

"Mother wrestling won against me, I lost. Your dreams and my courage are shattered," India's Vinesh Phogat wrote on social media platform X on Thursday as she announced her retirement from wrestling, a day after being disqualified from the women's 50kg competition at the Paris Olympics for being overweight for the final.

Jayawickrama charged over match-fixing approach

REUTERS

Sri Lanka spinner Praveen Jayawickrama has been charged with three counts of anti-corruption code breaches for failing to report an approach to fix matches and obstructing an investigation, the International Cricket Council (ICC) said on Thursday.

Jayawickrama, 25, was approached to fix international matches and was asked to approach another player to fix matches in the 2021 season of the Lanka Premier League.

"Reportedly, the Sri Lanka bowler was found to have deleted messages related to the approach for conducting corrupt practices," the ICC said in a statement. "Jayawickrama has 14 days from 6 August 2024 to respond to the charges."

Sri Lanka Cricket and the ICC have agreed that the ICC will take action concerning the charges.

Jayawickrama made his international debut in April 2021, taking 11 wickets in his first test against Bangladesh. He has not played for Sri Lanka since June 2022.



Bangladesh skipper Najmul Hossain Shanto and pacer Khaled Ahmed look on as right-arm quick Nahid Rana holds on to a catch during a practice session at the Sher-e-Bangla National Stadium in Mirpur yesterday. Even though the national team's official training camp for the upcoming two-Test tour of Pakistan later this month is yet to begin, Shanto joined training with players in and around the national team and the 'A' team, who will be leaving for Islamabad tonight for a series against Pakistan 'A', including two four-dayers and three one-day matches this month. [Bottom] Anamul Haque Bijoy, who was named Bangladesh 'A' captain for the longer format matches against their Pakistani counterparts, and Zakir Hasan, part of the 'A' team, also trained with the squad yesterday.

PHOTO: FIROZ AHMED

Tigers hopeful of beginning practice from tomorrow

SPORTS REPORTER

Bangladesh national cricket team's official practice session was deferred to Saturday, a Bangladesh Cricket Board official told The Daily Star yesterday.

The training camp was initially scheduled to begin yesterday but that did not stop a few of the players from turning up for individual sessions. Test skipper Najmul Hossain Shanto was amongst the few who trained alongside members of the Bangladesh 'A' team.

"We will take a break on Friday and hope to begin practice on Saturday. There were no security concerns. The national team stars and A team players for the second four dayer practised together today [Thursday]," a BCB official told The Daily Star.

The national team's panel of foreign coaches, including head coach Chandika Hathurusingha, did not attend the session as BCB exercised caution before beginning the official training camp.

While the national team's foreign coaches were unavailable, Richard Stonier, Bangladesh U-19s' strength and conditioning coach, oversaw the players' training session at Mirpur's Academy Ground.

Several embassies had advised their nationals to limit their movement due to the current unrest in the country following Sheikh Hasina's resignation as prime minister.

Bangladesh 'A' vow to keep focus on cricket

SPORTS REPORTER

As the country deals with the aftermath of the fall of the Awami League government, the Bangladesh 'A' team have the difficult task of blocking out all outside noise and focus on their upcoming tour of Pakistan.

"Our job is to play cricket. The players, the coaching staff are all professionals. We are more focused on our matches than anything else," Bangladesh 'A' coach Mizanur Rahman Babul told reporters in Mirpur on Thursday.

The first batch of Bangladesh 'A' team contingent, which consists 15 cricketers and nine support staff, will leave Dhaka today to play two four-day and three one-day matches against Pakistan A, scheduled to be held at the Islamabad Club.

They were initially scheduled to travel to Islamabad on August 6 but after Sheikh Hasina resigned as prime minister on August 5 in the face of widespread protests, their travel plan as well as the fixtures had to be deferred.

According to the revised schedule, the first four-day game will begin on August 13 and the second one on August 20. The red-ball matches will be followed by three one-dayers on August 26, 28 and 30 respectively.

Players like Mushfiqur Rahim, Mominul Haque and Mahmudul Hasan Joy, who are expected to feature in Bangladesh's upcoming two-Test series against Pakistan later this month, will also accompany the



team as they will feature in the opening four-day match.

The remaining members of the second four-day squad and one-day side will travel to Pakistan next week.

Although Bangladesh 'A' team's last phase of preparation was hampered quite a bit by the unrest, Babul claimed that they are well-prepared for the tour.

"We were waiting for a tour like this for a long time. We were in Chattogram for a long time, preparing for this 'A' team tour. We practiced there and played two practice matches.

"I don't think the current situation will affect us too much. Everyone is ready for these matches. Everyone is eager for it, the players were always asking when they will

leave for the tour, the BCB has always said that the tour will happen. So, we are ready for the tour," Babul said.

Meanwhile, Anamul Haque Bijoy, who will lead Bangladesh 'A' in the four-day series, sees the team's tour as an opportunity for the national team players to prepare for their upcoming Test series against Pakistan.

"This tour will be followed by our national team's tour. I think the preparation will help the national team a lot. We know that the wickets in Pakistan mainly help the batters. Both teams get equal opportunity. Bangladesh are going to play Tests after a long time. I hope we will achieve fruitful results from the series," he concluded.

