

Warne on his last Ashes tour?

MELBOURNE, Apr 4: Australia's master leg-spinner Shane Warne is tiring of the rigours of Test cricket and says he may retire within a few years, reports Reuters.

The 27-year-old bowler told Melbourne's Herald-Sun newspaper he had no intention of dragging out his career until a loss of form or fitness forced him out.

"It's not injuries, it's the pressure," Warne said from Cape Town after Australia's third limited-over international against South Africa.

"There is that much pressure on me and I don't know that I can stay at the mental level required to achieve the performance that I and everyone else wants for the next four or five years."

"I have never been a guy who was going to play until I was 35 or 40."

Warne has taken 240 wickets in 52 Tests and is seen as a potential Australia Test captain. After their 2-1 Test series win against South Africa, Australia leave next month for a six-Test series against England.

"This could be my last Ashes tour so I really want to make it a big one," Warne said.

"By the time the next Ashes tour comes around (in 2001) I will be 31 or 32 and there is a big chance I might be looking for other things in life."

Davis Cup NZ lead Indonesia

JAKARTA, Apr 4: New Zealand soundly beat Indonesia 2-0 on the first day of the Davis Cup Asia-Oceania Zone here today, reports AFP.

Indonesia's Suwandi and Mark Nielsen of New Zealand were neck-and-neck in the first set, but Nielsen leading in games 3-1, but Suwandi overtaking him to 4-3. Nielsen, banking mainly on his smooth serves, won the first set 7-5.

In the remaining two games, however, Nielsen seemed firmly in control and won 6-3 and 6-4, with the match lasting nearly two-and-a-half hours.

Suwandi played against Nielsen for the first time two years earlier in a tournament in Bandung, West Java, in which the Indonesian won.

Alastair Hunt took only one hour and 45 minutes to defeat Indonesia's Andrian Raturandang 6-3, 6-0, 6-3.

New Zealand's non-playing captain Jeff Simpson said his team would "work hard" on Saturday to try to secure a 3-0 score against Indonesia.

Indonesia's National Tennis Board chairman Wimar Witar admitted after Friday's games the Indonesian players "still lacked experience and have limited competition experience."

Lama tests positive for marijuana

PARIS, Apr 4: Bernard Lama, the French soccer team's top goal scorer over the past four years, tested positive for marijuana but is still being allowed to play for the time being, French radio reported Thursday, reports AP.

Lama tested positive during a training camp prior to France's last exhibition match Feb 26 against Netherlands, which the French also won, reported state radio France Info.

Lama plays for Paris-St. Germain, which won the European Cup Winners' tournament last season and are in this season's semifinals. Paris-St. Germain also won the French Cup in 1995 and are currently in second place in the league.

Lama was a star player on the club and was the national team goalkeeper since 1993. However Lama was not named for the team that played against Sweden Wednesday, France won 1-0.

After he was not named to the team he pointed out that he has not lost a game since the loss to Bulgaria in November 1993 — a game that eliminated France from the World Cup finals in the United States.

However for the past six months he had an ankle injury and started only two of the past six games for the national team.

The radio station said the Sports Ministry notified Lama a few days ago about the drug test and he asked for a second test to be analyzed. He would be able to play the regular league match against Rennes on Saturday and the first leg of the Cup winner.

Lama has not made any comment on the matter, nor did the French Soccer Federation.

Pakistan stoop to Lanka

SHARJAH, United Arab Emirates, Apr 4: Pakistan's middle-order committed harakiri on the brink of victory to gift world champions Sri Lanka a 19-run victory in the Sharjah Cup here today, reports AFP.

Pakistan, chasing Sri Lanka's 243 for eight, were comfortably placed when Shahid Afridi's explosive 67 off 55 balls and Salim Malik's 51 carried them to 173 for four by the 38th over.

But Pakistan lost five wickets for 24 runs in a dramatic lower-order collapse to end up with 224 for nine in perfect batting conditions at the Sharjah Cricket Stadium.

Off-spinner Muttiah Muralitharan made amends for dropping an easy skier off Afridi early in his innings by grabbing three wickets in the space of three overs to turn the match Sri Lanka's way.

Muralitharan trapped Malik leg before in the 38th over to start the slide, before removing Mohammad Wasim and skipper Wasim Akram off successive balls two overs later.

It was Sri Lanka's second successive win in the double-leg preliminary league after thrashing Zimbabwe by seven wickets in Thursday's opening match.

