Sports Reporter

Bangladesh have been ranked 126th in FIFA's latest ranking of the football playing countries, released from the headquarters of the world soccer governing body in Zurich on Thursday

Among the other South Asian countries. India preceded Bangladesh with the 105th position.

interestingly enough, the reigning SAF football champi ons Nepal have been ranked 129th Sri Lanka and Pakistan both former SAF champions. were slotted at 128 and 147 respectively. Brazil, the newly crowned World Cup champions topped the list while St. Kitts and Nevis form the bottom.

Thorpe, Benjamin soup Surrey up

LONDON, July 22: In form paceman Joev Benjamin and overlooked England batsman Graham Thorpe helped county championship leaders Surrey into a commanding position astainsi Nottinghamshire a Tre nt Bridge on Thursday, re ports Reuter.

Beinjamin took six for 27 to send Nottinghamshire tum bling to 125 all out.

Then Thorpe - ignored by the England selectors since the winter four of the West Indies - stroked an impressive 70 as Surrey reached 157 for two by the close of the first

Another six-wicket haul was claimed by Sussex's Eddie Hemmings as Somerest laboured to 277 for seven at home.

Mark Lathwell held the Somerset innings together with 124 but off spinner Hemmings, the oldest player on the county circuit at 45, took six for 61 from 44 overs as Sussex fought back in the final session.

Richard Montgomerie struck'a rich vein of form to claim his maiden championship century as Derbyshire's decision to bowl first at Northampton backfired badly.

. The 23-year-old opener. making only his third appearance in the competition. hammered 151, with 24 fours in a 310-ball stay. Northamptonshire were 409 for four at the close.

Another opener in good touch was Trevor Ward who hit 110 for Kent who ran up 373 for five against Glamorgan at Abergavenny.

New format goes well with Fed Cup

FRANKFURT, Germany, July 22. The Federation Cup, originally launched with 16 nations playing off in London in 1963. has attracted a record entry of 83 nations for 1995, reports

The competition has been renamed Fed Cup and in the new format the top eight nations in the World Group and another eight in Group One will play off on a home and away basis with matches decided over two days after four singles and a doubles.

Until now ties have been decided in a single day after two singles and a doubles. All other nations outside

the two top groups will play in segional qualifying events.

The four first round losers in the World Group will face

the four First Round winners in Group One to decide the composition of the 1996 World Group. Similarly the four first

round losers in group one will play the four winners of the regional qualifying to decide who plays in Group One the following year

Matches for the regional qualifying events for Europe-Africa, the Americas and Asia Oceania, will continue to be run on a round-robin basis.

"We are tremendously excited about this new format. said the International Tennis Federation's Fed Cup executive director Debbie Jevans.

English cagers ' in good nick

KULALA LUMPUR, July 22: Defending champions England continued their unbeaten run in the Commonwealth Basket ball when they thrashed Malaysia 81-49, on the third day of the championships Thursday, reports AFP,

Canada whipped Hong Kong 110-60 and Nigeria thrashed Singapore 80-48 in two other

matches. Peter Scantlebury was the toast of England as he singlehandedly delivered 21 points to down the Malaysians for their second victory in the

tournament. England, who beat mightly Nigeria 59-49 Tuesday started aggressively with Scantlebury finding the basket seconds after the start. The English

scorer led the salvo until his team led 41-16 at half-time. The Malaysians, hopeful for a third triumph after their earlier 108-63 victory against Singapore and 88-72 win over Hong Kong, returned after the breather with Chen Huat Keong engineering some brilliant manoeuvres.

Federation Cup final today

Break beckons Muktijoddha

Four-time champions Abahani Krira Chakra and the emerging force in the local lootball. Mukti-

oddha Sangsad meet in the finale of the BEXIMCO 12th Federation Cup football tournament at the Dhaka Stadtum

The match kicks-off at 5 pm. Bangladesh Television and Radio Bangladesh will cover the match live.

Although it will be Abahani

Nat'l b'ball

Bangladesh Air Force. Bangladesh Rifles, Bangladesh Army and Dhaka DSA won their matches in the Pepsi 17th national basketball tournament held at the NSC wooden floor gymnasium in Dhaka yesterday, reports AP.

