

Translations delaying probe

Indian police have made little headway in a probe into a 2000 match-fixing scam...

In 2000, police in New Delhi had filed a case against Proteas cricketers, including then captain Hansie Cronje...

But the police said they had made no progress in the case as they could not find a translator...

"We have approached the South African High Commission and also Jawaharlal Nehru University...

Crime Branch joint police commissioner Ranjit Narayan, who on Thursday questioned batsman Herschelle Gibbs over the scandal...

Gibbs had admitted accepting money from Cronje to score fewer than 20 runs against India...

He subsequently scored 74 runs and said he had "forgotten" about the deal, but was suspended and fined...

Capello

FROM PAGE 17 While Capello is reticent to argue against referee Bernardino Gonzalez Vazquez's decision...

"I don't understand why I was given a second yellow card," Ronaldo said.

"I saw that (Ruud) van Nistelrooy was shouting because the referee had blown for a foul for no reason...

"The referee moved his head and I said he was a 'phenomenon' and he then gave me the yellow card."

Gattuso makes

FROM PAGE 17 "I spoke to David in August in Edinburgh and he told me the door was always open for me...

"I know they are going through a bad time financially, and I won't go there to take a pension either."

"I won't go at 35 or 36, I'll go when I've still got something to offer them, at European level as well as Scottish."

"When I left Glasgow, it wasn't through the main door, I was forced to flee almost like some sort of thief, at four in the morning..."

"I'm a player who wants people to see how much I put into things, not someone who just runs away in the night."

"I've got a debt towards Rangers fans because of the way I left. They helped me get where I am. I just have to go back."

Chelsea win

FROM PAGE 20 Barry struck in the 81st minute to cancel out Angel's own goal...

Angel's spot-kick miss came in the 71st minute after Tottenham defender Calum Davenport was sent off for a professional foul.

Sheffield United held Manchester City to a 0-0 draw in a drab encounter at Eastlands.

United striker Rob Hulse's effort cannoned to safety off the crossbar in the first half and neither side came any closer to taking all three points.

Newcastle host Bolton on Sunday and rock-bottom Charlton travel to Fulham on Monday.



Maria Sharapova (Russian tennis star) "I feel strongly that the tennis season needs to be made shorter..."



Firebrand Australian paceman Brett Lee (L) and captain Ricky Ponting share a light moment during a practice match against Mumbai XI...

Ricky rejects matey talk



AFP, Sydney

Skipper Ricky Ponting has rejected suggestions that Shane Warne's close friendship with Kevin Pietersen shows Australia are too friendly with Ashes rivals England.

Former Test stars Merv Hughes, Allan Border and Mark Waugh have urged Ponting's team to put friendships on hold when the much-anticipated five-Test series begins in Brisbane on November 23.

Some former greats believe an over-friendly atmosphere contributed to Australia's loss of the Ashes in last year's epic series in England.

But Ponting, whose captaincy was under fire in last year's series, says Australia will play as hard as ever over the next couple of months.

"I can assure you that the Test cricket played in last year's Ashes series was incredibly tough, as hard as any of the Test cricket I have played," Ponting said in an interview with Sydney's Sunday Telegraph.

newspaper. "Having said that, I think I play my best cricket -- as do the team -- when we have a smile on our faces."

"I guess a lot of people may have got the impression that we were too friendly by the close friendship Shane Warne has with Kevin Pietersen, but this stems back to their English county cricket."

"Similarly, the act of sportsmanship between Andrew Flintoff and Brett Lee at the end of the second Edgbaston Test, some people regarded that as a sign of us being too friendly when it was a genuine act of sportsmanship by both players."

"I can tell you that last year's Ashes series was an incredibly tough battle on the field, and I expect this season to be no different."

Ponting says he has also addressed discipline issues with his players after admitting the team has overstepped the line in the past year.

"The Australian cricket team prides itself on playing the game hard but fair," Ponting said.

"Obviously there have been occasions in the past where individuals, myself included, have overstepped the mark, and this is unacceptable."

"I have spoken to the team about this fact -- particularly for myself as captain."

"We understand the profile and exposure that comes with representing Australia and we do not carry this responsibility lightly. We have addressed instances where we have gone too far."

Last month in a triangular tournament in Kuala Lumpur Ponting was fined his entire match fee by the ICC match referee for confronting umpire Asad Rauf over a wide delivery in their one-day match against the West Indies.

