ers in Argentinian Hernan Crespo

and young Englishman Carlton

Cole, revealed that the club had not

wanted him to go to the Nations

Cup.
"At first Mourinho said 'you are

on holidays. You have to come back

perfectly fresh.

### Pakistan get Afridi shock

AFP, Lahore

Pakistan's chances of staging a fightback in their one-day series against India took a knock Tuesday when all-rounder Shahid Afridi was ruled out of the remaining two

Afridi aggravated a rib injury that he sustained before Monday's third match in Lahore and has been advised to take two weeks' rest, Pakistan's team management said.

Afridi opened the batting in Monday's game and felt considerable pain while bowling three overs in India's innings, it said.

India lead the five-match series 2-1 after they won the third match by five wickets. Pakistan won the first in Peshawar by seven runs and India claimed the second in Rawalpindi by seven wickets.

Afridi is a local hero in Pakistan and his dismissals in previous matches have frequently triggered mass departures from the ground by his fans.

The fourth match of the series will be played at Multan on Thursday while Karachi will host the fifth match on Sunday.

### Akhtar out of Lankan tour

AFP, Lahore

Pakistani fast bowler Shoaib Akhtar has been ruled out of next month's tour of Sri Lanka with an ankle injury, officials said Tuesday.

"A stress fracture has been revealed on his left ankle which requires six to seven weeks rest, so he is out of the Sri Lankan tour,' Pakistan Cricket Board director of operations Salim Altaftold AFP.

The 30-year-old fast bowler took 17 wickets in Pakistan's 2-0 Test series win over England in December but the injury flared up during the recently-ended Test series against India.

He was forced to miss the first two one-day matches against India before being ruled of the rest of the limited overs internationals on

"Akhtar's injury is a blow to Pakistan because he has been our main strike bowler. But hopefully this will give some youngsters a chance to fill the gap," said chief selector Wasim Bari.

Pakistan play two Tests and

"Akhtar will resume training after six weeks' rest. Only after that will we assess his chances of touring England, which is an important series," said Bari.

Pakistan are scheduled to play four Tests and five one-day matches on their tour of England starting from early July this year.

### Bek Tero come here in August

SPORTS REPORTER

Thailand's Bek Tero FC will play exhibition football matches against local heavyweights Mohammedan Sporting Club and Abahani this year in Dhaka, informed Mohammedan general secretary Lokman Hossain Bhuiyan at a press briefing yester-

Mohammedan visited Bangkok earlier this month for a friendly and lost 4-0 to the Thai club.

"They will be visiting Dhaka in the middle of August to play friendly matches against the two top clubs of the country," told Lokman.

"They have also invited Mohammedan to Thailand to enjoy training facilities at the Beckenbauer Academy for one to three months," he added.

Mohammedan official Fazlur Rahman Babul, manager Imtiaz Sultan Johnny and coach Shafiqul

#### Islam Manik were also present. **BOA** chief inaugurates BSJA's modern library

BDNEWS, Dhaka

Bangladesh Olympic Association (BOA) on Tuesday eyed at bright prospect in sports at regional and international level.

"Bangladesh has the bright potentials and prospect and we are working accordingly with the training programmes aiming at Commonwealth Games, South Asian Games and Asian Games,' said BOA president and Chief of Army Staff Lt Gen Moeen U Ahmed while visiting the Bangladesh Sports Journalist Association (BSJA).

"Training in sports has no alternatives, we believe in it. We have started training programmes, and it will be continued," the BOA chief added.

He was discussing with the sports journalists while inaugurating BSJA's programme to set a modern library.

BOA secretary general Kutub Uddin Ahmed, deputy secretary general Ishtiaq Ahmed, BSJA president Manzurul Haque, general secretary Syed Mamun and other members of the association were

BSJA has started to expand its library with modern facilities with the support of BOA.

# Murali still undecided

Cricket

AFP, Brisbane

Sri Lankan ace spinner Muttiah Muralitharan says he has not decided whether he will play in Australia again amid continuous crowd taunts over his scrutinised bowling action.

