ITF Jr tennis

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Rajshahi

The 12th International Junior Tennis Championship began at Rajshahi Tennis Complex yester-

At least 175 players, including 65 girls from 25 countries, are taking part in the week-long tournament.

The participating countries are: England, Uzbekistan, Ukrain, China, Taipei, South Korea, Thailand, India, Maldives, Japan, Sri Lanka, Kazakhstan, Australia, Kyrgyzstan, Singapore, Russia, Canada, Solomon Islands, Austria, Hong Kong, Yugoslavia, USA, Nepal, Sweden, South Africa and hoet Bangladech host Bangladesh

Rajshahi City Corporation Mayor Mizanur Rahman Minu MP

Free cricket clinic in city

SPORTS REPORTER

A free cricket coaching camp with a view to unearth special talents, has started in Dhanmondi recently.

The Talent Hunt Cricket Coaching Clinic conducts training sessions for youngsters of all age

Fridays and Saturdays at the indoor nets of the Dhanmondi Cricket Stadium.

Interested budding cricketers can train under noted coach Mahbub Alam Babar free of cost from 10am -12pm on the days mentioned earlier. The clinic charges no admission fees but candidates have to fill in a test form before their eligibility for the camp is determined.

Rajshahi cricket

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Rajshahi

Apollo Cricket Club defeated Bandhan Krira Chakra by 67 runs in the inaugural match of the First Division Cricket League at the Rajshahi Medical College Hostel ground yesterday.

Winning the toss, Apollo batted first and made 119 runs all out in

In reply, Bandhan were all out for 52 runs in 22.1 overs.

Sajib and Polash scored 16 runs each while Jewell took four wickets for eight for the winners. Bandhan's Himel and Bulon took three wickets each.

Earlier, Rajshahi City Corporation Mayor Mizanur Rahman Minu MP inaugurated the league.

Ctg karate

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Ctg

Martial Art Academy and Joy Karate Academy became the cham pions and runners-up respectively in the second Mahanagari karate competition which concluded

Chattagram Mahanagari Krira Sangstha (CMKS) organised the three-day competition at the Metropolitan Shooting Range at Dampara Police Lines.

Bangladesh Karate Federation (BKF) president Md Ekhlasuddin Molla handed over the prizes as

Cute handball

BSS, Dhaka

ACROSS

1 Plumage

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17 Trailing

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Narinda Progoti Boys Club out-played Dhaka Wanderers Club 26-10 to maintain their unbeaten run in the Cute Premier Division Handball League match at the Outer Stadium Handball Ground

The winners led the first half by 19-8.

Rafiq netted highest 12 goals and Swapon followed him with five goals. Rubel was the top scorer for Dhaka Wanderers with five

Dhanmondi Club registered an exciting 33-26 victory over Victoria Sporting Club in the day's other encounter at the same venue.

Dhanmondi took a narrow 16-11 lead in the first half.

37 Law (Lat.)

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CROSSWORD By Eugene Sheffer

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Clarke keeps low profile

Cricket

Michael Clarke has made a striking impression in just 11 one-day internationals and on Sunday will make his first senior appearance for Australia on his home Sydney ground against Zimbabwe.

Middle-order batsman Clarke has yet to play a Test, but in an allaction performance in Friday's triangular one-day series opener against India in Melbourne, he scored 63 off 66 balls in a partnership of 143 with Andrew Symonds, took four catches and the crucial wicket of Rahul Dravid.

Clarke averages 65 with the bat and 24 with the ball and appears to consolidate his spot in the team with every game, though he remains modest about his contri-

"I just continue to do my job and hopefully I can keep scoring runs and one day cement my spot, but at the moment there's so many great players and everybody has been so successful, it's a hard team to cement your spot in," Clarke said for Australia there (at the SCG), I'm looking forward to it. My home ground and family and friends there, so it's going to be great."

Zimbabwe skipper Heath Streak on Saturday suggested Clarke could fill a lot of the void left by Steve Waugh's retirement from the

Streak said Clarke was "very impressive" after watching him lead Australia A in two matches against his side before the tri series.

"He's a good all-rounder and an excellent fielder, so I think he will be a good asset to Australian cricket and he's got a good head on his shoulders," Streak said.

