

Sports

Pakistan battling isolation as cricket host after New Zealand pull out

England mulls decision to send teams on Pakistan tour next month

ISLAMABAD: Pakistan cricket began confronting its worst fear Saturday, with the national side starting at another era of isolation from hosting international matches after New Zealand abandoned its tour, citing a security threat.

The All Blacks called off their first Pakistan series in 18 years with Wellington's backing on Friday just before the first one-day international was due to start in Rawalpindi. The decision has left cricket-crazy Pakistan reeling, with the nation still recovering from the 2009 militant attack on the Sri Lankan team in Lahore that wounded six players.

Already struggling to convince foreign teams to tour, Pakistan were forced to play home matches at neutral venues — primarily in the UAE — following the assault. The decision left a generation of cricket fans growing up having never attended a live game.

Prime Minister Imran Khan, a former international cricketer hero, and the Pakistan Cricket Board will now have to work overtime to avoid another period of exile. "With the administration they now have in place at the PCB and how closely linked to the PM it is, there'll be a real push to ensure they have to play as little as possible in a neutral venue," cricket writer Osman Samiuddin said.

Their first task will be to convince England, who decide today whether to send their men's and women's teams for a scheduled tour to Pakistan next

month. Those tours are to be followed by a series against the West Indies in December and Australia's first visit since 1998 in February next year.

"England are now likely not to tour. Australia... will also probably not come. So that will be a hit," Samiuddin said. "And for fans too, they've only just started getting used to going to big games again so for the prospect of that being taken away, it's going to hurt."

Avoiding isolation

The PCB bled \$200 million in losses during the country's cricket exile. Now, alongside the upcoming tours, its bids to host six international events — including the World Cup and Champion's Trophy between 2024-31 — could also be in jeopardy.

Former players say keeping international cricket in Pakistan is the key priority. "All cricketers are with the PCB and we have to find ways to avoid further isolation, for the sake of our next generations," former captain Rashid Latif told AFP.

New Zealand would have been the highest profile team to play in Pakistan in more than a decade. Pakistan have only hosted South Africa, Sri Lanka, Bangladesh and Zimbabwe since the 2009 attacks. Ex-player Naushad Ali said his country needs to restore the confidence of the cricketing world. "Pakistan will have to prove that New Zealand's

Exile cost \$200 million in losses



RAWALPINDI: Policemen stand guard outside the Rawalpindi Cricket Stadium in Rawalpindi on Friday, after New Zealand postponed a series of one-day international (ODI) cricket matches against Pakistan over security concerns. —AFP

decision was wrong, and I think only that will earn them sympathy," said Ali. "We should not give up our hosting rights and should lobby with other countries."

But former captain Shahid Afridi believes they

have sacrificed a lot over the years and deserve "a better deal". "We have done more than enough for them," he said. "We toured England and New Zealand (last year) despite fears of pandemic, and we want them to reciprocate." —AFP



NEW YORK: Emma Raducanu speaks after winning the 2021 US Open at the USTA Billie Jean King National Tennis Center on September 11, 2021. —AFP

Raducanu's grandmother wanted her to quit tennis

LONDON: Newly-crowned US Open champion Emma Raducanu's grandmother Niculina Raducanu wanted her to quit tennis, so concerned was she about her health after breathing difficulties forced her to retire from her Wimbledon Last 16 match this year. The 88-year-old Romanian told The Daily Mail her granddaughter's "health is more important (than wealth or fame)." Fortunately for 18-year-old Briton Raducanu neither her father Ian (son of Niculina) nor Chinese mother Renee took the advice and she swept through the US Open to become the first qualifier to win a Grand Slam title.

Niculina Raducanu — known to Emma as 'Mamiya' a Romanian term of endearment for grandmothers — is close to her granddaughter. She would host Emma twice a year in Bucharest in her apartment whilst she would come to the family's home in England to care for her

granddaughter and recount stories about Romania. However, she was so anxious for Emma after she retired from her clash with Australian Ajla Tomljanovic at Wimbledon she dared broach the subject of retirement with Raducanu's parents. "I asked her parents if she should quit tennis," Raducanu told the newspaper after they tracked her down at her Bucharest home. "Because what if something should happen to Emma? Her health is more important (than wealth or fame). The court she played on that day had a roof over it because it was raining, and she felt she couldn't breathe." When it came to last Saturday's US Open final, though, it was the grandmother not the granddaughter who faltered.

"The night she won the US Open (Raducanu beat fellow teenager Leylah Fernandez of Canada 6-4, 6-3), I couldn't watch because my heart couldn't take it," she said. "I said to myself: 'This match is going to be a really tough one,' so I decided not to watch it. I only found out the news the next day, and I was delighted she was strong and healthy, and that her mind was healthy also — especially after what happened the last time (at Wimbledon). When I talked to my son, I was happy for him. He would have been so disappointed if she'd have lost after all the work and resources, they'd put into this." —AFP

India coach Shastri denies book launch led to positive COVID test

LONDON: India head coach Ravi Shastri insisted he had "absolutely no regrets" over his attendance at a London launch of his new book cited as a possible source for a positive coronavirus test that took place before the team cut short their tour of England, as he signaled his intention to stand down after the upcoming T20 World Cup.

