

BCCI mum as Dhoni plays hide and seek

The Indian cricket board treats the non-availability of Mahendra Singh Dhoni to play for East Zone in the Duleep Trophy as its internal matter and is unwilling to say anything.

Board secretary N. Srinivasan was livid when reminded of board's fiat that all contracted players should play in domestic tournaments as they are free from international commitments.

'I am not going to answer the question, this is an internal matter of the board and I can't tell everyone who is brushing his teeth and who is not,' a miffed Srinivasan told IANS when asked if the Indian skipper has been exempted from playing in domestic tournaments.

East Zone selection committee chairman Raja Venkat, too, hung up the phone, refusing to take the call on Dhoni who was not considered for selection after the zonal selectors could not get in touch with him. Even Jharkhand selector Jodh Singh could not throw any light on his whereabouts.

A day after the Duleep Trophy selection, Dhoni was found holidaying at his India teammate Robin Uthappa's estate in Sunticoppa in Coorg district of Karnataka.

The Duleep Trophy tournament begins Jan 22 and the East Zone selectors are hoping that Dhoni will get back to them and join the team.

In the absence of Dhoni, the selectors picked former India opener Shiv Sunder Das of Orissa to lead the side.

Sachin Tendulkar, Rahul Dravid and Zaheer Khan, have all turned out for their state sides in the Ranji Trophy knockout rounds after back-to-back series against Australia and England. Even former captain Sourav Ganguly came out of retirement to play for Bengal in a bid to help the side to qualify for the elite group.

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