



Indiateam arrived Ashok Vatika is the place where Ravana kept the Sita captive. Ashok Vatika is a garden in the Sita Eliya in Sri Lanka

Indian Team members visit place of Sita's captivity ahead of 3rd Test

KANDY, AUG 11 /- Members of the Indian cricket team enjoyed some down time by paying a visit to Ashok Vatika, a garden in Sita Eliya in the former kingdom of Ravana as mentioned in the Vishnu Purana and Hindu epic, Ramayana, ahead of the third and final Test against Sri Lanka, starting on Saturday. Mohammed Shami and Umesh Yadav posted pictures on their social media handles of their visit to the place where Ravana kept the Sita captive. India have already clinched the three-match series by taking a 2-0 unassailable lead and will now look to complete the whitewash. Indian skipper Virat Kohli is absent from all the pictures and it seems didn't make the trip. India won the first two Tests without breaking a sweat and will expect a similar outcome in the third Test at Pallekele. So it came as no surprise that the Indian players looked in a relaxed mood and seemed to be enjoying the outing along with their families.

No problems playing Sri Lanka ODI, Kohli clears air

KANDY, AUG 11 /- India captain Virat Kohli today made it clear that he has no problems playing the upcoming limited overs series against Sri Lanka amid speculation that he may be rested keeping in mind a long season ahead. "Who said I am not playing? I don't know where this came from, but I have no problems in playing," Kohli's forthright answer to a query regarding team selection made it clear as to where he stood on the issue. The Indian team will be selected on August 13. There is a possibility that senior spinners like Ravichandran Ashwin and Ravindra Jadeja will be rested along with pacer Mohammed Shami. "We (team management and selectors) are going to sit down on selection soon and we certainly have plans in mind and combinations that we want to speak about. So as captain, I am definitely in the thick of things and knowing what to speak to the committee about," he signed off. (PTI)

BCCI is not above God, says angry Sreesanth

NEW DELHI, AUG 11 /- Anirate Sreesanth today vowed to make a competitive comeback despite BCCI's decision to appeal against the lifting of the life-ban on the tainted pacer. Yesterday the BCCI decided to appeal to the Division Bench of Kerala High Court against lifting of life ban on the 34-year-old. "BCCI I'm not begging, I'm asking to give my livelihood back. It's my right. I guess are going to God. I will play again.?????????????" an angry Sreesanth wrote on his twitter page. "Cmon @bcci this is worst u can do to anyone that too who is proven innocent not just once but again and again. don't know why u doing this?" he lamented further. (PTI)

Sri Lanka pin hopes on quicks to avoid whitewash

KANDY, AUG 11 /- Virat Kohli and his men stand on the cusp of history, aiming to become the first Indian team to complete a whitewash in an overseas three-Test series when they meet a below-par Sri Lanka in the third and final match, starting here tomorrow. India have won the first two Tests by comprehensive margins - by 305 runs in the first and 53 runs in Colombo. The island nation, which has been going through a transition phase for quite some time, has decided to roll-out a green top with an aim to salvage some pride from the inconsequential game. Their saving grace could be inclement weather after a spell of showers led to India's practice session be-

ing cancelled today. By including pacers Dushantha Chameera and Lahiru Gamage in their squad replacing the injured duo of Nuwan Pradeep and Rangana Herath, the Lankans are aiming to strike back with pace. Two days before the match, it was difficult to differentiate the 22-yards from the lush green outfield of the Pallekele stadium. The nature of the pitch may prompt Kohli to play his third specialist seamer in Bhuvneshwar Kumar in place of the suspended Ravindra Jadeja. Bhuvneshwar has done well in the few chances he has got in the Test team during the Kohli era. For seaming conditions, he has been Kohli's 'Go To Man'. However, there is a

possibility that Bhuvneshwar, with his decent batting ability, will replace Hardik Pandya with chinaman Kuldeep Yadav playing as the second spinner. Wrist spinner Kuldeep did wonderfully well on a bouncy Dharamsala track against Australia, where his four first-innings wickets proved to be decisive. The 28 Tests in which he has captained India since Kohli has not fielded the same XI. The pattern is unlikely to change in the 29th Test as well. How big a 2-0 series win will be is still debatable considering the quality of the opposition. But considering that India have never won a full Test series, 85 years since their debut in 1932, it will be praiseworthy if they go on to

win the final Test of the series. It will be interesting to note that India also do not have too many whitewashes at home to show for their efforts. In all, India have played four such series where they have won all Test matches. Two such series were under Mohammed Azharuddin's captaincy - 3-0 against England in 1993 and an identical margin versus Sri Lanka in 1994. India outplayed Australia 4-0 in the 2013 home series while Kohli led the side during the 3-0 rout of New Zealand, last year. Among their memorable overseas Test series (two or more victories) wins will be the Kapil Dev-led side winning 2-0 in a three-match series in England