Bangladesh Air Force trounced Rajshahi Sports Association by 112-38 points. Gosswami caged 27 points for the winners. They led the first half 66-21.

Dhaka Zila beat Brahamanbaria by a massive 147-58 points. Dhaka led the first half

Bangladesh Army edged past Barisal Sports Association by 137-32 points. The winners led the first half 78-20.

Sports Reporter *skipper Monem Munna's third

title hunt following the victories in the Charms Cup in Calcutta and the recently concluded DMFA Cup, it was Mohsin, the Muktijoddha captain who exuded more confidence about winning what will be the first major domestic title for the star-studded outfit.

Both skipper laid emphasis on fair refereeing as the key to

Despite injuries to three key players - Mohsin, defender Ataur and midfielder Rumi Rizvi Karim — Muktijoddha coach Salahnddin is expected to field all the three players in the starting eleven.

Abahani Krira Chakra will miss their promising defender Partha, as the young left back is rendered functionless by two successive yellow cards.

Muktijoddha who reached the final defeating the Moham-'medans 1-0 in the second semifinal, thrashed Feni Soccer Club 6-1 and routed PWD 9-0 on their way to the second round.

But they squeezed into the semifinal as Group A runnersup sharing a 1-1 draw with both Fakirerpool and Brothers Union before defeating Bangladesh Boys 3-1 in their last round robin league match.

Abahani Krira Chakra whose way to the final was paved by fortuitous 5-4 win over Brothers Union in tie-breaker qualified for place among the last four as Group B runners-

They beat Sadharan Bima 3-0 in their first round robin league encounter, shared points with Wari Club in a 1-1 draw and were held to a goalless draw against Moham medan SC in their last round robin league encounter.

Nat'l TT on

Sports Reporter

The Meril 19th national table tennis championship got underway at the Pabna district gymnasium yesterday with four boys matches being decided on the opening day.

According a faxed message received here last night. Dhaka, Kustia, Khulna and Madaripur won their respective matches in straight sets.

Earlier, M Aminul Islam. Commissioner of Rajshahi Division declared the six-day

A tetal of 229 participants including 100 men. *32 wo men, 69 boys from 28 different teams will fight it out for ten events.

World Cup fixtures announced

Holders to open against UAE

Feb 19: Rest day



NEW DELHI, July 22: Pakistan will begin their defence of the World Cup cricket championship in

1996 with a group match against the United Arab Emirates, who will be appearing in the tournament for the first time, reports Reuter.

The UAE are one of three associate members of the International Cricket Council (ICC) who are contesting the one-day tournament along with the nine Test-playing nations.

Pakistan: whose opening match is not until 10 days after the tournament stars on February 14, are in Group B with England, South Africa, New Zealand and the Netherlands.

Three previous World Cup winners, Australia, West Indies, and India are in Group A. Shri Lanka, Zimbabwe and Kenya complete the group.

Four teams from each group will qualify for the quarter-fi-

Jagmohan Dalmiya, the tournament convenor, confirmed on Thursday that the final on March 17 would be in

He said venues of the other games would not be finalised until next January.

FIXTURES

Feb 14: England v New Zealand Group B in India Feb 15: South Africa v UAE Group B in Pakistan Feb 16: West Indies v Zimbabwe Group A in India

Feb 17: Netherlands v New Zealand Group B in India Shri Lanka v Australia Group A in Shri Lanka Feb 18: England v UAE Group Bin Pakistan India v Kenya Group A in India

Feb 20: South Africa v New Zealand Group B in Pakistan Feb 21: India v West Indies Group A in India Shri Lanka v Zimbabwe Group A in Shri Lanka Feb 22: England v Netherlands Group B in Pakistan

Feb 23: Australia v Kenya Group A in India Feb 24: Pakistan v UAE Group B in Pakistan Feb 25: South Africa v England Group B in Pakistan West Indies v Shri Lanka Group A in Shri Lanka