Sri Lanka's score revolved around a record 184-run stand for the third wicket between 200-match veteran Aravinda de Silva (97) and Marvan Atapattu (94).

The pair came together after Pakistan, electing to field first, had removed the formidable opening pair of Sanath Jayasuriya and Romesh Kaluwitharana by the second over with only four runs on the board.

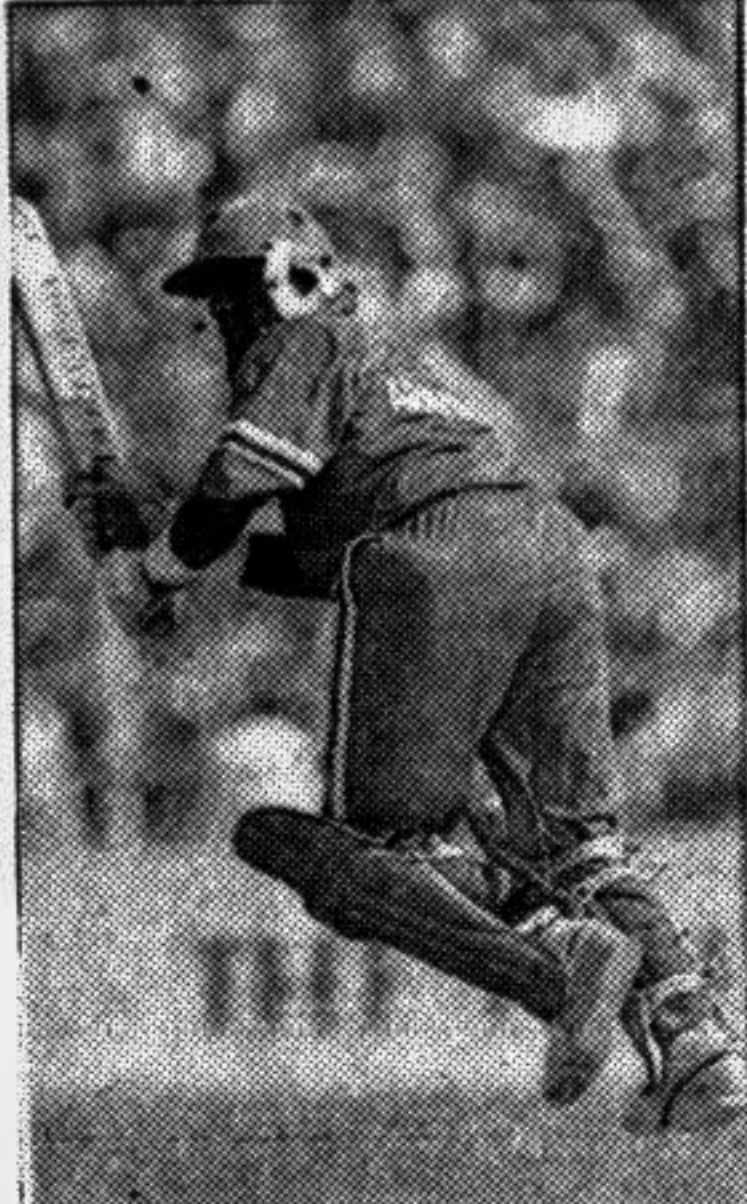
But Pakistan had to wait till the 40th over for their next wicket as De Silva and Atapattu played the strong Pakistani attack with some glorious stroke-play.

Their effort equalled Sri Lanka's best for the third wicket between De Silva and Asanka Gurusinha against Kenya in the 1996 World Cup at home in Kanday.

It also surpassed the previous best of 175 for the third wicket at this desert venue between India's Navtej Sidhu

and Mohammad Azharuddin against Sri Lanka in April, 1995.

De Silva celebrated his 200th one-day by being adjudged the man-of-the-match for the second time in two days. His effort of 60 against Zimbabwe won him the same honour.



A DE SILVA... m-o-m

Afridi, world record-holder for the fastest one-day century (37 balls), smashed five sixes and four boundaries after being dropped by Muralitharan at mid-on when on 29.

Two of his sixes came off left-arm seamer Chaminda Vaas and three from off-spinner Kumar Dharmasena, including two in one over.

But left-arm spinner Sanath Jayasuriya, who replaced the dazed Dharmasena for the 22nd over, struck with his first delivery as Afridi lofted an easy catch to long-on.

Malik, playing his 250th one-day, and Moin Khan (30 not out) fought on bravely, but found little support from the remaining batsmen.

