

Bhaji speaks out in favour of Ganguly

CRICINFO, undated
Despite Sourav Ganguly's plea that his ongoing spat with coach Greg Chappell should remain between the two men involved, his teammate, Harbhajan Singh, has spoken out in support of his captain.
Off-spinner Harbhajan also accused Chappell of instilling 'fear and insecurity' among the players. Ganguly's teammates have remained understandably quiet - until now. Harbhajan is the first player to voice his opinion.
Speaking to PTI, he urged that the controversy would reach its conclusion as soon as possible.
'Whenever any controversy surrounds the team, the performance of team is adversely affected,' he said.
'It will be good for the team if the controversy is immediately resolved so that every player can concentrate on his game instead of getting mental tension.'
And Harbhajan denied the accusation that Ganguly wasn't fit to captain the side, adding '...it may be the coach's (Chappell's) own observation but, as far as I am concerned, Ganguly has been proved as an excellent captain, which is evident from his match winning record.'
The spinner also dismissed the notion that Ganguly was only interested in captaining and creating difficulty among team members. 'I have played for almost five years under the captaincy of Ganguly and never felt like that,' he insisted. 'In fact, he takes personal interest to boost each and every player during practice as well as during a match.'
'Ganguly has rebuilt this team and whatever the team has achieved so far, credit goes to the captain.'

Inter-Service athletics

BDNEWS, Dhaka
The Inter-Service Athletics competition began yesterday at the Bangladesh Army Stadium.
Bangladesh Army dominated the opening day securing four gold medals.
Masudul Karim clinched gold in the 200m race, Mozahid Khan bagged gold in the 1500m, Shahidul Islam secured gold in the 110m hurdles and Mozaffar Hossain earned the same award in shotput.
Some 82 athletes from Bangladesh Army, Navy and Air Force are taking part in the three-day meet.

Shyampur in last four

SPORTS REPORTER
Shyampur drew with Mirpur 3-3 to move into the semifinals of the Sheikh Russel Under-14 Football Tournament at the Dhanmondi Club ground yesterday.
In another match, Dhanmondi registered a 3-0 victory over Biman Bandar Thana.

Big names

PRIMERA LIGA
Chappell said he was 'disappointed but not surprised' that the confidential e-mail was leaked, but made his views clear in a subsequent interview to the Press Trust of India (PTI) news agency in Harare.
Without naming Ganguly, India's most successful captain with 21 Test wins, Chappell said: 'Any discussion on selection from this point has to have in mind the World Cup in 2007.'
'It will take time to develop a team and I suppose a decision has to be taken on which of the senior players are most likely to last and be potent enough that long.'
'There are some things which are non-negotiable. Fielding and fitness are two of them.'
'Guys who are buying into it are going ahead and those who are not buying into it will find themselves by the wayside,' the coach warned in the interview.
The controversy overshadowed India's first Test series win outside the subcontinent since 1986, even though the 2-0 success over a weakened Zimbabwe provided only a limited morale boost.
A country-wide poll in the latest issue of the New Delhi-based Outlook weekly showed that 58 per cent of respondents wanted Ganguly, 32, out as captain.
Ganguly declined to comment on Chappell's missive on his return from Zimbabwe, saying he would put forward his side of the story to the BCCI.
'It is between the coach and me and we have to sort it out,' Ganguly said.
Chappell, whose contract runs till the 2007 World Cup, received support from ex-India captain Bishan Singh Bedi and former BCCI chief Raj Singh Durgapur.
'Chappell has to be supported because he wants to take Indian cricket forward,' said Bedi.
With India scheduled to play Test series against Sri Lanka, Pakistan, England and the West Indies this season, along with a minimum of 33 one-day internationals, the BCCI wants to end the dispute quickly.
'Ganguly must step down or be sacked. His sell-by date is over,' said Durgapur.

