National U-20

District Sports Association on July

365 are boys and 185 girls, are to

tion general secretary Shahabuddin

Ahmed informed a press conference

yesterday that sponsor Eastern Bank

Limited will pay an amount of Tk 3,50,000 out of a total budget of Tk 8

Shahabuddin also informed the

reporters that they had a plan to

hold a national long distance swim-

ming championship on the River Dakatia in Chandpur next

Mehdi Hasan Parag and Debaraj

Chatterjee secured 6.5 points each

after the end of the ninth round

games of the first Mechi Open

International Rating chess tourna-

Monir, Kazi Rashed Dinayet,

Khorshed Alam and Farhadur

Rahman Sabab earned six points

Indian International Master

Atunu Laheri is leading the table

Former world tennis number one

Marcelo Rios of Chile has retired at

the age of 28 due to a recurrent back

that the time has come for me to

leave tennis, my passion since

childhood," said Rios, named the

best Chilean sportsman of the

rankings for six weeks in 1998, becoming the first South American

to do so. He won 18 singles titles and

future. For the moment, I want to

rest, recuperate well, accept the idea

of no longer being able to play and

then think quietly about what I'll

group will enter the final round to be

held at the Sher-e-Bangla National

The Mymensingh round will end

with a match between surprise

package Sheikh Russel KC and

Jhenidah Mohammedan on July 24

and then travel to Rangpur, Jessore

GROUP A: Muktijoddha Sangsad

KC, Dhaka Abahani, Chittagong

Mohammedan, Najirpara KC of

Chandpur, Panchagarh Brothers

Union and Kararchar KC of

GROUP B: Dhaka Mohammedan,

Dhaka Brothers Union, Dhaka

Sheikh Russel KC, Jhenidah

Mohammedan, Unmochan of

Bagerhat and Bangladesh Air Force.

"I don't know what I'll do in the

one doubles during his career.

Finals of NFL

do," Rios said.

Stadium in Mirpur.

and Chittagong.

Rios hit number one in the ATP

"With great sadness, I confess

The meet began on July 13.

Aminul Islam Polash, Arman

Nepal Open

participate in the three-day meet.

About 500 participants, of them

Bangladesh Swimming Federa-

Swimming

July 20

UNB, Dhaka

November.

chess

SPORTS REPORTER

with eight points.

it a day

AFP, Santiago

Rios calls

Gavaskar tries to clear name

PTI, Dambulla

Former Indian captain Sunil Gavaskar is taking appropriate steps to clear his name from the unsavoury controversy which has broken out back home about his alleged involvement in a case of financial

"My people back home are trying to establish the facts before taking measures to deal with it," said the legendary opener who is here as a television commentator for the Asia Cup tournament.

Registrar of Companies in Ahmedabad, the capital of western state of Gujarat, has filed a complaint with the local police against Gavaskar and four other directors for having raised 46 million rupees out of a public issue for a clothes and shoe company but failed to issue dividends to subscribers out of it.

Gavaskar, looking cool and unperturbed, said he had resigned from his post as a director at least a decade back in the 90s

"During my brief association with it, I hardly attended any meeting of this company. The thing to remember is that I wasn't an executive director who is involved in the day-to-day running of a company."

Deport Fischer to USA or not?

AFP, Tokyo

Japanese immigration authorities are examining whether detained former world chess champion Bobby Fischer should be deported to the United States, an official said Saturday.

"We are in the process of deciding on deportation ... He was detained for violation of the immigration law but he can lodge a protest (with the justice minister)," said the official at the Narita immigration

Cases are often settled in days, but the process can drag on for weeks, said the official who declined to be named.

Fischer, 61, has been wanted by Washington since 1992 for breaking an international embargo on the former Yugoslavia.

He was taken into custody at Tokyo's Narita airport on Tuesday as he was preparing to catch a flight to Manila, according to Miyoko Watai, the head of the Japan Chess Association and a personal friend of

The US State Department cancelled Fischer's passport last December, she said, adding that Fischer had been travelling between Asia and Europe, including Japan and the Philippines.

