

INDIA WOMEN TO FORFEIT PAKISTAN MATCHES, SAYS ICC

NEW DELHI: India have been docked six women's championship match points after failing to play against Pakistan amid simmering tension between the South Asian rivals, the world cricket body said yesterday.

The International Cricket Council (ICC)

awarded Pakistan, who were supposed to host the games, two points for each of the three matches that were scheduled to be held between August 1 and October 31.

The ICC technical committee said it had considered written submissions

from both the Board of Control for Cricket in India (BCCI) and its Pakistani counterpart before making the call.

"The technical committee was sensitive to the current state of relations between the nations of India and Pakistan, but concluded that the BCCI

had not been able to establish acceptable reasons for not participating in this series," the ICC said in a statement.

The decision means the Indian eves, who stay fifth in the points table, will miss out on automatic qualification for the 2017 World Cup in England.

Bilateral ties between the men's cricket teams have been suspended since 2012 when Pakistan last toured India, but they have met each other in international tournaments including the World Cup, World T20, Champions Trophy and Asia Cup. — AFP

NZ EYE FIRST PAKISTAN SERIES WIN IN DECADES

HAMILTON: New Zealand have a chance to seal a first series win against Pakistan in more than 30 years in the second Test in Hamilton with the tourists without talisman Misbah-ul-Haq. The seventh-ranked Black Caps go into the match which begins tomorrow 1-0 up in the two-Test series following a comprehensive eight-wicket victory over second-ranked Pakistan in the opening Test in Christchurch. A win or draw in Hamilton will be enough for New Zealand to notch their first series win over Pakistan since 1985 and only their third ever in 22 series between the two countries.

The last time they met six years ago in Hamilton, New Zealand collapsed spectacularly in their second innings, losing their last eight wickets for 50 runs to be beaten by 10 wickets.

Wahab Riaz took three wickets in that onslaught and comes into contention for this Test after being by-passed in Christchurch. Pakistan need their own injection of good fortune as they battle to turn around a sub-par batting performance in Christchurch where they totalled only 304 in two innings.

"As a batting unit we need to put up a better show ... We have to improve in the next game," said Azhar Ali, who takes over the captaincy in the absence of Misbah.

The inspirational Misbah, who has kept Pakistan unbeaten in the last seven series they have played around the world, has returned home following a family bereavement.

He would not have been available even if he had stayed in New Zealand after receiving a one-Test ban for Pakistan's slow over rate in the first Test. "We'll miss him, definitely," Azhar said. "Obviously we have to cope with that now and whoever comes into the side will take that opportunity and give us runs, as well as the stability he gives us in the middle."

YASIR DECISION

Apart from the likely inclusion of Wahab, Pakistan were revealing little about the make-up of their side for a pitch that generally offers pace and reverse swing, with some turn as the match progresses. Azhar even suggested there was the possibility that acclaimed leg-spinner Yasir Shah could be excluded.

"We'll see the pitch and make the decision then. Whatever the conditions tell us, we'll try to pick the best XI for those conditions," he said. New Zealand have spinner Mitchell Santner back in their squad after recovering from a wrist fracture while Dean Brownlie, whose last Test was in 2013, was recalled as cover for Ross Taylor after a growth was detected in his left eye.

However, late Wednesday the 77-Test veteran was cleared to play in Hamilton, although he will undergo surgery afterwards. "Both the specialists he's seen in recent days have advised Ross still has 20/20 vision and Ross himself feels confident he is ready to play," team physiotherapist Tommy Simsek said.

"Ross will still need to undergo a medical procedure on his eye to remove the pterygium before it gets any larger. "He'll have surgery following the Test which rule him out of cricket for approximately four to six weeks."

New Zealand, like Pakistan, were short of runs in the first Test but declared themselves delighted with the "world-class" seam attack of Trent Boult, Tim Southee, Neil Wagner and Colin de Grandhomme, suggesting no change there.

"The way the four seamers in particular got into spells, held their areas for long periods ... was world class and it certainly was a huge effort," said captain Kane Williamson. Both sides head to Australia after the Test, where New Zealand will play three ODIs and Pakistan three Tests as well as a series of limited-over matches. — AFP



BULAWAYO: Sri Lanka batsman Niroshan Dickwella is in action during the fifth match of triangular one-day international series between Sri Lanka and West Indies at the Queens Sports Club in Bulawayo, yesterday. — AFP

S LANKA SNATCH THRILLING VICTORY OVER WINDIES

BULAWAYO: Sri Lanka took three wickets in the last three overs to snatch a thrilling one-run victory over West Indies in the triangular one-day series yesterday.

