

Ireland seeks clarification about disappointing assessment of their bid

South Africa eyes 2023 prize as bitter battle ends

LONDON, Nov 14, (AFP): The fog of war that has afflicted the race to host the 2023 Rugby World Cup will lift on Wednesday and is expected to reveal South Africa as outright victor to stage the quadrennial showpiece.

Two weeks ago the Rugby World Cup board released a report placing South Africa first across a range of criteria on which the candidates were assessed, ranging from stadiums to financial assurances.

France, second, and Ireland, third, came out swinging in response to the report and have been as combative as their players on the pitch, slamming the findings that placed South Africa in the driving seat.

Had they been on the field of play — where rugby players distinguish themselves from footballers for their

RUGBY

polite acceptance of the referee's decision — the Irish and French would have earned at least a sin-binning.

World Rugby replied with clarifications but it is now up to the 39 votes on its Council to decide whether they accept the unanimous decision of the Rugby World Cup board to award South Africa the hosting rights for the second time.

South Africa hosted the iconic 1995 edition — which saw the first black president of the country, Nelson Mandela, adorned in a Springbok jersey, then seen as one of the pillars of white apartheid rule — handing the trophy to white South Africa captain Francois Pienaar.

South Africa vice-president Cyril Ramaphosa, one of the architects of the relatively peaceful transition from apartheid, said a 2023 World Cup in the country would serve as affirmation of much of what the late Mandela stood for.

The Irish too have invested a huge amount of political capital into the bid with Prime Minister Leo Varadkar leading the bid presentation and securing the support of his British counterpart Theresa May — plus the cross border support of all the Northern Irish parties.

The Irish, probably for the first time in bid history, cited Albert Einstein in their letter seeking clarification about the disappointing assessment of their bid.

Philip Browne, the dynamic CEO of the Irish Rugby Football Union (IRFU), admitted in an interview with AFP last Friday that not even the great man could help reconcile World Rugby's vision of the tournament with Ireland's views.



Top & above: Photos taken during the RunKuwait initiative event.

Porsche Centre Kuwait supports the RunKuwait initiative

KUWAIT CITY, Nov 14: Porsche Centre Kuwait, Behbehani Motors Company, partnered with RunKuwait, the annual charity initiative spearheaded by Fawzia Sultan Healthcare Network (FSHN), a non-profit healthcare institution in the country. Nearly 2,300 participants took part in this year's race, which took place on Saturday, Nov 11, and helped raise funds to support the treatment and care of children with dis-

abilities referred for rehabilitation at FSHN's Children's Evaluation and Rehabilitation Center (CERC).

Commenting on the sponsorship, Hany Marie, Marketing Manager at Porsche Centre Kuwait, said: "Porsche Centre Kuwait is once again proud to support a cause that integrates both performance and altruism through a fun charity event for participants from all walks of life."

Supporting the RunKuwait initiative is in line with the company's corporate social responsibility philosophy and their support is ignited by the noble cause behind the run. For the past seven years, the initiative has raised funds to support multiple community initiatives, and since 2013, RunKuwait dedicated all its efforts to support the work of CERC, resulting in free healthcare services provided to 20 percent of the children

admitted to the facility, with a further 60 percent of treatments subsidized by the initiative.

Porsche Centre Kuwait currently supports multiple socially responsible initiatives including, Porsche Kids Driving School and Premier Sport Academy which are aimed towards promoting and instilling responsible driving ethics and the spirit of sportsmanship respectively from the grassroots level onwards.

Sri Lanka dream of winning India Test

Kohli's side to keep winning run intact on home soil

KOLKATA, Nov 14, (AFP): Captain Dinesh Chandimal is dreaming of Sri Lanka making history by winning a Test in India — despite being huge underdogs against the world's top-ranked side when the series begins in Kolkata on Thursday.

Sri Lanka lost all nine matches — three Tests, five one-day internationals and a Twenty20 international — as they were humiliated at home by Virat Kohli's tourists from late July to September.

The island nation have still never won a Test on Indian soil but they head for Eden Gardens with renewed hopes after winning both Tests against Pakistan in the UAE last month and Chandimal believes dreams can come true.

"We have never won a Test in India. So it's a dream for us to win one this time. We need to start well in this series," he declared.

Sri Lanka lost all three home Tests this year against India inside four days with Chandimal terming it their "worst ever" series.

Coach Nic Pothas, who took over after

Africa and England next year.

"First target is to win the first Test and get momentum to win the series," wicketkeeper Wriddhiman Saha said on Monday.

With leading all-rounder Hardik Pandya rested for the first two matches, the focus will be on senior spinners Ravichandran Ashwin and Ravindra Jadeja, who were rested for the last month's limited-overs matches against Australia and New Zealand.

The second Test begins on November 24 in Nagpur with the final match starting in Delhi on December 2. The two sides will also play three one-day internationals and three Twenty20 matches.

India (from): Virat Kohli (capt), Lokesh Rahul, Murali Vijay, Shikhar Dhawan, Cheteshwar Pujara, Ajinkya Rahane, Rohit Sharma, Wriddhiman Saha, Ravichandran Ashwin, Ravindra Jadeja, Kuldeep Yadav, Mohammed Shami, Umesh Yadav, Bhuvneshwar Kumar, Ishant Sharma.