Cricket Australia reproached Ponting over his behaviour and said it was a concern.

It was Ponting's second offence this year. The other took place during the second Test against Bangladesh in Chittagong in April.

Tigers welcomed

FROM PAGE 17 India is the only nation not to have hosted Bangladesh in the previous five-year Future Tour Programmes (FTP) of the International Cricket Council as they cancelled it twice during the period.

They also didn't leave out any slot in the next six-year programme although the Bangladesh Cricket Board (BCB) has time and again said that the two respective boards will sort out a time.

Now comes the question whether money is everything for BCCI in cricket.

Rusty NZ

FROM PAGE 17 Arthur was undecided if Gibbs should revert back to opening the innings with Smith after being dropped down the order to accommodate AB de Villiers and Boeta Dippenaar.

"In this tournament the emphasis will be on scoring runs while the ball is still hard and for that reason it is not out of the question that Herschelle could return as opening batsman," said Arthur.

Leading all-rounder Jacques Kallis, veteran wicketkeeper Mark Boucher, the experienced Shaun Pollock and fast bowler Makhaya Ntini ensure South Africa run deep with both bat and ball.

TEAMS NEW ZEALAND (from): Stephen Fleming (captain), Nathan Astle, James Franklin, Peter Fulton, Mark Gillespie, Brendon McCullum, Hamish Marshall, Kyle Mills, Jacob Oram, Jeetan Patel, Scott Styris, Daniel Vettori, Lou Vincent.

SOUTH AFRICA (from): Graeme Smith (captain), Loots Bosman, Mark Boucher, AB de Villiers, Boeta Dippenaar, Herschelle Gibbs, Andrew Hall, Jacques Kallis, Justin Kemp, Charl Langeveldt, Andre Nel, Makhaya Ntini, Robin Peterson, Shaun Pollock.

Result: India won by four wickets. Man-of-the-match: Munaf Patel. Toss: India

FROM PAGE 17 Yardy (four) and the dashing Kevin Pietersen (27) to the pavilion to secure three wickets for 18 runs in 8 overs.

Then spinner Romesh Powar wrapped up the England innings as he picked three for 24.

The batting disaster of England and the West Indies' debacle against Sri Lanka on Saturday prompted discussions in the press box and one travelling English journalist quipped, "Why blame Bangladesh when they can score more than England or the West Indies?"

Rahat Sarwar broke the deadlock in the 32nd minute when he neatly finished a combined move to give Ajax their first points in four games.

Azad, who play defending champions and joint league leaders Usha Kirra Chakra in today lone match, stuck to one point from a draw against Mohammedan.

Cricketers join UN campaign

AFP, Jaipur

England and Indian cricketers joined millions of people to back the United Nations 'Millennium Stand Up Campaign' against poverty before the start of their Champions Trophy match here Sunday.

Players, match officials and thousands of spectators at the Sai Mansingh Stadium here stood up before the Group A match to support the campaign.

The campaign has the backing of India skipper Rahul Dravid, batting star Sachin Tendulkar, film star Aamir Khan and musician AR Rahman.

"The International Cricket Council (ICC) is stepping up to the crease in a wonderful way," UN Secretary-General Kofi Annan said in a statement.

"It is going in to bat for a set of simple, powerful and people-centred objectives that every man and woman in the street can easily support and understand."

The campaign will see people across the world stand up against poverty during a 24-hour period on Sunday and Monday, according to an ICC press release.

Organisers hope to set a world record for the maximum number of people to stand up against poverty within this time frame.

"Our support of the campaign provides us with an important opportunity to draw attention to the need to address this and broader poverty issues," said ICC chief executive Malcolm Speed.

Woolmer days numbered?

PTI, Karachi

Coach Bob Woolmer's honeymoon period in Pakistan Cricket Board (PCB) may end as Shaharyar Khan's resignation has changed his situation dramatically in last few months of his contract till next year's World Cup.

According to highly placed PCB sources, Woolmer's last six months with the Pakistan team might not be as comfortable as they have been since he was appointed in June, 2004 by Shaharyar after unceremoniously sacking Javed Miandad.

It is no secret that PCB director of cricket Operations Saleem Altaf, a former Test player himself, is no big fan of Woolmer and believes he is a liability to Pakistan cricket.

Altaf was unhappy that Shaharyar had allowed too much latitude to Woolmer and given him perks outside his contract.

