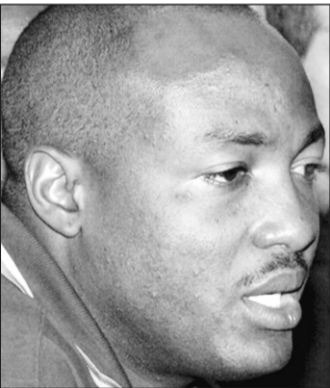




**Did U Know?**  
Newcastle United is an amalgamation of two clubs Newcastle East End and Newcastle West End. They combined in 1892.



**ESPN**  
English Premier Football League  
Aston Villa vs Newcastle United  
Live at 6:55 pm  
**Primera Liga**  
Barcelona vs Malaga  
Live at 1:30 am (Monday)  
**STAR Sports**  
ATP Championships  
Semifinal  
Live at 6:00 am  
**TEN Sports**  
West Indies vs England  
First ODI  
Live at 7:30 pm



**Brian Lara**  
(West Indies captain)  
*"We're playing against Bangladesh and I'm not going to write off Bangladesh. The way we're playing right now you can't write off anybody at all."*  
**On next month's Test series against Bangladesh.**

**Star WHIZZ KID COMPETITION 210**  
Tick the correct answers, post to The Daily Star  
Win attractive prizes  
**Competition closes at 8 pm April 23, 2004 and draw shortly afterwards**

1. How many gold medals did Bangladesh win in the recently concluded SAF Games?	5	4	3
2. Who is the coach of Chelsea?	Eriksson	Wenger	Ranieri
3. What is the title of the official Euro 2004 song?	Forma	Forza	Forca
4. Who clinched the WTA Key Biscayne title?	Venus	Hennin	Serena
5. What was the score of the India-Pakistan one-day series?			

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

## Nat'l jr chess

SPORTS REPORTER

Seven players jointly led the table with three points each after the end of the third round games in the 25th National Junior Chess Championship at the federation hall-room yesterday.

The players are: Mehedi Hasan Parag, Mohammad Ali, Minhazuddin Ahmed Sagar, Golam Mustafa Bhuiyan, Obaidul Islam Shaheen, Mahtab Uddin Robin and Shamiha Sharmin Shimmi.

In this round, Parag beat Ivana, Ali beat Tarif, Sagar beat Kahar, Mustafa beat Mushleh, Shaheen beat Ronny, Shimmi beat Ashraf, Robin beat Shrin and Dalim beat Liza.

The fourth round matches will take place at the same venue at 3pm.



**CATCH ME IF YOU CAN!** A combo photo shows the country's fastest woman and man Ishaq Jahan Iva (No. 120) and Abu Abdullah (No. 203) touch the finish tape during their respective 100m sprints in the 29th national athletics championships at the Sher-e-Bangla Mirpur National Stadium yesterday.

# Iva shines in Mirpur swansong



The top athletes of the country bade goodbye to the Sher-e-Bangla Mirpur National Stadium yesterday after the 29th national athletics championships concluded without a single new record.

It was the last national meet held on the good old track since the country's number two national stadium was built ahead of the 1987 SAF Games. The venue has recently been leased to Bangladesh Cricket Board, which is set to uproot the running track in a couple of month's time to give it a cricket look.

Athletics however will finally sign off from Mirpur after the junior national championships in May.

But the parting shot did not leave behind any impression apart from one instance of brilliance by Ishaq Jahan Iva, who defied the scorching heat and the pain of losing a home away from home to win the women's 100m sprint.

The 16-year-old Class X student

from BKSP, who clinched the 200m gold on Friday upsetting Shamsunnahar Chumki, took 12.40 seconds to become the country's fastest woman in her first-ever national appearance.

Iva, who hails from Lalmonirhat and is the current national junior champion, was over the moon after her latest triumph.

"I never thought I would be able to do better than Chumki but now I've done it and it's great," said the elated Iva who is being trained by a Chinese coach.

The daughter of a Railway clerk, Iva is now looking forward to competing in the Asian Junior

Championships in Malaysia in June.

"If I had not run in the 400m just before the 100m, I would have finished with a better timing," opined Iva, who wants to concentrate on shorter distances in future.

It was on the other hand a double disappointment for Chumki as the BJMC's sprinter, who still holds the national record in both events, finished with 12.60 seconds to settle for silver while the bronze went to her teammate Sumita Rani Das (12.65 seconds).

