

### Nat'l sub-jr chess in Jan SPORTS REPORTER

The 23rd National Sub-Junior Chess Championship organised by the Bangladesh Chess Federation will start from January 3 at NSC chess room.

All students below the age of 16 can take part.

Players must register on or before January 1 with proper age certificate from their school. Entry fee is not required. Also boys and girls from the districts also can enrol with a letter from their districts sports association.

The tournament will be held on a Swiss-league system.

### Alec doubtful

**REUTERS**, Melbourne

England wicketkeeper-batsman Alec Stewart has a bruised hand and is yet to prove his fitness for the fourth Ashes Test against Australia

starting on Thursday. Stewart, 39, the ninth-highest scorer in Test cricket, suffered the injury during a one-day match against Sri Lanka in Perth last week team spokesman David Clarke said on Tuesday.

"He had an injection in it this morning, he should be okay," Clarke said.

"He batted today. He didn't keep. But he'll have to keep (at a training session) tomorrow.

"(Reserve wicketkeeper) James Foster is already a member of the Test squad. He's there ready to go it needed.'

Foster has played six Tests. The 22-vear-old has plaved one firstclass match on tour, making eight runs. Stewart averaged 31.80 in the

first three Tests, all lost by England. Stewart's highest score in the current Test series was 66 not out.

### Mashrafee, FROM PAGE 13

in the series against the West Indies that's why I felt in pressure. I failed to play my natural game that affected my performance," he explained while talking to reporters yesterday.

The right-handed batsman came to report at the Bangabandhu National Stadium for the camp ahead of the World Cup to be held in South Africa from February-March.

Bashar said Gayward helped him find out the problems and gave tips on how he could play naturally. "He (Gayward) suggested that I

should only think about my performance and not other things," he said. As the national team began its

**REUTERS**, Durban preparation camp at BKSP, a real battle is expected, especially in the South Africa will topple Australia for bowling department with the return the first time at the top of the world of talented pace bowler Mashrafee Test championship if they beat Bin Mortuza who will join Monjurul Pakistan in their two-Test series Islam, Talha Jubair and Tapash starting in Durban on Thursday. Baishya.

The tearaway from Narail came

# 'Aus on different level' Football

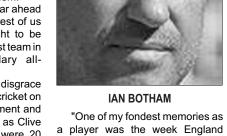
AFP, London

Ian Botham has admitted that Australia are playing cricket on "a different level" but added that Thursday's fourth Test in Melbourne gave England the chance to build on their two triangular one-day series victories over Sri Lanka.

England great Botham, who produced some of his finest performances against Australia, said the victories over the Lankans proved that "Nasser Hussain's team are nowhere near as bad as everyone in

Australia has been telling them. "These Aussies are so far ahead of everyone else that the rest of us are competing for the right to be regarded as the second best team in the world," the legendary allrounder insisted. "I don't think there's any disgrace

n admitting Australia play cricket on a different level at the moment and they are as dominant now as Clive Lloyd's West Indian side were 20 years ago. Those are facts of life."



a player was the week England clinched the Ashes, inside barely three days, at the MCG in 1986-7,"

61 on a slow, turning wicket.

play three overs after lunch.

a slender lead of 138.

number 10.

South Africa."

reach 174 for eight when rain ended

to be played, Pakistan had limped to

With almost two full sessions still

"We have some world class

"Also the youngsters Taufeeq

"After playing so many one-day

batsmen in Inzamamul Haq, Yousuf

Umar and Salim Elahi have done

really well in both Zimbabwe and

Omar Henry told Reuters: "At the

moment Australia are on top,

but...we've come out with fantastic

results from the Asian subconti-

nent and the West Indies, and it's

our goal to build a squad that is

Mornantau Hayward would pass a

fitness test on a thigh problem later

Henry hoped that fast bowler

successful in all conditions."

on Tuesday.

Youhana and Younis Khan.