**TEAMS**  
India: Virat Kohli (C), Shikhar Dhawan, K.L. Rahul, Cheteshwar Pujara, Ajinkya Rahane, Rohit Sharma, Ravichandran Ashwin, Wriddhiman Saha (wk), Umesh Yadav, Hardik Pandya, Bhuvneshwar Kumar, Mohammed Shami, Kuldeep Yadav, Adhiraj Mukund, Avar Patel.  
Sri Lanka: Dinesh Chandimal (C), Usul Tharanga, Dimuth Karunaratne, Kusal Mendis, Angelo Mathews, Lahiru Thirimanne, Dhananjaya Silva, Niroshan Dickwella (wk), Dilruwan Perera, Lahiru Kumara, Vishwa Fernando, Dushmanta Chameera, Chini Singge, Lakshan Sandakan, Malinda Puspakumara. (PTI)

In 1986, beating Pakistan 2-1 in 2004, 2-1 in Sri Lanka in 2015 and the first one - 3-1 in New Zealand under tiger Pataudi way back in 1967-68. When it came to two Test series, India have won 2-0 in Bangladesh (2004-05), Zimbabwe (2005-06) and Bangladesh again (2009-10). A win in the third Test will also strengthen chief coach Ravi Shastri's claim that "this team is capable of breaking new ground". It will be interesting if team management decides to shuffle the combination now that they have won the series. The team management may think of giving Adhiraj Mukund another chance while Rohit Sharma is still waiting to play his first Test since October.

Jadeja suspension: Kohli wants consistency in ICC rules

KANDY, AUG 11 /- Missing the services of premier spinner Ravindra Jadeja due to a suspension, Indian captain Virat Kohli today urged the International Cricket Council (ICC) to be more consistent in implementing rules pertaining to the players' code of conduct. "I think players have to be much more aware going ahead and just hoping that the guidelines are very similar from now on. Because it shouldn't vary according to how the situation is looked at," Kohli said in the pre-match press conference ahead of the third Test against Sri Lanka here. "So if it is consistent then I think it is going to be a good going ahead because players will obviously be more aware of how they need to conduct themselves on the field. It will only help the game get better," he added. World's No.1 Test bowler and all-rounder Jadeja was handed a one-match suspension for logging six demerit points in the last 24 months. His offences ranged from running on the pitch to throwing the ball dangerously at an opponent. As a result, he would be missing the third and final against Sri Lanka starting here tomorrow. Speaking on the suspension, Kohli said players should understand the ICC's rules but the governing body should show greater consistency while making such vital decisions. Kohli said with clarity on the rules, the players would be less prone to violating them. "Firstly we need to be very clear on what are the things that fall into it and what are the things that a player needs to keep in his mind while being on the field. Lot of things happen on the field, which is in the thick of things or heat of the moment you end up doing," he explained. "But you don't know what's going to cause



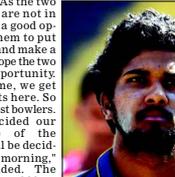
you not or two or three points. So I think the intent counts nowadays and that's something that players need to keep in mind. It might be very small thing but if the intent is to do something bad then obviously that is something that counts against the player," said Kohli. The series has been pocketed but Kohli ruled out making wholesale changes to the side in the inconsequential match. India won the first two Tests in Galle and Colombo comfortably and now have a chance to score a rare 3-0 overseas victory. And perhaps keen on clinching a clean sweep, Kohli said he would like to maintain continuity. "To play consistent cricket, you need to make sure that players are playing on a regular basis. Those who are performing and those who are doing well should continue in more games than not and to be consistent side I think we need to have continuity as well unless the situations where things are not controllable arise," Kohli said in a pre-match press conference. "So we certainly don't want to take anything lightly. We want to play the same kind of cricket that we have and hopefully retain the team that played the last game as much as we can. We are certainly not thinking of too many changes at all, especially in this format, because you don't want to start taking things for granted and lose that momentum," he added. Kohli rejected suggestions that this could demoralise players, who have not yet got a chance to play. "Managing players who don't get a chance is also a skill. It is not easy because everyone wants to play and luckily we have such players who are just waiting for opportunities. We don't have players who are happy to sit out," Kohli said.

