

Victoria beat Dhaka United

SPORTS REPORTER

Victoria SC notched their second win in the Premier Bank Bangladesh Championship League with a 2-1 win over Dhaka United SC at the Birshreshtha Shaheed Mostafa Kamal Stadium yesterday.

Sajidur Rahman put Victoria SC ahead in the 28th minute before Abu Hanif doubled the lead a minute later. Zakir Hossain pulled one goal back in the 78th minute for Dhaka United.

With their second win, Victoria leapfrogged to the fifth position with six points from five outings while Dhaka United stayed in sixth position with four points from five matches.

Pistorius too 'traumatised'

AFP, Johannesburg

South Africa's Paralympian sprint star Oscar Pistorius, who is charged with murdering his girlfriend on February 14, is still too traumatised to start training for competition, his family said on Thursday.

Pistorius last week succeeded in having his stringing bail conditions relaxed to allow him to travel abroad for competitions, but his uncle Arnold Pistorius said he was still battling to even step out of the house.

"Oscar is not back on any official training programme. This may change in future, but this will be a decision taken by Oscar."

"At this point Oscar is still in an extremely traumatised state and has made it clear to all of us that he is not able or willing to even contemplate this issue at this stage," the uncle said in a statement.

The statement came after South African newspapers published a photograph of the athlete wearing training clothes and his blades on a track at the University of Pretoria.

Afrikaans daily Beeld said the photo was taken by a schoolgirl in a group of high school hockey players on March 24.

"None of us are in any doubt. We saw Oscar training."

Sunrisers

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his four overs.

It did not look like enough, but with Steyn blazing under the floodlights, Hyderabad got home on a canter.

SCORES IN BRIEF

SUNRISERS HYDERABAD: 126 for 6 in 20 overs (Perera 30, Reddy 27; Dinda 2-29)

PUNE WARRIORS: 104 all out from 18.5 overs (Uthappa 24; Steyn 3-11, Misra 3-19)

Result: Sunrisers won by 22 runs

Hockey

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Mahmud scored two goals. Raihan Uddin also scored one goal in the one-way traffic.

Bangladesh, who on Thursday defeated hosts Singapore and Malaysia, face mighty Korea today in their last group match.

Russel focus

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that we have two easy matches against Feni Soccer and Arambagh KS but we believe they will come hard against us to avert their relegation."



PHOTO: STAR

Sheikh Russel KC players practise at the BUET Ground yesterday, ahead of their Grameenphone Bangladesh Premier League match against Brothers Union today.

Pak tour of WI in doubt



CRICINFO, Karachi

Pakistan's tour of the West Indies in 2013 is in serious jeopardy, after both boards failed to find a suitable window for the tour. Pakistan were originally scheduled to play two Tests, five ODIs and two Twenty20s in the Caribbean in June and July, but ESPNcricinfo understands that the tour is unlikely to go ahead.

According to the FTP, West Indies are scheduled to host Pakistan from the last week in June to the last week in July, but they planned a tri-series against India and Sri Lanka during that time. To avoid a clash, the WICB earlier had asked the PCB if their tour could be rescheduled to August. The idea, however, interfered with the Pakistan's own plan to host India and to play out the Zimbabwe series that

was postponed last year.

West Indies thereafter had also scheduled their Caribbean Premier League tournament from 29 July to 26 August.

"It's a very tricky situation here as our first priority to play according to the FTP," Zaka Ashraf, the PCB chairman, told ESPNcricinfo. "They actually planned their tri-nation series within our window and left us with a choice to reschedule the series, however after a lengthy deliberation we failed to find a window to go ahead with it."

"Earlier there were plans to split the tour but it's not working as we want to play a full series. West Indies is an important cricket team and we have always had cordial relations with them, and hopefully we will find another window next year."

The PCB was hoping to host India in August this year after a successful series in India last December.

However ESPNcricinfo has learnt that India have declined, citing player rest, while Zimbabwe responded positively.

Pakistan were scheduled to tour Zimbabwe for a series of two Tests, three ODIs and two T20s from December 2012 to January 2013 but had played the series with India instead. So, having the August window open, they offered Zimbabwe the option of playing the pending series.