But Botham said that England

had a chance to establish them-

selves as the world's "second-best"

side

own back yard, at their biggest And he maintained that England, stadium," said Botham, who pointed already 3-0 down in the best of five out that England were the last Test series, could do worse than visiting team to enjoy a Test victory on Australian soil when Alec start their recovery this week at the Melbourne Cricket Ground (MCG). Stewart's side won in Melbourne four years ago.

Botham said

Botham also said that novice paceman Stephen Harmison, Jimmy Anderson, and Simon Jones (when he regains fitness after sustaining a tour-ending knee injury while fielding in the first Test at Brisbane) were "three reasons to be cheerful about the future of English cricket".

"There really is nothing like

putting one over the Aussies in their

SPORT

Premiership

AFP, London

City 3-2.

Spurs overcome

Manchester City

Glenn Hoddle won the battle of the

former England coaches here at

Maine Road on Monday as his

Tottenham team came from behind

to beat Kevin Keegan's Manchester

half, took a deserved lead through

time from recalled duo Chris Perry

and Simon Davies turned the match

Tottenham's way before substitute

Gus Poyet sealed victory by nod-

City substitute Ali Benarbia set

Tottenham endured a frantic final

five minutes after Germany interna-

tional Christian Ziege was sent off

after twice getting yellow-carded for

seventh place in the English

Premiership table while City stayed

**TOP SCORERS** 

Leading scorers in the English

Premiership after the weekend

11 - James Beattie

- Thierry Henry (Arsenal),

8 - Harry Kewell (Leeds), Michael

Owen (Liverpool), Sylvain Wiltord

(Arsenal), Ruud van Nistelrooy

(Man Utd), Nicolas Anelka (Man

6 - Tomasz Radzinski (Everton),

Paolo Di Canio (West Ham),

**Rifles lift Top** 

Bangladesh Rifles clinched the

Victory Day Top Four Volleyball

Championship defeating Bangla-

Four v'ball

7 - Kevin Campbell (Everton)

10 - Alan Shearer (Newcastle)

Gianfranco Zola (Chelsea)

But they survived to move up into

up a rousing finale with a superb

injury time curler but it was all too

ding home six minutes from time.

captain Steve Howey.

late for Keegan's men.

kicking the ball away.

twelfth.

matches:

City)

(Southampton)

City, who dominated the first

But headers either side of half-

And he said they could help the country mount a real challenge for the Ashes in 2005 where England will be looking for their first series win in nine against Australia.

"Just think -- in nine months, they may even be established as part of the world's second-best team.

"Second-best is never good enough, of course, but at least it would be a stepping stone towards giving the Aussies a better run for their money in 2005.

# Rain the winner

# Football

#### AFP, Pietermaritzburg

Rain brought a premature end to the three-day tour match between Pakistan and South Africa A at the

Pietermaritzburg Oval on Monday as the game petered out into a draw. Taufeeq Umar held the Pakistan

second innings together in making 89 having occupied the crease for just over five hours. Apart from the 34 made by Younis Khan, nobody else in the Pakistani order made much of an impression in the second innings as

the tourists reached 174-8 when play ended. Pakistan looked particularly

ulnerable against the left-arm spin of Robin Peterson. Peterson, who was overlooked

Football

internationals, it's now just a matter by the selectors when the 13-man of discipline when it comes to the SA's chance at hand

squad for the first Test was five day game." Younis added. After mounting a rousing announced on Sunday, took four for fightback on Sunday to play them-Having been dismissed for 174 in selves back into contention. Pakistan made a disastrous start to the first innings, Pakistan suffered another middle order collapse to the third morning.

Resuming on 91 for two, they lost two wickets in the space of three balls without adding a run as Charl Langeveldt struck twice in the first over of the day.

"I'm not worried at all about the Peterson then took three wickets to reduce the tourists to 168 for batting," said captain Waqar Younis seven -- a loss of five wickets in the after the match, who top scored in the first innings with 36 batting at morning session.

