SPÖRT

Inzamam irked at Atkinson

AFP, Multan

Pakistan captain Inzamamul Haq on Tuesday blamed English curator Andy Atkinson for the dead wicket in the ongoing first Test against India, saying this was not the track his team wanted.

"The curator did not prepare the pitch we asked for," Inzamam told

"We need hard and bouncy tracks because fast bowling is our strength. Even grassy wickets will not suit us because our bowlers are not seamers.

The wicket at the Multan Stadium has been severely criticised after India piled up a mammoth 675-5 declared and the hosts replied with 364-6 by the third day.

Pakistan need 112 runs to avoid follow-on with four wickets in hand and Abdul Razzaq the last recognised batsman at the crease.

"I have always said that I want to play on positive pitches, but this pitch does not suit us and I hope wickets in the remaining two Tests

will be different," Inzamam said. Former Pakistan captain Imran Khan also slammed the dead pitch, saying it provided for boring cricket and was bad for country's

Atkinson admitted a good wicket could not be prepared because of lack of time.

"I am sure there will be better wickets for the remaining Tests at Lahore and Rawalpindi," Atkinson

Singer chess

SPORTS REPORTER

Grand Masters Niaz Murshed. Ziaur Rahman and International Master Reefat-bin-Sattar jointly maintained the lead with 2.5 points each after the end of the third round games of the Singer 30th National Chess Championship at the NSC conference room yester-

THIRD ROUND RESULTS

Niaz drew with Reefat, Zia drew with FM Sheikh Nasir Ahmed, IM Enamul Hossain Rajib bt Mohammad Javed, IM Abdullah Al-Rakib bt Aminul Islam Polash, Shawkat Hossain Pallab bt Monjur Alam, Saifuddin Lavlu drew with Abdul Maleq and Mehdi Hasan Parag drew with Debaraj Chatterjee.

Ranatunga smells a rat

Cricket

Sri Lanka's former captain Arjuna Ranatunga lashed out at the International Cricket Council (ICC) Tuesday for bringing Muttiah Muralitharan's action under scrutiny once again.

Ranatunga, who led Sri Lanka to an epic triumph in the 1996 World Cup, felt the prolific off-spinner was being put under pressure just when he was set to become the highest wicket-taker in Test his-

In remarks published in the Island newspaper here, Ranatunga said he saw a conspiracy against Muralitharan, who is just six wickets short of retired West Indian paceman Courtney Walsh's record of 519 wickets.

"This is to totally discredit the achievements of a great player. Murali is chasing the world record with Shane Warne (of Australia) and the Australians and the English do not want one of our players getting there," he said.

Muralitharan was reported to the ICC after the third and final

Test against Australia on Sunday by match-referee Chris Broad, a former England Test batsman, who doubted the legitimacy of one of Muralitharan's deliveries.

Broad said the bowler's doosra', which turns away from the right-handers unlike his stock ball that comes in, needed more

Broad added that he had discussed the matter with umpires Dave Orchard and Steve Bucknor and they were fully aware of the

Ranatunga criticised Broad and said his appointment as match referee was a let down for the game.

"The ICC should appoint those who are experienced, with an impeccable record in such responble roles," Ranatunga told the Island newspaper. "What experience does Broad have? Look at his background. His appointment and what he has done is a let down to the ICC's reputation.'

The newspaper said Ranatunga was hinting at a "white conspiracy" against Muralitharan who finished the series against Australia with 28 wickets to take his tally to 513.

"This issue now comes under the ICC's regulations dealing with

this matter and over the next six weeks an expert bio-mechanist will be appointed by Sri Lanka Cricket to work with the bowler to clearly identify and address any flaws that may occur during the delivery action," an ICC statement said.

"Muralitharan will be able to continue to play during this time."

It added that the match-referee reviewed Muralitharan's new delivery and after examining the action closely decided to report him to the ICC and notify the Sri Lankan board.

Muralitharan was three times called for "chucking" by Australian umpires before being cleared by bio-mechanical experts, who concluded that he suffered from a congenital condition that prevented him from straightening his

He is the fourth player to be reported to the ICC under its revised process to deal with potentially flawed actions in the past 12

West Indies' Jermaine Lawson, Bangladeshi Sanwar Hossain and Pakistani paceman Shabbir Ahmed have already been asked to undergo remedial work on their bowling actions.

Gripper steals Kapali thunder

by the part time pace of Ehsanul Haque. Still the tourists were going merrily along and were 153 for one in the 31st over when rain stopped

Once the showers were out of the way, a fresh target was fixed according to the Duckworth-Lewis method and Zimbabwe A required a further 65 runs in 11 overs.