PREMIERSHIP
Chelsea conceded a goal for the first time this season but a Frank Lampard double allowed the champions to recover and stretch their winning start to the Premiership campaign to seven matches.
A 2-1 win over Aston Villa kept Jose Mourinho's men six points clear of second-placed Charlton, who won 2-1 at West Brom.
More importantly, it extended their advantage over title rivals Manchester United to ten points after Alex Ferguson's side slumped to a shock 2-1 home defeat by Blackburn.
Arsenal also lost ground on the leaders after being forced to settle for a point in a goalless draw at West Ham, while Blackburn moved up to third thanks to a 1-0 win over Portsmouth, sealed by Kevin Nolan's overhead kick.
Villa striker Luke Moore had the honour of becoming the first player to breach Chelsea's defence this season, latching on to Juan Pablo Angel's flick-on to fire past Petr Cech just before the break.
It was the first goal Chelsea had conceded in 641 minutes of Premiership football and it earned Moore a 10,000-pound reward put up by The Sun newspaper.
His celebrations were curtailed however as the champions took barely a minute to get back on level terms through a Lampard free-kick.
Lampard then sealed the victory for the champions with a textbook penalty conversion 15 minutes from time after Olof Mellberg fouled Didier Droghba.
A clearly relieved Mourinho shrugged off the loss of his side's impressive clean sheet record. 'It's not normal that you don't concede for so long,' he said. 'It is normal to concede. I'm happy it wasn't a mistake by one of our players.'
Two goals from Morten Gamst Pedersen gave Blackburn a 2-1 win at Old Trafford that dealt a huge blow to United's chances of reclaiming the title.
Rudolf van Nistelrooy cancelled out Pedersen's first-half free-kick but the Norwegian snatched a winner against the run of play nine minutes from time.
United boss Sir Alex Ferguson admitted his side now face a daunting task to catch Chelsea.
'I am concerned at the gap between us and Chelsea but I am more concerned with getting our game back together and playing with enjoyment and passion that is the most important thing,' the Scot

Reds left red-faced

Football

AFP, London
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Blackburn's Morten Gamst Pedersen (L) is the toast of his teammates after scoring his second goal against Manchester United at the Old Trafford in Manchester on Saturday.

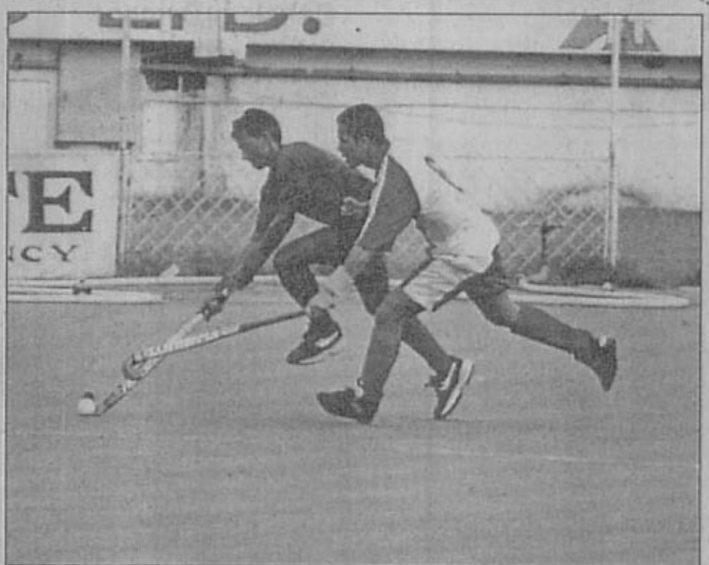
second place at West Brom.
Murphy's first came from the penalty spot after Steve Watson pulled down Jerome Thomas as he broke into the box.
The second was a tap-in from Dennis Rommedahl's cross after the pacy Danish winger had burst clear on the right.
Defender Curtis Davies pulled one back for the Baggies six minutes after the restart but Bryan Robson's side could not convert a late siege into an equaliser.
Birmingham teenager Neil Kilkeny was sent off on his Premiership debut as Liverpool grabbed a late equaliser in a dramatic 2-2 draw at St Andrews.
Kilkenny, 19, received a straight red card after punching Jamie Carragher's goal-bound header off the line with eight minutes left, conceding a penalty that Djibril Cisse converted to earn the European champions their fourth draw from five Premiership matches this season.
A Stephen Warnock own goal and Walter Pandiani's first of the season -- a tap-in following a blunder by Liverpool keeper Jose Reina -- had put Birmingham on track for all three points after Luis Garcia had come off the bench to give Liverpool the lead.
Everton's early season woes intensified with a home defeat at the hands of Wigan. Former Norwich striker Damien Francis condemned David Moyes's side to their fifth defeat in six matches with a 46th-minute strike.
Michael Owen scored for the second week in a row to earn Newcastle a 1-0 win over Manchester City in front of a delighted St James's Park.
The 18th-minute strike was a typical Owen effort, Lee Bowyer's pass allowing him to spring the offside trap and finish with a toe-poke past David James.