Pakistan clawed their way back into the match on Sunday by inducing a South African middle order collapse where the hosts slumped from 150 for two to 206 all out.

The first Test of two between Pakistan and South Africa gets underway in Durban on Thursday.

desh Air Force 15-18, 25-20, 10-15, 26-24 in the final yesterday. Asit Kumar of BDR was adjudged man-of-the-final, while best player's award went to Ramesh Chandra of Bangladesh Air Force.

BSS, Dhaka

# Australia will

different venues vesterday: Australia Test captain Steve Waugh Chittagong v Sylhet believes his side will remain the best Venue: BNS in world cricket even if South Africa are officially awarded top ranking by Toss: Sylhet. the International Cricket Council (ICC). The ICC released a statement on Tuesday explaining that South Africa could overtake top-ranked Australia on the ICC Test Championship Table if Shaun Pollock's side win their upcoming two-Test home series against Pakistan. South Africa would improve their series points average from 1.53 to 1.59 and overtake Australia (1.54) who have held the top ranking since the table was introduced last year. "Everyone knows who the number one side is so I don't really see that as a big issue," Waugh told a news conference in Melbourne on Tuesday. "If they happen to take the mace off us then congratulations to them but I think everyone knows who the number one side is.'

CHITTAGONG: First innings (Overnight 309-4 in 90 overs) Doc o Donyoz k

Scoreboards on the second day of

three Ispahani Mirzapore National

Cricket League matches held at

FROM PAGE 13

SCOREBOARD

# WORLD FOOTBALL BRIEFS

Football

AFP World football briefs on Tuesday: **CRAGNOTTI TO** 

STEP DOWN Rome Sergio Cragnotti has confirmed he will resign as president of financially-stricken Serie A club Lazio

after 11 years in charge. The cash-strapped Rome outfit held a shareholders meeting late Monday where it was agreed

### SERGIO CRAGNOTTI

Cragnotti would guit as soon as a new board of directors was in place. "The deal is ready to go through." he said. "Only red tape is holding it up, but everyone is in agreement."

Several local banks have agreed to loan the troubled Italian First Division club around 45 million euros to ease its debts, but only if new directors are appointed.

Lawyer Ugo Longo, a Lazio shareholder, is believed to be the main candidate to temporarily take charge when Cragnotti finally leaves.

Cragnotti said his fondest memories at Lazio were winning the Italian title in 2000 and the European Super Cup a year earlier.

"Winning the Scudetto in 2000 was fantastic, as was beating Manchester United to lift the Euro-

pean Super Cup," he added. "I only hope that Lazio can enjoy further success because their fans

really do deserve it." Lazio are currently second in Italy's Serie A despite their cash

crisis which has prevented them from paying their players' salaries for almost four months.

RIISE!

London Liverpool defender John Arne Riise has been called up by the Norwegian army early in the New Year

after a mix-up over his deferment application, the Sun reported uesday. National service is still compulsory in Norway, but deferments are usually granted in special circumstances such as employment

abroad But in Riise's case his mother Berit failed to send the letter requesting deferment in time for the November 25 deadline and he has been told to report for duty on January 8.

Riise's mother told the paper: "One year away from Liverpool could destroy his next 10 years.

"I think everyone is aware of the situation and I don't think the goal for the Norwegian military is to destroy people's lives. "When he does eventually come

home for good he will do his duty." The Sun quoted a Norwegian army colonel as saying that it was still possible for Riise to request postponment if he had a good enough reason.