Niroshan Dickwella and Kusal Mendis both scored 94 runs as Sri Lanka posted 330 for seven from their 50 overs but for the second game running, West Indies worked themselves into a winning position before falling agonisingly short of their target as they finished on 329 for nine.

Needing 10 runs off the final over bowled by Nuwan Pradeep, Suleiman Benn belted the third delivery for six to leave the West Indies requiring three runs from the final three balls.

But amid a frantic finish they could only manage one more run and must now battle hosts Zimbabwe on Friday to determine who will play Sri Lanka in Sunday's Tri-Series final.

A sparkling maiden ODI century from West Indies opener Evin Lewis (148 from 122 balls) was in vain as captain Jason Holder (45 not out) was the only other batsman to get past 30 in the innings. As they had done in their last match against Zimbabwe, when they could only manage three from the final over to tie, West Indies failed to close out the match.

Lewis was one of three run outs in the innings that came at crucial times and kept Sri Lanka in the game.

Dickwella and Mendis shared a 107-run part-

NHL results/standings		
Scoreboard at close of play in the fifth Triangular Series match between Sri Lanka and West Indies yesterday in Bulawayo, Zimbabwe.		
Sri Lanka Innings		
D. de Silva c&nb K. Brathwaite	58	E. Lewis run out (K. Mendis, Dickwella)
K. Perera b Gabriel	7	K. Brathwaite b Gunaratne
N. Dickwella lbw b Holder	94	S. Hope run out (Pradeep)
K. Mendis c Hope b Nurse	94	J. Carter run out (Tharanga)
S. Jayasuriya b C. Brathwaite	9	R. Powell lbw b N. Kulasekara
U. Tharanga c Nurse b Holder	26	J. Holder not out
A. Gunaratne c R. Powell b Holder	6	C. Brathwaite b N. Kulasekara
S. Pathirana not out	24	A. Nurse c Dickwella b Lakmal
Extras (lb-7 w-5)	12	S. Benn c D. de Silva b Pradeep
Total (for 7 wickets, 50 overs)	330	S. Gabriel not out
Fall of wickets: 1-18 K. Perera, 2-123 D. de Silva, 3-230 N. Dickwella, 4-258 S. Jayasuriya, 5-277 K. Mendis, 6-291 A. Gunaratne, 7-330 U. Tharanga.		Extras (lb-6 w-15)
Did not bat: N. Kulasekara, N. Pradeep, S. Lakmal		Total (for 9 wickets, 50 overs)
Bowling: S. Gabriel 5-0-29-1(w-1); J. Holder 10-0-57-3; C. Brathwaite 7-0-64-1(w-2); A. Nurse 8-0-58-1; K. Brathwaite 10-0-56-1(w-1); S. Benn 10-0-59-0(w-1).		Fall of wickets: 1-63 J. Charles, 2-133 K. Brathwaite, 3-175 S. Hope, 4-198 J. Carter, 5-224 R. Powell, 6-262 E. Lewis, 7-307 C. Brathwaite, 8-312 A. Nurse, 9-328 S. Benn.
West Indies Innings		Bowling: N. Kulasekara 10-0-73-2(w-7); S. Lakmal 10-0-67-2(w-3); S. Jayasuriya 4-0-20-0(w-1); N. Pradeep 10-0-65-1(w-3); S. Pathirana 7-0-51-0; A. Gunaratne 9-0-47-1(w-1).
J. Charles c Tharanga b Lakmal	26	

nership for the third wicket as Sri Lanka posted a formidable 330 in their innings.

Dickwella fell six runs short of a century as he

was trapped leg before wicket by Holder and Mendis then also missed out as he edged a delivery from Ashley Nurse. — Reuters



ADELAIDE: Cricket South Africa chief executive Haroon Lorgat (L) speaks at a press conference with South Africa's cricket captain Faf du Plessis (R) ahead of the third Test cricket match between Australia and South Africa in Adelaide yesterday. — AFP

DU PLESSIS DENIES CHEATING, SAYS MADE 'SCAPEGOAT'

ADELAIDE: South Africa captain Faf du Plessis said yesterday he had been made a 'scapegoat' by the International Cricket Council and denied any wrongdoing after being found guilty of ball-tampering during the second test against Australia.