"He's a good thinker of the game, I certainly think someone like that could certainly go a long way in filling the void that someone like Steve Waugh has left in the Australian team. Clarke doubted whether he

fair bit about the African team. Zimbabwe have lost 19 successive one-day matches to Australia since their only victory in their first encounter in the 1983 World Cup.

would need to pass any informa-tion about Zimbabwe as he

thought Australia already knew a

Clarke issued a cautionary note to those who would dismiss Zimbabwe as the rank outsiders in a series also involving two World Cup finalists.

"They are very competitive. I thought the Australia A team played fantastic in Adelaide, but Zimbabwe showed in Perth they have got a good team.'

Streak was adamant his team would be more than just a spoiler, despite a patchy lead-up to the series, losing to Australia A and Western Australia.

Carlisle was expected to recover from a thigh strain in time to play

TEAMS

AUSTRALIA: Ricky Ponting (cap tain), Matthew Hayden, Adam Gilchrist, Damien Martyn, Andrew Symonds, Michael Clarke, Michael Bevan, Ian Harvey, Andy Bichel, Jason Gillespie, Brad Williams, Brad Hogg, Brett Lee (two to be omitted).

ZIMBABWE (probable): Heath Streak (captain), Vusimuzi Sibanda, Stuart Carlisle, Mark Vermeulen, Grant Flower, Stuart Matsikenyeri, Tatenda Taibu, Sean Ervine, Andy Blignaut, Ray Price,

Stuart eyeing Asia tour

Cricket

AFP, Newcastle

Australian leg-spinner Stuart MacGill on Saturday defended his bowling performance in the series against India and said he had every intention of making the tours to Sri Lanka and India this year.

MacGill, whose place in the Australian team is being threatened by next month's return of Shane Warne from a 12-month drugs ban, captured 14 wickets at 50.79 against India in the four-Test "Call me deluded, but personally I felt pretty good through the whole series," MacGill said after his

5-94 for New South Wales against Victoria in a Sheffield Shield match here on Saturday. "I felt as if I bowled well to really good batsmen so it was no surprise

pretty quickly. "I saw in the paper I averaged 51 or something against India. It

to me today that I found rhythm

"At the beginning of the tour I decided what would be a good

gauge for me was if I felt I could bowl to the best players of spin in the world. I certainly think I acquitted myself well on that front.

"I bowled for long periods of time when the guys didn't score. Maybe I didn't get them out, but to



STUART MacGILL

be a spin bowler and keep them quiet I think was an achievement in

"(VVS) Laxman only got out six times in the tour and I got him

three times. If he's the benchmark, I'm pretty happy with myself."

Warne returns from suspension in time for Australia's tour to Sri Lanka in February, when he and MacGill will start jostling for a Test

"Everybody is saying, 'Shane's coming back, Shane's coming back,' well, for the first five or six years of my career he never went anywhere," said 32-year-old

"Things are back to normal from my point of view. I'm bowl-ing really well at the moment and we're going to the sub-continent for the next two tours and I feel like I'm going to be a valuable part of the squad with Shane, without him or alongside him. "I've never really played on the

sub-continent so it's something l want to do tick another box and

"It would be upsetting to be retired and not have done those sorts of things. Test matches on the sub-continent are probably the next thing for me and if we can hang on to the Ashes next time, that would be something nice as

Flemo leads from front

touch deserted them.

wickets for 46 runs, with Saleem start, and Moin Khan was out for

was run out for 36 while Inzamam In a 12-over spell, they lost five and Shoaib Malik failed to get a



MAN-OF-THE-MATCH: New Zealand captain Stephen Fleming glances on way to making an unbeaten 115 against Pakistan in the third one-day international in Christchurch yesterday.

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VJNMTIA

"GIGZHI PJIZP Yesterday's Cryptoquip: THE CONSTRICTOR'S EGGS HATCHED YESTERDAY MORNING. OUT

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,

It was left to a swashbuckling Abdul Razzaq to plunder the New Zealand bowling. He was at his losive best with an unbeaten 50 off 26 balls.

