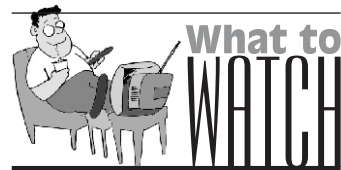




## Did U Know?

Athletics was an event at the first Special Olympics International Games held in Chicago, Illinois, USA in 1968.



### BTV

India vs Pakistan

Second ODI (D/N)

Live at 3:00 pm

### ESPN

ATP Masters Series

Third Round

Live at 8:00 am

Football Focus

Live at 6:30 pm

### STAR Sports

Sportsline

Sport News

Live at 8:00 pm

### TEN Sports

Sri Lanka vs Australia

Second Test, Day One

Live at 10:00 am

India vs Pakistan

Second ODI (D/N)

Live at 3:00 pm



### Ehsan Mani

(International Cricket Council president)

"It is great they are playing again, because cricket was poorer without an India-Pakistan contest."

**Star WHIZZ KID**

**COMPETITION 208**

Tick the correct answers, post to  
**The Daily Star**  
Win attractive prizes

**Competition closes at 8 pm**  
**March 27, 2004 and draw**

1. How many runs did Bangladesh score against Zimbabwe in the third ODI?	230	242	238
2. Who clinched the first Division Football League title?	Farashganj Victoria	Youngmen's	
3. Who won the Qatar Open tennis title?	Hings Henin	Myskina	
4. Who won the four-day National Cricket League title?			
Name .....			
Class .....			
School Address .....			
Phone: (if any) .....			

### NBL v'ball

BSS, Dhaka

Bangladesh Water Development Board (BWDB) overpowered Azad Sporting Club 25-21, 25-20, 26-24 in the National Bank Premier Division volleyball league at Volleyball Stadium yesterday.

Water Development Board, who earned six wins from eight matches, raised their tally to 20 points while Azad remained pointless as they suffered seven defeats from as many games.

## India's Sourav scare

### Pakistan back at full pace

AGENCIES, Rawalpindi



India captain Sourav Ganguly is doubtful and bowler Ashish Nehra has been ruled out of Tuesday's day-night second one-day international against Pakistan at the Pindi Cricket Stadium.

The 31-year-old left-hander missed a practice session because of fever, while Nehra suffered a recurrence of an ankle problem.

"Sourav has a mild fever. We're hopeful he'll be fit to play after his situation is reviewed," said vice-captain Rahul Dravid.

Nehra bowled a vital final over on Saturday, allowing Pakistan just three runs to gain a five-run victory for the tourists to go 1-0 up in the

five-match series.

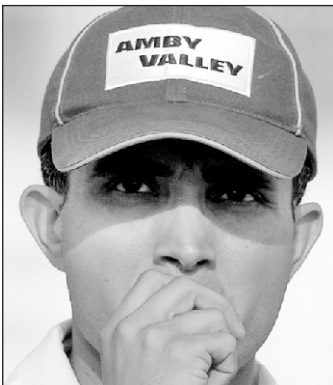
India piled up a mammoth 349-7 in Karachi, but Pakistan responded bravely through a century from captain Inzamamul Haq to reply with 344-8. It was the highest scoring one-dayer in history.

Dravid said young left-arm seamer Irfan Pathan may replace Nehra, although the team management has not ruled out bleeding rookie Ramesh Powar, an off-spinner and hard-hitting lower order batsman from Bombay.

Left-arter Nehra is the fourth front-line bowler missing from the attack.

Anil Kumble, Ajit Agarkar and Harbhajan Singh have not made the tour because of injury and opening bowler Zaheer Khan is yet to return to form.

"Bowling is an area we have to work on," said coach John Wright. "We are giving away too many



SOURAV GANGULY

runs.

"Kumble and Harbhajan are not here and there's no point thinking about how useful they could have been."



PHOTO: AFP

JUST KEEP YOUR LINE STRAIGHT: Pakistan captain Inzamamul Haq says something to fast bowler Shoaib Akhtar during a practice session at the Pindi Cricket Stadium yesterday.

## Rafique ducks press



SPORTS REPORTER

Bangladesh's premier left-arm spinner Mohammad Rafique totally distanced himself from the prying eyes of the media on his return from Zimbabwe yesterday.

