

Yuvi is home

AFP, New Delhi

India's World Cup cricket hero Yuvraj Singh returned home on Monday after receiving treatment for a cancerous tumour in the United States.

Sporting a black jacket and red baseball cap, the 30-year-old all-rounder gave thumbs-up signs to well-wishers who had gathered at New Delhi airport to welcome him back.

"He is absolutely fine and will rest at home for another 10-15 days," his mother Shabnam Singh told reporters at the airport.

Left-handed Yuvraj, named man-of-the-tournament after India's World Cup triumph at home last April, was diagnosed with a rare condition, mediastinal seminoma -- a malignant tumour between his lungs -- soon after the event.

After completing three sessions of chemotherapy in Boston in March, he had moved to London before returning to India.

"Finally the day has come! I am going home tomorrow! cant wait, excited to see my friends and family...see you india!," Yuvraj said on Twitter on Sunday.

Thousands of well-wishers, politicians, his teammates and other sports personalities including US cycling great Lance Armstrong had sent messages to the ailing all-rounder who is known for his aggressive batting and disciplined spin bowling.

"Today the entire country is happy, god is happy and I am very happy. My son has come back as a winner," Yuvraj's father Yograj Singh told the NDTV news channel.

One match ban on Sohel

SPORTS REPORTER

Bangladesh Football Federation's disciplinary committee has imposed a one-match suspension on Abahani goalkeeper Shahidul Alam Sohel for his unsporting behaviour. The young goalkeeper, who is also the first choice keeper of the national team, got into an altercation with the referee Jalal Uddin and shoved him a couple of times during Abahani's Premier League match against Farashganj SC on April 4. The keeper also refused to shake hands with the referee and opposition players after the match. The referee has also been served a show cause notice by the referees' committee for the same incident.

Abahani were also fined Tk 25,000 for not being able to control its supporters from attacking the match officials while the club masseur has been banned from the stadium for the season for throwing a water bottle at the referee.

The disciplinary committee also served a caution notice to Sheikh Jamal Dhanmondi Club and Muktiyodhha Sangsad for other incidents.

Delay to hurt

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played the Pakistan series in December. In the absence of Mashrafe, he has carried the pace attack as Shafiqul has not taken himself to the next level while the likes of Shahadat Hossain and Robiul Islam haven't had a similar impact in any format.

Chief selector Akram Khan believes that the country's lack of pace options has received a further blow without Rubel.

"Rubel is one of our best bowlers and we felt his absence during the Asia Cup. He has served the country since making his debut and is one of our bright prospects. We are missing him," said Akram.

"All three of us selectors are conducting hunts in the age-group levels from the Under-16s to the Under-19s. We have plans to put together a pace camp during the off-season because as far as I am concerned, fast bowlers are not selected looking at age, you need height, speed, etc," said the former national captain.



India batsman Yuvraj Singh (C) gives a thumbs-up to the camera upon his arrival at Indira Gandhi International Airport in New Delhi yesterday, after receiving treatment for a cancerous tumour in the United States.

PHOTO: AFP

Sachin still ill at ease

CRICINFO, Mumbai

Sachin Tendulkar's return to the Mumbai Indians squad for Monday's match against Deccan Chargers looks uncertain, after he said on Twitter that the finger injury he sustained in the opening game against Chennai Super Kings did "not look good".

Tendulkar posted a photograph of the injured finger on his right hand and tweeted around noon on Monday.

Tendulkar had to retire hurt on 16 after being struck on the glove by Doug Bollinger in the ninth over of the IPL's opening game between Mumbai Indians and Super Kings. He then missed Mumbai Indians' first home game, against Pune Warriors, and if he does not play today his next game could be against Rajasthan Royals on April 11.

Just before the start of IPL 2012, Tendulkar had handed over the leadership of the Mumbai Indians to Harbhajan Singh, because he wanted to take a "break from the responsibility of captaincy". Harbhajan had led Mumbai Indians to the Champions League T20 title last year and was an automatic choice to take over the captaincy.

Premier hit

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Interestingly, Gamini de Silva, the curator at the Sher-e-Bangla National Stadium said yesterday that he has been preparing the Mirpur venue for the April 10 game between Victoria Sporting Club and Gazi Tank. "They have told me to be prepared for tomorrow [Tuesday] and I am doing that," said the Sri Lankan curator.

BCB had on Saturday broken the deadlock regarding resumption of the league when it was announced that the league would resume on Tuesday after an emergency meeting. The standoff was surrounding the registration of Pakistan and Victoria batsman Mohammad Yousuf.

Everybody was curious to know yesterday whether the league will resume when local powerhouses like Abahani and Mohammedan Sporting Club threatened not to participate further in the competition until the registration issue of Yousuf is resolved.

The uncertainty has gripped the country's cricket for last few days with the league remaining suspended from March 28 following Abahani's refusal to play against Victoria citing that the clearance letter of Yousuf was fake.

Mohammedan also demanded that they didn't give the clearance letter to Yousuf.

