

Sports workshop starts today

The first-ever national sports workshop begins in the capital today with the aim to evolve ways and means to improve the country's sports, reports UNB.

Prime Minister Begum Khaleda Zia will inaugurate the three-day event at the Osmani Memorial Hall at 11 am.

About seventy sports organisers, experts and personalities will participate in the seminar organised by the Ministry of Youth and Sports.

The inaugural function will be followed by a business session beginning at 2 pm. The remaining sessions will be held at Engineers' Institution on Monday and Tuesday.

Nasirabad, Bindubashini in Nirman final

Nasirabad Govt High School of Chittagong and Bindubashini School of Tangail will clash in the final of the 13th Nirman schools cricket championship at the Dhaka Stadium today.

Earlier on Friday, Bindubashini eliminated last year's champions Narayanangal Govt High School by seven wickets in one of the two semifinals while Nasirabad pipped Scholastica to the post defeating the English medium school in the capital by 28 runs.

At the Dhaka Stadium, Jainal ripped through the Scholastica top order as the Dhaka outfit, set to score a modest 182 for an outright win in the stipulated 45 overs, were skittled out for 153 with sixteen balls to spare.

Saidur Ali, who gave Jainal good support, removed the last three batsmen to finish with three for 23.

Junaed and opener Yasir, who offered some sort of resistance with the willow, chipped in with 35 and 23 respectively.

Earlier, electing to bat Nasirabad High School scored a fighting 181 for nine in their allotted 45 overs with Masud and Tanveer contributing 35 runs each.

Opener Hasim with 22 and wicketkeeper Jissan, who scored a watchful 23 off 48 balls, were the other useful run-getters in the Nasirabad collection.

Nayem Ahmed claimed four wickets for 28 in his quota of nine overs.

In the other semifinal of the day at the Jagannath Hall ground, Bindubashini, chasing a poor Narayanangal total of 167, rattled up 170 for three in 36.2 overs with Saikat scoring an unbeaten 38.

Saikat, who was later declared man-of-the-match for his brilliant all-round performance, earlier took two wickets in his nine economic overs.

Beximco nat'l cricket BKSP, Barisal win openers

Bowlers reigned on the inaugural day of the 15th Beximco national youth cricket championship when Bangladesh Krira Shiksha Protisthan (BKSP) and Barisal prevailed over their opponents in their respective final leg openers at different venues in the city yesterday.

At the Jagannath Hall ground, Barisal, who were defending a rather paltry total of 102 folded the Munshiganj innings at a meagre 61 to record a surprisingly easy 41-run win with new-ball bowler Bazlu and first change Ashim Kumar evenly sharing eight wickets among them.

Bazlu gave away only ten runs in his seven overs for his four scalps while Ashim, who took charge from where Bazlu left, was equally impressive with the figure of four for 13.

In another low-scoring affair on the eastern trip of the Dhanmondi Cricket Stadium, BKSP recorded a comprehensive 46-run win over Satkhira.

Sent in to bat in the morning, the Savar outfit could manage only 116 runs before being all out in the last over of the 45-over-a-side match.

Masudur Rahman, who led the Satkhira charge with the leather on a wicket assisting the bowlers, took three wickets for 16 runs in his nine-over spell while Tapu and Munir claimed two wickets apiece.

With extras featuring the highest 22 in the BKSP total, Shabbir (19) and skipper Mursheed (20) were the other double digit scorers for eventual winners.

In reply, Satkhira were bundled out for a paltry 70 in the face of an accurate spell from all the six bowlers that BKSP used.

Only Shamim, who kept one end intact, remained unbeaten on an obdurate 21 off 65-ball.

For BKSP Munna, Shabbir, Pavel and Zahid took two wickets each but Sohai Islam, although, returned wicketless, virtually pinned down the opponent, batsmen with telling accuracy.



Chief of the Sharjah Cricket Benefit Fund (CBFS) Sheikh Faisal Bin Khaled Al Quassimi presents the Asia Cup to Indian skipper Mohammed Azharuddin after the final at the Sharjah Stadium on Friday. India beat Sri Lanka by eight wickets. — AFP/UNB photo

India retain Asia Cup

SHARJAH, Apr 15: Defending champions India beat Sri Lanka by eight wickets here Friday to bag their third successive Asia Cup title and end a seven-year drought at this desert-venue, report agencies.