Rafique, who was sent home by the Bangladesh team management prior to the final one-day international against the hosts on disciplinary grounds, reached Dhaka around eight in the morning and was straightaway taken to the Bangladesh Cricket Board (BCB)'s management office in Gulshan by Board officials who received him.

It wasn't until 4pm that the 34-year-old slow bowler arrived at his Aganagar home in Keraniganj. He

then shut himself up and refused to talk to journalists who wanted an insight into his alleged training ground bust-up with Tigers captain Habibul Bashar that apparently prompted his ouster.

"My father is still furious over what had happened. I can only tell you that he said the newspapers got it all wrong in their reports about what actually took place. We know our father and that's why we believe him. He never uses any foul language which some papers alleged he did during the incident. He also assured us that the real facts will come to light in time," said Rafique's eldest daughter Shila, a student of class seven.

"He rang me up from the airport at about 8:30am and said he was going to the BCB's Gulshan office. You have to understand he is very

## 'Keep on fighting'

AFP, Rawalpindi

Pakistan coach Javed Miandad on Monday urged his players not to ease off until they know they have seized the moment in the one-day series against India.

Pakistan fell short by five runs during the high-scoring thriller in the opening one-dayer at Karachi on Saturday, making 344-8 in reply to India's 349-7.

"We should have won after coming so close," Miandad said ahead of Tuesday's second international to be played under lights at the Pindi Cricket Stadium.

"As a coach, I felt disappointed and have told the players to grab the opportunity next time.

"It was due to inexperience we

## England humble hosts



AFP, Kingston

England, about 20 minutes before the next Test, five years ago.

The victory over West Indies in the opening Test on Sunday after a handover of the series was a career best for the bowler. The modest target of 20 runs was captured by England in 12 from 12.3 overs - the best position of bowling without a loss and like a deck of cards in their lowest Test



PHOTO: REUTERS

England fast bowler Steve Harmison (L) walks with teammate Andrew Flintoff following their crushing victory over the West Indies on the fourth day of the first Test at Sabina Park in Kingston on March 14.

The good news for the tourists was that in-form batsman Venkatsai Laxman was fit to play after missing the Karachi match due to a knee injury.

Laxman, who hit three one-day centuries on the recent tour of Australia, is expected to replace Hemang Badani.

Pakistan welcome fast bowler Shabbir Ahmed back from a finger injury but coach Javed Miandad refused to confirm his line-up.

Miandad spent the weekend working with his bowlers, who conceded 20 no balls and 10 wides in the opening loss.

"It's good to have Shabbir back but we will finalise our team only on Tuesday afternoon," he said.

"There was little to choose from the two sides at Karachi and this should be another good game. But we have to be more disciplined in our bowling."

Fiery fast bowler Shoaib Akhtar believes the bowlers will gain more assistance on his home ground.

And the bowler, nicknamed the Rawalpindi Express for the lightning speed he generates, hopes to celebrate his 100th one-day international with victory over Pakistan's arch-rivals.

"It's an honour to reach a milestone but I will celebrate only if it can help my team win," he said.

He deflected criticism that he was expensive in taking 2-55 on Saturday, saying: "The wicket at Karachi was a belfer.

"There will be more help for the bowlers here in Rawalpindi and I am totally focussed on keeping the runs down."

India will play five one-dayers and three Test matches on their first full tour of Pakistan since 1989.

### TEAMS

**INDIA (from):** Sourav Ganguly (captain), Rahul Dravid, Virender Sehwag, Sachin Tendulkar, Venkatsai Laxman, Yuvraj Singh, Mohammad Kaif, Hemang Badani, Parthiv Patel, Zaheer Khan, Laxmipathy Balaji, Irfan Pathan, Ashish Nehra, Murali Kartik.

SEE PAGE 14 COL 1



PHOTO: AFP

MORE FIREWORKS TODAY? Indian superstar Sachin Tendulkar (R) passes by his fiery opening partner Virender Sehwag during a training session at the Pindi Cricket Stadium yesterday.

## Russell, a vision



BISHWAJIT ROY

It does not necessarily mean that you need to be a Roman Abramovich to do great things. And in some cases great clubs don't always get the glory. Had it been true then the just concluded Western Union Premier Division Football League would have gone to one of the big three -- Mohammedan Sporting Club, Abahani Krira Chakra and Mukhtijodha Sangsads.

May be Brothers Union have won their maiden title but the League this year will go down in history for what a small club like Sheikh Russell Krira Chakra had done in their first season in top flight football.

