

Star SPORT

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Gayle will lose nothing: Akram

The West Indies Cricket Board (WICB) has committed a blunder by not letting Chris Gayle play in the series against India as the explosive batsman stands to lose nothing from a move which will only weaken the host team, feels former Pakistan captain Wasim Akram. Gayle has been ignored so far for his outburst against the WICB in a radio-show in April in which he criticised the cricket board for leaving him in a lurch during injury problems.



- PTI



(From L) Alok Kapali, Jahurul Islam, Junaed Siddiqui and Nazimuddin sweat it out on the stationary bike during their gym session at the Sher-e-Bangla National Stadium yesterday.

Jovanovski not coming yet

Football

SPORTS REPORTER

Coach-elect Gjorgji Jovanovski of Macedonia has seemingly refused to take charge of the Bangladesh national football team before the FIFA World Cup pre-qualifiers against Pakistan in June and July on 'security grounds'.

Jovanovski was supposed to arrive here today but the Bangladesh Football Federation yesterday issued a press release stating that the new coach was not coming due to unavoidable circumstances and a fresh schedule regarding his arrival would be announced shortly.

"His (Jovanovski) agent called me today (Sunday) and told me that he will take charge after Bangladesh's away match against Pakistan," said Team Management Committee chairman Badal Roy without elaborating.

However, it has been learnt that the 55-year old coach doesn't want to travel to Pakistan for security fears and reluctance from his family to allow him to travel to Pakistan. The Macedonian coach wants to take charge after Bangladesh's World Cup pre-qualifiers against Pakistan on July 3.

It was also stated by the BFF that security

fear was one of reasons behind the departure of Bangladesh's former Croat coach Robert Rubcic.

Bangladesh Football Federation president Kazi Salahuddin exclaimed his displeasure at this sudden move by the Macedonian.

"If one does not serve our purpose when needed, what we have to do with him?" replied Salahuddin when asked whether they would consider Jovanovski if he arrives after July 3.

There are rumours that Jovanovski may be considering himself as a replacement for the just-terminated national coach of Macedonia Mirsad Jonuz, and that might be a reason for his not flying for Dhaka. According to an agency report, Macedonia will announce a new coach within the next 15 days.

NTMC chairman Badal Roy informed that they would now appoint an interim coach from amongst BFF coaching staff and BFF technical director Bayezid Alam Zobayer Nipu might be appointed interim head coach. BFF member Hasanuzzaman Khan Bablu is expected to be accompanying the national team apart from assistant coach Golam Zilani and Nipu.

In another move, the Bangladesh foot

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GJORGJI JOVANOVSKI

Shakib's bat finally talks

SPORTS REPORTER

Shakib Al Hasan cracked a half-century after nine innings yesterday.

The national captain hammered a quickfire 54 in Worcestershire's first innings against Hampshire in the County Championship match at the New Road ground.

The last time the left-hander went past the 50-mark was against Australia back on April 9 in home conditions. His IPL stint yielded only 27 runs from three innings while during the Friends Life t20s, Shakib's highest score was 16, though both in the IPL and in

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Under-19 cricketers could tour Pakistan

SPORTS REPORTER

Bangladesh Cricket Board (BCB) will be submitting an application to the government for a possible tour to Pakistan by the under-19 side next month.

BCB CEO Manzur Ahmed said it is all tentative at the moment and nothing will be possible until they receive a government directive which will come only after they send in their schedule in a few days.

"It will be prepared after resolving a few issues," said Manzur.

If the BCB does get the government's green signal, the age-level side will travel on July 15 or 16 to play a few matches in preparation for the Under-19 World Cup to be held in Australia early next year.

No international cricket team has toured the troubled country since the attack on the

Sri Lanka cricket team on March 3, 2009 though Afghanistan toured last month to play three matches.

There was a standing invitation from the Pakistan Cricket Board (PCB) for a tour though that discussion was made at a higher level, according to sources.

The senior Pakistan team are also supposed to tour Bangladesh in December this year, though it was also learned that this series was already brought forward from April when, according to the Future Tours Programme (FTP), the Tigers have a tour to Pakistan.

Meanwhile, the Bangladesh football team are also scheduled to fly out to Pakistan for a FIFA World Cup qualifier on July 3 though they have requested to the game's governing body to shift the match from Lahore to Dhaka or any other neutral venue.

Bell puts hosts on top

Cricket

AFP, Southampton

Ian Bell's second hundred in three matches guided England into a commanding position on the fourth day of the third and final Test against Sri Lanka at the Rose Bowl here on Sunday.

Sri Lanka were 14 without loss in their second innings at tea on the fourth day, with Tharanga Paranavitana nine not out and Lahiru Thirimanne unbeaten on three on his Test debut.

The tourists were still 179 runs behind after England captain Andrew Strauss enterprisingly declared on 377 for eight, a lead of 193.

Bell finished on 119 not out -- the first Test hundred at the Rose Bowl -- following his unbeaten 103 in England's innings and 14-run first

Test victory in Cardiff.

Together with Eoin Morgan, who made a breezy 71, he shared a sixth-wicket stand of 137 against a flagging Sri Lanka attack badly missing retired greats Muttiah Muralidaran, Chaminda Vaas and Lasith Malinga, not to mention the injured Nuwan Pradeep.

