

## Pepsi Cup cricket first semifinal today

## Ctg, Sylhet complete quorum

Sports Reporter



Rafiqul destroyed Dhaka with a haul of five wickets as Sylhet entered the semifinal of the Pepsi Cup 20th national cricket championship with ease at the Dhanmondi Cricket Stadium on Saturday.

Not much of a bowler, but fairly useful in the fretful, fidgety scheme of instant cricket, Rafiqul captured five wickets for 29 runs from 7.4 overs. His exploits left Dhaka all out for 125 in the span of 37.4 overs, nearly 13 short of the full quota of 50 over.

Dhaka's young skipper Halim Shah won the toss in the bright morning of a national holiday on account of the Independence Day and chose to bat first on a wicket, not really known for its assistance to the first users.

Dhaka were on the backfoot right from the world go as the experienced seamers of Sylhet reduced them to 41 for three. Habibul Bashar Suman tried to hold the innings together with a patient 36 but Rafiqul's

arrival in the scene quashed all hopes of a recovery.

Former national cricketer Ahar Hossain Shantu with 14 and Towhid with 11 were the other mentionable run-getters for Dhaka.

While Rafiqul stole the bowling honours with a big haul, experienced Golam Faruq Suru took two for 18 while national cricketer Athar exemplified economy with figures of one for 13 from seven overs.

Sylhet scored 129 for four wickets from 34.2 overs. Mahbubur Rahman Selim remained unbeaten on 31 as the strong Sylhet favoured to the semifinal with a six wicket win.

National cricketers Aminul Islam and Athar Ali Khan were the other significant contributors with 30 and 24.

Former national cricketer Rafiqul Alam captured two wickets for 27 runs from his quota of ten overs. Naimur Rahman and Azhar Hossain got one wicket apiece among the Dhaka bowlers.

Reigning champions Chittagong careered to a seven-wicket win against Mymensingh

at the Dhaka Stadium on the same day to set up a clash in the first semifinal billed for today at the Dhaka Stadium.

Put in to bat first, the tacky Mymensingh struggled all along against the experienced and incisive Chittagong bowlers like Saiful and useful seasoned campaigners like Morshed and Salahuddin. They were all out for 117 in 48.3 overs with Pappu and Shariful Huq Plaban making 20 each.

While wicketkeeper Pappu took 64 balls for his 20, off spinner Palaban, who toured Kenya recently with the Bangladesh team, played 23 balls and hit a sixer and a four.

Former national cricketer Shahidur Rahman scored 38 and opener Azam 26 to make light of Chittagong's early losses of national player Akram Khan and Zahid Razzak.

One hundred and eighteen runs were posted in 42.1 overs with skipper Minhazul Abedin Nannu unbeaten on 20 as Chittagong completed a massive seven-wicket victory to brace for a defence of the title.

## Army Reds lift Independence Day b'ball title

Sports Reporter

Fancied Bangladesh Army Reds clinched the title of the Independence Day basketball championship with a comfortable 68-49 win over Bangladesh Air Force in the final at the woodenfloor gymnasium yesterday.

Bangladesh Army, who moved into the final with an all win record in their four round robin league matches, led the first half 23-18.

They scored 45 points against Air Force's 31 in the second session to ensure the winners' purse of Taka 3,000.

Iqbal caged 18 points for Army while teammate Shafi scored 17. However, Naimul of Air Force was the highest scorer of the day with 19 points but saw his efforts go in vain for lack of support from his peers.

State Minister for Youth and Sports Sadeque Hossain gave away prizes as chief guest. Bangladesh Air Force received Taka 2000 and the runners-up trophy.

President of the Bangladesh Amateur Basketball Federation (BBAF) Prof Rashid Uddin Ahmed was also present on the occasion.

Five teams including two clubs and three service outfits took part in the six-day meet.

## Tahmid holds centre stage

Sports Reporter

Syed Tahmidur Rahman left the local chess pundits in a fix as the FIDE Master, playing brilliantly, beat International Masters Mahmood Ahmed Khan Lodhi, the Pakistani favoured to win this 40-player meet, and national champion Reefat Bin Sattar to go atop the points table of the United Insurance International Masters chess tournament.

On completion of the seventh round matches at the National Sports Council chess room yesterday, Tahmid along with Lodhi, Indian Subhrajit Saha shared the top slot, having collected five and a half points each.