Former Sri Lankan skipper Arjuna Ranatunga has urged Muralitharan to stop playing in Australia because of crowd provocation in the triangular one-day cricket series.

But Muralitharan has sidestepped the issue whether this will be the last time he plays in Australia.

Sri Lanka is scheduled to tour here in two years, but he has refused to slam the door on the possibility of coming back.

"I am not sure because we are not playing for another two years so I don't know what will happen in between," Muralitharan told reporters late Monday. "It is possible but I have not really thought about it. Everything is the same. Nothing changes."

Muralitharan 33, who has captured 584 Test wickets and more than 400 in one-dayers, underwent voluntary tests in Perth earlier this month in a bid to prove that his elbow flexion was below the allowed 15-degree limit.

But the boorish behaviour of Australian crowds, who roar "chucker" and "no ball" every time he approached the bowling crease, is wearing thin.

Ranatunga, now a deputy minis-ter in Sri Lanka, was reported last weekend as saying of the situation: If I had been the captain or manager I would have asked Murali to pack his bags and go home and take some rest as there is a limit to everything.

"If the Australians can't respect good cricket they don't deserve to see the best in action."

Ranatunga once protested and almost walked out with his team from the Adelaide ground in 1999 after Australian umpire Ross Emerson no-balled Muralitharan in a one-day international.

'Murali had decided not to tour Australia two years back but reversed his decision when he wanted to play a charity match for Asian tsunami victims. But if this is no point in going there over and overagain," Ranatunga added.

Former Australian skipper Steve Waugh has stepped in and urged Australian crowds to enjoy seeing one of the finest bowlers in the history of the game.

"He's like Shane Warne in that regard, just one of those special players. They're not going to be around forever," Waugh said in the weekend press.

"He's exciting to watch, he's a match-winner. There's alot of debate over his action, but I don't have a problem with it. I think it's fine. "It would be a shame if he didn't

come back, but I think he will." Sri Lanka coach Tom Moody agrees and believes Australian crowds have not seen the last of

Muralitharan. "I don't think it will be the last time he tours here. Obviously there are a few issues off the field but they are not as bad as they are made out

to be," Moody said.
"It is not different to the reception Warnie gets in England. It is a mark of respect from the Australian public in that he is a major threat and they try and stir him up.

# Gayle aware of his duty

Cricket

CRICINFO, undated

Chris Gayle, West Indies' opening batsman, says that he understands the responsibility he carries opening the batting in New Zealand.

"I always have a responsibility in this team," Gayle told the Trinidad and Tobago Express. "I have a job to do. There are younger players in the team who are inexperienced. I have to use my experience and share it with them. "Whatever I can offer I will

definitely put it forward to them, but at the same time, everyone has to learn quickly and once you get an opportunity, you have to grab it with both hands." In a career chequered with big hundreds and low scores, Gayle

said that he has come to acknowledge the need to play according to "You have to adapt to whatever situation there is," he said. "It's not

all the time you're going to see Chris Gayle go out there and blast,

West Ham moved into the top six of

the English Premiership with an

emphatic 3-0 victory over relega-

tion-haunted Birmingham at

Upton Park on Monday night for

their seventh consecutive victory

Harewood, and a third from Dean

Ashton, heaped more misery on

in the danger zone at the foot of the

table some six points adrift of safety.

We've got to show a bit more resil-

ience than we did tonight." Bruce

told Sky Sports afterwards, "We are

West Ham manager Alan Pardew

said: "Whatever anybody says to us

Birmingham boss Steve Bruce.

