



South African opener Gary Kirsten ducks to avoid a bouncer from Australian fast bowler Glen McGrath during the first day's play of the second Test between Australia and South Africa in Cape Town yesterday. — AFP photo

### IM chess meet from Sunday

Sports Reporter

The second United Insurance International Masters chess tournament will begin in the city from March 20 with four foreign players expected to take part in the meet. This was disclosed at a press conference held at the Bangladesh Chess Federation office yesterday.

Pakistani International Master (IM) Mahmud Ahmed Khan Lodhi, quite a familiar face to the local chess fans and three Indians — Priton Singh, Paritosh Bhattacharya and Suryashekhar Ganguly — have confirmed their participation.

Lodhi, the highest rated player of the meet at 2475, is already in the capital. Lodhi, who had earlier completed his first Grand Masters norm, is tipped to win the eleven-round meet.

Suryashekhar Ganguly, who is only eleven years old, is a promising Indian chess player with a rating of 2131 points.

Forty players will take part in the Swiss league competition. State Minister for Youth and Sports Sadeque Hossain will inaugurate the meet at the National Sports Council conference room on March 20.

Mujibur Rahman, general secretary of the Bangladesh Chess Federation, revealed that cash awards of the 60,000 will be up for grabs.

He also disclosed that about Taka two lakhs have been earmarked for the successful holding of the tournament and United Insurance Company, the sponsors will bear all the expenses.

IM Sabitov Odin of Kazakhstan, who is also the president of his country's chess federation is also expected to take part in the meet.

But the venue of the meet is still to be decided. Bangladesh Chess Federation is interested to hold the competition at the National Sports Council conference room. The tournament will be shifted at the chess room of Bangladesh Chess Federation if they fail to get permission from the National Sports Council (NSC).

Vice-president of Bangladesh Chess Federation Dr A R Khan and M Harunur Rashid, the executive director of United Insurance Company were also present at the press conference.

### Trial for DU cricket team

Sports Reporter

Nineteen players have been picked in the trial in view of forming the Dhaka University cricket team for the 20th Pepsi Cup national cricket final round scheduled to begin from March 21, according to a DU press release.

The players are: Selim Shahed, Kazi Ziaur Rashid (Rupom), Ziauddin Ahmed Shuvon, Mamun, Sohel, Javed Omar Belim Golla, Shabbir, Habibul Bashar Sunon, Atique, Robi Samad Mansur, Sharfuddinul Iqbal Shaheed Saikat, Shamsul Huda, Talha Sajjad, Ashiqur Rahman, Arif, Azam Ferdous, Shafayatul Islam (Kiron), Jaydev Basak.

### Germany edge past Australia

LAHORE, Pakistan, Mar 17: Australia, holders of the Champions Trophy, were beaten 2-1 here Thursday by Olympic champions Germany, after the scores were tied at 1-1 at halftime, reports AFP.

The match flared into controversy three minutes before the end, after a goal awarded to Australia was eventually disallowed.

The troubles started when a shot from a corner by Jay Stacy, rose off a defender's stick and struck the Pakistani umpire, Rashed Ali Khan.

Khan then blew the whistle seconds before Australia's David Wansbrough pushed the ball into goal, but the Germans protested the moment the umpire signalled a goal.

## Hudson holds SA together



CAPE TOWN, Mar 17: Even a brilliant century by birthday boy Andrew Hudson couldn't brighten South Africa's first innings as it painstakingly crawled to 237 for five in the second Test against Australia on Thursday, reports AP.

The home side lost its way after a rollicking start as the Australians kept it repeatedly under check throughout the first day.

Hudson couldn't have given himself a better present on his 29th birthday and provided the backbone of a very sorry first-day total after skipper Kepler Wessels won the toss and elected bat.

Hudson and Gary Kirsten gave their side a dream start, posting the first 50 in 10 overs in their combined effort of 71 runs for the first wicket.

Both managed to see Craig McDermott and Merv Hughes off the attack after three and four overs respectively, with some breathtaking strokeplay before tragedy struck.

While Kirsten drove and cut in his 29, Hudson savagely cut, hooked and pulled as he raced to his second Test century in his 13th game.

Michael Slater's panther-like fielding ended Kirsten's innings and soon the Australians pulled their socks up to produce the second killer blow two overs later.

Hansie Cronje's dream run with the bat ended after making just two as he played on to Glen McGrath, who bowled outstandingly throughout the day.

