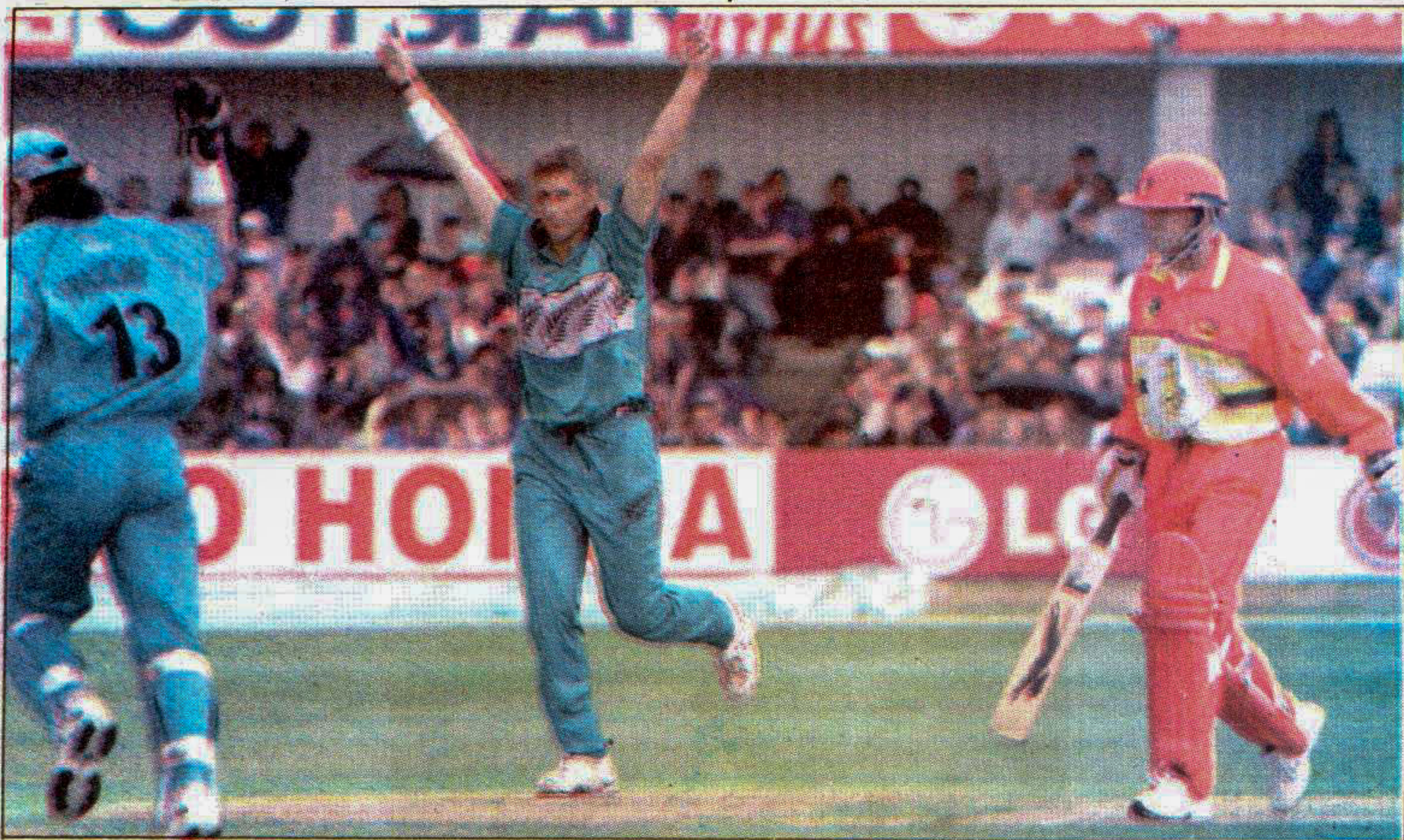


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IN HIS ELEMENTS: World Cup's leading wicket-taker Geoff Allott is jubilant after having Andy Flower caught at point yesterday. — AFP photo

S Africa now favourites

LONDON, June 6 (Reuters): South Africa were re-installed as World Cup favourites after their thrilling three-wicket win over Pakistan on Saturday. Their odds were shortened to 6-4 from 15-8 by bookmakers William Hill while former favourites Pakistan drifted to 2-1. Australia remain third favourites at 100-30.

Latest odds

- 6-4 South Africa
- 2-1 Pakistan
- 100-30 Australia
- 8-1 New Zealand
- 16-1 Zimbabwe
- 33-1 India

Shocking!

