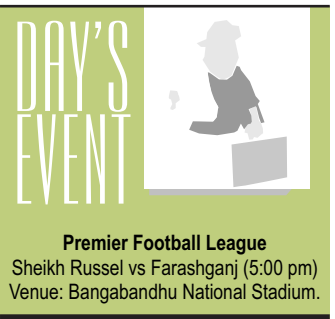




England is without a win vs Australia at Lord's in the last 18 Tests. England's last win against Australia at this venue was in 1934 by an innings and 38 runs.



David Graveney
(ECB chairman of selectors)
"He will be remembered as a tenacious batsman who served England with great ability and great pride."
On Graham Thorpe.



StanChart chess

SPORTS REPORTER

Masum Hossain of Dharmarajik School, Sharif Hossain of Hossain Ali School and Reazul Islam of Rajdhani School were sharing the lead in Group-B (Class VI-X) of the Standard Chartered School chess tournament after six rounds at the BCF auditorium and NSC conference room.

Joint leaders Masum and Sharif shared points while Reazul beat Saimon in the sixth round games to push their collection to 5.5 points.

Hot on their heels were four players – Bitan and Abhraman from Kolkata and local boys Old and Biddut – with five points.

In Group-A (KG-Class V), Abdullah Al Saif maintained solo lead with maximum six points while Saathi Majumder of Kolkata took pole position in the girls' group with 5.5 points.

Kevin predicts Eng fightback

AFP, London

England's batting star Kevin Pietersen is adamant Michael Vaughan's team can level the Ashes series at Edgbaston next month despite their 239-run defeat against Australia in the first Test.

South African-born Pietersen was a rare success story in England's four-day defeat at Lord's where he was playing his debut Test recording knocks of 57 and 64 not out.

The Hampshire batsman is confident England can bounce back in Birmingham when the second Test starts on August 4.

"It is disappointing we didn't put up a bigger fight but to take positives, Steve Harmison bowled well and I batted okay," said Pietersen.

Kiwis leave for Zimbabwe tour

AFP, Wellington

The New Zealand cricket team left Monday on the first leg of a Zimbabwe tour mired in controversy over President Robert Mugabe's campaign to demolish urban slums, leaving hundreds of thousands homeless.

The team flew out of Christchurch on its way to Namibia, where it will train and play warm-up matches before arriving in Zimbabwe on August 4 for two Tests and a three way one-day series with the hosts and India.

New Zealand Green Party co-leader Rod Donald, who has been leading a campaign to prevent the tour, said Monday it could still be stopped.

"Our government could still find the courage to stop the tour," he said.

'We have to make best use of the rules'



SPORTS REPORTER

The national cricketers got back business yesterday to prepare for the upcoming challenge against Sri Lanka in August-September.

The 22-day break after an absorbing England tour was really refreshing for the players. "We fully enjoyed the break all the way because previously we had allowed for short time to enjoy the break. It will help us to make a fresh start for the challenging Sri Lanka tour," said batting sensation Mohammad Ashraful, who was understandably chirpy along with teammates on the first day of training at the Army Stadium.

Only eleven players reported to coach Dav Whatmore. Captain Habibul Bashar only returned from United States earlier in the morning and wicketkeeper Khaled Mashud was allowed to enjoy a few more days break. The other ten are touring England with the Bangladesh A team.

For the first time Bangladesh are going to play one-day series before the Test matches. They will also be tested by the ICC's new one-day rules.

The fixture definitely offers some relief to Habibul Bashar men as many thought it could have been better if Bangladesh had played some one-day cricket first in England.

Whatmore, however, was excited at the prospect of playing under the new regulations.

"I don't think the new additions will be a burden for Bangladesh rather it might be help us. Whether it is an advantage or disadvantage doesn't matter we have to accept it."

"We have to get used to the new rules as best as possible -- super-sub and two phases of the field

restriction. I'm glad that Bangladesh is going to play under the new rules after the teams (Sri Lanka, India and West Indies) try it out in the triangular series in Colombo," said the Australian.

The 51-year-old shrewd tactician also welcomed the Board's initiative to provide a bowling expert ahead of the tour.

"We had batting and fielding coaches in my time earlier and trainer Stuart (Karpinen) has done good job helping the bowlers but we need somebody who is dedicated to giving full time to our bowlers," he said adding that he had no preferences.

The Board took the initiative especially after the England tour

where the bowlers struggled.

