

1

8

days to go



Did U Know?

No match in World Cup history has been more distasteful than the West Germany - Austria clash in Spain 1982. Because of the format of the tournament, only a 1-0 win to the Germans meant that both these neighbour countries would proceed to the next round at the expense of Algeria. When West Germany took the lead after 10 minutes, both teams virtually stopped playing. It slowed down to walking pace with neither of the teams interested in going forward. The neutral Spanish crowd and the Algerian fans constantly booed and shouted, a German supporter was so disgusted that he set fire to his national flag on the terraces. The following day Algeria protested to FIFA that the game had been fixed and called for both teams to be disqualified, but their protest was rejected. From the 1986 World Cup onwards, the last round of matches in the 1st round have been played simultaneously to avoid scandals like that.



BTV
Nitol-Tata National Football League
T & T Club vs Khulna Abahani
Live at 5:30 pm
SEE PAGE 15



Youri Djorkaeff
(French int'l midfielder)
"After the World Cup I'm going to take my bow."

Star

WHIZZ KID

COMPETITION 171

Tick the correct answers, post to
The Daily Star
Win attractive prizes
Competition closes at 8 pm
May 24, 2002 and draw
shortly afterwards

- West Indies won the third Test against India by
8 wickets 10 wickets 19 runs
- Who will lead Bangladesh A team in the Malaysia Cricket Challenge?
Akram Amijul K Mashiud
- Who won the man-of-the-match award in the first Test between Pakistan and New Zealand?
M c
- Who are the English Premiership champions?
Man United Arsenal Liverpool
- Who clinched the Hamburg...

Name

Class. Roll No.

School Address

Phone: (If any)

MSC stay afloat

SPORTS REPORTER



Mohammedan Sporting Club kept alive their outside chance of retaining the title when they defeated Bangladesh Biman by 38 runs in a crucial GrameenPhone Premier League match at the Bangabandhu National Stadium yesterday.

Mohammedan became the unlikely victors in the first match after a week's break due to inclement weather when the holders defended 226 in the 43-over contest. The match was curtailed because of the delayed start for overnight rain.

Biman, in their chase, were bowled out for 188 in 37.1 overs.

The result also put an end to Biman's chase for the coveted title. They can now only hope for giving a last minute twist to the battle for glory that tilts towards Victoria Sporting Club, who needed a victory against Mohammedan in their penultimate match on Tuesday to celebrate a rare success.

Victoria is maintaining a lead of

four points from second-placed Mohammedan with two more games in hand.

Mohammedan has a realistic chance to finish on equal points with the 'centenary team' of Victoria. In that case the popular Motijheel outfit should have to win their next two games and then wait for the outcome of the last Super Six match between Victoria and Biman.

Only a day before Mohammedan were bowled out for 202 against the same team but Biman were denied to chase that relatively easy target by the unfriendly rain.

The victory however exacted a sweet revenge for Mohammedan, who lost the first round battle against Biman by four wickets.

Bangladesh Biman appeared to be a better side to win the do-or-die battle until a decisive runout of Ziaur Rashid changed the complexion of the game. The national airliners were eventually bowled out for 188 with 5.5 overs to spare.

Mohammedan skipper Minhazul Abedin returned to action after missing the previous game due to hamstring injury with a superb 56. The experienced right-hander

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PHOTO: ANISUR RAHMAN

Mohammedan's Minhazul Abedin about to sweep during their GrameenPhone Premier Division Super Six fixture against Bangladesh Biman at the Bangabandhu National Stadium yesterday.

India thrive on record stand

Cricket

AFP, St John's

Venkatsai Laxman cracked a superb 124 not out in a record stand with Ajay Ratna as India overcame early hiccups to consolidate their position in the fourth Test against the West Indies here on Saturday.

