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BSEC Bhaban, 102 Kazi Nazrul Islam Avenue (1st Floor) Kawran Bazar, Dhaka-1215
Phone: 9131442-6 Fax: 180-2-9130943, E-mail: nwcl@gononet.com

Star SPORT

DHAKA SUNDAY MARCH 14, 2004, E-MAIL: dssports@gononet.com

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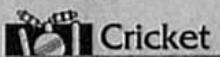


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Tigers' last shot



SPORTS REPORTER

Bangladesh will be sniffing a maiden series victory when Habibul Bashar's men take on Zimbabwe in the fifth and final one-day international at the Harare Sports Club ground today.

Satellite channel ESPN will telecast the match live from 1.20pm (BST).

After heavy showers in Bulawayo washed out any prospect of play in the first two matches, the series is surprisingly level at 1-1.

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A brilliant all-round show by Zimbabwe skipper Heath Streak in the penultimate match on Friday snatched victory from the clutches of defeat at the same venue as the Tigers lost by just 14 runs.

The tourists, winless since the 1999 World Cup in England, stunned the cricket world on Wednesday when they pulled off a sensational eight-run win to take the lead. Their fourth victory in the abridged version of the game brought to an end a consecutive 47-match losing streak.

And the new-found confidence has lifted the players' morale ahead of the decider.

Did U Know?

Monica Seles is a partner in the All-Star Café, a sports restaurant chain, with Andre Agassi, Tiger Woods and Joe Montana.



ESPN

Bangladesh vs Zimbabwe
Fifth ODI
Live at 1:20 pm

English Premier Football League
Southampton vs Liverpool
Live at 10:00 pm

STAR Sports

English Premier Football League
Man City vs Man United
Live at 7:55 pm

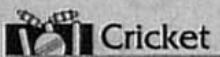
Primera Liga
Celta De Vigo vs Valencia
Live at 2:00 am (Monday)

TEN Sports

West Indies vs England
1st Test, Day 4
Live at 9:00 pm



Under-23s suffer batting blues



SPORTS REPORTER

Bangladesh U-23 team were on the back foot after being bowled out for 157 against Zimbabwe A on the second day of three-day practice match at the Fatullah Stadium yesterday.

The home side conceded a 171-run lead to the visitors, who stretched it to 264 after finishing the day on 93-3 in their second innings.

Test cap Trevor Gripper once again led the way with an unbeaten 59 after the right-hander made 81 in

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Zimbabwe's first innings total of 328. After Under-23 captain Naeem Islam (28) and Imran Ahmed put on 31 runs for the first wicket, the home side then rapidly slide to 69-6 until bowler hero Arafat Sunny and Dhaman Gosh staged a salvage operation. The seven-wicket pair added 66 runs with wicketkeeper Gosh top-scoring with 35 off 44 balls that included four boundaries.

His partner Sunny, who destroyed the Zimbabweans with six for 76 on Friday, contributed a patient 23.

Wadding Mwayenga, Tinash Panyangara, Gavin Ewine and Gripper claimed two wickets.

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PHOTO: AFP

COMMITMENT PERSONIFIED: Mohammad Kaif (L) is about to complete a magnificent catch after narrowly avoiding a collision with teammate Hamang Badani (R) to see the back of Pakistan batsman Shoail Malik during the first one-day match at Karachi yesterday.



Zinedine Zidane
(Real Madrid's French superstar)
"I'd like to carry on and I feel good in Madrid. I love it. I can only say good things about the club regarding the three years I have spent here already."

Cricket wins in Karachi

AFP, Karachi



Rival captains Sourav Ganguly and Inzamamul Haq were unanimous in declaring cricket the winner after India pulled off a sensational five-run win over Pakistan here Saturday.

In a dramatic run feast befitting the resumption of cricketing ties between the two rival nations, Pakistan made 344-8 in reply to India's 349-7.

"It is difficult to remember a better one-dayer," Ganguly told a news conference after the match at the National stadium in the south-

crease," he said.

Ganguly praised left-arm seamer Nehra who kept his cool while bowling the last over.

"(He) (Nehra) was asked not to give 10 runs and he did the job despite the pressure of an India-Pakistan match," he said.

