



Did U Know?

The record winning sequence at a track and field event is 122, and Ed Moses of the USA is the proud holder of that feat. His winning streak continued from 1977 to 1987.



TALK TURKEY



Carlos Alberto Parreira
(Brazil football coach)
"Our players are the best in the world, so much so that they are imitated by others."



What to WATCH

- BTV**
SAFF Championship
Nepal v Bhutan
Live at 3:45 pm
Bangladesh v Maldives
Live at 5:45 pm
- ESPN**
Western Union World Football
Repeat at 7:30 am
England vs Sri Lanka
World Series, Eighth ODI
Live at 9:13 am
Sportscentre Hindi
Sport News
Live at 8:30 pm
- STAR Sports**
Australian Open
Men's/Women's First Rd
Live at 6:00 am
Sportsline Tonight
Sport News
Live at 8:00 pm
Harsha Online
Cricket Talk Show
Same Day Delay at 11:00 pm

Star WHIZZ KID COMPETITION 18

Tick the correct answers, The Daily Star

Competition closes at 8 pm Jan 24, 2003 and draw

- How many teams will play in next month's Cricket World Cup?
16 12 14
- Who won the Hopman Cup title?
Australia Russia America
- How many Test centuries has Steve Waugh scored?
34 31 29
- Who became Tribal football champions?
K'Chari M y m o n s i n g h
Rangamati
- Who won the man-of-the-match award in the fifth and final Ashes?

Name

Class..... Roll No.....

School Address

Phone: (if any)

Thorpe joins 'Power cricket'

INTERNET, London
England's Graham Thorpe will be among the stars on show in the Power Cricket matches at Cardiff's Millennium Stadium later this month.
Thorpe will be joined by West Indies' Courtney Walsh and South African Ntente Hayward in a Rest of the World team who will take on an