From 90 for two at lunch, South Africa cruised along in the post-lunch session despite losing Wessels.

Peter Kirsten, who was unbeaten on 62 at the break, joined Hudson to give a facelift to a worrying South African score of 100 for three.

The pair added 89 runs, but soon after the break, Hudson's 249-minute stay was ended by a brilliant piece of Australian fielding.

Steve Waugh at extra-cover went sprawling to intercept a Kirsten drive and in a flash had the stumps thrown down at the striker's end.

It was a harsh decision, considering how close the decision was, and it required at least three playbacks in frame-to-frame motion to decide Hudson's fate.

His innings was studied with 13 boundaries and lasted 175 balls.

Jonty Rhodes was beaten by a McGrath breakthrough, and suddenly the South African innings had slumped to 198 for five.

For the next hour and a half it was agonizing batting, as Brian McMillan batted against leg-spinner Shane Warne and the Waugh twins.

Kirsten has batted for 224 minutes and struck six boundaries in his 188-ball knock.

Richardson removed Walsh after six consecutive overs and used six bowlers before the first interval, including spinners Jimmy Adams and Shivnarine Chanderpaul.

Chanderpaul, at 19 the first teenager to represent the West Indies since Elquemedo Willet in 1973, was a surprise inclusion in the final 11. Called in Wednesday to replace his injured fellow Guyanese in the squad of 13, he took the place of opening batsman Phil Simmons from the team that won the first Test in Jamaica by eight wickets.

With minutes before lunch, the West Indies missed a chance to remove Smith. Driving at fast bowler Winston Benjamin, he edged a straight-forward, two-handed catch to first slip where Brian Lara dropped it. He was then on 27.

Chanderpaul for Simmons was the only change in the West Indies 11 while England made three changes to their first Test team, bringing in Ramprakash, Ian Salisbury and Angus Fraser for Matthew Maynard, Andy Caddick and the injured Devon Malcolm.

SCOREBOARD  
Scoreboard at lunch on the

pointment for Ramprakash. Mar 17: Fast bowler Courtney Walsh took a wicket in each of his first two overs.

but England captain Mike Atherton and Robin Smith were carefully repairing the damage by lunch Thursday, the first day of the second cricket Test against the West Indies, reports AP.

At the interval, Atherton (34) and Smith (29), were in a partnership of 68 with England at 70 for two.

West Indies captain Richie Richardson's decision to bowl first after winning the toss was immediately vindicated when Walsh bowled Alec Stewart for a duck off the inside edge with the fourth ball of the second over.

Walsh then won a leg before wicket decision from Indian umpire Srinivas Venkataraghavan to dismiss Mark Ramprakash for two in his next over.

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### Now soft tennis

Sports Reporter

Bangladesh may not have any worthwhile representation in the international sports circuit, but the country certainly is taking giant strides in the process of increasing the number of sports bodies. With twenty seven federations already operational, although there is enough space for one to wonder about the raison d'être of some, if not most of them, another national body may see light in a very short while.

As a sequel to the recent visit of the president of Japan's national soft tennis federation, and his assured assistance to promote the game a different version of tennis played with a soft ball and on a different court — in this country, the local sports organisers have chalked out a plan to launch Bangladesh Soft Tennis Association. A five-member committee has already been constituted with a view to ensuring Bangladesh's presence in the event at the Hiroshima Asian Games, scheduled to start in October this year, which will have the status of a demonstration sport in this Asia.

Two Nepalese coaches arrived in the city yesterday to conduct a coaching camp at the Dhanmondi Women's Sports Complex with a view to giving a semblance of authenticity to what, many feel, seems no more than scam.

The Japanese soft tennis federation, who has already sent some sports gears with its president during his visit, will bear the expense related to the Nepalese duo's stay in Dhaka.

Bashir Ahmed, Secretary General of the Bangladesh Olympic Association (BOA), will head the five-member committee, which includes Akhter Hossain, Faruqul Islam, Saidur Rahman Don and Nazma Shamim. This committee, according to a reliable source, will supervise the coaching programme as well as the overall promotion bid of the game in this country.

MIAMI, Mar 17: Former world number one tennis player Monica Seles, who has not played since being stabbed by a crazed spectator nearly a year ago, became a United States citizen Wednesday, her publicist said, reports Reuter.

Yugoslavian-born Seles and her mother Ester passed their citizenship exams in Miami, said spokeswoman Linds Dozoretz.