Abu Abdullah of Bangladesh Army became the fastest man with 10.90 seconds. The 23-year-old sprinter from Noakhali, who had a less than impressive SAF Games, finally basked in glory at the fourth attempt in the national championship.

Abdullah, who finished fifth in the 9th SAF Games just two weeks ago in Islamabad, won a bronze last year but he was a gold winner at the last Summer Athletics.

Abdullah's Army mate Shahidul Islam (11.10 seconds) and Abdullah Hel Kafi (11.32 seconds)

MEDAL TABLE				
Army	15	14	10	
BJMC	12	15	7	
BKSP	6	3	4	
Navy	3	4	3	
Khulna	0	0	4	
Noakhali	0	0	3	
Note: Chittagong Physical College, BDR, Sylhet and Gopalganj won one bronze each.				

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PHOTO: STAR

## BAAF council today

**SPORTS REPORTER**

The council meeting of the Bangladesh Amateur Athletics Federation (BAAF) will be held today at Sher-e-Bangla Mirpur National Stadium.

This is the first council in two years for the struggling federation, which lost five key members including its general secretary two years ago after change of the government.

The main agenda of the council will be either to fill the five vacated posts or go for fresh elections. The speculation is that most of the 68 voters are interested to have a new election.

The federation is also looking forward to its councillors to remove the 'amateur' tag from its name.

Among the five absentee executive members general secretary Ibrahim Chenghis, joint-secretary Iqbal Hossain and member Mostak Ahmed are now residing in Canada while treasurer Delwar Hossain and member Mujibur Rahman never appeared in the federation since the change of power.

## 'We have done it'

**AFP, New Delhi**

The Indian press was euphoric Saturday, heaping praise on the cricket team which clocked a maiden Test series win against Pakistan on their rivals' soil and their first overseas victory in a decade.

National dailies splashed front-page pictures of a jubilant Indian team celebrating their 2-1 Test victory over their arch-rivals under headlines such as "Spirited win, India high" and "The 'Cup of joy runs over'".

"How sweet it is!" exclaimed the Hindustan Times. The Tribune newspaper headlined its piece "We have done it," adding "Indians create Test history on Pakistani soil."

The photographs of an ecstatic Indian team were juxtaposed with those of the visibly distraught Pakistani skipper Inzamamul Haq.

As Indians gleefully woke up from a night of firecrackers and partying, they opened newspapers to glowing sports reports, which pushed aside news of national elections starting Tuesday.

The Indian team's visit -- the first full tour of Pakistan in 15 years -- came as part of confidence-building measures to normalise ties upset by a bitter conflict in Kashmir in 1999 and another near-war in 2002.

Pakistan issued visas to more than 8,000 Indian fans to watch the

SEE PAGE 14 COL 4

## CJKS-Ispahani cricket

CU CORRESPONDENT

Mohammedan Sporting Club recorded a massive 154-run victory over Chittagong Port Authority (CPA) Sports Association in the CJKS-Ispahani Premier Division Cricket League at the MA Aziz Stadium yesterday.

The popular Sadarghat club amassed 262 for seven in stipulated 50 overs. Middle-order batsmen Rafiqul Islam and Abu Sama Biplob contributed the bulk of the runs.

Rafiqul hit a run-a-ball 92 with 11 sweetly-executed boundaries. His partner made a patient 70 off 101 balls.

CPA Sports Association were bundled out for 108 in 36.1 overs with Aminul Haque Amin making 32.

Mohammedan's Shafaq Al Jafir and Iqbal Hossain grabbed three wickets each.

# Bashundhara, BADC open

**SPORTS REPORTER**

**GrameenPhone CORPORATE LEAGUE**

Bashundhara Group and Bangladesh Agricultural Development Corporation (BADC) Krira Sangha will launch the first-ever Grameen-Phone Corporate Cricket League (CCL) at the Bangabandhu National Stadium on April 20.

The Bangladesh Cricket Board (BCB) has taken the 13-team CCL as a challenge to overcome the non-appearance of Dhaka clubs who have over the years dictated how the game is run in the country.

The Board was compelled to float the new league involving 12 corporate houses and invited Bangladesh under-19 side after

influential capital clubs including two popular houses Mohammedan and Abahani decided not to take part in the Premier League that has been regarded as a major source of income for the cricketers.