With four fours and three lusty

sixes he again exposed New

Zealand's woeful inability to contain in the final overs as the Black Caps gave up 57 runs in the last five Daryl Tuffey was by far the most efficient bowler after going for 24

runs in his first four overs, he came back to take two for seven in a fourover spell and ended the innings with two for 45 off 10. The fourth match in the series

in which the first three games have been won by the team batting second, will be played in Napier next Wednesday. SCOREBOARD Complete scoreboard of the third one

day international between Pakistan and New Zealand in Christchurch on PAKISTAN

Hameed c Styris b Oram 17 Farhat c McCullum b Mills Elahi c Fleming b Styris 80 Youhana run out (Cumming) 36 Inzamam c McCullum b Tuffey 0 Malik c Fleming b Tuffey Moin c Mills by Styris 10 Razzaq not out Mahmood run out (Cumming) 11 Akhtar run out (Mills) Sami not out Extras: (lb-2, w-2, nb-1) Total: (For 9 wkts in 50 overs) Fall of wickets 1-50, 2-72, 3-144, 4-144, 5-152, 6-186, 7-190, 8-234, 9-247 0 M Bowler 2 Tuffey 45 Mills 10 0 Oram 54 Cairns 34 Vettori NEW ZEALAND Cumming c Hameed b Sami Fleming not out 115 Marshall c Sami b Malik 64 20 Styris b Akhtar McMillan not out 35 Extras: (lb-14, w-5, nb-3) 22

Total: (For 3 wkts in 46.2 overs) 259 Fall of wickets: 1-10, 2-158, 3-188 Did not bat: Cairns, Oram, McCullum, Mills, Vettori, Tuffey Akhtar 0 43 Sami 10 0 67 43 Mahmood Razzaq 47

Result: New Zealand won by seven wickets to lead series 2-1. Man-of-the-match: Stephen Referee: Tayeb Hasan.

Fleming. Toss: New Zealand.

Farhat

Parma put on sale!

AFP, Parma

One of Italy's most prestigious football clubs Parma was barely afloat on Saturday after its directo and entire board quit and the club was put up for sale as the scandal that has ravaged parent-company Parmalat began to hit home.

Parma, who have won the UEFA Cup twice, became one of the first victims of the Parmalat fallout following the discovery of a multibillion euro black hole in the food and dairy giant's finances.

The revelation triggered a massive fraud investigation into the multi-national, sucking in companies and banks worldwide.

A statement issued by Parma following a crisis shareholders meeting on Friday announced that club president Stefano Tanzi son of arrested Parmalat owner Calisto Tanzi and his cousin Palo Tanzi had stepped down and that their departure was effective from next Wednesday.

They were the last remaining Parmalat representatives on the Parma board following the departure of three other senior directors, including Fausto Tonna, the group's former finance chief who is now behind bars.

Parma's stunned supporters will at least have taken a crumb of comfort from a comment by the man representing the new leadership put in place to try to salvage something from the Parmalat wreckage.

Bhandari to join India

AFP, Calcutta

Medium-pacer Amit Bhandari will join the Indian team for the ongoing triangular tournament in Australia, it was announced here on Saturday.

"The decision to send Bhandari was taken after a request from the team management in Australia to strengthen the bowling," the cricket board said in a statement.

Bhandari, 25, was picked by the five-member selection committee after a teleconference. The Delhi bowler played a solitary one-dayer against Pakistan at the Asia Cup in Dhaka in June

India on Friday lost the first match of the tournament to world champions Australia by 18 runs.

Zimbabwe are the third team in

West Indies in charge

AFP, Benoni

Opening West Indies batsman Chris Gayle scored a run-a-ball century on the opening day of their tour match against Easterns at Willowmoore Park in Benoni on Friday, but his teammates failed to follow through.

Gayle blasted 145 in an overall tally of 334 before the middle and lower order faltered. In spite of that, the West Indies were firmly in the driving seat.

Easterns, in reply, made a poor start, crawling to 30 for two at the

Streak wants rule changes

REUTERS, Sydney

Zimbabwe cricket captain Heath Streak believes the rules of one-day matches should be changed to make the game more exciting.

A veteran of 170 limited-overs internationals, Streak said on Saturday that the sport's officials could reinvigorate the game with a few simple adjustments. Under current laws, teams must

for the first 15 overs of the match. placing at least two fieldsmen in catching positions and allowing just two outside an inner circle. The rule allows the batting team to make a flying start but Heath says the game invariably loses

abide by strict fielding regulations

interest until the usual late flurry in the final few overs. "One-day cricket is a fantastic advert for the game but there is a risk that unless a tight finish is involved, the game can be predict-

able for players and fans," he said

in a statement. "With 11 countries playing limited overs internationals there is plenty of scope to experiment with some fresh thinking.