SHORT CORNER

Sacked for helping protestors, Bithi gets reinstated

Former cricketer and coach, Arifa Jahan Bithi, confirmed that she has been reinstated as the manager of the women's cricket team in the Rangpur division. Bithi was dismissed from her position after helping the students in their anti-government movement that led to the fall of former prime minister Sheikh Hasina, who fled the country after resigning on August 5. "Alhamdulillah, I have been given back my post as the manager of Rangpur divisional women's cricket team with dignity," Bithi confirmed through a Facebook post on Wednesday.

Messi to miss fifth consecutive match for Miami

Lionel Messi will miss a fifth consecutive match for Inter Miami on Thursday when the defending champions host Toronto in a Leagues Cup knockout-round opener. The 37-year-old striker suffered a right-ankle injury in Argentina's victory over Colombia in last month's Copa America final. Miami coach Gerardo Martino said on Wednesday that Messi had continued to improve but had not practiced with his Inter teammates since suffering the injury and would not be in the lineup against the Canadian club.

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Rafael Nadal to skip US Open

REUTERS

Rafael Nadal has decided not to participate in the US Open due to concerns about his fitness, the Spaniard said on Wednesday while adding his next event will be the Laver Cup in late September.

For Nadal, who won the most recent of his four US Open titles in 2019, this marks the second consecutive year he has sat out the year's final Grand Slam.

"Writing today to let you guys know that I have decided not to compete at this year's US Open, a place where I have amazing memories," the 38-year-old said in a post on X.

"I will miss those electric and special night sessions in NYC at Ashe, but I don't think I would be able to give my 100% this time."

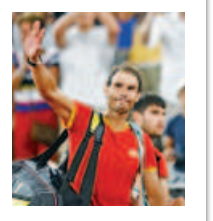
Nadal added that his next event will be the Sept. 20-22 Laver Cup in Berlin.

The 22-times Grand Slam winner competed at the Paris Olympics where he lost to eventual champion Novak Djokovic in the second round of the singles competition and reached the quarterfinals of the doubles with Carlos Alcaraz.

"Rafa is a tremendous champion and he will be missed during the 2024 US Open by the fans and all those associated with the tournament," US Open Tournament Director Stacey Allaster said in a statement.

"We wish him all the best and look forward to having him back at the USTA Billie Jean King National Tennis Center."

The 38-year-old former world number one has fallen to 159th in the rankings after struggling for two years with injuries and against Djokovic at the Olympics, suffered one of his worst losses.



Sabina, Maria excited for WCL journey

SPORTS REPORTER

Having completed the official formalities with Royal Thimphu College (RTC) FC of Bhutan, four of the country's top female footballers are poised to make history in the inaugural AFC Women's Champions League (WCL).

More Bangladeshi female footballers could have participated if local clubs had entered the competition, but Sabina Khatun, Maria Manda, Monika Chakma, and Ritu Porna Chakma earned an unexpected chance to play due to their strong performances in recent FIFA friendlies against hosts Bhutan.

Ahead of their scheduled departure on August 12, Bangladesh captain Sabina and her deputy Maria expressed their excitement about participating in the AFC WCL, vowing to give their best for RTC FC.

"Firstly, I want to thank the RTC team for giving us the opportunity to play in the AFC Women's Champions League," Sabina told The Daily Star yesterday. "It's a great moment for us to be part of such a prestigious tournament. We will do our best for them," she added.

For Maria, get the chance to play in this tournament has been "a significant achievement" in her career after making the cut in the national side.

"For Monica, Ritu, and me, this is our first time going abroad to play for a club. It's an amazing feeling to get such an opportunity outside the country."

"I had hoped to play abroad, and some of us once



received offers from Indian teams, but we couldn't make it happen due to international commitments," said the midfield orchestrator.

In the preliminary stage of the competition, RTC FC will play their Group D opener against Bam Khatoon of Iran on August 25 before

taking on Kitchee SC of Hong Kong on August 28 in Thimphu.

Maria is expected to pair with Monica at the heart of the midfield, replicating the chemistry they've developed while playing for the national team over different age levels.

"We definitely have a good understanding, but RTC will decide who plays where. Both of us will try our best to be in the starting eleven and put on a good show for RTC," said Maria.

Initially, Bangladesh's football authorities were reluctant to release the four players for RTC, preferring they focus on preparations for the upcoming SAFF Women's Championship in October. However, they eventually agreed, allowing their key players to gain valuable experience ahead of the regional women's football extravaganza.

In light of SAFF Championship preparations, Sabina said, "Only four of us will play in the Champions League, but we have to think about the whole Bangladesh team. I think we should play at least three or four practice matches ahead of the SAFF Women's Championship."



Real Madrid's most sought-after player in recent times, Kylian Mbappe joined Los Blancos' training session for the first time on Wednesday since being presented as the club's new number nine at the Santiago Bernabeu in mid-July. It was the reigning La Liga and Champions League winners' second training session of the pre-season, in which, according to the club's statement, the full squad had reported to training with the return of the players who had taken part in Euro 2024 this summer.

PHOTO: REAL MADRID