Earlier, Atapattu came within six runs of his maiden one-day century when Mushtaq picked up a superb diving catch in the covers to break the long partnership. Atapattu hit 10 boundaries in his 118-ball innings.

De Silva, with seven one-day hundreds under his belt but

looking for his first at Sharjah, was stumped off Saqlain Mush-taq in the final over three short of the mark.

Saqlain led a late Pakistani revival with three quick wickets as Sri Lanka lost five batsmen in the space of 21 runs in the last five overs.

SCOREBOARD

Scoreboard in the Sharjah Cup one-day international between Pakistan and Sri Lanka on Friday:

SRI LANKA

Jayasuriya lbw b Younis 3
Kaluwitharana lbw b Akram 0
Atapattu c Mushtaq b Malik 94
A de Silva st Moin b Saqlain 97
Ranasinghe c Rameez b Saqlain 20
Mahanama c Younis b Akram 3
Vaas b Saqlain 0
Tillekaratne run out 1
Dharmasena not out 3
Muralitharan not out 4
Extras: (lb-6, w-12) 18
Total: (8 wks in 50 overs) 243
Did not bat: S de Silva.

Fall of wickets: 1-3; 2-4; 3-188; 4-222; 5-232; 6-232; 7-233; 8-238.

Bowling: O M R W
Akram 10 1 52 2
Younis 7 1 34 1
Saqlain 10 0 47 3
Mushtaq 10 0 44 0
Afridi 9 1 39 0
Malik 4 0 21 1

PAKISTAN

Rameez Raja b S de Silva 6
Afridi c S de Silva b Jayasuriya 67
Ijaz c S de Silva b Dharmasena 18
Malik lbw b Muralitharan 51
Inzamam c Kaluwitharana b Jayasuriya 9
Muhammad Wasim c Tillekaratne b Muralitharan 17
Moin Khan not out 30
Wasim Akram st Kaluwitharana b Muralitharan 0
Mushtaq Ahmed run out 0
Saqlain Mushtaq run out 1
Waqar Younis not out 9
Extras: (lb-7, nb-5, w-4) 16
Total: (9 wks in 50 overs) 224

Fall of wickets: 1-21; 2-84; 3-111; 4-140; 5-173; 6-190; 7-190; 8-190; 9-197.

Bowling: O M R W
Vaas 8 0 45 0
S de Silva 7 0 24 1
Muralitharan 10 0 38 3
Dharmasena 7 0 39 1
Jayasuriya 10 0 42 2
A de Silva 8 1 29 0

Result: Sri Lanka won by 19 runs.

Man-of-the-match: Aravinda de Silva.

Next match: Pakistan v Zimbabwe on Sunday.

Nat'l cricket qualifiers begin from today

Sports Reporter

The qualifying rounds of the 23rd national cricket championship will begin today across the country with three zonal matches billed for the opening day.

On the inaugural day, Rangpur will take on neighbours Kurigram at the Dinajpur Stadium. Manikganj will meet Bangladesh Police at the Comilla Stadium and Sylhet face Sharikatpur at the Noakhali Stadium.

A total of 28 teams split into six zones are participating in the championship scheduled to end on April 14.

The winners of the zones will meet last year's semifinalists Chittagong, Dhaka, Narayanganj and Biman. The final round is scheduled to be held in Rajshahi after the Eid-ul-Azha.

Khulna cricket MSC Europa Div I champs

KHULNA, Apr 4: Mohammedan Sporting Club defeated their arch-rivals Abahani Krira Chakra by six wickets in the final of the Europa First Division cricket league '97 played here on Thursday at the Khulna Stadium ground and earned the coveted championship trophy, reports BSS.

The match was reduced to thirty overs because of heavy downpour.

Mohammedan won the toss and put Abahani to bat. Abahani scored 122 runs for the loss of nine wickets in the stipulated thirty overs.

Mohammedan, in reply, reached their winning target for the loss of four wickets.

President of Khulna District Sports Association and Deputy Commissioner Ittefak Ahmed gave away the trophies to the participating teams.