"The number of times Woolmer has gone on vacations into other Board officials but they kept quiet because of Shaharyar. But with him now gone, the situation could change dramatically," source told PTI.

Anna Chakvetadze of Russia won the WTA Kremlin Cup, beating fifth seeded compatriot Nadia Petrova 6-4, 6-4 here on Sunday.

Chakvetadze took one hour and 30 minutes to claim her second career title after winning at Guangzhou two weeks ago to record her third win over Petrova in as many meetings.

"I was a bit lucky today (Sunday) as Nadia was not 100-percent fit," Chakvetadze said at the award ceremony. "Nevertheless, I'm happy to win at home."

"I hope the public enjoyed the match."

The 19-year-old Chakvetadze looked slightly more focused from the start breaking her opponent's serve twice in the opening set to a 1-0 lead in 51 minutes, while Petrova, who was unbeaten in the finals this year, broke back once. million dollar combined event.

Lara still

AFP, Moscow

FROM PAGE 17 The Windies were shot out for only 80, failing to cope with a slow Mumbai wicket and Farveez Maharoof, who finished with ODI-best figures of 6-14.

Poor footwork and shot selection were to blame as the Caribbean outfit lasted under 31 overs.

And the skipper admits they have plenty to work on before their game against Australia on Wednesday, also at the Brabourne Stadium.

"I hope the pitch is better but we have to do some work behind the scenes working on technique to make sure we give a good account of ourselves," he added.

"This pitch was a bit sluggish but it wasn't one where you should make under 100 -- there was a bit of inept batting."

"We have identified this as a problem for a few one-dayers recently, we collapsed in Malaysia in a couple of matches against India and Australia."

"So we have to address it, or we're not going to last long in this tournament."

"The only good thing is that all eight teams start with zero points."

Pigeon's three cards



AFP, Sydney

Consummate positive thinker Glenn McGrath says there are three strong reasons why Australia will reclaim cricket's Ashes against England over the next couple of months.

The veteran fast bowler, who has snared 136 of his 542 Test wickets against England, is working his way back into bowling rhythm after taking eight months off this year to support wife Jane through her third battle with cancer.

McGrath says come next January he is supremely confident Australia will have the Ashes back after losing them in England in last year's epic series.

The 36-year-old paceman believes three reasons point to Australia's chances of Ashes success, beginning at Brisbane's Gabba ground on November 23.

"England went into the last Ashes after a very successful 18 months. They had the same team together and Michael Vaughan was doing a great job as captain," McGrath told Sydney's Sun-Herald newspaper from India Sunday.

"They'd been playing with a lot of confidence and winning, and once you win games you start to know how to win games, especially when those key moments come up."

"In regard to their confidence and everything else, there's a massive difference between England then and England now."

"They've lost Vaughan, had a lot of injuries, and haven't had the same team together. Okay, they won their last couple of Tests, but their one-day form has been pretty poor."

"Secondly, the Australian team has learnt a lot from last time. "When you lose is when you learn the most. We identified a few areas where we could improve."

"With the calibre we've got, a lot of our plans were for our team, rather than individual player versus individual player. We've moved to the next level."

"England on that tour with their support staff and the way they prepared, they were the world leaders in those areas."

"They had us covered there. We've identified that. We've got (fast bowling coach) Troy Cooley and a couple of other guys in place now, so we're leaving no stone unturned."

McGrath's third reason is Australian batsman Mike Hussey, who is averaging almost 76 from his 11 Test appearances since his debut against the West Indies almost a year ago.

"Mike Hussey didn't play the (Ashes) Test series last time, and since then he's taken the world by storm," McGrath said.

"What Huss brings to the team, and the way Brett Lee has bowled in the last 12 months, they're huge bonuses for Australian cricket. That's why we'll finish with the Ashes."

McGrath, a bowling machine best primed by a lot of work, says he will have enough preparation before the Ashes, with two one-day series in Malaysia and India.

He has had to adapt, not so much because of an ageing body but because of a subtle power shift in which Lee has been granted the wind at his back, two years ago in one-dayers and in Tests last southern summer.

"I've gone from bowling with the wind to bowling against it. Being a rhythm bowler, that's probably the toughest thing I've had to deal with, but it's not a huge issue and I feel I can cope with it pretty well," McGrath says.

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"But whether I'm there or not," he says, "come early January, the Ashes will be in Australian hands."

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