The Indians, who last won a tournament here in 1988, played superior all-round cricket to give Ajit Wadekar a fitting farewell on his last working day as the team's manager.

Mohammad Azharuddin's gamble to field first in a perfect batting conditions paid off when the Sri Lankans were restricted to 230 for seven in 50 overs.

Left-hander Asanka Gurusinha played a lone hand for the islanders with an aggressive 85.

The Indians, who had one over left from their innings for not bowling 50 overs in the stipulated time, overwhelmed their opponents with 233 for 2 and 7.1 overs to spare.

Master batsman Sachin Tendulkar set the tempo with 41 off 40 balls before Azharuddin and Navjot Sidhu sealed India's superiority with an unbroken stand of 175 for the third wicket.

Captain Azharuddin hit an unbeaten 90 off 87 balls with five boundaries and two sixes, and was named man-of-the-match.

Sidhu made 84 not out, his third half-century in four matches, and won 5000 dollars for being nominated the man-of-the-series.

Some 7,000 jubilant Indian expatriates, who had seen their team lose 13 of their last 16 matches against arch-rivals Pakistan here, erupted when Azharuddin struck the winning boundary off pacer Champaka Ramanayake.

The Indian captain dedicated the win to Wadekar, who earlier in the day said he would not seek an extension as cricket manager when his three-year term expires this month.

"Ajit sir has been a father figure to all of us. We will miss him a lot," an emotional Azharuddin said of Wadekar, under whom India won nine of their last 18 Tests and 34 of 57 one-day internationals.

India have won four of the five Asia Cups played so far, the last three at Sri Lanka's expense. The islanders were the winners at home in 1986.

The Indians, who defeated Sri Lanka by a similar margin in their league match last Sunday, never looked back after Tendulkar's rousing start.

The 21-year-old contributed 41 in a first-wicket stand of 48 with Manoj Prabhakar (9) by the ninth over.

Earlier, Asanka Gurusinha's sterling stand of 85 had stabilised Sri Lanka's initial setback.



SIDHU... man-of-the-series

Coming in after Sri Lanka's Roshan Mahanama fell for 46, the solid one-down, left-handed batsman stayed on for 120 balls to score a breezy 85, peppered with two fours and three sixes.

It was only the suicide single asked by Ruwan Kalpage that terminated Gurusinha's innings. Nayan Mongia broke the stumps after collecting a brilliant throw from Anil Kumble.

Openers Mahanama and Jayasuriya had put on an opening wicket partnership of 46, when Mahanama was sent back in the 10th over by Kumble off his very first ball.

Mahanama scored 15 off 37 balls, including one boundary.

Jayasuriya (22) followed in the next over, wicketkeeper Nayan Mongia catching an offside nick. Venkatesh Prasad was the bowler, who ended up taking Hashan Tillekaratne (22).

Captain Azharuddin's throw from the covers sent back Sri Lanka's counterpart Arjuna Ranatunga, who scored just three runs off eight balls.

Rumesh Kaluwirathana once again wielded a punitive bat as he scored three fours in his 19-ball stay which yielded 18 runs.

Azhar, Aaquib atop

SHARJAH, Apr 15: Indian skipper Mohammad Azharuddin topped the batting averages in the fifth Asia Cup cricket which concluded here yesterday, reports BSS.

He had an average of 101.00 followed by compatriot Navjot Singh Sidhu with 98.5 and Pakistan's Izzatullah Huq with 95.

Sachin Tendulkar amassed the most runs with 205 including the only century (112) made in the four-nation tournament.

Pakistan's Aaquib Javed with a total of five for 48 topped the bowling averages with 9.60 followed by India's Venkatesh Prasad with 18.66. Prasad had a tally of six for 112.