Although the 11 corporate houses could only accommodate 147 cricketers in their line-ups, it was however not a bad figure at a stage when the cricketers were almost set to suffer a year of financial loss.

There was more good news for the players that CityCell, a leading cellular phone company, decided to make their presence felt in the unique competition. After missing

the two-day registration proceedings, the country's first mobile phone operators are expected to rope in national vice-captain Rajin Saleh and pacer Tapas Baishya to complete their roster today.

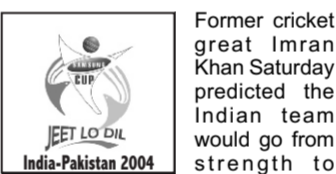
The registration window will reopen today from 4-8pm and MM Ispahani, one of the leading tea companies of the country, are also set to take the advantage of the extended time. They have singled up five players so far and are likely to confirm the services of former national captain Minhazul Abedin Nannu, who is known for offering plenty of surprises when it comes to transfer talks.



**THIS IS HOW YOU STOP THE BALL:** Mike Young, the new fielding coach of Bangladesh cricket team, is giving some tips to (R-L) Enamul Haque, Habibul Bashar and Hannan Sarkar during a practice session at the Bangabandhu National Stadium yesterday.

# India can only get better

**AFP, Islamabad**



Former cricket great Imran Khan Saturday predicted the Indian team would go from strength to strength after their maiden series win in Pakistan.

"They look in strong shape and this current team will rise further as their players are performing and have the knack of handling pressure well," Imran said.

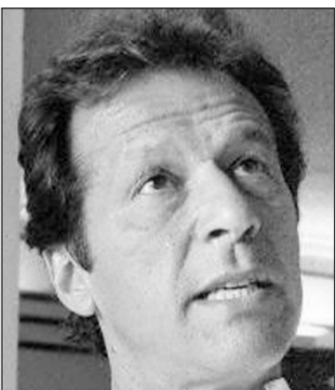
"India fought well throughout the tour and the 19-year-old Parthiv Patel's innings in the third Test displayed their fighting abilities."

Patel, a wicketkeeper batsman who was asked to open the innings, hit a fighting career-best 69 to solve a selection problem for India and help his team overwhelm Pakistan in the third and decisive Test.

With their innings and 131-run

win, India also took the series 2-1 to jump to fourth position in the ICC (International Cricket Council) rankings.

And they won the preceding one-day series 3-2 to cap their remarkable



**IMRAN KHAN**  
able first full tour across the border for 15 years.

"I can't say that this is the best Indian team ever but it has shown remarkable qualities and can be compared to India's all-time best teams," said Imran, now a politician and television commentator.

Imran said the Pakistani management needed to look into several areas to lift their cricket.

"Pakistan cricket officials need to ask several questions from themselves after this defeat, the structure needs to be overhauled and the vacuums left by some leading players need to be filled," said Imran, who played 82 Tests for his country.

"We had two match winners in Shoaib Akhtar and Mohammad Sami but the bowling resources could have been utilised better than this," said Imran, himself a fast bowler who took 362 Test wickets between 1971-1992.

"We have a batsman captain, a

# Shoaib feels sad

**AFP, Islamabad**



Disgruntled Pakistani paceman Shoaib Akhtar Sunday lamented the home series loss against India and his own poor form but denied any lack of effort and differences with captain Inzamamul Haq.

"I am disappointed we lost the home series against India and my own form, but saying that my attitude and effort were not up to the mark is wrong," said Akhtar.

"I failed to produce but the defeat is not of one man, it's a defeat of eleven against eleven, just like our last two series wins were wins of the team."

The fiery bowler -- known as the Rawalpindi Express for his pace -- came under severe criticism following Pakistan's innings and 131-run loss in the third Test and with it their first ever home series loss to India by 2-1.

Pakistan captain Inzamamul Haq lashed out at Akhtar, saying his poor form led to the Test series defeat against India.