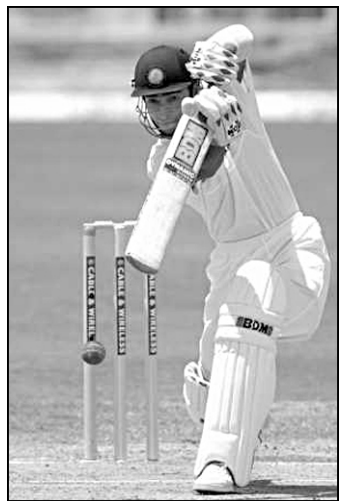
The stylish middle-order batsman's third century in 34 Tests helped India recover from 257-6 to reach 462-6 at stumps on the second day at the Antigua Recreation Ground.

Laxman, 27, shared an unbroken 205-run stand with young Ajay Ratna (93 not out) after pacemen Mervyn Dillon and Cameron Cuffy had threatened to restrict India to a modest total on a batting pitch by sharing three early wickets.

Their partnership was India's highest for the seventh wicket against the West Indies, the previous best being 186 between Dilip Sardesai and Eknath Solkar at Bridgetown in 1971.

The 20-year-old Ratna, nearly

dropped after scoring 16 in his last four Test innings, made amends as



RATNA ...93 n.o

he cut and pulled on way to his career-best score. He hit 10 fours in his resolute 233-ball knock under pressure.

This was Laxman's first century since March 2001 when he

slammed an impressive 281, the highest by an Indian in Tests, against Steve Waugh's Australians at Calcutta.

His maiden Test hundred also came against Australia when he smashed a rapid-fire 167 in early 2000 at Sydney.

Laxman, who completed 2,000 Test runs during his 237-ball knock, went for shots only in the closing session after having strengthened his team's position as he raced from his tea score of 56 to 100 off just 44 balls.

The West Indies attack lost much of its threat after lively opening spells from Dillon and Cuffy as seamers Adam Sanford and Pedro Collins could never put pressure on Laxman and Ratna.

Skipper Carl Hooper had to resort to part-time spinners Ramnaresh Sarwan and Chris Gayle, but failed to contain runs in the entertaining last session which produced 125 in contrast to 46 in the morning session and 65 in the afternoon.

Laxman made the most of a tiring

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Tingling with dream ton

Cricket

REUTERS, St John's

India's Vangipurappu Laxman was thrilled after he fulfilled his childhood dream of scoring a Test century in the West Indies.

The 27-year-old batsman slammed an unbeaten 124 to take India to 462 for six on the second day of the fourth Test, sharing a record 205-run unbroken stand for the seventh wicket with Ajay Ratna (93 not out).

"It was always my dream to score a hundred in the West Indies," Laxman said. "I'm really thrilled that I achieved it."

It was Laxman's third Test century, following his 167 in Sydney two years ago and an Indian record 281 in Calcutta last year which inspired his country to pull off a stunning 2-1 home series win over Australia.

"Any century is very important. This is my third and luckily all of them have been good," Laxman said.

India were struggling at 257 for six, having lost three wickets for 24

runs, when Laxman and wicketkeeper Ratna came together and the pair batted through the day.

"The most important thing was to



LAXMAN ... 124 n.o

stay at the crease because the situation we were in in the morning demanded me and Ajay to preserve wickets," Laxman said.

"On top of that, the West Indies were bowling well -- good line and

length, not giving us easy deliveries to score off."

It was Laxman's fourth score in excess of 50 in the series.

He struck 69 in the first drawn Test in Georgetown before hitting half-centuries in both innings in Trinidad to clinch the man-of-the-match award as India won by 37 runs to register their first win in the Caribbean for more than 26 years.

"I thought right from the start of the tour I was batting well," Laxman said.

"It was just a matter of time. Once I was set, I thought I wouldn't throw it away this time. The first two Test matches I was disappointed getting out after crossing 50, but those innings gave me confidence that I'll get a big score."

The Hyderabad batsman heaped praise on Ratna, who made his debut in Trinidad.

The 20-year-old wicketkeeper was almost left out of this test after scores of 0, 2, 1 and 13 in his first two matches. But he responded with a gutsy knock under pressure to silence his critics.

