

### NZ-Zimbabwe last tie today

NAPIER, Feb 2: New Zealand cricket coach Glenn Turner wants further improvement from his team when it faces Zimbabwe in the third and final limited-overs international at Napier on Saturday, reports AP.

New Zealand already hold a winning 2-0 lead in the series but Turner believes the Kiwis have plenty of work to do before the World Cup starts later this month.

New Zealand begin their World Cup campaign against England at Ahmedabad, India, on Feb 14.

The Kiwis wrapped up the series against Zimbabwe with a comprehensive six-wicket win in Wellington on Wednesday, but Turner said his bowlers have so far been less impressive than the batsmen.

"I thought the bowling was better in Wellington than it was in Auckland, but it was hard to tell because it was such a helpful wicket," Turner said.

New Zealand will again be without all-rounder Chris Cairns for the match in Napier - the first day-night international to be played in New Zealand.

Cairns is resting a calf muscle injury and hoping to be fit in time for the World Cup, but Chris Harris is expected to return to action after being sidelined for more than three weeks with a broken wrist.

Zimbabwe captain Andy Flower said Saturday's match gives his team its final opportunity to sort out its batting problems before the World Cup.

"We've got to get our batting woes sorted out," he said. "Grant Flower and Guy Whittall are playing well, but a few of the youngsters have to get some runs as well."

Zimbabwe's problems with its batting are aggravated by David Houghton's unavailability through injury and the fact that opener Craig Evans has been thrust into international action without any lead-up matches.

### SQUADS

**NEW ZEALAND** (two to be omitted): Lee Germon (captain), Nathan Astle, Craig Spearman, Stephen Fleming, Roger Twose, Adam Parore, Shane Thomson, Chris Harris, Dipak Patel, Gavin Larsen, Dion Nash, Danny Morrison and Robert Kennedy.

**ZIMBABWE** (from): Andy Flower (captain), Grant Flower, Craig Evans, Guy Whittall, Alistair Campbell, Sean Davies, Stuart Carlisle, Heath Streak, Paul Strang, Bryan Strang, Eddo Brandes, Henry Olonga, Charlie Lock, Craig Wishart.

### Bombay ready to host SL-Aussie WC tie

BOMBAY, Feb 2: Bombay would be able to host the Sri Lanka-Australia World Cup match if it was shifted from Colombo following the bomb blast there, a leading official said today, reports Reuter.

"We would be ready to host the match if it was allotted to us," said Bal Mahadalkar, secretary of the Mumbai (formerly Bombay) Cricket Association (MCA).

The Sri Lanka-Australia clash on February 17 is one of four games scheduled in Colombo and Kandy.

Several leading Australian players have expressed fears for their safety and their cricket board will discuss the possibility of forfeiting the Sri Lanka match at a meeting next week.

Mahadalkar said the MCA was in the process of a massive renovation programme at the Wankhede Stadium.

"Most of the work is nearing completion and only the floodlights will not be ready by February 17," he said. "But the match can be played as a day match, instead of a day-night one."

Sri Lanka cricket chief Ana Panchihewa said the island would stage its four World Cup fixtures despite the bomb blast which killed up to 80 people on Wednesday.

### McDermott goes thru' another horrifying call

BRISBANE, Feb 2: Australian fast bowler Craig McDermott was the victim Friday of a hoax caller who claimed to have planted a bomb in the cricketer's house, reports AP.

McDermott's manager Geoffrey Schukraft said a man with a foreign accent had telephoned the offices of Queensland Cricket in Brisbane and reported a bomb had been planted at McDermott's home on the Gold Coast, 50 miles (80 kilometers) south of the Queensland state capital.

A police search of McDermott's home failed to locate anything suspicious.

The threat followed Wednesday's massive car bomb in the Sri Lanka capital of Colombo, which killed at least 80 people and injured more than 1,400.

Australia is scheduled to play its opening match of the World Cup cricket tournament against Sri Lanka in Colombo on Feb 17.

McDermott declined to talk to reporters about the call.



A delighted Pakistani Prime Minister Benazir Bhutto receives a cricket bat signed by all the members of the Pakistani World Cup squad during the inauguration of the renovated stadium in Lahore - venue of the World Cup final - on Feb 1. — AFP/UNB photo

## SL to beef up security



COLOMBO, Feb 2: Sri Lanka's cricket board sought today to dispel Australian fears about the safety of their players here during the World Cup and insisted the matches should go ahead despite a bomb blast in Colombo, reports AFP.