Feb 26: Pakistan v Netherlands Group B in Pakistan Zimbabwe v Kenya Group A in India Feb 27: New Zealand v UAE Group B in Pakistan India v Australia Group A in India

Feb 28: Rest day Feb 29: South Africa Pakistan Group B in Pakistan West

Indies v Kenya Group A in India. Mar 1: Netherlands v UAE Group B in Pakistan Australia v Zimbabwe Group A in India Mar 2: India v Shri Lanka Group A in India

Mar 3: Pakistan v England Group B in Pakistan Mar 4: West Indies v Australia Group A in India Mar 5: South Africa v Netherlands Group B in Pakistan Mar 6: Pakistan v New Zealand Group B in Pakistan

India v Zimbabwe Group A in India Shri Lanka v Kenya Group A in Shri Lanka Quarter-finals Mar 9: A-1 V B-4 in Pakistan; A-3 v B-2 in India;

Mar 11: A-4 v B-1 in Pakistan: A-2 v B-3 in India SEMIFINALS Mar 13: Between winners of Mar 9 quarter-finals

Mar 14: Between winners of Mar 11 quarter-finals (both to be played in India)

FINAL

Mar-17: Lahore, Mar 18 is the reserve day.

A downer for Goodwill Games



ST PETERSBURG. . Russia, July 22: Swimming, the showcase event of Saturday's open

ing day of the Goodwill Games. might be postponed because of renovation delays at the SKA indoor swimming pool, reports

Goodwill Games president. Jack Kelly said an inspection of the pool early Friday showed a troublesome filtration system was still pumping out murky brown water as it has done for several days. Kelly said the system was improving, but slowly.

Kelly said scheduling would allow for pushing the two-day event back one day to Sunday and Monday rather than hold it on Saturday and Sunday as planned. He said a decision

would be made late Friday. "It's not something that would mean changing the quality of the swim competition. Kelly said. "We have a very big

programme and that (change in the swimeschedule could be accommodated." A delay in having the pool ready would be a major embar-

rassment to Goodwill officials.

Games, the first major sports event in post-Soviet Russia. would be an organisational disaster. They have also questioned large spending on the event in a city swamped with economic problems.

Though many of the venues for the Games have undergone extensive rehabs, the SKA pool has probably been the biggest rebuilding project in the city.

Kelly said water tests showed the poll was safe, but' he said holding competition in a pool with brown water would look bad on television.

"We want to make sure the aesthetics are what we want." Kelly said. "They (St Petersburg organisers) want to portray this is a place where standards are like everywhere

"This one problem is a shame because the pool was a wreck and now it looks great," Kelly added. He said other Games venues were "virtually ready" with only last-minute problems to be solved.

"Deputy Mayor Vitaly Mutko asked the news media to be fair. "Please don't exaggerate the seriousness of the prob-Critics have suggested the lem, normal work is going on."

Swimming's first event Saturday is a much-anticipated 50-metre race between world record-holder Tom Jager of the United States and Russian Olympic gold medalist Alexander Popov.

Russia is spending 15 billion rubles (dlrs 75 million) on the Games, mostly for renovation of the 11 competition sites for more than 2,000 athletes from 55 countries.

Crowd predictions for the Games vary, but Kelly said Saturday's two-hour opening ceremony at '70,000-seat Kirov Stadium was virtually sold out.

Some reports suggest tourists have been scared away by rising crime in St Petersburg. About 30,000 policemen, including anti-terrorist units and Interior Ministry troops, will guard venues, hotels and other sites during the

These are the third Goodwill Games, founded by Atlanta media tycoon Ted Turner. The 1986 Games in Moscow and Seattle in 1990 combined for a loss of more than dlrs 60 million. Kelly said officials no longer hope to break even in St. Petersburg.



DaveRichardson, the South African stumper who conjured up some resolute rearguard action with the bat adds to the growing frustration of the English fielders hemming around him yesterday, the second day of the first Test at Lord's. - AFP photo

Wėssels proud

LONDON, July 22: South African captain Kepler Wessels said Thursday's century against England at Lord's was the undoubted highlight of his ca reer, reports Reuter.