Reefat, his fellow-IM Ziaur Rahman, Kalimullah Khan and A N M Ruhul Qudus trail the top trio half a point behind with a collection of five points each.

## Bima brilliance dazzles Ansars

Sports Reporter

Sadharan Bima Krira Sangstha recorded their second successive win in the office hockey league with a thumping 4-1 victory over Dhaka Ansars at the Hockey Stadium yesterday.

Fresh from their 6-1 victory over Police AC, Sadharan Bima enjoyed yet another day of dominance against overawed Ansars.

National colour Jamil Parvez Lulu scored two goals for the winners while Mohammed Sadek and Murad netted the other two goals.

Abu Bakar Siddik pulled one back for the losers in the 58th minute from a penalty corner.

## Dimeer pockets 555 golf crown

Sports Reporter

Dimeer Chowdhury won the 555 golf classic tournament '94 held at the lush green course of Kurmitola Golf Club on Sunday, says a press release.

Li Gen M Nooruddin Khan, chief of Army staff and president of the Kurmitola Golf Club, inaugurated the day-long meet, participated some 150 golfers.

Fakhruddin Ahmed became runners-up while M S Kwan was the ladies' winner.



Chief of Air Staff, Air Vice Marshall Altaf Hossain Chowdhury giving the trophy to the winner of the 555 golf classic tournament at the Kurmitola golf club course yesterday. —Star photo

## India level one-day series with a seven-wicket win

## Tendulkar torments Kiwis



AUCKLAND, New Zealand, Mar 27: Sachin Tendulkar scored an explosive 82 Sunday

to lift India to an emphatic seven-wicket victory over New Zealand at Eden Park in the second limited-overs cricket international, reports AP.

Tendulkar slammed his runs from just 49 balls as India reached the victory target of 143 in just 23.2 overs for the loss of three wickets.

The 20-year-old clearly relished being moved, up the order to open with Ajay Jadeja and he launched a blistering attack on the home team's bowlers.

His innings included 15 fours and two sixes.

Tendulkar's half-century came up in the 11th over off only 34 balls and the Indian hundred was raised in the 13th over for the loss of just one wicket, that of Jadeja for 18.

Tendulkar's first single was the one he ran to go to 82 in the 15th over. He was dismissed on the second ball of Matthew Harris's second over when he lobbed back a simple catch to the bowler.

The Indians scored the rest of the required runs without difficulty, losing only one wicket along the way. Vinod Kambli fell for 21 to Chris Harris with 126 on the board.

Captain Mohammad Azharuddin was unbeaten on 12 at the end, with Sanjay Manjrekar on seven.

New Zealand earlier struggled to make any impact against a controlled Indian attack and was all out in the final over for 142.

Harris led the scoring with a patient unbeaten 50 from 71 balls that included three boundaries and a six over long-on.

The top five New Zealand batsmen were back in the pavilion with just 34 runs on the board but Harris and Parore then painstakingly put on 52 for the sixth wicket.

Wicketkeeper Parore departed for 23, run out superbly by Tendulkar, who threw down the stumps from mid-wicket.