Two wins & an upset

BD leave for Namibia today

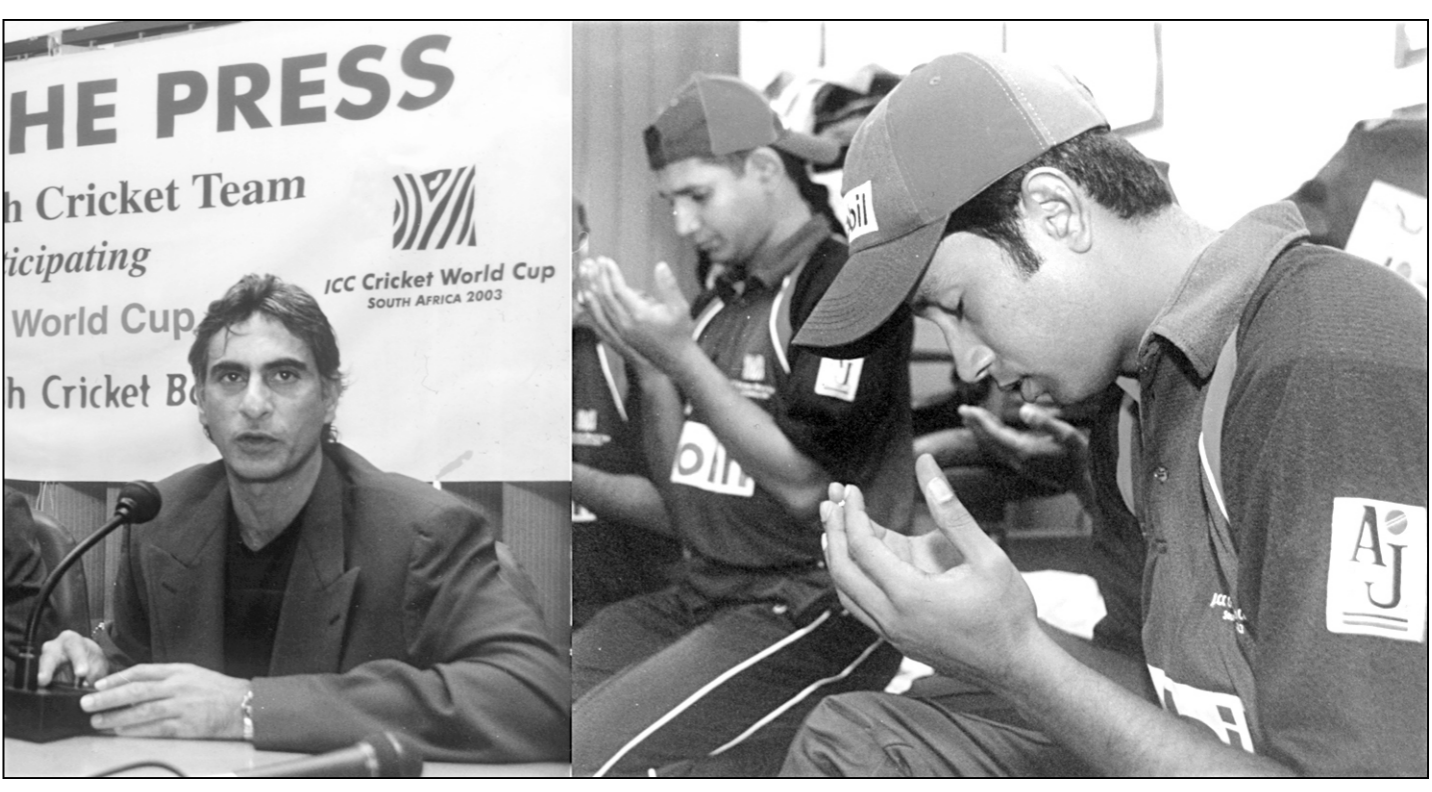


SPORTS REPORTER

Bangladesh set itself a target of two wins plus causing an upset to one of the established sides at the Cricket World Cup starting in South Africa on February 9.
Coach Mohsin Kamal said this yesterday at press briefing prior to the team's departure for Namibia.
Bangladesh captain Khaled Mashud, manager ASM Faruque and two BCB advisors Mahubul Anam and Reazuddin Al-Mamun were present during the conference at the BCB's Bangabandhu Stadium office.
"Our mission is to win against Canada and Kenya and then hope for a good day against either Sri Lanka, West Indies, South Africa and New Zealand.
"Cricket is a funny old game

where anything can happen on a given day. I refer to Bangladesh's victory against Pakistan in the last edition. So if we can achieve a victory against one of the 'big four' I think that will be our World Cup in a way," said Kamal, a former Pakistan fast bowler.
The team, which leaves today for the Namibian capital of Windhoek, will spend 15 days acclimatising to the African conditions. As part of the short tour they will play five one-day matches against the hosts, who are one of the three ICC Associate members that qualified for the 43-day showpiece event.
Kamal was satisfied with the amount of work done before they left.
"The training sessions went pretty well at the BKSP and Dhaka. The boys have improved a lot since I took over earlier this year. Hopefully, everything will go according to plan in South Africa."
Khaled Mashud told reporters he had almost decided his playing eleven. He rated his teammates mentally and physically much stronger than the 1999 World Cup squad in which he was a member.
"We have to win against lightweights Kenya and Canada because everybody back home expects it. The team's morale is also very high. I am expecting a good show," the captain said.
Asked whether it was a wise move to step down as skipper after the World Championship, Mashud refused to say that his surprise decision would affect his team's performance during the tournament.
"So long as I remain the captain, I will give more than hundred percent."
BCB advisor and cricket committee chairman Mahubul Anam in this connection said that the board was very much concerned with the announcement and they would talk with the captain after the World Cup was over. He added that South

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THE MOMENT HAS ARRIVED: (L) Bangladesh national cricket coach Mohsin Kamal addresses a media conference at the Bangabandhu National Stadium yesterday. (R) The World Cup bound cricketers praying for a successful campaign in South Africa. The squad is scheduled to leave Dhaka today for cricket's biggest carnival.