This is a happy day for me. I am proud to be a United States citizen and very happy my mother and I are now citizens of this great country. We loved learning more about the United States in order to become citizens and we look forward to continuing our lives here," Seles said in a statement.

She said the decision to become an American was not politically motivated and that she and her family look forward to visiting her homeland someday.

She and her mother have lived in the United States for nine years and currently live in Sarasota. Her father Karoly and brother Zoltan accompanied Seles and her mother to Wednesday's interview and exam, and are waiting to fulfil citizenship requirements, Dozoretz said. The family is of Hungarian descent.

Prabhakar, a 30-year-old opening batsman and pace bowler, will miss the one-off Test which starts Saturday in Hamilton, as well as four limited-overs internationals.

Prabhakar has been suffering from the injury to his left heel for several months and it has failed to respond to treatment.

Prabhakar, who has taken 92 Test wickets during his career, said he was bitterly disappointed. He said he had been advised to rest the injury for three weeks.

Prabhakar said, "My feeling is that it is fine when I'm batting or fielding but it gets worse with each ball when I bowl." "I told the selectors I could bat ... but these things happen."

"I would have liked to have played here. You never know, maybe I could have scored my first Test century here."

Indian captain Mohammad

BUENOS AIRES, Mar 17: Diego Maradona, basking in the spotlight after training with the national side for a March 23 friendly against Brazil, is determined to spearhead his country's bid for glory in the World Cup finals, reports Reuter.

"I've been granted my passport and a visa so I've nothing to fret about," a relaxed Maradona told reporters after a practice match. "I'm feeling fine and am dying to play again."

Maradona was sacked by his club last month and his career lay in ruins after he shot an air rifle at journalists, injuring four. He still faces criminal charges.

Yet despite his surprise recall, the 33-year-old midfielder seems almost certain to sit out the match against arch-rivals Brazil.

"Experience is always vital at this level but it's not everything," coach Alfio Basile told Reuters. "To be a footballer you have to be playing regularly."

"Let's not rush him. We'll keep monitoring his position day by day. We all want to see him play in the World Cup,"

### An Olympian's transformation into a criminal

## Tonya Harding comes clean



PORTLAND, Ore., Mar 17: Figure skater Tonya Harding pleaded guilty Wednesday to covering up the plot to attack her rival Nancy Kerrigan, agreed to end her competitive career and was ordered to pay 160,000 dollars in penalties, reports Reuter.

Dressed in a trim black suit and speaking in a soft voice, Harding, 23, pleaded guilty to a felony charge of hindering the prosecution in its investigation of the conspiracy leading up to the January 6 attack on Kerrigan.

Following terms of a plea bargain, Multnomah county circuit judge Donald Londer sentenced Harding to three years probation, fined her 100,000 dollars and ordered her to withdraw from the US Figure Skating Association.

Without USFSA credentials, Harding cannot participate in competitive figure skating events and will not attend next week's World Championships in Japan.

Harding also was ordered to perform 500 hours of community service, reimburse the district attorney's office 10,000 dollars in costs and set up a 50,000 dollars fund to benefit Oregon's special Olympics, a competition for

handicapped people. "I'm really sorry that I interfered," Harding told Londer in court.

In a statement after the hearing, Harding said she had "no excuses" for failing to come forward when she learned that her former husband Jeff Gillooly and other associates were behind the attack in which Kerrigan was smashed above the knee by a man with a metal club.

As part of the plea bargain, Harding was also ordered to get a psychiatric evaluation and then counselling to be determined at a later date.

"I am committed to seeking professional help and turning my full attention to getting my personal life in order," she said. "This objective is more important than my figure skating."

Deputy district attorney Norm Frink said Harding admitted in her plea to meeting with Gillooly and her bodyguard Shawn Eckardt January 10 to agree on story they would tell to investigators who by then were rapidly unravelling details of the amateurish plot against Kerrigan.

Under the plea agreement, Harding cannot face any further charges in the Kerrigan case and is cleared of any prior involvement in the attack.

But Frink said after the hearing that "there is substantial evidence in the public record that indicates her involvement."

"I think it would not have been in the public interest to have pursued a long-term prosecution that would have drained this county of resources to answer every question definitively about this case," he said.

The attack on Kerrigan knocked her out of the US figure skating championship won by Harding and shocked the sports world with its echoes of the stabbing of tennis star Monica Seles by crazed fan.