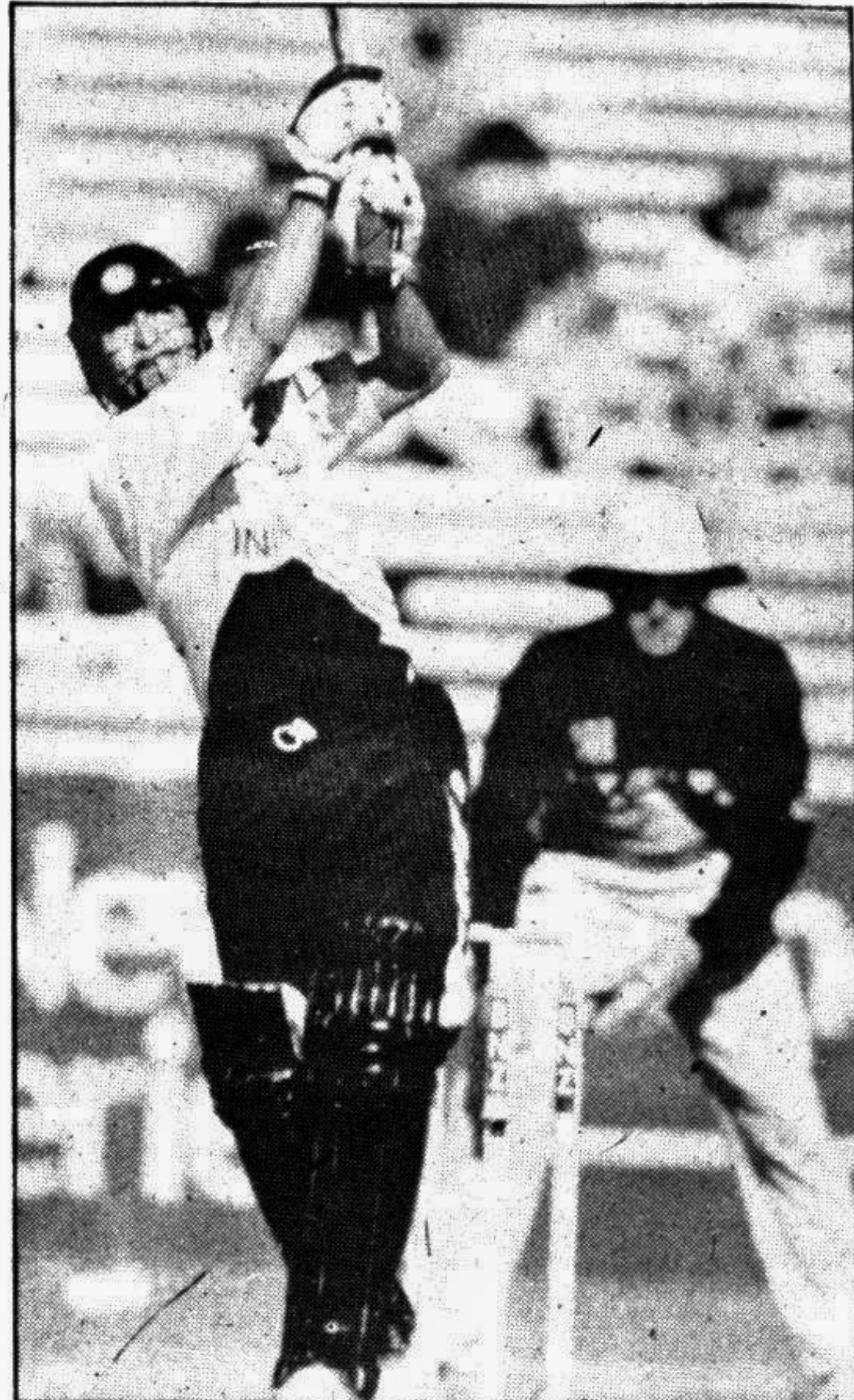
Kapil Dev, Javagal Srinath and Salil Ankola each took two wickets and spinner Rajesh Chauhan took 3-43.

New Zealand scored a 28-run win over India in the opening match of the series on Friday in Napier. The teams now head to Wellington for the third international on Wednesday.

## SCOREBOARD

Scoreboard in the second one-day international between

| INDIA:                            |     | NEW ZEALAND:                      |    |
|-----------------------------------|-----|-----------------------------------|----|
| Jadeja c Rutherford b Pringle     | 18  | Young c Mongia b Ankola           | 16 |
| Tendulkar c and b Hart            | 82  | Hartland c Azharuddin b Kapil Dev | 6  |
| Kambli c Hart b Harris            | 21  | Rutherford c Azharuddin b Srinath | 6  |
| Azharuddin not out                | 12  | Fleming c Mongia b Kapil Dev      | 6  |
| Manjrekar not out                 | 7   | Thomson c Mongia b Ankola         | 1  |
| Extras (w-2, nb-1)                | 3   | Harris not out                    | 50 |
| Total (for three wks, 23.2 overs) | 143 | Parore run out                    | 23 |
| Fall: 1-61; 2-117; 3-126.         |     |                                   |    |



