

## Indo-Pakistan talks likely

REUTERS, Karachi

Pakistan and India officials are set for talks this week in a bid to resume competition between the two countries, Pakistan cricket chief Tausif Zia said Thursday.

"The Indian officials has conveyed to us that he wants to meet with the (Pakistan Cricket Board) and I am more than willing to meet him," Zia told this news agency, referring to Indian Olympic Association (IOA) president Suresh Kalmadi.

Kalmadi has said that Indian Sports Minister Uma Bharti approves of the bid to restore cricketing ties, suspended because of high tensions between the two countries.

## Pepsi media cricket

UNB, Dhaka

Ajker Kagoj earned an exciting two-wicket victory over Ekuushey Television (ETV) in a vital match of the Pepsi media cricket competition at the Maulana Bhasani National Hockey Stadium yesterday.

In the day's other matches, Dainik Jugantar beat Inqilab by 38 runs, Dainik Dinkal defeated news agency ABAS by 48 runs, Dainik Bhoror Kagoj overcame UNB by four wickets while Dainik Sangram got walkover against Banglabazar Patrika as the later side failed to field required five players during the match, all at the same venue.

## Sony TV's Asian

FROM PAGE 13  
licensing deal in cricket as the Asian sub-continent market is the biggest cricketing market," he said.

The other bidders had included ESPN and Star television.

"The rights for other markets will be announced by next month as negotiations are still on," said Harish Thawani, co-chairman of World Sports Nimbus, which manages cricket on a global basis.

Thawani said India's state-run national television company, Doordarshan, would have access to selected India matches, semi-finals and finals of these tournaments and some high profile league matches.

The ICC coverage by Sony begins from September with the 2002 12-nation ICC Champions Trophy, an event to be played in India, Australia and Sri Lanka.

## Eng bid to finish off NZ

MCI Cricket

AFP, Auckland

England set out on Saturday to complete their dominance over New Zealand and clinch the three-Test cricket series in the final Auckland Test.

Nasser Hussain's team whipped the Kiwis by 98 runs in the first Christchurch Test before the weather conspired to stop them from pressing home their advantage in last weekend's drawn Wellington Test.

England have been by far the better team of this series with outstanding individual performances with the bat and ball, while the Kiwis have been struggling with a second-string pace attack and inconsistent batting and fielding.

"The series is still open, that's just a factor of a three-Test match series when one game is severely interrupted by the weather and bad light so it becomes a second-and-a-half Test series," Hussain said here Thursday.

"However well you play, that goes down to a last Test match, so I would rather be playing the cricket we are and one-nil up and not play

catch-up, which we normally are.

"At the moment we've done everything asked of us, it's been a long winter and it is difficult going into the last week of the winter season and still looking to win that Test series that we haven't this time.

"But we've dug deep before and we might have to do it again in Auckland."

The tourists are expected to go into the Eden Park game with the same 11 that has outplayed New Zealand, the only vagary being the condition of the drop-in pitch in Auckland and whether winning the toss becomes absolutely paramount.

Hussain has defended his fellow Essex teammate James Foster, whose wicketkeeping fallibility surfaced again during the Wellington Test.

Foster dropped three catches and each time persisted in chasing the ball with one glove.

He goes into his sixth Test with his wicketkeeping under as much scrutiny as when he made his international debut against Zimbabwe in Harare last September.

Foster has dropped 11 catches in his past seven internationals, but a batting average of 27 has glossed

over his errors. He needs a good third Test against the Kiwis.

England have made a decision to stick with Foster ahead of former Test captain Alec Stewart.

"It will be difficult for him," said Hussain. "In his first couple of Tests his batting wasn't there and kept well and now he's dropped a couple of chances but his batting's improving with every game."

"It is great for us, we need those runs down the order, so it's going to be difficult for the young lad but he keeps working and he keeps progressing, we're well happy with him."

New Zealand have made two changes for the final Test, dropping opening batsman Matthew Horne and pace bowler Chris Martin.

