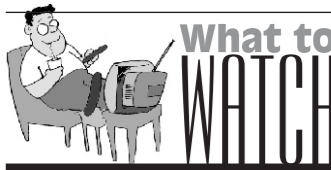




## Did U Know?

The Olympic flame is a symbol carried over from the ancient Olympics, where a sacred flame burned at the altar of Zeus throughout competition. It was finally reintroduced at the 1924 Amsterdam Games.



## What to WATCH

- ESPN**  
New Zealand vs Pakistan  
First ODI  
Live at 4:57 am
- South Africa vs West Indies  
Third Test, Day Two  
Live at 2:25 pm
- Primera Liga**  
Celta De Vigo vs Deportivo  
Live at 2:30 am (Sunday)
- STAR Sports**  
Australia vs India  
Fourth Test, Day Two  
Live at 6:00 am  
Harsha Online  
Cricket Talk Show  
Repeat at 10:30 pm



## TALK TURKEY



**Saurav Ganguly**  
(Indian cricket captain)  
"I'm very happy for Steve that he's going the way he wanted but from our point of view it's a Test match and we need to win."

**Star WHIZZ KID COMPETITION 204**  
Tick the correct answers, post to The Daily Star. Win attractive prizes.  
Competition closes at 8 pm Jan 16, 2004 and draw

1. Who clinched the Leonine Grand Masters chess title?  
Zia Reefat Rakib

2. Who won the Pepsi Nat'l volleyball women's crown?  
BJMC Army Navy

3. Who won the European footballer-of-the-year award?  
Nedved Owen Zidane

4. Who became World Youth football champions?  
Brazil Holland France

Name .....  
Class ..... Roll No. ....  
School Address .....  
Phone: (if any) .....

**WHIZZ KID-203 winner**  
**Farhan Rashid Ahmed**  
(Mastermind School, Dhaka)  
Please produce your ID card and an attested passport size photograph while collecting the winner's prize from the Sports Desk of The Daily Star at 7:30 pm on January 11.



**DAY'S EVENT**  
**Nat'l Cricket League (Day-1)**  
Rajshahi vs Chittagong  
Venue: Cricket Garden, Rangpur  
Barisal vs Sylhet



Mohammedan forward Farhad (L) is being intercepted by Badda Jagarani's Hafiz during their Western Union Premier Division Football League fixture at the Sher-e-Bangla National Stadium in Mirpur yesterday.

## Itigo ignites MSC

**SPORTS REPORTER**  
**WESTERN UNION**  
Mohammedan's striker from Cameroon Itigo struck the second hatrick in the Western Union Premier Division Football League as the holders drubbed Badda Jagarani Sangsad 4-0 at the Sher-e-Bangla National Stadium in Mirpur yesterday.

The outcome sent the Black and Whites atop the standings in the 10-team league leaving with nine points from five matches. Abahani and Sheikh Russel Kira Chakra share the second position with eight points each but have played a game less.

Itigo, who has been the only impressive performer among the four Cameroon booters for Mohammedan, recorded the second hatrick of the competition after Abahani's striker Saiful Islam

Khokon's treble against Dhaka Wanderers Club. His goals made Itigo the league's top scorer with five.

It was a welcome win for the Motijheel giants following their unlucky 1-1 draw against Brothers Union in their last match. But Mohammedan were denied a breakthrough for the better part of the first half by the young Badda team who had held Abahani in their previous game.

However, Itigo eased nerves when he headed home a Farhad corner in the 35th minute (1-0).

Four minutes into the second half, compatriot Kisito's through pass was controlled by Itigo inside the D-box who beat his marker, dodged past Badda custodian Al Amin and placed the ball into the net (2-0).

Itigo completed his hatrick with a rightfooted angular piledriver in the 57th minute (3-

0). The tireless Farhad sealed Badda's fate in the 19th minute of the second half when he put the finishing touch to a Kisito square pass (4-0).

**There will be no matches today because of the countrywide dawn to dusk strike called by the main opposition Awami League. The matches scheduled for today will be bodily shifted.**

**Yellow cards:** Amin Rana (Mohammedan), Hafiz (Badda)

### TEAMS

**Mohammedan:** Nadim, Olinga, Jewel, Faisal, Basala, Amin Rana (Rony), Kaiser, Itigo (Nakib), Kisito, Bakhtiar (Monju) and Farhad.