But pacemen Mashrafe Bin-Mortuza, Tapash Baisya believed that there was hardly any scope to bring about dramatic changes. If anything he might be able to fine-tune certain aspects.

"I've experienced taking part in a

SEE PAGE 13 COL 4



SHOW ME YOUR STRENGTH: (L) Coach Dav Whatmore (R) watches as Mohammad Rafique lifts weight at the gym of the Army Stadium yesterday. (R) Mohammad Ashraful also tests his strength on an iron bar.



PHOTOS: STAR

Bashar craves for more authority



SPORTS REPORTER

Bangladesh captain Habibul Bashar would love to have more say in team selection.

The 32-year old returned home yesterday after enjoying a three-week holiday in the United States with his family but brushed aside the jet lag from the 24-hour travel when asked to comment on the issue.

"I think the time has come to give the matter some serious thought. It is a very important issue for discussion. I would most definitely like to have a more active role in the selection process," said Bashar who has been Bangladesh's most successful skipper in their own limited way. Bashar missed the first day's training of the Tigers' preliminary camp yesterday but cleared the air a little saying he could not return earlier due to the non-availability of a flight.

The country's highest run-scorer in Test cricket also agreed with the view of chief selector Faruque Ahmed that the captain should be given a lengthy appointment.

"For the captain to have his say in

the team, you need to appoint him for a certain period of time and not on a series by series basis. That will help the skipper to plan things. Under the present policy of the board (BCB), the selectors are not obliged to seek or accept my opinion."

Bashar also admitted that with his current status, it was impossible for him to exert enough authority.

"The boys are very helpful and they are very cooperative towards



HABIBUL BASHAR

me. But I think there is a need for a certain amount of power to handle the team properly. There has to be

room for the captain to express himself and show his personality. Without that you can not expect something creative from him."

When asked whether he would discuss these factors with the BCB as expected by the board president, Bashar replied in the positive.

"I have read the comments of the chief selector Faruque Ahmed on the issue on the internet version of Daily Star Sport. Actually I have been thinking about it for quite a long time and definitely I will let my desires known to the board soon. It will be excellent if we can put some of the things in practice before our next assignment."

Coach Dav Whatmore meanwhile was diplomatic in his views on the matter.

"Captaining the team is a very important position. The case is not that we don't talk to him (Bashar). At the moment he is not excluded from the selection procedure because he gets information and we also get information from him. His opinion is heard," said Whatmore.

"He is still (part of the process), but officially it needs to be seen what can be done."

Abahani off awkwardly

Arambagh handcuff Sky-Blues again

SPORTS REPORTER



Unlike their championship rivals, Abahani made a stumbling start to the second-leg of the Premier Bank Premier Football League yesterday.

While Mohammedan, Brothers and Muktiyoddha got off to comfortable identical 3-1 wins, struggling giants Abahani's woes intensified when they suffered a goalless draw at the hands of Arambagh Krira Sangha at the Bangabandhu National Stadium.

Lying a distant fourth in the ten-team table with 16 points, Abahani looked incapable of winning but had Ibrahim not squandered a golden chance -- firing a weak penalty straight at Arambagh keeper Shakil, the Sky-Blues could have stolen three points.

It was the second time that Arambagh handcuffed Abahani in the league after the two sides' 1-1 draw in the first leg.

Abahani had goalkeeper Nizam back after five matches but with five key players -- Joy, Ndem, Parvez, Farhad and Tipu -- absent due to suspension, they were forced to field one of the weakest teams in decades.

After a decent start, which saw Ujjal's second minute freekick spectacularly saved by a full stretch Shakil and Ghanaian forward Ibrahim's placing shot going just wide, Abahani failed to make any attempt on the rival goal in the rest of the first half.

Abahani even did not have enough strength on the reserve bench and made only one change, bringing on veteran Tushar after the break for another ageing midfielder Selim. Tushar's long passes, however, created a few chances for Anwar but the inexperienced striker -- playing his first full game for the

popular Dhanmondi outfit -- looked shaky in the scoring zone.

Anwar, left unmarked by the three-man Arambagh central defence twice, headed the ball over the bar on both occasions and his goal midway through the second half was ruled out for offside.

Abahani were finally thrown a lifeline in the 71st minute when referee Abdul Hannan awarded the Sky-Blues a penalty after Ujjal was tripped from behind by Ramjan in

the box. Ibrahim, who was unimpressive throughout the game, could not use the opportunity due to lack of confidence as his feeble shot from the spot rolled slowly along the ground before Shakil made an effortless spot.

