

Junior chess play-off today

SPORTS REPORTER
Defending champion Mehdi Hasan Parag and Mohammad Ali will take part in a play-off match of the National Junior Chess Championship today from 4:00 pm at Bangladesh Chess Federation Auditorium.
Parag and Ali both earned 8 points each after the final round.

NB volleyball

BSS, Dhaka
Bangladesh Rifles (BDR) maintained their winning streak in the National Bank Premier Volleyball League defeating Bangladesh Police 26-24, 30-28 and 25-21 at Dhaka Volleyball Stadium yesterday.
This was BDR's sixth win in a row, while Police tasted first defeat in their sixth match.
Water Development Board (WDB) beat Wari Club 25-11, 25-11 and 25-19 in the other match of the day.



ROMANCING IN PARIS: Andre Agassi and Steffi Graf.

Loving doubles

Australian Open

AFP, Melbourne
Andre Agassi and Steffi Graf will play their own version of "Mr and Mrs" at the French Open in May -- providing the American brings home another grand slam title at the weekend.
Agassi said on Tuesday that his wife had agreed to play mixed doubles with him at the French Open if he wins his fourth Australian Open crown in Melbourne.
"For the record...if I win here, Steffi has to play doubles with me in Paris. You can print that and I'll hold you to it," he said.
The American revealed their plans for a Paris love match after crushing Frenchman Sebastien Grosjean 6-3 6-2 6-2 to reach the Australian Open semi-finals.
Graf, who won 22 grand slam

singles titles, retired from tennis in August 1999 and has not played since. She entered the mixed doubles with John McEnroe at Wimbledon in 1999, reaching the semi-finals.
If Graf, a year older than her husband at 33, and Agassi do play together in Paris, they would bring a combined 30 grand slam singles titles to the court.
However, the pairing could run into difficulties as Agassi admits he finds it hard to concentrate when he plays against his wife at home.
"She usually beats me. I have trouble keeping my eye on the ball," he joked after his match with Grosjean.
Graf and Agassi married in October 2001, the same month she gave birth to their son Jaden Gil.
Agassi, seeded number two this year, won the Australian Open in 1995, 2000 and 2001.

Daniela wants more muscles!

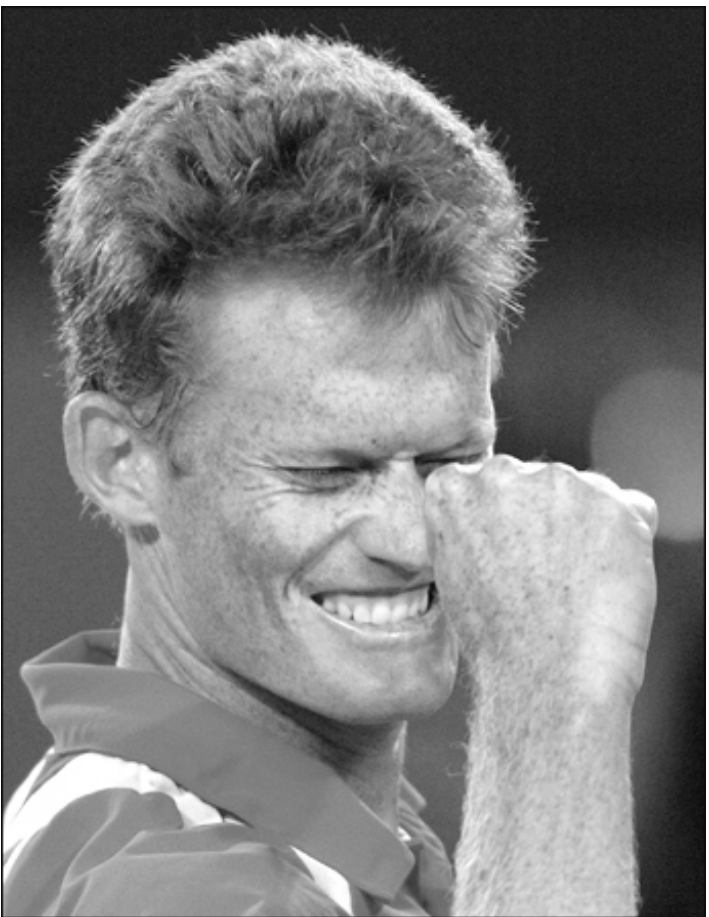
AFP, Melbourne
Daniela Hantuchova is planning to hit the weights after being blown away by a bombardment of big serves against Venus Williams here Tuesday.
The slenderly-built seventh seed was on the receiving end of a ferocious array of serves from Williams as she slid to a 6-4, 6-3 defeat in the Australian Open quarter-finals.
Williams just missed breaking her world record for the fastest serve ever recorded when she sent a 201kp/h thunderbolt hurtling towards Slovakian Hantuchova during the match.
It was just outside the 205kp/h exocet that she conjured up in Zurich in 1998, which remains the fastest serve ever recorded on the WTA Tour.
Hantuchova said Williams' service game was practically unstoppable.
"That serve was incredible," Hantuchova said. "I mean, you feel like you have your chances, and then somebody serves like 200k an hour. There's not much you can do about it."
"I think the serve really helped her today. I had my chances on her serve, but any time I felt like I was going to break her or something, she just served unbelievable," said Hantuchova.
Hantuchova had run Williams close at last year's Australian Open, taking the American to three sets before losing.

