singh Dhoni's team.

"Kirsten is a quality person and it would be hard to find a replacement for him. Under him, the Indian team has reached the number one spot in Tests and won the World Cup," said Warne. "He is a fantastic coach."

Warne, who quit international cricket in 2007 with 708 wickets in Tests and 293 in one-dayers, excelled in a dual role as captain and coach guiding the Rajasthan Royals to a surprise title in the inaugural IPL edition in 2008.

Bhaji, Yuvraj hit back at Afridi antics

Cricket

AFP, New Delhi

Indian cricket stars Harbhajan Singh and Yuvraj Singh have hit out at Pakistan captain Shahid Afridi for his comments that Indians do not have "big clean hearts" like Pakistani Muslims.

Afridi also praised Pakistan's media for being "100 times better" than India's in a Pakistani TV show aired Sunday that has caused hurt and anger across the border in India.

"If Indians were not large-hearted, they would not have made so much of progress and delivered growth," Harbhajan was quoted as saying by the Press Trust of India news agency.

"I think it's been an uncalled for reaction. It wouldn't help the love and respect with which he is treated in this country."

India defeated arch-rivals Pakistan in a much-hyped semifinal attended by the leaders of both countries before beating Sri Lanka in Mumbai last week to regain the World Cup after 28 years.

"Pakistanis indeed have very large hearts which is evident by their generous gesture of

dropping so many catches against India during the semifinal clash," Yuvraj, named man-of-the-tournament, told The Times of India.

"India would not have gone to the final had it not been for Pakistan's large-heartedness!"

Pakistan dropped four catches of Sachin Tendulkar who went on to make a vital 85 and fashion India's 29-run win over their rivals.

Afridi insisted later that his remarks had been taken out of context, although he stood by his comments about the Indian media.

His remarks shocked fans in India, who had greeted his efforts during the World Cup to promote harmony between the estranged neighbours whose diplomatic relations are fraught with tension.

India and Pakistan have not played a bilateral series on each other's soil since the Mumbai attacks in 2008 derailed their peace process.

New Delhi blamed Pakistan-based Islamist extremists for the attacks, which left 166 people dead.

The two nations have fought three wars since the subcontinent was partitioned in 1947.

SL vice-captain, selectors quit

AFP, Colombo

Veteran batsman Mahela Jayawardene quit as vice-captain and a three-member selection committee also resigned en masse in a major shake-up in Sri Lankan cricket following the team's World Cup defeat.

"I think it's time to move on, give the reins to someone younger in the team," Jayawardene told AFP.

The resignations came a day after Kumar Sangakkara stepped down as one-day and Twenty20 captain.

Jayawardene, 33, was vice-captain for the World Cup, where Sri Lanka lost to India by six wickets in the final in Mumbai last week despite his impressive century.

Sri Lanka Cricket chairman DS de Silva said the governing body had accepted Jayawardene's resignation.

Jayawardene, who has scored 9,527 runs in Tests and 9,423 in one-day internationals, quit as Sri Lanka captain in February 2009.

The selectors, led by former batsman Aravinda de Silva, also handed in their resignations to Sports Minister Mahindananda Aluthgamage. De Silva was the vice-captain of the 1996 World Cup-winning Sri Lankan side.

Sangakkara stood down on Tuesday to allow selectors to groom new leaders for the next cricket World Cup in 2015.

Sri Lanka's next international assignment is the tour of England in May-July for three Tests and five one-dayers.

Akmal dropped

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"Younis Khan and Umar Gul have been rested while Abdul Razzaq could not fit into the team."

One-day skipper Shahid Afridi had hinted that senior players would be rested to give younger team members a chance, prompting Younis Khan, Abdul Razzaq and Umar Gul -- all part of the World Cup squad -- to be left out.

Afridi will not be part of the Test team after retiring from the longer version of the game last year.

Misbahul Haq will lead Pakistan in the Tests, for which a squad will be announced later.

Among the newcomers is Usman Salahuddin, a 20-year-old right hander who scored 927 runs in the country's premier first class tournament, the Quaid-e-Azam Trophy, last season.

Aizaz Cheema is a right-arm pacer, while Hamad Azam is an all-rounder who made Pakistan's squad for the World Twenty20 in the

Caribbean last year, but did not play a match.

SQUAD: (T20 and one-day): Shahid Afridi (captain), Mohammad Hafeez, Ahmed Shahzad, Taufiq Umar, Usman Salahuddin, Misbahul Haq, Asad Shafiq, Umar Akmal, Abdur Rehman, Saeed Ajmal, Tanvir Ahmed, Wahab Riaz, Junaid Khan, Hamad Azam, Aizaz Cheema, Mohammad Salman.

FIXTURES

April 18: One-day warm-up match, St Lucia
April 21: Twenty20 international, St Lucia
April 23: First one-day international, St Lucia
April 25: Second one-day international, St Lucia
April 28: Third one-day international, Barbados
May 1: Fourth one-day international, Barbados
May 5: Fifth one-day international, Guyana
May 8-9: Two-day match, Guyana
May 12-16: First Test, Guyana
May 20-24: Second Test, St Kitts.