Arambagh, who are seventh with ten points, came out of their defensive shell on occasions and created two good chances. But Rituh's powerful drive from ten yards on a 73rd-

SEE PAGE 13 COL 4



PHOTO: STAR

Abahani's Ghanaian striker Ibrahim, who failed to score from a penalty, races past Arambagh fullback Russell during their Premier Bank Premier Football League match at the Bangabandhu National Stadium yesterday.

Simone bares her soul



AFP, Sydney

The estranged wife of Shane Warne said Monday the high-profile Australian Test cricketer lived in a "rarefied bubble" and didn't understand reality.

Simone Warne, 35, who has separated from Warne over his highly-publicised infidelities, said the champion leg-spinner did not comprehend that he was behaving badly towards her.

Warne, 35, has been the subject of lurid English tabloid headlines after a series of dalliances with young women which Simone Warne confirmed had occurred since he moved to England to play for county Hampshire three months ago.

"He just doesn't get it, he cannot comprehend that he is behaving badly," Simone Warne told the latest issue of Australian magazine New Idea.

"He knows I'm hurting, but he doesn't understand that what he is doing is wrong."

"It's been a massive reality check for him that he has lost his family. He

kept saying: 'I don't understand why you have to go, we can get through this'."

"I think he lives in such a rarefied bubble these days, he doesn't understand what reality is anymore. He's living the high life and it's not a good way to live, sooner or later the bubble bursts."

Simone Warne confirmed English press reports this month linking Warne with three sexual relationships with English women, which precipitated her walk out.

She said in the magazine article that Warne had awoken her early one morning after he received a phone call from his English manager tipping him off about the newspaper stories.

"I was in shock. I was numb. I said to him, 'how could you be so stupid?' I just couldn't believe he had done it again," she said.

In response to her probing, Warne admitted that English student Laura Sayers wasn't the only woman he had been involved with, saying he also had dalliances with two others.

"I told him there and then that I was leaving," Simone Warne said. "There was no need for discussion, it was so clear in my mind that I had

to leave. I knew I didn't want to be with this person for one minute longer."

Simone Warne, who has three children to Warne -- daughters Brooke, 8, and Summer, 3, and son Jackson, 6 -- is back in Melbourne, while Warne is playing for Australia in the five-Test Ashes series against England in England.

The marriage break-up has had considerable fallout for Warne, Test cricket's all-time leading wicket-taker.

Australian tycoon Kerry Packer's Channel Nine network has cancelled his 225,000 US dollar-a-year television commentary contract because of incidents in his private life.

Warne has been the subject of a catalogue of damaging off-field headlines.

In 2000, British nurse Donna Wright told tabloid papers that Warne had harassed her with explicit text messages. The incident cost him the Australian Test vice-captaincy.

Three years later he was banned from cricket for 12 months after failing a drug test for a banned

SEE PAGE 13 COL 5

Muralitharan amazes WI



SPORTS REPORTER

AFP, Kandy

Muttiah Muralitharan spun the West Indians to their doom as Sri Lanka won the second cricket Test by 240 runs here on Monday to sweep the short series 2-0.

The off-spinner grabbed eight for 46 as the tourists, set a huge victory target of 375, folded up for 137 before tea on the fourth day at the Asgiriya Stadium.

Muralitharan's 14th haul of 10 wickets in a match -- he claimed 2-37 in the first innings -- gave him 17 wickets in what was his first series in 11 months due to a shoulder injury.

The 31-year-old now has 549 Test wickets from 93 matches, second only to Australian Shane Warne, who took his tally to 589 from 124 games after Sunday's first Test against England at Lord's.

The West Indies, missing 10 top stars including the world's leading batsman Brian Lara following a sponsorship dispute at home, had no clue how to play spin on the wearing wicket.

Their only hope was the inclement weather that had interrupted play on the last three days, but the rains kept away despite the dark clouds to enable the Sri Lankans to post an emphatic win.

Earlier, Kumar Sangakkara remained unbeaten on 157 as Sri Lanka declared their second innings at 375-7 midway through the morning session.

Muralitharan made up for the absence of left-arm seamer Chaminda Vaas, who has been ruled out of cricket for at least a week due to a hamstring strain.

Vaas, who had claimed 13 wickets in three previous innings in the series, was advised to rest ahead of the one-day tri-series against India and the West Indies starting later this week.