"I have played with and against

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Jorge Burruchaga (not in the picture), put through by Diego Maradona, just manages to beat the offside trap and goes on to fire past German custodian Harald Schumacher to score the Argentina's winning goal in 1986 FIFA World Cup final at Mexico's Azteca Stadium. Argentina won 3-2

City abase Brothers

SPORTS REPORTER

City Club thumped down an 84-run defeat on Brothers Union in the GrameenPhone Premier Relegation League match at the Dhanmondi Cricket Stadium yesterday.

The match that left an academic interest rather than any serious concern for status would be best remembered for a blazing half-century by Tushar Imran.

The young right-hander plundered 87 runs off 57 balls as City Club piled on a massive total of 230 for seven in the curtailed 25-over match.

Tushar hammered five sixes and four boundaries in his enterprising knock. City Club's Pakistani opener Waseem Nayeem scored a breezy 45 off 23 balls and Jamaluddin made a 32-ball 44.

Brothers, in reply, could manage 146 for five in their share of 25 overs.

Both City and Brothers had earlier confirmed their place above the dreaded relegation zone.

CUP CORNER



AFP, Tokyo

Japan's World Cup build-up has been marred by a death in national coach Philippe Troussier's family, after some encouraging signs from their star players in Europe.

The death of a nephew of the Frenchman in a traffic accident puts a dampener on the Japanese team, whose big guns looked to have struck a rich vein form in the closing stages of the European leagues this week, ahead of the start of World Cup finals on May 31.

The Frenchman flew to Paris from Japan's camp in Madrid Saturday for the funeral after his nephew's death the night before, according to Japanese press reports Sunday.

That meant he missed flying with his team to Oslo for a friendly against Norway on Tuesday, following a humiliating 1-0 loss to a makeshift Real Madrid side during the week.

"He seemed to be bearing up against the shock of losing someone close to him," Hideki Kato, a press officer for the Japanese Football Association, told reporters after seeing Troussier off at Madrid airport.

The Nikkan Sports daily speculated that the death could have a knock-on effect on the Japanese team.

"The psychological shock suffered by coach Troussier appears to be great and it is also feared to shake his players as well," the paper said.

The Japanese, due to co-host the World Cup with South Korea, had been enjoying a bumper week after Hidetoshi Nakata set up the goal that won Parma the Italian Cup on Friday, after Shinji Ono set up the winner in the UEFA Cup final on Wednesday.

Nakata's performance in the 1-0 win against Juventus was a boost for Japan and a personal triumph after a disappointing season following his 26 million dollar transfer from AS Roma, Italian champions last year. He also scored in the 2-1 away loss in the first leg of the final.

Fellow midfielder Ono set up the winner for Feyenoord in their 3-2 victory over Germany's Borussia Dortmund to lift the UEFA Cup in Rotterdam.

Both Nakata and Ono, who moved to the Dutch club from J-League Urawa Reds last July, are returning to international duty for the first time in six weeks after powering Japan to a 2-0 away win over Poland.

"I have taken time in resting up," Ono, 22, told Japanese reporters upon arrival at Oslo airport on Saturday. "Playing for the country is a different story and I have to switch my frame of mind."

The Japanese side also features two England-based players, Portsmouth keeper Yoshikatsu Kawaguchi and Arsenal reserve midfielder Junichi Inamoto, who saw his club seal the English league and cup double this week.

Troussier, who says his only aim is to prevent Japan from becoming the first hosts in World Cup history to bow out in the first round, was due to rejoin the team on Monday.

Japan have won three, lost one and drawn two of their World Cup warm-ups. Their final friendly, against Sweden, is in Tokyo on May 25.

KOREAN POLICE'S INTERPRETATION SERVICE

INTERNET, Seoul

National Police Agency reported police would offer a two-month interpretation service for foreign visitors travelling to Korea for the World Cup finals starting from May 25, Korea Herald stated.