'Happy with Ponting'

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leadership style will be forceful and always in the hunt for wickets.

"I don't think there will be too much substantial difference between exactly how they do things."

"Tactically in the field, Clarke has an aggressive mindset. He tries to find ways to take wickets and I'm sure you will see a bit more of Clarke's style of leadership."

"I think everyone is excited about how the new leadership will be for our team. The best thing for our development is having Ricky there as well," he said.

said.

Watson, who made his international debut in 2002 (incidentally in Ponting's debut series as skipper), said it was "special" to be part of the leadership group.

"I'm working harder to try and turn things around for us. There's not going to be any drastic change but hopefully, I can contribute as well as Clarke can contribute," he said.

Australia tickets on sale from today

SPORTS REPORTER

The tickets of the three-match one-day series between Bangladesh and Australia will be available at the Grameenphone centers in and around Dhaka from today.

The first match will be held on April 9 at the Sher-e-Bangla National Stadium in Mirpur while the remaining two games will also take place at the same venue on April 11 and April 13. The last match will be played under lights.

The ticket rates are: East Gallery-Tk 50.00, South Gallery-Tk 100.00, North Gallery-Tk 100.00, Club House (north & south)-Tk 300.00, International Gallery (south and north)- Tk 500.00 and Grand Stand-Tk 1000.00.

BD A start campaign today

SPORTS REPORTER

The Bangladesh A team's campaign in South Africa will start today with the first four-day match at the Senwes Park in Potchefstroom.

Former Bangladesh captain Mohammad Ashraful will lead the strong second string side in the tour.

During their three-week trip, Bangladesh A team will also play another four-day and five one-day matches against their South African counterparts.

Chesterfield passes away

CRICINFO

Trevor Chesterfield, the veteran cricket journalist and former first-class umpire, has died aged 75 in Moratuwa, Sri Lanka, where he had been living and working for several years. A regular contributor to various publications and websites across the world, he was also the author of several books, including the biography of South African fast bowler Fanie de Villiers and South Africa's Cricket Captains: From Melville to Wessels.

Chesterfield was present at almost all the World Cup matches held in Sri Lanka last month and appeared in reasonable health, though he had many long-standing medical issues. A couple of days before his death, he went to a talk show and complained of the unbearable cold in the TV studio. On Wednesday morning he fell off his bed while asleep and was taken to the hospital in Moratuwa but is believed to have died on the way.

Haroon Lorgat, the ICC's chief executive, called him a "true lover of the game", a "fair, balanced and fearless journalist with strong views on the game, underpinned by a genuine desire to see cricket continue to flourish."

He lived a global life - born in New Zealand, he moved to South Africa, where he umpired and wrote on cricket before settling down in Sri Lanka, attracted to the warmth of the people and the climate. In between, he found time for a reporting stint in Vietnam during the war - he would speak of reading Cardus in the trenches, and of trying to attract his American colleagues to an alien game.

Trio looking

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the practice match.

"I have not set any individual goal with the match rather as a team we want to play good cricket. It was not easy to make the team for the match because you know some players are now in South Africa with the A team," said Rokibul.

Australia who arrived in the capital on Monday night, held their first practice at the Sher-e-Bangla National Stadium in Mirpur yesterday.

The first one-dayer of the three-match series will be held on April 9 at Mirpur while the remaining two games will take place at the same venue on April 11 and April 13.

NATIONAL CRICKET LEAGUE

Dhaka crush Barisal

SPORTS REPORTER

Dhaka won by 166 runs against Barisal at the Sylhet Divisional Stadium and are at the top with 63 points after the end of the first phase of the National Cricket League yesterday.

Barisal, on the other hand, only just qualified for the semifinals after they finished fourth with 32 points.

Meanwhile at Rajshahi, Sylhet managed to gather eight points from their game against Khulna and moved from fourth to third position with 37 points.

Khulna and Chittagong are the two teams who could not qualify for the second phase finishing with 31 and 30 points respectively.

Each team will play against each other in the second phase starting from April 10 with Dhaka taking on Sylhet at Zahur Ahmed Cricket Stadium and Rajshahi facing Barisal at the Fatullah Stadium.

The top two teams will battle it out on the scheduled finale on April 29 at the Sher-e-Bangla National Stadium.

DHAKA-BARISAL

Needing 346 to win in the final day,

Barisal lost their remaining nine wickets after getting out for 210.

Nasiruddin Faruque missed a half-century as he was stumped on 44 off left-arm spinner Elias Sunny. Skipper Shahin Hossain ran out of support as he was not out at one end with 57 off 116 balls. Shahin's bat produced nine fours.

Mosharraf Hossain then picked the wickets of Asif Ahmed for nought and Arafat Salahuddin for one to wreck Barisal's slate-order.

Mosharraf and Sunny shared eight wickets between them to rip the batting of Barisal. After his brilliant century in second innings, Sunny finished with 3-36. But it was Mosharraf who claimed more wickets, five for 80 runs.