Flying South African

Australian Open

AFP, Melbourne
Wayne Ferreira will play his second semifinal at the Australian Open 11 years apart after an upset win over fourth seed Juan Carlos Ferrero late Tuesday.
The never-say-die South African downed the nine years' younger Spaniard to win 7-6 (7/4), 7-6 (7/5) 6-1 in 2hr 11min and set up a semi-final with tournament favourite and second seed Andre Agassi on Thursday.
Eleven years ago Ferreira defeated John McEnroe to make the last four of the 1992 tournament.
The 31-year-old unseeded Ferreira gave the highly-rated Spaniard a lesson in hardcourt play.
He staved off three set points at 4-5 in the second set to take the set to a tiebreaker which he claimed for a commanding two sets to love lead.
Dispirited Ferrero fell away dramatically in the final set as Ferreira surged home grabbing three service breaks.
It was Ferreira's first win over Ferrero in three matches, after losing his previous matches at the Paris Indoor in 1999 and the Tennis Masters Series in Rome two years ago.
Ferreira is playing in his 13th consecutive Australian Open and 50th Grand Slam tournament. It was Ferreira's sixth quarterfinal appearance at the Open.
Ferreira now has the chance to better his career-best Grand Slam performance at the Australian Open in 1992 when he defeated McEnroe in the quarter-finals before losing to Stefan Edberg in the semi-finals.
He reached the quarterfinal stage here last year before he retired with a groin injury at 5-2 in the first set against Marat Safin.
He is playing in his 49th consecu-

tive Grand Slam, five behind Stefan Edberg's record of 54.
It was more hardcourt heartache for 22-year-old Ferrero, who had been impressive in his four leadup wins over Franco Squillari, Jean-Rene Lisnard, Fabrice Santoro and Mario Ancic.
But he repeatedly sprayed his favoured forehand around the court on Tuesday to give Ferreira the opportunity to post one of his more satisfying wins against one of the young lions of the men's circuit.
Ferrero had won 11 of his previous 13 matches since the season-ending Tennis Masters Cup in Shanghai where he lost the final in five sets to world number one Lleyton Hewitt.
His best results are at the French Open on the red clay of Roland Garros, where he finished runnerup to compatriot Albert Costa in last year's final and semi-final appearances in his two other showings in 2000 and 2001.



JUAN CARLOS FERRERO

Ticket-scalpers

FROM PAGE 13
The Cricket World Cup starts next month. The opening ceremony takes place at Newlands on February 8, with the first match, between hosts South Africa and the West Indies, on the following day.
Heeger said the CWC committee was confident that all organisational and security measures were in place for a successful launch of cricket's premier one-day competition.
"Most of the procedures and processes that needed to be put in place are completed. So we are ready to rumble when the World Cup heads into Cape Town," he said.
A security blanket would be placed over the stadium and a one kilometre traffic-free zone enforced.
The police bomb squad would check all vehicles close to the stadium and only accredited taxis, both minibus and metered, could ferry spectators, such as VIPs and the media, to the ground.
Every vehicle allowed into the area would be accompanied by a security officer.
"At the end of the day, I think we can all feel confident that every spectator, player and VIP is safe while in the stadium."
The players themselves would also be under close scrutiny, with doping tests to be undertaken at all matches and the International Cricket Council's (ICC) anti-corruption unit "in full swing".
A vigil would be kept over dressing rooms to guard against bookies gaining access to information from the teams, he said.