Positive in defeat No problem

Club ground in Colombo on for India PAKISTAN Hameed c Mushfiq b Mahmud 102 Farhat lbw b Razzak Malik run out Inzamam st Mashud b Razzak Youhana not out Younis b Baisva

Razzaq cand b Rafique Moin not out Extras: (lb-3, w-6) Total: (For 6 wkts in 50 overs) 257 Fall of wickets: 1-86, 2-91, 3-200, 4-200, 5-241, 6-248 Did not bat: Sami, Akhtar, Kaneria

Bowler M Mushfig 10 Razzak 10 Mahmud 10 Rafique BANGLADESH Omar run out

Ashraful c Moin b Sami Bashar Ibw b Sami Saleh cand b Malik Kapali c Hameed b Farhat Mushfiq lbw b Akhtar Mashud b Akhtar

Rafique c Hameed b Kaneria

18

Mahmud c Razzaq b Akhtar Baisya b Malik Razzaknotout Extras: (lb-10, nb-5, w-6) Total: (All out in 45.2 overs) Fall of wickets: 1-48, 2-52, 3-97, 4-114, 5-118, 6-136, 7-148, 8-150, 9-

Bowler Akhtar Sami Razzao Kaneria Malik Farhat Result: Pakistan won by 76 runs.

Man-of-the-match: Yasir Hameed. Toss: Pakistan. Umpires: Brian Jerling (South

Africa) and Gamini Silva (Sri

AFP, Dambulla

Rahul Dravid smashed an impressive 104 and Irfan Pathan grabbed three quick wickets as India thrashed the inexperienced United Arab Emirates by 116 runs in an Asia Cup Group B league match here on Friday.

India were tottering at 65-3 after electing to bat in the day-night match on a slow pitch before posting a competitive 260-6 against the non-Testplaying nation, thanks to Dravid's

Left-arm fast bowler Pathan then captured three early wickets in as many overs as UAE were bowled out for 144 after being 45-6 at one stage. SCOREBOARD

Scoreboard of the Asia Cup Group B match between India and UAE at the Rangiri International Stadium on

INDIA: 260 for 6 in 50 overs (Dravid 104, Ganguly 55, Kaif 32)

Saeed c Kaifb Pathan Arshad c Dravid b Pathan Usmanlbwb Balaji Nameeuddin lbwb Pathan Khan lbwb Balaji Magsoodc Laxman b Zaheer Asghar Alilbwb Kumble Tauqirst Dravid b Tendulkar Rehman b Tendulkar Asadnotout Latif c Laxman b Tendulkar Extras: (b-8, lb-1, nb-4, w-21) Total: (Allout in 35 overs)

Fall of wickets: 1-1, 2-26, 3-26, 4-29, 5-36, 6-45, 7-97, 8-121, 9-144 Bowler Pathan 28 Balaii 42 Zaheer Kumble

Tendulkar Result: Indiawon by 116 runs. Man-of-the-match: Rahul Dravid.

Life in Lanka

Asia Cup enjoyed a rare experience of hearing it sing in the rainy season.

Colombo is a city full of big trees and wherever you go, the greenery will be with you. You can't see the bird but you will hear sweet sounds day and night.

To kill curiosity, a group of reporters approached a local jour-

Bangladesh. We do not. We have two seasons. It's only rains and shines here. So the cuckoo sings whenever it's shining," he said gleefully.

THE WAR RAGES ON

Every senior Pakistani cricketer aspires to be the captain. It is a burning issue that has never given then.

any leader time to relax knowing that there is always someone trying to pull him down. After the Miandad-Imran or Akram-Wagar duels in the 80s and 90s, it has been a case of musical chairs.

