

## Zimbabwe struggling

LONDON, May 6: Zimbabwe struggled here Friday as they slid to 107 for seven by tea against Kent at Canterbury, re-

Facing a massive deficit of 328, Zimbabwe were sent into a downward spiral for the second time in the match by debutant seamer David Masters.

Masters followed his four for 44 in the first innings with four for nine in nine overs, and wickets by spinners Min Patel and Darren Scott added to Zimbabwe's plight.

The only plus for Zimbabwe was a dire day was the return to form of key batsman Neil Johnson, who has suffered four ducks in his last six innings dating back to the recent West Indies tour.

Johnson drove his opening ball from Patel for three for his first runs of the tour, and rightly proceeded to play his shots, reaching a fluent 53 not out from 83 deliveries, including two on-side sixes off Scott.

Kent declared at 487 for eight, then Masters had Grant Flower caught behind on the stroke of lunch. Soon afterwards, Masters removed Murray Goodwin lbw playing across the line, Trevor Gripper was spun out by Patel, then Masters accounted for Guy Whittall and Stuart Carlisle.

Scott sent back Dirk Viljoen and Tatenda Taibu helped by close catches from Rahul Dravid and Ed Smith but found Johnson a much tougher opponent.

Kent captain Matthew Fleming closed his first innings once Paul Nixon (54) had been bowled off his pads by Grant Flower for 53 from 138 balls.

Nixon and Fleming (38) added 74 in 15 overs with declaration clearly on their minds before the mastership of India's Dravid yesterday.

But Dravid lasted just eight balls, falling 18 runs short of his fourth double century, and failing to add to his overnight 182.

## Baumann's appeal denied

BERLIN, May 6: A German court has refused to allow former Olympic 5,000 metres champion Dieter Baumann to compete while waiting for officials to make a final decision on his doping case, reports Reuters.

Baumann, who faces a two-year ban for testing positive for nandrolone, was seeking permission to compete before the legal committee of the German Athletics Federation (DLV) reaches a final decision.

A spokesman for public prosecutors in Darmstadt on Friday confirmed a report in the German daily *Stuttgarter Zeitung* that the request had been rejected.

Baumann wanted to compete so he could make the qualifying standard for this year's Olympics, hoping he might then be able to go to Sydney if he was cleared by the DFB.

"My last possibility to qualify for the Olympics has been taken away," said Baumann, announcing he would be giving a press conference on Monday.

His lawyer, Michael Lehner, said Baumann would appeal the court's decision but the prospect of the ruling being overturned seemed unlikely.

Baumann, 5,000 metres gold medallist at the 1992 Barcelona Games, was suspended last November after two random tests showed he had levels of the banned anabolic substance nandrolone 10 times over the accepted limit.

The German athlete, who has campaigned against doping and advocated tough sanctions against drug cheats, denied any wrongdoing.

He filed legal proceedings against unknown parties after nandrolone was found in his toothpaste, claiming the drug must have been injected maliciously.

## Unstoppable Safin

PALMA, Spain, May 6: In-form Russian Marat Safin remained on course for his second successive tournament win as he moved through to the semi-finals of the 500,000 dollar Mallorca Open here on Friday with a hardfought 3-6, 6-4, 7-6 over Spain's former world number one Carlos Moya, reports AFP.

The 20-year-old right-hander, who won his second career ATP title in Barcelona last Sunday, took two-and-a-quarter hours to seal his win over the stubborn 23-year-old, who in 1999 became the first Spaniard in 26 years to be listed at number one.

Safin, who stormed to prominence last year as he recorded his first career ATP title in Boston, sealed his win on his second match point after Moya, the 1998 French Open winner and a finalist here the same year, had saved the first in the third set tie-break.

The Russian, who rebounded from losing the first set to batter Moya with an almost perfect baseline game, will face unheralded Spaniard Galo Blanco in Saturday's semi-final after the 23-year-old overcame up and coming Argentine Juan Ignacio Chela, who eliminated mercenary Russian Yevgeny Kafelnikov on Thursday, also in three sets 5-7, 6-3, 6-3.

The other semifinal pits Chela's compatriot Mariano Puerta against Swede Mikael Tillstrom. Puerta, the sixth seed, beat Spaniard Alberto Martin 6-4, 6-1 while on a wretched day for the home players Tillstrom beat another Spaniard Albert Portas 6-3, 6-2.

## Imran says ICC biased



KARACHI, May 6: Pakistani cricket legend Imran Khan on Saturday hit out at officials of the International Cricket Council (ICC), saying they were biased against Pakistan, reports AFP.

"They should have asked (ICC) chief executive David Richards why he concealed facts about Australian players' confession of having contacts with bookies in 1994," Imran said, commenting on the governing body's London meeting this week.

"I don't know why the ICC has not taken the Australian Cricket Board to task for hiding facts. The ICC instead put pressure on Pakistan for its match-fixing report," Imran said.