"Cricket needs to find a way of keeping itself attractive and inter-

Victor vanishes FROM PAGE 13 ddha, collected four points from

the same number of matches. Yellow cards: Iqbal (Brothers) and Rintu (Victoria) **TEAMS** BROTHERS UNION: Biplob,

Sujon, Arman (Tapu), Alfaz, Victor, Okelo, Igbal and Liton (Rikta). VICTORIA SC: Raju (Tutul) Gobinda, Ramjan, Zet, Fakrul, Israfil, Rahel (Mehedi), Sharif, Polo (Litu), Rintu and Idris.

Hopman Cup

Davenport drives USA

Tennis

AFP, Perth

Lindsay Davenport sent a clear warning to her Australian Open rivals here Saturday when she steered the United States to its second consecutive Hopman Cup mixed teams tennis title with a 2-1 win over the Slovak Republic.

Davenport was the only player in the tournament not to lose a set in her singles matches, dispatching Daniela Hantuchova 6-3, 6-1 in the final to set up the victory, making the USA the first team to win the

Karol Kucera then levelled the tie in the men's singles, fending-off

an athletic James Blake 4-6, 6-4, 7-6 (7/5) in a thrilling encounter before the American pair regrouped to take out the mixed doubles.

It was a brave effort from the Slovaks who were only drafted into the final following the forced withdrawal of Belgium and Australia -both of which were ahead of them in their qualifying group.

Hantuchova had not won a set all week and was only awarded the match against Australian Alicia Molik when the latter was forced to withdraw with injury while leading by a set and 3-0.

Despite her efforts, Davenport, who is coming back from injury, said she didn't want to read too much into her form leading up to the Australian Open, the season's

first grand slam event, which starts in Melbourne on January 19.

She said she was disappointed to hear world number-three Serena Williams would not be available to play in the Open because she was still training after suffering a knee injury last August.

"It's really unfortunate. You always want the best players to play in a tournament but you know, really don't know what to expect anymore," Davenport said.

"I don't know if I should expect to do well or not.'

The world's fifth-ranked woman said Belgian number one Justine Henin-Hardenne deserved to be favourite for the event.

"I think Justine is still a clear favourite -- I mean it's been four vears since I won a Slam so it's been a little while," Davenport said.

"Venus (Serena's number 11ranked sister) I'm sure is going to return in good form. I still have a lot of work to do.

"I still have to get used to the heat and playing outdoors is my next step. But who knows? I've got a few weeks and maybe my game will keep coming around.

Davenport sent 12 aces during the match against Hantuchova. "I served a lot better than I felt

like I served yesterday and I had to. At the times I was hitting second serve she was really going forward and putting me in a lot of trouble so lucky I served well in the

second and when I needed to at

the end of the first," she said. Blake again provided great entertainment value showing off an amazing array of shots during a see-saw match eventually won

playing a shot from between his legs while facing away from the net, then recovered to collect the return by swapping the racquet to his left hand and hitting the

In one rally during the third set, the right-handed Blake

brought up break point after

But Kucera showed a deft touch, working the angles well to edge out the 37th-ranked Blake.

"I'm so lucky. Every year I come down here my partners never lose," Blake said.

"It makes my job just a little

EUROPEAN FOOTBALL BRIEFS

AFP, Stuttgart

Struggling German side Kaiserslautern have recruited German defender Timo Wenzel from VfB Stuttgart.

June 2006 after seeing his chances at Stuttgart restricted by the form of Marcelo Bordon and Fernando Kaiserslautern coach Erik Gerets

Wenzel, 26, penned a deal until

has defensive pair Herve Lembi and Hany Ramzy sidelined and did not want to be caught short at the back with Cameroon duo Bill Tchato and Lucien Mettomo absent for several weeks for the African Cup of Nations.

FUENTES ON LOAN Guingamp

Guingamp's Argentine defender Fabricio Fuentes has been loaned out until season's end to Argentine first division side River Plate with an option to buy.

Fuentes, 27, has failed to fill the gap left by compatriot Nestor Fabbri in the struggling French first division side, with his family failing to acclimatize in Brittany. The former Velez Sarsfield player had signed for three years at Guingamp with the club tipped to seek the services of Bastia central defender Nisa Saveljic.