Gatafe continue to surprise

keeper whose error against Barcelona on Wednesday had cost them a win.
Reigning champions Barcelona, who rested Brazilian superstar Ronaldinho and Portuguese playmaker Deco with Champions League commitments in the week, got their first domestic away victory away with a 4-1 win at Real Betis.
Samuel Eto'o should have got Barca off to a good start after just eight minutes but he hit his penalty against the post.
However, Dutch midfielder Mark van Bommel, starting his first game since moving from PSV Eindhoven in the summer, headed the visitors' opener after 19 minutes from a Xavi Hernandez free kick.
Betis were then reduced to 10 men a minute later when Ricardo Oliviera got a yellow card for fouling his compatriot and Barca left back Belletti, and then relieved his marching orders for protesting about the decision.
Against the odds, Juanito Gutierrez headed an equaliser for Betis eight minutes from the break but the home side ran out of steam in the second half.
Eto'o made up for his earlier miss with two goals in the second period, a clinical left foot strike just before the hour and then another from close range 13 minutes from time.
Santi Ezquerro completed the bad night for Betis with his first

Quiet start

FROM PAGE 12
Araf Apparels: Golam Mabud Chowdhury, Alok Kapali, Ehsanul Haq, Nayeem Islam, Arafat Sunny, Jamaluddin Babu, M Selim, Oaskurwani Ahmed Palash, Qumrul Hasan Jony, Hasanuzzaman Rozel, Humayun Kabir Shahin, Ashrafat Khan, KMANisur Rahman, Safaq-Al-Jabir and AKM Ahsanullah.
Security Air Express: M Islam, Rashedul Rahman Rony, Atiqur Rahman, Jahidul Islam, Uttam Kumar Sarker, Rafiqul Islam Ripon, Biswajit Halder, Pushpen Sarker and Debashis Kumar Barua



Action from yesterday's ABS Group National Hockey Championship clash between BKSP and Jessore at the Maulana Bhasani National Stadium.

The Maldinis rule

Football

REUTERS, Torre Del Greco
AC Milan captain Paolo Maldini set a record for Serie A appearances on Sunday when he took to the field for the 571st time in Italy's top flight -- a day before his son is due to start his career with the club. Maldini's appearance against Treviso took him past Dino Zoff's record of 570 games and with another season left on his contract the former Italy international could go beyond 600 Serie A games before retiring.
It is the second time that the 37-year-old has broken an appearance record set by former Juventus keeper Zoff -- Maldini replaced the captain of Italy's 1982 World Cup-winning side as the national side's most capped player, a record he still holds with 126 appearances.
Maldini, who made his Serie A debut in a 1-1 draw with Udinese on January 20 1985, has played 801 games in all competitions for the club where he has spent the whole of his career.
Most of Maldini's career has

