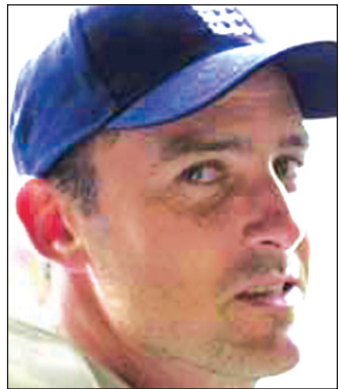




## Did U Know?

Badminton is one the world's fastest racket sports, requiring quick reflexes and superb conditioning. In a badminton smash, the shuttlecock has been timed at speeds over 200 m.p.h. in top international competition.



**Graham Thorpe**  
(Former England batsman)

"I have decided the time has come for me to retire. It is an emotional moment because in the main I have had a fantastic time and there are many things I will miss, but I feel comfortable this is the right decision." After taking the decision to quit from all first-class cricket at the end of the current season.



**ESPN**  
Football Focus  
Live at 5:00 pm  
Sportscentre  
Live at 8:30 pm  
English Premier Football League  
Man City vs Sunderland  
Live at 12:40 am (Wednesday)

**STAR Sports**  
English Premier Football League  
Portsmouth vs Aston Villa  
Live at 12:30 am (Wednesday)

## Summer badminton

BDNEWS, Dhaka

Enayet became men's singles champion in the Summer Open badminton tournament which concluded at the Woodenfloor Gymnasium yesterday.

Enayet beat Parash 2-1 in the final while the men's doubles title went to Sumon and Parash who blanked defeated Moktar and Sarwar 2-0.

Konika emerged women's singles champion outplaying Dulai 2-0. Konika also clinched the women's doubles, beating the Noori-Ruma duo 2-0 pairing with Dulai.

Youth and Sports secretary Syed Sujauddin Ahmed distributed prizes among the winners. President of the Bangladesh Badminton Federation Kutubuddin Ahmed was present as the special guest.

## Blignaut back for Zimbabwe

REUTERS, Bulawayo

Fit-again Andy Blignaut was included in the Zimbabwe squad named on Monday for the triangular series against India and New Zealand.

The all-rounder missed Zimbabwe's Test series against New Zealand because of injuries to his bowling shoulder and elbow.

New Zealand won both Tests by an innings, the first in two days and the second in three.

Blignaut, who should help make Zimbabwe more competitive in the one-day series, was captaining the Zimbabwe Board's XI in Monday's tour match against the New Zealanders.

### SQUAD

Tatenda Taibu (captain), Stuart Carlisle, Chamunorwa Chibhabha, Charles Coventry, Keith Dabengwa, Brendan Taylor, Craig Wishart, Andy Blignaut, Gavin Ewing, Blessing Mahwire, Hamilton Masakadza, Waddington Mwayenga, Edward Rainsford, Vusi Sibanda, Heath Streak, Prosper Utseya.

# Dhaka derby now on Thursday

SPORTS REPORTER

Thousands of football fans will have to wait a couple of days for the clash of the country's two most popular outfits as the Premier Football League match between Abahani and Mohammedan has been delayed.

The crucial 16th round clash was scheduled to be held today at the Bangabandhu National Stadium but the overused ground looked anything but a football pitch after continuous rain over the past few days.

The Dhaka derby will now be held on August 25 at the same venue.

With Abahani all but out of contention, their arch-rivals will be looking to making the most from the game to stay in the championship race against holders Brothers Union.

The Black and Whites are the only unbeaten side and jointly lead the table with Brothers, but they have not

beaten the Sky Blues this season in three meetings.

On the other hand, Abahani recorded their biggest ever victory over the Black and Whites -- a 5-1 drubbing in the Federation Cup -- and are the team in form after winning three big matches in a row.

Whatever their rivalry, the two perennial foes have joined forces to wage a war against Brothers, who have been charged with allegations

POINTS TABLE							
Teams	M	W	D	L	GF	GA	Pts
Brothers	15	11	2	2	32	14	35
MSC	15	10	5	0	30	11	35
Abahani	15	8	5	2	26	14	29
Muktijoddha	15	9	1	5	26	19	28
Russel	15	6	4	5	26	12	22
Farashganj	15	5	3	7	16	18	18
Arambagh	15	3	6	7	17	22	15
Wanderers	15	2	6	7	16	31	12
Youngmen's	15	3	2	10	17	41	11
Dipali	15	0	2	13	18	43	2

of match-fixing.