A goal in each half from Marlon

Bruce's side remain entrenched

PREMIERSHIP

Football

in all competitions.

in a relegation scrap."

blast for a quick 20. That won't do Indies' current tour. With Brian the team any good. It's just a mental part of being a batsman that you have to work out the situation out

there and adapt to it.' Together with Shivnarine



CHRIS GAYLE

Chanderpaul and Ramnaresh Sarwan -- two other players who have been fixtures in the national side over the past few years -- Gayle has been entrusted the role of scoring the bulk of runs on West

now it's been a good season. The

players have been absolutely brilliant and deserve all the accolades

they get," adding: "These players are

rest of the season, Pardew added:

"We want to worry the big boys and

we are making some strides

was quickest to react to a lucky

bounce off defender Kenny

Cunningham in the 11th minute

but no more goals were added in

the lacklustre way they had fin-ished the opening 45 minutes,

upped the pace once again from

the restart. But it took until just

after the hour mark for Harewood's

his own saved penalty after a hand-

It arrived when he followed up

West Ham, clearly mindful of

Harewood's first came when he

young and hungry."

towards that.'

the first half.

second to come.

ball by Martin Latka.

Lara opting out of the initial one-day leg of the tour, Gayle's role becomes more important.

Commenting on the absence of Lara in New Zealand, Sir Vivian Richards said that Test cricket's highest run-scorer would be missed. "A team that has been failing for some time needs its best player," he told the Barbados Nation. "It is not right in my mind that we will have one of the best players ever [missing] when West Indies need the sort of support at this stage, going away from home, playing in New Zealand. We all know New Zealand conditions can be very, very tough. Let us hope that we may consider these sort of things."

Lara's experience of 121 Tests and 248 ODIs would have been vital, Richards added. "I would love more than anything else to see our best team in New Zealand. We have a lot of young, inexperienced players who will be on tour."

The West Indies begin their tour with a Twenty20 international at Eden Park on Thursday before heading to Wellington for the opening match of the offerday series and

third a couple of minutes later to

wrap up another comfortable win.

finally forced Shaka Hislop into his

Campbell from the bench, it was all

too easy for the Hammers as they

moved level on points with Arsenal

last five Premiership matches, last

posted 15 points out of 15 between

January 31 and February 21 1996

when Coventry, Nottingham Forest,

Spurs, Chelsea and Newcastle were

beaten in successive matches.

long illness last week.

West Ham, who have won their

in the Premiership table.

And as far as ambitions for the first meaningful save, and despite

Jermaine Pennant's free-kick

Dudle

### Hammers going great guns Pace before spin

Dean Ashton promptly added a

Hopefully I'll grab the chance if it comes my way. It's a big tour in here in India and I'm looking forward to

England will play three Tests and seven one-day internationals England have not won a Test series since David Gower's tourists triumphed 2-1 in 1985. India have lost just three of the

last 25 Test series played at home on wickets that traditionally favour spin bowling. Rahul Dravid's Indians are

currently touring Pakistan where they lost the Test series 1-0 but defeated Sri Lanka 2-0 at home earlier in the season.

The Hammers' successful run England will play two warm-up has come at a poignant time for the matches before the first of three fans who turned up to pay tribute back-to-back Tests begins in to the late Ron Greenwood, the Nagpur on March 1. The second Test will be played in Mohali from former West Ham and England manager who passed away after a March 9-13 and the third in Mumbai from March 18-22.

# Drogba doubtful starter CHAMPS LEAGUE

Ivory Coast captain Didier Drogba said on Tuesday he is worried about

his long running battle with a knee

problem that has cast in doubt his availability for next week's mouth-watering Champions League clash'

The 27-year-old who was con-

troversially sent-off in the two sides

Champions League second round

first leg encounter last season told

the Sun that it had got worse while he was on African Nations Cup

duty and he was well below his top

"For three months I have had lingering pain in my knee," said

Drogba, who was inspirational in

Ivory Coast's run to the final where

they lost to Egypt in a penalty

play as I would do usually.

tion, Iam not at my best.

"I am fine in my mind but I can't

"When I kick and change direc-

"Even for my goal against

"I am at only 60 per-cent of my

Nigeria, I did not kick the ball as I

abilities," added Drogba, who

scored three times at the Nations

Cup and also the winning penalty

in the shootout with Cameroon in

the quarterfinals, though he

However Drogba, who if he were

with Barcelona.

form physically.

shootout.

PTI, Lahore Mired in controversies that he

describes as "needless", India's cricket coach Greg Chappell has momentarily wondered whether he should stay on, but on Tuesday he told his detractors that he was not going to flinch.

