

OVER THE BREAK



Mitchell Starc and Rohit Sharma were two of the most impressive performers during the Eid holidays. The Australian pacer picked up a match haul of five wickets and led the reigning champions home in a tense win over the West Indies while the Indian opener smashed an unbeaten 144-ball 122 in a simple win against South Africa.



PHOTO: AFP/REUTERS

**WINDIES FUME AFTER COULTER-NILE, STARC HEROICS TAKE AUS TO WIN**

Nathan Coulter-Nile's record-breaking innings laid the platform for Australia's 15-run victory over the West Indies on Thursday as the World Cup holders bounced back from a top-order collapse to make it two successive wins.

Australia were in dire straits at 38 for four after the West Indies fast bowlers proved too hot to handle early on at Trent Bridge. But Coulter-Nile's career-best 92 -- the highest score by any number eight batsman or lower in a World Cup -- helped take them to 288 all out.

He carried on a recovery started by former skipper Steve Smith (73), with the pair bailing Australia out in a stand of 102 in 89 balls.

West Indies, despite a painstaking 68 from opener Shai Hope and 51 from captain Jason Holder finished on 273 for nine.

Fast bowler Mitchell Starc did the bulk of the damage with five for 46 -- the first five-wicket haul of this World Cup -- including a late burst of four for two in 11 balls -- as Australia followed up their seven-wicket win over minnows Afghanistan.

Afterwards, Carlos Brathwaite said the West Indies were on the wrong end of

too much poor umpiring while Michael Holding slammed an "atrocious" display by the match officials.

West Indies opener Chris Gayle and captain Jason Holder were both twice given out on the field at Trent Bridge on Thursday but, on both sets of occasions, saw their decision to review vindicated by the third umpire.

The mood of the Caribbean side was not helped when standing umpire Chris Gaffaney missed a Mitchell Starc no-ball the delivery before the left-arm quick dismissed Gayle for 21.

"I don't know if I'll be fined for saying it but I just think that the umpiring was a bit frustrating," Brathwaite told reporters. "To lose Chris in a chase of 280, who can probably get 180 of them himself obviously, broke the start that we wanted to have."

**SHAHZAD OUT OF WORLD CUP**

Afghanistan opener Mohammad Shahzad will miss the rest of the World Cup after suffering a knee injury, tournament organisers revealed Thursday.

Wicketkeeper-batsman Shahzad will be replaced by Ikram Ali Khil in a blow to the World Cup minnows, who have lost their opening two matches. The 32-year-old scored just seven runs against Australia and Sri Lanka before the injury curtailed his

**SA VETOED DE VILLIERS' WORLD CUP COMEBACK**

South African selection convener Linda Zondi said Thursday he was "shocked" when told that batting star AB de Villiers had made himself available for the World Cup.

Zondi said he was informed on the day of the squad announcement in April by captain Faf du Plessis and coach Ottis Gibson that De Villiers had said he was willing to come out of retirement.

Zondi said it would not have been morally right to include De Villiers.

"I pleaded with AB de Villiers not to retire in 2018... I did give him the option to plan and monitor his season to get him to the World Cup fresh and in a good space," said Zondi.

"He turned down the offer and said he was at peace with his decision to retire."

Zondi said it would be unfair to other players to accede to De Villiers' belated request.

"For Faf du Plessis and Ottis Gibson to share AB's desire to be included in the squad on the day we announced our World Cup squad on April 18 was a shock to all of us," said Zondi.

"At no point in the year that he had retired did he make himself available for selection. It was no option when I received the news on the day of the squad announcement, our squad was finalised and confirmed. AB is undoubtedly one of the best players in the world, but above all else, we have to stay true to our morals and principles, there is no regret in the decision."

**SHARMA GUIDES INDIA TO EASY WIN OVER PROTEAS**

Rohit Sharma hit an unbeaten century as India made a comfortable start to their World Cup campaign with a six-wicket win over South Africa in Southampton on Wednesday that dealt a fresh blow to the Proteas' tournament hopes.

Chasing a modest 228, India cruised to victory on the back of Sharma's 122 not out as they won with 15 balls to spare and live up to their tag as one of the favourites for the showpiece event.

For South Africa, a third straight defeat in as many matches this World Cup left their hopes of qualifying for the semi-finals on a knife edge. Fast bowler Jasprit Bumrah and leg-spinner Yuzvendra Chahal laid the platform for victory as India restricted an injury-hit South Africa to 227 for nine in 50 overs.

South Africa all-rounder Chris Morris, a rare shining light for the Proteas, accepted his side had no more room for error this tournament.

