

V-Day cricket teams named

SPORTS REPORTER

Sabbir Khan will lead the Shaheed Jewel XI while Mahmudullah Riyad will skipper the Shaheed Mushtaque XI in the Victory Day exhibition match at the Dhanmondi Cricket Stadium on December 16.

Players of both sides have been requested to report to their respective coaches -- Imran Sarwar (Mushtaque XI) and Abdul Hadi Ratan (Jewel XI) -- at 8am in the morning of the match.

TEAMS

Shaheed Mushtaque XI: Mahmudullah Riyad (captain), Nazmus Sadat, Tamim Iqbal, Uttam Sarkar, Shirajullah Khadem, Dhiman Ghosh (wicketkeeper), Musharraf Hossain, Ishraq Sonnet, Sajidul Islam, Rizaul Islam, Suharwardi Shuvo, Nazmul Hossain, Kamrul Islam and Humayun Kabir. Coach: Imran Sarwar.

Shaheed Jewel XI: Sabbir Khan (captain), Imrose Siddiqui, Naeem Islam, Farhad Hossain, Nasir Hossain, Mahmudul Hasan, Nadimuddin Mintu (wicketkeeper), Taposh Ghosh, Alamgir Kabir, Rummon Islam, Arif Hossain, Arafat Salahuddin, Ziaur Rahman and Gazi Salahuddin. Coach: Abdul Hadi Ratan.

Samakal's sports editor loses father

SPORTS REPORTER

Mohammed Abdul Wadud, former superintendent engineer of PDB, died of cardiac disease at the National Institute of Cardio Vascular Research Hospital yesterday. He was 63.

He left behind his wife, three sons and a daughter to mourn his death. He will be buried today at his native village Nimsar in Burichong thana, Comilla.

Abdul Wadud's son Moshir Rahman Tipu is the Sports Editor of the daily Samakal.

Lindsay to quit after child-birth

REUTERS, London

Three-times Grand Slam tournament winner Lindsay Davenport has no plans to play tennis again after giving birth to her first child next year.

"I hate the word 'retirement' but this season was such a struggle physically for me and I can't imagine playing again," Davenport told ESPN.com (www.espn.com).

The 30-year-old American missed most of 2006 with back problems before reaching the quarterfinals at the US Open.

In her career, she has won the Australian Open, Wimbledon and US Open singles titles plus the 1996 Atlanta Olympics gold medal. Her 51-singles titles put her ninth on all-time list.

Davenport began her professional career in 1993 and was one of the pioneers of the power game in women's tennis.

Tamim greets

FROM PAGE 21
"They (Scotland) lacked real strike bowlers and as a result failed to pose any threat for us," Nadif observed.

SCORES IN BRIEF

BCB ACADEMY: 252-6 in 50 overs (Sadat 30, Tamim 105, Jahurul 1, Nadif 68, Marshall 19, Khadem 0, Shuvo 10*, Sonnet 4*, Haq 3-35, Wright 2-21, Lyons 1-39).

SCOTLAND: 219 all out in 47.2 overs (Watts 4, Poonia 63, Watson 1, Hamilton 11, Brown 47, McCullum 57, Smith 1, Wright 12, Haq 10, Blain 0, Rogers 0*, Sonnet 2-21, Khadem 2-40, Mosharraf 4-32, Dollar 2-37).

Result: BCB Academy won by 33 runs.

Brazil not ready

FROM PAGE 24
host the tournament, which FIFA wants in South America under its rotation policy.

But standards of infrastructure and safety could cause concern for the world governing body.

Aside from needing to revamp its stadiums and transport, Brazil is notorious for its street gangs and high crime levels.

FIFA president Sepp Blatter has said high standards had been set in recent World Cups and warned the governing body would be ready to look "further north" if there were no suitable South American candidates.

Brazil is the only five-time World Cup winner and hosted the tournament once before in 1950, losing 2-1 to Uruguay in the final.

Four previous World Cups have been held in South America: Uruguay 1930, Brazil 1950, Chile 1962 and Argentina 1978.

The next World Cup will be held in South Africa in 2010.



India's Leader Paes pats his mixed doubles tennis partner Sania Mirza on the head during the final against Japan at the 15th Asian Games in Doha on Wednesday.

Bhupathi blasts Paes

Leander-Sania pair wins mixed doubles gold

AFP, Doha



India's Mahesh B h u p a t h i launched a bitter attack on doubles partner Leander Paes on Wednesday just moments after

they had teamed up to defend their Asian Games title.