LOCAL snippets

SPORTS REPORTER

Sohel Mia slammed a hat-trick to power Friends Social Welfare Association to a 3-1 win over PWD Sports Club in their match of the Destiny Group Dhaka Metropolis 2nd Division Football League at the Birshreshtha Shaheed Mostafa Kamal Stadium yesterday. Ripon scored the consolation goal for PWD.

Baridhara, Agrani split points

Uttar Baridhara and Agrani Bank shared points as they drew 2-2 in their match of the Premier Bank Bangladesh Championship League at the Cox's Bazar Stadium yesterday.

Sumon put Uttar Baridhara ahead in the 20th minute before fellow striker Jibon doubled the lead seven minutes later.

However, Agrani Bank bounced back superbly in the second half as came into the match Gafur reduced the margin in the 76th minute from a spot-kick before he restored parity in seven minutes later with his second.

The draw kept Uttar Baridhara at the top of the table with 14 points from ten matches while Agrani Bank moved up to fourth with 12 points from same number of matches.

Scholastica, Viquarunnisa in semis

Scholastica School and Viquarunnisa Noon School & College reached the semifinals of the Plan Metropolis Women's School Football Tournament beating their respective quarterfinal opponents at the Sultana Kamal Women's Kriha Complex in Dhanmondi yesterday.

Scholastica beat BAF Shaheen School & College 2-0, with goals from Samaha and Liana in the first half.

In the other quarterfinal, Viquarunnisa thrashed Motijheel Govt Girls' High School by 5-0 goals at the same venue. Nini struck a hat-trick while Diba and

Windies well ahead

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you can play anyhow against them. You have to step up."

In the morning, Australia took the new ball as soon as it became available but it didn't seem to provide any more movement than the old one.

Skipper Michael Clarke had a gully and a short backward point in place to Darren Bravo and the plan worked when he played a tentative shot to the slower pace of Shane Watson, the ball going straight to Mike Hussey in the gully.

Bravo's slow trudge off the field showed his clear disappointment after his innings of 51 had been brought to an end.

Narsingh Deonarine was playing his first Test for two years but, again, Australia had a clear plan. They served him up with the odd short ball and their preparation paid off. On 22, he was caught in two minds to a shorter delivery from Ryan Harris and as he turned away, the ball came off the edge and went high to wicket-keeper Matthew Wade who took his second catch.

After lunch, Carlton Baugh had moved on to 22 when he started off for an impossible single after Chanderpaul had turned the ball to square leg.

But Harris swooped and his direct hit dismissed the West Indies keeper.

This brought in Sammy and the West Indian captain was intent on attack.

He had only been at the crease a few minutes when he smashed Nathan Lyon for three boundaries in four balls.

He then ducked into a Watson delivery and needed several minutes of attention.

Next ball, still not fully recovered from the blow, Sammy powered the ball back over Watson's head for six.

SCOREBOARD

WEST INDIES: First Innings				
Barath c Siddle b Harris				22
Brathwaite c Wade b Siddle				57
Edwards c & b Warner				61
Bravo c Hussey b Watson				51
Chanderpaul not out				103
Deonarine c Wade b Harris				21
Baugh run out (Harris)				22
Sammy c Cowan b Hilfenhaus				41
Roach c Clarke b Lyon				16
Edwards c Hussey b Warner				10
Bishoo not out				18
Extras: (lb-12, lb-9, w-4, nb-2)				27
Total: (For 9 wickets in 153 overs)				449
Fall of wickets: 1-38, 2-142, 3-167, 4-240, 5-285, 6-316, 7-369, 8-402, 9-421.				

Bowler	O	M	R	W
Harris	29	8	83	2
Hilfenhaus	33	12	67	1
Siddle	31	10	83	1
Lyon	31	11	94	1
Clarke	2	0	4	0
Watson	15	5	46	1
Warner	10	0	45	2
Hussey	2	0	6	0

AUSTRALIA: First Innings (overnight 44 for no loss)

Cowan c Baugh b Sammy				14
Warner c Bravo b Sammy				42
Watson not out				39
Ponting run out				4
Clarke not out				27
Extras: (lb-6, nb-1)				7
Total: (For 3 wickets in 42 overs)				133
To bat: Hussey, Wade, Siddle, Harris, Hilfenhaus, Lyon.				

Bowler	O	M	R	W
Edwards	12	2	36	0
Roach	11	0	43	0

Shakib a clear fan favourite

SPORTS REPORTER

Shakib Al Hasan's ever-growing popularity among fans found another medium when he was voted as the Cricketer of the Year for 2011 by members of BanglaCricket.com, a fan-driven cricket website.

This is the second time the forum have organised fan voted awards to recognise top performers of the country. The award considered performances in the 2011 calendar year with eleven categories; voting ran for a period of one month in March this year.

Predictably, Shakib was the chosen one after becoming the highest run-scorer and wicket-taker for the country in Tests and ODIs. Apart from the top award, he was also chosen as the top Test and ODI Cricketer, best Test and ODI batsman and best ODI and Test bowler.