Last year West Indies A team's reciprocal tour (after 2010) to Pakistan also fell through as the visitors were reluctant to visit Pakistan. The idea was floated to play in the UAE but due to the excessive cost of arranging a series for A teams away from home, it was scrapped by the PCB. Pakistan last visited West Indies in 2011, drawing the Test series 1-1, winning the ODI series 3-2 and the hosts taking the only T20I.

Cook targets dominance



AFP, London

England captain Alastair Cook believes his team could be on the verge of a period of sustained dominance which would peak with a World Cup triumph in two years.

Cook is confident England's recent lacklustre displays in the drawn Test series against New Zealand were just a blip that will soon be forgotten as they head into a frenetic programme over the next few months.

England play New Zealand in a Test series rematch then host the limited overs Champions Trophy and the Ashes Test series before heading to Australia for a second Ashes campaign.

Cook's men will be back in Australia and New Zealand for the 2015 World Cup and the opening batsman is convinced a good run over the next year can be the catalyst for England to win the tournament for the first time.

"We haven't won an ICC 50-over event so that is certainly a priority," Cook said on Friday.

"We've got the tournament here in our home conditions which we hope to make the most of and then in two years' time there is the World Cup. We haven't won that either."

"They are two big tournaments coming up and we have certainly got the team, if we keep developing, to have a chance of

winning them."

The Champions Trophy begins on June 6 and England play in Group A against Australia, New Zealand and Sri Lanka.

But before that Cook wants England to make amends for their tame showing in New Zealand.

"We knew how tough it would be," said Cook. "New Zealand have got some really good young players who we will hear a lot more about in the future."

"The bottom line is we did not play as well as we could have done and if you do that in any international team you don't deserve to win."

Regardless of his team's result against New Zealand, Cook refuses to accept England will start as firm favourites when Australia arrive for the Ashes after being hammered 4-0 in India recently.

"We're the first England team to play back-to-back Ashes series so close together so the potential and the opportunity to do something very special is there," Cook said.

"I wouldn't read too much into what happened in India with Australia. The conditions were very different to what we are going to experience in England."

"They are going to be a very tough side to beat. They have got some world-class players. The Ashes is a unique event so hopefully it will bring the best out of both sides."

"The favourites stuff is all off the field. You can read all you want about that sort of stuff but it is irrelevant."

Aussie Ronchi in NZ squad



AFP, Wellington

Former Australian wicketkeeper Luke Ronchi was Friday named in the 15-man New Zealand one-day squad for their upcoming tour to England and the Champions Trophy.

Ronchi is the only player who has not previously represented New Zealand in the side that also sees the return of spinner Daniel Vettori, who has been sidelined for eight months with an ankle injury.

The touring Test squad sees recalls for Martin Guptill and Mark Gillespie, who are added to the list of players who featured in the squads for the recent drawn three-Test home series against England.

The 31-year-old Ronchi is New Zealand born but was raised in Australia where he

played four one-day internationals and three Twenty20 internationals in 2008-09 before returning to his country of birth.

National selection manager Kim Littlejohn said that with a fully fit squad, the race for spots had never been so competitive.

SQUADS

Test: Brendon McCullum (captain), Trent Boult, Doug Bracewell, Dean Brownlie, Peter Fulton, Martin Guptill, Mark Gillespie, Tom Latham, Bruce Martin, Hamish Rutherford, Tim Southee, Ross Taylor, Neil Wagner, BJ Watling, Kane Williamson.

ODI and Champions Trophy: Brendon McCullum (captain), Trent Boult, Grant Elliott, Andrew Ellis, James Franklin, Martin Guptill, Mitchell McClenaghan, Nathan McCullum, Kyle Mills, Colin Munro, Luke Ronchi, Tim Southee, Ross Taylor, Daniel Vettori, Kane Williamson.

Williams stopped by rain



AFP, Charleston

World No. 1 Serena Williams and Venus Williams were among the players left waiting on Thursday as rain wreaked havoc at the WTA claycourt tournament in Charleston.

Second-seeded Caroline Wozniacki advanced to the quarter-finals via walk-over after Germany's Andrea Petkovic pulled out of their third-round match with a right calf injury, but for much of the day that non-event was the only action.