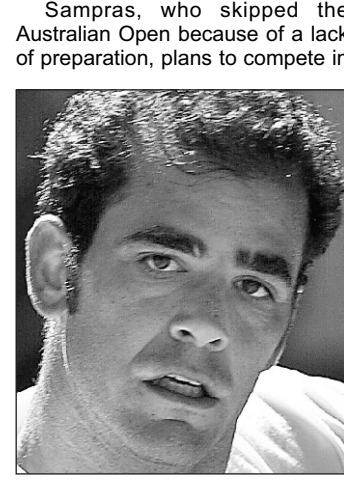
More congrats
FROM PAGE 13
Hafiz, also a former minister, said that the spirit the Bangladesh team had shown by lifting the prestigious regional title would remain memorable in the hearts of football fans in the country.
He hoped that this march towards victory would continue.
Meanwhile, Abahani football club has congratulated the national team on its great feat.
In a statement yesterday, the club felicitated the manager, trainer, officials, the captain and players of the national team for the victory.
Mohammed Sporting Club last night held a reception to the triumphant footballers at the Sonargaon Hotel.

Unfinished business

Tennis

AFP, New York
With the Australian Open in full swing Down Under, Pete Sampras is quietly preparing for another tennis season, one which he believes could yield the one Grand Slam title to elude him - the French Open.
"Yes I believe I can win. I will have no added pressure. This may very well be my final shot at it," the 14-time Grand Slam champion told Agence France-Presse.
The 31-year-old American announced last month that he would prolong his illustrious career.
For months, Sampras had refused to be drawn on his future after capturing his 14th Grand Slam title at the US Open in September.
But in the end, his competitive nature took over.

"I really enjoy playing and competing," said the seven-time Wimbledon Champion, who admits that "staying motivated" will be his biggest challenge this season.
Sampras, who skipped the Australian Open because of a lack of preparation, plans to compete in



PETE SAMPRAS

the final three major championships - the French Open, Wimbledon and the US Open.
He said he will "not play a lot on clay" heading into Roland Garros, which starts May 26, and has not yet decided which tune-up events he will compete in.
Sampras made another early exit last year at the French, losing in the first round to Italian journeyman Andrea Gaudenzi. His best performance there was in 1996, when he reached the semi-finals.
Sampras will return to competition in February at the ATP event in San Jose, California.
He'll be working with his old coach Paul Annacone, who has resigned his post with the US Tennis Association to coach Sampras full-time.
If the season goes well, Sampras said, he could go on even longer.
"I'm not 100 per cent sure either way," the former world No. 1 said.

India kept waiting

FROM PAGE 13
Kapil, a former World Cup-winning captain, moved the court to ensure India's top cricketers took part in the tournament to be played in South Africa, Zimbabwe and Kenya from February 8 to March 23.
If the players are banned, the litigation wants the federal finance ministry to withdraw all tax benefits to the tournament's official sponsors hailing from India.
At least three of the four major World Cup sponsors -- Pepsi, Hero Honda and LG Electronics -- have major interests in the lucrative Indian market.
Some of India's best known lawyers, former law minister Arun Jaitley, Kapil Sibal and Harish Salve, argued the litigation on behalf of Kapil and five other plaintiffs on Monday.
An independent arbitrator can be brought in to settle the dispute if all parties agree.
The Court of Arbitration for Sport (CAS), based in Lausanne in Switzerland, could intervene and has been contacted by the BCCI.
CAS can fast-track the case so it can be resolved before the start of the World Cup.
Meanwhile, the Player Terms Contracts for the 2003 World Cup has restricted the South African

players in the use of their images and personality rights for the period of the tournament as well as for 30 days before the opening game and 20 days after the final game.
"Companies and businesses are advised that players are prevented from granting the use of their images and personality rights except in authorised circumstances," said Donne Commins, account director of Octagon, which manages the Protea team's commercial affairs and sponsorship.
"Any company or business wishing to utilise a player image or his personality rights must contact Octagon Marketing (which manages the Team's commercial affairs and sponsorship through the South African National Cricket Team Trust) and the South African Cricketers' Association (SACA) for authorisation on such use.
"This must occur whenever anyone wishes to utilise a player's name, photograph, likeness, performance, autograph, biographical material or appearance.
"The unlawful use of these may result in the player being placed in breach of his World Cup Contract and to legal action being taken against the utilising party."