Pakistan's Inzamam said he was not disappointed at losing the match.

"You can't be disappointed at a game like this," he said.

"As Sourav said, cricket was the ultimate winner. We fought till the end and the crowd had a lot to cheer the whole day," he said.

Inzamam defended his decision to ask India to bat first, but conceded his bowlers did not live up to expectations.

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Tushar named A team skipper

SPORTS REPORTER

Middle-order batsman Tushar Imran will lead the Bangladesh A team, which was announced by the Bangladesh Cricket Board yesterday, for the first four-day match against the visiting Zimbabwe A at Rajshahi starting from March 17.

The Board announced the 13-member squad after short-listing a 25-member preliminary list.

The second-string southern African team will play another four-day match against their Bangladesh counterparts at Bogra from March 23-26. The two sides will later meet in a five-match limited-over series at different venues across the country.

TEAM

Tushar Imran (captain), Nafees Iqbal, Rashedul Haque, Ehsanul Haq, Mazharul Haque, Nasir Uddin Faruque, Mohammed Salim, Jamal Uddin, Alamgir Kabir, Enamul Haq Jr, Shahdat Hossain, Faisal Hossain, Gazi Alamgir.

Sports befriends 'em

REUTERS, Karachi



both countries hope will cement a fledgling peace process, and thousands more are expected when the tour reaches Lahore, close to the Indian border.

Unlike a typical European soccer tie, here the Indians sit among

the Pakistanis, exchanging chants and banter in the spirit of the gentleman's game.

India's cricketers have not been on a full tour of Pakistan since 1989, when the Soviet Union still existed and Benazir Bhutto was Prime Minister in Islamabad.

The nuclear rivals have fought three wars since independence from Britain in 1947, and came close to a fourth in 2002 when up to one million troops were amassed along their border.

Everyone at the packed arena in Pakistan's financial hub was aware that this was about more than just sport and akin to the "ping pong diplomacy" between China and America in 1971.

"After 15 years it is great to see the Indians here," said Faiz Hashmi, a Pakistani engineer sitting with his son Adeel.

"This should help to increase interaction between the countries and improve relations."

A few rows back, a crowd of Indians proudly waved a saffron, white and green flag cheering on their batsmen.

"This is my first time to Pakistan," said Munir Ahmad, an Indian Muslim from Bangalore.

"We definitely got a different picture than the one we were expecting after we landed. We see the people here are very friendly and humble, and the atmosphere is great."

The countries have begun a tentative rapprochement based on "confidence building measures" including reviving air, road and rail links and calling a ceasefire along the heavily militarised Line of Control dividing the two armies in disputed Kashmir.

The Muslim-majority Himalayan region is at the root of tensions between the countries.

New Delhi blames Pakistan for fomenting a rebellion in Indian-held Kashmir that has killed tens of thousands of people since 1989. Pakistan calls the insurgency a "legitimate freedom struggle", but denies aiding the militants.

Both countries know that if India's tour passes without incident, it would be a huge boost for the chances of lasting peace, as hundreds of millions of cricket-mad fans tune in to the games on televisions across South Asia.

Security is tight, with more than 5,000 police deployed in Karachi for the first international.

Karachi is a volatile city of 14 million people, where Islamic militant groups bent on derailing the peace process have been active.

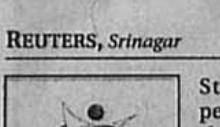
"The security is necessary, but it's a little overdone," said Faisal Anwar, a 28-year-old banker from Karachi.

But the atmosphere is completely electric, and it has always been like this between India and Pakistan."

If anyone doubted the level of goodwill between the fans, Priyanka, the granddaughter of former Indian Prime Minister Indira Gandhi, was given a rousing welcome when she joined the throng - by both sets of fans.

The fierce sporting rivalry between the neighbours is still there, but losing for either side may be a little less painful than usual this time.

Kashmir taken over by ...



Strife-weary people in Kashmir, at the heart of decades of enmity between India and Pakistan, sat glued to their TVs on Saturday to watch the two countries fight a different kind of battle -- a cricket match.

His younger brother, Riyaz, thought otherwise. "Both teams are equally good but the Indian team looks better and I think India will win," Riyaz said.