Wessels lapped up the emotion of South Africa's longawaited return to cricket's most famous ground before start of play and then went out to reseue his side from early trouble with a superbly disci plined innings of 105.

"It was everything I could have hoped for on a personal level," said Wessels, "Getting a century at Lord's has to be the highlight of my career."

Wessels has now scored Test hundreds for two countries against England -the only batsman to have achieved such a feat. His first was in 1982 on his

in Brisbane. "When I went home to South Africa in 1985 I had no doubt my Test career was finished," said Wessels, who fell out with Australia over money

debut for his adopted Australia

after winning 24 caps. "I didn't entertain any idea of playing Test cricket again. it's been an amazing

turnaround for me." Wessels was chosen to captain South Africa in the 1992 World Cup soon after their re-

turn to the international fold. He described his country's first Test at Lord's for 29 years as "a tremendous feeling, a

great thrill."

"The atmosphere was excel lent we couldn't have asked for a better day from that point of

Botham to sue Imran

LONDON, July 22: Former England cricket captain Ian Botham is to sue his Pakistan eounterpart Imran Khan for libel in the latest twist to the long-running ball tampering saga, reports AP.

Imran admitted in his autobiography earlier this year that he used a bottle top to gouge the ball during his country career in England. The fast bowler also ac-

cused all English bowlers of the practice and attacked Botham's reputation. According to Friday's Daily Mirror newspaper, Botham's solicitor has issued a writ, claiming his client was

"extremely angry at the asper-

sions being made about his cricket, integrity and upbringing. He didn't want to do it. but he feels very insulted." Botham last winter was prepared to act as a key witness for Test teammate Alan Lamb in the libel action brought against him by another former Pakistan bowler Sarfraz

ball tampering. Sarfraz later withdrew his action. In the Asian publication, India Today, Imran referred to Botham, Lamb and Fred Trueman as lacking class and

Nawaz, who Lamb accused of

upbringing. Botham and Imran were two of the world's greatest allrounders. In 102 Tests from 1977 to 1992, Botham took 383 wickets at an average of 28.40 and scored 5,200 runs. including 14 centuries at 33.54.

Imran took 362 wickets at 22.81 each and scored 3,807 runs including six centuries at an average of 37.69 in 88 Tests until his retirement in 1992.

Morceli drops

out

OSLO. Norway, July 22: World and Olympic champion Linford Christie withdrew from the 100 metres because of a hamstring injury, reports

Nourredine Morceli, the two-time world 1,500-meter champion and world mile record holder, will not come pete because organisers reportedly wouldn't pay him enough appearance money.

But there are still plenty of big guns in Friday's Bislett Games, the opening meet of track and field's "Golden Four"

Like Dennis Mitchell, Mike Powell. Jackie Joyner-Kersee and Colin Jackson. The Dream Mile is as tradi-

tional as the opening snowball

throwing "event in the Bislett , Some of the world's great est mile times have been recorded at the famous "world record track" in downtown Oslo. Since 1924, a total of 59

world track marks have been

broken at Bislett Stadium. Britons Sebastian Coe, Steve Ovett and Steve Cram set their world mile records at Bislett between 1979 and 1985.

Cram's mark of 3 minutes 46.32 seconds stood for eight years until Algeria's Morceli finally broke it last year. Morceli won last year's

Dream Mile here and set the world mile (1.6 kms) record of 3:44.39 later in the season at Rieti, Italy, after capturing his second straight 1,500-me ter gold medal in the World Championships at Stuttgart, Germany.

Without Morceli, the Bis lett's Dream Mile field is the weakest in several years.

England in dire straits



LONDON, July 22: England were 141 for 7 at the close in reply to South Africa's first innings total of 357 on the second day of

the first Test at Lord's today. reports Reuter. Earlier, South Africa's com-

petent late order batsmen frustrated England and scored freely on the second morning of the first Test at Lord's to be all out for 357. Resuming at 244 for six.