NEW DELHI, June 6: A 25-year-old cricket fan committed suicide in southern India over the national team's poor showing in the World Cup, a newspaper reported today, reports AFP. Pavitrnan slipped out of the room at his home in Kerala state Friday when television showed India losing their fourth wicket for just 17 against Australia in London, The Statesman said.

The paper said he took poison and was later found dead in the bathroom. Meanwhile unsuspecting members of his family continued to watch the match, which India eventually lost by 77 runs.

Waugh dumbfounded

LONDON, June 6 (Reuters/Internet): Australia captain Steve Waugh said he found criticism by former leading players of his side's go-slow tactics in their final World Cup group game against West Indies "quite dumbfounding".

"They would have done exactly the same if they had thought about it," Waugh told the Sunday Times newspaper.

The match on May 30 ended bizarrely as Australia deliberately slowed down in the final overs of their innings in a bid to make it difficult for New Zealand to reach the Super Six stage rather than West Indies.

The play failed and New Zealand qualified, carrying forward the two points they had gained from beating the Australians earlier in the tournament.

Waugh said the criticism was astounding considering "what was at stake and the importance of carrying through two points".

Ctg Mayor to host reception

Chittagong City Mayor Alhaj A B M Mohiuddin Chowdhury will host a reception in the port city on Wednesday in honour of the Bangladesh World Cup cricket team, reports UNB.

BCB president Saber Hossain Chowdhury said yesterday during a press conference in the city.

He said some political parties and other organisations have also expressed their desire to accord receptions to the national heroes. But they will have to wait until July 10 as national captain Aminul Islam and some other players are leaving for London later this week.

The entire team, including the skipper, will attend the reception but the main attraction will be the two Chittagong-born cricketers — Minhazul Abedin and Akram Khan.

Saber stands by BCB decision

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"We have already communicated with Australia, New Zealand, England, Pakistan and South Africa regarding the appointment of a new coach and hope to have a new coach before August," Saber concluded.

Heads held high - III

From Nizamuddin Ahmed in London  
(This interview has been taken on June 3, prior to the Bangladesh team's departure from London. Heathrow. This is the third and final part of the series. Part II appeared on June 6)

**Shafiuddin Ahmed:**  
"It is natural to feel very good when returning home under the circumstances" was how this lanky medium-fast bowler expressed himself.

"My joy knew no bounds when I bowled Ijaz Ahmed out. It was a wicket after another had fallen in the previous over. And, that's why we could apply pressure on them," Shafiuddin said without mincing his words.

He admitted that he could not express his inner feelings after beating Pakistan. "Because we were so happy that it is beyond me. I did not think of any body or anything else. I was only thinking of our game, even after winning the match," he said.

About the tour, he said, "I have not been on a more enjoyable tour."

His statement was important because Shafiuddin had previously toured England, Scotland, Ireland, New Zealand and Kenya, and returned home with some embarrassing results.

"Team spirit was at its best. The seniors in the team always encouraged us greatly. This was a plus point. We were very free with each other," was another of his promising comments.

His target was to do well and gain Test status for Bangladesh.