Barcelona in Spanish Cup final

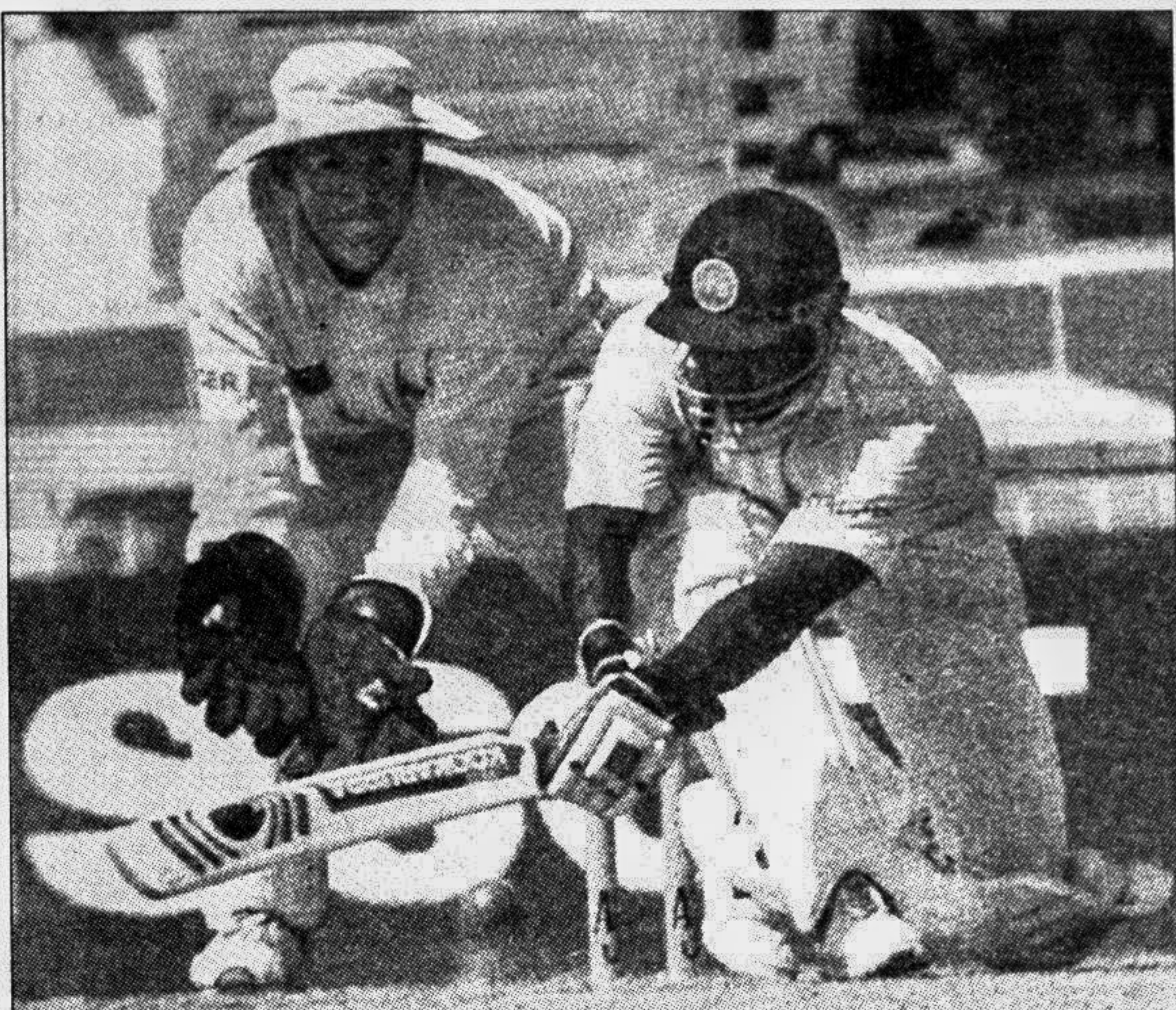
BARCELONA, Apr 4: FC Barcelona advanced to the Spanish Cup final Thursday with an easy 3-0 victory over Second Division side Las Palmas, reports AP.

Barcelona will face Real Betis in the final. Betis defeated Celta Vigo in the other semi on Wednesday.

Barcelona's Oscar Garcia, Luis Enrique Martinez and Fernando Couto were on target to wrap up a 7-0 aggregate rout.

Betis reached their first final for 20 years when they ousted Celta 2-1 on aggregate.

The final is in Madrid on June 28 after the league season ends.



Sri Lankan opener Sanath Jayasuriya sweeps the ball while Zimbabwean wicketkeeper Andy Flower looks on during the opening match of the Sharjah Cup in the United Arab Emirates on Apr 3.

Blatter avoids confusion

HONG KONG, Apr 4: FIFA secretary general Sepp Blatter insisted today that the world governing body was not getting embroiled in politics by linking its name to a 'Reunification Cup' All-Star match for Hong Kong's hand-over, reports AFP.

