#### Mumbai, Kolkata may miss Pak cricket.

BBC ONLINE, undated

Faridabad.

Major Indian cities Mumbai and Kolkata are likely to miss out on hosting Pakistan's tour of the coun-

"Test matches are scheduled for Mohali, Chennai and Bangalore," said a Board of Control for Cricket in

India (BCCI) source. "The one-day matches are scheduled for Kochin, Jamshedpur, Visakhapatnam, Kanpur and

The BCCI is set to announce a final itinerary for the tour, Pakistan's first since 1999, on Thursday.

The two sides will play three Tests beginning on March 4, 12 and 20.

They will be followed by five onedayers, the first on March 28, and the tour will end on April 9.

Mumbai's exclusion is linked to security reasons as Hindu fundamentalist party Shiv Sena has voiced its opposition Pakistan playing

But Kolkata's omission can only be linked to Pakistan's three oneday victories there in 1987, 1989 and last year.

However, sources in the Pakistan Cricket Board said they would consider playing in Mumbai because they didn't want to deprive the city of a high profile match.

Mumbai did not host any matches on Pakistan's last tour in 1999, after death threats from Shiv Sena, whose activists also dug up the

#### Pakistan walk

FROM PAGE 13 Between Pakistan and the West Indies at the Gabba in Brisbane on WESTINDIES Gayle c Malik b Razzaq Hinds c Butt b Hafeez Sarwan c Naved b Mahmood Lara c Hafeez b Naved Powell cAkmal b Naved Chanderpaulnotout Extras: (b-1, w-9, nb-5) Total: (For 5 wkts in 50 overs) Fall of wickets: 1-86, 2-149, 3-209, 4-

211,5-273 Did not bat: Samuels, Browne, Bradshaw, Dillon, Collins Akhtar 2.5 0 7. Naved 10 0 55 Mahmood 9.1 1 57. Afridi 10 0 39 54 43 10 Razzaq PAKISTAN Butt b Dillon Akmal c Lara b Bradshaw Hafeez c Gayle b Dillon Malik c Browne b Bradshaw Inzamam not out Youhana not out Extras: (lb-1, w-3, nb-3) Total: (For 4 wkts in 47 ov Fall of wickets: 1-28, 2-36, 3-159, 4-Did not bat: Razzaq, Afridi, Mahmood, Akhtar, Naved Bowler

AFP, Brisbane

had to leave the field.

two weeks.

der problem.

runs from 17 overs.

25 They're

26 Dumb-

founded

27 One's per-

saying (Abbr.)

29 Explan

COW

common

evidence

medes'

quish

Free"

lioness

have we

bearing

33 Less

By Eugene Sheffer

6 Hodges of 28 Pithy

8 Prestidigi- 32 "Holy

3 Put

4 Admits

baseball

7 Homer's

vessel

10 Meadow

Pakistan were hoping for a swift

recovery for paceman Shoaib Akhtar

after scans Wednesday revealed a

tear in his left hamstring which

A two-week stint would all but

rule him out of the series until the

best-of-three-match final series

should Pakistan reach the playoffs

against either Australia or the West

their own problems, missing the off-

spin of Chris Gayle during

Wednesday's match due to a shoul-

and made 82, was still unfit to bowl

and the Windies relied upon expen-

sive part-timers Marlon Samuels,

Ramanesh Sarwan and Wavell

The trio went for a combined 128

Gayle, who opened the batting

The West Indies were suffering

Collins 49 Bradshaw Dillon 46 Samuels 72 Sarwan Hinds 25 Result: Pakistan won by 6 wickets.

Man-of-the-match: Kamran Akmal. Toss: Pakistan.

Umpires: Rudi Koertzen (South Africa) and Peter Parker (Australia).

#### SERIES TABLE

Points table in the VB Series after Wednesday's match between the West Indies and Pakistan: Windles

35 Morning

36 Makes

moisture

comfort-

39 "- Town

display

48 Unworldly

50 Buckeyes'

51 Stench

52 Affront

keglers do

41 Nativity

45 What

CROSSWORD

8 Comedian 37 Heavenly

12 Animation 40 Hiatus

ACROSS

1 Computer

13 Oklahoma

14 Vicinity

18 Go up

19 Tackle

21 Theater-

goers' needs, for

22 Holy 26 A place to

30 Acapulco

32 Regis!

mono

gram

19-Across

15 Delightful 17 Nibble

4 Kind of

#### AKMAL STUNNER! Pakistan wicket-keeper Kamran Akmal raises his bat after hitting his first hundred during the VB Tri-Series match against the West Indies in Brisbane yesterday. Shoaib injured ICC makes Rankings

FROM PAGE 13
"I congratulate the ICC on their initiative in giving these rankings official status for the first time," said Dexter, also a former England chairman of selectors.

could rule him out for the remainder "It gives me great satisfaction to of the VB Series cricket competition. know that the cricketing public will Shoaib managed to bowl just 2.5 continue to enjoy their interest in overs during Pakistan's six-wicket the continuously changing standwin over the West Indies before he ings of all the best players in the world," the Sussex great added.