KHULNA-SYLHET

Resuming the day at 158-6, Khulna reached 213 before losing all their wickets.

Left-arm spinner Shaker Ahmed took two more wickets yesterday to finish with figures of 6-71. The youngster is now the highest wicket taker with 28 victims.

Taposh Ghosh scored 51 off 206

balls. The top-order batsman hit four boundaries in his slow innings.

Sylhet scored 163 for eight in their second innings before stumps were drawn. Fariduddin Masud claimed four wickets for just 27 runs to cause problems for the Sylhet batsmen. Saikat Ali and Rumman Ahmed missed half-centuries after they both got out t Masud on 45 and 49 respectively.

Saikat's bat slammed six fours while Rumman hit eight in his innings, both hitting a six each.

BRIEF SCORES

DHAKA: First inns 133 all out and second inns 473-7 dec (Sunny 153, Mazid 84; Rabbi 3-50, Ariful 1-24).

BARISAL: First inns 230 all out and second inns 210 all out (Shaheen 57 not out, Nasiruddin 44; Mosharraf 5-80, Sunny 3-36).

RESULT: Dhaka won by 166 runs.

SYLHET: First inns 425-7 dec and 163-8 (Rumman 49, Saikat 45; Masud 4-27, Bishwanath 2-31).

KHULNA: First innings 213 all out (Taposh 51, Tushar 42; Shaker 6-71, Tasamul 1-8).

RESULT: Match Drawn.

IPL starts tomorrow

AFP, New Delhi



The Indian Premier League cricket bandwagon rolls into action on Friday with organisers hoping India's World Cup victory last weekend

will help the competition regain some of its lost sparkle.

This year's edition -- spread over 51 days and comprising 74 matches across 13 venues -- will be the first after the ousting of its outspoken founder Lalit Modi, who was forced out last year under a cloud of corruption allegations.

The tournament's future had looked in doubt amid claims of corruption, money-laundering and tax evasion, as well as secret deals to hide teams' real owners and even links to India's criminal underworld.

But a massive PR exercise by the Board of Control for Cricket in India (BCCI) has ensured the IPL has kept its date with fans, as well as sponsors and advertisers hungry for their share of the huge commercial pie.

IPL chief executive Sundar Raman dismissed fears that cricket fans in India, still

recovering from celebrations after Saturday's victory over Sri Lanka in the World Cup final, could suffer sporting overload.

"The success of the Indian team in the World Cup has made it (IPL) more interesting," Raman told AFP, saying the tournament would "carry on from where the World Cup ended".

"Fans are already into cricket and celebrating India's victory. We are confident of building on the success of the last edition."

This year's IPL, the fourth time it has been held, will have two new teams in Kochi Tuskers Kerala and Pune Warriors, taking the total number of franchises to 10.

The opening game will feature Chennai Super Kings, led by victorious Indian captain Mahendra Singh Dhoni, and the Kolkata Knight Riders, owned by Bollywood superstar Shah Rukh Khan.

The IPL revolutionised the sport when it burst onto the scene in 2008 with a high-octane blend of international star players, scantily-clad cheerleaders and Bollywood glamour.

Using the short Twenty20 form of the game, IPL matches are usually three-hour events packed with music, delirious crowds and countless television advertisements.



PHOTO: COURTESY

The Sunbeams girls basketball team pose for photographs with the inter-school champions trophy that they won on Saturday defeating ISD in the final.

CROSSWORD By Eugene Sheffer

ACROSS

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5 Ointment
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13 Pelvic
14 Joan
15 Rag
17 Shell-
18 Respect-
19 Glisten
21 "Behold!"
22 Dim,
24 Vex
27 Cattle
28 Molt
31 D.C. VIP
32 Fall back
33 Rd.
34 Fellows
36 Rush-
37 Ragout
or
ratatouille

DOWN

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2 First
3 Naughty
4 Yours
5 Truly
6 Prejudice
7 Whopper
8 Mrs.
9 Wearable
10 Neighbor-
11 Con
16 Expert
20 Part of
21 UNLV
22 Coventry
23 Earring
24 Fuel
25 Debtor's
26 Zapper
27 Vegan's
29 2-Down's
30 Morning
35 Our
37 Tribal
39 "Great!"
40 Melody
41 Buy
42 Aesopian
43 Stave
44 Unrivaled
45 Dove's
46 Responsibility
49 Brewery
50 Skillet

Solution time: 25 mins.

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CRYPTOQUIP

F M Z I L E ' U G L Z Y I L G P T N O M

Z A B N U D W P O M B Q B K F O Z Q

O B E Y F U F B E F E K , A N U U M L

E Z T L D Z I Q B I G F E K W Z A L Q Q .

Yesterday's Cryptoquip: TO THOSE PEOPLE WHO GET ALL BOTHERED BY IMPRECISE PUNCTUATION USAGE, I SAY "COMMA DOWN!"
Today's Cryptoquip Clue: U equals T