Du Plessis, who was sanctioned for the same offence in 2013, was charged last week after footage emerged from the Hobart test of him applying saliva to the ball with a mint in his mouth.

Cricketers in the field are permitted to, and routinely do, 'shine' one side of the ball by applying saliva with their fingers and rubbing it on their uniforms to encourage the ball to swing in the air when it is bowled. However, it is forbidden to use 'artificial' substances to work on the ball. After a marathon ICC hearing in Adelaide on Tuesday, the 32-year-old was fined his entire match fee but cleared to play in the series finale in Adelaide.

The ICC verdict was defended by its South African Chief Executive David Richardson as a "line in the sand" but current and former players slammed the decision, saying every team shined the ball in the same way. Du Plessis, standing in for injured regular skipper AB de Villiers, expressed regret that the case had taken away from his team's series-winning triumph in Australia and said he had never intended to cheat. "I still completely disagree with (the verdict)," Du Plessis told a media conference in Adelaide in calm and measured tones. "I felt like I've done nothing wrong. It's not like I was trying to cheat or anything, I was shining the ball. "It's something that all cricketers do. "Our mouths are always full of sugar, I think it's such a grey area in the laws of cricket.

"I just ask for that everyone gets treated the same way. I think that's fair.

"Obviously the ICC has taken a stance against me, to use me probably as a scape-

goat now, but all you can ask for is that everyone gets treated the same."

BIG DEBATE

Sitting beside Du Plessis, Cricket South Africa Chief Executive Haroon Lorgat said he had asked the skipper to hold off from appealing the charge pending further information from the ICC.

"We will pick up this topic with the ICC," Lorgat, a former chief executive of the sport's global governing body, said.

"It's a big academic debate about this.

"I am personally aware of the pervasiveness of this issue. I get stories told all the time." South Africa wrapped up the series 2-0 by thrashing Australia by an innings and 80 runs in Hobart last week, with the touring side's bowlers dominating.

"I suppose the thing that's most disappointed us is that we've dominated and played exceptionally well," said Du Plessis.

"That's taken all the shine away from that, excuse the pun," he added, breaking into a wry smile as reporters chuckled.

Du Plessis was backed by Australia captain Steve Smith, who denied his team had ever complained about the tactic.

"I've seen Faf's comments in his press conference ... We along with every other team around the world shine the ball in the same way," Smith told reporters.

The charge laid by Richardson last week angered the South African camp, as did the close attention from local journalists, one of whom clashed with a team security guard at Adelaide Airport after the Proteas touched down on Monday. "Thanks for all the love last week," Du Plessis said with irony to reporters. "What happened at the airport was pretty disappointing ... Because I was never really going to be able to give any answers (before the hearing).

"I did feel there was a sense of (the media) looking for a reaction." — Reuters

PATEL REPLACES INJURED SAHA AS INDIA KEEPER

MUMBAI: India have called up wicketkeeper Parthiv Patel for the third test against England after Wriddhiman Saha was ruled out of the match in Mohali with a thigh strain, the country's cricket board (BCCI) said yesterday.

Saha replaced Mahendra Singh Dhoni as India's test wicketkeeper after the former captain retired from the five-day format at the end of

2014. He has played 20 tests for India but will be unavailable for the match starting on Saturday. "BCCI medical team confirms that India wicketkeeper Wriddhiman Saha developed a strain in his left thigh during the second match... played against England at Visakhapatnam," the board said in a statement. "As a precautionary measure, Saha has been advised rest and will not play in

the next test match of the series." Patel became test cricket's youngest wicketkeeper when he made his debut as a 17-year-old against England in 2002 and has gone on to play 19 more tests for the country, the last in Sri Lanka in 2008.

The hosts lead the five-match series against England 1-0 after winning the second test in Visakhapatnam by 246 runs. — Reuters



VISHAKHAPATNAM: In this photograph taken on November 19, 2016 India's wicketkeeper Wriddhiman Saha (L) watches as England's Jonny Bairstow (C) plays a shot during the second Test cricket match between India and England in Vishakhapatnam. Saha was yesterday ruled out of the third Test against England, prompting the selectors to recall Parthiv Patel. — AFP