**Badda Jagarani:** Al Amin, Sumon, Daniel, Nahid (Benu), Chandan, Zahid (Maloy), Belal, Mintoo (Milon), Arup, Johny and Hafiz.

**Referee:** Tajul Islam

## Sachin puts India atop

**Cricket**  
**AFP, Sydney**  
Sachin Tendulkar finally came good with a half-century as India attempted to take the steam out of Steve Waugh's farewell fourth Test bash at the Sydney Cricket Ground here on Friday.

The 'Little Master' has threatened to produce a long-awaited innings of substance and 44,901 Sydneysiders here to celebrate home-town hero Waugh's 168th and last Test match were treated to Tendulkar's overdue return to form.

Following on from another explosive innings of 72 by free-wheeling opener Virender Sehwag, Tendulkar carried on the momentum to have the Indians in a healthy position as they chase a first-ever series win in Australia.

At stumps on the opening day, India after winning the toss were 284 for three with Tendulkar unbeaten on 73 with V.V.S. Laxman not out 29.

Tendulkar took time to get into his scoring stride, his 37th Test

half-century coming off 100 balls, but by the close he had worked himself and his team into early command.

He had batted for 202 minutes off 156 balls with 12 boundaries.

"He will make up for his failures with a huge score, he's done it in the past and he's batting tremendously well on 73 so hopefully he'll have a very big one tomorrow," said opener Akash Chopra, who

### 9,000-dulkar!

**AFP, Sydney**  
Indian batting great Sachin Tendulkar became only the fourth player in Test cricket to pass 9,000 runs during the opening day of the fourth Test against Australia here on Friday.

The 30-year-old 'Little Master' needed 36 runs at the outset of the Sydney Test to nudge past 9,000 in his 111th Test match.

At stumps he was unconquered on 73 with V.V.S. Laxman not out 29 and India 284 for three after win-

ning the first Test.

played another gritty innings on Friday.

It has been a largely forgettable series for 30-year-old Tendulkar, who had scores of 0, 1, 37, 0 and 44 in the series and ended 2003 with only 153 runs in five Tests at an average of 17.

Before Tendulkar's lean spell came to an end, India looked in a little better with the loss of their best-performed batsman Rahul Dravid for 38 - his lowest in his last six innings of the series - and the tourists at 194 for three.

David, who scored 233 in the second Adelaide Test, took his series aggregate to 528 at 105.60, before he was leg before wicket to Australia's best bowler Jason Gillespie.

He was hit above the knee roll and New Zealand umpire Brent Bowden took a while to raise his finger ending a 66-run third wicket stand with Tendulkar.

Sehwag and Chopra compiled their second consecutive century opening stand in as many Tests to get India away to a bullish start.

Sehwag, who exhilarated with his adventurous knock of 195 in



Indian master batsman Sachin Tendulkar flicks during his unbeaten 73 against Australia in the fourth and deciding Test at the SCG yesterday.

## India's tour of Bangladesh on

**SPORTS REPORTER**

The India cricket team will arrive in Bangladesh in mid-April to play their first full series. Bangladesh Cricket Board (BCB) president Ali Asghar confirmed the news in an interview with satellite channel NTV yesterday.

The BCB boss, who is now busy in Kuwait on an ACC (Asian Cricket Council) assignment, informed that the tour would feature two Tests and three one-day internationals.

Bangladesh played their Inaugural Test against the Indians in November 2000.

Asghar, who is also ACC president, assured that the proposed tri-series would take place after the India tour. But it has yet to be decided who will be the third team besides the hosts and India.

When the Daily Star Sport contacted BCB cricket committee chairman Mahbul Anam he also informed that India would be coming to Bangladesh.

"The BCB president (Asghar) has been given an assurance by his Indian counterpart Jagmohan Dalmiya about the tour when they met last week. But I can't disclose anything else about the issue right at the moment. Everything will be made official after the president returns on Sunday" he added.

## Cute handball

**BSS, Dhaka**

Bangladesh Police defeated Dhaka Mariner's Young Club 40-33 in the Cute Premier Handball League at the Handball Ground yesterday.