But captain Inzamamul Hag said The rankings will now be sponsored by leading Asian electronic there was no need to send for any goods manufacturer LG. reinforcements and that Shoaib

According to the rankings, the could be playing again within one to world's current leading Test bats-man is Jacques Kallis with Australia "The doctor says he will hopepaceman Glenn McGrath the best fully be playing after one week and that's when we'll get him (back)," he

Following are current official Test, one-day and players rankings announced by the International Cricket Council on Wednesday:

#### PLAYERS' RANKINGS

Pos	Batsman	Country
1	J Kallis	SAfrica
2	RDravid	India
3	RPonting	Australia
4	BLara	WIndies
5	DMartyn	Australia
6 7	VSehwag	India
7	STendulkar	India
8	MHayden	Australia
9	KSangakkara	SLanka
10	AGilchrist	Australia
Pos	Bowler	Country
1	GMcGrath	Australia
2	MMuralitharan	SLanka
3	SPollock	SAfrica
4	SAkhtar	Pakistan

1	ankin	gs
	SHarmison	England
	AKumble	India
	JGillespie	Australia
	MNtini	SAfrica
	SWarne	Australia
)	CVaas	SLanka
	-ROUNDERS	
on	ly five named)	
05	Player	Country

-ROUNDERS	
ly five named)	
Player	Country
JKallis	SAfrica
AFlintoff	England
SPollock	SAfrica
SJayasuriya	SLank
ChamindaVaas	SLank
TRANKINGS	
Country	Point
Australia	132
England	109
AND THE RESIDENCE OF THE PARTY	

	India	108
	; Sri Lanka	103
	Pakistan	101
	South Africa	100
	New Zealand	93
	West Indies	73
	Zimbabwe	42
	Bangladesh	6
NE-	DAYRANKING	S
s	Country	Points
	Australia	137
	NewZealand	120
	New Zealand Sri Lanka	120 117
		1 To
	Sri Lanka	117
	Sri Lanka Pakistan	117 109
	Sri Lanka Pakistan England	117 109 109
	Sri Lanka Pakistan England West Indies	117 109 109 105

Kenya

Kuznetsova has been caught in a drugs storm this week after authorities in Belgium revealed she had tested positive for the stimulant ephedrine at an exhibition event last month.

The 19-year-old fiercely denied being a dope cheat and took refuge from the controversy by bludgeon-ing her opponent with a near flawless performance.

show that it doesn't affect me ... I didn't do anything wrong," said Kuznetsova.

But other seeds were not so lucky. Japan's 28th seed Shinobu Asagoe lost to China's Li, while Russian ninth seed Vera Zvonareva crashed 6-3, 6-3 to compatriot Vera

World number 64 Li, who made history last year by becoming the first Chinese player to win a title on the WIA Tour when she won in Guangzhou, advanced to the third round after downing Asagoe 6-3, 6-4

notable results by Chinese women, who have come from nowhere in the past decade to establish themselves on the international circuit.

#### **United coming** to China

AFP, Beijing

Premiership.

AFP, Zurich

release for 2005.

FIFATOP 20

3. Argentina

4. Czech Rep

5. Spain 764

6. Netherlands

2. France

7. Mexico

8. England

9. Portugal

11. USA

10. Italy 738

12. Rep of Ire

13. Sweden

14. Denmark

16. Germany

17. Uruguay

20. Iran 695

REUTERS, Melbourne

said on Wednesday.

during that time.

SL season

cut short

the tsunami disaster.

affected by the tsunami.

board media release said.

REUTERS, Colombo

Brisbane.

Hafeez's bowling

action reported

Pakistan all-rounder Mohammad

Hafeez has been reported for a

suspect bowling action, the

International Cricket Council (ICC)

the umpires and match referee after

Wednesday's limited-overs match

between Pakistan and West Indies in

Under the ICC's regulations,

Hafeez must spend the next six

weeks with a biomechanist to iden-

tify and correct any flaws in his

action but will be allowed to play

its rules on suspect bowling actions

by adjusting the degree at which

bowlers can straighten their arm. A

decision is expected when the coun-

cil meets in Melbourne next month.