India's make-shift opener Sachin Tendulkar plays a lofted drive for six during his whirlwind innings of 82 off only 49 balls against New Zealand in the second one-day at Eden Park yesterday. India won by seven wickets to restore parity. — AFP photo

| INDIA:  |            | NEW ZEALAND:  |  |
|---|------------|---|--|
| Hart b Chauhan  | 10         | Did not bat: Kapil Dev, Mongia, Kumble, Srinath, Ankola, Chauhan. |  |
| Larsen st Mongia b Chauhan                                    | 5          |   |  |
| Morrison st Mongia b Chauhan                                  | 2          |   |  |
| Pringle b Srinath   | 17         |   |  |
| Extras (lb-2, nb-1, w-3)                                      | 6          |   |  |
| Total: All out for  | 142        |   |  |
| Fall: 1-1; 2-11; 3-31; 4-33; 5-34; 6-86; 7-105; 8-111; 9-115. |            |   |  |
| Bowling:  |            | Result: India won by seven wickets.                               |  |
| Kapil Dev   | 10 1 18 2  | Man-of-the-match: Sachin Tendulkar                                |  |
| Srinath   | 7.4 2 17 2 | Series tied 1-1, two to play                                      |  |
| Ankola  | 8 0 27 2   |   |  |
| Jadeja  | 4 0 6 0    |   |  |
| Kumble  | 10 2 29 0  |   |  |

## Trinidad Test nicely poised



PORT OF SPAIN, Trinidad, Mar 27: Graham Thorpe redeemed himself after a sequence of low scores by battling his way to an unbeaten 64 that revived England's hopes in the third Test against West Indies on Saturday, reports Reuter.

Thorpe shared successive half-century stands with Graeme Hick (40) and wicketkeeper Jack Russell (17 not out) to lift England to 236 for five in reply to West Indies' first innings of 252 at the close on the second day.

England, having swiftly wrapped up the West Indian tail from the overnight 227 for seven, then found themselves in a familiar plight at 115 for four after Curtly Ambrose and Winston Benjamin each took two wickets.

Left-hander Thorpe, whose previous four scores in the series were 16, 14, 0 and 20, erased the memory of his wretched form by lifting England with a timely and resolute innings marked by vigorous pulling.

Thorpe, who completed his half-century from 97 balls, put on 52 for the fifth wicket with Russell.

England, already trailing 2-0 in the five-Test series, have produced some of their most effective cricket at a crucial time, with the prospect looming of a third 5-0 sweep by West Indies in the last 10 years.

They started the day on the right note by dispatching West Indies last three wickets with 30 minutes for the addition of 25 runs.

Angus Fraser had Ambrose (13) caught by Thorpe at first slip, and bowled Kenny Benjamin with an inswinger after the paceman had rattled up nine runs in nine minutes.

Chris Lewis finished the job, having Courtney Walsh bow first ball to finish with four for 49. Fraser ended with four for 49. However, Ambrose soon joined England with a delivery that kept low and came back off the pitch to shatter Alec Stewart's stumps as he played back, having made just six.

Captain Mike Atherton, showing typical determination, and Mark Ramprakash, who needed a substantial score after twice falling in the second Test, put on 66 for the second wicket before West Indies broke through again.

They captured three wickets while 33 were scored, reducing the touring team from 82 to one to 115 for four.

Ramprakash (23) tried to hook a ball outside off stump from Winston Benjamin, but

Hick and shared an unbroken sixth wicket stand of 69 with the obdurate Russell.

The pair gave England the chance to establish a lead of at least 50, which is the minimum that will need to offset having to bat last on what is likely to become an increasingly difficult Queens Park Oval pitch.

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skied it for a return catch. With five runs added, Atherton edged Benjamin and was caught low down by wicketkeeper Junior Murray for 48. Ambrose returned and further undermined England's top order by having Robin Smith lbw for 12.

Hick, surviving difficult chance in the slips of Benjamin when he had made only two, and Thorpe then started the revival which, with Russell's subsequent contribution, has left the match intriguingly poised.

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## US drub India

NEW DELHI, Mar 27: Jim Courier and Todd Martin of the United States won the reverse singles to complete a 5-0 whitewash of India in their Davis Cup first round tie here Sunday, reports AFP.

Courier, the world number four, dropped a set to Leander Paes before downing the Indian number one 6-7(5-7), 6-1, 6-4 in two hours and 32 minutes on the Delhi Tennis Association grass courts.

Australian Open finalist Martin swept aside Zeeshan Ali 6-2, 7-5 in one hour and 16 minutes in the second match.

The top-seeded Americans now meet the Netherlands in the quarter-finals while India, who reached the semifinals last year, face a playoff to remain in the elite 16-team world group.

Paes, ranked 320 places below Courier, had promised to give the American a tough match in the dead rubber and he kept his word.