He described the last 10 days as miserable after Paes, the Indian captain, and the coach criticised him following shock loss in the team event to Taiwan at the start of the tournament.

"There was an opportunity to question me and it was pretty much done in a very haphazard manner by the captain and the coach," said Bhupathi.

"I have lived with his comments for 12 years, it hurts," he said.

The 32-year-old revealed he had been coaxed into coming to Doha, after Paes said he would refuse to play with him.

"When I proved my fitness (back in India), he flat out told me he didn't

want to play with me," he told reporters outside the Khalifa Tennis Complex where they had beaten Thai twins Sanchai and Sonchat Ratiwatana 5-7, 7-6, 6-3 in the gold medal match.

"I was coaxed into coming and again the soap opera started and I'm just glad I'm going home with at least a gold medal."

He said it appeared the chances of the pair, dubbed the "Indian Express", combining again for the 2008 Olympics in Beijing were nil.

"We should forget about the Olympic gold because it's clearly not happening with both of us. I'm not going to go begging for anybody," he added.

The outburst is the latest in a series of disputes between the pair who combined to win three Grand Slam titles together but parted soon after the Athens Olympics in 2004.

Paes later defused the row saying "I would love to play with him for India again."

"I would love to have Mahesh on my team anytime, he is a great asset," said Paes' court-side after winning the mixed doubles gold

with Sania Mirza.

The Indian Davis Cup captain said they had a great record playing for India together and wanted to improve on that.

"It just proves we are the best team in Asia," he said of their men's doubles win together.

Paes and Bhupathi reunited here to defend their Asian Games title, and have been at pains to stress that their feuding had been put to one side.

Bhupathi said he had held his tongue throughout the tournament to concentrate on winning gold for India.

"The goal was to win a gold medal for India and that has been done," he added.

But he spoke out publicly after hearing that Paes had told a BBC journalist after their win Wednesday that he would not want to play regularly together in the future.

Paes said he did not want to play regularly with Bhupathi because he already has a partner for the ATP circuit.

The 33-year-old and the Czech Republic's Martin Damm won the US Open doubles title this year.

India won't add cricket

AFP, Doha

India will not include cricket in the Asian Games if New Delhi wins the right to host the 2014 edition, the country's sports chief said on Thursday.

"I am not in favour of having cricket at the Asiad because it is not an Olympic sport," Indian Olympic Association president Suresh Kalmadi told reporters here.

"I know cricket is a religion in India and draws huge crowds wherever it is played in the country.

"But we do not want Olympic sports to be overshadowed by one sport. Frankly, I don't want it at the Asian Games."

Kalmadi's comments came after Olympic Council of Asia chief Sheikh Ahmad Al-Fahad Al-Sabah had said earlier that discussions were on to introduce cricket at the Asian Games.

"It would be wonderful to have India and Pakistan and all the other Asian countries that play cricket competing at the Asian Games," Sheikh Ahmad said here on December 5.

Perfect day for Panesar

AFP, Perth

Monty Panesar finally had his day in the Australian sun in the third Ashes cricket Test between England and Australia at the WACA Ground here Thursday -- and what a day it was.

The left-arm spinner was surprisingly, and somewhat controversially, left out of the England team for the opening two Test matches, both won convincingly by Australia, and the calls for his inclusion have been getting louder and louder.

Panesar got his chance on Thursday when he was recalled to the England team in place of Ashley Giles, and while he may be known as a fielder of modest ability, this was one chance he didn't drop.

Panesar finished with figures of 5-92 as Australia were bowled out for 244, while his victims included Justin Langer, Andrew Symonds and Adam Gilchrist.

If he was feeling the pressure of being labelled England's saviour on his Ashes debut, Panesar didn't show it as he landed the ball on the spot from the first over.

"I was probably nervous for the first few overs, but I just took my time, I didn't want to rush anything and I was pretty pleased with the way the ball came out," he said.

Panesar said Thursday's performance was one of the best days he has had in Test cricket and ranked alongside his five-wicket haul against Pakistan at Old Trafford earlier this year.

PSG put troubles

FROM PAGE 24
the ball but could not prevent it going over his head and rolling into the net.

Hardly had the second half got under way than Pauleta struck again running on to a pass to speed clear of the Greek defence and hammer a low right-footer into the corner of the net.

A double from the impressive Kalou after 52 and 54 minutes ended the match as a contest and assured PSG would keep their season alive with an appearance in the last 32.

"It was a tough match, but we were efficient, we played with heart to give our public this win," said Lacombe.