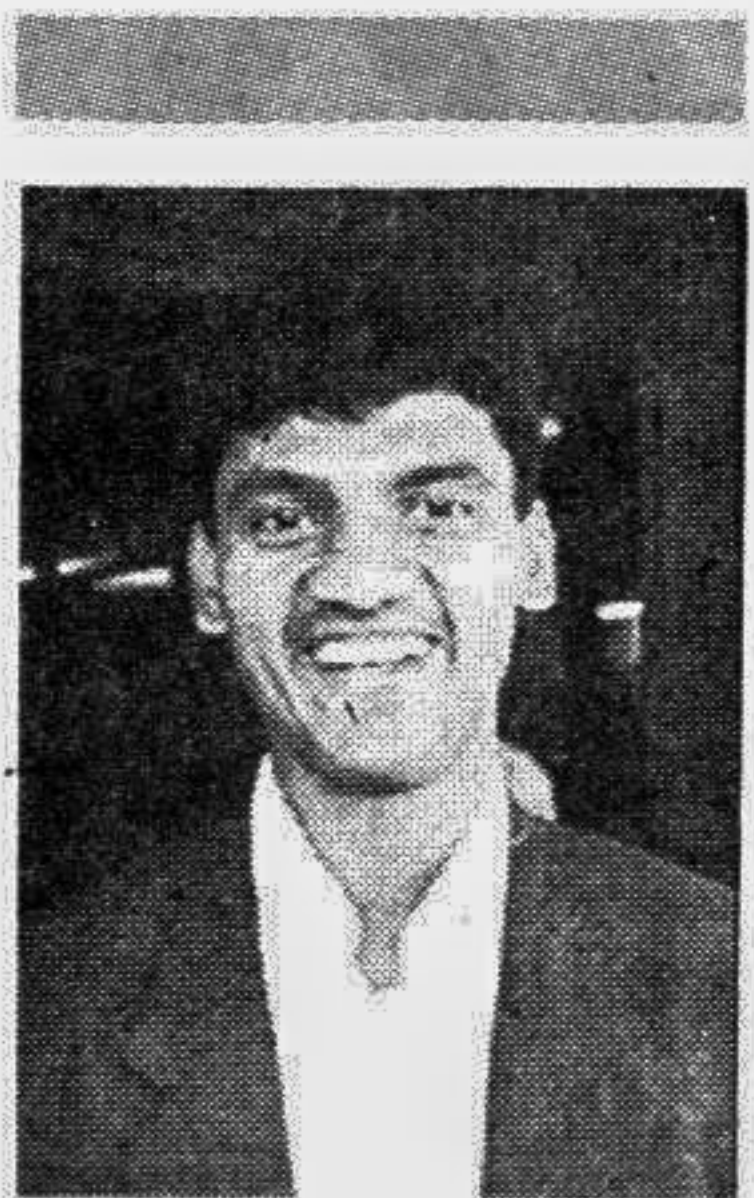
**World Cup stats:** Played: 2, Wicket: 1.

**Khaled Mahmud:**  
His was a joyous return, as he 'was going home with a very good win'.

"We have also fulfilled our target of winning two matches in the World Cup," said the Bangladesh vice-captain.

"This is the starting of our journey. We have the confidence right now of beating any Test team. We are going back home. We

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WASIM ON WAR PATH: Pakistan skipper Wasim Akram makes a vociferous appeal for lbw against South African opener Gary Kirsten on June 5. — AFP photo

Won against Donald but lost against SA

TRENT BRIDGE, June 6 (AFP/Reuters): Pakistan's explosive strike bowler Shoaib Akhtar may be winning the pace battle but he's losing the World Cup war, according to rival captains Hansie Cronje and Wasim Akram.

Cronje, speaking after South Africa's last-gasp win over Pakistan yesterday, said that some people were calling Akhtar the world's best bowler.

But he argued: "Shoaib Akhtar had only played 21 one-day internationals before today — he's fast but he's relatively inexperienced."

"When he grows older, he will learn it's not all about being fast."

South Africa's win over Pakistan in the second round of the tournament looked impossible yesterday until Lance Klusener and Mark Boucher hit 44 runs

off 24 balls.

Akhtar, who had taken two for 13 in his opening four-over spell, was smashed for 17 off a single over at the death. His last five overs cost 38 runs.

Akram said that he had told his bowlers that "if they want to win, they must be consistent and play according to a plan."

"Shoaib did not bowl according to the plan. He bowled a little short and the one over in which he gave away 17 runs cost us the match."

He told the Sunday Telegraph that Shoaib, the fastest bowler in the tournament, had not bowled "according to the plan."

"At the death the best policy is to bowl full and try to deliver yorkers as often as possible," Akram was quoted as saying.

Akram was fulsome in his praise for Lance Klusener whose

swashbuckling unbeaten 46 carried the South Africans to an unlikely three-wicket win yesterday.

"He has a very quick eye, picks up the length of a ball and dispatches it clinically into the gaps. He won a match that South Africa had all but lost."

Cronje added that Akhtar should learn from Akram, who he said was a master at containing batsmen in the final overs.

"Wasim never gives you anything to hit. With Shoaib, you feel you can hit him. He won the pace battle but Allan's more accurate."

Akhtar, a 23-year-old from Rawalpindi, has been the sensation of the World Cup, using his pace to initiate early breakthroughs.

He was timed at 95 miles per hour yesterday and organisers

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Trouble-free Old Trafford

MANCHESTER, June 6 (AFP): World Cup organisers are confident that Tuesday's cricket World Cup clash between arch rivals India and Pakistan here at Old Trafford will pass off without trouble.

But British police are taking no chances as they prepare to implement the tightest security measures of the tournament so far.

The high profile match comes as both countries are gripped by border tension over the disputed territory of Kashmir.

"There will be additional measures. They are not over the top but appropriate for the event," said World Cup spokeswoman Josie Stevens.

