

ICC should target America with Twenty20: Gus Logie

Former West Indian batsman Gus Logie says Twenty20 is the future and the International Cricket Council (ICC) should use it to popularise the game in the US to make cricket a truly global sport.

For him, Indian ODI captain Mahender Singh Dhoni is 'a jewel in the crown' of international cricket. 'Dhoni is already an icon in international cricket. He has done exceptionally well as a captain,' Logie, who as coach led Bermuda to a 2-1 victory in ODIs against Canada here this week, told IANS in an interview.

He said the Indian captain was an extremely gifted player. 'He is always very calm and never flustered. For this very, very rare quality in international cricket, he is a jewel in the crown of cricket. This man is destined for great heights as he has a level head on his shoulders,' Logie said.

Lauding the success of the Indian Premier League (IPL), the West Indian said Twenty20 was the only way to promote cricket around the world.

'The IPL has shown how popular this format of the game is. Look how the connoisseurs have liked for its sheer excitement. I feel Twenty20 is the way to give exposure to cricket around the world,' he said.

Making a comparison between cricket and football, he said: 'Look at the world cup in football where 30-odd teams are involved. But if you have eight or 10 teams for the world cup, you cannot call it a world sport.'

He suggested that the ICC should first help raise the level of the sport in all associate member nations by giving them more funds and technical support. 'Then, the ICC should target America which has a huge expatriate population. T20 will be very popular in America.'

According to him, Canada was poised to do well on the international stage. 'They have so much talent and so much base to choose from - they have expatriates from the Caribbean, India, Pakistan and Bangladesh. I see no reason why they won't do well against others, even full ICC members.'

As for Bermuda, he said cricket on the island nation faced many problems, including a small pool to choose from because of its 60,000-odd population, the popularity of football and tight policies on recruiting expatriate players.

'But we did well to qualify for the last world cup and hopefully we will do for the next world cup as well. I am sure our victory over Canada in ODIs will certainly excite people back home,' Logie said.

He called Vivian Richards the best of his generation. 'Going by records, you may judge a player is great. But Viv stood out for his sheer presence on the crease. Very few could be compared with him.'

For the former middle order batsman, Dennis Lillee, Richard Hadlee, Sunil Gavaskar, Imran Khan, Wasim Akram and Kapil Dev were other greats of his era.

Gurmukh Singh (© IANS / India eNews)