The clash of the Dhaka heavyweights will serve as a fund-raiser for ailing former national footballer Monwar Hossain Nannu, who represented both sides during his heydays.

The Metropolis Football League Committee (MFLC), getting the nod from the Bangladesh Football Federation, has declared the match as a charity for one of the finest footballers of the country -- a midfielder turned defender -- who has been suffering for cancer for a long time.

Nannu's younger brother Shamsul Alam Manju, who also represented the national team, is regarded as one of the best right-backs in the country.

The MFLC has revised the prices of tickets for the benefit fund and pass holders for VIP gates 1 and 2 will be charged Tk 50 and 30 respectively. Gallery tickets will cost Tk 30 each.



PHOTO: STAR

Former national footballers and well-wishers visited ailing footballer Monwar Hossain Nannu (sitting 2nd from right) at his residence in the city yesterday.

# Afro-Asia Cup shared



AFP, Durban

The Africa XI and the Asia XI shared the Afro Asia Cup when the third and final match was abandoned because of rain at Kingsmead on Sunday.

The Asians were struggling at eight for two in reply to the Africa XI's modest 106 all out when rain stopped play.

Asia XI opening bowlers Shoaib Akhtar of Pakistan and Zaheer Khan of India exploited helpful conditions to wreck the African batsmen.

In a match reduced to 48 overs a side after a late start because of rain, the African innings lasted only 32.5 overs. The two sides had won once each in the first two matches, the first inter-continental clashes to be granted official one-day international status.

Shoaib, bowling at express pace in gloomy light, took two for 11 in an opening spell of seven overs, while man of the series Khan took three for 21, bowling all his 10 overs in a single spell.

It was the Indian left-armers' third successive three-wicket haul. He took three for 37 and three for 43 in

the first two matches.

The Africa XI were 26 for five and 54 for seven before Shaun Pollock (44 not out) and Heath Streak (14) added 51 for the eighth wicket before the last three wickets fell for one run.

Graeme Smith, the South African captain, returned to international cricket as captain of the Africa XI after completing a four-match ban for a slow over rate. It was an inauspicious comeback.

Smith decided to bat after winning the toss half an hour before the scheduled start. But rain fell soon afterwards and the start was delayed by 1 hour 45 minutes. When play did get under way, the light was gloomy and the pitch lively.

Smith lasted just six balls before being trapped leg before wicket by a fast delivery from Shoaib which swung into him.

Boeta Dippenaar and Jacques Kallis, who returned after missing the second match with a sore back, survived for five overs before Khan had Dippenaar caught at third slip.

Kallis and Jacques Rudolph tried to repair the damage before three further wickets fell with the total on 26. Rudolph was run out by a direct hit from Abdul Razzaq at cover.

Kallis was leg before to Khan and Ashwell Prince cut Shoaib to backward point.

Pollock scored his 44 not out off 35 balls with six fours to give the Africa XI some hope but when Streak was leg before to a Shahid Afridi googly he quickly ran out of partners.

Conditions remained difficult for batting when the Asia XI started their innings. Virender Sehwag hit a boundary off Pollock but in the next over was bowled by a fast, full-length delivery from Dale Steyn, which straightened off the pitch and hit his off stump.

Shahid Afridi skied a catch to midwicket off Pollock and an interesting finish seemed possible, especially as the Asians had substituted one of their batsmen, Mohammad Ashraful, so they could get bowler Ashish Nehra into the action.

Mahela Jayawardene joined Kumar Sangakkara but five balls later the rain returned.

The series was played in the South African winter and did not attract big crowds. After attendances of 3800 and 5380 at the first two matches, there were fewer than 3000 for the decider, although it was hardly surprising because the weather was always threatening.

Jagmohan Dalmiya, chairman of Afro Asia Cricket Cooperation, said a

## Ashraful, Mashrafee due today

SPORTS REPORTER

Mohammad Ashraful and Mashrafee-Bin-Mortuza will return home today after taking part in the Afro-Asia Cup in South Africa.

