

## U-19s victors in final warm-up

SPORTS REPORTER

Bangladesh under-19 cricket team won a high-scoring match against their Zimbabwe counterparts by three runs to complete their build-up for the ICC Under-19 World Cup with hundred per cent success yesterday.

The Mushfiqur Rahim-led side, who outclassed USA by ten wickets in the first practice match on Thursday, amassed 265-7 in stipulated 50 overs after batting first.

The junior Tigers' innings was built around by two half-centuries by Raqibul Hasan (69) and Sakib Al Hasan (51). Mehrab Hossain was the other notable scorer with an unbeaten 47 while Shamsur Rahman added 44.

The Zimbabweans, who have four Test caps in their ranks, completed their 50-overs quota on 262-9.

Bangladesh, who have been placed in Group A along with New Zealand, Pakistan and Uganda, will play their first match in the tournament on February 5 against New Zealand.



## Did U Know?

Soccer has been part of the Olympic Games since 1908.



## TALK TURKEY



## Sunil Gavaskar

(Indian cricket legend)

"In Test cricket one cannot just blaze away, especially not when there is something in the wicket (for bowlers). The complete absence of a defensive mechanism means that there is little hope of survival."



Aktel Premier Cricket League SUPER SIX  
Mohammedan vs Brothers Union  
Venue: Faluhal Cricket Stadium  
Biman vs Sonargaon Cricketers  
Venue: Dhanmondi Cricket Stadium

## Murali will be reprimanded

AFP, Melbourne

Sri Lankan spinner Muttiah Muralitharan will face an "unofficial reprimand" after responding to crowd taunts in Perth with a single-finger gesture, officials said Friday.

A statement released by Cricket Australia, the sport's governing body, on behalf of International Cricket Council match referee Jeff Crowe, said the matter would be discussed with Muralitharan in Hobart next week.

Muralitharan was photographed making the gesture towards a man in the crowd at Sri Lanka's match in Perth last Tuesday.

The man had painted his face black and had the words "no-ball" painted across his chest.

The Sri Lankans said earlier they were fed up with Australian crowds taunting Muralitharan but would not lodge a formal complaint about racism.

Team manager Michael Tissera said he would not follow in the footsteps of the South Africans, who have formally complained of racist slurs from Australian crowds, but they were upset by the ongoing treatment of their best bowler.



India captain Rahul Dravid (L) talks to reporters while Pakistan vice-captain Younis Khan looks on during the launching ceremony of the India-Pakistan ODI series in Karachi on Friday.

## Indians ready for ODIs

Cricket

AFP, Karachi

Indian cricket captain Rahul Dravid said on Friday his players were geared up for the next week's five-match, one-day series against Pakistan despite their Test loss.

"It was disappointing to lose the Test series but the players will not be short on motivation for the limited over matches. When it's against Pakistan they are never short on it," Dravid said during the ceremony to display the cup for the one-day series here.

After two high-scoring draws, Pakistan outclassed India by 341 runs in the third and final Test in Karachi on Wednesday to clinch the three-Test series 1-0, their first series win over their arch-rivals since 1987.

The five-match one-day series kicks off in the northwestern city of

Peshawar on Monday.

Dravid, who took over as India captain last year, said his young one-day side is in its developing stages.

"It's a young one-day side which we are trying to develop for the bigger events in future. We have learnt a lot from the Test series and hope that these lessons will help us," said Dravid.

Reacting to the sharp criticism on the twin collapse of India's famed batsmen in the Karachi Test, Dravid admitted they had failed.

"We didn't bat well and lost four wickets early in both the innings, which was the key because it was important to play the new ball well and we failed twice in that," he said.

India were bundled out for scores of 238 and 265 as young seamer Mohammad Asif and all-rounder Abdul Razzaq shared 14 wickets between them to steer Pakistan to victory on the fourth day.

Dravid said he hoped a different batting combination would help in the one-day series.

"You have a different combination for the one-day matches and we have done well recently against Sri Lanka and South Africa with this team, so I am hopeful that we will play better cricket," said Dravid, who was forced to open in the Tests.

India brought in batsman Mohammad Kaif, all-rounder Suresh Raina, left-arm spinner Murali Kartik and paceman Sri Sreesanth in their 15-man one-day squad.