Pakistan first into last four



SPORTS REPORTER

Pakistan continued to defy the formbook by becoming the first team to reach the semifinals of the Third South Asian Football Federation (SAFF) Championship with a 2-1 victory against Sri Lanka at the Bangabandhu National Stadium yesterday.
Starting the eight-nation meet as underdogs, the unheralded Pakistan team floored a much-vaunted Lankans to carry on from their upset 1-0 win against defending champions India in the tournament opener on Friday.
After a barren first half Zahid Niaz struck for Pakistan in the 50th minute.
Shrafaraz Rasool, who scored

the all-important goal against India, confirmed a back-to-back Pakistan win adding the second in the 86th minute.
Weerasinghe pulled one goal back for Sri Lanka in the first minute of injury time. Sri Lanka had won their first game 1-0 against Afghanistan.
The defeat was certainly an insult for the more privileged Sri Lankans, whose domestic football structure is much more developed than their opponents'. Sri Lanka are also direct beneficiaries of the Asian Football Confederation's development project. The Lankans who are presently enjoying the services of a Brazilian coach, however, did little to leave a mark in a match dominated by the Pakistanis.
The victory put Pakistan at the top of Group A with maximum six points, leaving India and Sri Lanka

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PHOTO: STAR

Afghanistan's David Yaqubi (No 14) trying to go through Indian defender Venkatesh during their SAFF Championship clash yesterday.

McGrath eyes fitness



REUTERS, Melbourne

Australia fast bowler Glenn McGrath hopes to be fit to play in a triangular series one-day international against Sri Lanka in Brisbane on Wednesday after having two cortisone injections in his back on Sunday.
Australia's leading paceman returned to the team from a side strain injury for Saturday's match in Hobart against England, which the home side won by seven runs in a thrilling finish.
However, McGrath left the field with a back injury after bowling only seven overs for 31 runs.
On Sunday, the fast bowler blamed his "miracle" outfield catch in the second test against England in November for his back problems.
"My back has always been pretty good and the scans today showed the back couldn't be any better," McGrath told reporters at Brisbane airport on Sunday after having two cortisone injections and a scan in Melbourne.
"But it probably all stems back to Adelaide when I dived and took that catch (to dismiss Michael Vaughan) and my lower back has been a bit sore since then. That's probably triggered it.
"Hopefully the cortisone will take effect -- it's in the right area -- and that would be the end of it.

"That would be the perfect scenario and hopefully I can have a bowl in the morning."
Australia went into Saturday's match without frontline bowlers Jason Gillespie (elbow injury) and Shane Warne (shoulder injury) and now face the possibility of having those two -- plus McGrath -- on the sidelines for Wednesday's game.
The world champions, who will defend their title in southern Africa next month, have won four of their five matches in the triangular series



GLENN McGRATH
against Sri Lanka and England and lead the standings on 22 points.
England lie second on 13 with Sri Lanka on seven.
Australia need McGrath in top form after conceding totals of 343 for five -- the highest ever against

Australia -- and 264 for seven against Sri Lanka and England in the past week.
McGrath, 32, had an irritated facet joint in his lower back, the Australian Cricket Board (ACB) said in a statement.
It is not a recurrence of the side strain injury which forced him to miss the fifth Ashes test against England earlier this month and the one-day match against Sri Lanka on January 9, the ACB added.
McGrath's absence from the field in the fifth Ashes test ended a run of 54 consecutive Tests since October 1998, when he represented his country against Pakistan in Rawalpindi.
Australia team physiotherapist Errol Alcott told reporters that Gillespie, who injured his elbow in the Sydney test last week, was likely to be rested for another week or two.
Warne, who made a comeback for Victoria against Western Australia on Friday, would be reassessed, Alcott added.
Warne, 33, dislocated his shoulder playing for Australia against England in Melbourne on December 15 and returned to the same ground 26 days later in a domestic one-day match, taking 1-53 from eight overs.
"His shoulder's obviously stable, it's not popping out. He's able to bowl probably hundreds of overs but... the shoulders, sometimes they can be a bit inflammatory after a lot of use," Alcott said.
"So we're waiting to see after that

