

Quick Read

Jose Mourinho sacked as Manchester United manager



MANCHESTER: Manchester United have sacked manager Jose Mourinho after the club made their worst start to a season in almost 30 years, the Premier League club announced on Tuesday. The 55-year-old Portuguese's last match in charge was the 3-1 defeat by

league leaders Liverpool on Sunday which left them 19 points behind their opponents. It is United's worst start in the league since 1990 and even his ambition of reaching the top four and a Champions League qualification spot is in danger with the club 11 points adrift of those places. Despite the club having reached the Champions League knockout stages -- they face an intimidating last-16 tie with Paris Saint-Germain -- a mix of the results, dressing-room discord and criticism of the board's transfer policy proved potent factors in the decision to dismiss him. "Manchester United announces that manager Jose Mourinho has left the club with immediate effect," a club statement said. "The club would like to thank Jose for his work during his time at Manchester United and to wish him success in the future. "A new caretaker manager will be appointed until the end of the current season, while the club conducts a thorough recruitment process for a new, full-time manager." —AFP

Injury fears for Pakistan ahead of South Africa series



JOHANNESBURG: Injury fears hover over the Pakistan cricket team as fast bowler Mohammad Abbas and spinner Shadab Khan continue to be in doubt for the first Test against South Africa. According to sources, Abbas is nursing a shoulder issue while Shadab has a groin injury which could lead to them sitting out the three-day practice match against Cricket South Africa Invitation XI starting tomorrow. Opener Fakhar Zaman is also suffering from a knee problem, but he is expected to play the practice match. The players are currently in Benoni for the practice match. It is the only game for the tourists before the first of three Tests starts in Centurion on December 26. Pakistan seek batting form in South Africa tour opener The Tests will be followed by five one-day internationals in which both teams will be looking to settle on combinations ahead of the Cricket World Cup in England and Wales, starting on May 30. There will also be three T20 internationals — a format in which Pakistan top the international rankings.

Test squad: Sarfraz Ahmed (captain/wicketkeeper), Asad Shafiq, Azhar Ali, Babar Azam, Faheem Ashraf, Fakhar Zaman, Haris Sohail, Hasan Ali, Imam-ul-Haq, Shan Masood, Mohammad Abbas, Mohammad Amir, Mohammad Rizwan, Shadab Khan, Shaheen Afridi, Yasir Shah. —APP

No Imran, Miandad waiting to replace Sarfraz: Akram



MULTAN: Former Pakistan skipper Wasim Akram on Tuesday said that Sarfraz Ahmed should continue captaining the national side in all three formats of the game. While speaking to media in Multan, when one of the reporters asked Akram what his position was on Shahid Afridi's comments where he said that Sarfraz should leave

Test captaincy and focus only on one-day internationals and T20s, Akram said, "I have been hearing about this for the last month or two. If not Sarfraz then who? Somebody give me a name of who would replace Sarfraz." "There are no Imran Khan or Javed Miandad waiting in line to replace him," Akram added. "Sarfraz is playing good cricket. The upcoming tour to South Africa will be very challenging." Earlier, Afridi had said that Sarfraz should focus on ODI and T20 cricket and leave Test captaincy. "I favoured his captaincy in all three formats earlier. But now we have the World Cup coming up. —Agencies

Is Shah Mehmood Qureshi's son eying the sixth PSL team?



MULTAN: There seems to be another contender in line for 'The Sixth Team', formerly known as Multan Sultans, for the upcoming edition of Pakistan Super League (PSL), Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf leader Jhangir Khan Tareen's son Ali Tareen has already expressed interest in bidding for the sixth team, but now, he may have found a competitor. Foreign Minister Shah Mehmood Qureshi's son Zain Hussain Qureshi has hinted at a possible interest in acquiring the franchise. In an ambiguous tweet posted earlier, the younger Qureshi said that he wants the sixth team to stay in Multan. "South Punjab has given Pakistan some great cricketers... the sixth franchise must stay in Multan. PSL can do with some sarai ki tarqa," Zain Qureshi tweeted. Not too long ago, Ali Tareen had said he would be interested in buying the sixth PSL franchise. —APP

Australia level India series with first Test win since tampering scandal

Australia 326 (Harris 70, Head 58, Ishant 4-41) and 243 (Khawaja 72, Shami 6-56) beat India 283 (Kohli 123, Rahane 51, Lyon 5-67) and 140 (Lyon 3-39, Starc 3-46) by 146 runs

PERTH: Australia beat India by 146 runs in Perth Tuesday to level the series with their first Test win since the ball-tampering 'sandpapergate' scandal that rocked international cricket.