Former captain Sourav Ganguly, Parthiv Patel, Venkatesh Laxman, Anil Kumble and Wasim Jaffer have left for home after featuring in the Test squad.

Pakistan vice-captain Younis Khan said the home team will have to start afresh in the one-day series.

"I think one-day cricket is different and the team which plays well

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## Champs finish with a win

SPORTS REPORTER

Already champions Old DOHS finished their Aktel Premier Division Cricket League campaign on a winning note when they romped to a massive 101-run victory against Victoria Sporting Club in their last Super-Six match at BKSP yesterday.

The match was just a formality for the Akram Khan-led side who confirmed the title for the second successive year beating Bangladesh Biman in the penultimate round on Wednesday at the same venue. Their five-run victory against the national flag carrier was however shrouded in controversy following some dubious umpiring decisions.

Back to the day's match, Akram led from front to avenge their 19-run defeat against the same opponents in the first leg.

Riding on the big man's 77-ball 75, DOHS amassed 268 for 8 in 50 overs after put into bat.

The right-hander smashed three fours and as many sixes while Manjarul Islam contributed 55 off 80 balls with eight hits to the fence and young Mahmudullah Riyad added a 63-ball 55 that produced five fours and a six.

Pakistani Jaffar Quareshi was the most successful Victoria bowler who claimed three wickets conceding 53 runs in 10 overs.

Victoria got off to a scratchy start in their reply when they lost opener Golam Mabud in the very first delivery off paceman Shahadat Hossain and Sajjad Hasan had to retire hurt in the next over.

But one down Mahbub Alam tried to repair the damages with a 17-ball 38, smashing seven fours and a six. But once his cameo innings came to an end, Victoria lost their way as they kept losing wickets at regular intervals to be bundled out for 167 in 37.4 overs.

Nasiruddin Faruque top scored with 54 off 90 balls with six hits to the fence.

Left-arm spinners Manjarul Islam and Abdur Razzak picked three wickets each.

With the outcome, DOHS ended up with 28 points from 16 matches while Victoria finished on 18.

The league concludes today with Mohammedan-Brothers and Sonargaon-Biman matches.

## SCORES IN BRIEF

DOHS: 269-8 in 50 overs (Golam Rahman 46, Manjarul 55, Akram 75, Riyad 55, extras 22; Kamrul 2-52, Jaffar 3-53)

VICTORIA: 167 all out in 37.4 overs (Mahbub 38, Nasiruddin 54, Jaffar 22, extras 17; Shahadat 2-40, Razzak 3-20, Manjarul 3-13)  
Result: DOHS won by 101 runs.

## BCB's EC sits today

SPORTS REPORTER

An emergency meeting of the executive committee of Bangladesh Cricket Board (BCB) will be held this morning to finalise the different standing committees.

A seven-member committee was formed in the board's much-talked about meeting on January 28 to form the committees, but no consensus could be reached as not a single meeting was held with all its seven members present.

"We couldn't finalise the committees but we prepared a draft proposal which will be submitted in tomorrow's meeting for discussion. We are planning to name only the chairmen who later will complete the job," said Reazuddin Al Mamun, one of the members on the committee.

Mamun along with BCB vice-president Aziz Al Kaiser Titoo and Khondokar Jamiluddin met yesterday to discuss the issue.

It is also expected that the meeting will finalise the working committee and select the name of the new chief executive officer (CEO).

## Boaters resume training today

SPORTS REPORTER

National footballers return to their training camp today at the Bangabandhu National Stadium.

Diego Cruciani's charges, who are preparing for the upcoming Asian Cup qualifiers, skipped training on Thursday demanding a clear announcement on the season's players' transfer.

But later on the same day they had changed their mind following assurance from Kazi Salahuddin, chairman of National Team Management Committee.

The camp began on January 28 under the supervision of the Argentine coach.

## No Lee respite for SA

Cricket

AFP, Melbourne

Speedster Brett Lee added to his growing reputation as a lethal limited-overs bowler as he snared 4-30, including three wickets in one over, as Australia crashed and bashed their way to an 80-run win over South Africa here Friday.

Lee, who was originally due to be rested for the match, was the

executioner, but it was batsmen Michael Hussey and Andrew Symonds who softened up Australia's opponents in the latest tri-series match.