The two Bangladesh star cricketers were selected for the Asia XI but only Ashraful got the chance to play. Though not picked for the second game, Ashraful batted in the first match as a super-sub and made a first-ball duck. The deciding third and final one-day was washed out.

Pace bowler Mashrafee, however, spent the entire series on the bench.

The pair will hardly get any rest as they will leave Dhaka tomorrow for the Tigers' tour of Sri Lanka to play three ODIs and two Tests.

## PCB rules out Kashmir plan

REUTERS, Karachi

Pakistan Cricket Board (PCB) will not ask India to play a one-day match in Pakistani Kashmir next year, board chairman Shaharyar Khan said on Monday.

Last week the sports minister in Pakistani-ruled Kashmir, Dewan Ali Chughtai, said a request had been sent to the PCB to play a match in Muzaffarabad, capital of the Pakistani-ruled zone known as Azad Kashmir.

India are due to tour Pakistan from January next year, playing three Tests and five one-day internationals.

Shaharyar said the board had not yet received a formal request from the government of Pakistani Kashmir.

"And even if we do, the fact is we have already sent a proposed itinerary to India for approval and we can't change it in midstream," he told Reuters.

"We want to promote cricket in Azad Kashmir but it is premature to ask India to play there."

Kashmir lies at the heart of tensions between the two nuclear-armed rivals who have fought two of their three wars over it since they won independence from British rule in 1947.

The two nations launched a slow-moving peace process last year after going to the brink of a fourth war in 2002. Since then they have restored sports, travel and diplomatic links.

India toured Pakistan last year after a gap of 14 years to play a Test series.

## World Twenty20 championship in September

CRICINFO, undated

All reigning domestic Twenty20 champions from around the world will take part in a six-team tournament at Leicester between September 15 and 17.

Pakistan's Faisalabad Wolves and Sri Lanka's Chilaw Marians will both participate in the inaugural International Club Championship.

Organisers are pleased with the levels of interest in the event, and the aim of getting all the major club sides appears to have been fulfilled.

In addition to the Pakistan and Sri Lankan sides, two other domestic champions -- Somerset (England) and Titans (South Africa) -- will be taking part.

The number will be made up by Leicestershire and a PCA Masters XI which will feature a number of England players, both past and present.

In the first round group stage teams will be awarded two points for a win and one for a tie with the top two teams in each group go through to the semifinals.

## INTER-VARSITY AQUATIC DU natants in the lead

BDNEWS, Dhaka

Hosts Dhaka University were leading the medals table with six gold, two silver and one bronze medals on the opening day of the inter-university swimming championship yesterday.

The DU earned gold medals in the 100m butterfly, 4x100m relay, 50m freestyle, 1500m freestyle, 200m butterfly and 4x100m medley relay.

Rajshahi University followed them with two gold, two silver and three bronze medals.

The RU earned gold medals in the 100m freestyle and 100m breaststroke.

Islamic University earned their only gold in the 200m backstroke.

# Some relief for Arambagh

ARAMBAGH-2, YMC-0

SPORTS REPORTER

Arambagh Kirira Sangha heaved a sigh of relief when they picked up crucial three points with a 2-0 defeat of Youngmen's Club Fakirerpool in yesterday's Premier Bank Premier Football League to keep ahead of the relegation zone.

Charles Ghansah and Ritu struck either side of the break in Arambagh's third win which pushed their collection to 15 points, three and four points clear of Wanderers and Youngmen's respectively at the end of the 15th round.

With Dipali -- at the basement of the ten-team fray with two points -- already relegated, Arambagh's chances to avoid relegation brightened at the cost of their neighbours.

Arambagh, who beat Young-

men's 3-1 in the first-leg, dominated the show at the Bangabandhu National Stadium but the pitch was at its worst following incessant rain for the last few days.

Arambagh, who have never been demoted after their arrival in the top flight of domestic football in 1980s in the then first division, took the lead after 32 minutes. Skipper Imrul's corner was deflected by their defender Dulal to Ghansah and the Ghanaian stopper pushed the ball into an open net for his third goal.

Ritu's fourth goal in the league sealed the victory in the 67th minute when the former national striker sliced through two defenders on a long run and slammed an angular drive into the far post off the sidebar.