Set 287 to win, India resumed at 115 for five on the final day and never threatened to pull off a miraculous victory, losing their last five wickets for just 21 runs.

They were dismissed for 140, with spinner Nathan Lyon claiming 3-39 to finish with eight wickets for the match and guide the home team to a drought-breaking success, their first in seven Tests spanning almost 10 months.

It was Australian captain Tim Paine's first Test win in five matches since taking over from the suspended Steve Smith in South Africa, and also the first victory for new coach Justin Langer, coming in his hometown. Australia's previous Test win was against South Africa at St George's Park in March. It was during the following Test at Newlands that Cameron Bancroft was caught using sandpaper to alter the ball and Australian cricket was plunged into turmoil. The scandal led to lengthy suspensions from Cricket Australia for Bancroft, Smith and opener David Warner and saw



PERTH: Tim Paine and Virat Kohli shake hands

Paine appointed as skipper just months after being recalled to the side.

Australia's best result in the four previous Tests since the scandal was narrowly hanging on for a draw against Pakistan in Dubai. They had also won only six of 22 one-day internationals and Twenty20 matches since the scandal. Having already lost star batsman, captain and first innings

centurion Virat Kohli for 17 on the fourth day, during which he engaged in extended verbal jousting with Paine while the latter was batting, India's hope rested on overnight batsmen Hanuma Vihari and Rishabh Pant.

Tail folds However, Vihari added just four to his overnight score and fell to Mitchell Starc (3-46) for 28. The right-han-

der tried to flick the ball through the leg side and only succeeded in ballooning a simple catch to Marcus Harris at midwicket.

Knowing he was running out of partners, Pant tried to force the issue but miswicked a drive off Nathan Lyon low to midwicket, where Peter Handscomb dived to his left and took another excellent catch, having been the man that took the contentious catch in slips to remove Kohli in the Indian first innings. His dismissal for 30 left only India's notoriously fragile tail with exactly 150 needed and ended any hope of them pulling off an unlikely win on a lively pitch exhibiting spells of variable bounce. Umesh Yadav lasted 23 balls until he tamely parried a return catch to Starc for two and India slid to 139 for eight. Ishant Sharma was in no mood to hang around and backed right away, edging a Pat Cummins (2-25) delivery through to wicket-keeper Paine for a duck.

The last man to fall was Jasbir Bumrah, who went for a big shot and only succeeded in skying a chance back to bowler Pat Cummins. The series now heads to Melbourne, with the famous Boxing Day Test starting on December 26 and India looking to regroup as they seek to win their first-ever



WELLINGTON: Angelo Mathews and Kusal Mendis walk off after having batted through the day during first Test against New Zealand.

Mendis and Mathews bat all day to give Sri Lanka hope

WELLINGTON: On day four in Wellington, facing a monumental first-innings deficit, and in what seemed like a hopeless match situation, Kusal Mendis and Angelo Mathews went to the trenches. They absorbed New Zealand's many attacks. They delivered a few glancing blows of their own. They made a hundred apiece, and for only the 22nd time in the history of Test cricket, they batted out an entire day without losing a wicket.

Their partnership - 577 balls in - is worth 246. It is easily Sri Lanka's best against New Zealand, and has allowed the visitors to go into the fifth day of an intriguing Test with a fighting chance of securing a draw. They are still 37 runs away from making New Zealand bat again, but will be buoyed no doubt by the weather forecast, which suggests rain will arrive around mid-day, if not before. Mathews was in a dogfight virtually the entire time he was at the crease, hit by balls last night and in the first session on Tuesday, defending with astounding stoicism - but Mendis played a more attractive innings, at least in the morning. While Mathews was struggling to work himself into the innings, playing and missing, and failing to get out of the way of some of New Zealand's many bouncers, Mendis struck sublime straight boundaries to prevent the quicks from settling, and made sure to climb into a few commanding pull shots as well.

There were a few occasions through the day when Mendis slowed down, and Mathews took the scoring burden upon himself, but after lunch, both had basically decided that nothing New Zealand sent their way - not another spell of Neil Wagner bodyline, not another spell of Tim Southee probing outside off, not Ajaz Patel's disciplined lines and lengths - were going to shake them out of their calm. Mathews has batted like this before, of course, and has played several match-saving innings in his career, though it has been a while since the last one. For Mendis, this was a new sort of innings entirely - one which, at least since after the lunch break, was focused largely around his defence.