Batsmen averaging 30 or more: (tabulated as matches, innings, not outs, runs, average, highest score, hundreds and fifties)

	M	I	NO	Runs	Avg	HS	100s	50s
Azharuddin (Ind)	1	2	1	101	101.00	90*	1	1
Navjot Singh Sidhu (Ind)	4	4	2	197	98.50	84*	1	3
Izzatullah Huq (Pak)	3	3	1	190	95.00	88	1	2
Sachin Tendulkar (Ind)	4	4	1	205	68.33	112*	1	1
Wasim Akram (Pak)	3	3	1	86	43.00	50	1	1
Manoj Prabhakar (Ind)	4	4	1	122	40.66	60	2	1
H Tillekaratne (SL)	4	4	1	115	38.33	48	1	1
Arjuna Ranatunga (SL)	4	4	1	102	34.00	71	1	1
S Jayasuriya (SL)	4	4	1	134	33.50	51	1	1
Akram Khan (Bangladesh)	3	3	1	92	30.66	44	1	1
R Dharmasena	1	1	1	30	30	30	1	1

(* The mark denotes not out)

Average of the bowlers taking five or more wickets in the tournament: (tabulated as overs, maidens, runs, wickets, average, 4-wickets, and best bowling)

	Overs	Mds	Runs	Wkts	Avg	4wks	Best
Aaquib Javed (Pak)	19	1	48	5	9.60	1	5-19
Venkatesh Prasad (Ind)	28	1	112	6	18.66	1	3-37
Anil Kumble (Ind)	36	1	139	7	19.95	1	2-23
Saitul Islam (Bangladesh)	22	2	100	5	20.00	1	4-36
Muralidharan (SL)	28.2	1	111	5	22.20	1	4-23



Sayed Yousuf Hossain, the president of the Bangladesh Table Tennis Federation (BTTF), addresses newsmen at the NSC conference room yesterday in connection with the 20th national championship which begins in the capital from today. — Star photo

Wadekar quits cricket

SHARJAH, Apr 15: India's cricket manager Ajit Wadekar said Friday he was calling it a day after completing a successful three-season term, reports AFP.

Wadekar, 54, said he will not seek an extension of his term after the current Asia Cup to concentrate on his family and banking career.

Wadekar, a former Test captain who led India to their first series wins against West Indies and England in the early seventies, took over as manager on the tour of Zimbabwe and South Africa in October 1992.

Under him, India won nine of their 18 Test matches — eight at home — and 33 of 56 one-day internationals, including the Hero Cup in Calcutta in 1993 and the Singer Cup in Sri Lanka in 1994.

"I leave this Indian team optimistic of a bright future," Wadekar said. "We have some outstanding talent and are on the road to acquiring the professionalism that makes a champion team."

The Board of Control for Cricket in India (BCCI) is unlikely to name a successor till the start of next season, in October, which includes the World Cup being co-hosted by India, Pakistan and Sri Lanka.

Among the leading candidates are current chairman of selectors Gundappa Vishwanath, Sandeep Patil, Mohinder Amarnath and Madan Lal.



AJIT WADEKAR

Returning for the tour of New Zealand, he was clearly short of form and has still looked stale in the Test series against Australia in the Caribbean.

The west Indies pace ace said this week: "This is the second Test match and I have not done myself or the team any justice as far as I am concerned."

"I am really short of work. I am way below my best."

After seven years of constant bowling in the cause of the Leeward Islands, Northamptonshire and West Indies, Ambrose's shoulder was in need of repairs.

"I have had a few months off, which was needed," he said. "I am still short of work and it has taken me longer than I expected to get back in top shape."

The 31-year-old Antiguan had to miss the last two matches of the English country championship last year for Northants.

An examination by a specialist in England indicated that Ambrose faced either an operation or a prolonged absence from the game to give

Lankans get heroes' welcome

COLOMBO, Apr 15: Sri Lanka's cricketers led by Arjuna Ranatunga returned home Saturday to a warm welcome following their first-ever Test series win on foreign soil and an impressive one-day performance in Sharjah, reports AFP.

The team's luxury coach was escorted by vehicles carrying supporters from the main Katunayake Airport outside Colombo to the cricket board headquarters here to honour their first Test win in New Zealand last month.

Nat'l TT begins today

SOME 221 paddlers including 29 women participants are expected to feature in the ten-day meet when the 20th Karnaphuli national table tennis championship begins at the NSC wooden-floor gymnasium today.