David Richardson, Brian McMillan and especially Craig Matthews played their strokes

ioh with few nerves. McMillan and Richardson punished some short and wide bowling from Phill Defreitas, Darren Gough and leg spinner Ian Salisbury, who surprisingly opened the day. and scored boundaries at will.

When Gough found the rhythm he had Thursday, he had a strong leg before wicket appeal turned down against Richardson, but got him with the next ball.

He made one cut back and trapped Richardson on the knee still in his crease and umpire Dicky Bird had no hesitation to give him out.

mained five not out. him figures of three for 72.

for 76. South African captain Kepler Wessels had said overnight he wanted to reach at least 350, and after his own superb 105 on he should be content, so far, with the homecoming he and his countrymen have waited nearly three decades for.

SCORE BOARD South Africa A Hudson e Gooch b Gough G Kirsten @ DeFreitas b Hick H Cronje c Crawley b Fraser K Wessels c Rhodes b Gough P Kirsten c Rhodes b Gough J Rhodes b White B McMillan c Rhodes b Fraser D Richardson lbw b Gough C Matthews b White F de Villiers c Rhodes b Fraser A Donald not out

8-141; 4-164; 5-239; 6-241;

Fall of wickets: 1-18: 2-35;

Total

Jer reitas	10	3	0/	- 5
Gough	28	6	76	4
Salisbury	25	2	68	(
raser	24.5	7	72	2
tick.	10	5	22	
Vhite	13	2	43	2
England	first in	ning	(S	
M Atherton c Wessels b Donald				2

G Hick c Richardson b De Villiers38 G Gooch Ibw b De Villiers C White c Richardson b Donald

Fall of wickets: 1-19; 2-41; 3-68; 4-107; 5-119; 6-136; 7 To bat: P DeFreitas. D

Bowling (to date): 0 54 5 28 De Villiers 6 27 Matthews 1 25 McMillan

US needs ATP's attention

Richardson had made an in-

Matthews immediately

valuable 26 as he and McMillan

flayed the bowling, playing

some aggressive shots square

of the wicket, especially off

McMillan came up in 51 min-

utes. He completely domi-

nated the stand, eventually

bowled off his pads by a yorker

His 50 partnership with

put on 39 runs.

DeFreitas.

AFP photo



before lunch.

nd more time with fans to achieve peak US popula-

rily, chief executive officer Mark Miles said, reports AFP. "In Europe it's in the stratosphere compared to the situation in the US. We're go-

ing to do what we have to

catch up. It's a competitive en-

vironment." Miles said the ATP must enlist the aid of top players to challenge basketball, baseball and American football for US sports attention.

"Players have to understand it's their job to grow and promote the sport," Miles said. "They have got to demand it from each other. It's peer pressure.

Another concern is making tournaments special instead of similar.

"We have to do a better job to get competitive in marketing. Other US sports have had a modern marketing plan

Appearance guarantees to top players amount to much more than prize money at most events. Early losses by top seeds make US fans unhappy at tennis players for not giving their best. But Miles said tour events need to be regarded like national Basketball Association regular season

games.

are tanking," he said. they do the most important events of a season."

7-6 (7-5)

6, 6-3, 7-6 (10-8).

the match away.

used to it."

Edberg and Stark traded

breaks in the sixth and sev-

enth games of the opening set.

then Edberg broke again in

the ninth game. A break in the

fifth game of the second set

was all Edberg needed to put

I'm playing now." he said.

'Delays like this are one of the

problems you sometimes run

into because of the weather.

but it's something you go

through and you learn to get

the day, following one of 75

The delay was the second of

"I'm pleased with the way

about," he said. "Anything that

and microphones at US matches is among the ideas Miles has for the sport. Major rule changes such as no-ad scoring, a limit on second serves and coaching between sets are not likely soon. Miles

"I don't see a radical change," he said. "It will come slowly. Better to let it creep

Miles favours coaching despite little support from others, saying, "it can improve the quality of play. How many times have we seen a guy out of it? a coach can get him back

into the next set. Coaching between sets might provide a natural break for fans. Miles said When I first heard it.

adds tactics would be worth using as an experiment." More television cameras



July 22: Andre Agassi, who regarded this tournament as an important steppingstone to the US Open, was defeated by Brett Steven of