A veteran Pakistani journalist admitted that all is not well in the side. Now it seems Shoaib Akhtar wants more power and is after Inzamamul Haq's job. Rumours are "You have six seasons in rife about their recent verbal

The Rawalpindi Express is also inspired by Pakistan Cricket Board's quest for a new captain to lead the side into the 2007 World Cup because the Pakistan think-tank believes that 'big boy' Inzamam would not be able to continue until

Stop conspiracy: Amalesh

that Abahani has a glorious history of winning titles against all odds but added that nowadays off-pitch happenings are dominating how a season turns out.

Amalesh, who coached Abahani to lift the inaugural edition of the NFL, said that he has got a very strong squad to repeat the 1999 feat.

"But there is a pre-condition we want fair judgement on the field. Our preparation is not bad and I am hopeful the boys will fight all the way in the competition," he said.

A long-serving Abahani midfielder Amalesh admitted that Abahani suffered because of a cold relationship between Anatoly and manager Monem Munna over playing Anatoly's son Maxim.

Yes, there was a problem with Maxim but it was not as serious as people believed. We had a good

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relation with him but honestly speaking his son spoiled it midway

through the league," he informed. The veteran coach said that defence was his main concern since it is totally inexperienced.

"We have a young back four but I want my stalwarts Masud Rana and Hasan to guide them. Besides, I'm relieved that my first choice goalkeeper Nizam is back to full fitness."

ABAHANI SOUAD

Goalkeepers: Nizam, Munna, Aman. Defenders: Masud Rana, Hasan, Shawkat, Siraji, Aminul, Ruku, Bipul, Wali

Midfielders: Navan, Rakib, Joy, Pranotosh, Parvez, Ashqar Babu,

Forwards: Colly Barnes, Ujjal, Khokon.

By Eugene Sheffer

With

Love"

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Amalesh's midfield will rely on the tireless running of Joy, Rakib's creativity and playmaking skills of

Ashgar Babu. Rakib is a proven fighter but he didn't do justice to his reputation in the Premier League. But he is now fully fit. Besides, our Ghanaian attacking midfielder Ibrahim will also join the team and that's good

news for us." Abahani frontline has got two promising livewires in Ujjal and Khokon. But the Dhanmondi outfit will need the goals of their Nigerian striker Colly Barnes to do the trick in the National League.

Abahani have been pencilled in Group A along with holders Muktijoddha, Chittagong Mohammedan, Najirpara KC of Chandpur, Panchagar Brothers Union and Kararchar KC of Narsingdi.

CRYPTOQUIP

YJUG

Yesterday's Cryptoquip: IF YOU PLAN TO BUY ONLY HALF A RABBIT, YOU'LL FORCE THE

Today's Cryptoquip Clue: M equals T

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.

CNKAM

UJPZCJV

BUTCHER TO SPLIT HARES.

OJZMHJX AZV

MAJG AZYJ OJJP

MAJ EHZO EFIU?

QHICQ

Khuram puts brakes FROM PAGE 13 ond and last match in the three-

on a slow pitch.

first one-dayer in 18 months, hit nine fours in his eighth halfcentury in 46 matches.

Gunawardene steadied the innings after the cheap dismissals of openers Saman Jayantha (18) and veteran Sanath Jayasuriya (21), adding 64 for the third wicket with Kumar Sangakkara (17).

Khan triggered a middle-order collapse when he dismissed Tillakaratne Dilshan (six) and Thilina Kandamby (four) to send the hosts reeling at 161-6. His third victim was Gunawardene, caught by Sameer Zia.

He was well-supported by fast 2-35 off 10 overs.

The UAE were also a bowler short for a major part of the innings as left-arm seamer Asim Saeed returned to the pavilion due to a sprained muscle after bowling just two overs.

struggled for runs, especially against Khan who kept a tidy line and length in his impressive spell.

Jayasuriya, Jayantha, Sangakkara and stand-in captain Mahela Jayawardene (26) all failed to build on good starts.

ball 26 before being run out going for the second run. He led the team in the absence of Marvan Atpattu, who was rested along with left-arm fast bowler Chaminda Vaas.