Established in 1995, the Uttara-based outfit was hardly on anybody's lips when the season kicked off. But they seized the spotlight by making it into the last four of the Federation Cup.

If that was not enough the events that followed in one of the most exciting finishes to the League left nobody in no doubt that it was a story of some ordinary people who have done extraordinary things in extraordinary situa-

tions.

Imagine Brothers running away with an unassailable eight-point lead midway through the second leg and their real challengers Mohammedan, Abahani and Mukhtijodha giving up the fight one after another when a 'B' team like Russell emerged in the scene.

They came tantalisingly close to taking all the glory before Brothers won the final game against Mukhtijodha thanks to a second-half goal from Monwar.

Still, a second place finish behind Brothers Union, who broke the bank to form a virtual national team, was a great achievement for Sheikh Russell.

And anybody associated with the club will tell you that the driving force behind Russell's fairytale run was none other than its president Nurul Alam Chowdhury.

It was clearly evident moments after their final game of the season against Dhaka Wanderers when all the players sang in praise of the charismatic Chowdhury.

The Russell boss is not an unknown figure in the sports community. The bespectacled gentleman may not have succeeded as either a hockey or table tennis player, but certainly his passion for sports in general and football in particular has at last left

its mark.

A down to earth person, Chowdhury has always believed in one thing.

"If one is to succeed in any venture there must be a good management behind him," said Chowdhury who took over the presidency in 2001.

A successful businessman

While many smelt a rat in Brothers' win against Mukhtijodha, the Russell president preferred to offer his congratulations to the Gopibaghat team.

"Brothers deserve the title since they were undoubtedly the best among the ten teams. But what my club has achieved is equally impressive," he said adding that the challenge for his club now is to prove that the second-place finish was no fluke.

"The big challenge now for us is to prove that it was not a one-off situation. We are already thinking to establish the club as a powerhouse for the good of country's football."

He however admitted that the task ahead was a difficult one for a club, which has still no home of its own.

SEE PAGE 14 COL 5



NURUL ALAM CHOWDHURY

Chowdhury also knew that experience has no substitute and that's why he approached two former star footballers Sheikh Aslam and Badal Roy in an effort to build a durable team.

"We certainly don't possess the

## AIUB Cup on

PRESS RELEASE

East West University won the opening match of the AIUB Cup cricket tournament defeating United International University by eight wickets at the Gulshan Youth Club ground yesterday.

Earlier in the morning, the third version of the inter-university competition, which is being organised by the American International University-Bangladesh (AIUB), was inaugurated by State Minister for Youth and Sports Fazlur Rahman.

Vice-Chancellor of AIUB Dr. Carmen Lamagna and founder-chairman of AIUB Dr. Anwarul Abedin were present on the occasion.

A total of 24 private universities of the country are taking part in the knockout competition at five different venues that will be held from March 15 to 31.

## WI say sorry publicly



AGENCIES, Kingston

The West Indies cricket team have taken the unprecedented step of issuing a public apology following their humiliating defeat in the first Test against England at Sabina Park on Sunday.

They were bowled out for 47 inside a session on the fourth morning, losing the match by ten wickets.

In an official release, the team said that they "sincerely apologised to the West Indies public for the shocking performance on the fourth day".

It was not only the defeat that caused uproar in the Caribbean. Immediately after the match, four of the West Indian squad were reportedly seen in one of the stands drinking and partying.

Ricky Skerritt, the West Indies

manager, didn't mince his words.

"I am disgusted at the thoughtlessness and shamelessness displayed by these players following such a horrific performance," he said, before insisting that the team would work tirelessly to fight back. Their identity has not yet been



BRIAN LARA

revealed -- though it has been confirmed captain Brian Lara was not among them.

Gus Logie, the team's coach, was reported to be equally angry, but restrained himself in public, saying: "We will continue to ask the players for a higher level of discipline and a higher level of commitment to themselves and West Indies cricket."

Meanwhile, Lara called on his senior players to bounce back.

"There was no devil in the pitch and we definitely faltered today," Lara told reporters. "The senior players have to realise that we went wrong in this game and we have to rectify that and move on."

"The good thing is that a lot of the inexperienced players did really well. Devon Smith and Ryan Hinds with the bat and Tino Best and Fidel Edwards with the ball."

However, despite the team's capitulation, Lara said wholesale changes should not be made for

SEE PAGE 14 COL 4