"It's pretty simple. You lose three in a row at the World Cup...you need to win every game from now on in. So the guys know what needs to be done."

**LANKANS BEAT AFGHANISTAN**

Nuwan Pradeep and Lasith Malinga starred as Sri Lanka fought back to crush Afghanistan's hopes of a World Cup victory on Tuesday.

Afghanistan, bidding for just their second win in a World Cup match and their first over a Test nation were in command halfway through a gloomy day in Cardiff after dismissing Sri Lanka for 201.

But faced with a rain-revised target of 187 in 41 overs, their batting let them down again as they were bowled out for 152.

Pradeep took a career-best four for 31, while Malinga (three for 39) struck at both ends of the innings, finishing the match with a trademark yorker that bowled Hamid Hassan.

Victory saw Sri Lanka, beaten by Afghanistan in last year's Asia Cup, bounce back from a 10-wicket thrashing by New Zealand in their World Cup opener in Cardiff.

**BEST QUOTE**

ফেক জাঙ্গিনা

Talking of the last match, I don't know what becomes defence and what becomes offence to you guys when we lose. You do analyses and you know who to attack when. I sometimes wonder if you change your questions when we lose. In the last match, five fielders were brought up and we attacked who we had to attack. At the end of the day, it depends on the bowler what kind of field set he wants.

**Mashrafe Bin Moraza, Bangladesh captain**

**BCCI backs Dhoni's army insignia**

AGENCIES, New Delhi

As the controversy over MS Dhoni wearing wicketkeeping gloves bearing an insignia of the Indian Army escalates, the Committee of Administrators (CoA) chief Vinod Rai has backed the former Indian captain.

Vinod Rai has said that the insignia is neither religious nor commercial and the Board of Control for Cricket in India (BCCI) stands behind Dhoni in the matter.

Rai told PTI, "The BCCI had already sent a formal request to the ICC for clearance. As per ICC regulations, players can't sport any commercial, religious or military logo. There was nothing commercial or religious in this regard as we all know,"

Rai also said, "And it is not the paramilitary regimental dagger that is embossed in his gloves. So Dhoni is not in breach of ICC regulations."

According to reports the CoA chief's defence is based on the fact that the word 'balidaan', which is part of the dagger emblem of the para-regimental force is not written on Dhoni's gloves.

Rai also said that the BCCI will also appeal the ICC to continue the usage of the gloves bearing Insignia of the Indian Army.

Dhoni is an honorary Lieutenant Colonel in the Parachute Regiment of the Indian Territorial Army.

When asked what their stand would be if the ICC insists on Dhoni not wearing those specific gloves or sanctions the former India captain, Vinod Rai said, "I think there has been a request to get it removed and not an instruction."

He also added, "As far as we are concerned, the BCCI CEO (Rahul Johri) will be reaching there before the Australia game and will be speaking to the senior

ICC officials."

The issue cropped up after MS Dhoni was spotted sporting the dagger insignia on his gloves during India's opening match against South Africa in Southampton on June 5.

After the news spread like wildfire on social media, the ICC, on Thursday said that they are requesting Dhoni to not use the gloves with the insignia embossed on them.



**'We want to win, not send a message'**

ICC

The time for sending messages is over for Carlos Brathwaite after his West Indies side fell agonisingly short of downing defending champions Australia at Trent Bridge.

While he and the pace attack impressed for a second successive match, it was not enough and the 30-year-old knows that positivity must be converted into victories if West Indies want to profit from the tournament.

"We don't want to send messages out to other teams, we want to win games. We scored 421 against New Zealand in the warm-up and then bowled Pakistan out for 105 and people have said we've sent messages," he said.

"But this time we lost and it's not about sending messages, it's about winning games. We fought hard and Australia played very well, we felt we could chase it down but weren't able to do that. We didn't adjust as quickly as we would have liked but kudos to the Australia."

"There are fine margins, on another day we could have Coulter-Nile out early on and had them out for 150 or 160, we bowled well and they dealt with it well."



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In what was a major highlight of the ongoing ICC Cricket World Cup in the United Kingdom, West Indies left-arm seamer Sheldon Cottrell made a stunning catch at deep square-leg to dismiss the dangerous Australia batsman Steve Smith in a group stage encounter on Thursday. Smith tried a lofted shot off Oshane Thomas but it turned into a flat flick towards the long-leg region, where Cottrell sprinted to his left to take the catch, which he flicked into the air in celebration. No doubt this was a happy moment for West Indies, who were chasing a challenging 289-run target.