The UAE are playing their sec-

Gaddafi plots Palace coup?

REUTERS, London

Libyan leader Colonel Muammar Gaddafi could buy promoted Premier League soccer club Crystal The 21st National Under-20 Palace, The Guardian says. Swimming Championships begin at the swimming pool of Borgra

It said Gaddafi, who owns a 7.5 per cent stake in Italian club luventus, has not made an offer yet but has shown interest in the small south London club that surprisingly won the promotion playoffs in May.

"I've been told that Gaddafi and his son (Al-Saadi) are interested in acquiring Palace," the Guardian quoted the club's chairman Simon

Jordan as saying.

Jordan said there had been no formal approach but if there was "I'd consider it ... If it's beneficial to the club it will be considered."

Having taken over the club four years ago when it was in administration and overseen a remarkable recovery capped by the team's unexpected promotion, Jordan has said he wants to quit but will only do so when the right buyer is found.

Jordan said there might be many people in Britain who would object to Gaddafi being involved in an English football club given the two countries' long enmity.

Ties between Britain and Libya warmed this year after the latter agreed to pay damages for the 1988 airliner bombing over Lockerbie, Scotland, which killed 270 people.

Palace last played in the premier league in 1998

Murali woos

FROM PAGE 13 going the law as it stands today," he explained.

Like Ian Chappell, Woolmer also urged to change the 'crooked law', which might deem that the actions of a lot of bowlers are not within the

Bahrain hold

FROM PAGE 13 Hubail shocked China on 41 minutes with a superbly goal on the counter. The Bahrainis broke out swiftly after snuffing out a Chinese attack, and Talal Yusuf split the defence with a 40-yard pass to Hubail who looked offside.

China goalkeeper Liu Yunfei got caught in two minds after advancing off his line and could only palm the advancing Bahraini player's perfectly weighted lob into the net. China left the field at half-time to

howls of derision from their fans, but came out for the second half with all guns blazing to have the Bahrainis on the back foot immedi-

Bahrain keeper Ali Saeed was forced to clear after striker Li chested down after 49 minutes before Zhou Ting saw his shot parried away two minutes later.

China's pressure got its reward on 59 minutes though when Yan forced a handball from Sayed Mahfoodh for the penalty.

Zheng buried his shot to Ali Saeed's left but was ordered to take the kick again by Malaysian referee Mohammed Salleh Subkhiddin. Zheng made no mistake with the second, chipping down the middle to level.

Buoyed by the equaliser, China continued to dominate and they were soon in the lead. Zhou strode purposefully into Bahrain territory before slipping a pass to striker Li, who rolled a neat finish past Ali Saeed.

China looked headed for victory but Bahrain refused to roll over and Ali left the home fans dumbstruck with just a minute left with a shot that flew past Liu.

The left-hander, playing his

bowler Ali Asad, who finished with

The Sri Lankan batsmen still

Jayawardene slammed a run-a-

team group, having lost the opener against India by 116 runs on

SCOREBOARD

Jayantha b Maqsood

Scoreboard of the Sri Lankan innings against the United Arab Emirates in Asia Cup Group B match at the Rangiri International Stadium on Saturday: SRILANKA

Jayasuriya lbw b Asad Gunawardene c Zia b Khan 73 Sangakkara Ibw b Zia Javawardene run out Dilshan b Khan Kandamby c Maqsood b Khan Chandana b Asad Zoysa c Zia b Arshad 21 Muralitharan b Khan Malinga not out Extras: (b-10, lb-4, w-10) Total: (All out in 50 overs) Fall of wickets: 1-39, 2-41, 3-105, 4-143, 5-151, 6-161, 7-190, 8-214, 9-

222				
Bowler	0	M	R	W
Asad	10	0	35	2
Saeed	2	0	15	0
Maqsood	7	0	60	1
Zia	10	0	44	1
Tauqir	10	1	34	0
Khan	10	0	32	4
Arshad	1	0	5	1
UAE: Kha	n, Sa	eed,	Ars	had,
Usman, Na	eemu	ldin,	Maqs	ood,

Asghar, Tauqir, Zia, Asad, Rai. Toss: Sri Lanka. Umpires: Peter Parker (Australia) and Ian Howell (South Africa).