Nasir Hossain was elected the emerging player of the year while Khadiza Tul Kubra was named the Women's Cricketer of the Year. Some of the more interesting categories included the most under-rated player of the year (won by Nazmul Hossain) and best domestic cricketer (Asif Ahmed).

BanglaCricket has over 13,000 registered members but its viewership is even larger. On average, 80,000-plus unique visitors go to the site. The sources of visits for BanglaCricket.com are from the US, Bangladesh and the UK.

Chess Fed Election Irregularities alleged

SPORTS REPORTER

Three aspiring contestants for the upcoming election of the Bangladesh Chess Federation (BCF), including the country's first Grand Master Niaz Murshed, made allegations of gross irregularities against the incumbent general secretary of BCF Mokaddes Hossain.

They sent a letter addressed to the National Sports Council chairman and sports minister Ahad Ali Sarkar yesterday in which they alleged that the election procedure is running according to the will of the current ad-hoc committee general secretary, despite being one of the candidates. Many of the districts and affiliated associations have not yet received letters for their councillorship, they also alleged.

They have also appealed for the dissolution of the current committee and to hold the election under an interim committee. Apart from Murshed, the letter also included signatures of the federation's vice-president Mirza Enamul Hossain and treasurer Ronodeb Dasgupta.

MI clinch a thriller

SPORTS DESK



The fifth edition of the IPL, which got off to a tepid start, finally had a nail-biter as Rohit Sharma hit the last ball of the match for six to seal a

cinematic finish for Mumbai Indians against Deccan Chargers at the Y.S.Rajsekhar Reddy Stadium yesterday.

Chasing a target of 139, Mumbai Indians made 142 for five with Rohit Sharma scoring a match-winning unbeaten 73.

Daniel Christian, not the wisest choice for the final over, dished out two full tosses to Rohit Sharma, including the final ball which was smacked over long-on with three needed.

Kumar Sangakkara had bowled out his best bowler, Dale Steyn, leaving the final honours to Christian. The first ball was smashed by James Franklin wide of long-off for four. With five needed off two, the penultimate ball was forced to long-off and Rohit Sharma timed his dive just in time to survive a run-out appeal. Christian couldn't come up with anything special, gifting Rohit Sharma with the most hittable delivery of the over, breaking many hearts of the home fans who went home disappointed for the second time in as many games.

Fortunes kept oscillating in the final overs, but for most periods in the chase, the Chargers were in control. Much of the credit

should go to Dale Steyn, who ran in with the same vigour as he does for South Africa. He defeated the best hitters in the Mumbai lineup with raw pace and fizzy bounce, nipping out three wickets for just 12 runs. He took 2 for 6 in his first spell, conceded just two off his next over and only five off his final over. In hindsight, Sangakkara will feel he should have kept him for the final over.

Earlier, a four-wicket haul by Munaf Patel restricted Deccan Chargers to a below-par 138 for 9, giving Mumbai Indians the chance to record their second win.

Munaf nipped out two early wickets, putting pressure on Daniel Christian and the captain Kumar Sangakkara who is himself short of runs.

Shikhar Dhawan eased those nerves, albeit briefly, with towering hits over the on side, smashing four sixes in the region of deep midwicket and square leg. However, Dhawan failed to read a slower one from Lasith Malinga in the following over and got a leading edge that swirled to Kieron Pollard at point.

BRIEF SCORES

DECCAN CHARGERS: 138 for 9 (S Dhawan 41, D Christian 39, C White 30 not out; M Patel 4-20, S Malinga 3/27, K Pollard 2-33) MUMBAI INDIANS: 142 for 5 (R Sharma 73 not out, K Pollard 24; D Steyn 3-12) Result: Mumbai Indians won by 5 wickets Man of the Match: Rohit Sharma

Serena's first in 2012

Tennis

AFP, Charleston

Fifth seeded Serena Williams captured her 40th career WTA title by overpowering ninth seeded Czech Lucie Safarova 6-0, 6-1 at the Charleston clay court tournament on Sunday.

The 13-time Grand Slam winner needed just 58 minutes to dispatch Safarova in her first final appearance since last year's US Open when she lost to Samantha



PHOTO: REUTERS

A smiling Serena Williams of the United States poses with the Family Circle Cup trophy after beating Czech Lucie Safarova in the final in South Carolina on Sunday.

CROSSWORD By Eugene Sheffer

ACROSS

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companion

Solution time: 24 mins.

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CRYPTOQUIP

K W L B O X Z P O I P R Z H V A W D B C M

W C B R C D O X K R H A H I W R B

W X U U B M R C H D B W I P H R P B C M

A W L G M : " G W R R A B M P B B V ."

Saturday's Cryptoquip: OVERSEAS DIVISION

OF A FAMOUS TOY TRUCK COMPANY SERVING

A PACIFIC ISLAND KINGDOM: TONKA TONGA.

Today's Cryptoquip Clue: P equals H