JOHN ARNE RIISE

T Hadi c Aftab b Ahsanullah

Extras: (b-3, lb-3, nb-2, w-3)

49, 5-126, 6-127, 7-151, 8-196

Total: (For 8 wkts in 71 overs) 204

Fall of wickets: 1-15, 2-28, 3-36, 4-

O M

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Rana Ibw b Safiuddin

Rezaul Ibw b Ahsanullah

Hasibul Ibw b Safiuddin

Ejaz batting

Bowler

Waseluddin

The 22-year-old Riise, a 6 million dollars buy from Monaco 18 months ago, was the only Liverpool player to appear in all 38 of their vehicle was subsequently stolen. Premiership games last season and manager Gerard Houllier

19

8

32

11

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8 0

53

Sajjad defies Dhaka 25, Ali Arman 28; Shafaq 3-41, Nuruzzaman 3-22, Aminul jr 2-69) RAJSHAHI: First innings (overnight

19 for 1 in 10 overs) Zahurul c sub b Anisur Jamal Ibw b Pijush 92 Rafiqul c Shahin b Anisur 5 Nuruzzaman c Arman b Pijush 43

Anis run out Hasan c Nahidul b Anisur

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149 as the visitors won by 29 runs, Pakistan's only victory over South

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### rewarded him with a five-vear deal Liverpool spokesman lan Cotton

**ARMY CALLING** 

STOLEN Glasgow Rangers' Dutch international Ronald de Boer had his car stolen after thieves broke into his house here in the early hours of Monday

**DE BOER'S CAR** 

morning

The Daily Star

said: "We have supplied the docu-

mentation that the agent required to

prove that he is employed abroad."



**RONALD DE BOER** 

The thieves found the keys to De Boer's BMW X5 sports car inside his house and then drove off with the vehicle in the Mearnskirk area of Glasgow.

In an interview with Tuesday's Scottish Sun newspaper De Boer, 32. said he was relieved neither he nor any members of his family were injured in the incident.

"The keys were inside the house and they broke in to get them," De Boer explained.

"It happened very early in the morning

"It's annoying but at least nobody was hurt - that's the most important thing," he added.

De Boer joined current Scottish Premier League leaders Rangers two years ago in a multi-millionpound move from Spanish giants

Barcelona. Late on Monday, a Strathclyde Police spokesman said: "We can confirm that a 32-year-old male reported that his house had been broken into, his car keys taken and his high value, high performance

"Police inquiries are continuing."

back in the squad after a year's absence due to injury.

"I'm completely fit now. I can generate my old pace and my runup is the same but I changed my bowling action as suggested by TA Shekhar of India," Mashrafee said who set a target to bowl at a speed of 140 km-per-hour.

The promising pacer said, "I'm just waiting to play in the national team. I have been practising in nets for the last one and a half months, and I am trying my best to regain my rhythm."

Khaled Mahmud the experienced campaigner is optimistic of playing in his second World Cup though he was ignored in the home series against the West Indies.

"My performance in South Africa in the last tour was not bad. So I'm hopeful to get a place in the final squad," said Mahmud who was adjudged man-of-the-match when Bangladesh beat Pakistan in the 1999 World Cup.

He is one of the four cricketers in the list of 20 who represented Bangladesh in England three years ago. The others being the present captain Khaled Mashud, left-arm paceman Monjurul Islam and slow left-arm bowler Mohammad Rafique.

### Waqar warns 'em

#### FROM PAGE 13

balls without adding a run as Charl Langeveldt struck twice in the first over of the day.

Spinner Robin Peterson then took three wickets to reduce the tourists to 168 for seven -- a loss of five wickets in the morning session.

Pakistan clawed their way back into the match on Sunday by inducing a South African middle order collapse where the hosts slumped from 150 for two to 206 all out.

## Cricketers' camp

#### FROM PAGE 13

been selected for the camp from a 30-man preliminary squad: Khaled Mashud (captain), Habibul Bashar, Javed Omar, Al-Shahriar, Ehsanul Haque, Sanwar Hossain, Khaled Mahmud, Monjurul Islam, Mohammed Rafique, Mushfiqur Rahman, Hannan Sarker, Mohammad Ashraful, Tushar Imran, Anwar Hossain, Mohammed Anwar Hossain (wicketkeeper), Tareq Aziz, Taposh Baishya, Alok Kapali, Mashrafee-bin Mortuza and Talha Jubair.

one-day rankings, are universally regarded as the world's best team, underlining the point by beating the South Africans 5-1 over six Tests

Australia, who also head the

last season South Africa captain Shaun Pollock said: "Australia are playing very well at the moment, but the fact that we are in the running for the championship is recognition that we have played well and been successful in different conditions around the world.