TIME TO RELAX: Brazilian coach Carlos Alberto Parreira relaxes by the poolside at the team hotel in Arequipa, Peru. Brazil will face Mexico in the Copa America quarterfinals on July 18.

Saudi quest starts today



AFP, Chengdu

Injury-hit Saudi Arabia kick off their quest for a fourth Asian Cup crown here Sunday against Turkmenistan while the battling footballers from war-torn Iraq open their campaign. The Saudis beat Turkmenistan 3-

0 in a World Cup qualifier last month, but will face the Central Asian side this time with five key players out injured, including midfielder Mohammed Noor and goalkeeper Mohammed Al Daeyea.

"I've had to send back five injured players to Saudi Arabia due to injury," Dutch coach Gerard Van Der Lem said. "But I think we will be fine... we'll be ready Sunday." Saudi Arabia won the Asian Cup

in 1984, 1988 and 1996 and were

runners up in the last tournament in Long one of Asia's strongest teams, they are favoured to win Group Cand challenge Japan, South Korea and hosts China for this year's

Turkmenistan, playing in their

first Asian Cup, are aiming to get into the final eight and will be counting on high scoring veteran midfielder Begenchmuhammed Kuliyev and youthful striker Vladimir Bayramov.

Van Der Lem, who once coached Dutch giants Ajax, is expected to go right at the Turkmenis from the start in an effort to re-enact the 3-0 first half lead that his side built up in their last meeting.

In Sunday's second Group C match, Uzbekistan will take on a youthful Iraqi squad that is in for a long summer of football and will be representing their war-torn country at the Athens Olympics next month. "In a tournament like this, the

first match is the most important, so we must win against Uzbekistan if we expect to move into the final eight," Iraqi coach Adnan Hamd told The Iraqi squad, led by midfield playmaker Abdul Wahab Abu Al

Hail, qualified for both the Asian Cup and the Olympics under extremely difficult circumstances while war raged in their homeland. "My players feel that what they must do is they must think of our

people in Iraq, they must make them feel happy in this situation," Hamd "I think this is very important for us now, all the team feels responsible for our country.

The Uzbeks are also thinking along similar lines, with coach Ravshan Haydarov looking to Greece's sensational win of the European Cup as inspiration for his "Any team can win this tourna-

ment as long as they have the right preparations and spirit. You only have to look at Greece's victory in the European championship to see that it is not always the big countries that win," Haydarov told journalists

"This is the Asian Cup so you cannot say this team is strong or that team is weak because everyone has the same high aims."

Haydarov shrugged off the absence of star striker Maksim Shatskikh and veteran Vladimir Maminov, both of who chose not to come to China, and expressed confidence in 34-year old Mirdjalal Kasimov's ability to lead a new generation of Uzbekistan players.

"While it is of course disappointing to lose such players it gives an opportunity for some of the youngsters to come through and prove what they can do, so in that regard we can draw a positive from the

Troussier sets his target

Indonesia is crucial," he said.

round I will regard it as a failure. I

expect to get to the quarterfinals as a

his Qatari paymasters after defeats

in 2006 World Cup preliminary

matches have left his team strug-

gling to reach the final round of

spell coaching in Africa before

leading Japan to the Asian Cup in

2000 and into the last 16 of the World

Cup two years ago, said his team

problems were caused by poor

that to score we need 20 crosses,

"The problem at the moment is

Troussier, who enjoyed a long

Troussier is under pressure from

quarter-finals.

minimum.'

Asian qualifiers.

finishing.



