

**Kaneria  
'in the dark'**

AFP, Karachi

Former Pakistan cricketer Danish Kaneria said Friday he was in the dark about a disciplinary hearing in Britain over corruption that led to the jailing of an English county player.

The England and Wales Cricket Board (ECB) announced on Thursday that the leg-spinner and his former Essex teammate Mervyn Westfield would face a hearing next month.

Westfield was jailed for four months in February after admitting that he accepted money to underperform during a Pro40 match between Essex and Durham in 2009.

The 23-year-old seamer named Kaneria -- arrested in 2010 but released without charge -- as the link between the bookmaker and the players.

Kaneria, who has not played for Pakistan since the Nottingham Test against England in August 2010, said he had not been informed about the hearing.

"I just got to know about a disciplinary hearing from the media," Kaneria told AFP.

"Once I get the official letter from the ECB then only I will consult with my lawyer and decide how to go about it."

Kaneria faces a worldwide ban from the game if found guilty by the hearing, where a number of Essex players are expected to give evidence.

The 31-year-old, who played 61 Tests and 18 one-day for Pakistan, is now involved in first-class cricket in Pakistan. He led Sindh in the Pentangular Cup first-class tournament and also played in the Super Eight Twenty20 event earlier this year.

In February this year, the International Cricket Council, the ECB and Pakistan Cricket Board dismissed Kaneria's claims that he had been cleared in the spot-fixing scandal.

**The forgotten**

**FROM PAGE 16** unimaginative and reactive, at best. The sad part is that the committee is led by Gazi Ashraf Hossain, a former national captain no less, who was often the lone voice in favour of the first-class tournament when he was not in charge of the various domestic competitions. These days he has a very different tune, one that has him mostly grumbling about how difficult it is to settle on a domestic calendar.

It is now clear that the NCL is not a BCB priority, but to behave in a manner which suggests that the high and mighty within the board wants it to become extinct can never be a good sign, especially since Bangladesh's existence in the ICC Elite group is based on status as a Test-playing nation.

First-class cricket has to be BCB's top priority, whether it makes them money or not and whether they like it or not.



**A Scholastica player goes for a goal against Dhanmondi Tutorial during their semifinal of the School Handball Tournament at the Handball Stadium yesterday.**

PHOTO: BANGLARCHOXK

**LOCAL snippets**

SPORTS REPORTER

A first-half strike from Syed Karim guided 10-man Cox's City FC to a 1-0 win over Argani Bank in the Premier Bank Bangladesh Championship League encounter at the Cox's Bazar Stadium yesterday.

Karim converted a spot-kick in the 20th minute which proved the decisive goal for the match. Agrani Bank were reduced to 10 men after Rezaul Liton was given the marching orders in the 45th minute.

The third win in eight matches kept Cox's City in the third position with 12 points by virtue of goal difference as Argani Bank also have 12 points from nine matches and are ahead of Cox's City.

**School Handball**

Scholastica and Sunnydale moved into the girls' final of the Polar Ice-Cream 20th National Handball Tournament after beating their respective rivals in the semifinals at the Handball Stadium yesterday.

Scholastica defeated Dhanmondi Tutorial 10-1 while Sunnydale routed Viqarunnissa Noon School & College 11-3 in semifinals.

In boys' group, Narinda Govt High School and Residential Model School & College qualified for the final as Narinda defeated Play Pen 19-18 in a tense first semifinal while Residential Model beat St Gregory's High School 12-11 in the nerve-wracking second semifinal.

Both the finals will take place at the same venue today.

**Table Tennis**

Bagerhat emerged champions in the team event of the National Junior Table Tennis Championship with a 3-1 win over Biman Bangladesh in the boys' team event in Dinajpur yesterday. However, Biman lifted the girls' team event title with a 3-2 win over Rangpur. Biman also clinched girls' doubles title beating Rangpur 3-1. Biman's Snigdha-Sharmin pair defeated Raima-Raisa pair of Rangpur in the girls' doubles final.

**School football**

Haji Karam Ali High School of Chhatak upazila emerged Sunamganj district champions in the National School Football Islami Bank Tournament. They beat Derai Dhal Public High School 3-1 in tie-breaker in the final in Sunamganj yesterday. Meanwhile, Pauba Damkura Hat High School and Bagmara Shoipara High School moved into the final of Rajshahi district defeating their respective opponents in the semifinals yesterday.

**Williams sisters move on**

AFP, Charleston

Fifth-seeded Serena Williams overpowered New Zealand's Marina Erakovic 6-2, 6-2 on Thursday as she and sister Venus edged closer to a clash on the green clay courts of Charleston.

Serena fired six aces and won 80 percent of her first serve points to advance to the quarter-finals in emphatic style.