Youngmen's tried hard to come back but got only one clear cut chance five minutes from time when Ripon invaded the rival penalty area. But his efforts went down the drains as the robust midfielder shot the ball wide from close.

# Where hope doesn't spring eternal



AFP, Bulawayo

Bulawayo likes to call itself the city of warrior kings. It certainly once was, when the ruthless rulers Lobengula and Mzilikazi held sway.

The place used to be called "Gubuluwayo" -- the place of killing. But in a greatly different context the New Zealand cricket captain Stephen Fleming referred to it as somewhere to kill time in, while

trying to preserve his team's killer instinct.

He had polished off the Zimbabweans in under two days of the first Test in Harare and then under three in the city of (former) warriors.

India might find themselves facing the same dilemma when their time for Tests comes around against the youthful and inexperienced Zimbabweans.

They will certainly note a dwindling populace in the country's second city, who have no fuel for vehicles, staple foods are generally unobtain-

## AFC U-17 CUP BFF calls up 30 probables

SPORTS REPORTER

The Bangladesh Football Federation (BFF) yesterday named a 30-member preliminary squad for the AFC Youth (Under-17) Championship.

The residential camp will begin at the BKSP from August 26 under coach Mahbub Hossain Roxey.

The players have been requested to report to the Sayeed Hasan Kanan, member of the National Team Management Committee, at the BFF House by 3.30 pm on August 26.

The qualifiers are scheduled to be held in November.

### THE SQUAD

**Goalkeepers:** Nehal (Rajshahi), Badal (Narayanganj), Mostaq and Uketan (BKSP); **defenders:** Pintu Das (Manikganj), Shen Wein (Cox's Bazar), Syed (Narayanganj), Mahfuz (Khulna), Nurul (Sylhet), Johny, Saikat, Kanak, Russell Sr and Russell Jr (BKSP); **midfielders:** Raju (Kishoreganj), Zitu (Chittagong).

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PHOTO: AFP

ICC chief executive Malcolm Speed and Indian actress and TV presenter Mandira Bedi display a shirt, which will be worn by the Rest of the World side in the Super Series against Australia, during a press conference in New Delhi on Monday.

# Beauty and the best



AFP, Miami

Maria Sharapova, 18, became the first Russian woman to reach the summit of women's tennis on Monday when took over the world number one spot in the rankings released by the WTA.

Although Sharapova was unable to repeat her 2004 Wimbledon triumph this year, she has stalked Lindsay Davenport for months before finally supplanting the US veteran atop the rankings.

Sharapova had appeared on course to secure the top spot a week ago, needing only to reach the semifinals at the WTA Tour event in Carson, California.

Her hopes then were dashed when a strained pectoral muscle began to bother her, forcing her to withdraw before her quarterfinal match.

Determined to be fit for the US Open, the final Grand Slam of the year that starts on August 29 in New York, Sharapova then skipped the

Tier One tournament in Toronto that ended on Sunday.

But with Davenport also idle, it didn't stop the glamorous Russian grabbing the coveted No. 1 days before the US Open draw.

"To be honest, I was surprised I was number one up until today," Davenport said Sunday as she prepared to compete in the US Open tuneup in New Haven, Connecticut.

For Sharapova, achieving the top

spot while sitting on the sidelines took none of the gloss off the accomplishment.

"You have to achieve something in order to get there," she said as she

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MARIA SHARAPOVA

## FACTFILE

**Name:** Maria Sharapova  
**Birthday:** April 19, 1987  
**Nationality:** Russian  
**Height:** 1.83m  
**Weight:** 59kg  
**Plays:** right-handed, two-handed back-hand  
**Turned professional:** 2001  
**Career highlights**  
Tournament titles (10)  
**2005:** Tokyo, Doha, Birmingham  
**2004:** Birmingham, Wimbledon, Seoul, Tokyo, WTA Championships  
**2003:** Tokyo, Quebec  
**Grand Slam highlights**  
Won Wimbledon 2004. Semifinalist Australian Open, Wimbledon 2005. Quarterfinalist French Open 2004 and 2005. Three Grand Slam doubles titles.  
**Career prize money:** 4,009,039 dollars (\$3,241,985 euros)