A FIFA All-Star side, featuring England's Alan Shearer and Liberia's George Weah and Germany's Lothar Matthaus, will play an Asian All Star team in Hong Kong on July 3, barely 48 hours after the British colony is returned to China.

In a press conference to promote the event, the International Football Federation (FIFA) leader said the handover was "a political event... and a very important event."

FIFA's All Star side has played in charity matches in the past but, with many people expressing concern about Hong Kong's future after the handover, the world body has never been so closely linked to such a political occasion.

Blatter added, though, "We are not getting involved in a political event. We are trying to hold a sporting and culture event in celebration of a political event."

"It is the first time we have witnessed such an event in the world. Of course we feel proud at FIFA that we can contribute to such a match."

The match was the idea of Henry Fok, a Hong Kong tycoon with close ties to Beijing and a

former FIFA executive vice-president.

Fok's son Timothy is on the organising committee for the "Reunification Cup" and he said football has become an "abiding love" for many Hong Kong people.

"It was this powerful emotion that focused our minds on using football as the means of celebrating the historic occasion of the return of China to Hong Kong rule," he said.

As far as sport is concerned, nothing means more to the lives of millions of people in Hong Kong than soccer and for

who play in Japan's J-League, Brazil and Argentina's regular first team players will be taking part in the Copa America in July.

Half have to confirm their participation.

Asia's newly crowned player-of-the-year, Iranian striker Khodadad Azizi, is in the squad to take on the FIFA stars.

FIFA All Stars Squad

Mark Bosnich (Australia), Andreas Kopke (Germany), Lothar Matthaus (Germany), Christian Karembeu (France), Ze-Eliass (Brazil), Aldair (Brazil), Sunday Leseh (Nigeria), Leonardo (Brazil), Alexei Lalas (USA), Carlos Dunga (Brazil), Matthias Sammer (Germany), Alessandro Costacurta (Italy), Ciro Ferrara (Italy), Taribo West (Nigeria), Edmundo (Brazil), George Weah (Liberia), Jean-Pierre Papin (France), Alan Shearer (England), Allessandro del Piero (Italy), Miguel Alfonso (Spain).

Asian All Stars Squad

Mohammed Al-Deayea (Saudi Arabia), Falah Dabshia (Kuwait), Ralidi Swadi (Iraq), Mohammed Jahani (Saudi Arabia), Dusit Chalemsorn (Thailand), Chen Chi-Keung (Hong Kong), Fan Zhiyi (China), Masami Ihara (Japan), Karim Bagheri (Iran), Mohammed Nasrallah (Syria), Mohammed Ali (United Arab Emirates), Laith Hussain (Iraq), Sergi Lebedev (Uzbekistan), Hwang Sun-Hong (S Korea), Khodadad Azizi (Iran), Ali Daei (Iran), Mohammed Salem el Nazei (Qatar), Hao Haodong (China).

SEPP BLATTER

millions more in Hong Kong nothing means more to them than the reunification with China.

The FIFA squad is made up mainly of players from Europe and Africa, or South Americans

Coetzer shuts Sanchez out

HILTON HEAD ISLAND, South Carolina, Apr 4: Although Arantxa Sanchez-Vicario made Family Circle Cup history, it wasn't the kind she wanted, reports AP.

In 1996, the Spanish star won at Sea Pines after 10 years of trying. On Thursday, she became the first defending champion in a quarter-century to lose prior to reaching the last eight, falling to No. 13 Amanda Coetzer 6-2, 5-7, 6-0.

"I know I'm not at my best moment right now," said Sanchez-Vicario, the second seed. Seven women won the first 23 Family Circles, and all but 1973 titlist Rosie Casals took the crown again. Sanchez-Vicario, the eighth champion, hoped to join that group and break an 11-month winless drought — the longest in her career.

"Mentally, it's kind of hard," she said.

Sanchez-Vicario has shared four moments with Coetzer before. Two years ago, the Spaniard came here ranked No. 1, but injured her right ankle in a quarterfinal match with Coetzer.

Sanchez-Vicario taped up her sprain and won in three sets. However, the injury forced her to withdraw from her first tournament ever. She missed the next six weeks and lost her top position.

She laughed at the remembrance, just happy to walk freely to her next event. Monday at Amelia Island, Florida.