"We depended a lot on Akhtar because he is one of the fastest

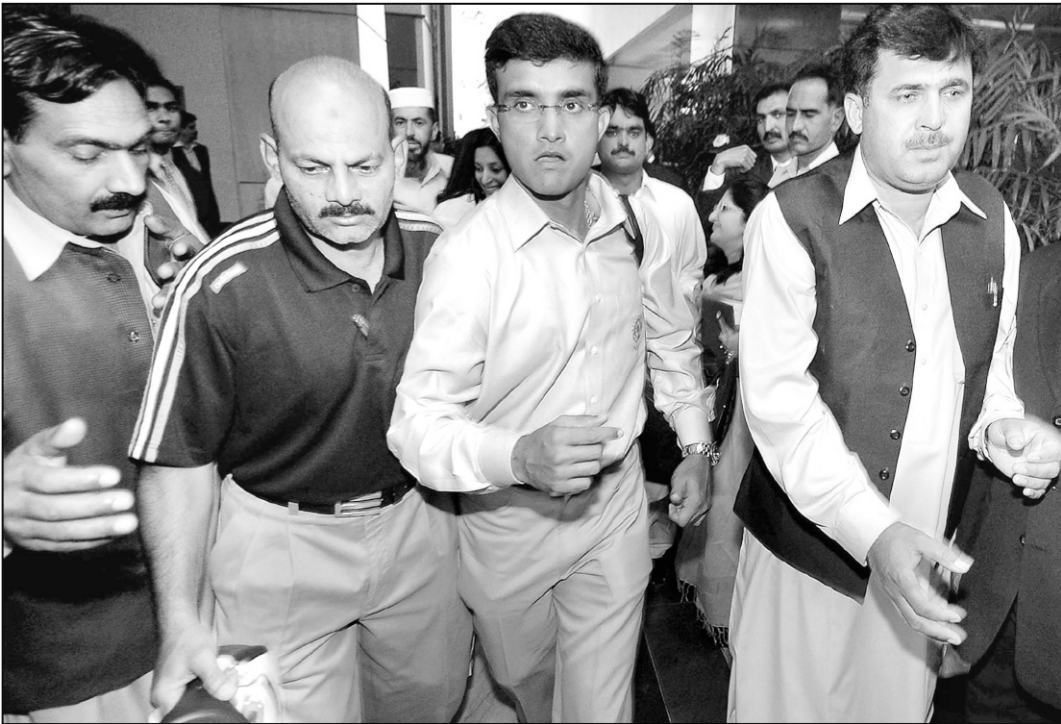
bowlers in the world, but he let us down badly," Inzamam said after the match on Friday.

Inzamam said the poor form of Akhtar, who managed just seven wickets in the three-match series at an average of 42, was one of the major reasons for the defeat.

But the 28-year-old paceman said he tried his best.

"I am a human and humans fail. But I assure everyone that I tried my best in the series," he said.

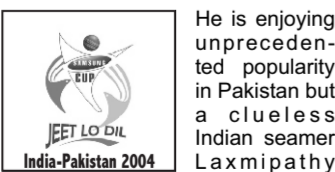
"We have lost to a better team, we did well in Lahore and won. No one criticised us then and now everyone gets out the knives after



**Pakistani security personnel escort India captain Sourav Ganguly out of the hotel on way to the airport in Islamabad yesterday.**

# The smiling assassin

**PTI, Rawalpindi**



He is enjoying unprecedented popularity in Pakistan but a clueless Indian seamer Laxmipathy Balaji, is still wondering what has made him click in this land of Pathans.

The medium-pacer, who helped shape India's historic Test series triumph on Friday, has been greeted with chants of "Balaji, Balaji" and has emerged as a hero of sorts.

Asked what was the secret of his popularity, Balaji replied modestly that even he was not sure what the reason was.

"I really don't know. I asked a few people, and they said my name sounded good. Others said it had something to do with my smile. But I really don't know," said the bowler trying hard to repress a grin.

Balaji emerged as a key bowler

claiming 12 wickets in the three-match series. In the series-decider, he took seven wickets to play a stellar role in the victory.



**LAXMIPATHY BALAJI**  
"Taking wickets is always important, it gives you the confidence. The tracks for the Test matches had something for the bowlers unlike the pitches for the one-dayers. So it

helped us," he said.

Balaji said his performance in the high-profile series has given him the confidence to perform well against any team but admitted that he had a long way to go.

"I had worked on my line and length and my in-swingers for this series. I am happy that the hard work has given some result, but I still have a long way to go," the bowling sensation said.

"I felt that I was bowling with a good rhythm in the Tests. It is now important to take this confidence forward and maintain this rhythm in future matches. I have to keep improving."

Balaji said the series triumph against Pakistan was a "special feeling" and it was great honour for him to be part of the team, which had created history.

"Beating Pakistan is always special. We had come here to do just that so it's a great feeling. We now have to carry on in this way."