Manjarul (2-32) and right-arm pacer Tareq Aziz Khan (1-55) took three wickets when the match resumed but Gripper's 119-run second wicket stand with Vusumuzi Sibanda ensured that the tourists never felt any pressure.

The dashing Gripper hammered an 89-ball 98 with fourteen fours and one over boundary before offering a return catch to Maniarul. Sibanda was quick to follow after a cultured 65 off 117 balls but Charles Coventry and Stuart Matsikenyeri safely took their side home.

Gripper was named man-of-thematch for his belligerent knock.

The third encounter of the series will take place at the Bangabandhu National Stadium in Dhaka on April

SCORECARD

Scoreboard of the second limited-over match between Bangladesh A and Zimbabwe A at the Shaheed Chandu Stadium in Bogra yester-**BANGLADESHA**

Al-Shahriar c Chigumbura b Manjarul c Sims b Chigumbura 22

Ehsanul c Maregwede b Rinke 0 Kapali c Sibanda b Panyangara 111 Tushar c Mwayenga b Gripper 23 Ashraful c (Sub) b Panyangara 19 Faisal b Rinke Dhiman run out 12

Razzak not out

Tareg run out Alamgir not out Extras: (b-14, lb-5, nb-1, w-16) 36 Total: (For 9 wkts in 50 overs) 266 Fall of wkts: 1-21, 2-22, 3-61, 4-146,

5-204, 6-216, 7-250, 8-263, 9-265 O M R W Panyangara 10 0 41 Rinke 10 0 52 2 Mwayenga 9 0 55 Chigumbura 3 0 18 10 0 44

ZIMBABWEA Rinke c Ashraful b Ehsanul Gripper c and b Manjarul Sibanda lbw b Tareq Chigumbura lbw b Manjarul Sims run out Matsikenyere not out Coventry not out Extras: (b-1, lb-1, nb-2, w-9) Total: (For 5 wkts in 40.3 overs) 218* Fall of wkts: 1-56, 2-175, 3-185, 4-

55 Tareq 0 Alamgir 0 25 Ehsanul 10 2 30 7.3 1 33 Razzak 0 21 8 0 32 Manjarul 2 0 18 0 Result: Zimbabwe A won by five

Man-of-the-match: Trevor Gripper (Zimbabwe A). *Target was revised to 218 in 42 overs under the D/L method.

Satkhira v'ball

OUR CORRESPONDENT

Palli Mongal High School, Bakal High School, PN High School and Kaliganj Ujjibani Institute won their respective matches in the competition at Satkhira Stadium.

In yesterday's games, Palli Mongal High School defeated Rasulpur High School 2-0 and Bakal High School defeated Palashpole High School by the same score.

On Monday, PN High School defeated Karina High School 2-0 and Kaliganj Ujjibani Institute defeated Satkhira Government High School also 2-0.

Mumbai claim 36th Ranji **Trophy**

REUTERS, New Delhi

Champions Mumbai claimed the Ranji Trophy title after dominating the final against Tamil Nadu, which ended in a tame draw on Tuesday.

Tamil Nadu middle-order batsman Subramaniam Badrinath hit an unbeaten 110 on the final day to enable last year's finalists to stave off an embarrassing defeat.

Mumbai sealed their 36th national title in 39 finals by virtue of their first innings lead, having amassed 613 after bowling out the hosts for 294.

Tamil Nadu had reached 353 for four wickets in their second innings, having wiped out the 319run first innings deficit, when the match was called off as a draw in the last session of play.

Resuming at their overnight 163 for three, Tamil Nadu lost ex-India opener Sadagopan Ramesh (31) early with 139 runs still required to avoid an innings defeat.

But the 23-year-old Badrinath held firm, hitting 17 fours in his 338-ball knock lasting almost seven hours and sharing in an unbroken 173-run fifth wicket partnership with Hemang Badani (77 not out) to salvage a draw.