Martina Hingis — playing her first tournament since becoming the world's youngest-ever No. 1, won her 28th straight match this season — 6-3, 6-3 over Barbara Schett. Next up for the 16-year-old Hingis is Wetrud Probst, a qualifier who advanced when No. 8 Irina Spilrea retired with a wrist injury.

No. 3 Jana Novotna was dumped by No. 14 Brenda Schultz-McCarthy 6-3, 6-3.

Fifth-seeded Conchita Martinez, a winner here in 1994 and 1995, topped Jennifer Capriati 6-0, 5-7, 6-4. No. 7 Anke Huber took out ninth-seeded Iva Majoli 3-6, 7-6, (7-5), 6-1.

Coetzer was 2-13 against Sanchez-Vicario, often losing her composure while the Spaniard threw back shot-after-shot.

This time Coetzer settled back for the long rallies. She won a 15-minute game to lead 2-0 in the opening set and broke serve three, more times.

The second set was a mesmerizing 73-minute exhauster where neither player led by more than a game. The Spaniard wrangled it away on a 93-mph ace and a pair of Coetzer mistakes.

But Sanchez-Vicario's poise and patience quickly disappeared in the closing set. She made 19 unforced errors in losing only her second 6-0 set in 33 matches and 11 years here.

Sanchez-Vicario looked uncomfortable and frazzled. After backing Coetzer into the pink geraniums against the Stadium Court wall with a midcourt smash, Sanchez-Vicario barely

moved as the South African cracked a winning forehand with arm's reach.

Another time, Sanchez-Vicario flubbed a textbook overhead smash into the net a few feet away, her head drooping as the ball rolled to her feet. Quietly, she picked it up and placed it over the net.

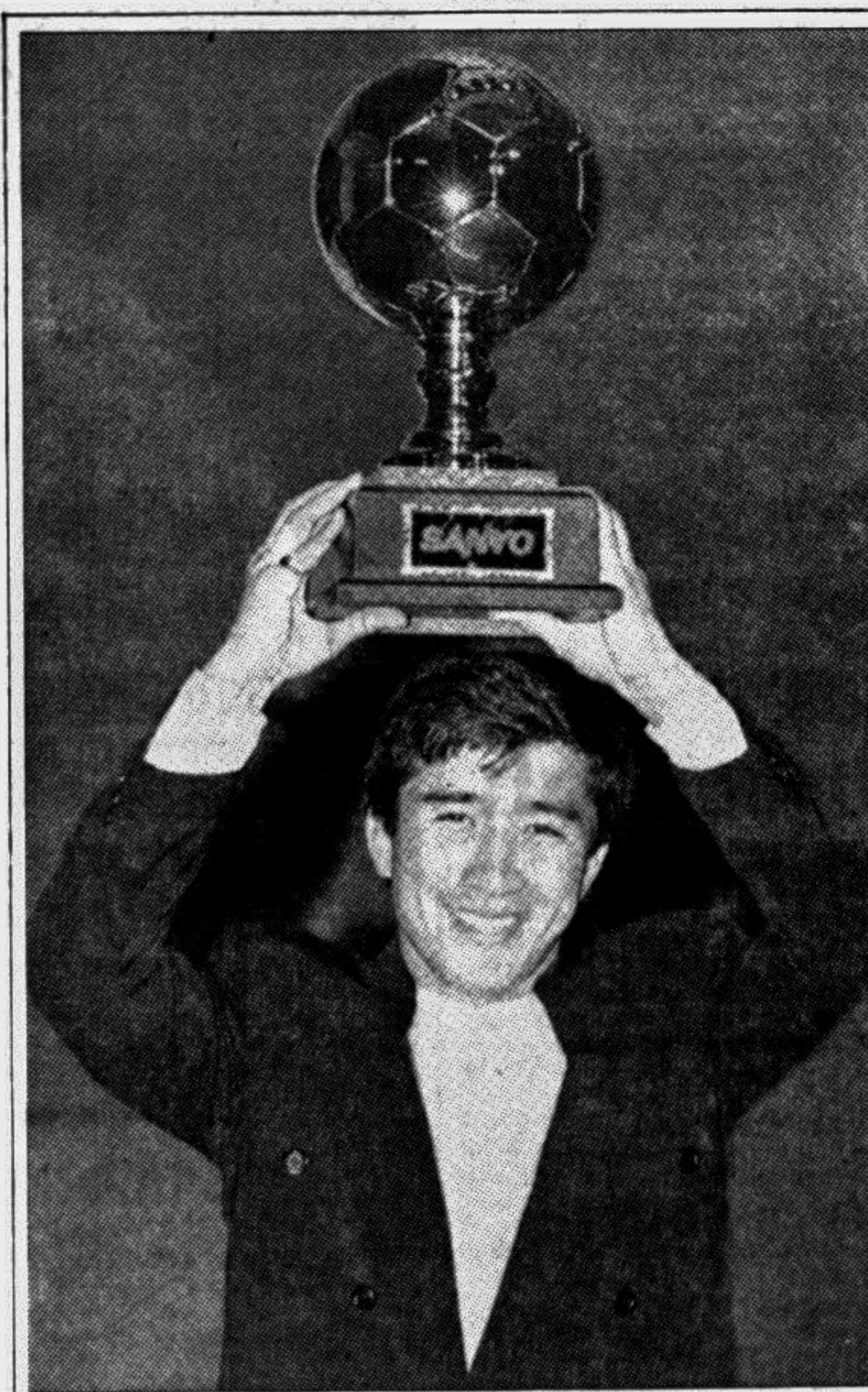
France's \$ 26 m security plan for WC soccer