The winners led the first half 19-16.

Preeti Mohan scored 13, Mithu 12 while Mohiuddin added seven for the winners.

Didar and Mamun struggled hard for the losers with nine goals each.

Dhanmondi Club went on to a comfortable 22-14 win over Dhaka Wanderers Club in the second match of the day after leading the first session by 13-6.

Farukul led the Dhanmondi frontline with eight goals while Khokon and Ripon scored five each for the vanquished.

No match of the league will take place on January 3 and 4.

The league will resume on January 5 after the final of the Orient Bread Cup tournament scheduled for January 4 between Bangladesh Police and Bangladesh Rifles at the same venue.

## Masuda gets 1st position

**SPORTS REPORTER**

Masuda Begum secured the first position in the preliminary phase of 25th National Women's Chess Championship at the NSC yesterday.

Since Masuda and other 4 players earned 5.5 points each after the end of the seventh and final round games so tie-breaker was applied.

Following were the other positions: 2nd - Afroza Khanam Bably, 3rd - Shamiha Sharmin Simmi, 4th - Nazrana Khan Eva, 5th - Shamima Akter Liza, 6th - Delara Jahana Nurpur.

Meanwhile, in the 24th National Sub-Junior Chess Championship Imran Ali took the solo lead in the points table with maximum seven points after end of the seventh round games at the same venue yesterday.

Last year champion Minhazuddin Ahmed Sagar, Shuvro Ghosh, Shamsuddoha Shakin and Sayed Ahmed earned the position with 6 points each.

In this round Elein beat Sagar, Shakin beat Rony, Shuvro beat Shaheen and Sayed beat Saimon.

## Al-Shahriar show

**ISPAHANI Mirzapore Tea**  
5th National Cricket League

**SPORTS REPORTER**

Bangladesh discard Al-Shahriar entertained the crowd on a chilly Friday to propel one-day holders Dhaka to a four-wicket win over Khulna in the Ispahani Tea Fifth National Cricket League at the Dhanmondi Cricket Stadium.

Although the opener hit an aggressive unbeaten 61 off 72 balls that included six fours and an overboundary, his batting exploits in a curtailed 25-over affair, still failed to help Dhaka join Chittagong and Sylhet at the top of the table after four rounds.

Test cap Alok Kapali struck a fine unbeaten half-century as hosts Sylhet earned a comfortable six-wicket win against lowly Barisal. It was their second straight win in the limited-overs competition.

The game was only one not affected by the cold spell that has gripped the country.

Away at Rangpur, Akram Khan's Chittagong handed Khaled

Mashud-led Rajshahi a six-wicket thrashing in a low-scoring match.

### DHAKA V KHULNA

Al-Shahriar reminded selectors what he was capable of a day after the preliminary Zimbabwe tour squad was announced.

Chasing 145 for victory, the right-hander got Dhaka home with seven balls to spare with a straight-driven four off Khulna left-arm spinner Abdur Razzak Raj. Khulna should have got rid of the dangerous batsman but skipper Habibul Bashar spilled the catch at short mid-wicket when he was batting in the 20s.

Another out-of-favour national player Sanwar Hossain made a rapid 40 off 26 balls with four boundaries and a six. He put on 58 runs for the fifth wicket with Al-Shahriar.

Earlier, Khulna relied on solid knocks by Bashar and Hasanuzzaman to make a fighting 144-5 after being asked to bat.

Bashar scored a run-a-ball 40 while his right-hander Hasan smashed a 36-ball 42, which included two consecutive sixes off Naimur Rahman.

### SYLHET V BARISAL

Despite Mustadir Litu's all-round performance Barisal went down to Sylhet at the Sylhet Stadium.

Talented Alok Kapali smashed an unbeaten 63 off 90 balls as the home side scored 195 for four in 46 overs in reply to Barisal's 194 in 48.2 overs.

Kapali hit seven boundaries and two over-boundaries in his 90-ball innings. He added 72 runs for the fourth wicket with Nasirul Alam Nahid, who scored 36 off 50 balls.

Spinner Litu captured three for 36 after scoring 48 off 50 balls. He was adjudged man of the match.