The president of the Bangladesh Table Tennis Federation (BTTF) Sayed Yousuf Khan, who was addressing the newsmen at the NSC conference room last evening in connection with the national championship, informed that 32 teams from all over the country, including defending men's champions Bangladesh Biman, women's title-holders Bangladesh Ansars and Madaripur, the boys' event winners, will fight it out in ten different events.

They are: Men's singles and doubles, men's team event, women's singles and doubles, women's team event, boys' singles and doubles, boys' team event and mixed doubles.

The president of the BTTF further added that the sponsor Karnaphuli Limited will bear the expenses of the meet which amounted at Taka two lakhs.

A tame draw at Antigua

ST. JOHN'S, Antigua, Apr 15: Australia settled for a draw here Thursday, keeping a 1-0 lead over West Indies in their four-match Test series after the rain-ruined second Test was halted, reports AFP.

Australia had declared their second innings at 300 for seven.

Set an improbable victory target of 257 in 36 overs, West Indies were 80 for two when it was agreed to end the match. Seven of the final 15 overs were to be bowled when rain denied the teams a chance to play out the fifth day.

"We don't feel cheated," Australian captain Mark Taylor said. "We're just a bit frustrated we didn't get a chance and a full day's play to see if we could win."

The West Indies record of not losing a Test series since 1980 remains under threat, but captain Richie Richardson is not worried.

"I would not say we're getting anxious," he said.

"That would suggest we're beginning to panic and that's the last thing you do if you want to win."

Overnight rain worsened the condition of a sodden outfield and left little doubt in delaying the start to umpires Steve Bucknor of Jamaica and England's David Shenherd.

Patches of field were quagmire but a helicopter hired from a local tour company hovered over the affected



STEVE WAUGH... 65 n.o.

lose a wicket in reaching their final total before making a sporting declaration.

Richardson of West Indies was bowled out before tea by a Paul Reiffel delivery.

Left-hander Brian Lara, who completed a world record Test innings of 375 here last year against England, had five boundaries in 43. He and Stuart Williams shared 58 in 81 minutes spent in the middle before playing across a ball from left-arm fast bowler Brendon Julian just before it was agreed to halt play.

SCOREBOARD

Scoreboard on the fifth and final day of the second Test between the West Indies and Australia at the Recreation Ground here on Thursday:

AUSTRALIA: 1st innings
216 (C Walsh 5-64)

WEST INDIES: 1st innings
260 (B Lara 86)

AUSTRALIA: 2nd innings
(overnight 273 for seven)

AUSTRALIA: 1st innings
M Taylor c Murray b Walsh 5
M Slater c Richardson b Walsh 18
D Boon lbw b W Benjamin 67
M Waugh b W Benjamin 61
S Waugh not out 65
G Blewett c Williams b Hooper 19
I Healy c Hooper b Walsh 26
B Julian run out 6
R Reiffel not out 13
Extras: (w-1, lb-9, nb-10) 20
Total: (seven wickets declared) 300

Fall of wickets: 1-22; 2-43; 3-149; 4-162; 5-196; 6-254; 7-273.

Bowling O M R W
Ambrose 19 3 42 0
Walsh 35 7 87 3
W Benjamin 24 2 72 2
K Benjamin 15 1 51 0
Arthurton 1 0 1 0
Hooper 9 3 16 1
Adams 4 0 16 0

WEST INDIES: 2nd innings
S Williams not out 31
R Richardson b McGrath 2
B Lara b Julian 43
J Adams not out 3
Extras: (nb-1) 1
Total: (two wickets) 80

Fall of wickets: 1-11; 2-69

Bowling O M R W
Reiffel 6 2 12 1
Julian 5 2 15 1
Warne 7 0 18 0
McGrath 6 2 20 0
M Waugh 6 2 15 0

Result: Match drawn.

Ambrose down, but not out

his shoulder time to heal. He was diagnosed with rotator cuff tendinitis.

Given clearance from another specialist he had visited in New York in late December, Ambrose has been able to revive his Test career.

"It was not as serious as many people believed," he said.

"I went to see this specialist in New York and he told me that because of all the cricket tour of New Zealand, a dress rehearsal for the current series against the Aussies, where he captured five wickets for 113 runs off 58.1 overs in two Tests and one for 78 off 23 in three one-day internationals.