The Sri Lankan government would like to reassure the participants and the players that all steps are being taken to ensure their safety," said Ana Panchihewa, president of the Board of Control for Cricket in Sri Lanka.

"This is the biggest event to be held here," he told AFP. "The president (Chandrika Kumaratunga) and Prime Minister (Sirima Bandaranaike) had taken a personal interest in making sure the World Cup is played in Sri Lanka."

Australian cricketers have expressed concern about playing their opening match in Colombo on February 17 following the bombing by suspected Tamil rebels here Wednesday which left at least 77 people dead and more than 1,400 injured.

The Australians have suggested they may forfeit the match or demand a change of venue. The Australian Cricket Board is scheduled to make a decision early next week.

Panchihewa said the Sri Lanka cricket board had received assurance is co-hosting the event with India and Pakistan, should go ahead and host four matches as scheduled.

World Cup organisers are to discuss the situation on Sunday and the convenor of the organising committee, Jagmohan Dalmiya, said today that "it's too early to say anything."

"Nothing's been sorted out so far," he told AFP in New Delhi. "But we are obviously very concerned at the developments in Sri Lanka."

The suicide bombing of the Central Bank building occurred just a few blocks from the luxury hotel where the Australian team is supposed to stay.

Panchihewa said he had been informed by Sri Lanka's Ministry of Ports of the government's interest in seeing that the World Cup is played here.

He said he had been told that "strict instructions have been given to the Ministry of Defence to provide maximum security to the visiting teams."

The cricket board president said a government committee was planning to discuss "what extra security areas they can beef up." Sri Lanka has already assigned the elite police special task force commandos to guard visiting teams and match venues.

"These types of incidents (bombings) have happened here in the past," the cricket board president added. "Life is back to normal already."

"Foreigners have not been targeted in the past and neither have sports events," he said. "We are taking all precautions and the players have nothing to worry about."

Sri Lanka are scheduled to play three matches in Colombo against Australia on February 17, Zimbabwe on February 21 and the West Indies on February 25.

Even before the bombing, there had been some concern expressed by Australia about a visit to Sri Lanka because of tension caused by throwing accusations made against Sri Lanka spinner Muttiah Muralitharan last summer.

The bombing has already caused the cancellation of rugby tours to Sri Lanka by two New Zealand teams.

## Matches in Lanka threatened as scepticism mounts



NEW DELHI, Feb 2: Organisers of cricket's World Cup starting in 13 days have begun talks to decide whether Sri Lanka can stage matches following a bomb blast which killed up to 80 people in Colombo on Wednesday, report agencies.

Sri Lanka is jointly hosting the sports' most prestigious limited overs tournament with India and Pakistan, and has games scheduled in Colombo and Kandy.

The Pakistan-India-Lanka Committee (PILCOM) organising the 12-team World Cup began discussions on Thursday to decide whether Sri Lanka could remain co-hosts.

"We are assessing the situation and we should come to a decision by Monday (Feb 5)," PILCOM's convenor and secretary Jagmohan Dalmiya told Reuters by telephone from Calcutta.

Players and officials have voiced fears for their safety after the suicide truck bombing that also left 1,400 injured.

David Richards, chief executive of the International Cricket Council (ICC) which has its headquarters at Lords

held talks with PILCOM on Thursday about Sri Lanka's fate as a co-host Dalmiya said.

"We have also spoken to the Australian Cricket Board (ACB)," Dalmiya added. "We are seeking views from officials from the three cricket boards (India, Pakistan and Sri Lanka). We need some time."

Richard's said in a statement: "The explosion in Colombo yesterday is obviously a matter of concern to all countries competing in the World Cup."

"I have spoken this morning to Dalmiya who has given an assurance that an assessment of the position will be carried out over the next two to three days."

The ACB said Thursday it would decide next week whether to withdraw from the Sri Lanka leg of the Cup.

Apart from the match against Australia on February 17, Sri Lanka host Zimbabwe on February 21, West Indies on February 25 and Kenya on March 6.

Zimbabwe team manager Denis Streak said the players were not too concerned by the blast.

"We've come from a war torn country, Streak said in New Zealand where the team is currently playing. "Hopefully security will be good. We don't see it as a major problem, we're not going to get too concerned about it. You could get run over by a bus in the street it's just one of those things."

Away in Bridgetown, Barbados, the West Indies cricket team awaits an assessment of the security situation in Sri Lanka before deciding if it will attend it's Feb. 25 World Cup cricket match there.