Action from the friendly match between Bangladesh women's football team and the visiting West Bengal side at the Mirpur Sher-e-Bangla National Stadium yesterday.

Ponting punishes

FROM PAGE 13
three consecutive losses). A strong man, he came back very, very hard and did extremely well in the past couple of matches (122, 106, 6, 99). He must have thought he needed a break before we get to South Africa," Atapattu added.
Australia finished the series on 38 points with seven wins from eight matches, ahead of England on 20 and Sri Lanka on 14.
Australia are yet to name a team for Thursday's first final although leg-spinner Shane Warne has recovered from a shoulder injury he suffered in December and is expected to be included after playing two one-day games for Victoria earlier this month.
However, Ponting believes Hogg's good form, with 10 wickets in four matches, has given the selectors a tough decision.
SCOREBOARD
Scoreboard of the triangular series one-day match between Australia and Sri Lanka at Melbourne Cricket Ground on Tuesday:
SRI LANKA
Atapattu c Hogg b Bichel 26
Gunawardene lbw b Hogg 45
Sangakkara c Watson b Hogg 43
De Silva c Watson b Bracken 44
Jayawardene st Gilchrist b Hogg 0
Arnold b Williams 14
Vaas run out 1
Tillakaratne not out 9
Mubarak lbw b Williams 15
Extras: (lb-5, w-11, nb-1) 17
Total: (For 8 wks in 50 overs) 214
Fall of wickets: 1-64, 2-100, 3-134, 4-135, 5-166, 6-170, 7-201, 8-214
Did not bat: C Gamage, P Nissanka
Bowler O M R W
Williams 10 0 57 2
Bracken 9 0 33 1
Bichel 10 0 33 1
Hogg 10 0 37 3
Watson 4 0 17 0
Symonds 7 0 32 0
AUSTRALIA
Gilchrist b Vaas 26
Hayden not out 80
Ponting not out 106
Extras: (w-3) 3
Total: (For 1 wkt in 34.3 overs) 215
Fall of wicket: 1-37
Did not bat: J Maher, M Bevan, A

Symonds, S Watson, B Hogg, A Bichel, N Bracken, B Williams
Bowler O M R W
Vaas 8 0 45 1
Nissanka 7 3 0 61 0
De Silva 9 0 51 0
Gamage 3 0 23 0
Arnold 5 0 27 0
Jwardene 2 0 8 0
Result: Australia won by nine wickets.
Man-of-the-match: Ricky Ponting.
Next match: First final, Jan 23.

Harper full of hope

ICC Cricket World Cup

AFP, St. John's
West Indies got down to fine-tuning Tuesday for next month's World Cup confident they could win their first one-day trophy since 1979.
"I think the players are in pretty good spirits coming off the tour of Asia where after the first couple of Test matches we certainly rebounded very well and played some good cricket right until the end to come back and win that one-day series against India," coach Roger Harper said.
"I think it is no mean feat to win anything in India. It isn't easy. And to come back from the defeats of the first two Tests showed remarkable character and spirit by the young players.
"We carried on from there and played good cricket in Bangladesh and I think everyone is in pretty good spirits. Everyone is confident.
"We understand conditions in South Africa will be different. We have to adjust and to adapt to them and do it quickly. But I think we are ready for the challenge."
But he said the team had made winning the World Cup their goal.
"That's our ultimate objective," he said.
"We have to take it one step at a time. I think that has to be our approach. We go there look to win each match and I think if we do that we'll give ourselves a very good chance of winning that trophy."
Captain Carl Hooper and manager Ricky Skerritt shared his feelings.
West Indies come up against South Africa, Sri Lanka, New Zealand, Kenya and Bangladesh in their group.
And they have set out to try and simulate conditions here in their final training sessions at the new Stanford Cricket Ground in Antigua.
Former Windies great Andy Roberts was assisting with the

coaching of the bowlers and was advising the ground staff on the type of wickets to prepare to get them as