Sri Lanka Cricket has cut short their

domestic cricket season because of

The board announced that all

"These clubs, which had lost

players and equipment, have indi-

cated their inability to continue

playing in these tournaments," a

south coast club pushing hard for

promotion in Division 2, lost seven

members of their first XI squad.

Hambantota Cricket Club, a

Several of Sri Lanka's players met

the traumatised team captain,

Shihan Singwansa, while delivering

aid to tsunami victims over the

tournaments would be abandoned

after a request made by clubs

The ICC is considering changing

The ICC received a report from

18. Greece

19. Japan

.Turkey 711

Brazil 842

FIFA world rankings

World champions Brazil remain top

of the FIFA world rankings in the first

With few matches being played

over the end of the year period, the

main mover was Germany who

climb three places from 19th to 16th

747

due to their successful tour of Asia.

No changes

at the top

Manchester United will bring its allstar squad to China in July for a friendly against Chinese Super League team Beijing Hyundai. The Red Devils will take the field

at Beijing's Workers' Stadium on July 26 as part of an Asian tour, club officials were cited as saying by the China Daily Wednesday.

"We hope that by playing the preseason match in Beijing we will encourage local youngsters to take up the sport and inspire some of them to reach the very highest levels of professional soccer," said club commercial director Andy Anson.

It will be the English team's first appearance in Beijing. They played an exhibition game in Shanghai in

You can be sure we will bring our full squad of players to Beijing, subject to injuries," said Anson.

The former Premiership champions will also play in Hong Kong on

Asia is seen as a key market for the world's richest sports club and over the past three years it has opened at least 10 of its own "Mega Stores" across the continent. To further boost interest in their Beijing match, Anson said United's

Chinese signing Dong Fangzhou would likely be part of the team. Dong joined the club in 2003 in a three-year deal worth 3.5 million pounds (6.4 million dollars) and was loaned out to FC Antwerp in a bid to acquire top-flight experience before

beginning his career in the Agassi demoralised Rainer Schuettler in a repeat of their 2003

Eighth-seeded Agassi disman-

# Early scare for Federer

## Australian 3 Open

World number one Roger Federer was pushed all out in a thrilling three-set battle with spirited Japanese qualifier Takao Suzuki before claiming his place in the third round at the Australian Open on Wednesday.

Federer, the heavy favourite to win the year's first Grand Slam tournament after an outstanding 2004 when he won three Grand Slam titles and the season-ending Tennis Masters Cup, finally doused the 203rd-ranked Suzuki 6-3, 6-4, 6-4 in 1hr53min.

The defending champion will next take on Finland's Jarkko Nieminen, who earlier knocked Thailand's tennis pride Paradorn Srcihaphan out of the Open.

Suzuki unsettled Federer's smooth rhythm with net-rushing tactics and through the three sets made a total of 96 approaches to the

Suzuki won his first-ever match at the Open in the first round against American Jan-Michael Gambill and after coming up empty in his two previous tilts at the year's first Grand Slam tournament in 1999 and 2001.

Federer joins four-time winner Andre Agassi and two-time finalist Marat Safin in the third round.

final here as he marched into the

tled the 40th-ranked German on Rod Laver Arena, 6-3, 6-1, 6-0 win in just 1hr 27min, a near carbon-copy of his win over Schuettler in the

Australian final two years ago. Agassi's latest masterclass set up a third round encounter with compatriot serve-volleyer Taylor Dent on Friday.

The 34-year old American, the oldest man in the field, showed no signs of a hip injury that last week threatened his participation as he ran down drop shots and drilled backhands and forehands past the hapless German.

To be able to have the time to get it (injury) better up to this point is a great sign that it will be 100 percent, because I've got another day now," Agassi said. "My movement was plenty good enough for me to think about my game and not think about

Agassi is on target to face Federer in the quarterfinals in the top half of the men's draw.

Safin wasted no time in reaching the third round with a brisk demolition of Czech Bohdan Ulihrach.

The Russian fourth seed -- who slogged through a record 30 sets lasting over 21 hours during last year's march to the final where he lost to Federer -- was in no mood to hang around and raced to a 6-4, 6-1, 6-3 victory.

Safin, who also whistled through his first round tie without dropping a set, now faces 28th seed Mario Ancic of Croatia in the next round as he seeks to go one better than last

best start ever to a Grand Slam, saying hard work and a wiser outlook were paying dividends.

