

Column One

SPORTS TALK



David Beckham

(England midfielder)
"I think more people dislike me than like me."

Speaking after England's exit from France '98.

DID U' KNOW?

(The Professor does)

THAT Winston Benjamin, West Indian fast bowler of the 1990s, is lucky to be alive. It is reported that a senior fast bowler pulled out a handgun in the West Indies changing-room, put it into Benji's mouth and pulled the trigger. Neither of them knew there was a bullet in the gun. The bullet went through Benjamin's cheek. He now has a permanent scar.

Big boys should not play with guns.

Boost sports WHIZZ KID

COMPETITION FOR SCHOOL CHILDREN

Competition-114

Tick the Correct Answers

Post to The Daily Star

Win attractive prizes

Competition closes at 8 pm

April 23, '99 and draw shortly afterwards

1. What is the result of the Australia-West Indies Test series?
2-2 3-1 2-1
2. Who was the man-of-the-series in the Australia-West Indies Test series?
McGrath Lara S Waugh
3. Who won the Pepsi Cup in India?
Sri Lanka India Pakistan
4. Who was the man-of-the-final in the Pepsi Cup?
Mahmood Ganguly Inzamam
5. Who lifted the Meril Int'l Cup?
Bangladesh Zimbabwe Kenya

Name

Class Roll No.

School Address

Phone: (If any)

POWERED WITH

EN-VITS

ENERGY RELEASING VITAMINS

Nat'l schools cricket

Kindergarten's emphatic win

ANZ Grindlays National School Cricket

Ideal Kindergarten, University Laboratory and Nawabpur Govt. High won their respective matches in the ANZ Grindlays Bank 17th national schools cricket championship at different city venues yesterday, reports UNB.

Ideal Kindergarten earned a massive 172-run victory over Manarat Dhaka International at the Kalabagan Club ground.

Deciding to bat, Ideal Kindergarten posted a mammoth 292 for eight in 33.4 overs with Billal scoring 86 runs.

In reply, Manarat were dismissed for a paltry 120 in 23.4 overs. Kawsar and Kabir picked up three wickets each.

At the Mohammadpur Eidgah ground, University Laboratory outplayed Matrichhaya by six wickets.

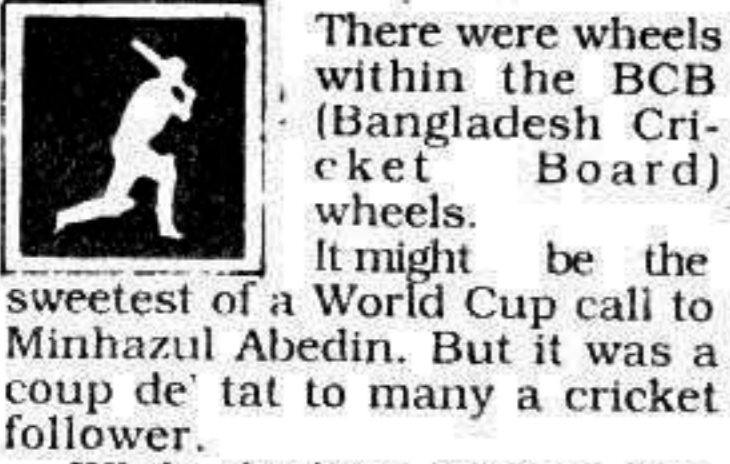
University Laboratory hammered 138 for four in 16 overs replying to Matrichhaya's 134 for seven in 23.1 overs.

At the Orient Club ground, Nawabpur Govt. High crushed Dhaka Government Muslim High by eight wickets.

Nawabpur scored 193 for two in 16.2 overs in reply to Muslim High's 189 in 32.5 overs.

Feast on Minhaz issue

Al-Amin & Syed Ashfaqul Haque



There were wheels within the BCB (Bangladesh Cricket Board) wheels. It might be the sweetest of a World Cup call to Minhazul Abedin. But it was a coup de tat to many a cricket follower.

While drafting Minhaz into the 15-man England-bound team, ugly internal wrangle in the Board came to the fore when it, in a meeting on Thursday away at the BKSP, made the "most undemocratic" decision of recent times.