Kerrigan went on to recover and won the silver medal at the recent Winter Olympics in Lillehammer, Norway where Harding finished eighth.

From the moment of the attack, attention focused on the often-controversial Harding and her unconventional camp.

When confronted by reporters immediately afterward about whether she was involved, Harding responded: "You guys know me better than that."

But within a week, reports began to leak out about a "murderous plot involving Gillooly and the 350-pound (160 kg) Eckardt."

By the end of the month Gillooly had pleaded guilty to helping orchestrate the attack, allegedly carried out with the help of Eckardt and two associates from Arizona: Shane Stant, the alleged "hit man" and his uncle Derrick Smith, the getaway car driver.

While the men apparently fancied themselves as top-secret operatives, they left a trail of clues that investigators virtually stumbled upon, making reservations in their own name and speaking in phone calls that were easily traced.

For Harding, the guilty plea marks the end to a career that saw her scramble to the top of the elitist world of figure skating despite a difficult childhood, a rocky marriage and a personal life marked by violent episodes.

Born in Portland to a mother then in her fifth marriage, Harding grew up in eight different homes in the area and collected soda bottles to help pay for the expenses of her sport, including material for costumes sewn by her mother.

When she was 15 Harding met Gillooly, then 18, at the Clackamas Town Centre ice skating rink near here that long has been her home base.

Their marriage in July 1990 was stormy from the start. They separated twice, and Harding twice sought restraining orders against Gillooly, swearing he was physically abusive.

Late last year they divorced, but they reconciled again, then separated just before Gillooly pleaded guilty and implicated Harding, saying she was in on the plot from the beginning.



US figure skater Tonya Harding (L) with her lawyer Bob Weaver, in Multnomah county circuit courts, United States on March 16 tells judge Donald Londer that she is guilty of conspiracy to hinder prosecution in the attack on Nancy Kerrigan. — AFP photo

## India to miss Prabhakar



HAMILTON, New Zealand, Mar 17: Indian all-rounder Manoj Prabhakar will miss the rest of his team's cricket tour of New Zealand after Thursday falling a fitness test on a foot injury, reports AP.

Prabhakar, a 30-year-old opening batsman and pace bowler, will miss the one-off Test which starts Saturday in Hamilton, as well as four limited-overs internationals.

Prabhakar has been suffering from the injury to his left heel for several months and it has failed to respond to treatment.

Prabhakar, who has taken 92 Test wickets during his career, said he was bitterly disappointed. He said he had been advised to rest the injury for three weeks.

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Yet despite his surprise recall, the 33-year-old midfielder seems almost certain to sit out the match against arch-rivals Brazil.

"Experience is always vital at this level but it's not everything," coach Alfio Basile told Reuters. "To be a footballer you have to be playing regularly."

"Let's not rush him. We'll keep monitoring his position day by day. We all want to see him play in the World Cup,"

Azharuddin said Prabhakar's absence would force a reshuffle of the Test team.

"We're very disappointed, because it has upset the balance of the side," he said. "But we have to play on with what we have and make do the best we can."

The Indians will replace

Prabhakar with either Bhupinder Singh of Punjab or Bangalore's younger but less experienced Venkatesh Prasad.

New Zealand, meanwhile, received a pre-Test confidence boost when they defeated Pakistan by seven wickets in the fifth and final limited-overs international between the teams in Christchurch on Wednesday.

Having restricted Pakistan to 145 for nine, New Zealand made 146 for three, spearheaded by man-of-the-match Blair Hartland, who made an unbeaten 68.

New Zealand lost their recent Test series to Pakistan 2-1 and went down 3-1-1 in the limited-overs series, but captain Ken Rutherford said his team was looking forward to the Test.

"It's another Test match and a Test is a great opportunity to play against the best,"

McDermott returns to Australia to undergo surgery to remove fragmented cartilage from his right knee, while Healy's unavailability has been put down to personal reasons.

Healy, along with vice-captain Mark Taylor and all-rounder Steve Waugh, is a candidate to replace Border as Australia's captain after Border retires.

Australia will be joined by reigning champions Pakistan, New Zealand, India, Sri Lanka and Bangladesh in the two-week tournament in Sharjah, which is hosted every four years in United Arab Emirates.

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General secretary of Bangladesh Chess Federation Mujibur Rahman (2nd from L) addressing a press conference at the federation office yesterday in connection with the second United Insurance international chess tournament which begins in the city on March 20. — Star photo