She could eventually face a semifinal showdown with elder sister Venus, who rallied from 2-4 down in her opening set to beat Australian Anastasia Rodionova 7-5, 6-2. "I hope we both get there," said Serena, who must get past big-hitting German Sabine Lisicki, the sixth seed, in the quarter-finals.

"I have to win another match, and I really, really hope we both get there, so we'll see." Lisicki rallied from a break down in both sets to beat Kazakhstan's Yaroslava Shvedova 7-5, 6-4.

This is the third time both Williams sisters have played the WTA tournament in Charleston in the same year, but the first time both have made the quarters in the same year.

Venus will have to wait until Friday to find out who she faces in the quarter-finals after heavy storms moved into the area and halted play for the night as second-seeded Samantha Stosur led unseeded Galina Voskoboeva of Kazakhstan 4-2. Stosur, the US Open champion ranked fifth in the world, was left as the highest-ranking player in the field after the injury withdrawal on Sunday of Agnieszka Radwanska.

**WI dream of breaking Aus jinx**

**First Test from today**



AFP, Bridgetown

Australia aim to extend their 19-year grip on the Frank Worrell Trophy against the West Indies from Saturday and pile on the Test match agony for the fallen Caribbean giants.

Since they last hosted Australia four years ago, the West Indies have won only three of the 30 Tests that they've played while trying to rebuild their team.

Those three wins have been enough to produce series wins over England and, more recently, in Bangladesh, their first victory away since 2003.

Meanwhile, Australia are on a high having had a 4-0 cleansweep over India in their last series in January.

They haven't lost a Test series since the Ashes defeat in January 2011 that led to significant changes in their structure and approach to the game. It also saw a change to the playing organization with Michael Clarke taking over from Ricky Ponting as captain and South African Mickey Arthur installed as coach.

"As a playing group we can take a lot of confidence out of beating India 4-0 in Australia but conditions are a lot different here," said Clarke ahead of the first Test which starts at Kensington Oval on Saturday.

"The hardest part of playing international sport is beating teams away from home in conditions that you're

not as used to."

Despite their woeful recent Test record, there are signs that the West Indies may be closing the gap.

They played well in both the recent Twenty20 and ODI series with neither team getting the upper hand as both series were tied.

"For me as captain getting the guys to gel well and to execute the team plan, the more results we'll get," said West Indies captain Darren Sammy who believes that attitude was important in the recent performances in the ODIs and Twenty20s.

The changes for both teams in the last four years have been significant.

Of the team that won the final Test at the Kensington Oval to clinch the series 2-0 four years ago, only Clarke, Ponting and Michael Hussey remain in the Test set up.

It's one fewer for the West Indies with Shivnarine Chanderpaul and Fidel Edwards the only players from that side to have been included in the latest squad.

Australia won their only warm-up match in the longer form of the game beating the West Indies Cricket Board President's XI by eight wickets.

Several changes to the side that played in that fixture can be expected as David Warner and Michael Hussey were rested while wicket-keeper Matthew Wade will almost certainly put on the baggy green for the first time.

West Indies named a squad of 13 for

the first Test, with only opening batsman Kieran Powell and wicket-keeper Carlton Baugh having played for the President's XI in the tour game.

With Marlon Samuels playing in the IPL there have been returns to the squad for Narsingh Deonarine and Ravi Rampaul.

It's an important series for both teams as they look to consolidate on their recently improved performances.

Australia want to extend their run of undefeated Test series to five with Clarke saying: "As a team we're trying to become a little bit more consistent with our performances and this is going to be a tough Test for us but it's going to be a good indication as to where we are at with that consistency."

The West Indies will be seeing if they can take their success in the one day formats into the longer form of the game.

**SQUADS**

**WEST INDIES:** Darren Sammy (captain), Kirk Edwards, Adrian Barath, Carlton Baugh, Devendra Bishoo, Kraigg Brathwaite, Darren Bravo, Shivnarine Chanderpaul, Narsingh Deonarine, Fidel Edwards, Kieran Powell, Ravi Rampaul, Kemar Roach

**AUSTRALIA:** Michael Clarke (captain), Shane Watson, Michael Beer, Ed Cowan, Peter Forrest, Ryan Harris, Ben Hilfenhaus, Michael Hussey, Nathan Lyon, Peter Nevill, James Pattinson, Ricky Ponting, Peter Siddell, Mitchell Starc, Matthew Wade, David Warner.

**Gayle back for Windies?**



CRICINFO, Barbados

Chris Gayle and the WICB have reached an understanding that paves the way for the former West Indies captain to return to the national team as early as the upcoming tour of England, Caribbean Media Corporation (CMC) has reported. However, the deal's success will be tested by an ongoing lawsuit - to which Gayle is a party - between the West Indies Players' Association (WIPA) and the board. Gayle hasn't played for West Indies since the 2011 World Cup.