"This is the best start I've had," Safin said. "I did a good job in the

preseason, worked hard. I'm ready. "Also, I got older a little bit. I have more experience so I know what to do. Always I was looking for a good start in every Grand Slam, but for

French Open champion Gaston Gaudio came from a set down to beat American Mardy Fish on the way to the third round

some reason not enough experience

The Argentine 10th seed fought back to oust Fish 2-6, 6-4, 7-5, 7-6 (7/4) in three hours and will now play Slovakia's 20th seed Dominik Hrbaty in the third round.

Thailand's tennis hero Paradorn Srichaphan missed out on his chance of facing Federer in the third round after going down to Finland's Jarkko Nieminen, 6-3, 6-4, 6-2.

Elsewhere, Slovakia's Karol Beck came from two sets down to knock out underdone German 16th-seed Tommy Haas 5-7, 2-6, 6-2, 7-6 (7/5), 6-3 and rising Swede Joachim Johansson, the 11th seed, Dutchman Peter Wessels 6-3, 7-5, 6-

The 2002 Australian Open champion and 30th seed Thomas ohansson of Sweden was taken to five sets before extinguishing Argentine Agustin Calleri 6-4, 5-7, 6-3, 2-6, 7-5 to set up a third-round meeting with American Kevin Kim, who ended Spaniard giant-killer Guillermo Garcia Lopez's run with a Safin said he was enjoying his straight sets 6-2, 6-4, 6-2 win.

# 'I'm the donkey bowler'

the series with 24 victims.

development to play at Free State.

The wickets are flat, and it was fan-

tastic to play with and be coached by a legend like (former South African

### Cricket

REUTERS, Johannesburg

Despite his match-winning performance in the fourth Test against South Africa seamer Matthew Hoggard considers himself England's "donkey" bowler.

Hoggard took a career-best seven for 61 to spur England to a 77-run win over South Africa in Johannesburg on Monday to give the tourists a 2-1 series lead going into the final Test at Centurion.
"It's the donkey work, really,"

Hoggard, who took 12 wickets in the match, told a news conference on Tuesday with reference to his role in

"It's about putting the ball in the right areas consistently. Shaun Pollock does it for South Airica and Glenn McGrath does it for Australia.

"We've also got the big lads like (Andrew) Flintoff and (Steve) tarmison to run in and territy them if you need to."

Hoggard, who has taken 141 Test wickets at 30.90 apiece, said his understanding of his role in Michael Vaughan's side gave him security. 'You don't feel threatened that if

you don't get wickets you are going to be left out of the side," he said. Hoggard played in South Africa for Free State in the 1998-99 and

MATTHEW HOGGARD

fast bowler) Allan Donald." The fifth Test, which starts on Friday, will be Hoggard's last match of the tour because he is not in the one-day squad. Meanwhile, South Africa have

axed fast bowler Dale Steyn for the fifth Test at Centurion.

Steyn missed the third Test in ribcage muscle tear.

1999-2000 seasons, and believes Cape Town with a shoulder strain but was recalled for the that experience was standing him in good stead. The 28-year-old is Johannesburg match after his England's leading wicket-taker in replacement Charl Langeveldt injured his left hand. "It was a massive part of my

The 21-year-old made his debut in the first Test in Port Elizabeth but has been dropped from the squad after taking eight wickets at an average of 52 runs in three matches.

Andre Nel has been placed on standby for Langevelds, who will have a fitness test later on Nel, who last played a Test in

March 2004 and has just made his way back from injury, has taken 36 wickets in 10 appearances. Middle-order batsman Hashim

Amla, dropped for the fourth Test, was also cut from the squad. Amla played in the second and third Tests but only managed a top score of just

A report from Centurion adds, Flintoff will play in the Test after being given an injection to help

"Andrew Flintoff had an injection in the ankle following a scan today," an England media release said on Wednesday.

"He will play in the fifth Test, and the injury will be reviewed after the

Flintoff almost missed the fourth Test against South Africa with a

## NZ & World XI allowed to train on match pitch

#### Cricket

AFP, Auckland

In a departure from international cricket regulations, the New Zealand and World XI teams will be allowed to practice on the match surface the day before their three one-day matches, the New Zealand Herald saidWednesday.

The previously unheard of provision will provide up to 60 minutes of practice for each team, in the hope the extra exposure will take early sting out of the wicket and counter one of the game's biggest problemsthat limited over matches are effectively decided in the first 20

In terms of international cricket, the move comes as a radical concept, as match pitches usually remain in the control of the groundsman until the start of play, and are off limits to players.