Greg won't

shy away

The tough-talking Australian, who has found himself at the centre of a row over Sourav Ganguly's place in the team after he took over as the coach eight months ago, said here, "There have been people around the team and outside the team who have tried to make issues much bigger than they have really been."

### Pakistan fined for slow going

CRICINFO, undated

Inzamamul Haq, the Pakistan captain, has been fined 10 per cent of his match fees for a slow overrate during the third ODI against India on Monday. The rest of the team was fined five per cent.

Pakistan bowled one over less in the stipulated time during their loss to India at Lahore. The Indians were pulled up for the same offence after the first game at Peshawar that Pakistan won by seven runs.

### Diego's

when he heard the news but later it was learned that he would have to wait to know about his fate. In fact, the provisional two-match suspension imposed on Cruciani by the AFC will remain in force until its disciplinary committee's verdict.

The AFC executive committee had earlier forwarded the issue to the FIFA disciplinary committee and the world governing body suspended the Argentine till the AFC disciplinary committee's decision.

FIFA said: "The coach is hereby suspended in accordance with Article 20 of the FIFA Disciplinary Code from all friendly and competitive matches contested by his national or club team until the AFC disciplinary committee reaches a final decision on this matter."

Reacting to this, the AFC suspended the coach provisionally for Bangladesh's Group F AFC Asian Cup 2007 qualifiers against Uzbekistan on February 22 and Hong Kong on March 1.

The FIFA has asked the Asian governing body of football to take a decision within one month.

#### not to be fit would leave manager Jose Mourinho with just two strik-

**UEFA CUP** 

missed his one one in the final.

# Boro on a high

Football

AFP, Paris

Middlesbrough's confidence has shot up on the run-up to their midweek UEFA Cup clash at VfB Stuttgart while Bolton boss Sam Allardyce is trying not to let England manager speculation distract him.

Stuttgart might take note of the high morale at the Riverside after the relegation-threatened team beat Jose Mourinho's league leaders Chelsea 3-0 on Saturday while Allardyce is dying to concentrate on Wednesday's home match with Marseille amid media speculation he is the top home-grown candidate to succeed Sven-Goran Eriksson as England manager.

Middlesbrough boss Steve McLaren gave warning to future opponents that the Chelsea result has enthused his side with belief and is a platform for further success, perhaps starting at the Gottlieb-Daimler stadium in the UEFA Cup last 32, first leg on ted to the club and to the players, I

Thursday night. McLaren said: "We've shown what we're capable of doing although we haven't done it enough and in the past couple of months our home record has been poor.

"But we had nothing to lose and when we scored the first goal you could see the confidence and belief come back. This gives us something to build on.' Chelsea's defensive resilience

deserted them as they lost by three goals for the first time under Mourinho. Boro had earned just one win in I Premiership games before the

Chelsea fixture. Bolton meanwhile almost copied Middlesbrough in beating a top team on Saturday when only a stoppage-time equaliser from Gilberto denied them a third vic-

tory over Arsenal this season. When asked whether the constant speculation was distracting for him and his players, the Bolton boss insisted: "I don't think it looked like that out there, do you? I am commit-

am contracted to them.

DIDIER DROGBA

"Whatever comes around in the end, you get on with it, accept it. The players are not being distracted and I am not allowing myself to be distracted."

understand he would have pre-

Wednesday in a rematch of a classic

second round encounter last term

which the English side edged 5-4

Chelsea host Barca next

ferred me to stay."

on aggregate.