Four third-round matches were postponed until Friday: top-seeded Serena Williams v Mallory Burdette, fifth-seeded Venus Williams v Varvara Lepchenko, sixth-seeded Lucie Safarova v Sorana Cirstea and Bethanie Mattek-Sands v Madison Keys.

Three matches finally got on Charleston's green clay courts on Thursday night, with 2007 Charleston champ Jelena Jankovic of Serbia booking her quarter-final berth with a 6-0, 6-4 victory over US qualifier Jessica Pegula.

Padma Bhushan for Dravid

INTERNET, New Delhi

Indian cricket legend Rahul Dravid was awarded the Padma Bhushan on Friday by President Pranab Mukherjee at the Rashtrapati Bhavan in New Delhi, for his outstanding contribution to the sport.

The Padma Bhushan is India's third highest civilian honour, after the Bharat Ratna and the Padma Vibhushan. The awards were announced in January 2013.

Friday's ceremony was of the first batch of awards being conferred. Two Padma Vibhushan, 10 Padma Bhushan and 42 Padma Shri awards were given to personalities from different professional backgrounds for their contribution to the nation.

The government had come out with a list of 108 Padma awardees this year - In all four personalities were awarded Padma Vibhushan, 24 for Padma Bhushan and 80 Padma Shri. Nobody was named for Bharat Ratna for this year.

Last year, Dravid was once again overlooked for the Rajiv Gandhi Khel Ratna - the nation's highest sporting honour, losing out to Olympic medal winners - Shooter Vijay Kumar and wrestler Yogeshwar Dutt.

India women

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soon after and Bangladesh slumped to 79 for 5 in 16 overs.

A few late hits from Ritu Moni, who hit the only six of the match, and Rumana Ahmed helped Bangladesh cross the 100-run mark for the first time in the series. They were eventually restricted to 113 for 7.

The teams will now travel to Ahmedabad to play three ODIs.

Improve swing, says Wasim



AFP, Lahore

Famed paceman Wasim Akram Friday told Pakistani bowlers that they must master swing bowling to win internationally, as he readies to nurture the country's talent at a key training camp.

"I was disappointed the way our fast bowlers performed in South Africa, so I will try to teach the fast bowlers how to swing the ball which is important for performing well at international level," Wasim said at the launch of the camp.

Known fondly as "Sultan of swing" for his mastery, the 46-year-old left-arm fast bowler will train around 15 current and upcoming bowlers at a camp in Karachi from April 20-29.

Wasim was invited to do so by the Pakistan Cricket Board ahead of the eight-nation Champions Trophy in England in June, after Pakistani pacemen failed to impress on tour in South Africa earlier this year.

Frontline paceman Umar Gul managed just five wickets in two Tests while lanky Mohammad Irfan took two in two. Rahat Ali was the best with six wickets in two matches after going wicketless in his debut Test.

"If someone wants to be a really good fast bowler he will have to bear with the scorching sun and heat. If he does that, only then he can become a good bowler and it's a continuous process of learning," said Wasim.

Wasim said that Irfan, the world's tallest bowler who stands at seven feet one inch, has to work hard on his fitness.

"If he keeps fit then I am sure he can play for three-four years," said Wasim, who took 414 Test and 502 one-day wickets.

Wasim also expressed hope that India would allow Pakistani players to feature in their lucrative Twenty20 Indian Premier League (IPL).

"I think politics should stay away from sports," said Wasim, who was the bowling coach of Kolkata Knight Riders in the IPL until last year.

"Since Pakistani bowlers are better than India's, it will benefit the Indian league," he added.

Pakistani players featured in the inaugural IPL in 2008 but India stalled all bilateral ties after the November 2008 attacks on Mumbai killed 166 people and were blamed on Pakistani-based militants.

2nd 'first time' for Sajidul

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just for bowling's sake. I have learnt to bowl according to the batsman's abilities," said Sajidul.

He was of the opinion that his three for 23 against the Dhaka Gladiators, in the Bangladesh Premier League (BPL) T20 this year was one of the many factors that led to the recall. "The BPL match did help me a bit since I performed well against good players. That might have had a positive impact on the selectors," he said.

Whether Sajidul will be in the playing eleven for the first Test is still unsure. The bowler though has his targets firmly set. "The wickets in Zimbabwe will support the seamers. My main aim will be to swing the ball accurately."