Like a couple of schoolyard bullies, the pair showed no compassion as they bludgeoned the Proteas' attack for 60 runs off their last five overs to rocket their team to an impressive 281-7.

In reply, South Africa, reduced to a disorganised rabble by Lee, mustered a meek 201-9, conceding

a bonus point to the Australians in the process.

"Batting second was always going to be difficult so keeping them to a score of around 230 was going to be important for us," captain Graeme Smith told ABC radio.

"I think at one stage we probably had them there and we let it slip probably in the last 10 (overs) and especially the last five."

It was a dismal performance from a side which needed to win either this match or their next against Australia in Sydney on Sunday, to avoid a "live" confrontation with Sri Lanka in Hobart.

The Australians have already qualified for the best-of-three finals series but South Africa, if they lose again on Sunday, could then be overhauled for the remaining berth by Sri Lanka.

From the outset of the South African innings, it was obvious that they lacked the application to beat the Australians.

Smith, who had shown signs of breaking free of the form slump that has plagued him throughout his team's Australian tour, was trapped in front by Lee for a duck after just two balls.

Fellow opener Boeta Dippenaar followed, caught behind off Stuart Clark for nine and when Jacques Rudolph fell for 19 the Proteas were in trouble at 48-3.

When Lee was reintroduced to the Australian attack in the 38th over, things looked bleak for South Africa, by the end of it, they were desperate.

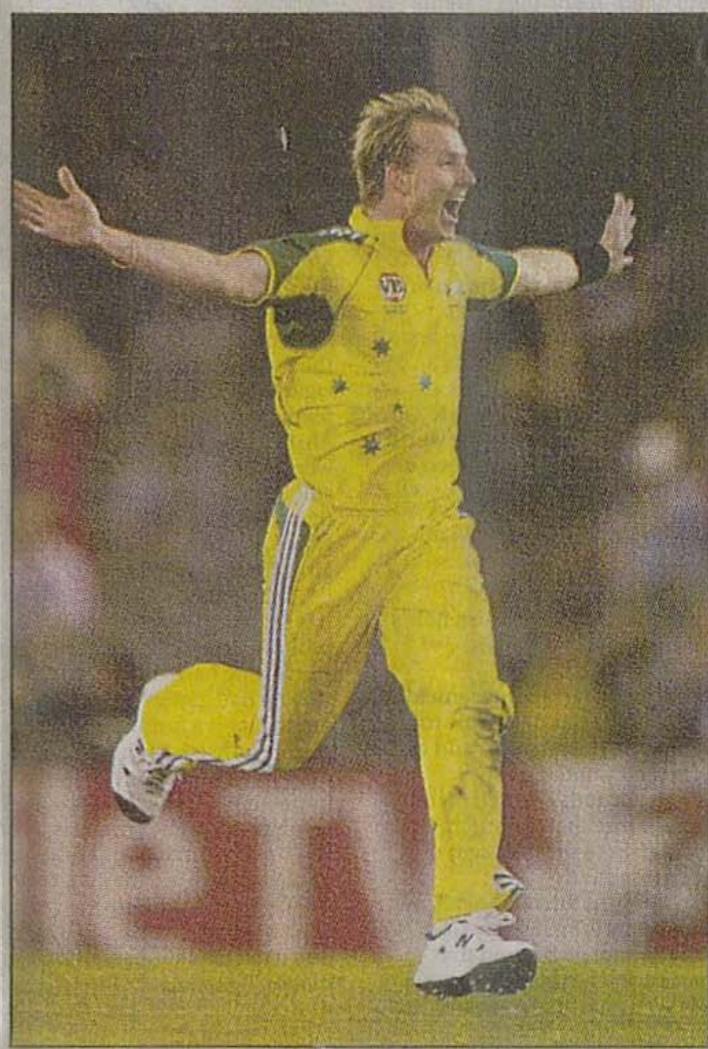
Justin Kemp (28), Mark Boucher (0) and then Johan Botha (46) all fell and the Proteas had crashed to 156-8.

The Australians had earlier looked like they might be restricted to a modest total but at 167-5 from 37 overs, Hussey joined Symonds and the pair ripped into the Proteas.

Hussey slogged 62 runs off 44 balls, including nine boundaries while Symonds clouted 65 off 60 balls, with a booming six over mid-wicket and five boundaries.