"The tour of New Zealand did not do much for me. I was not in any kind of shape. The west Indies team had struggled without Richie (Richardson) and Desmond (Haynes), so I just thought I could make a difference."

So far, he has not been able to make the difference to this series against Australia.

"Hopefully, it could come right in Trinidad," he said. "I have been knocked down before and I have bounced back."

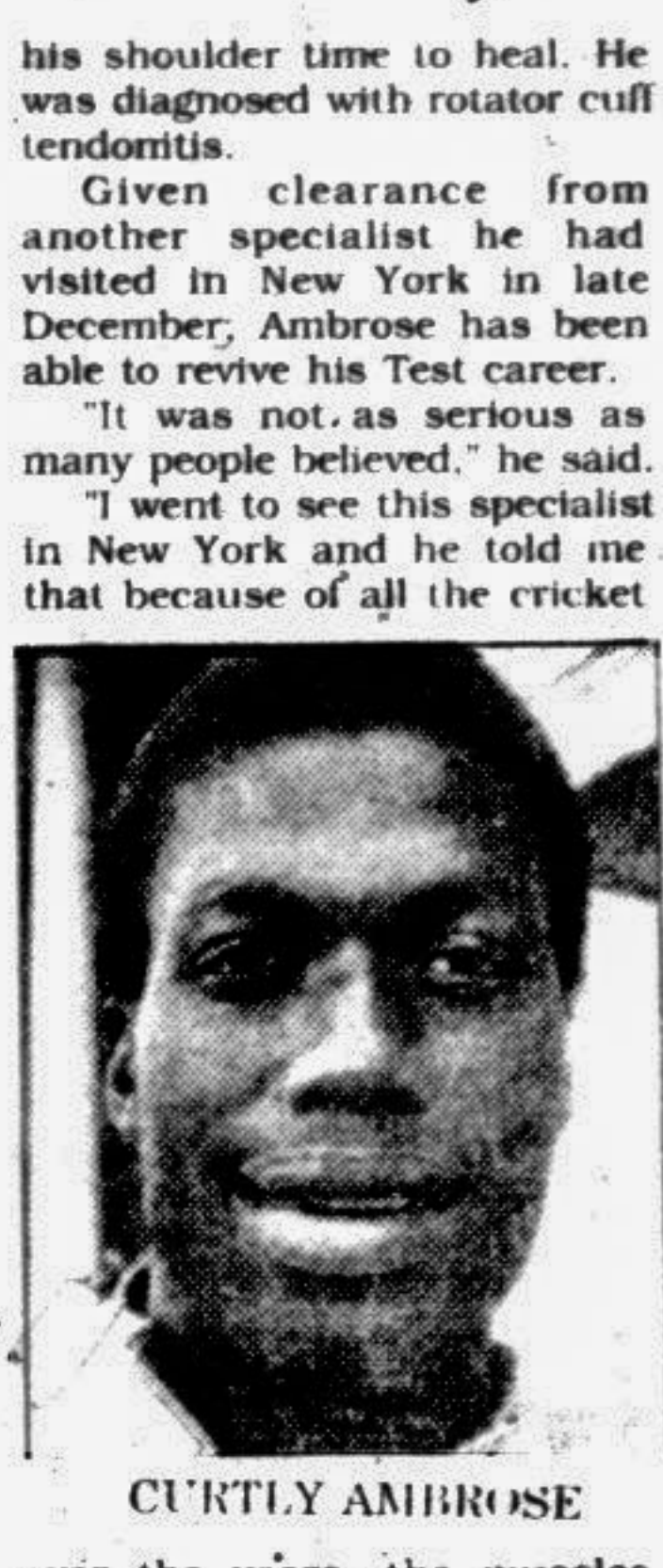
Last year, Ambrose seemed not to be himself in the first two Test against England, set 194 to win the third Test at Queen's Park Oval in Trinidad, the English were ambushed by Ambrose with six for 24.

They were dismissed for 46, their second lowest total in Test history.

Currently, the West Indies are 1-0 down against the latest tourists, but Ambrose is convinced his team can still win the series.

West Indies-Australia series are always competitive," he declared. "It is never easy playing against them. They are a bunch of tough guys and they never give up. Being 1-0 down we are not worried."