"It would be good to have our picture taken with that trophy."

The International Cricket Council rankings are based on results since May 1996. In the intervening period South Africa have won series in India and Pakistan, drawn another in Sri Lanka. and won a rubber in the West Indies.

By contrast Australia, despite a world record 16 wins in a row, have struggled on the subcontinent. They lost in India and Sri Lanka, and drew in the Caribbean as well as at home to New Zealand. South Africa head of selectors

"One of the reasons we selected Hayward was to pair him with Makhaya (Ntini) and it would **CURRENT STANDINGS** I. Australia 1.54 average points; 2.

South Africa 1.53; 3. New Zealand 1.18; 4. Sri Lanka 1.13; 5. England 1.00; 6. India 0.93; 7. West Indies 0.88; 8. Pakistan 0.81; 9. Zimbabwe 0.50; 10. Bangladesh 0.

be fantastic if that idea bore fruit," Henry said.

The home side's squad is strong on specialist batsmen and Henry may have revealed the side's top six when he said: "Herschelle Gibbs, Graeme Smith, Gary Kirsten, Jacques Kallis, Neil McKenzie, Boeta Dippenaar -that's a lot of class batting talent." Henry suggested left-arm

spinner Nicky Boje, the only specialist slow bowler in the squad, would play despite the Kingsmead groundsman promising a hard, bouncy pitch. "You've only got to look at the

whose side lost the one-day series 4-1. said fast bowler Mohammad Sami had been passed fit, welcome news after Shoaib Akhtar returned home with a knee injury and Wasim Akram opted out of the Test series.

spinners."

Africa in seven Tests.

Pakistan captain Waga

"Sami just had a niggle and he's fine," Waqar said.

Pakistan's previous Test, against Zimbabwe in Bulawayo, ended on November 19 and the only first-class fixture on the South African tour, against South Africa A in Pietermaritzburg, was truncated by rain and bad light.

"You can't do much about the weather," Wagar said. "The mood in the camp is good, and hopefully we'll put it together and play some disciplined cricket."

Fast bowler Monde Zondeki has been withdrawn from the South African squad to enable him to play in two domestic limitedovers matches on Friday and

Sunday



Members of the Daffodil family who took part in their Victory Day celebration badminton tournament at the institute's campus at Dhanmondi recently.

Australia play England in the fourth Ashes Test starting in Melbourne on Thursday. Waugh's side have already retained the Ashes by comfortably

winning the first three Tests

### Lord's outfield newly laid

AFP, London

Work to install a new outfield at Lord's Cricket Ground has been completed, its owners Marylebone Cricket Club (MCC) said Monday. According to MCC, the 1.25 million pounds (1.99 million dollars) project has been completed on time and on budget.

The aim of the new 100.000 pounds (159,000 dollars) irrigation system and 18,000 square metres of fresh turf is to reduce the amount of plaving time lost to rain.

The English climate's notoriety for wet weather is unlikely to change much before the start of next season but delays brought about by rain were exacerbated by the old, slowdraining, clay-based outfield. All 17,000 tonnes of the old

surface have now been removed, a process which began in September with the sale of turf from a ground known to enthusiasts around the world as 'the home of cricket'.

The turf sale raised 35,000 pounds (55,650 dollars) which will be invested in youth cricket through the MCC Foundation. MCC deputy chief executive

David Batts said Monday: "We're very pleased with the progress of this important and extensive project.

PHOTO: COURTESY

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**By Eugene Sheffer** 

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The Cryptoquip is a substitution cipher in which one letter stands for another. If you think that X equals O, it will equal O throughout the puzzle. Single letters, short words and words using an apostrophe give you clues to locating vowels. Solution is by trial and error