BCB, which has an appalling tendency not to do the right thing at the right moment, surprised all and sundry on April 8 when it blasted its selectors for their controversial World Cup job, and then went on to dismantle the trio. Enayet Hossain Siraj and Co. selectors for about fifteen months, were startled at the sudden outburst by their once-patrons and then preferred to slip into the back ground without a whimper.

The same quarter of the BCB rallied behind the three-man panel when, much to the disbelief of country's cricket aficionados, Minhaz had been left out of the 19-man provisional squad on February 27.

Even the Board president Saber Hossain Chowdhury, who preached not to interfere in any selection in the past, went on record by saying that the presence of experienced Minhaz, a prolific performer in domestic cricket last season, could have endangered the "discipline" in the team. Some board officials soon joined in unison to label Minhaz as a rebel on many an occasion and sang selectors' praises for showing 'guts' and 'grey matter' to give him the axe.

But after a month and a half when it appeared that the Minhaz issue was laid to rest, Siraj and his men suddenly fell from grace in an extraordinary meeting, where all guns were pointed at them.

Although the instant reac-

tion following the meeting's decision was "justice finally done" by the board, but beyond the boundary it was more like a polarisation of sorts in the Saber-led elected panel.

The diverse reaction was quite evident after the meeting. When up with a positive frame of mind upholding the decision, some of the very important BCB officials termed the outcome of the meeting unexpected.

It came as a surprise for many BCB officials, who did not turn up at the meeting attended by only 18 (some claimed less than that) out of the 33 board members.

There was no such serious matter like discussing the performance of the selection committee in the agenda. Moreover, the meeting was only to approve the 15-man Bangladesh squad, the list of which was sent to the ICC on March 31, said Ahmed Sajjadul Alam.

A former joint-secretary of the then BCCB, Sajjad also feels that if the board is to take serious decisions like discarding the selection committee it should have been included in the agenda.

"I think this is a bad precedent and it is not a healthy practice," said Sajjad. Tanvir Haider, a senior vice-president, appeared flabbergasted by the incident.

"It was not understandable how those 18 took such a sensitive decision in the absence of other members," said Tanvir. "I'm not against dissolving the selection committee. I have raised the issue in previous meetings. But my wise words were ignored earlier. I don't even understand how the same people, who were defending the selection committee's decision the other day changed their colour overnight."

"Besides, the meeting was a trial of strength by a quarter close to the president. It appears to me that cricket Board at this moment running

without a meaning and purpose," said Tanvir.

In a cynic's point of view, it is a victory for the two joint-secretaries --- Dewan Shafiqul Arefin and Mahmudul Haq against the erstwhile chief selector Enayet Hossain.

Both Dewan and Mahmud had bitter memories of not being allowed by Enayet in the team's tent during the ACC Trophy in Nepal last year as they were travelling there at unofficial capacity.

But Dewan, reportedly backed by the non-cricketing section in the board, not only left Enayet to carry the can, but also cornered the board members who have credentials as cricketers.

The politics for power, which clearly split the board into two sections, first surfaced when Tanzeem Ahsan Saad resigned from the post of executive secretary about two years ago. With Saad departing the scene, Dewan and Mahmud assumed more control in the board.

Dewan had anxious moments when he was disciplined by the board for speaking against the ruling body to the press earlier this year. But he was soon compensated by the board president.

A purposeless post, branding co-ordinator of the England-bound Bangladesh squad, was created only to accommodate the footballer-turned-cricketer-official, who is known to be the closest associate of the president, on the tour party.

When other affluent participating nations included a manager, a physio and a coach in the team, Bangladesh, who do not hope to win even a single match, has shown the luxury of taking an extra man for no good reason at the expense of the public exchequer.

Besides, Dewan was at odds with coach Gordon Greenidge in the past. Cricket followers also fear that his presence, not that of Minhaz, would have a negative impact on team discipline in England.

Minhazul grateful to BCB for call-up

Sports Reporter

Minhazul Abedin, who was included in the World Cup team by the Bangladesh Cricket Board (BCB) on Thursday, appeared at the BCB office at the Bangabandhu National Stadium yesterday.

During his over an hour's stay at the board headquarters, Minhazul filled up a few forms as part of the formality for the World Cup.

Earlier in the morning, Minhazul also faced the British High Commission for his visa. Talking to a group of reporters yesterday, Minhazul said that he was yet to receive any formal call from the board.