The 47-year-old former Pakistan captain -- who now heads his own political party, Movement for Justice -- was referring to Australian players Shane Warne and Mark Waugh who confessed to accepting money from an Indian bookmaker for providing pitch and weather information during Sri Lanka's 1994 tour.

The Australian Cricket Board (ACB) imposed fines on the players without disclosing the facts until they were divulged in 1998.

Richards knew those facts and had action been taken at that time the menace would not have spread like this," Imran said.

"Now most of their decisions are baseless and they would not be able to achieve anything," he said, adding that the formation of an investigative body "is the

only positive decision."

During its two day meeting the ICC decided to set up a corruption investigative body and announced that anyone found to be involved in match-fixing would be banned for life.

Imran also criticised South

African official Ali Bacher.

Bacher, managing director of the United Cricket Board South Africa, last month told "The Australian" newspaper that two World Cup matches had been fixed, including one between Pakistan and Bangladesh.

He also expressed suspicions about Pakistani umpire Javed Akhtar.

Bacher later retracted, saying

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Bacher, managing director of the United Cricket Board South Africa, last month told "The Australian" newspaper that two World Cup matches had been fixed, including one between Pakistan and Bangladesh.

"I have not met any officials but I have conveyed my stance to the chairman of the cricket board General Tauqir Zia," he said.

A match-fixing report by Lahore High Court Judge Malik Mohammad Qayum is pending action in Pakistan.

General Zia is scheduled to meet Pakistan's president, Mohammad Rafiq Tarrar, shortly to discuss the report.

## I haven't done anything wrong'



GEORGETOWN, May 6: Pakistan fast bowler Wasim Akram has again denied any kind of involvement in the fixing of international cricket matches, reports AFP.

"I think we have been through all of the processes and, as far as I am concerned, I know by the grace of God, I have not done anything wrong, so nobody can point their finger at me," Wasim told the Stabroek News newspaper here Saturday.

"If people in authority of cricket are mentioning India and Pakistan, it means simply that they want to divert the attention from whatever has happened from their own scenario at home," he added.

The Pakistan Cricket Board are due to release a report from Justice Malik Qayum next week on match-fixing. It was expected to recommend life bans on some players and heavy fine on others.

Wasim asserted that at no time under his captaincy or any other captain was Pakistan involved in any kind of match-fixing.

The left-arm fast bowler said: "As long as I have been playing internationally as a cricketer, no one has ever come up to me, nor mentioned anything to me, nor offered me anything when it comes as regards these open flowing, but stupid allegations of fixing-matches.

Bangladesh and pointing accusing fingers at Pakistan.

"We tried our best and we got beaten by the better side on the day," the former Pakistan captain remarked.

"We wanted to chase in that match and to get some confidence back, but we did not cope well with the Bangladeshi bowl-

ing," he said.

"I know that I am one of the older boys on the team with much experience, but the younger boys have to look up to us and use us as the examples to help them out," he commented.

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## Energetic Enqvist



MUNICH, May 6: Thomas Enqvist won two matches on the same day Friday to set himself up for a semi-final clash at the 525,000-dollar BMW Open against German crowd-pleaser Tommy Haas, reports AFP.

Enqvist, the 1998 champion at the Iphitos Club, was called to early action in the morning to complete a second-round contest interrupted Thursday by rain.

The 26-year-old Swede finished off the third set, earning a victory over Croatian Ivan Ljubicic 6-2, 6-7, 6-7.

Jiri Novak booked a quarterfinal place against Enqvist as he completed a contest also stopped in the third set Thursday evening.

Novak beat fellow Czech Slava Dosedel, the eighth seed, 6-3, 4-6, 7-5.

Enqvist was equally on-form on the clay-court late shift, moving into Saturday's round of four with a win over

Novak 6-3, 6-4.

"I've felt confident all week," said Enqvist, who reached his third semi-final of the year. "It was tough against Novak. I'm looking forward to playing Haas, we have similar styles and this quick clay should help my game."

With Boris Becker watching his protege, Haas kept German hopes alive, winning easily against ATP Tour newcomer Federico Browne of Argentina in straight sets.

Browne was competing in his second ATP Tour event of the year after Atlanta, where he lost in the first round to Austrian Stefan Koubek. He stands 202nd in the year-long Championships Race.

A break for Haas in the first set and another in the second was enough to ensure victory. "I'm really satisfied with how I'm playing this week," said the winner. "Today was a big test against a clay specialist."

Holder Franco Scillari of Argentina, seeded seventh, knocked out second seed Younes El Aynaoui of Morocco 2-6, 6-2, 7-6 in the day's longest match lasting well over two hours.

6-3, 6-4.

Haas showed his superiority over Browne, a lucky loser who got into the tournament when compatriot Guillermo Canas had to withdraw with a left wrist injury.

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