



PHOTO: STAR

Bangladesh national team cricketers play a game of football during a practice session at the National Cricket Academy ground in Mirpur yesterday.

WICB hails the players

AGENCIES, Port Of Spain

The West Indies cricket team showed an outstanding display of tenacity, fight, courage, will-power and belief en route to their title triumph in the just-concluded ICC World Twenty20 in Sri Lanka, president of the country's board, Julian Hunte said.

"This was an outstanding display of tenacity, fight, courage, will-power and belief. To come to Sri Lanka and beat them on their home turf in the grand final, when all was on the line, is truly remarkable," said Hunte, the president of the West Indies Cricket Board (WICB).

"The entire region was behind this team as they left home to compete to participate in this high-profile tournament," he added.

West Indies defeated Sri Lanka by 36 runs in the final of the ICC World T20 to win their first world title after a gap of 33 years, having won the ODI World Cup way back in 1979'.

The ICC World T20 is the fourth major international title for the West Indies team. Clive Lloyd's all-conquering team won the inaugural Cricket ODI World Cup in 1975

and repeated the feat in 1979, while Brian Lara's side won the ICC Champions Trophy in England in 2004.

"West Indies cricket has a rich history and we are proud of what those who have played before have done for us and what they achieved," the WICB president said.

"Now, in this era, we have a new group of champions who have given their all and made us proud. Today, we salute our champions," Hunte added.

With this title, West Indies have become the only team to have won the 50-over World Cup, the Champions Trophy and the World Twenty20 and Hunte said he would like to thank the current side for giving the countrymen a great gift.

"I want to say 'thank you' to the team for what you did for the people and for West Indies cricket. Sunday, October 7, 2012 will go down in history and one of the great days in West Indies cricket.

"It was a job well done and the entire Caribbean along with West Indies cricket lovers are extremely proud of this team. It was a joy to see such a clinical performance on the field of play," Hunte said.

PCB serves notice on Razzaq

AFP, Karachi

Pakistan cricket chiefs Tuesday ordered veteran all-rounder Abdul Razzaq to explain himself after he publicly criticised skipper Mohammed Hafeez for dropping him for the World Twenty20 semifinal.

The 32-year-old was replaced by fast bowler Sohail Tanveer for Pakistan's semifinal defeat against Sri Lanka last week, a decision which Hafeez said was unanimous.

But when the team returned to Pakistan on Saturday, Razzaq blasted the captain for acting alone.

"I was disappointed sitting outside while the team was losing the match," Razzaq said.

"I know the team management didn't drop me, it was Hafeez who left me out. He should speak up and admit his decision."

Pakistan Cricket Board (PCB) spokesman Nadeem Sarwar said Razzaq had breached the players' code of conduct, which forbids players from speaking to the media without prior permission from the board.

"Razzaq has violated the code of conduct and we have served him a show-cause notice. He has seven days to answer the notice," Sarwar told AFP.

Razzaq made 22 in Pakistan's Super Eights match in the World Twenty20, his only appearance in the tournament.

West Indies beat hosts Sri Lanka in the final on Sunday to lift the trophy.

Local snippets

FROM PAGE 16
Bangladesh played out a goalless draw against Afghanistan in their first match before going 2-0 down against the Japan Football Academy.

Bangladesh will now face India today and Bhutan tomorrow.

Pioneer football

Dhaka (North & South) City Corporation 21st Pioneer Football League got underway yesterday with Palash slotting a hat-trick in one of eight venues.

London Tigers thrashed Shaheed Buddhijibi Smriti Sangsad 7-0 at the Golarke ground with Palash scoring four goals while Fahim struck two goals and Masum netted one.

Tejgaon Young Star beat Dhaka Credit Union 1-0, Matuail Udayan Sangha beat Sher-e-Bangla KC 2-1, Mansur SC thrashed Uttaran Club 3-0, Bangladesh SC beat Amli Gola FA 2-0, Lalbagh Tarun Sangha defeated Rup Nagar 3-0, Motherbari Mukhtakantho beat Araf SC 2-1, Khilgaon Pragati Sangha beat Bazarbag Sangha beat 1-0 while the match of Nasrin SC vs Kamalapur Samaj Krira Chakra was called off.

Accused umpires hit back

Cricket

AFP, Colombo

Umpires at the centre of bribery claims denied Tuesday they were willing to fix matches for cash as cricket authorities announced an urgent probe into the allegations aired in a television sting.

An undercover investigation by the private India TV channel allegedly found six umpires, including one on the international circuit, were willing to give decisions or provide inside information on teams and playing conditions in return for illicit payments.

The accusations were broadcast only a day after the West Indies' victory over hosts Sri Lanka in the final of the World Twenty20 tournament, quickly souring the atmosphere after one of the game's premier events.

None of the umpires was involved in the tournament.

The International Cricket Council (ICC) called on India TV "to turn over any information which can assist its urgent investigations into this matter."