We'll be giving out full effort to win 3rd Test: Chandimal

PALLEKELE, AUG 11 /- Sri Lanka skipper Dinesh Chandimal today said he is hoping to avoid a 0-3 Test series whitewash against India with assistance from a lively pitch and a young fast bowling attack. "Series is not yet over. As a captain, I don't like to lose. May be (whether) it's the world's number one team or number eight team, I want to win. We're giving out full effort but we cannot control the ultimate result," Chandimal said on the eve of the third and final Test here. "Pressure is always there. We are 2-0 down now but still we are really good team. As a team we are hoping to win this game. If we can do that, definitely we can get more confidence and go forward. We are looking forward to that." Sri Lanka have brought in pacers Dushmanta Chameera and Lahiru Gamage in place of injured Rangana Herath and Nuwan Pradeep. The hosts are also expected a lively wicket here, even though a lot of grass is shaved off the wicket. "Of course, Herath is a really big loss. But we have to manage players. He is suffering from a really stiff back. So we gave him a rest in this game. Lahiru Gamage and Vishwa Fernando are bowling well these days," he said. "As two senior bowlers are not in contention, it's a good opportunity for them to put up their best and make a contribution. I hope the two will grab the opportunity. "Most of the time, we get seaming wickets here. So maybe it suits fast bowlers. We haven't decided our team because of the weather. We will be deciding it tomorrow morning," Chandimal added. The captain said it would be a "difficult task" against India but he would take it as a challenge. "It's a difficult task but a real captain has to stay with the team at difficult moments. It's a big challenge for the whole team but if one or two youngsters can come out and shine to a level that we can win this game. "It will be a great moral booster to the whole team as well. We must not forget that fact that we are up against the world's number one team. We're also waiting to pick that win." Chandimal said although Sri Lanka were missing a lot of their key players, he would not like to use it as an excuse. "India is a really good team, especially in the last two to three years. And we have had a lot of bad luck with injuries. Asela Gunaratne in the first Test, and then Nuwan Pradeep, and

now Herath. When that happens, the captain, manager and selectors cannot get the right combination especially if you lose players like them. "They are really good players. We're struggling because of that, also, but we don't want to give excuses. We have a really good team for this game and we're looking forward to win this," he said. India will be missing the services of Ravindra Jadeja, who is serving his one-match suspension, and Chandimal said: "We all know Jadeja is the number one session on Thursday. We did practice yesterday at the indoor nets but our batsmen are not all that happy batting at indoor nets. We were to practice in the morning (today) but it rained and we lost the opportunity. However, the trainers gave us some exercises and we did them. "On the other hand, we thought it's good to come for to-"

day of a rest to the mind as well. I haven't had a look at the wicket because of the rain," said Chandimal. After the innings defeat in Colombo, the young Sri Lankan team met with former Sri Lankan cricketer Aravinda de Silva and received a pep talk. "He is a legend and you know he is one of the greatest batsmen that Sri Lanka has ever produced. We had a chat with him three days ago. After that players but he would take it as a challenge. "It's a difficult task but a real captain has to stay with the team at difficult moments. It's a big challenge for the whole team but if one or two youngsters can come out and shine to a level that we can win this game. "It will be a great moral booster to the whole team as well. We must not forget that fact that we are up against the world's number one team. We're also waiting to pick that win." Chandimal said although Sri Lanka were missing a lot of their key players, he would not like to use it as an excuse. "India is a really good team, especially in the last two to three years. And we have had a lot of bad luck with injuries. Asela Gunaratne in the first Test, and then Nuwan Pradeep, and



Sania Mirza posted a picture where she's enjoying an outing at Niagara Falls.

Montreal Masters: Rafael Nadal upset by Canadian Teen Shapovalov

MONTREAL, AUG 11 /- Canadian teenager Denis Shapovalov shocked top seeded Rafael Nadal to reach the quarter-finals of the ATP Montreal Masters tournament, spoiling the Spaniard's chances of returning to world number one. The 19-year-old Shapovalov, who needed a wild card to get into the tournament, continued his giant killing form at the hardcourt tournament by rallying to beat Nadal in three sets, 3-6, 6-4, 7-6 (7/4) on Thursday. Nadal, who had defeated Shapovalov Thursday, and then Chung Hyeon or Adrian Mannarino on Friday. Shapovalov's stunning upset against the reigning French Open champion came as a result of some inspired tennis in front of a boisterous home crowd who cheered his every shot. Shapovalov had just three wins this season

coming into the tournament. He quickly got on a roll in Montreal beating Brazil's Rogério Dutra Silva in the opening round 4-6, 7-6 (0/6), 6-4. He defeated former US Open winner Juan Martin Del Potro in the second round in straight sets 6-3, 7-6 (7/4) to set up the showdown with Nadal. Shapovalov won seven of the final eight points of the third set tiebreaker before closing out the match with a forehand winner down the line. He celebrated by falling onto his back then covering his face with his hands. Shapovalov blasted a total of nine aces, including ones on his second serve that handcuffed Nadal. He also had seven double faults and won 67 percent of his first serve points but had 77 percent of his first serve points but had just two aces and six double faults in the two hour, 45 minute center court match. Elsewhere on Thurs-

day, Roger Federer maintained his career-long winning streak over David Ferrer to advance to the quarter-finals after a three-set battle with the veteran Spaniard. Federer, 36, had never lost in 16 previous meetings with the 35-year-old Ferrer, whom he first defeated 14 years ago at the Vienna Indoor tournament. But while Ferrer managed to take the opening set - ending Federer's 32-set streak - the Swiss ace raised his game to win 4-6, 6-4, 6-2. "I actually feel really happy because I know I can play a lot better. David can play a lot better, too," Federer said. "We battled, both tried to find a way to win. You know, he had a good start, I had a better finish. A strange, a crazy, prone Federer was unable to generate his usual fiery energy on, and quickly found himself giving away early breaks to trail 4-1 in the first set.



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