BOUTOILLE LEAVES LILLE

Striker Djezon Boutoille has signed for second division Amiens after being freed from French first division side Lille where he had six

months left to run on his contract. Boutoille, 28, played just nine son after falling out of favour with coach Claude Puel, and has signed a two-and-a-half year deal with

HANNOVER AFTER SONG Hannover

Ambitious Bundesliga side Hannover are tracking Cameroon defender Rigobert Song of French

The 27-year-old stopper is concentrating on the upcoming African Nations Cup in Tunisia and Hannover coach Ralf Rangnick has asked compatriot and Cameroon manager Winfried Schafer about his qualities.

"He (Rangnick) asked me about Rigobert," revealed Schafer. "Signing him would be the best idea Hannover have had for a long

2001-02 season but could not prevent Cologne from getting

Beckenbauer claims the Bundesliga winter break is a luxury that will be not afforded for much As it stands the 18 teams in the

German top-flight have a six-week

season.

the break is superfluous pointing out that the leagues in England, Spain and Italy did not need to have a rest during the festive period.

Beckenbauer told Munich newspaper Abendzeitung. "It is a total luxury. The English

even play at Christmas. Beckenbauer predicted a

sooner rather than later. Former Liverpool and West Ham defender Song played in the Bundesliga before back in the will soon be removed from the

calendar," he added.

Record beckons Ruud

Football

Manchester United boss Sir Alex Ferguson is backing Ruud van Nistelrooy to complete a record-

The Dutch striker needs just two more strikes to join the likes of Alan Shearer, Thierry Henry and Michael Owen in the English top flight's 100 club.

Given that van Nistelrooy scored a hattrick in the corresponding fixture last season and has hit the net in his last five appearances against the Magpies, it would be unwise to bet against him finishing off his membership application in his 128th Premiership appearance for United.

That would see him smash the

fastest century record set by Newcastle skipper Alan Shearer,

goalscoring records.

"I'm not interested in individual honours, to be honest," he said. "I came to Manchester to win troohies with the team. Winning the Premiership last season was the greatest ever feeling and that is what I play football for.

score 50 goals or 100 goals. These sort of things are for looking back on at the end of your career, not when you're playing and still chasing trophies. "I would have traded in all my

worked so hard for it that season. "But that made us even more determined to come back and win

You never lose that hunger at a club like United."

Ferguson, who is currently attempting to tie his favourite Dutchman down to a new five-year contract, claims not to have been surprised by just how prolific van Nistelrooy has proved to be.

Mikael Silvestre. "He will soon find out that being a striker is hard work," Robson admitted.

alongside Shearer.

Leicester v Chelsea (1400 GMT)

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Hopman Cup after defeating Slovak Republic in the final in Perth yesterday.

American James Blake (L) and compatriot Lindsay Davenport hold up the

KAISER AGAINST WINTER

Bayern Munich president Franz

winter hiatus between December 17 and January 31 to recharge their batteries for the second half of the However, Beckenbauer believes

"We are the only country out of the top nations that has a break in the summer and the winter,"

change in the Bundesliga calendar "I am sure that our winter break

he got 44 last season and he's

already on 18 this season, so there

on a run of three straight wins

which has put them into the fourth

round of the FA Cup and back

within touching distance of a fourth-place finish which would

ensure a return to the Champions

that out of the 16 goals which these

two sides produced in their two

league meetings last season, 11 were conceded by his defence.

expected to return for another six

weeks. Robson is expected to

deploy midfielder Kieron Dyer as a

makeshift striker once more,

Dyer scored a double in the

midweek win over Southampton

but Robson expects him to face a

tougher time against United centrebacks Rio Ferdinand and

With Craig Bellamy not

But Robson is painfully aware

Newcastle arrive at Old Trafford

is no sign of him letting up.'

breaking century of Premiership goals in Sunday's Old Trafford showdown with Newcastle.

Rajani (Francis), Titoo, Nazrul, who took 137 games to bring up his But van Nistelrooy insists earning three points against Sir Bobby

Robson's in-form side will mean every bit as much to him as adding to his burgeoning list of

first division side Lens.

"It is all about the team, not individuals. It's not about whether

goals in my first season to have won the Premiership, because we

the next season, which we did. "Now we want to win it again and win the Champions League.

SUNDAY'S FIXTURES

"We have gone beyond that issue," Ferguson said. "When he

scored 36 in his first season, people said he could not do it again. Then

means 53 Dash

22 "Chicago" lyricist 24 Luau Solution time: 27 mins 27 Grad 29 Inaugura tion 32 Lara Croft portrayer 35 TV's warrior princess 36 Advan-