Sri Lanka (from): Dinesh Chandimal (capt), Dimuth Karunaratne, Dhananjaya de Silva, Sadeera Samarawickrama, Angelo Mathews, Lahiru Thirimanne, Rangana Herath, Suranga Lakmal, Dilruwan Perera, Lahiru Gamage, Lakshan Sandakan, Vishwa Fernando, Dasun Shanaka, Niroshan Dickwella, Roshan Silva.



Sri Lanka's Lakshan Sandakan bowls at the nets during a practice session prior to their first cricket Test match against India at the Eden Gardens in Kolkata, India, on Nov 14. (AP)

CRICKET

Graham Ford left in June, said the India debacle had taught his team vital lessons.

"We learnt how Indian team does well and the areas we needed to improve," he said.

"It's internal — the discipline, the culture and how the teams stick together," Pothas said.

"The mistake you can make here is come and be infatuated with the Indian side and concentrating too much on them. We know they are a good side. But we played them months ago," the South African added.

Fifties from Dimuth Karunaratne, Angelo Mathews and Niroshan Dickwella gave Sri Lanka a solid start to the tour in their two-day game against the Board President's XI in Kolkata.

All-rounder Mathews, who is returning from a calf injury that made him miss the Pakistan Tests, will be employed solely as a batsman.

Veteran Rangana Herath will lead Sri Lanka's spin attack, supported by Dilruwan Perera and left-arm unorthodox Lakshan Sandakan.

Kohli's India are looking to consolidate their top Test ranking and keep their winning run intact on home soil.

The Indians have not lost a home series in any format since being beaten by South Africa in one-dayers in 2015.

Sri Lanka will be India's last home challenge before heading off on tough tours to South

Tata Motors Global Customer Service Camp promo banner.

Target to serve over 25,000 customers across 900 touch points

Tata Motors announces 2nd edition Global Service Camp

MUMBAI, Nov 14: In an endeavour to continuously provide best customer experience for its commercial vehicle range, Tata Motors today announced its second edition of its Global Service Camp, which will be held from Nov 21 to 23 with a target to service over 25,000 commercial vehicles across 900 touch points in over 40 countries.

During the three-day long global service camp, commercial vehicle customers of Tata Motors can avail free comprehensive vehicle health check-ups, free labor and special schemes on lubes along with various value-added services. The company will also offer attractive discounts on Tata Genuine Parts and incentivize owners who report with their vehicle to the service camp. In addition, the camp

will also offer 'High Mileage' Awards as a recognition for our customers.

Through the camp, customers can avail special pricing on the company's range of commercial vehicles and experience some of Tata Motors' new products and services. The service camp will also act as a platform for various training initiatives for drivers cum operators, introducing and briefing them on new commercial vehicle technologies, safety practices and vehicle productivity.

Rudrarup Maatra, Head, International Business, Commercial Vehicles, Tata Motors said, "With the immense success of the inaugural edition in 2016, we are excited to announce the second edition of Global Service Camp in 2017. This camp not only allows us to address the servicing needs of our customers' vehicles, but also gives us an op-

portunity to interact with all our stakeholders and assess their needs to better our product and service offerings going forward. It also serves as a good platform to strengthen our brand presence."

With the most extensive range of commercial vehicles arising from day-to-day needs, Tata Motors is among the top 10 truck and bus manufacturers globally. With vast global experience, the company brings a deep understanding of customer expectations from diverse markets and is well positioned to cater to the ever changing automotive norms and commercial vehicle trends across the globe. The company continues to invest in its products and sales & service network with an aggressive customer centric approach of anticipating customer requirements.

20th CETAA cricket to start on November 17

KUWAIT CITY, Nov 14: The 20th Prof Ramachandran Memorial Cricket Tournament (RMC) conducted by College of Engineering Trivandrum Alumni Association (CETAA) and sponsored by GTE OLAYAN Co will begin at the Boulevard Cricket Grounds, Salmiya on Nov 17. CETAA is proud to inform that this tournament has been conducted without a break for the last 20 years in spite of many adverse circumstances that arose from time to time.

The eagerly awaited cricket tournament conducted among the 8 Engineering Alumni Associations from Kerala marks the start of the engineers sports calendar in Kuwait for the season 2017-2018. This time the organisers have changed the format to bring in more competitive interest by conducting RMC as 2 separate tournaments viz the RMC cup and the CETAA

Cup. Last year's semifinalists will compete for the RMC cup while the other 4 teams will fight it out for the CETAA cup. The teams will play on a league basis in their respective groups with the top 2 teams from each group to play the respective finals. The exciting news for cricket lovers this year is that the tournament will be conducted at the picturesque Boulevard complex using white balls and coloured clothing in a day and night basis providing entertainment for the spectators in plenty.

Defending champions AECK and KEA will spearhead the challenge for the RMC Cup. TEC and TKM the other 2 teams in the group will try to ensure that they aren't mere pushovers. The other 4 teams MACE, NSS, CETAA and NIT will fight it out for the CETAA cup and all the 4 teams will fancy their chances. The matches

in both the groups is expected to be evenly balanced and well fought adding to the quality of the tournament.

With the players and spectator interest on the rise, GTE Olayan Co will once again be sponsoring the tournament for the 20th consecutive year. The league matches will be of 12 overs a side duration while the final will be of 15 overs based on prevailing ICC rules and regulations (including "free hits" for no balls). All in all cricket buffs can look forward to some thrilling action scheduled to end on Nov 30, 2017.

The opening day's play will start at 10:00 am with a match between NIT and NSS while the last match of the day will be between KEA and TKM at 8:30 pm. The teams line-up and inaugural function will be at 4:00 pm at the half way stage after the 4th match.