The agreement between Gayle and the WICB was brokered by CARICOM (the Caribbean Community) and had the involvement of St Vincent Prime Minister Ralph Gonsalves. According to the report, a meeting will be convened between the two parties to "tidy up residual matters" after both parties expressed regret for their actions. "In the light of all of this, the WICB and Mr Gayle agree that the way is now clear for his active return to West Indies cricket, subject to all necessary fitness considerations," the report quoted from the agreement. "A date is to be set for this meeting, convenient to all parties, including Mr Gayle who is currently in India," Baldwin Spencer, the Prime Minister of Antigua and Barbuda, and the chairman of the Prime Ministerial sub-committee of cricket was quoted as saying.

Gayle has reportedly said he will be unavailable for West Indies duty for the entire duration of the IPL, which ends on May 27. West Indies are due to tour England for a full series between May 5 and June 24 and Gayle's participation in the IPL means he will miss the Test series. However, he was prepared to forego his contract with Somerset and play for West Indies in the one-day and Twenty20 games on that tour. He also said he was available for the World Twenty20 this year and that he was not seeking to "cherry pick" the series he played.

In a statement dated March 29, the board said it was "disappointed" over Gayle's unavailability during the IPL but in the "spirit of compromise and subject to agreement being reached on all outstanding residual matters" it would convey Gayle's unavailability to the selectors.

The board hoped Gayle would drop the lawsuit concerning No-Objection Certificates filed by the WIPA against it, though Gayle, in a statement last week, said he could not "possibly contemplate withdrawing unilaterally from proceedings", especially when such a move would affect all West Indies players. The board, though, has since written to Prime Minister Gonsalves, arguing that Gayle's participation in the lawsuit was not consistent with the agreement reached with the board.

It also questioned why Gayle could not withdraw from the lawsuit unilaterally. "As the lawsuit was started by WIPA without him, and his claims are set out separately, we do not understand why Mr Gayle says he cannot contemplate withdrawing from the lawsuit without WIPA.

"Our efforts must surely be focussed on bringing about the resolution of all outstanding matters between the Board and Mr Gayle."

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**Dilshan fined**

AFP, Colombo

Sri Lanka's Tillakaratne Dilshan has been fined 10 percent of his match fee for over-the-top appealing during the second Test against England, the International Cricket Council (ICC) said on Friday.

Bowling during England's first innings on Thursday, Dilshan charged towards the striker's end celebrating a dismissal even before the decision had been given, the ICC said.

When he reached the other end, Dilshan turned around and appealed repeatedly, according to the charge laid by on-field umpires Bruce Oxenford and Asad Rauf, and TV umpire Rod Tucker.

**Swann tightens**

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used for the series. Dilshan, who made 35, has now gone 21 innings without a Test century since plundering 193 against England at Lord's in June last year.

Later in the same over, Swann appealed for leg-before against Sangakkara, which Oxenford turned down. This time it was England's turn to lose the review even though the ball clipped the off-bail.

But Sangakkara did not last long as he edged Swann to wicket-keeper Matt Prior after making 21, with Sri Lanka still 61 runs in arrears.

The left-hander, who had been dismissed first ball in two of the three previous innings, finished the series with a dismal average of 8.75.

Lahiru Thirimanne (11) and night watchman Dhammika Prasad (34), who saw off one over on Thursday evening, put on 23 for the first wicket when Sri Lanka resumed at 4-0.

Prasad, a tailender who averaged 19.20 in his previous nine Tests, survived two dropped catches to defy England for 87 minutes and even helped himself to five boundaries, but it was mostly downhill for Sri Lanka after that.

**SCOREBOARD**

**SRI LANKA:** First innings 275 (M Jayawardene 105, Samaraweera 54, Mathews 57; Swann 4-75, Anderson 3-62)  
**ENGLAND:** First innings 460 (Pietersen 151, Strauss 61, Cook 94, Trott 64; Herath 6-133)

**SRI LANKA:** Second innings (overnight 4-0)

Prasad c Bresnan b Finn	34
Thirimanne c Strauss b Anderson	35
Dilshan c Anderson b Swann	11
Sangakkara c Prior b Swann	21
M Jayawardene not out	55
Samaraweera b Swann	47
Randiv b Swann	0
Mathews not out	3
Extras: (b-4, lb-6, w-2)	12
Total: (For six wickets in 91 overs)	218
To bat: P Jayawardene, Herath, Lakmal.	
Fall of wickets: 1-23, 2-64, 3-104, 4-125, 5-215, 6-215.	