FROM PAGE	13						
Bowler	0	M	R	W			
Martin	18.2	2	65	2			
Mason	6	1	32	0			
Oram	11	3	23	1			
Cairns	10	2	19	0			
Vettori	18	2	53	0			
Styris	9	1	40	1			
Result: So wickets an	uth Afric ddrawthe	a w seri	on b es 1-1	y siz			
Man of the motel. Cuseme Curith							

FRIENDLY SCHEDULE

At Dublin

Fixture list for international friendly

Friendlies involving Euro 2004 finalists:

At Rotterdam Netherlandsv France At Gothenburg, Sweden Sweden v England

Republic of Ireland v Czech Republic At Sofia Bulgaria v Russia At Heraklion, Greece

Greece v Switzerland At Gijon, Spain Spain v Denmark At Braga, Portugal

Portugal v Italy At Cologne, Germany GermanyvBelgium At Zagreb Croatia v Turkey At Ljubljana

Slovenia v Latvia

International friendlies not involving Euro 2004 finalists

At Tirana AlbaniavIceland At Glasgow Scotland v Romania

Estonia v Northern Ireland **AtValetta** Malta v Finland

AtLuxembourg LuxembourgvBosnia At Bratislava Slovakia v Austria

At Skopje Macedonia v Ukraine At Plock Polandy United States

At Budapest HungaryvWales **At Tunis** Tunisia v Ivory Coast

At Carson, United States Mexico v Costa Rica At Fort Lauderdale, United States Panama v Haiti At Kingston

Jamaica v Honduras

Roma in a soup? AFP, Milan

Trading in Italian side AS Roma's shares was suspended on the Milan stock exchange for two days from Tuesday. A stock exchange spokesman said the club, which has debts of

300 million euros (373 million

dollars), would be making a state-

ment about its future by Wednesday. Russian oil company Nafta Moskva pulled out of negotiations to buy the cash-strapped Serie A club in February after fraud squad detectives raided the offices of all Italian first and second division

accounting irregularities. Last July English Premiership club Chelsea were bought by Russian oil magnate Roman Abramovich, who has spent 175 million euros (217 million dollars) on players since arriving at the London club.

clubs in a probe into suspected

Antic leaves Celta

AFP, Vigo

Serbian coach Radomir Antic announced Monday that he was quitting as coach of Spanish first division strugglers Celta Vigo.

Antic, who was recently linked with a move to Premiership side Tottenham, said that he took the decision in agreement with club bosses after their 2-0 loss at home to Real Zaragoza Sunday.

The Serb arrived at Celta last January to replace sacked Miguel Angel Lotina but has not helped stop the rot with the club currently second from bottom of the Primera Liga with 28 points after 30 games.

Deputy coach Moncho Carnero will fill the gap until a new coach is found as the club face the drop with just eight games left this

Border police threaten strike

Portuguese border police have threatened to go on strike during Euro 2004 over overtime pay

Union spokesman Goncalo Rodrigues said Tuesday officers would refuse to work overtime from April 15. He claimed they were owed 2.5 million euros in However, Jose Luis Arnaut, the

government minister overseeing the soccer championship, said he did not believe a single Portuguese would use Euro 2004 to harm the country's image. And Lisbon airport director Francisco Severino said they had a

back-up plan in case of a strike.

INDIA: First innings 675 for 5 declared (Sehwag 309, Tendulkar Around half a million people, on 194; Sami 2-110) top of the usual 1.4 million tourists. are expected for the June 12 to July

PAKISTAN: First innings (over-



Brazil's latest sensation Kaka (driving) and superstar Ronaldo (standing) ride a golf cart with an unidentified escort while playing a few holes of golf at the Yacht and Golf Club in Asuncion on March 29.

Brazil in bogey land



AFP, Montevideo

South American Zone leaders Paraguay take on Brazil in the top match of the fifth round in the 2006 World Cup qualifying campaign on Wednesday determined to cut the world champions down to size.

Brazil, one point behind Paraguay in third place, are fielding a dream attacking trio of Ronaldo (Real madrid), Ronaldinho (Barceona) and Kaka (AC Milan). But it does not impress

Paraguay defender Denis Caniza. "Sure, they're household names but we feel we can more than hold our own," he said.

Paraguay got off to a bad start with a 4-1 defeat in Peru but since then have won their last three matches while Brazil, the first world champions forced to qualify, have won two and drawn two. Brazil are promising that adv sity will bring out the best in them

Brazil face injury problems, searing heat and will only have had one training session before the match against the Paraguayans, who are making a habit out of

as they aim to settle some scores

upsetting their neighbours. Brazil lost 2-1 on their last visit to Asuncion three years ago and had their 2002 World Cup celebrations dampened by Paraguay, who beat them 1-0 in their first match after winning the final.

Paraguay also qualified for this August's Olympic Games at Brazil's expense, beating them 1-0 at under-23 level in January.

"Brazil must thrive in the most difficult moments," coach Carlos Alberto Parreira said. "We will make sure that our quality prevails.