UEFA Cup last 32 first leg fix-

WEDNESDAY

Litex Lovech (BUL) v Strasbourg (FRA), Lokomotiv Moscow (RUS) v Sevilla (ESP), Bratislava (SVK) v Levski Sofia (BUL), FC Basel (SUI) v Monaco (FRA), Hertha Berlin (GER) v Rapid Bucharest (ROM), Lille (FRA) v, Shakhtar Donetsk-(UKR), Heerenveen (NED) v Steaua Bucharest (ROM), Rosenborg (NOR) v Zenit St Petersburg (RUS) Schalke 04 (GER) v Espanyol (ESP), Bolton (ENG) v Marseille (FRA), Udinese (ITA) v Lens (FRA), FC Bruges (BEL) v AS Roma (ITA), Real Betis (ESP) v AZ Alkmaar (NED)

THURSDAY

FC Thun (SUI) v SV Hamburg (GER), VfB Stuttgart (GER) v Middlesbrough (ENG), Slavia Prague (CZE) v Palermo (ITA) Secondleg: February 23

## Iran blasts German med



AFP, Berlin

The Iranian embassy in Germany has protested to a German newspaper for publishing a "disgusting and abhorrent" cartoon portraying Iranian footballers as suicide bomb-

Under the headline "Why the German army absolutely must be deployed for the World Cup", the cartoon published last Thursday shows four Iranian footballers with bombs strapped around their stomachs alongside four German

37 Indigent

neer's

ion

compan

Myanmar

street

isher's

word

DOWN

1 Over-

detailed.

1 Quaker's 38 Bucca-

address

5 Joke

CROSSWORD By Eugene Sheffer

2 Attila.

4 Like

3 Superla-

some

5 Kaplan

who

6 Oklaho

played

ma city

sive one

lar home

8 Triangu-

9 Dinner

hour in

10 Pedestal

11 Morse

old Rome

7 Aggres-

cuisine

20 "SNL"

Jay

island

tive suffix 21 Indone

alumnus

The letter to the centre-left Tagesspiegel newspaper said the cartoon "had provoked disgust and abhorrence among sportsmen, the Iranian people, sports fans in the entire world as well as Iranians living in Germany" The embassy said the media

bore the responsibility for portray-ing the World Cup in a positive light and said it reserved the right to take Iran is among the qualifiers for the 32-nation World Cup which

kicks off in Germany on June 9 with the final on July 9. The cartoonist, Klaus Stuttmann,

said he had received three e-mailed death threats over the cartoon. He insisted he had not intended

to offend Iran but was trying to make an ironic point. "I am against soldiers being deployed for the World Cup and tried to make my point of view clear that I find the suggestion absurd,' he said in an interview to be published in Tagesspiegel on Tuesday.

"I do not see the Iranians as

suicide bombers, and they are not. On the contrary, they are sportsmen like other sportsmen. So that is why we do not need the army." Patricia Wolf, the duty editor of lagesspiegel, said the newspaper had received no complaints on the

furious emails arrived in the early hours of Saturday. "Misunderstandings are always regrettable. But whoever wages a

day of publication, but a flood of 66

#### campaign against a country, a newspaper or even against individuals, is behaving irresponsibly," Wolfsaid.

Today's Cryptoquip Clue: M equals L

## Gilchrist blows SL away The tourists recovered strongly Arnold with a blinding one-handed

Sri Lanka, who looked to have presented Australia with a challenging target after scoring 266 for nine, in the end were battered out of it by the ballistic Gilchrist.

Three batsmen scored half-

centuries - Mahela Jayawardene 86

(91 balls), Russel Arnold 76 (71

balls) and Kumar Sangakkara 59 (85 balls) - to take advantage of winning the toss. Sangakkara became the highest scorer of the tri-series with 469 runs at an average of 42.63, with Jayawardene completing the series with 425 at 38.63 after his sixth halfafter losing the wickets of Jayasuriya (6 off 12 balls) and skipper Marvan Atapattu (7 off 16 balls) for just 28 runs.

series of dropped catches with Atapattu grassed in a mix-up between Gilchrist and Mike Hussey at slip on six and Sangakkara put down by Katich on nine on his way to his fifth half-century of the series.

catch off Jayawardene (on 11), running in off the boundary rope only for the ball to go over his head for four.