WASHINGTON.

reports AP. In eliminating the tournament's top attraction. Steven advanced to the quarterfinals on a difficult day for seeded

New Zealand 6-3, 3-6, 6-4

Thursday night at the dlrs

650,000 Legg Mason Classic,

Agassi, the No. 5 seed, was ousted, along with No. 4 Marc Rosset of Switzerland, No. 6 Jaime Yzaga of Peru, No. 7 Ivan Lendl. No. 13 Henrik Holm of Sweden, No. 14 Jason Stoltenberg of Australia and No. 15 Jonathan Stark. No. 2 Stefan Edberg has a

will face No. 8 Aaron Kricks-

much easier time of things. minutes which began immediately after Krickstein finished Playing crisp tennis despite a off Wilander. long rain delay, the Swede de-Krickstein trailed 5-3 in feated Stark 6-4, 6-4 to advance to the quarters. Edberg started his match four hours late following two

the third set and 5-4 in the tie-breaker before taking the final three points to wrap up the match. long stoppages. On Friday, he "He (Krickstein) always seems to find a way to win tein, who edged Sweden's

a partnership of 54.

from Craig White for 41 out of

White showed deceptive pace and after Matthews had been offered a procession of short wide balls, he whipped one in fast and straight and got the wicket which was proving very frustrating for England captain Mike Atherton.

McMillan was on 29 when he was out to an excellent catch by wicketkeeper Stephen Rhodes diving low to his left after Angus Fraser nipped one back to take the inside edge.

Fanie de Villiers was the last batsman out for eight, also caught Rhodes bowled Fraser. 10 minutes after coming back from lunch. Alan Donald re-

Praser's two wickets gave while Gough finished with four

Extras (lb-9, nb-9)

7-281; 8-334; 9-348.

A Stewart b Donald J Crawley & Hudson b De Villiers

S Rhodes b McMillan I Salisbury not out Extras (b-2 lb-5 nb-7) Total (for seven wickets)

Gough, A Fraser,

WASHINGTON, of making the sport important July 22: Top ATP and not generic." Miles said. players must spe-"The most important factor is

South African captain Kepler Wessels forces one off his

backfoot on the first day of the first Test between South

Africa and England at Lord's on July 21 while his

counterpart Atherton watches on anxiously. The

workmanlike southpaw went on to hit 105.

putting on 93 for the seventh

and eight wickets as 106 runs

were scored in the session

pageantry of the historic occa-

sion when a packed house, in-

cluding Archbishop Desmond

Tutu and South Africa's deputy

president Thabo Mbeki, saw

South Africa return to Lord's

for the first time since 1965.

the players got on with their

Without the hype and

longer than we have."

"NBA fans don't think they "Everyone understands you step it up for the finals. It's impossible for an athlete to focus on every event the way

thought it was ridiculous. Now I think it's something to think

Agassi joins casualty list

close matches," Wilander said. Mats Wilander 6-7, (4-7), 6-4, "He never gives in." Trailing 5-4 in his third Rosset dropped a 6-2, 6-2 set tie-breaker. Wheaton strudecision to Stoltenberg. Yzaga ng together two of his 21 aces, was a 6-1, 6-1 loser to Swebut trailed 8-7 when Lendl den's Thomas Enqvist and double-faulted. Wheaton then Lendl fell to David Wheaton 2scored the final two points to

wrap up the victory. Medvedev ousted

STUTTGART, Germany. July 22: A hand injury forced Andrei Medvedev's early exit from the million-dollar Mercedes Open here on Thursday, but there was painless progress to the quarterfinals for the other top seeds. reports AFP.

The second, seeded Ukrainian lost 6-7 (3/7), 2-6 to Germany's unseeded Marc Goellner in their carried-over second round tie. But he still managed a smile. "I was playing in pain, but I still wanted to have fun, " said

the teenager. Medvedev won the Stuttgart event in 1992 but his game

this week was severely re-stricted by strained tendons between the fingers on his right hand - the legacy of a tournament fall at Gstaad.