Being included in the World Cup side following uproar in the board and among the fans, Minhazul could hardly hide his emotions.

"This is happiest moment of my life. As a cricketer, I had the dream of playing in the World Cup and I think it's going to happen finally," said the former national skipper and the most experienced all-rounder



in the country. He was not named in the 19-man World Cup probables after being called for the 30-man preliminary camp despite his good form.

"I always had the confidence that the board will call me and they have done it today. I am grateful to this board for allowing me to play the World Cup," said Minhazul.

"I am going to perform my best at the World Cup," Minhazul promised. The Chittagongian has been keeping fit by having regular practice sessions at the port city.

U-14 National Football

14 play zonal finals tomorrow

Sports Reporter

Fourteen teams booked berths in the zonal finals of the Biman Cup under-14 National Football Championship qualifying rounds by winning their respective zonal semifinals played at different venues across the country yesterday.

The zone-wise finals will be played tomorrow among yesterday's winners. Chuadanga, Faridpur, Natore, Rajshahi, Manikganj, Narayanganj, Chandpur, Patuakhali, Chittagong, Laxmipur, Kurigram, Nilphamari, Mymensingh and BKSP are in the zonal finals.

The seven zonal champions will join holders Cox's Bazaar and hosts Joypurhat in the final.



to be played from April 25.

The following are the results of yesterday's zonal semifinals:

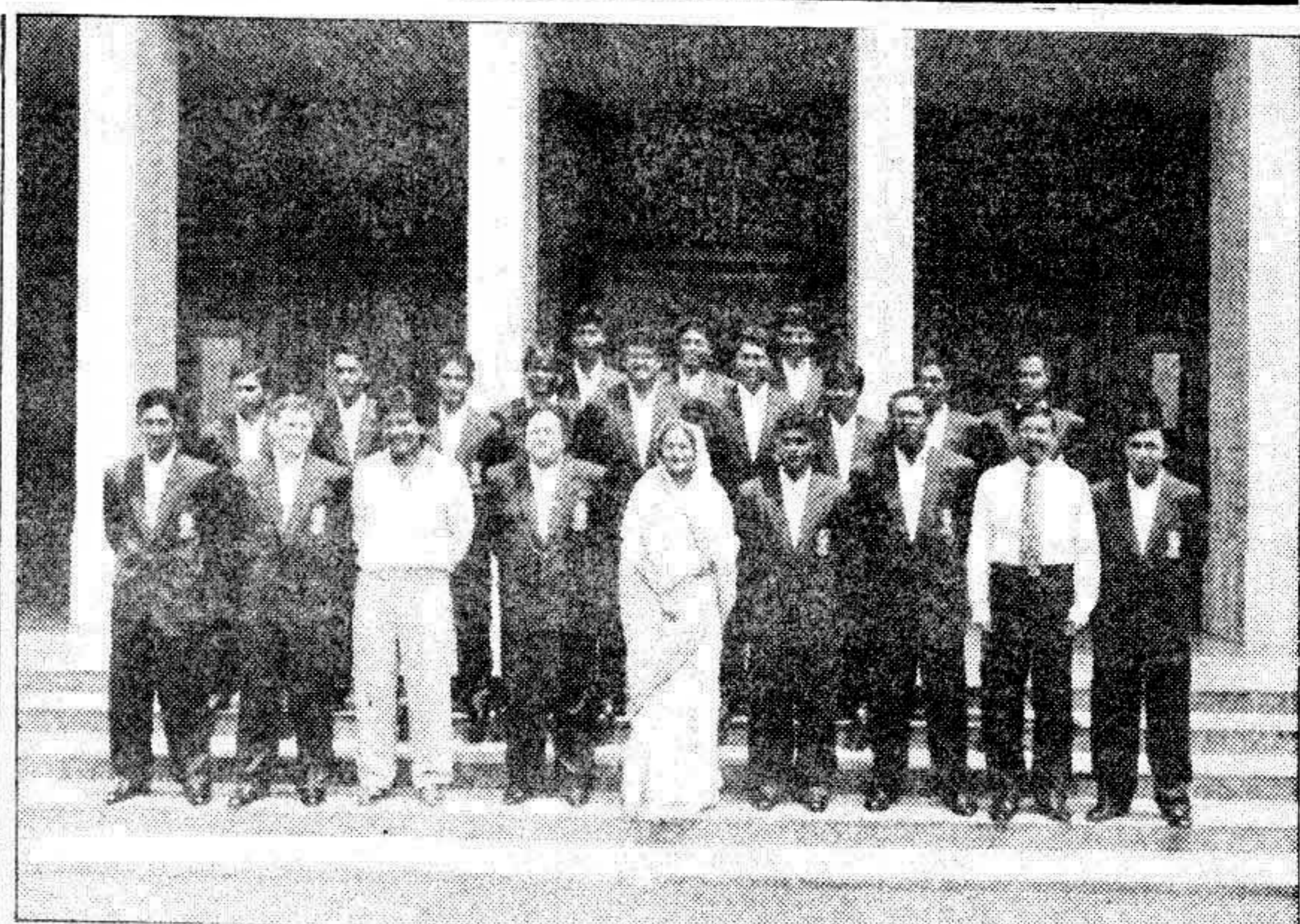
- | | |
|---|-------------------------------------|
| Faridpur zone
Chuadanga-5
Faridpur-1 | Kushlia-3
Rajbari-0 |
| Rajshahi zone
Natore-6
Rajshahi-1 | Naogaon-5
Bogra-0 |
| Narayanganj zone
Manikganj-2
Narayanganj-2 | Brahmanbaria-0
Gazipur-1 |
| Patuakhali zone
Chandpur-2
Patuakhali-1 | Khulna-0
Bagerhat-0 |
| Comilla zone
Chittagong-3
Laxmipur-3 | Feni-0
Comilla-0 |
| Nilphamari zone
Kurigram-4
Nilphamari-1 | Rangpur-1
Gaibandha-0 |
| Dhaka zone
Mymensingh-2
BKSP-3 | Netrokona-1
Kishoreganj-0 |