All-rounder Andre Adams is the newcomer while paceman Daryl Tuffy returns as the selectors search for a bowling attack which can dismiss England twice.

All-rounder Chris Harris appears likely to return to the team this time after missing out on the starting 11 for the drawn second Test.

Wicketkeeper Adam Parore will be retiring after his 78th Test match over Easter and looking to head in a new direction after 12 years of cricket.

## Lanka acclaim Pak security

REUTERS, Karachi

Sri Lankan cricket chiefs have praised security during their team's recent visit, a major boost for Pakistan before tours by New Zealand and Australia, a Pakistan spokesman said on Wednesday.

"The Sri Lankan board has sent us a letter in which they have acknowledged the excellent security arrangements made for the Asian Test Championship final in Lahore," cricket board spokesman Khalid Butt told Reuters.

"It is a very positive boost for us ahead of tours by New Zealand and Australia this year," he said after New Zealand, Sri Lanka and the West Indies refused to play in Pakistan following the September 11 attacks on the United States.

## Independence Cup kabadi

BSS, Dhaka

Bangladesh Army and BDR (Red) won their respective matches in the Independence Day Kabadi Championship at the Kabadi Stadium on Thursday.

BDR (Red) defeated BDR (Green) 93-78 after leading the first half 42-35.

In the other match, Bangladesh Army beat ASPTS 137-94. The winners led the first half 64-49.

ASPTS take on BDR (Green) while the BDR (Red) meet Bangladesh Army today.

## Europa Cup b'ball

UNB, Dhaka

Bangladesh Army and Bangladesh Navy won their respective matches in the Europa Cup Independence Day basketball at the Dhanmondi Basketball Gymnasium yesterday.

Army smashed BKSP by 114-57 points after dominating the first half 57-26.

Altaf caged 21, Shahjahan 18 and Mustafa 16 for the winners while Saion scored 16 and Tamony 10 for the losers.

In the day's another match, Navy beat Dhumketu Club by 82-70 points. The winners led the first half 46-33.

Gusshami managed 29, Rashed 18, Noman 8 for the Navy while Bliaz scored 21, Mich and Titas 10 points each for Dhumketu Club.



PHOTO: COURTESY  
Participants of the Japan Cup golf tournament pose with Chief of Army Staff and president of Kurmitola Golf Club Lt Gen M Harun-Ar-Rashid (6th from L) at the KGC yesterday. The two-day meet will end today.

## Agassi in last four

Tennis

AFP, Key Biscayne

Defending champion Andre Agassi booked his semifinal berth in the Tennis Masters Series tournament here Wednesday, reaching the final four of the elite event for the eighth time in his career.

The US veteran, who will turn 32 on April 29, defeated Ecuador's Nicolas Lapentti 6-3, 7-5 and has yet to concede a set.

However, he was in trouble several times on his serve against Lapentti, finally fending off two break points in the final game of the second set to avoid a tiebreak, of which he has won only one of seven this season.

Agassi had several successes at the against Lapentti, and said a willingness to come in would add an extra weapon to his game.

Agassi is now a step closer to adding a fifth Key Biscayne title to those he won in 1990, 1995, 1996 and 2001. Only his wife, Steffi Graf, has won as many.

In the semifinals he'll face another South American, either Chilean Marcelo Rios or Argentina's Juan Ignacio Chela.

He would no doubt also be ready for Chela, beaten by Agassi in their only previous encounter at Scottsdale earlier this month when Agassi was en route to his 50th



ANDRE AGASSI

In the quarterfinals Hewitt faces sixth-seeded Russian Marat Safin in a battle of the last two US Open champions. Safin, who won at Flushing Meadows in 2000, defeated Fernando Gonzalez 6-3, 6-3. Swiss 12th seed Roger Federer will battle Romanian Andrei Pavel in the remaining quarterfinal.

The women's semi-final lineup is

## Power takes Pak squash title

AFP, Lahore

World number three Jonathon Power of Canada prevailed over world number one and top seed Peter Nicol of England to win the Pakistan Open squash championship here on Wednesday.