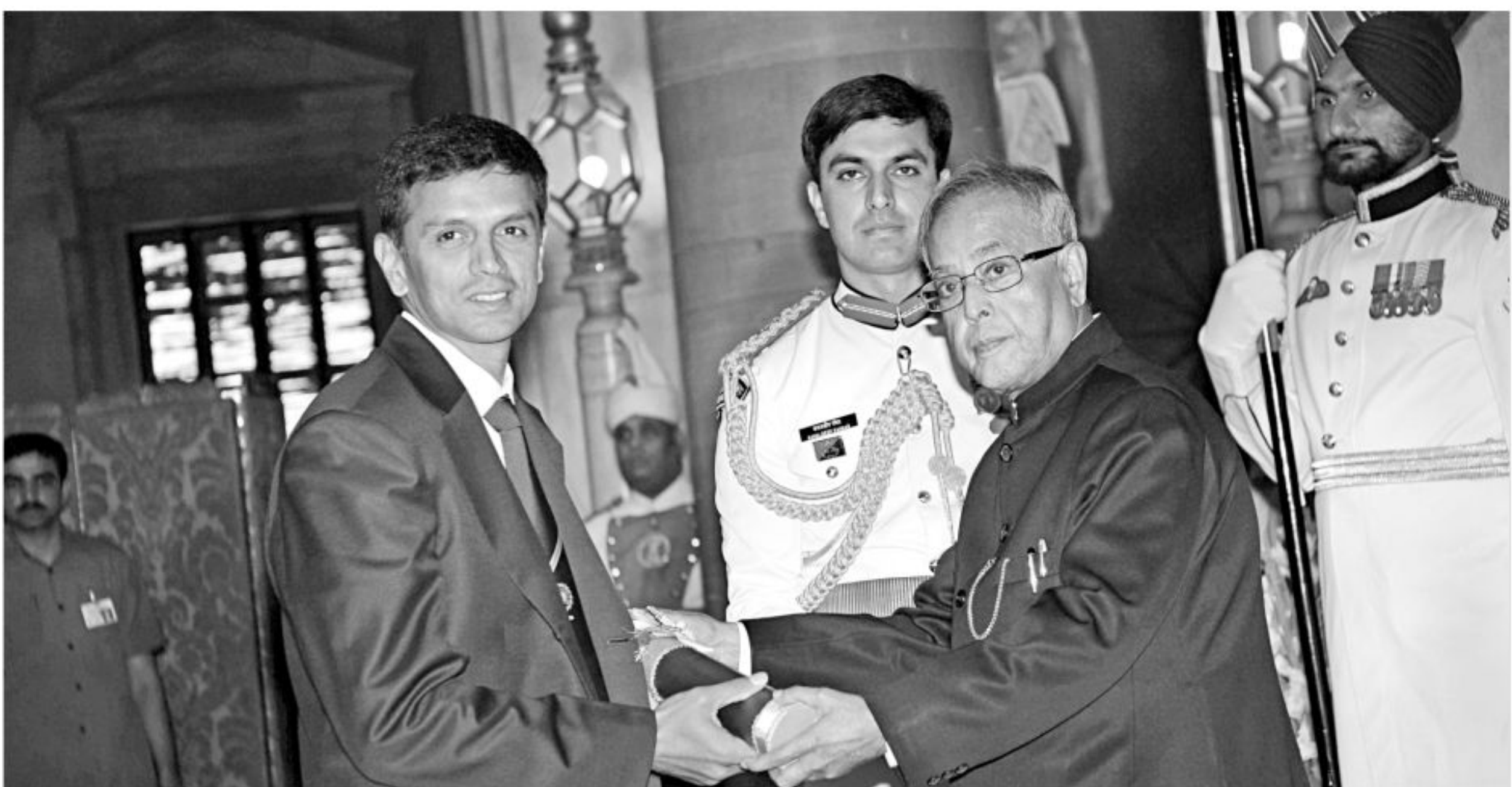


PHOTO: AFP

Indian President Pranab Mukherjee (R) presents the Padma Bhushan award to former India cricketer Rahul Dravid (L) during the presentation of the 'Padma Awards 2013' at the Presidential Palace in New Delhi yesterday.