Jadukar Samad soccer on

The ninth Jadukar Samad Kishore football tournament kicked off here at the Outer Stadium yesterday, reports UNB. State Minister for Youth, Sports and Cultural Affairs Obaidul Quader inaugurated the tournament.

Four of the 12 teams taking part in the first round will play in the round-robin league. In the opening match, Mishuk Krira Proshikhhan Kendra of Narayanganj took on Tejgaon National Football Training Club.

President of the tournament committee Ziaul Haq, ex-president of Victoria Sporting Club Mahbubzaman and officials of the football federation were present on the occasion.



The England-bound Bangladesh World Cup cricket squad during a photo session with Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina at the International Conference Centre in the city yesterday.

PM wishes cricketers well

Team leaves tomorrow

The 15-member Bangladesh World Cup squad led by Aminul Islam leaves tomorrow for London, reports BSS.

The cricket extravaganza begins at Lord's on May 14 with holders Sri Lanka meeting England in the opening encounter. Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina wished the team success and expressed her optimism that they would bring laurels for the country.

Sheikh Hasina, who is keen to promote games and sports in the country, asked the cricketers to remain firm in their conviction and offer their best while playing against their opponents.

"Never give up as there is always win and loss in the games," she said. Bangladesh qualified as ICC Trophy champions beating Kenya in Kuala Lumpur in 1997.

Bangladesh, placed in Group B with Australia, Pakistan, West Indies, New Zealand and Scotland, will take on New Zealand in the first group match on May 17.

Bangladesh have little chance of winning any match but aim to take revenge against Scotland, who beat them in the Commonwealth Games in Kuala Lumpur in 1998.

"We don't think we have any

hope for winning a match. But I expect the boys, will still give it their best," team manager Tanvir Mazharul Islam Tanna said.

Opener Mehrah Hossain and Shahriar Hossain are the best openers and they have the ability and courage to face any

three batsmen played well," Aminul Islam said. Akram Khan, who led Bangladesh in the ICC Trophy victory, said the players had improved after playing one-day internationals recently.

"The matches have boosted their courage and experience," he said. Former West Indian great Gordon Greenidge said, "Our target is to beat Scotland, though they are now a strong side with the inclusion of players who have club experience in Australia and New Zealand."

"The boys are committed to giving a good fight," he said. Bangladesh will play a few warm-up matches in London.