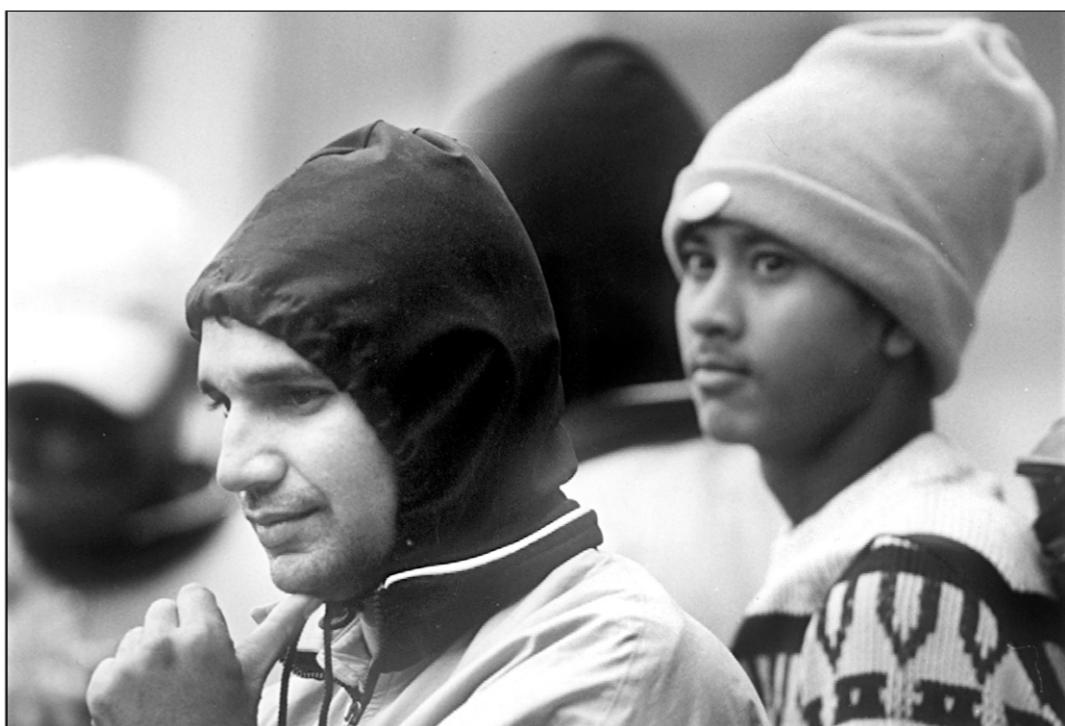
Jamal Faisal was Barisal's top-scorer with 72 after they decided to bat.

### CHITTAGONG V RAJSHAH

The match Rangpur Cricket Garden was reduced to 30-overs-a-side. Rajshahi were bundled out for 109 in 28.2 overs after opting to bat.

Opener Rafiqul Islam making highest 34 off 58 balls. M a s u m u d o l l a

SEE PAGE 14 COL 2



PROTECTION AGAINST THE CHILL-BOUNCER! Khulna skipper Habibul Bashar has his head covered to escape from the cold during yesterday's National Cricket League encounter with Dhaka Division at the Dhanmondi Cricket Stadium.

PHOTO: ANISUR RAHMAN

## Asia Cup likely in July

**Cricket**

**AFP, New Delhi**

The Asia Cup, the symbol of limited-overs cricket supremacy in the continent, is expected to be held in July after officials decided against clubbing it with India's upcoming tour of Pakistan.

The six-nation tournament was originally scheduled to be held in late April at the end of India's first Test series in Pakistan in almost 15 years.

But the Asian Cricket Council (ACC) abandoned the idea when told by India it had a commitment to play a Test series in Bangladesh soon after the Pakistan tour.

ACC chief executive Syed Ashraf Haq said a July date was being considered for the tournament which features India, Pakistan, Sri Lanka, Bangladesh and two qualifiers, the United Arab Emirates and Hong Kong.

"There is a period between July 11 and the first week of August when all six teams will be free, so we may schedule it then," Haq told AFP.

"Pakistan is the only team that has not confirmed so far for July, but we are confident they will agree."

The biennial tournament has not been held since the May 2000 event in Dhaka due to political tensions between India and Pakistan.