Traffic in Srinagar was thin and many government employees stayed at home to watch the game.

The enthusiasm for cricket had even infected the normally stiff troops who provide security to Srinagar.

On Saturday, even the militants were probably watching the cricket. Police said no rebel attacks were reported from across the state all morning.

of the match on their pocket radios even as they held on to their automatic guns and patrolled the streets.

"We prayed for the Indian team and we are sure our prayers will be answered and India will win the match," said Joginder Singh, a Border Security Force soldier.

The police, is trying to quell a 14-year revolt by Islamic rebels against New Delhi's rule which has claimed more than 40,000 lives so far.

Violence continues to rage in the troubled region despite new moves to make peace between India and Pakistan. India accuses Pakistan of fomenting separatist violence in Kashmir by arming and training Muslim guerrillas. Pakistan denies the charge.

On Saturday, even the militants were probably watching the cricket. Police said no rebel attacks were reported from across the state all morning.

Scoreboard of the first one-day international between Pakistan and India at the National Stadium in Karachi on Saturday:

INDIA

Sehwag b Naveed 79
Tendulkar c Naveed b Akhtar 28
Ganguly c and b Naveed 45
Dravid b Akhtar 99
Yuvraj c Hameed b Naveed 3
Kaif lbw b Sami 46
Badami not out 8
Zaheer b Sami 0
Kartik not out 3

Extras: (b-1, lb-7, nb-20, w-10) 38

Total: (For 7 wkts in 50 overs) 349

Fall of wickets: 1-69, 2-142, 3-214,
4-220, 5-338, 6-344, 7-344

Did not bat: Nehra, Balaji

Bowler O M R W

Akhtar 10 0 55 2
Sami 10 0 74 2
Naveed 10 0 73 3
Razzaq 9 0 83 0
Malik 10 0 50 0
Hameed 1 0 6 0

PAKISTAN

Hameed b Balaji 7
Farhat c Dravid b Zaheer 24
Youshna c sub (Pathan) b Sehwag 73
Inzamam c Dravid b Kartik 122
Younis b Kartik 46
Razzaq b Zaheer 27
Moin c Ganguly b Nehra 16
Malik c Kaif b Zaheer 7

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DAY'S EVENT

Bangladesh U-23 vs Zimbabwe

A Day Three

Venue: Fatullah Cricket Stadium



FAN TIME: Priyanka Gandhi (2nd from L), daughter of Indian opposition leader Sonia Gandhi, her brother Rahul Gandhi (2nd from R) and husband Robert Vadra (R) celebrate the exciting five-run victory of their national team against Pakistan at Karachi yesterday.

PHOTO: AFP

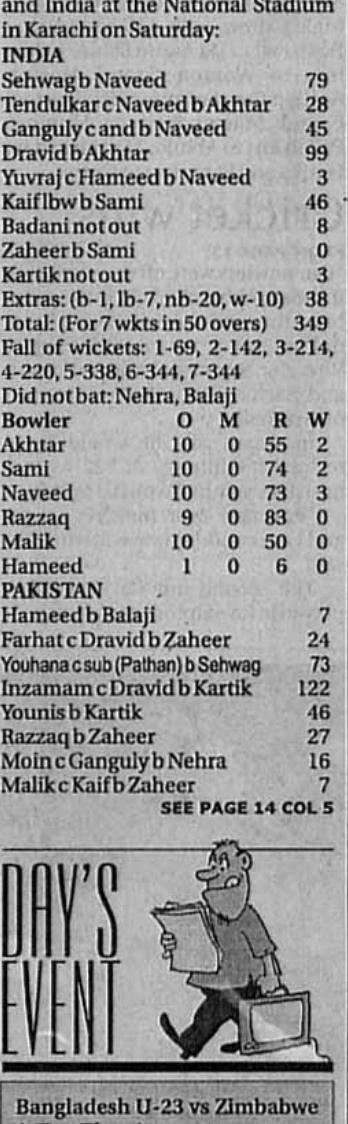


PHOTO: AFP
INZI SPECIAL: Pakistan captain Inzamamul Haq looks towards the heavens after completing a sublime century in the first one-day international against India at the National Stadium in Karachi yesterday.