"So far the only information we had is from radio and television, but we are endeavoring to get a reliable, independent assessment," Short said in reference to the terrorist bomb that tipped into the heart of the Sri Lanka capital of Colombo on Wednesday, killing more than 70 people.

None of the Caribbean Community nations that comprise the West Indies team has diplomatic representation in Sri Lanka and the WICBC is relying on reports from other Commonwealth High Commissions.

Short said the prolonged civil war in Sri Lanka had constituted a security risk for some time.

"But coming so soon before a major sporting event, it is even more worrying," he said. "Naturally, we are very concerned over the safety of our players. That is paramount and we would not want to put them at any risk."

The West Indies players assembled in Barbados Thursday for a week-long camp to prepare for the World Cup. Short said he would be talking to manager Wes Hall and captain Richie Richardson about the situation as more information becomes available.

International Cricket Council chairman Sir Clyde Walcott said Thursday he was awaiting word from his London-based chief executive, David Richards.



STAMP COLLECTORS WATCH OUT! The United States Post Office unveiled these 1996 Olympic stamps on Feb 1 in Atlanta. The 20 stamps are a part of the "Classic Collection" format with each having description on their reverse side. — AFP/UNB photo

### Singapore to host Singer Cup cricket 1996

The Singer Cup 1996, a triangular one day international cricket tournament will be played in Singapore from April 1st-7th 1996, according to a press release.

In this largest ever cricketing event in this part of the world, organised by the Singapore Cricket Association, with active co-operation of the Asian Cricket Council and support from Singapore Tourist Promotion Board and Singapore Sports Council, the three Test playing countries in Asia - 1983 world champions India, 1992 world champions Pakistan and 1995 Singer Champions Trophy winners Sri Lanka will be playing round robin competition followed by a grand final on the 7th April between the top two teams for the 'Singer Cup 1996'. A total of US\$70,000 is at stake with the cup winners walking away with a Prize Money of US\$30,000.00 runners up with US\$20,000.00 and the third placed will receive US\$10,000.00. The balance of US\$10,000.00 will be given away as man-of-the-match and tournament awards.

Keeping in mind the spectator interest, Singapore Cricket Association is pleased to announce the reduction in prices for the tickets for Monday, 1st April and Wednesday, 3rd April from S\$30.00 to S\$20.00 per day, being week days. The tickets for Friday and Sunday remain unchanged at S\$30.00 and S\$50.00 respectively. Student tickets remain unchanged at S\$10.00 and S\$25.00 for preliminary round and the final.

This cricketing extravaganza will be televised live over Star TV network which is beamed through ASIAT 1 (105.50E) footprint and can be accessed in 53 countries to an estimated viewing audience of over 500 million people.

Interest will be particularly high as the tournament will immediately follow the World Cup played in India, Pakistan and Sri Lanka.

### FIXTURES

April 1st: Pakistan vs Sri Lanka  
April 3rd: Sri Lanka vs India  
April 5th: India vs Pakistan  
April 7th: Final

### Barisal cricket

From Our Staff Correspondent

BARISAL, Feb 2: Four H Club scored a huge 119 run over Uttar Akkanda Boys' Club at the local stadium here today.

Batting first Four H compiled a mammoth total of 235 for the loss of 8 wickets in the stipulated 44 overs. Shaheen cracked a breezy 47 off 28 balls followed by Nahid, who remained unbeaten on a rapid fire 42.

In reply Akkanda Boys were shot out to a paltry 126 with 55 balls to spare. Liton scored 34.

For Four H Faruque and Arun evenly shared four wickets among them. No matches will be held today.



HARMONIOUS END TO THE BALKAN WAR! World co-number one, Americanised Serb Monica Seles (L) and her Croatian conqueror Iva Majoli ensures that there's no hard feelings after their quarterfinal match of the Torey Pan Pacific Open in Tokyo yesterday. Majoli dealt the first major blow to Seles' confident comeback with a surprise 1-6, 7-6 (7/5), 6-4 victory. — AFP/UNB photo

## Iva sends Seles packing

TOKYO, Feb 2: Top seed Monica Seles suffered only the second defeat since her comeback today when she was beaten 1-6, 7-6, 6-4 by Croatia's Iva Majoli in the quarterfinal of the Pan-Pacific Open women's tournament, reports Reuter.

The joint world number one conceded only three games in beating the 18-year-old in their Australian Open quarterfinal clash last week.

"She (Majoli) is clearly a better player today," Seles said.

Seles, who went into the tournament with an injured left shoulder, had no excuses for her defeat.