Fittingly, the pair were separated only by a run at the end of the day. Mathews had 117 off 293 balls; Mendis 116 off 284. The younger partner had led Mathews for much of the day, but Mathews took more of the strike in the third session. Central to both batsmen's survival was their judgement of length. Both Wagner and Southee repeatedly went to the short ball attack, with virtually no seam movement on offer from this surface now. —AFP

Restoring international cricket top priority: PCB MD Wasim Khan

DUBAI: Newly appointed managing director of Pakistan Cricket Board (PCB) Wasim Khan has said that bringing back international cricket to the country is his top priority.

"With Pakistan having lots of ups and downs over the last 20 years, it is critical that we get a level of international cricket back in the country," Wasim said in an interview with The Daily Telegraph.

"It may well be small steps getting county teams touring and visiting the fantastic national academy. Could we get an MCC team to tour? Or could we have a small number of international matches to start with rather than a whole series? Could teams play one or two one-day internationals on their way through to the United Arab Emirates?"

The 44-year old, who serves as the chief executive of Leicestershire County Cricket Club, continued, "I appreciate countries have a lot of security issues but, with military-style security on offer, I am keen to understand where the gaps are so we can address them. It is interesting for me to get to the bottom of those things and see what I can influence and the conversations I need to have with other countries so we can understand what we need to do to ensure



they can come back to Pakistan." Speaking about the love Pakistan holds for cricket, Wasim said the international community should not underestimate how important the sport is to the nation. "There is an embarrassment factor that cricket is being played in another country," he added.

The PCB managing director further said that he is hopeful teams like England will visit Pakistan in the future to play cricket.

ing a couple of games in Pakistan, that would be huge. A few years ago people were talking about how important it is to have a strong West Indies. To have a vibrant Pakistan side is vital, too," he added.

Commenting on Prime Minister Imran Khan's efforts towards restoring international cricket in the country, Wasim said there has been a lack of investment in facilities and infrastructure because people are not willing to spend because of a lack of international cricket. Wasim Khan appointed PCB managing director "There has been a lack of investment in facilities and infrastructure because people have asked, what is the point? Why spend money when we don't have international cricket? So, it is about bringing hope back. Imran Khan is trying to professionalise institutions and bring hope back to the country and making decisions based on merit," Wasim said. "My appointment hopefully proves that. The easier decision would have been to appoint someone in Pakistan but there is a real appetite for change. That will be a big part of my role and Imran Khan has led that from the front. I would not have considered this role if someone like him was not at the helm." —Daily Telegraph



LAHORE: Players of Kazakhstan and Nepal teams struggle to get hold on the ball during Haier Hockey Series Open 2018. Kazakhstan hockey team won the match by 6-0 at the National Hockey Stadium.

Tearful South Korean Olympic champion tells court of coach abuse

SEOUL: Double Olympic gold medalist Shim Suk-hee broke down in tears as she told a South Korean court of the years of abuse she suffered at the hands of her coach.

Aged 21, the short-track skater has four Olympic medals to her name, including relay golds at both Sochi 2014 and on home ice at this year's Pyeongchang Games. But she told a court that her coach Cho Jae-beom had been beating her since she was seven - on one occasion breaking her fingers - leaving her "deeply traumatised".

His violence "kept escalating" as she grew older, she said at the hearing in Suwon, south of Seoul.

"He frequently beat me and verbally abused me since I was seven ... at one point beating me with an ice hockey stick and breaking my fingers," she said. Another time he hurled metal nuts at her, ripping open her forehead. Just weeks ahead of the Pyeongchang Olympics, "he kicked and punched me so hard, espe-

cially on my head, that I even thought 'I could die here'," she said, breaking down. South Korea is a regional sporting power and is regularly in the top 10 medal table places at the summer and winter Olympics. It is the only Asian country other than Japan to have hosted both Games. But in an already intensely competitive society, winning is everything in



its sports community - where coaches hold immense sway over athletes' careers, and physical and verbal abuse are known to be rife. Those who speak out are liable to be sidelined and castigated as "traitors". Cho admitted to police that he beat Shim and three other athletes at their training camp to "improve their performance" and was given 10 months in prison for assault at his trial in October. But he appealed against the sentence. Shim said she had been "brainwashed" by Cho who threatened to end her sporting career if she spoke out, saying she had been "gripped by extreme fear and anxiety" about Cho all her life.

"I'm getting psychological treatment for depression, anxiety, sleep disorder and post-traumatic stress disorder," she said. The pre-Pyeongchang beating left her concussed and she blamed it for affecting her performance at the Games, where she failed to match her medal haul from Sochi, which included silver in the 1500m and bronze in the 1000m. —AFP