"We'll get over all this on the pitch," he said. "If we can impose our rhythm, we'll win the game.'

DON'T MISS 'EM!

TEN Sports will telecast the Argentina Ecuador match live from Buenos Aires at : 30am Bangladesh Standard Time (BST) today (Wednesday). The channel will also televise live the Brazil v Paraguay game from Asuncion at 6:30am BST on Thursday.

The coach added that he would maintain the much-criticised central defensive partnership of Roque Junior and Lucio. Parreira was only entitled to his

players 48 hours before Wednesday's match because the date had been allocated by FIFA for As a result, most of the squad took part in domestic games for their European clubs at the weekend, flew out on Sunday and

arrived in Paraguay on Monday where they were greeted by temperatures in the high 30s Celsius. "I'm not complaining but the guys have come from Europe, it was snowing in some countries, and they arrive here where it's 30 degrees," said Parreira. "No matter

how motivated you are, the human body suffers.' Superstar Ronaldo shrugged off jet lag and searing heat and headed straight for the golf course after the world champions arrived in

The players crossed the Atlantic and arrived in Asuncion at midday on Monday after journeys of around 15 hours, had been advised to spend the afternoon resting.

But Parreira said that he was not upset that the Real Madrid striker had joined AC Milan's Kaka for a 90 minute round on the golf course at the Brazil team hotel on the banks of the Paraguay river.

he was recovering from knee surgery and now lists it as his favourite "There was no ban on players getting out of bed," Parreira told

Ronaldo took up the sport when

"The rest was from training. There was a certain amount of free-Midfielder Kleberson, right back

Belletti and midfielder Alex all with $drew from \, the \, squad \, through \, injury.$ Paraguay have had similar problems to Brazil but managed to get some of their squad together last

they leave spaces which we can use to our advantage," said Spanishbased defender Delio Toledo. Paraguay lead the South American qualifying group with nine

"Brazil are an attacking team but

points from three games, one more than Argentina and Brazil. Argentina, second in the table, entertain Ecuador on Tuesday without Kily Gonzalez and Javier Zanetti whom Inter Milan failed to

release before Sunday's Italian

league matches

At La Paz: Bolivia v Chile At Buenos Aires: Argentina v Ecuador

At Montevideo: Uruguay v Venezuela At Asuncion: Paraguay v Brazil

'Mach 3' man hailed

Paraguay.

FROM PAGE 13

swashbuckling knock of 309." In a sports page editorial, the Hindu newspaper noted that "Sachin Tendulkar may be the

most famous sportsman in the country but it is Sehwag who fits the bill as a people's champion". The Asian Age, while praising Sehwag's performance, sympathised with Tendulkar.

"Tendulkar's disconsolate walk back at 194 was not the way this high-flying Indian innings should have ended. Meanwhile, Sehwag is set to

campaign for Indian Labour Minister Sahib Singh Verma in upcoming national polls, the player's father said Tuesday. "Yes, Virender will travel with Verma and will ensure he gets reelected with a huge margin," Krishan Kumar Sehwag told NDTV television news channel.

Verma, a member of India's ruling Hindu nationalist Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP), is seeking re-election from the same seat in the staggered polls beginning April 20. Releasing the party's electoral pledge, BJP President Venkaiah

Naidu also referred to Sehwag's feat. "Sehwag has scored 300 runs and so now we want 300 seats," he The BJP is banking on warming ties with rival Pakistan, enhanced by the ongoing cricket tour, and a robust economy to return to

power for the fourth time since

SCOREBOARD

Scoreboard at stumps on the third day of the first Test between Pakistan and India at the Multan Stadium on Tuesday:

Farhat lbw b Balaji Umar c Dravid b Pathan Hameed c Patel b Pathan 91 Inzamam c Chopra b Kumble 77 Youhana c Patel b Zaheer Razzag not out Moin b Tendulkar Extras: (lb-26, nb-10) 36 Total: (For 6 wkts in 106 overs) 364

Fall of wickets: 1-58, 2-73, 3-233,

To bat: Saqlain, Akhtar, Sami, O M R Bowler 22 6 71 Zaheer Pathan 24 4 87 Kumble 8 96 17 Balaji 4 49 Sehwag 2 0 11

4-243, 5-321, 6-364

Ganguly going

FROM PAGE 13

Kaif will fly in on April 3 to replace Ganguly in the 15-man squad for the second Test starting at Lahore's Gaddafi Stadium on April 5.