AFP, Beijing

Qatar coach Philippe Troussier believes his side's hopes of progressing in the Asian Cup hinge on them getting a flying start against Indonesia here Sunday.

Troussier, who led Japan to glory at the last Asian Cup four years ago. has set his sights on steering an inexperienced Qatar team into the quarterfinals of the tournament from Group A. But with tough matches against

Gulf rivals Bahrain and hosts China to come, the Frenchman believes that his youthful line-up must score a victory over the Indonesians to stay on course for the last eight.

"My players have no experience of major tournaments but I'm feeling pretty good," Troussier said.

Hiddink confirms German approach

AFP, Berlin

PSV Eindhoven's Dutch coach Guus Hiddink on Friday confirmed he had been in contact with the German football federation (DFB) about the German national team coach post.

The Danish football federation however made it known on Friday that they did not wish to release their national coach Morten Olsen who is many people's favourite to take over therole Hiddink told the Dutch press he

had received an offer to succeed Rudi Voller who resigned on June 24, the day after the German team were knocked out of the Euro 2004 tournament in Portugal. PSV Eindhoven president Harry van Raaij however said, according to

Friday's Bild newspaper, he was not

pleased that the DFB had not con-

tacted him directly about Hiddink. Kicker magazine reported Olsen as saying recently that to be coach of the German national team would be a very attractive proposition.

And Franz Beckenbauer, a World Cup winner in 1974 as captain and Real Mallorca. 1990 as coach, was quoted in Wednesday's Bild newspaper saying he expected the next coach to be a foreigner though he did not name

"The key point for this team is to while Japan need only six and start well. The match against France probably need only three,' Troussier said. If we play at the level I know we The problem is not about the can play, then I'm confident we can intention -- we have been playing get the result that we need. My first

very aggressively. But the problem is target regarding the job, and the at the feet of the players, about the team's potential is to get to the concentration and the decision-"If we don't get to the second "Unfortunately we have to make

a big, big effort to score."

Troussier can take some comfort from the fact that his team's opponents at the Workers Stadium on Sunday have been having similar problems in front of goal and have a dreadful Asian Cup record for finding the net. They failed to score once

during the 2000 tournament. Indonesia has suffered three defeats to club sides in the past month, prompting Bulgarian coach Ivan Kolev to make wholesale

changes to the squad. Most notably, Kolev axed Ilham Jayakasuma, Indonesian football's top goalscorer and most valuable

Valencia face Villarreal

Opening Primera Liga ties released

Football

REUTERS, Madrid

Valencia will begin the defence of their Primera Liga title with a home game against regional rivals Villarreal on the weekend of August

"They are going to be very diffi-cult opponents," Valencia coach Claudio Ranieri told the club's website. "These sorts of games are always very tough and it might have been better if we had met our neighbours at a later date." The draw for the new season's

Football Federation on Friday, threw up several intriguing clashes in the opening round of matches. Real Madrid, who ended last season with a worst-ever five- match

calendar, carried out by the Spanish

losing streak, face a tricky trip to

The islanders, who are now coached by former Real boss Benito Floro, claimed an impressive 3-2 win at the Bernabeu in May and have a good record against the side from

Last season's runners-up Barcelona begin their campaign at Racing Santander, who dealt them a 3-0 defeat in the equivalent fixture last season. Primera Liga debutants Getafe

play King's Cup winners Real

Zaragoza in the top flight, while Numancia and Levante, also promoted last season, meet Real Betis and Real Sociedad. Atletico Madrid face an early reunion with former coach Gregorio

Manzano when they host Malaga and Deportivo Coruna make the trip to Espanyol, who are coached by former Celta Vigo boss Miguel Angel Real Madrid host Valencia on

October 23-24 in their eighth game of the season and visit the Mestalla on March 6. They will meet arch-rivals Barcelona for the first time at the Nou Camp on November 20-21, with

the return set for April 9-10. The league season ends on the weekend of May 28-29, with the King's Cup final taking place on

Saturday June 11.

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