"We are aware of the difficulties between Pakistan and India, but this is a cricket match."

"For obvious reasons we cannot go into too much detail about the security arrangements."

"But we have talked to all the relevant authorities at great length, including Greater Manchester Police and ACPO (the Association of Chief Police Officers)."

"So far the India and Pakistan supporters have been very good natured and exuberant."

The organisers, however, admit that ticketing arrangements have left them powerless to separate rival fans — a policy which British police regard as essential at football matches.

Stevens added: "All Super Six tickets were sold in advance and nobody knew who would be playing who in the second round. So the segregation of fans has never been possible."

Indian captain Mohammad Azharuddin said his team would not be distracted by worries about security.

"I am leaving it to the British authorities," he told AFP. "They know what to do best. We have played Pakistan before all over the world. We are not worried."

Pakistan captain Wasim Akram appealed to fans not to wreck the match.

Akram said: "I would ask all fans to co-operate. I don't believe there will be any trouble. It's only a game, after all," he said.

The two sides have traditionally been arch-rivals. Recent military clashes on the nations' disputed Kashmir border have further raised tensions before the game.

British Asian fans are among the most passionate followers of cricket. The north-western city of Manchester has significant populations of Indians and Pakistanis.



South African allrounder Shaun Pollock pulls during the Super Six match against Pakistan. — AFP photo

Imran the peacemaker

MANCHESTER, England, June 6: Former Pakistani cricket captain Imran Khan has joined hands with leaders of the Asian community here to ensure that Tuesday's World Cup clash between India and Pakistan passes off peacefully, reports AFP.

Imran has offered to help before the potentially explosive match at Old Trafford, which follows border tensions between the two nations over the disputed region of Kashmir.

"I have told Lance [sic] I am available to help them make a success of it," Imran said. "We can't afford to let it go wrong."

Community representatives here were confident the political tensions would not spill over to the cricket field.

Bhim Virmani, chairman of Manchester's Indian Association, said: "Indians and Pakistanis walk the same streets here, spend their money in the same shops. There will be no trouble, just glorious cricket."

"We have a natural feeling for Kashmir, but it should not create so much tension that people start stabbing each other here."

Muhammad Junejo, Virmani's Pakistani counterpart, responded: "This has not got to be seen as a battle between two rivals."

"In my life I worked with Hindus and I work with Jews. We all get on, that is the truth of life — a good combination, a good chemistry."



quate security was in place. "We have got on our hands the best match of the World Cup and probably the best game of cricket we've seen in this country."

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BATTING, BOWLING SO FAR

LONDON, June 6 (Reuters): Top batting and bowling performances at the cricket World Cup after Saturday's Super Six match between South Africa and Pakistan (\*denotes not out):

**BATTING**

183 — Saurav Ganguly (India) v Sri Lanka, May 26, Taunton.  
145 — Rahul Dravid (India) v Sri Lanka, May 26, Taunton.  
140 — Sachin Tendulkar (India) v Kenya, May 23, Bristol.  
104 — Rahul Dravid (India) v Kenya, May 23, Bristol.  
100 — Ajay Jadeja (India) v Australia, June 4, The Oval.  
97 — Saurav Ganguly (India) v South Africa, May 15, Hove.  
96 — Jacques Kallis (South Africa) v India, May 15, Hove.  
88 — Nasser Hussain (England) v Kenya, May 18, Canterbury.  
88 — Alec Stewart (England) v Sri Lanka, May 14, Lord's.  
83 — Mark Waugh (Australia) v India, June 4, The Oval.  
82 — Maurice Odumbe (Kenya) v Sri Lanka, May 30, Southampton.  
81 — Yousaf Youhana (Pakistan) v Scotland, May 20, Durham.  
81 — Inzamamul Haq (Pakistan) v Australia, May 23, Leeds.  
80 — Roger Twose (New Zealand) v Australia, May 20, Cardiff.  
80 — Ridley Jacobs (West Indies) v New Zealand, May 24, Southampton.  
77 — Shivnarine Chanderpaul (West Indies) v Pakistan, May 16, Bristol.  
76 — Darren Lehmann (Australia) v New Zealand, May 20, Cardiff.  
76 — Gavin Hamilton (Scotland) v Pakistan, May 20, Durham.  
76 — Neil Johnson (Zimbabwe) v South Africa, May 29, Birmingham.  
75 — Robin Singh (India) v Australia, June 4, The Oval.