Ganguly, 30, missed the ongoing first Test here when he hurt his lower back during last week's fifth and final one-dayer in Lahore which India won to clinch the The Indian captain, who lay on

the field for several minutes soon after he fell while trying to stop a ball, had to be carried off in a stretcher. Scans carried out at a Lahore

hospital showed no serious damnot decreased.

age, but Shetty said the pain had Vice-captain Rahul Dravid, who is leading India in the Multan Test in Ganguly's absence, will remain

M'singh cricket

OUR CORRESPONDENT

At Lima: Peru v Colombia

Abahani Krira Chakra recorded a five-wicket victory over Asit Memorial Club in the Navana Primer Division Cricket League at the Mymensingh circuit house

ground yesterday. Batting first, Asit Memorial made 133 all out in 41.3 overs. Abahani replied with 135-5 in 30.2

SCORES IN BRIEF

ASIT MEMORIAL CLUB: 133-10 in 41.3 overs (Suman 33, Rabin 27, Rani 15; Rakib 4/22, Shawan 2/28) **ABAHANI:** 135/5 in 30.2 overs (Emon 37, Arman 35, Mitul 18; Suman 2/9)

Result: Abahani won by five wick-

Khulna Div

champions BSS, Faridpur

Khulna Division emerged winners in the two-day final of the Under-15 Age Group Development Cricket Championship defeating Dhaka Metro Blues by virtue of a first innings lead at the local stadium here vesterday.

Dhaka Blues resumed the day at 37 for two in reply to Khulna's first innings total of 224 for nine in 90 But Khulna bowlers shot their

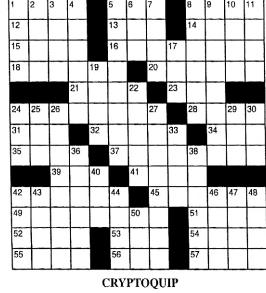
opponents out for 192 in 56.2 overs to take a 32-run lead. Khulna in their second knock scored 171 for seven wickets in 47.2

Masud Rana of Khulna was declared man-of-the-match for

scoring 58 not out and taking four in-charge for the second Test also.



CROSS	WORD	By Eugene	e Sheffer	
ACROSS	41 Teller's	2 Fire	24 Play-	
1 Tater	partner	(Pref.)	ground	
5 Opal or	42 Munch	3 Caspian	game	
onyx	master-	Sea	25 Where, to	
8 Man	piece,	feeder	Caesar	
with a	with "The"	4 Blue-	26 One	
clan	45 Maestro	print	sent to a	
12 Phoeni-	49 Toll road	5 Fence	specialist,	
cian city	51 Work-	feature	e.g.	
13 "Today I	bench	6 Ostrich's	27 Indefati-	
man"	attach-	cousin	gable	
14 Mah-	ment	7 Rover's	29 Tarzan's	
jongg	52 In — way	destina-	son	
piece	(ailing)	tion	30 "May-	
15 Historic	53 Insult (SI.)		day!"	
periods	54 Relaxa-	crew	33 Daughter	
16 Apple	tion	9 Refine	of	
pastry	55 Guys'	10 Bread	Elizabeth	
18 Cour-	counter-	spread	II	
teous	parts	11 Region	36 Fashions	
20 Grad-to-	56 Office-	(Abbr.)	38 Scoun-	
be	holders	17 Born	drels	
21 Stare	57 Coaster	19 Mexican	40 Eminem's	
open-		entree	genre	
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23 Conger,	1 Dance	com-	escorted	
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24 Traitor	Solution tir	ne: 24 mins.	home	
28 Parent	LASER	MARGIN	44 Skirt	
sharers	TURTLE	AVERSE	length	
31 Rush-	INLAID	NOVELS	46 Use a	
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32 Tiber	VICEPR	ESIDENT	47 Existence	
port	EXAMT	RAMNOV	(Latin) 48 "It's a	
34 Menag-	PUG	ALPO		
erie 35 Talent	FLURRE	STPALO	Wonder- ful	
35 raient 37 Prison	READER	RENOIR	Life"	
staffers	KNEADS	SEEMS	actress	
39 Blunder			50 Family	
og bluttuer			Ju Fairing	



KJFJEIWGO VKKLXLFVGJA V FVIQJ MLXEJI ND DVMA, XWQTG

QJG EFNRM VRVO Saturday's Cryptoquip: IF YOU HAVE NO MONEY TROUBLES AT ALL, I BELIEVE THAT'S CONSIDERED FISCAL FITNESS. Today's Cryptoquip Clue: V equals A 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

Super Smith

Man-of-the-match: Graeme Smith.