Bowler	O	M	R	W
Anderson	16	6	27	1
Finn	15	1	30	1
Swann	26	1	82	4
Bresnan	11	5	14	0
Patel	19	6	37	0
Pietersen	4	0	18	0

**Barisal hurtle ahead**

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four-wicket haul that did the hilly district the main damage. Bandarban were bowled out for a measly 64 runs in 21 overs.

Away at the Shaheed Chandu Stadium in Bogra, Naogaon prevailed in a one-wicket win over Natore, who were set up well with 221-8 in 50 overs after Mokhlesur scored exactly 100 runs. Milon took six wickets for Naogaon. In another nail-biter, Dinajpur beat Gaibandha by three wickets with Arif and Dhiman helping the winners reach 256 for seven in the final over, despite Minhaz's six wickets.

In the other matches, Feni hammered Laxmipur in a 129-run win at the Zohur Ahmed Chowdhury Stadium in Chittagong, Madaripur beat Gopalganj by three wickets in Sariatpur, Rajshahi crushed hosts Pabna by 100 runs, Narayanganj destroyed Netrokona by eight wickets with Sabuj picking six wickets for just eight runs, Habiganj beat Moulvibazar by five wickets in a rain-interrupted 45-overs-a-side game while in far-flung Thakurgaon, Lalmonirhat beat Kurigram by 52 runs.

**Pune pull off**

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brilliantly, the hosts restricted the visitors to a modest total.

The Warriors, who had won only four games in the previous season, commenced their campaign on a poor note after being put in to bat. They slumped to 27 for three by the fifth over and never recovered from the big blows.

**SCORES IN BRIEF**  
**PUNE WARRIORS:** 129 for 9 (Smith 39, Uthappa 36; Malinga 2-16, Patel 2-26)  
**MUMBAI INDIANS:** 101 for 9 (Franklin 32, Karthik 32, Harbhajan 16; Dinda 4-17)  
Result: Pune Warriors won by 28 runs.

**Irfan blows dash KKR**

CRICINFO, Kolkata



Irfan Pathan bowled only one over in the game but proved decisive with the bat, smashing an unbeaten 42 from 20 deliveries to ensure Delhi Daredevils did not make a mess of their chase of 98 after having been 49 for 0. It would have been embarrassing for Daredevils to lose after that opening partnership, and especially after they had reduced Kolkata Knight Riders to 55 for 6 at one stage.

Aaron Finch and Virender Sehwag had gone serenely after the target in the rain-affected game shortened to 12 overs per side. But the asking-rate suddenly rose above ten runs an over after their dismissals in successive overs, and it was left to Irfan to bail Daredevils out.

And he did so in style, with some nerveless stroke-making under pressure. With 35 needed from 20 deliveries, Irfan lofted Jacques Kallis for six over long-on.

South Africa fast bowler Marchant de Lange, on IPL debut, was pulled over deep midwicket and swung over long-on for two more sixes. Game over.

That the game was actually played was only because the rain relented after causing a two-and-a-half hour delay. A packed Eden Gardens had waited and waited for the rain to stop.

When the match finally got underway, the home team Knight Riders crumbled instantly. By the end of the fourth over, they had lost four wickets, and six by the end of the seventh. Morne Morkel was responsible for three of those strikes, including the wickets of Kallis and Tiwary off consecutive deliveries.

The crowd eventually found their voice when Bengal boys Debabrata Das and Laxmi Shukla hit the Daredevils spinners for a few sixes. The blows also ensured Knight Riders ended up with a decent score after having been reduced to 55 for 6.

Things had looked worse for Knight Riders at 31 for 4. Brendon McCullum

missed a pull off Roelof van der Merwe to be caught plumb in front in the second over. Morkel came on in the third and uprooted Kallis' middle stump with a stinging yorker. Manoj Tiwary has travelled around the world with the Indian team recently without getting a game. And when he finally got one today, he lasted one ball, going back in his crease and conspiring to convert a very low full toss into a yorker. Bowled again.

Yusuf Pathan lasted three more deliveries than Tiwary had. Off his fourth, he tried to duck under a not-so-short ball from Umesh Yadav but only managed to glove it awkwardly to the wicketkeeper. Knight Riders' troubles only increased when Gautam Gambhir chopped an attempted guide to third man off a short Morkel delivery onto his stumps.

**SCORES IN BRIEF**  
**KOLKATA KNIGHT RIDERS:** 97 for 9 (Shukla 26; M Morkel 3-18)  
**DELHI DAREDEVILS:** 100 for 2 (Irfan 42 not out, Finch 30)  
Result: Delhi Daredevils won by eight wickets.



**US tennis star Serena Williams signs autographs after her win over Marina Erakovic of New Zealand at the Family Circle Cup in South Carolina on Thursday.**

PHOTO: REUTERS