"The ICC reiterates its zero tolerance towards corruption whether alleged against players or officials," the organisation said in a statement.

Three of those named were from Sri Lanka, while two were from Pakistan. The sixth was Nadir Shah, one of two Bangladeshi members of the ICC's international panel which officiates in matches around the world.

Grainy footage appeared to show Shah, who has stood in 40 one-day internationals and a number of Twenty20 internationals, saying he was willing to give decisions on demand.

An India TV transcript of the sting said that Shah offered to give biased LBW (leg before wicket), run-out and inside-edge verdicts.

"If the umpire is shown a favour, the umpire can do anything," Shah was quoted as saying in the transcript.

The video does not show any cash being exchanged nor did the channel broadcast any proof of the umpires delivering decisions or information.

Shah said any suggestion he was open to bribery was "absolutely rubbish".

The Bangladesh Cricket Board (BCB) pledged to investigate the claims.

"The BCB has a zero-tolerance policy to issues related to corruption in the game and is committed to holding a thorough inquiry," it said in a statement.

The Pakistan Cricket Board said it was gathering information and was in contact with the ICC. "We have zero tolerance towards corruption," said spokesman Nadeem Sarwar.

Pakistan umpire Nadeem Ghouri, another of those named, denied any involvement. "I am surprised at these baseless allegations," he told AFP, saying he would consult his lawyers.

Ghouri has umpired in Test matches and dozens of limited-over

internationals, although he is no longer part of the ICC panel.

Sri Lanka cricket authorities were on Tuesday considering whether to suspend their three local umpires.

"We have looked at the tapes. We have got written submissions from the umpires and we will take a formal decision later today," ARM Aroos, chairman of Sri Lanka Cricket umpires' committee, told AFP.

Gamini Dissanayake, one of three Sri Lankans to be named, told the Colombo-based Daily Mirror the allegation was a "fabrication".

"Obviously this is an attempt at mudslinging," he told the daily.

India TV chairman Rajat Sharma told AFP his channel would cooperate with the International Cricket Council (ICC) in investigating the scandal.

"Of course we will give the entire unedited tape to anyone who is enquiring this," Sharma said. "We would cooperate with the ICC."

Three Pakistani cricketers were last year jailed in Britain after being found guilty of spot-fixing following a newspaper sting.

Shah was among the umpires at the inaugural Bangladesh Premier League earlier this year, a local version of India's IPL Twenty20 tournament.

The competition was marred by corruption allegations and ended up with former Bangladeshi international Shariful Haque being indefinitely banned.

Nishikori gets going

Tennis

AFP, Shanghai

Japan's Kei Nishikori cruised through his Shanghai Masters opener on Tuesday just 48 hours after lifting his second Tour title in Tokyo, as America's John Isner saved three match points to progress.

Nishikori, the number 14 seed, who became the first Japanese player to win the Japan Open on Sunday, eased past China's Wu Di 6-2, 6-4 in his first-round match.

"Obviously, it's not easy to play [so soon] after winning the tournament," said the 22-year-old, who is at a career-high of number 15 in the rankings after his success in front of home fans.

"But I had a good day today. I love to play here," added Nishikori, who reached the semifinals in Shanghai last year before he lost to eventual champion Andy Murray of Britain.

Nishikori's weekend win over big-serving Milos Raonic was his first on the Tour since the 2008 Delray Beach title, sharply raising expectations that Asia had uncovered a potential world-beater.

In a battle of two giants, eighth seed John Isner was forced to dig deep to save three match points to win a second-round match containing three tie-breaks and keep alive his outside chance of qualifying for the ATP World Tour Finals.

Isner booked his place in the third round by beating South Africa's Kevin Anderson 7-6 (7/3), 6-7 (8/10), 7-6 (9/7) in two hours and 45 minutes.

Four resign from MCA

CRICINFO, Mumbai

Four former cricketers resigned from their administrative positions in the Mumbai Cricket Association yesterday. The list includes selector Milind Rege, and MCA's Cricket Improvement Committee (CIC) members Balwinder Singh Sandhu, Nilesh Kulkarni and Karsan Ghavri.

Mohammedan

FROM PAGE 16
Rahman Meshu and Abdul Baten Komol justified their inclusion as the former duo of Sheikh Jamal Dhanmondi struck one goal each to mark the start of the Sky Blues brilliantly.

Komol put Abahani ahead in the 23rd minute with a placing shot after a Jessore DFA defender clearance off a left-back Wali Faisal cross fell to the winger.

Komol turned provider soon after as he dived down the right flank to enter the box before releasing a nice low-cross and Meshu negotiated it well to find the back of the opponent net with a side-volley.

The margin could have been bigger had Abahani striking duo Shakhwat Hossain Rony and fit-again Enamul Haque not rattled the crossbar in the dying minutes of the first half. The ball was mostly confined to the midfield in the second half.