According to the initiated project, a police dispatcher will call an interpreter through a special "tripartite phone" immediately as a foreign visi

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Nitol-Niloy b'ball BKSP meet St Gregory in final

UNB, Dhaka

BKSP and Saint Gregory High School moved into the final of the Nitol-Niloy Boys School Basketball competition beating their respective rivals at the Dhanmondi Basketball Gymnasium yesterday.

BKSP reached the final defeating Mastermind School 91-36 after leading the first half by 38-20 in the day's first semi-final.

Bappi and Emran caged 18 points each for the winners while Masum Nabil 27 for the losers.

In the day's second semifinal, Saint Gregory defeated Saint Joshep 77-46 after leading the first half by 31-23.

Shaon scored 18, Shakil 15 and Dulak 14 for the winners while Utsa 16 for the losers.

The final will be held on Tuesday at the same venue.

Education Minister Dr Osman Faruque will be present as chief guest.

England in Dyer straits

AFP, London



England's World Cup plans were thrown into disarray Sunday after coach Sven Goran Eriksson revealed that key midfielder Kieron Dyer is likely to miss this summer's World Cup finals.

There was more bad news for England when Eriksson also confirmed that Liverpool midfielder Steven Gerrard may need an operation on his groin injury and could also miss out.

Both players were due to travel to Dubai on Monday with the other members of the squad as England begin their World Cup preparations for Japan and South Korea.

But they now face an anxious wait to see if they will play any part in England's 2002 World Cup campaign.

A scan on Sunday revealed Dyer had suffered knee ligament damage after a brutal two-footed tackle from Southampton's Tahar El Khalel in

Mohammedan in Super Four

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Rajshahi

Dhaka Mohammedan defeated Rajshahi Abahani Krira Chakra 3-2 in an incident packed match of the Nitol-Tata National Football League at the Rajshahi Stadium yesterday.

The match was suspended for 55 minutes because of bad lights and another 41 minutes for scuffles between players of the two teams.

Alfaz opened up the account for Mohammedan at the eighth minute into the game.

With yesterday's result Mohammedan and Chittagong Abahani moved into the Super Four of the final round, with each having eight points.

The Super Four round will begin in Dhaka on May 16.

Kumble out of 4th Test

Cricket

AFP, St John's

Top Indian leg-spinner Anil Kumble has been ruled out of the ongoing fourth Test against the West Indies due to a fractured jaw, an Indian official said Sunday.

"We took him to the hospital this morning and it was found that the jaw was severely fractured," said Indian manager Gautam Dasgupta.

He added it was too early to decide whether the 31-year-old spinner would play the fifth and final Test in Jamaica and the five one-day internationals.

Kumble was struck on the jaw by a rising delivery from fast bowler Mervyn Dillon on Saturday, but continued to bat before being dismissed for six.

"The injury didn't look bad at that moment," said team physio Andrew Leijus.

"But Kumble complained of pain this morning and it didn't look right. It was then decided to have another X-ray done on his jaw."

Kumble, only the second bowler after Englishman Jim Laker to grab a perfect-10 in a Test innings, struggled for success in his only Test innings of the current five-match series.

He was dropped for two Tests after returning an expensive 2-145 in the drawn opening match at Georgetown last month.

He was, however, the most successful bowler on India's last tour of the Caribbean in 1997 as he took 19 wickets in five Tests.

Kumble, who bagged 10-74 against Pakistan at Delhi in 1999, has so far taken 318 wickets in 70 Tests.

Tangiers awaits ICC inspection

BBC ONLINE, London

Moroccan venue Tangiers will undergo an inspection from the International Cricket Council in June, with an eye to becoming a neutral Test venue.

Tangiers is set to make its international debut with a triangular one-day tournament in August.

But it is now also under consideration as a host for Pakistan's Test series against Australia in October, following the suicide bombing in Karachi that killed 14 people last week.

It won't be feasible to host the series in Sharjah but the weather will be fine in Tangiers.

The New Zealand team, who were staying in a hotel close to the blast, immediately abandoned the remainder of their tour.