"I don't want to take anything away from Iva because she played a great match. I was lighting there and I don't know what happened out there after the first set. But I lost a match. That's reality," said Seles.

Asked whether her injured shoulder had affected her, Seles replied: "No, I lost a match because Iva was better. My shoulder got a few days rest and was fine."

"I think I missed too many chances. Maybe I wasn't as eager as I should have been," said Seles, who had been hot favourite to win the event in the absence of her German rival Steffi Graf.

Seles was playing in her fifth tournament since returning from a 28-month lay-off to recover from the trauma of an on-court knife attack by a Graf supporter in 1993 at Hamburg.

After easily taking the first set in only 10 minutes, Seles suddenly ran into trouble from Majoli's solid serve and powerful ground strokes.

After taking the second set by winning a tie-break 7-5, Majoli, ranked eighth in the world, went from strength to strength taking the big points in the final set.

Seles has won three tournaments, including the Australian Open last weekend in her comeback and until now her only defeat was by Graf in the US Open final last September.

Majoli felt she had turned the tables on Seles from their Australian Open clash because "Monica made a few more errors this time."

"I expected a close match today but didn't really expect to win because I think she has played really well since her comeback. I couldn't believe I won," she added.

Majoli now meets unseeded Martina Hingis, the 15-year-old Swiss prodigy, who easily beat Japan's only quarterfinalist Naoko Sawamatsu 6-1, 6-2.

Second-seeded Conchita Martinez and Arantxa Sanchez-Vicario, the third seed, scored straight sets wins to set up an all-Spaniard semifinal on Saturday.

Martinez had a smooth passage to the last four with a 6-2, 6-3 victory over eighth-seeded American Lindsay Davenport.

Sanchez-Vicario, playing her first match in the indoor event after receiving a first-round bye and a walkover on Thursday, beat fifth seed Magdalena Maleeva of Bulgaria 7-5, 6-3.

## SA vying for the victory

JOHANNESBURG, Feb 2: South Africa are heavily favoured to beat Tunisia in the African Nations Cup final in Johannesburg on Saturday, knowing that victory will have ramifications much further a field than just the soccer pitch, reports Reuter.

The home team, playing in their first-ever Nations' Cup final tournament, have captured the country's imagination in much the same way as the springbok rugby team helped close South Africa's long-standing racial divide after their World Cup win last year.

For Four H Faruque and Arun evenly shared four wickets among them. No matches will be held today.

Now his young team, who upset Zambia 4-2 in their semifinal in Durban on Wednesday, have astounded the odds to reach the final when Kasperczak admits they were not even favoured to get past the opening round group.

South Africa, who thrashed pre-tournament favourites Ghana 3-0 in Wednesday's semifinal, play a Tunisian side who have long exceeded the expectations set for themselves at this tournament.

Tunisian coach Henry Kasperczak picked 10 players from his under-23 team for the Nations' Cup squad with an eye to gaining experience for future competitions as well as more immediate bid for a place at the Olympic Games in Atlanta later this year.

Now his young team, who upset Zambia 4-2 in their semifinal in Durban on Wednesday, have astounded the odds to reach the final when Kasperczak admits they were not even favoured to get past the opening round group.

"But we have had a professional approach. Ours is a young side progressing with every match," he said.

Tunisia have recorded just two wins in five matches on route to the final but won at vital junctures against Zambia and the Ivory Coast.

They will, however, have to do without leading goal scorer Imed ben Younes, injured against the Ivorians in the group matches, and defender Sami Trabelsi, who received a second caution in the semifinal and serves an automatic one-match suspension.

But they will have hard-working midfielder Riadh Bouaziza back after he was suspended for the semifinal.

The return of striker Phil Masinga to South Africa's team after his suspension has created a selection headache of sorts for coach Clive Barker.

28" Powervision Colour Television.

21" Powervision Colour Television.

20" Powervision Colour Television.

14" Powervision Colour Television.

CD Player.

Turbo Bass.

### US Open offers huge cash

NEW YORK, Feb 2: A record 10,893,890 dollars in prize money will be offered at this year's US Open a boost of 10.46 per cent over last year's total given for the Grand Slam event by the US Tennis Association, reports AP.

Men's and women's singles champions will each receive 600,000 dollars 25,000 dollars more than in 1995. The tournament will remain the only Grand Slam offering equal prize money to men and women through all rounds.

Runners up in singles will receive 300,000 dollars, doubles champions will share 240,000 dollars while mixed doubles pairs will split 60,000 dollars.

The US Open runs from August 26 to September 8 in New York.