England resumed Sunday on 195 for four, a lead of 11 that owed much to a fluent 85 from Kevin Pietersen, who had come in with England struggling at 14 for two.

Bell was 39 not out overnight and James Anderson unbeaten on nought.

Anderson drove the third ball of the day, from Thisara Perera, off the back foot through the covers for four and later repeated the stroke off the same bowler -- both shots worthy of any 'proper' batsman.

Anderson struck two successive cover-driven fours off Chanaka

Welegedara but, next ball, he was caught behind off the same bowler for a sparkling 27, having helped Bell put on 45 for the fifth wicket.

Bell, 78 not out at lunch, pressed onto his 14th Test century.

Late cut and square cut boundaries off successive deliveries from left-arm seamer Chanaka Welegedara took the 29-year-old to 95.

Meanwhile left-hander Morgan cover-drove Welegedara for a fifth boundary to complete an 88-ball fifty and bring up a century stand with Bell.

And Bell went to his own hundred when he hooked a Suranga Lakmal bouncer for a single to get to a century in 159 balls with 12 fours.

Morgan, who had an lbw decision overturned on review on 58, got himself out when, trying to carve Lakmal through the offside, he got an edge and

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Windies take Barath in First Test against India starts today

Cricket

AFP, Kingston

West Indies again overlooked Chris Gayle for selection, and his omission has overshadowed the build-up to the first Test against India, starting on Monday at Sabina Park here.

The controversial former captain is involved in a dispute with the West Indies Cricket Board (WICB), which has threatened not only his participation in the series, but also his international career for the Caribbean side.

It followed comments he made during an interview on a radio station in his native Jamaica in April.

Gayle and high level West Indies officials met on Tuesday to discuss their differences, but the meeting ended in uncertainty, with the WICB directors to decide on Gayle's fate at a board meeting in the Jamaica capital on Friday.

Fellow opener Adrian Barath earned a recall instead, and will open with compatriot Lendl Simmons.

Barath spent nearly five months on the sidelines nursing a damaged hamstring, and made a return to the side on Thursday in the fifth one-day international against the Indians at the same venue.

He is the only change to the previous Test squad that played Pakistan in St. Kitts earlier this month, with teenage opener Kraigg Brathwaite omitted.

Chanderpaul has also been at loggerheads with the WICB in recent weeks, but has also been retained.

Chanderpaul also made some highly-charged comment about the WICB officials in a radio interview during the Pakistan series.

He was subsequently written to on the matter, but he played in the first Test against the Pakistanis before injury sidelined him for the second Test.

The WICB said it also intended to have a meeting with Chanderpaul prior to the Test to outline their expectations of him in his future participation in the West Indies team as a player.

It was not clear about the status of all-rounder Dwayne Bravo. He had missed the Tests against Pakistan, after playing in the ODIs, to play in the Indian Premier League.

He played the first two ODIs against the visitors in his native Trinidad, but then requested a break from the game to 'refocus and reflect', and was hoping to rejoin the team for the Test series.

Fellow all-rounder Andre Russell impressed during the ODIs against the World champions, but no room could be found for him in the squad.

He probably lost out in the reckoning to experienced fast bowler Fidel Edwards, who will be looking to make a return to the international arena, following almost two years undergoing rehabilitation on his back.

India have no such challenges, and will be

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Siddikur ends on 16th

SPORTS REPORTER

Bangladesh golfer Siddikur Rahman could not turn the tide in the fourth and final round of the Queen's Cup golf championship at the Santiburi Samui Country Club in Thailand yesterday, slipping two places to finish in joint 16th position. The country's ace golfer repeated his poor showing of the previous day to shoot a round of three-over-par 74 (71-par-course). His cumulative score over the four-day tournament was one-over-par 285.

Local star Chawalit Plapho also had identical third and fourth rounds, the difference being that he played great golf to secure a round of three-under-par 68 to take the title. His cumulative score of eleven-under-par 273 was head and shoulder above the rest in the final analysis; two shots clear of second placed Prayad Marksang of Thailand, and six ahead of Daisuke Maruyama of Japan.



England batsman Ian Bell raises his arms in celebration of his 13th Test ton during the fourth day of the third Test against Sri Lanka at the Rose Bowl in Southampton yesterday.

PHOTO: AFP

SPECIAL OLYMPICS Contingent to leave Tuesday

SPORTS REPORTER

A 56-member Bangladesh contingent will leave here for Greece on Tuesday to take part in the Special Olympic Summer Games, beginning from Saturday next in Athens.

Some 7,500 intellectually disabled athletes from 182 countries will compete in 22 Olympic-type sports over ten days. Forty Bangladeshi athletes will compete in six disciplines -- athletics, swimming, badminton, table tennis, football and bocce, said speakers at a press conference at the NSC Tower auditorium yesterday.

Bangladesh have been participating in the Special Olympics from the 1995 New Heaven Summer Games in United State where they grabbed 20 medals including six gold. In the latest edition of these Games in 2007 in Shanghai, China Bangladesh grabbed 71 medals including 32 gold.

"Winning medals is not

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