TEAM
Aminul Islam (captain), Khaled Mashud (WK), Akram Khan, Shahriar Hossain, Mehrah Hossain, Khaled Mahmud, Faruque Ahmed, Naimur Rahman, Mohammad Rafique, Enamul Hque, Hasibul Husain, Shaifuddin Ahmed, Monjurul Islam, Jahangir Alam and Nseyanur Rashid.

Manager: Tanvir Mazharul Islam Tanna.
Assistant Manager: Dewan Shafiqul Arefin Tutul.
Coach: Gordon Greenidge.
Physio: Robert Allan Hunt.

sort of bowling and in the middle order... experienced Akram Khan, Faruque Ahmed, captain Aminul Islam can help build a good score," the team manager said.

All-rounders Khaled Mahmud and Naimur Rahman are in good form, he added. "We will display our best in batting and fielding as we have nothing to lose. Our bowling has also improved and there can be an upset result, if two or

Thorpe hits another vital knock

SHARJAH, United Arab Emirates, Apr 12 (AFP/Internet): Graham Thorpe struck his second half-century in two days to steer England to 206 against Pakistan in the Champions Cup here on Monday.

The Surrey left-hander, who made 79 against India on Sunday, hit 62 to retrieve England's innings after another dismal top-order performance. Alec Stewart finally called correctly after losing 14 of his last 19 tosses, but his teammates failed to take advantage of batting first in the day-night international.

England collapsed to 129-6 by the 34th over, before Thorpe and Mark Ealham boosted the score by adding 63 in 76 balls for the seventh wicket.

Fiery paceman Shoaib Akhtar claimed 4-37, including both Thorpe and Ealham, to ensure England were bowled out

with five deliveries to spare. England have only their pride at stake in their last league match after being knocked out of the race for the final with three successive defeats.

Pakistan, who won both their previous matches, and India will clash in the final on Friday.

India, meanwhile, were fined 30 per cent of their match fees by Sri Lankan referee Siddath Wetiminy for slow over-rates during their two games against England on Friday and Sunday.

Indian seamer Venkatesh Prasad was fined an additional 30 per cent of his fees for a verbal outburst against England's Vince Wells on Sunday.

SCOREBOARD

Scoreboard of the England innings in the Champions' Cup triangular series match against Pakistan on Monday:

ENGLAND

Knight c Akram b Akhtar	26
Stewart c Ijaz b Akhtar	11
Wells run out (Ijaz Ahmed)	3
Hick b Mahmood	24
Thorpe b Akhtar	62
Flintoff b Mahmood	0
Fairbrother c Wajahatullah b Arshad	25
Ealham b Akhtar	36
Austin run out (Malik)	1
Gough c Afridi b Saqlain	5
Fraser not out	0
Extras: (lb-6, w-5, nb-2)	13
Total: (All out in 49.1 overs)	206
Fall of wickets: 1-42; 2-43; 3-60; 4-86; 5-95; 6-129; 7-192; 8-193; 9-206.	

Bowler:	O	M	R	W
Akram	7	0	25	0
Akhtar	10	1	37	4
Saqlain	9.1	0	41	1
Mahmood	1	37	2	
Arshad	9	0	40	1
Afridi	4	0	20	0

M'singh cricket

MYMENSINGH, Apr 12: Shapla Club and Pandit Para Club won their respective matches in the First Division cricket league today, reports UNB.

Shapla defeated County Club by 6 runs at the Circuit House ground while Pandit Para outplayed Mohammedan SC by 8 wickets at the local stadium.

Batting first, Shapla scored 153 for the loss of nine wickets in 38.5 overs.

Marwar scored the highest 53 while Saiful added 37. Rakib picked up three wickets for 18 while Sumon and Rabbi took two wickets each for 21 and 30 runs respectively.

In reply, County were all out for 147 in 37.4 overs. Chandan scored 44 while Limon and Sumon added 30 and 29 runs respectively.

Monwar Afroj and Saiful took three wickets each for 20, 25 and 28 runs respectively. Billu bagged one wicket for 30.

In the other match, Pandit Para winning the toss sent Mohammedan in to bat and they were all out for 105 in 39.4 overs.



An Azhar Mahmood delivery sends England batsman Andrew Flintoff's off-stump flying. — Internet photo for 21.