PARIS, Apr 4: France on Thursday unveiled a 150 million franc (26 million dollars) security plan for the 1998 World Cup soccer tournament, including the recruitment of up to 12,000 special stadium guards, reports AP.

Fourteen months ahead of the 98 Cup's first kickoff — set for June 10 outside of Paris — the government announced that the games played at 10 stadium countrywide would also require the deployment of an additional 5,000 police officers per day.

Special video cameras will be installed at the game venues to allow authorities to keep an eye on soccer's sometimes boisterous fans, and security will be boosted at the teams' training sites.

Authorities will hire 10,000 to 12,000 stadium guards — roughly one per 100 spectators — to handle most security needs within the stadiums, a World Cup interministerial committee said.



Iranian striker Khodadad Azizi holds aloft the trophy after winning the Asian footballer-of-the-year award at the Asian Football Confederation (AFC) annual ceremony in Kuala Lumpur on Apr 3.

The Daily Star Entertainment Guide

Saturday 5th April
(All programmes are in local time. There may be changes in group programmes.)

BTV

3:00pm Opening Announcement All-Asian Programme Summary 3:20 Movie of the Week 4:00 The Angels 5:25 Banashree 6:00pm Angkor 6:30 Nebodon 7:00 News in English 7:05 Gonotanter Abhiyatra 7:25 Maati-o-Manush 8:00 News in Bangla 8:30 71 Dinipri 8:40 Deganio 9:10 Abhimot 10:00 News in English 10:30 Film Show: Chicago Hope 11:30 News in Bangla 11:35 Tomorrow's Programme Summary 11:40 Close Down

BBC

6:00 BBC World News 6:30 Hard Talk 7:00 BBC World News 7:30 World Focus: Panorama 8:00 BBC World

News 8:30 World Focus: The Money Programme 9:00 BBC World News 9:05 Weekend World: Horizon 10:00 BBC World News 10:30 World Focus: Window on Europe 11:00 BBC World News 11:30 Reporters 12:00noon BBC World News 12:30 Hard Talk 1:00 BBC World News 1:05 World Focus: Assignment 2:00 BBC World News 2:30 Time Out: Island Race 3:00 BBC World News 3:05 Weekend World: Great Journeys 4:00 BBC World News 4:30 Time Out: Abroad in Britain 5:00 BBC World News 5:30 This Week 6:00pm BBC World Headlines 6:30 Weekend World: Horizon 7:00 BBC World News 7:30 Reporters 8:00 BBC World News 8:30 Time Out: Island Race 9:00 BBC World Headlines 9:05 Weekend World: Pandora's Box 10:00 BBC World News 10:30 Time Out: Rhodes Around Britain 11:00

BBC World News 11:30 This Week 12:00noon BBC World News 12:30 Hard Talk 1:00 BBC World Headlines 1:30 Weekend World: Horizon 2:00 BBC World News 2:30 Time Out: Island Race 3:00 BBC World News 3:30 Reporters 4:00 BBC Newsdesk 4:30 This Week 5:00 BBC World Headlines 5:05 Weekend World: Pandora's Box