"We have been down before and have always made a comeback and won."



CURTLY AMBROSE

over the years, the muscles around the shoulder were a bit weak," the veteran of 52 Test said.

"I didn't lift weights before, so it meant I would have to go to a gym to do some training."

Surgery, as a cure, was completely ruled out.

"The specialist said what I had was nothing serious, it was a minor thing any my shoulder just needed strengthening and that would take care of everything."

He was passed fit for the

Parma's twin pursuit

ROME, Apr 15: Parma are running out of time.

Nine points behind Italian First Division leaders Juventus with eight rounds left to play, Parma's best hope of beating the Turin club may be in the Italian Cup, reports AP.

Neither team was sharp in league losses last round, but both recovered to post victories in Italian Cup semifinals this week and will meet in the two-match final in June.

Parma's 3-1 win over Foggia — their opponent again on Saturday — allowed them to advance on a 4-2 aggregate. Juve beat Lazio 2-1 to advance on a 3-1 aggregate.

All First Division matches will be played Saturday because Sunday is Easter.

Foggia are 14th in the 18-team league, outside of the relegation zone only on goal differential. Survival instinct plus home fans could combine to give Parma trouble.

Foggia stopper Giovanni Bucaro, disqualified, will be replaced in the starting 11 by seldom-used Giuseppe Di Bari.

If Juventus are going to add to their record total of 22 league title — and grab their first since 1986 — they will have to do so short-handed. Some key players will miss Saturday's appointment at Reggiana.

Goalkeeper Angelo Perruzzi, who has been spectacular since January, was injured in Tuesday's win over Lazio and will be out for a month. Midfielder Antonio Conte pulled a thigh muscle in the same match. Striker and team leader Gianluca Vialli — fifth in the league with 13 goals — still has a hurt left hamstring.

And Portuguese international Paulo Sousa, who directs the club's attack from midfield, is out suspended.

But Juve have overcome the injury bug all season, thanks to their remarkable depth. Reggiana, in 17th, do not figure to pose problems.

Milan, their run of titles soon to end at three, face crosstown rivals Internazionale in Saturday's late match. Milan are in a virtual tie for third place, while Inter have rocketed up to sixth by going undefeated in their seven matches since Massimo Moratti took control of the club.

French midfielder Marcel Desailly will not start for Milan because of a pulled muscle in his left leg.

Inter's international striker tandem of Dutchman Dennis Bergkamp and Uruguayan Ruben Sosa has been playing better of late and could give the vaunted Red-and-Black defence fits.

Fifth-place Lazio play at Padova without two-time defending scoring champions Giuseppe Signori, whose pulled muscle will likely force him to miss the April 23 derby against Roma.

Other matches Saturday: Cremonese Bari; Fiorentina Napoli; Genoa Cagliari; Roma Brescia; and Torino Sampdoria.

'FIFA affront Africa'

LAGOS, Apr 15: World football's ruling body, FIFA, has insulted the people of Africa by taking away Nigeria's right to host the World Youth Championships, Nigerian Foreign Minister Chief Tom Ikimi claimed here, reports AFP.

The championships, currently underway in Qatar, were taken away from Nigeria last month on health and safety grounds, Nigeria has since boycotted the Doha tournament in protest.

"This unjustifiable and arbitrary decision by FIFA is not only an affront to the millions of sport-loving people in Nigeria and in Africa but also a hegemony of the very principle of justice and fair play which is the foundation of competitive sport all over the world," Ikimi said.

Coach Nevio Scala's club plays at Foggia, where the clubs drew 1-1 in the first leg of their Italian Cup encounter.

The squads are clearly the class of Italian soccer and among the best in Europe. They also could meet in the final of the UEFA Cup, in which they've both advanced to the semifinals.

But while Parma have kept pace in cup play, Juventus have been too strong in the league. Juve had gone eight straight league matches without a loss — seven victories and one draw — before dropping last Sunday's derby against Torino 2-1.

The past two rounds, Parma all but relinquished their pursuit of the league title by losing consecutive games for the first time this season. Uncharacteristically sloppy defence allowed AC Milan a 3-2 win, following AS Roma's 1-0 victory.

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