Lee, who was initially going to be rested for the match, was only

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Australia fast bowler Brett Lee celebrates taking the wicket of South Africa's Johan Botha during their tri-nation match in Melbourne on Friday.

## Ganguly not quitting

Cricket

AFP, New Delhi

Former India captain Sourav Ganguly on Friday brushed aside speculation he was planning to quit saying he was in good touch and even ready to open the innings.

"I am playing well at the present moment and hopefully I will continue to play well whenever given the opportunity," Ganguly told the Times of India.

The left-hander, a controversial selection for the Pakistan tour, hit a gutsy 34 and 37 in two innings on a seamer-friendly track in the third and final Test at Karachi in India's 341-run defeat on Wednesday.

"I got to bat in only one Test and put up two hundred-run partnerships and did okay. I thought I batted pretty well," said Ganguly.

He has been in the news since a public spat with coach Greg Chappell, who described the Bengali as a "disruptive influence" in a leaked e-mail to the Indian cricket board in October.

Ganguly, India's most successful Test captain with 21 wins, was then sacked and axed from the one-day squad.

He was included in the team for the first Test against Pakistan at Lahore last month reportedly due to pressure from cricket board chiefs.

He was preferred to regular openers Gautam Gambhir and Wasim Jaffer, but batted in the middle order as India went into the

England arrive in India later this month for three Tests and seven one-dayers.

Ganguly also denied he was a loner in the dressing-room in Pakistan, saying he had an enjoyable tour and such talk was mere "speculation".

"I have been a captain to most of these boys and there are absolutely no problems," said Ganguly, who has scored 5,221 runs in 88 Tests and 10,123 in 279 one-dayers.

"In fact, certain times on the field I have felt that things could be done in a certain way and have given my suggestions to (current captain) Rahul Dravid. There were times when he even implemented them," he said.



SOURAV GANGULY

## Zim crisis deepens

Cricket

AFP, Harare

Zimbabwe's rebel cricketers accused the game's rulers of pursuing a 'divide-and-conquer' strategy on Thursday as their lawyer considered a last-minute move to end the crisis which has seen senior players refusing to represent their country.

As the bitter wrangle -- which has already seen the country suspend its Test status for the second time in less than two years -- dragged on, fourteen players insisted they would not be bullied into submission.

Senior player Hamilton Mazakadsa, who joined teammates in a queue to receive newly-drafted contracts for their consideration, told AFP: "It's just typical divide and rule."

The new Zimbabwe Cricket chiefs, who were appointed as an interim board in early January by the Zimbabwe government, also told the player's representative and negotiator Clive Field they would no longer deal with him.

They insisted on appointing their own man instead.

But in the one sign of defiance as the group of 14 players gathered in the public park outside the Zimbabwe Cricket (ZC) headquarters they said they would stick by Field.

"We will have nothing to do with anybody else," said one international.

Meanwhile, the players' newly-appointed legal representative Beatrice Mletwa decided to hold fire on a letter of summons against ZC demanding around a million dollars in back pay or face High Court proceedings.

She held back after receiving a last-minute letter from a ZC lawyer suggesting that a financial deal might be possible through the Reserve Bank of Zimbabwe.

On Wednesday evening many of the players had met and declared afterwards they were "out of here" and "that was it."

One angry player told AFP: "We will pack up cricket altogether or playsomewhere else."

They had also agreed in early January to give the newly

appointed ZC interim committee a chance to fulfill a "Term of Reference" within a three-week deadline in which new contracts would be presented and accepted.

But they stated immediately after the committee's failure on Tuesday, through Field, that they would demand all the money owing for Test match and ODI fees going back to August and September, plus five months back pay before agreeing to anything.

However, 14 players gathered in the car park below the ZC headquarters here Thursday to be told that new contracts were ready for them to take home and examine.

The messenger was specialist coach and former skipper Andy Pycroft who was sent down to also tell them that Field was no longer acceptable.

Afterwards Field said they would consider the contracts and "make their own decisions."

Thursday's developments came a day after national team manager of 15 years Babu Maman and selector Richie Kaschula were fired.



A handout picture taken on January 30 shows a model during a 'Catwalk with Ball' fashion show in Berlin. The show was themed 'football' in the year of the FIFA Football World Cup that will take place from June 9 to July 9 in Germany.