Team manager Michael Tissera said he may miss the opening match of the tri-series against India in Dambulla on Saturday, but will play in the later matches.

Lasith Malinga, opening the bowling in Vaas' absence, struck in his second over when he trapped Xavier Marshall leg-before for one.

The West Indies, who went to lunch on 24-1, were destroyed by Muralitharan after the resumption.

The wily bowler had Runako Morton leg-before for nine with the 'doosra' -- the off-spinner's ball that turns the other way -- to make it 38-2.

Rookie opener Ryan Ramdass (23) and Sylvester Joseph were dismissed off consecutive balls in identical fashion, caught by Mahela Jayawardena at silly point.

It was Muralitharan's spin partner, left-arm Ranga Herath,

who struck a vital blow when West Indian captain Shivnarine Chandere paul jabbed defensively to give Jayawardena his third catch.

Muralitharan returned to clean-bowl Narsingh Deonarine for 29 and then polished off the remaining four wickets in a breathtaking spell.

Earlier, Sri Lanka added 35 runs in nine overs to their overnight score of 340-7 before closing the innings.

Sangakkara's eighth Test century lasted 396 minutes during which he hit 23 boundaries.

Fast bowler Tino Best was ordered off the attack by New Zealand umpire Tony Hill for sending down a second beamer in the innings.

Best, who had bowled a beamer to Sangakkara on Sunday, sent down a chest-high full toss to Herath which the batsman cut to the point fence for four.

Play began 45 minutes late due to heavy rain before the sun broke through briefly for the first time in two days.

Sri Lanka won the first Test in Colombo by six wickets.

Final scoreboard on the fourth day of the second Test between Sri Lanka and the West Indies at the Asgiriya Stadium on Monday:

SRI LANKA: First innings 150 (Samaraweera 37, Dilshan 36; Powell 5-25, Best 3-50)

WEST INDIES: First innings 148 (Deonarine 40; Vaas 6-22, Muralitharan 2-37)

SRI LANKA: Second innings (over-night 340-7) Jayasuriya c Morton b Lawson 36 Atapattu c Banks b Powell 19

SEE PAGE 13 COL 1



PHOTO: AFP

EIGHT-STAR MURALI: Mercurial Sri Lanka spinner Muttiah Muralitharan lets go a delivery on the fourth day of the second Test against West Indies on Monday.

BD A-Glamorgan 3-dayer today

SPORTS REPORTER

Bangladesh A team will play their second three-day game against Glamorgan that begins today at Abergavenny in Wales.

The second-string Bangladesh side lost their first three-dayer against Gloucestershire by 130 runs on Friday.

Earlier, the visitors opened their England tour with a two-wicket limited-overs defeat against the British Universities. Their second 50-over match against Hampshire had to be abandoned without a ball being bowled on Sunday due to rain.

India warm up with easy win

CRICINFO, undated

Mahendra Dhoni struck an unbeaten 86 as India warmed-up for the Indian Oil Cup with a comfortable 66-run win over a Sri Lanka Cricket XI at the Nondescripts Cricket Club Ground in Colombo on Monday.

Dhoni and Mohammad Kaif (52) steadied the Indian innings after they were struggling on 104 for 4 to post 247 for 8 after winning the toss.

Rahul Dravid was dismissed for 5 but Kaif and Dhoni added 56 before Kaif fell to Pradeep Jayaprakash-daran, who was the pick of the Sri Lanka XI attack with 3 for 35.

Once Kaif fell Dhoni cut loose and in total hit five fours and three sixes.

The Indian seamers -- led by Irfan Pathan -- then demolished the Sri Lanka XI top order, reducing them to 70 for 6 before bowling out them for 186.

Jai P Yadav claimed two wickets and conceded just 11 runs from his six overs. Prasanna Jayawardene offered the only real resistance but his 66 only narrowed the margin of defeat. Pathan wrapped up the tail and his figures of 4 for 42 will send him into the triangular tournament in high spirits.

Doha Games' no to cricket

AFP, New Delhi

Cricket will not figure in next year's Asian Games in Doha, the organisers said here Monday.

"It has been decided to drop cricket because of a tight schedule," said Ahmed Abdulla Al-Khulaifi, deputy director general of the Doha Asian Games Organising Committee (DAGOC).

"Also, the Asian Cricket Council was willing only to promise junior (under-19) teams for the event," he added.

SEE PAGE 13 COL 5