He surprised the two-time French and Australian Open champion by winning the first set tie-breaker 7-5.

Courier broke Paes's serve twice to win the second set 6-1 and broke him again in the opening game of the decider.

With Courier serving for the match at 5-4 and 30-40, Paes lost a crucial break point when the chair umpire overruled a linesman.

Given another chance, Courier hit a service winner and finished the match with a forehand passing shot.

## Havelange, a professional

TUNIS, Mar 27: Asia and CONCACAF will both be guaranteed an extra, third place at the 2002 World Cup finals, FIFA president Joao Havelange said on Friday, reports Reuter.

But he ruled out a fourth place for African teams in the tournament until at least 2006.

"I have told the Africans that each bit of progress will come in good time. For the time being, they will have to wait," said Havelange.

Africa currently has three places at the World Cup finals, while Asia and CONCACAF — the grouping of north and central American and the Caribbean — have two each. The new places will be at the expense of Europe, who currently have 13.

Europe lost one of their places in the 1994 finals to Africa.

FIFA recently announced plans for a play-off match between an Asian team and a European country in the qualifying competition for the 1998 finals, which would allow Asia the possibility of a third participant in the tournament in France.

The top two finishers at the Asian qualifying tournament will automatically qualify, and the third-placed side will play off over two legs against a European qualifier for another place at the World Cup finals.

The FIFA president also confirmed he is to meet with the presidents of the five different continental federations in Zurich on April 5 to discuss the future of his presidency.

## Rupali Bank romp

ISMAIL ripped through the ANZ Grindlays Bank Ltd batting order to pave the path for an easy eight-wicket victory for Rupali Bank in the first office cricket league at the Dhanmondi Club ground Saturday.

Ismail, with a fiery spell of new-ball bowling, ran through the top order of Grindlays Bank, who elected to bat after winning the toss, to reduce the losers to 67 for seven in 16.5 overs.

With the innings heading nowhere, Kajo offered some sort of resistance to the rampant Rupali Bank bowlers and guided his side through to a rather respectable 110 in 30.4 overs. The number-eight batsman remained unbeaten on 33 with Kamrul, Hira and Hedayet being the other batsmen to cross the double-digit mark with collection of 22, 11 and 11 respectively.

Ismail finished with fabulous figures of five for 15.

In reply, Rupali Bank sauntered past the victory target in 21 overs, making 114 for two with Junaid hitting an unconquered 40. Opener Kiran followed him with a well-made 37.

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## Esposito steals the show



PARIS, Mar 27: Frenchman Franck Esposito trounced Olympic champion Melvin Stewart and shattered the men's 200 metres butterfly short-course world record at a World Cup swimming meeting on Saturday, reports Reuter.

Esposito, bronze medalist behind the American at the 1992 Barcelona Olympics, thrilled the home crowd with a devastating performance, clocking one minute 53.05 seconds which carved more than a second from the old world mark.

Apart from Esposito's new world and European standard, three more European short-course records tumbled.

Ukraine's Alexander Djaburia and Russia's Alexander Popov respectively lowered their European 50 metres backstroke and 100 metres backstroke marks, while Lorenza Vigarani of Italy claimed the women's 200 metres backstroke mark from two former East Germans.

Popov failed to beat the 100 metres freestyle short-course world record for the first time in five World Cup outings but made up for it by lowering the European 100 backstroke mark for the second time in eight days with a time of 52.56 seconds.

Djaburia also posted his second European short-course record in eight days with a narrow victory in the 50 backstroke in 27.20.

Vigarani clocked 2:07.30 in the women's 200 backstroke to beat the 2:07.54 recorded by Cornelia Sirch in Indianapolis in January 1993 and equalled by fellow Former East German Dagmar Hase in Victoria, British Columbia, in April 1992.

But, to the crowd's noisy delight, Esposito upstaged all others as he took the 200 metres butterfly ahead of reigning world and Olympic champions Stewart.

Esposito, short-course world champion in Palma de Mallorca last December, led Stewart by a fraction in over the first 100 but surged clear after the halfway mark.

Esposito, the crowd whistling and cheering him on, won by a body-length, his 1:53.55 beating the mark of 1:54.21 established by New Zealand's Danyon Loader in Gelsenkirchen, Germany, on February 13, 1993.

Stewart touched second in 1:54.37 and