been spent at left-back, a role in which he has been considered the best in the world for more than a decade, but in recent years he has preserved his energy and used his experience as a central defender.
In both roles he has brought his qualities of exceptional reading of the game, outstanding timing, calmness and intelligence along with a high level of competitiveness that has almost never spilled over into aggression.
During his 20 years with the club Maldini has collected seven Serie A titles and four European Cups.
The last triumph in Europe came in 2003 when Maldini raised the Champions League trophy at Old Trafford in Manchester following victory on penalties against fellow Italians Juventus.
That honour came 40 years after his father Cesare captained Milan to their first European honour with victory over Benfica in the 1963 European Cup final also played in England, at Wembley stadium.
Cesare Maldini, who has coached his son with both the club and national team, remains part of the Milan set-up working as head of the

scouting team.
Paolo Maldini retired from the Italian national team after the 2002 World Cup and has resisted several attempts to lure him back into the Azzurri set-up in order to focus on his club career.
His contract with Milan runs until the end of next season and he said this week that he intended to see out that deal despite suggestions that he might hang up his boots next year due to niggling problems with his knee.
'I think I have aged pretty well. My spirit is still that of a kid, the knee a little less so but I will look to honour my contract until June 30 2007,' he said.
The Maldini family connection at Milan could be extended for many more years with Paolo's nine-year-old son Christian joining the club's youth system at the Liniate training camp on Monday.
'He enjoys the game and that is the only thing that you can know about him at the moment,' said Paolo. 'If he really wants to be a footballer then he will know how to handle all the pressures there will be for him.'

SERIE A

Vieira the inspiration

Football

AFP, Rome
Serie A leaders Juventus fought back from a goal down to win 2-1 at Parma on Saturday and maintain their 100 per cent record.
Patrick Vieira's 82nd minute header, his third goal in five matches since his summer move from Arsenal, secured a precious victory for the title-holders after Mauro Camoranesi had cancelled out Marco Delvecchio's early opener.
Juventus' fifth successive league win saw them open up a five point lead over Fiorentina and Palermo, who both play on Sunday.
In Saturday's early match Reggina ended a run of four straight defeats with a 2-0 home victory against Udinese.
With one eye on Tuesday's Champions League match against Rapid Vienna, Juventus started with

Pavel Nedved, Emerson and Zlatan Ibrahimovic on the bench.
But with the scored tied at 1-1 and Parma threatening to end Juve's flawless run, Juve coach Fabio Capello brought on his big guns who turned the game in favour of the reigning champions.
Parma, determined to show new owner, former Real Madrid president Lorenzo Sanz, that he has invested wisely, stunned the visitors by taking a 13th minute lead.
Bernardo Corradi used his upper body strength to hold the ball up for former Roma striker Delvecchio whose low half volley from an acute angle swept past Christian Abbiati.
Juventus offered little in attack until two minutes from the break.
Vieira teed up the advancing Camoranesi whose speculative toe-punt from 20 yards arrowed into the top corner.
A superb save from Cristiano Lupatelli denied David Trezeguet and Camoranesi headed wide of an

open goal before the visitors took the lead eight minutes from time.
Vieira charged into Parma's half and fed Ibrahimovic wide on the right.
The Swede waited as Vieira carried on his run and the substitute's cross picked out the unmarked Frenchman who beat Lupatelli at the backpost.
In Calabria, Reggina broke the deadlock two minutes before half-time when Francesco Cozza fired a right-footed drive past Morgan De Sanctis.
Simone Cavalli doubled the home side's lead 14 minutes from time with his first ever Serie A goal.
Udinese, who visit Barcelona in the Champions League next Tuesday, were reduced to 10 men in stoppage time when Fausto Rossini was sent off.
After winning their first two league matches, Udinese have done all their good work by losing three in a row.