The 27-year-old won 15-10, 13-15, 15-10, 15-14 in 87 minutes to lift the trophy and winner's purse of 15,750 dollars.

Power became only the second foreign player to win the Pakistan Open squash title after Peter Marshall won it in 1999.

## Aussie tail thwarts SA

MCI Cricket

AFP, Potchefstroom

Jimmy Maher and Nathan Hauritz snatched a tie for Australia with an unbeaten last wicket stand of 36 in the third one-day international at North West Stadium on Wednesday.

South Africa, needing a win after losing the first two matches in the seven-game series, seemed set for a comfortable victory when Australia lost their ninth wicket in the 46th over.

Australia had lost six wickets for 45 runs and needed 37 to win off 28 balls.

The first glimmer of hope came when Maher slammed a six off the last ball of the 47th over. It was also the last delivery by Mukhaya Nitni, South Africa's best bowler, who finished with four for 33.

Using his feet to all the bowlers, Maher hit further boundaries off Lance Klusener and South African captain Shaun Pollock.

## SCOREBOARD

Final scoreboard in the third one-day international between Australia and South Africa at North West Stadium Wednesday:

## SOUTH AFRICA

Dippenaar c Ponting b Lee 7  
Gibbs c Maher b Lee 10  
Kallis c Gilchrist b Gillespie 71  
McKenzie c Martyn b Lehmann 37  
Rhodes c Maher b Lee 83  
Klusener c Hayden b Lee 20  
Boucher c Gilchrist b Gillespie 5  
Hall not out 18  
Pollock not out 1  
Extras: (nb-1, w-6) 7  
Total: (For 7 wkts in 50 overs) 259  
Fall of wickets: 1-11, 2-27, 3-105, 4-180, 5-222, 6-232, 7-256

Did not bat: N Boje, M Nitni

Bowler O M R W

Gillespie 10 0 46 2  
Lee 9 1 45 4  
Watson 6 0 40 0  
Bichel 10 1 44 0

Lehmann 9 0 42 1  
Hauritz 6 0 42 0

## AUSTRALIA

Gilchrist c Boucher b Nitni 16  
Hayden c Gibbs b Boje 78  
Ponting run out (Klusener) 3  
Martyn run out (Pollock) 35  
Lehmann c Boucher b Kallis 33  
Maher not out 43  
Watson c Boucher b Nitni 8  
Bichel b Nitni 7  
Lee c Boucher b Nitni 8  
Gillespie b Klusener 0  
Hauritz not out 11  
Extras: (lb-1, nb-11, w-5) 17  
Total: (For 9 wkts in 50 overs) 259  
Fall of wickets: 1-33, 2-39, 3-112, 4-178, 5-180, 6-194, 7-206, 8-222, 9-223

Bowler O M R W

Pollock 9 0 49 0  
Nitni 10 1 33 4  
Kallis 9 0 52 1  
Klusener 10 0 54 1  
Hall 4 0 24 0  
Boje 8 0 46 1

Result: Match tied.

Man-of-the-match: Jimmy Maher.

Remaining matches:

Bloemfontein, March 30.

BTV

## CHANNEL-i

11:00 Time  
11:00 World Business Report

11:30 The Car's The Star ex Top Gear

12:00 BBC News

12:30 World Business Report

1:00 BBC News

1:30 Hardtalk

2:00 BBC News

2:30 Rough Science

3:00 BBC News

3:30 World Business Report

4:00 BBC News

4:30 Correspondent

5:00 BBC News

5:30 World Business Report/Asia Today

## STAR GOLD

6:00am Happy Days

6:30 3rd Rock From The Sun

7:00 The Oprah Winfrey Show

7:30 Raven

8:00 MacGyver

9:00 Roswell

10:00 Angel

11:00 The Oprah Winfrey Show

12:00 Main

13:00 Meri Saahil

14:00 Shanti

15:00 Hit Filmein Hit

16:00 Kya Film Kya Geet

17:00 Small Wonder

18:00 Main

19:00 Meri Saahil

20:00 Shanti

</div