But the International Cricket Council decision against giving the matches full one-day international (ODI) status has provided an experimental window for New Zealand Cricket, which received stinging criticism for preparing bowlerfriendly pitches against India two years ago.

New Zealand captain Stephen Fleming said he was interested in seeing how the new practice conditions worked out.

"People are obviously working hard on solutions and if this is going to make a better contest I'm all for it," he said.

The three matches were hastily arranged to provide extra competition for New Zealand after the Sri Lankan tour was cut short following the devastating tsunamis which swept through south Asia three

weeksago.
Fleming attempted to erase speculation of the series turning into a festival affair because of its fund-raising aspect to provide aid for tsunami victims.

"No, that won't happen because the players won't allow it to," he "The importance of the series is

very clear to us -- we need a tough match-play play (game) before Australia arrive, so we'll be working very hard.

'It's crucial we keep our structure and shape and treat these games like fully fledged ODIs." The mini series starts in

Christchurch on Saturday followed by matches in Wellington on Monday and Hamilton next Wednesday.

#### Isunami match

FROM PAGE 13

Insurance had already pledged "a significant donation" and the club added they hope to attract corporate as well as public support for a match which has the official backing of both the International Cricket Council (ICC) and the England and Wales Cricket Board (ECB).

Surrey chief executive Paul Sheldon said: "We are delighted to be able to play a small part in helping to rebuild the shattered lives of the victims of this terrible disaster. "Brit Insurance's immense

generosity will mean that a large number of our Asian friends and supporters will have an opportunity of seeing some of their greatest heroes in the first Twenty20 event of its kind.

Sheldon's counterpart at ECB, David Collier, added: "The world of cricket has played a leading role in responding to the tragic events caused by the Tsunami.

#### Kenyan cricket crisis deepens

AFP, Nairobi

Kenya's cricket crisis escalated Tuesday when the sport's ex-ruling board, sacked by the country's sports minister last week for mismanagement, won a court order preventing the government from interfering in its operations.
A Nairobi court issued a restrain-

Association, pending a ruling in a civil suit soon to be filed by its members that aims to quash their dis-The order from high court judge Melton Makhandia also prevents a government-appointed interim committee from taking over the

ing order barring government action against the Kenya Cricket

KCA's work and offices in Nairobi's Ruaraka suburb. The injunctions were sought by the sacked president of the KCA, Sharad Ghai, who claims sports minister Ochilo Ayacko exceeded his mandate and acted improperly when

he fired the old board on Friday. Ayacko accused the board of financial mismanagement, failing to resolve a long-standing feud with national team players and being too slow in drawing up a new constitu-tion and named a caretaker panel to oversee the KCA until new elections

are held in April. But on Monday, Ghai told AFP he did not recognize Ayacko's decision and would contest it and, shortly thereafter, members of the interim board complained that they had been locked out of the KCA offices.

After Tuesday's court order, police were sent to the offices and instructed interim board memberswho had finally gained access to return home, officials said. Meanwhile KCA general manager

Sammy Obingo, one of the few exboard members to be included on the 11-strong interim committee, said he had been threatened with dismissal for siding with the new panel.

"They want to get rid of me," he

33 Musical based on 34 "Xanadu" band's

#### Ally McBeal's 35 "CSI" 53 Proceed 54 Antitoxins field 36 Archi-55 Detergent 16 Picked a winner? 38 Dome DOWN leader 39 Earthy 1 Canyon Kyser comeback 23 Some 24 Sea eagle 43 Access to Solution time: 25 mins. 45 Cranberry 46 "What 49 Ball-

# CRYPTOQUIP

LH YMKKC BV F

HE ZFGKELSEK'W AFO. S CKYJHE OHB MFZK

L. H. W. F. O. "L. F. J. K. M. K. F. C. L. !."
Yesterday's Cryptoquip: WORDS OF WOE FROM
A FAILING DIETER MIGHT BE "A WAIST IS A
TERRIBLE THING TO MIND."

Today's Cryptoquip Clue: L 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.

#### Sania's date FROM PAGE 13

Melbourne Park.

10

Po 1 2

"I'm a professional and I want to

Douchevina.

in 1hr7min. It was the latest in a series of

#### FROM PAGE 13 Khunpitak (Thailand) 6-3, 6-0 in the girls' doubles semifinal.

Elena on course

Boys' top-seed Chang Huai-En of Taipei eliminated Oyama Tetta of Japan 6-2, 6-2 to move into the singles semifinal.