ROGER HARPER

close as possible to those in South Africa.
"The pitches in South Africa tend

to have a quite a bit of bounce and they have very good carry and there is also a little bit of lateral movement," Harper said.
The 15-man squad plus five reserves along with players from Antigua will play in two day-night practice matches on Wednesday and Sunday as their first two matches against South Africa and Sri Lanka will be day/night fixtures.
West Indies have been able to welcome back double world record holder Brian Lara from illness which sidelined him from the tours of India and Bangladesh.
Lara was hospitalised with suspected hepatitis during the ICC Champions Trophy in Sri Lanka.
The exact nature of his illness has not been revealed but he was last month cleared for inclusion in the West Indies' 15-man World Cup squad.

Venus, Agassi march on

FROM PAGE 13
Williams said she was unaware she had nearly broken her record against Hantuchova with her 201 kp/h blockbuster.
"I didn't even know I served it," Williams said. "I guess the times I serve the hardest are when I'm not trying. I haven't even tried to break my record."
"Back when I was serving really big, I had the 205, I was always trying to serve really hard. So this tournament I did decide that I'm going to start trying to do that again."
"Now I'm trying to see if I can serve it even bigger than the record."
Hantuchova had no answer to Williams' service game, the American thumping down six aces on her way to victory.
Afterwards Hantuchova said Williams serve was practically unplayable.
"That serve was incredible," Hantuchova said. "I mean, you feel like you have your chances, and then somebody serves like 200k an hour. There's not much you can do about it."
"I had my chances on her serve, but any time I felt like I was going to break her or something, she just served unbelievable," said Hantuchova.
Williams now plays Henin-Hardenne in the last four.
Henin-Hardenne recovered from her gruelling fourth round battle against Lindsay Davenport on Sunday, when she collapsed on court with cramp, to beat Virginia Ruano Pascual 6-2, 6-2.
In the men's quarterfinals, Agassi became the first man to

reach the last four with a whirlwind demolition of Grosjean that the American said was harder than it looked.
"Scorelines I believe can always be misleading and today was a question of it being a lot tougher than the score. It was toe to toe," said Agassi.
Agassi's victory stretched his unbeaten run at the Australian Open to 19 matches - he was a back-to-back winner here in 2000 and 2001, and withdrew from last year's tournament because of injury.
With top seed and world number

one Lleyton Hewitt dumped out on Monday, Agassi is now favourite to triumph on Sunday. Agassi said he was only concentrating on the semi-final when asked about his chances.
"I have one person on my mind now and it's either Wayne or Juan Carlos, it's that simple for me," he said. Grosjean said Agassi was well-placed to claim his fourth Australian Open.
"Yes, I think Agassi can win in each tournament he plays," he said. He's ready. He's hitting the ball very hard and doesn't spend long on the court.



Winners of the national men, junior, and sub-junior chess championships during 1995-2002 and First & Second Division Chess Leagues for 2002 pose during a prize-giving ceremony yesterday. State Minister for Civil Aviation and Tourism Mir Mohammad Nasir Uddin (2nd from left sitting) was present as chief guest.



Bangladesh captain Rajani Kanta Barman (L) receives the most-valuable-player's cheque from Kazi Zahurul Qyuum, Bangladesh sales manager of Emirates, after the SAFF Championship final on January 20.

Star WHIZZ KID COMPETITION 1

Tick the correct answers, post The Daily Star

Competition closes at 8 pm Jan 24, 2003 and draw

1. How many teams will play in next month's Cricket World Cup?
16 12 14

2. Who won the Hopman Cup title?
Australia Russia America

3. How many Test centuries has Steve Waugh scored?
34 31 29

4. Who became Tribal football champions?
K'Char M y m e n s i n g h
Rangamati

5. Who won the man-of-the-match award in the fifth and final Ashes
Name

Class

School Address

Phone: (If any)