But Ponting latched onto one of his greatest-ever catches to dismiss



Chief of Army Staff and Bangladesh Olympic Association president Lt Gen Moeen U Ahmed clicks the mouse of a computer to inaugurate BSJA's programme to set up a modern library yesterday.

take falling backwards in the outfield. Andrew Symonds also took three catches, two of them outstanding athletic efforts to dismiss The Australians paid early for a Atapattu and Chamara Kapugedera (9). SCOREBOARD

Scoreboard in the third triangular series limited-overs final between Australia and Sri Lanka at the Gabba on Tuesday: Mick Lewis also misjudged a SRILANKA Atapattu c Symonds b Bracken

Jayawardene c Katich b Clark Arnold c Ponting b Bracken Dilshan c Hussey b Clark Kapugedara c Symonds b Lewis 9 Vaasrun out (Lee) Muralitharan run out (Gilchrist) 3 Fernando not out Extras: (lb-2, w-2, nb-1) Total: (For 9 wkts in 50 overs) 266 Fall of wickets: 1-7, 2-28, 3-128, 4-204, 5-213, 6-238, 7-259, 8-265, 9-266

Jayasuriya c Symonds b Bracken 6

Sangakkara lbw b Clarke

Did not bat: Perera

Ponting not out

Extras: (lb-5, w-4, nb-1)

Super-sub: Bandara for Kapugedera Bowler R 58 Lee 10 0 Bracken 10 44 Lewis 10 52 Clark 10 0 45 0 39 Clarke AUSTRALIA Gilchrist b Muralitharan 122 Katich not out 107

Total: (For 1 wkt in 45.3 overs) 267

Fall of wicket: 1-196 Did not bat: Martyn, Symonds, Clarke, Hussey, Lee, Bracken, Clark, Lewis Super-sub: Hogg (unused) O M R Vaas 45 Perera 50

Fernando 45 Dilshan 3.3 0 21 Muralitharan 10 50 Bandara 36 Jayawardene 0 15 Result: Australia won by 9 wickets and clinch the triangular series 2-1.

Man-of-the-series: Andrew Symonds. Toss: Sri Lanka. Umpires: Aleem Dar and Daryl Harper.

It's one

Gilchrist.

FROM PAGE 12

Ponting leapt backwards, thrust out his right hand at full stretch and took it cleanly "I thought it was going to lob over me," Ponting said.

flight of the ball from mid-wicket,

steps running sideways and thought I had it covered and all of a sudden found I didn't have it covered then just stuck my hand out and it managed to stay in. His effort is being compared

"I turned around and took a few

with Australian John Dyson's leaping outfield interception at the Sydney Cricket Ground to dismiss West Indian bowler Sylvester Clarke back in the 1980s.

#### 8 Enthusi-41 Bribe astic. 42 Vicinity plus 12 Has to 43 Blocking 48 Covers 13 Commo-49 Compete tion Man-of-the-match: Adam 14 Rover's 50 Zilch playmate 51 Neighbor 15 Cinched 17 Laugh-a-52 Freddy's 19 Sends online

25 Baldwin Guinness 26 Owing 30 Fond du -, Wisc. 31 Stage

lines

21 Cleese's

Fawlty

Mr.

24 Teensy

32 Sailor's assent 33 Circulating 35 Carey or Barry-

36 Curved

Solution time: 21 mins

16 Moray, 35 Hinge e.g. altema tive 38 Cover of gloom 39 Suther-40 Start over 41 Branch 44 Zilch 45 Court 46 - Arbor,

22 King of comedy 23 Denomination 24 Oppositionists 26 Supine 27 Exceptional 28 See 29-Down 29 With 28-Down naively innocen occupant 31 Architect Saarinen 34 Molest KTBP. BPSY QRJMMA YTQFNJBOZI ZRL HSSFLRJQ

HQSK BPSQRB. OP'B JMM BNSV-VA KRQFNJZVOBR Yesterday's Cryptoquip: IF YOU'RE PREVENTED FROM ENTERING ANY PUB, I GUESS IT MEANS YOU'VE BEEN DIS-BARRED.

The Cryptoquip is a substitution cipher in which are letter stands for another. If you think that X equals O, it will equal O throughout the puzzle. Single letters, short words and words using an apostrophe give you clues to locating vowels. Solution is by trial and error.