CHANNEL V

6:00am Frame by Frame 7:00 Rewind VJ Sophiya 8:00 Frame by Frame 8:30 Asian Top 20 VJ 9:00 Big Bang Weekend VJ Alessandra 12:30 Billboard 12:30am VJ Sophiya 1:00am VJ Alessandra 1:30am VJ Alessandra 2:00am VJ Alessandra 2:30am VJ Alessandra 3:00am VJ Alessandra 3:30am VJ Alessandra 4:00am VJ Alessandra 4:30am VJ Alessandra 5:00am VJ Alessandra 5:30am VJ Alessandra 6:00am VJ Alessandra 6:30am VJ Alessandra 7:00am VJ Alessandra 7:30am VJ Alessandra 8:00am VJ Alessandra 8:30am VJ Alessandra 9:00am VJ Alessandra 9:30am VJ Alessandra 10:00am VJ Alessandra 10:30am VJ Alessandra 11:00am VJ Alessandra 11:30am VJ Alessandra

Bang VJ Alessandra 12:30 The Ticket 1:00 Over The Edge VJ Sophiya 2:00 Music Update Tokyo 2:30 The Ride 3:00 Big Bang VJ Alessandra 4:30 V Spot

STAR PLUS

6:30 Voltorn 7:00 Aerobics Oz 8:30 7:30 Good Morning India 9:30 Katts & Dogs 10:00 The Addams Family 10:30 The Simpsons 11:00 Zoofie with Jack Hanna 11:30 BBC Documentary "Midus Touch" 12:30 Mystery Movie Halifax F P 2:30 Children's Film 4:30 Jubilee 5:00 Jubilee Film "Dharma" 8:00 Dress Circle 8:30 Tara Rum Pum 9:30 Star News 10:00 News Track 10:30 Manekes Ark 11:00 Arts Update 11:30 L A Law 12:30 Show Reel 1:00 Star News 1:30 Movie: Dancing in the Dark 3:30 Hardcastle and McCormick 4:30 Voyage to the Bottom of

the Sea 5:00 The Wild Wild West

STAR SPORTS

6:30am Spanish F'ball League: 3:03 7:00 Sports India -37 7:30 India Tour of West Indies 4th Test Match Day 1 HL 8:30 World Wrestling Federation Raw 9:30 NBA-Inside Stuff 10:00 Cricket Week 10:30 The Asian Football Show 11:30 US PGA Tour 1997 The Players Championship Final Day 2:00 India Tour of West Indies 4th Test Match Day 1 HL 3:30 Wrestling: XFL 1997 6:00pm Asia Sport Show 6:30 NBA-Inside Stuff 7:30 India Tour of West Indies 4th Test Match Day 1 HL 8:00 Live India Tour of West Indies 1997 4th Test Match Day 2 From Recreation Ground, Antigua 10:00 Sharjah Cup Hits 10:30 LIVE India Tour of West Indies 1997 4th

Test Match Day 2 From Recreation Ground, Antigua 1:30 LIVE India Tour of West Indies 1997 4th Test Match Day 2 3:00 The Grand National 3:30 Dubai World Cup 4:30 Volvo World Cup Showjumping '96/97 5:00 The Grand National

STAR MOVIES

7:30am Comedy: Amos And Andrew 15 (Arabic Subtitles) 9:30 Family: The Swans G (Arabic Subtitles) 11:00 Family: The Snow Queen G (Arabic Subtitles) 11:30 Family: The Water Babies PG (Hindi Subtitles) 1:30 Adventure: Tomorrow Man 15 3:30 Family: Dominick And Eugene 15 (Hindi Subtitles) 5:30 Classic: Flying Deuces PG (Hindi Subtitles) 7:30 Comedy: Full Moon High 15 9:30 Animated Short: A Close Shave 10:30 Adventure: Covington Cross 15 12:30 Thriller: Fearstak 15 2:00 Fright Night:

Pumpkinhead II Blood Wings 18 4:00 Comedy: Fools Of Fortune 18 (Hindi Subtitles) 5:30 Adventure: High Lonesome 12 (Hindi Subtitles)

ZEE TV

6:00 ZED 7:00 ZED 7:30 Ru-Ba-Ru 8:00 News 8:30 Helpline 9:00 Disney Hour 10:00 Gaane 9:30 Family: The Swans G (Arabic Subtitles) 11:00 Saalab 11:30 Banegi Apni Baat 12:00 Philips Top Ten 1:00 Casper Kya Scene Hai 1:30 Silila 2:00 Lakme Khadosurat 2:30 Yeh Kaha Aa Gaye Hum 3:00 Kodak Kik Kik 3:30 Jhalpat Khana 4:00 TVS Sa Re Ga Ma 5:00 Hathi Cement Aashana 5:30 Chahat Aur Nafrat 6:00 Hum H