Proteas pass the baton to Lanka!

AFP, Colombo

South Africa's inability to win a major tournament despite having teams packed with talent has long earned them the tag of international cricket's major "chokers".

But after Sri Lanka's fourth successive loss in a World Cup final on Sunday, the African nation may believe that their Asian counterparts have now inherited the dubious title.

The island nation, who won the 1996 50-over World Cup, lost the 2007 and 2011 World Cup finals in the same format and the Twenty20 final to Pakistan in 2009.

Mahela Jayawardene and his men went into Sunday's match knowing full well it was their best chance of overcoming the disappointments, playing in familiar conditions on home soil and with the support of a packed stadium.

They started brightly, cheaply dismissing the dangerous Chris Gayle, who had been touted as the man standing between Sri Lanka and the Cup, and conceding just one boundary in the first 11 overs of the West Indies innings.

But as the sixes began to fly off Marlon Samuels' thick blade in the next few overs, Sri Lanka lost the plot.

Jayawardene, involved in all four final defeats, watched helplessly as the momentum shifted in his opponents' favour and Sri Lanka never recovered.

"It was one of those days when the momentum shifted and it was pretty tough to get back in it again," the captain lamented.

Chasing a modest target of 138, the batsmen lacked self-belief and were shot out for 101 in under 19 overs, with just three of them reaching double figures as they crumbled under pressure.

The Sri Lankan crowd, who had come to celebrate a famous win, instead had to watch the West Indies players go wild with the "Gangnam Style" dance and Gayle doing a perfect imitation of the horse-riding dance made famous by South Korean singer Psy.

At the start of the tournament, the Sri Lankan captain had said he would gladly take a loss in the final rather than bow out in the initial stages.

But he was not so sure after going through the pain of defeat.

Jayawardene later announced his decision to give up the captaincy in the shortest format of the game.

"It hurts a lot, because you want to do something special, not just personally, but for the public as well," the stylish right-handed batsman told reporters.

"We've been playing really good cricket but we haven't been able to cross that hurdle. So it hurts as a player, as a cricketer, as an individual."

"But we just need to move on, try, and see how well we can get over this and get back on and keep fighting again."

Nadir claims innocence

FROM PAGE 16

"We have seen the videos and are trying to collect all the files. We will make an investigative committee and address the matter accordingly," said BCB media committee chairman Jalal Yunus yesterday. "It's not possible to comment on any of these as of now. We have a zero tolerance policy and we will take a firm stance if there is any offence."

Shah was also quoted by the Press Trust of India as strongly refuting the allegations and calling them "rubbish". "Absolutely rubbish. If I am going to fix match, I will

be caught some day by the ICC. No umpire fixes matches."

When contacted by ESPN Cricinfo, Shah stressed his innocence. "I was taken to Delhi to sign a contract for umpiring in the Sri Lanka Premier League. But when I saw these people making match-fixing approaches, I backed off. I didn't do any SPL matches, as you must know. I was never involved in match-fixing at any level."

Another Bangladeshi umpire targeted by the sting operation Sharifuddin Haque was subsequently banned by the BCCI for varying lengths.

declined offers to fix matches, refused to comment on the issue.

In his years as an umpire in Bangladesh Nadir Shah has been known to have outspoken, anti-establishment views, but on the other hand has maintained a clean chit as far as allegations of bias in his decision-making on the domestic as well as international circuit is concerned.

India TV had also earlier alleged corrupt practices by five Indian domestic players in May, all of whom were subsequently banned by the BCCI for varying lengths.

CROSSWORD By Eugene Sheffer

ACROSS	1 A great amount	6 Construction piece	11 "Evangeline" setting	12 Housefly larva	14 Street less traveled	15 Past	16 Salt Lake athlete	17 He hit 61 in '61	19 Scooted	20 Afterward	22 Three-man vessel?	23 Lose color	24 Helvetica lack	26 Most goose-bump-inducing	28 NOW goal	30 Slight touch	31 Run off (with)	35 "Loves me (not) me" factor					
DOWN	39 "The Amazing —"	40 Bother	42 Post-bout garb	43 Whatever number	44 So far	46 Sheepish remark	47 News-writer's name	49 Circumvent	51 Lens cleaning solution	52 Culmination	53 Water nymph	54 Philippine knives	1 Grim Reaper's tool	2 Life's work	3 Commotion	4 Dist. across a circle	5 Begin's co-Nobel	6 Drank up	7 Serenades the moon	8 Early bird	9 Olden meeting places	10 Units	11 Touches

Solution time: 27 mins.

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CRYPTOQUIP

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 KEUCRG: JAGHIJBIT' HIJZTBET.
Yesterday's Cryptoquip: SINCE I'M MAKING OFFERS TO BUY BLANKETS AT THIS AUCTION, YOU COULD SAY THAT'S BEDDING BIDDING.
 Today's Cryptoquip Clue: G equals N