"An ICC (International Cricket Council) team will be visiting Tangiers to inspect the stadium in June," said Abdul Rahman Bukhatir, chairman of the Cricketers' Benefit Fund Series (CBFS).

"And I am pretty confident the venue will be approved since the facilities there are of international standard."

The CBFS owns stadiums in Tangiers and Sharjah and organises the twice-yearly Sharjah one-day tournaments.

The desert venue hosted two Tests and three one-day internationals between Pakistan and West Indies in February after the Caribbean team expressed security fears.

But the stands were empty as the longer form of the game failed to appeal to the expatriate community.

And Bukhatir said Morocco would be a preferable venue for the Australia series because the weather would be less humid.

The one-day tournament, which will run from 12 to 21 August, will have prize money totalling 250,000 USD, with the winners taking home 120,000 USD.

"South Africa and Pakistan have already confirmed their entries for the event," said Bukhatir.

"We are in discussions with Australia and Sri Lanka to finalise the third team for the tournament."

Green Delta hockey Sonali Bank, Ajax split points

UNB, Dhaka

Sonali Bank and Ajax Sporting Club made goal-less draw in the Green Delta Premier Division Hockey League at the Maulana Bhasani National stadium yesterday.

In the day's First Division League, Victoria Sporting Club defeated Barnak Samaj 2-1 after leading the first half 1-0 at the same venue.

Sahiduz Zaman Rahat struck both the goals for Victoria while Imran Ahmed scored for Barnak Samaj.

Age-gr cricket Final round from May 16

BSS, Dhaka

The final round of the Under-13 Cricket Championship will begin at Brahmanbaria on May 16.

The Under-15 competition will begin on May 16 at Faridpur and Under-17 on May 18 at Rajshahi, a Bangladesh Cricket Board (BCB) press release said yesterday.

BCB will organise the competitions under its development programme.

Eight teams -- one each from Dhaka, Rajshahi, Chittagong, Khulna, Barisal, Sylhet and two teams from Dhaka Metro -- will take part in the competitions.

LATEST

SPORTS REPORTER

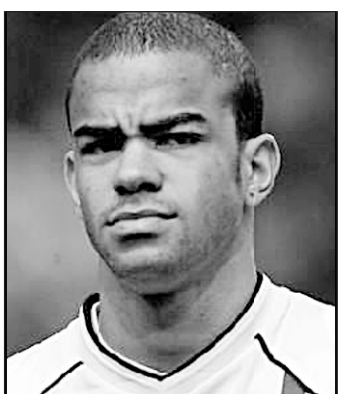
West Indies were 30 without loss in their first innings shortly after lunch on Day three of the fourth Test against India at St. John's in Antigua yesterday.

Earlier, India had declared their first innings on 513 for nine.

Saturday's Premiership clash at St Mary's.

Eriksson confirmed that Dyer is "almost for sure" ruled out of the finals and has called up Liverpool midfielder Danny Murphy as a replacement.

Gerrard will see a doctor in



KIERON DYER

Belgium but Eriksson remains hopeful he could later link up with the England party.

West Ham winger Trevor Sinclair has been placed on standby. England's squad has been

decimated by injuries with Gary Neville already ruled out and captain David Beckham still recovering from a broken bone in his foot.

Eriksson admitted he felt England's current injury troubles were "unlucky" but remained optimistic.

"It's unlucky that today we got both those problems the day before we are leaving (for Dubai)," he said. "Of course it's not good but it's football and things like that happen occasionally."

"I know that we might play without two very good footballers (Dyer and Gerrard), three with Gary Neville as well, but we have a lot of good players and I go there optimistic."

"With Steven Gerrard I thought it was nothing but they phoned me from Liverpool and told me it was much worse than I thought."

The 53-year-old Swede expects the forthcoming trip to Dubai to give his players the chance to rest both mentally and physically.

"In Dubai it's going to be very hot. You come together, working a little, some of them resting depending on how tired they are," he added.

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