Booters play Maldives today

SPORTS REPORTER

Hosts Bangladesh take on Maldives in their second Group B match at the Bangabandhu National Stadium today. The game will start at 5.45pm.
Fresh after their 1-0 win over Nepal on Saturday, the boys of Austro-Hungarian coach George Kottan will be looking for a repeat act to seal their place in the semifinals.
It will be Bangladesh's first meeting with the tiny islanders after the 1-1 drawn encounter in a four-nation invitational tournament in Male in 2000.
Maldives also won their opening match against newcomers Bhutan 6-0 on Saturday.
The national team trained at the Bangabandhu National Stadium in the morning where Kottan said he would start with the same team that played against Nepal.

School cricket

OUR CORRESPONDENT

Islamia High School and Gaibandha Government Boys' High School moved into the final of the Standard Chartered 21st National School Cricket Championship at the Gaibandha Government Boys High School ground yesterday.
Islamia defeated Akbar Ali High School by one run in the first semifinal.
Batting first, Islamia managed 101 runs all out in 22 overs.
In reply, Akbar Ali were all out for 100 runs in 20 overs.
In the second semifinal, Gaibandha Government Boys beat Shahebhullah Government High School.
Gaibandha scored 73 runs for four wickets in 19 overs.
In reply, Shahebhullah collected 71 runs all out in 24 overs.

In Murali's Hair



REUTERS, Sydney

Australia umpire Darrell Hair, who no-balled Sri Lanka's leading bowler Muralitharan for throwing in the 1995-96 Melbourne Test, will officiate in Sri Lanka's one-day international match against England here on Monday.
It will be the pair's first on-field meeting on this tour.
Muralitharan -- the fourth-highest wicket-taker in one-day international history -- has not toured Australia since 1998-99, when he was also no-balled by local umpires for throwing.
Sri Lanka captain Sanath Jayasuriya said Muralitharan, who has taken 299 wickets in one-dayers, was more concerned about returning to form and fitness after a hernia operation with the World Cup starting in southern Africa next month.
Muralitharan missed Sri Lanka's first three matches of the series, all losses, and returned in a winning side against Australia in Sydney on January 9.
"No problem, it (umpire Hair's appointment) is no problem," Jayasuriya told reporters on Sunday.
"He's just started and needs more time bowling in the nets and in matches," Jayasuriya said.
He bowled pretty well the other night (2-44) and he will get more and

Fingers crossed for Flintoff

INTERNET, London

Andrew Flintoff will face a fitness test on Monday to see if he will be able to represent England in next month's World Cup.
The Lancashire all-rounder must prove he has finally recovered from a double hernia operation after an aborted attempt to figure in the Ashes series with Australia.
Flintoff said: "I've been working for at least five hours each day in the gym, running and performing strengthening exercises.
"I feel great and I'm raring to go. I've been bowling spells of between 10 and 12 overs in the indoor nets and I'm very confident of passing the test."
England captain Nasser Hussain has already given Flintoff an ultimatum over his fitness worries.
"Andrew Flintoff needs to prove his fitness out here," said Hussain of the Lancashire player who will, all being well, return to Australia in the next week.
"If after four or five months of being injured you are still not fit two weeks before a tournament, then there's very little chance.
"But if he proves his fitness at the academy and can get in to play cricket with us for two or three weeks and get a game in, that's fine."

more useful in time.
"When he comes in it gives a lot of confidence to the boys, he means as much to us as Shane Warne does to Australia.
"We don't bother about whatever the crowd says because we know he has proved himself as the number one bowler in the world," Jayasuriya said.
Muralitharan is rated by Wisden as the best bowler in Test history. The 30-year-old has taken 437 wickets in 78 Tests, the third-highest all-time tally, but his bent-arm action has provoked strong reaction.
Called for throwing by umpire Ross Emerson in a one-day match in Adelaide against England in 1998-99 and by Hair three years