With India 2-1 up, this month's fifth and deciding Test against England was dramatically cancelled just over two hours before the scheduled start in Manchester because of COVID-19 concerns in the tourists' camp.

A reported positive test by assistant physiotherapist Yogesh Parmar, appeared to be the last straw for an India squad already without Shastri, and two other backroom staff, who had all previously contracted the virus.

Former India all-rounder Shastri was criticized after it emerged, he had launched his book at a well-attended party in London where no masks were worn, two days before the fourth Test at the Oval.

Four days after the launch, Shastri tested positive for COVID and had to go into isolation while the match was being played.

Shastri was widely criticized in England for his conduct but the 59-year-old, in an interview with the Guardian newspaper, published online Friday, said: "There were about 250 people there and no-one got COVID from that party."

"I've not got it at my book launch because it was on the 31st (August) and I

tested positive on 3 September. It can't happen in three days," he said. "I have absolutely no regrets...At the Oval Test, you were climbing stairs used by 5,000 people. So, to point a finger at a book launch?"

'Not lose a penny'

The abandoned Test at Old Trafford is reckoned to have cost English cricket up to £40 million (\$55 million) but Shastri said the England and Wales Cricket Board (ECB) would "not lose a penny."

"The ECB have been outstanding and their relationship with Indian cricket is tremendous. I don't know if it's a stand-alone Test next year or they give them an extra two T20 games, but the ECB will not lose a penny because of the relationship that exists. In 2008 when we had the (terrorist) blast in Mumbai, England came back and played the Test. We don't forget that."

Meanwhile Shastri, head coach since July 2017 after spending the three years before then as India's team director, believes the October-November T20 World up in Oman and the United Arab Emirates — a tournament moved from India because of COVID concerns — would represent an ideal time for him to step down.

"I believe so because I've achieved all I wanted," he said. "Five years as No 1 (in Test cricket), to win in Australia twice, to win in England."

Shastri, who said he played no part in the Manchester decision, added: "If we win the (T20) World Cup that will be the icing on the cake. I believe one thing — never overstay your welcome...To beat Australia away and to lead the series in England in a COVID year? It is the most satisfying moment of my four decades in cricket." —AFP

Classifieds

Hospitals & Clinics

Sabah Hospital	24812000	Khaldiya	24848075
Amiri Hospital	22450005	Kaifan	24849807
Maternity Hospital	24843100	Shamiya	24848913
Mubarak Al-Kabir Hospital	25312700	Shuwaikh	24814507
Chest Hospital	24849400	Abdullah Salem	22549134
Farwaniya Hospital	24892010	Nuzha	22526804
Adan Hospital	23940620	Industrial Shuwaikh	24814764
Ibn Sina Hospital	24840300	Qadsiya	22515088
Al-Razi Hospital	24846000	Dasmah	22532265
Physiotherapy Hospital	24874330/9	Bneid Al-Gar	22531908
		Shaab	22518752
		Qibla	22459381
		Ayoun Al-Qibla	22451082
		Mirqab	22456536
		Sharq	22465401

Clinics

Kaizen center	25716707
Rawda	22517733
Adaliya	22517144

CHANGE OF NAME

I, My Self Phangan Singh Son of Amar Singh Holding India Passport Number L4263773 Residing in Village Mirzeke St Ferozepur That I Have Change My Name Phangan Singh to Given Name Fangan Singh. (C 0649) 17/9/2021

I, PROCARIUS MARIANESAN, holder of Indian Passport No. T2417987, declare to change my name from PROCARIUS MARIANESAN to PROCARIUS MARIANESON. (C 0852) 16-9-2021

I, GAFFAR SYED HUSSAIN SHANAWAS, holder of Indian Passport No. 4650880, declare to change my name from GAFFAR SYED HUSSAIN SHANAWAS to SYED SHANAWAS. (C 648) 15-9-2021

I, PASUPULETI MUNI KUMAR, S/o PASUPULETI SUBRAMANYAM, holder of Indian passport no: M2288252, R/o D.No.9/335-3, SRI RAM NAGAR, Rly. Kodur Town & MANDAL, KADAPA DIST., A.P. - 516 101. (NEW) has changed my name from NEMALI MUNI KUMAR (OLD NAME) to PASUPULETI MUNI KUMAR (NEW NAME).

Kuwait Times
Now you can browse
www.kuwaittimes.net
e-mail: info@kuwaittimes.net

EMERGENCY 112
Automated enquiry
about the Civil ID card is
1889988