Chappell disappointed

FROM PAGE 12
we have one in Sehwan.
They form a good combination as they play in domestic tournaments too. Hopefully they will develop together,' he said.
On the overall performance in Zimbabwe, Chappell said that though they did not win the one-day tournament preceding the Test series, they had their chances in the final but could not take advantage.
'If we went there with the intention of winning both Tests and one-dayers. We did not win the one-dayers but there were positive signs the Tests went the way we hoped. We wanted to win them well and it happened,' Chappell said.
Chappell said that fielding was not a concern till the last morning of the Test series when they dropped a few catches in the slip cordon.
'We thought we were catching well but we dropped a few on the last morning. We need to catch everything and stop everything,' he said.
Chappell said that fielding and building partnerships are two of the main areas the team is working on.
'We are going to drop some catches but should strive to keep them to the minimum.'
He said one-day specialist

Dhoni was an exciting prospect but whether he could translate this potential to the Tests remains to be seen. 'We are lucky to have two excellent keepers in Dhoni and Karthick,' he added.
About Zaheer Khan, who looked a little below par at the first Test in Bulawayo, Chappell said the left arm fast bowler seemed to have got into rhythm towards the last part of the Test series in Zimbabwe.
A few players need to get fitter and better prepared for their role in the team, he said in reference to the injuries sustained by the medium pacers of the Indian team.
'If we need the youngsters to push the old. We are looking forward to the 2007 World Cup for which we need a good mix of young and experienced players'.
He said that the team was trying to look at Sehwan as an impact player.

Jones '50-50 for' Pakistan tour

AFP, London
England seamer Simon Jones is rated just 50-50 to be fit for the upcoming tour of Pakistan.
The Glamorgan pacesman missed the final Ashes Test at The Oval with an ankle injury and faces a scan on the problem on Friday.
England physiotherapist Kirk Russell told the Sunday Times: 'It is very much 50-50 with him.'
'If we have an England camp on October 17 and 18 at Loughborough and he needs to be bowling then for him to be declared fit to tour Pakistan.
'If things continue to progress well, we will look to increase the amount of weight the ankle is bearing before Simon starts running again.'
Jones took 18 wickets in the first four Tests before his place in the XI which secured the Ashes was taken by Durham all-rounder Paul Collingwood.
Pakistan host England for a three-match Test series and five one-day matches from November to December this year. The first Test starts in Multan on November 12.

CROSSWORD By Eugene Sheffer

ACROSS
35 Swamp
1 Half a 1960s quartet
6 Jazz man's job
9 Has the where-withal
12 Mad contents
13 Tramcar
14 Blackbird
15 1990s third-party candidate
16 Contradiction
18 Parisian ruffian
20 Reinquish scorer
21 Cabbage
23 Menlo Park mono-gram
24 Performed
25 Infringes bit
27 Leonine family
29 Dog
31 Brass component
55 Pligs' digs
56 Roulette bet
57 Aquarium fish
43 Wardrobe malfunction
1 Domino spot
2 'All the things You --' opening day?
45 Docking area
47 Sunshade
49 1970 movie, "Where's --?"
6 "Love Boat" role
7 "Dies --" ruffian
53 "Got a Secret"
54 Perfect
10 Battery terminal
11 Put the kibosh on
17 Take
19 Gambol
21 Lobbyists' org.
22 LAX info
24 Commotion
25 Silk tree
28 Blood of the gods
30 Siesta
32 Castle wall
33 Yalie
34 Sgt. (Abbrev.)
38 Nationals, once
39 Intelligent
40 Late
42 Larklike songbird
45 Floccate
46 Protuberance
48 Round
49 Table address
50 Links
51 Carte lead-in

Cryptogram grid with numbers 1-55 and letters G VTDQ IQ YOTTGQH. Includes 'CRYPTOQUIP' title and 'Solution time: 25 mins.' text.

CRYPTOQUIP
G VTDQ IQ YOTTGQH
INGHGQDT KONYOY IQ EFO
YENOEO. G HWOYY G YFIWTF
FDKO VIOEGJ TGJOQYO.
Yesterday's Cryptogram: IN THE SCOTTISH HIGHLANDS, ONE WOULD IMAGINE THE MOST POPULAR SOUP IS CLAN CHOWDER.
Today's Cryptogram Clue: O equals E
The Cryptogram 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.