**BOWLING**

5 for 14 — Glenn McGrath (Australia) v West Indies, May 30, Manchester.  
5 for 21 — Lance Klusener (South Africa) v Kenya, May 26, Amstelveen.  
5 for 31 — Robin Singh (India) v Sri Lanka, May 26, Worcester.  
5 for 35 — Saqlain Mushtaq (Pakistan) v Bangladesh, May 31, Northampton.  
4 for 7 — Chris Harris (New Zealand) v Scotland, May 31, Edinburgh.  
4 for 17 — Allan Donald (South Africa) v England, May 22, The Oval.  
4 for 25 — Courtney Walsh (West Indies) v Bangladesh, May 21, Dublin.  
4 for 34 — Darren Gough (England) v Kenya, May 18, Canterbury.  
4 for 37 — Alan Mullally (England) v Sri Lanka, May 14, Lord's.  
4 for 37 — Geoff Allott (New Zealand) v Australia, May 20, Cardiff.  
4 for 37 — John Blain (Scotland) v Bangladesh, May 24, Edinburgh.  
4 for 40 — Wasim Akram (Pakistan) v Australia, May 23, Leeds.  
4 for 42 — Neil Johnson (Zimbabwe) v Kenya, May 15, Taunton.  
4 for 56 — Debashish Mohanty (India) v Kenya, May 23, Bristol.  
4 for 64 — Geoff Allott (New Zealand) v Pakistan, May 28, Derby.

Inside hostile home

COLOMBO, June 6 (AFP): Sri Lanka is set to probe incomes of cricket super stars as the entire team will face scrutiny after their humiliating exit from the World Cup, officials and press reports here said today.

The country's failure to defend the World Cup won three years ago has raised questions about the management of cricket and reopened the controversial election of board president Thilanga Sumathipala.

"Instructions have been given to check on the tax returns of some of the superstars, just to make sure that the state has not been cheated of its due revenues," the Sunday Times said.

Sumathipala said there would be an inquiry into the country's World Cup debacle after he receives a full report from tour manager Duleep Mendis who said on Friday that the team morale had suffered badly after the defeats.

The pro-opposition Sunday Leader said the debacle has also led to a polarisation within the Sri Lankan government.

President Chandrika Kumaratunga's uncle, Clifford Ratwatte unsuccessfully contested Sumathipala to head the cricket board in March and later filed a court case challenging the vote.

The board has remained wracked by uncertainty with the court suspending Sumathipala and his fellow elected office-bearers and later reinstating them pending a final verdict.

Cricket board officials said they had sought police protection for the seven team members who returned to the country on Friday together with four officials.

However, there were no fans to meet the players in sharp contrast to March 1996 when they were given a heroes' welcome after winning the finals against Australia to grab the World Cup for the first time.

The Sunday Times carried a

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Turning points

TRENT BRIDGE, England, June 6 (AFP): Ten key moments during Pakistan and South Africa's World Cup Super Six clash here on Saturday:

**+Jonty Rhodes fails to hold onto a sharp chance at backward point off Saeed Anwar, gifting the batsman an extra 13 runs and Pakistan 22 before Anwar is removed by Steve Elworthy.**

+Elworthy, often overlooked in South Africa's star-studded pace attack, has Abdul Razzaq caught in the deep to finish with figures of two for 23 off 10 overs.

**+Inzamamul Haq is run out for four, failing to ground his bat as Jonty Rhodes throws down the stumps to make it 118 for five.**

+Moin Khan smashes sixes off Allan Donald and Shaun Pollock to make 63 off 56 balls before he is run out. Fifty-four runs come off the last 30 balls of the innings.

**+Shoaib Akhtar has Herchele Gibbs caught at gully with his third ball to make it seven for one.**

+Akhtar, after bowling a 95mph delivery, the fastest in the tournament, catches Hansie Cronje's top edge and the ball sails into the hands of third man with the score on 19.

**+Australian umpire Darrell Hair raises his finger as Gary Kirsten pads up to Wasim Akram with the ball darting back from outside the off stump to make it 38 for three.**

+Daryll Cullinan is caught at the second attempt by a diving Saeed Anwar at cover off Azhar Mahmood to make it 55 for four.

**+Shaun Pollock is caught at slip off Azhar Mahmood after putting on 77 with Jacques Kallis and giving South Africa a chance of stealing the game.**

+Lance Klusener clubs 46 from 41 balls to steer South Africa to victory.



South Africa's Mark Boucher cutting Shoaib Akhtar on June 5 at Trent Bridge. — AFP photo