It remains to be seen if Pakistan, the original hosts of the 2004 tournament, can hold it in July due to the onset of the monsoons and hot weather in that period.

Sri Lanka is the only country in the region which organises international cricket in the month of July.

Indian cricket officials, meanwhile, will meet in Calcutta next week to finalise the itinerary of the Pakistan tour in March-April for,

SEE PAGE 14 COL 1

## Ponting's reward

**AFP, Sydney**

Ricky Ponting on Friday was awarded the McGilvray Medal as the Australian Broadcasting Corporation's (ABC) Test cricketer of 2003.

Ponting had a stellar year accumulating 1,503 runs at 100.20, the best in Test cricket, including six centuries, three of them double-centuries.

He joined the legendary Don Bradman as the only players in Test cricket to score three double-centuries in a calendar year.

Ponting, who will take over as captain when Steve Waugh retires after the current Sydney Test, also broke teammate Matthew Hayden's Australian record of 1,391 runs accumulated in 2001.

The 29-year-old captain-in-waiting has scored two double-centuries in the current series against India - 242 in the second Adelaide Test and a Test-best 257 in nearly 10 hours' batting in the third Melbourne Test.

SEE PAGE 14 COL 1

## Peace beyond the boundary?

**Cricket**

**AFP, New Delhi**

As India's prime minister heads to Pakistan this weekend, millions of cricket lovers in both countries will pray nothing ruins India's first Test tour of Pakistan in 15 years slated for March.

They are aware that cricket, which evokes unrivalled passion on both sides of the border, has often been used by governments and political trouble-makers to score points.

Want to show official displeasure? Cancel a bilateral cricket tour. Want your names in the newspapers or news channels? Just vandalise a cricket pitch.

Activists in India and Pakistan have made careers out of staging protests over the game that is worshipped like a religion on the subcontinent.

The upcoming tour will be the mother of all tours, the ultimate

rivalry in world cricket that will stop two nations in their tracks when Sachin Tendulkar takes guard against Shoaib Akhtar's thunderbolts.

The long-awaited visit was announced in October just two days after the Indian government lifted a three-year ban on bilateral cricket ties with Pakistan following a thaw in diplomatic relations.

Although the two teams have met in multi-nation events like the World Cup, India has not played a Test in Pakistan since 1989, while Pakistan last crossed the borders in early 1999 for three Test matches.

"The Indian tour will be the best thing to happen to world cricket in recent years," said Ehsan Mani, the Pakistan-born chartered accountant who heads the International Cricket Council (ICC).

Not only will the tour provide succour to the cash-strapped Pakistan Cricket Board, it will also lend greater credibility and structure to the ICC's 10-year Test calendar that has been marred by

cancelled tours.

The big bucks have begun to pour in even before the schedule for the March-April tour, comprising three Tests and between five to seven one-day internationals, has been finalised.

One Indian cricket official predicted a turnover of around 20 million dollars - a vast increase from the five-million dollar mark touted for other high-profile series like Australia versus England.

"It is going to be a jackpot series, and from my reading of the pulse of the international television rights market, the series is going to be worth 20 million dollars," the official said.

Indo-Pakistan cricket is more than just a game - or even commerce. It could boost political relations between the old foes, like the ping-pong diplomacy in 1971 which gave a new fillip to ties between the United States and China.

Former Pakistan president General Zia-ul-Haq tried his own

version of the ping-pong diplomacy when he flew to India in 1986 to attend a Test match in Jaipur despite tense relations with the Rajiv Gandhi regime.

It cleared the war clouds hovering near the borders.

Cricket ties between India and Pakistan have been both dramatic and riveting, but they have also swung from the sublime to the ridiculous.

In 1987, Pakistan captain Imran Khan ordered his players to field with helmets on after they were pelted with rubbish during the Ahmedabad Test.

When India toured Pakistan in 1989, its captain Kris Srikkanth was accosted on the field and had his shirt ripped by a spectator during the Karachi Test.

Ten years later, Pakistan beat India in front of empty stands at the 100,000-seater Eden Gardens in Calcutta after crowd violence forced police to clear the galleries.

Yet, the two warring nations

SEE PAGE 14 COL 5