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DARRELL HAIR

Andre versus Australia

First Grand Slam starts today



AFP, Melbourne

Lleyton Hewitt.
Agassi has a wonderful record in Melbourne, winning three Opens in six attempts and only out of the semi-finals twice.
His Grand Slam rival Pete Sampras is not here, but Agassi has to contend with a new generation of stars hellbent on making their impact in big-time tennis.
Agassi begins his campaign on Rod Laver Arena here on Monday against compatriot Brian Vahaly. He won his only meeting with Vahaly in straight sets in Washington last year.
"I never hesitated at all to think that I'd be playing this year," Agassi said. "That time might come only when I play my best and I can't win anymore."
"I'll always feel the desire to dig deeper and get through the challenges of trying to succeed."

Agassi has again come to Australia in peak fitness condition after working out with trainer Gil Reyes back in Las Vegas.
"You have to get into the gym, onto the hill for running, then take an easy day.
"I feel I'm in a position do better this year, every year it becomes more important to be strong and healthy. It gets harder and harder, and the other guys get better and better.
"I need to keep pushing myself, it's the only thing I can count on," he said.
Seven-time major winner Agassi is only the fifth player to win all four Grand Slams and possesses one of the shrewdest tactical minds in the game.
"The worst thing you can do is to

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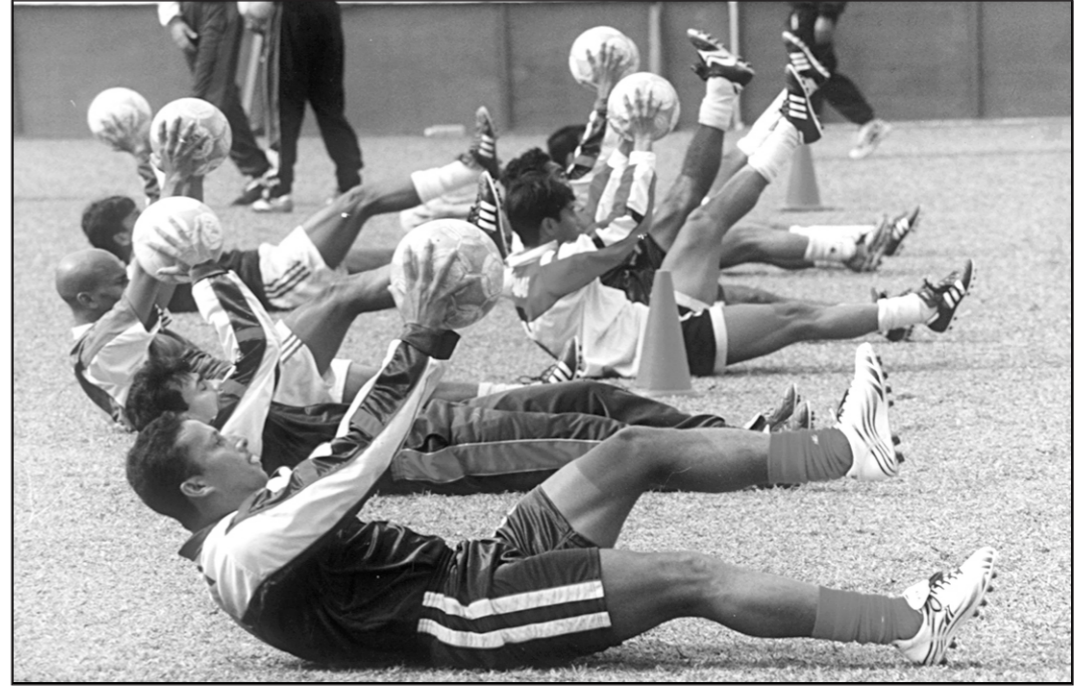


PHOTO: STAR

Players of Bangladesh SAFF football team train at the Bangabandhu National Stadium yesterday.