"The atmosphere in the Parc was hot and after we went 2-0 it was a great party. We knew it was a high risk game but we came through and are now going to savour this win."

Hapoel Tel Aviv finish third in Group G after a 1-1 home draw against Czech side Mlada Boleslav. In Italy, Palermo suffer an early exit after being held 1-1 by Celta Vigo in their Group H, with Fenerbahce finishing third in the group after a 2-2 draw against visiting Eintracht Frankfurt.

Elsewhere Former Champions League winners Ajax went second in Group F after a 3-0 win over SV Zulte Waregem of Belgium, who qualify in third.

Much ado

FROM PAGE 21
It is expected that the big names like Abahani, Mohammedan, Mukti Joddha and Brothers Union will come alive within the first week.

The transfer closes on February 14 and the league is scheduled to start on the next day.

Four-dayer

FROM PAGE 21
Mohammad Shahjada and Anthony Ireland took wickets at will, exploiting the pitch.

The Bangladesh Cricket Board (BCB) retained the same side for the four-dayer.

SQUAD

Jahurul Islam, Javed Omar, Tushar Imran (captain), Rajin Saleh, Alok Kopali, Manzarul Islam, Sahagir Hossain, Marshall Ayub, Tapash Baisya, Dollar Mahmud, Mohammad Sharif, Enamul Haque, Mohammad Shahjada.

Smith issues pace warning

First SA-India Test starts today



REUTERS, Johannesburg

South Africa captain Graeme Smith has warned India to expect a trial by fire in the first Test on Friday.

The South Africans have omitted spinners from their squad, confirming that they will attack the Indians with an all-pace attack on the traditionally fast and bouncy Wanderers pitch.

If Smith is to be taken at face value, India's batsmen will take on an attack that is reaching top form.

"It's a big call to make here and now but our attack is really hitting its straps," Smith told a news conference on Thursday.

Smith was particularly impressed with fast bowler Dale Steyn, who has recovered from a quadriceps strain in time for the first Test of South Africa's home campaign.

"He (Steyn) adds a new dimension," Smith said. "(Andre) Nel is

hitting 140 kilometres an hour, Makhaya (Ntini) is hitting 140, but Dale is up there at 150.

"He gets the ball to swing at pace, which is always a huge asset."

In South Africa's last Test at the Wanderers, against New Zealand in May, Steyn took three for 43 and four for 91.

Narrow cracks were visible on the pitch on Thursday and if they widen significantly they will add to the challenge.

"There are always cracks at the Wanderers," Smith said. "With the heat around they will play a role, and it's been hot here for a while."

India's frailty against fast bowling on responsive pitches was starkly exposed in the one-day series, which South Africa won 4-0.

India have recalled Sourav Ganguly and VVS Laxman for the Test series in an attempt to add steel to their brittle batting order.

Smith said Ganguly would "add a bit of hardness and maybe some

fighting spirit", but he remained confident that his team could handle anything the visitors threw at them.

"India have some world class performers, but there are some guys in our side who've knocked over big names in other sides and they are looking forward to doing so again," he said.

TEAMS

SOUTH AFRICA (from): Graeme Smith (captain), Jacques Kallis, Hashim Amla, Mark Boucher, AB de Villiers, Herschelle Gibbs, Andrew Hall, Andre Nel, Makhaya Ntini, Shaun Pollock, Ashwell Prince, Dale Steyn.

INDIA (from): Rahul Dravid (captain), VVS Laxman (vice-captain), Virender Sehwag, Wasim Jaffer, Gautam Gambhir, Sachin Tendulkar, Sourav Ganguly, Mahendra Singh Dhoni, Dinesh Karthik, Munaf Patel, Zaheer Khan, Shanthakumaran Sreesanth, VRV Singh, Irfan Pathan, Anil Kumble, Harbhajan Singh.



Indian superstar Sachin Tendulkar chats with his coach Greg Chappell on Thursday during a training session at Wanderers Stadium in Johannesburg on the eve of their first Test match against South Africa.

Flemo brands SL selfish

Wellington Test underway



AFP, Wellington

The controversy surrounding Muttiah Muralidaran's bizarre run out which hastened Sri Lanka's downfall in the first cricket Test against New Zealand, flared again here Thursday on the eve of the second Test.

Two days after Sri Lanka said they had put the issue behind them - while maintaining the run out was bad sportsmanship -- New Zealand captain Stephen Fleming accused the tourists of taking the gloss off New Zealand's win.

"We won't necessarily move on," Fleming said, describing the sportsman's issue as a smokescreen to mask Muralidaran's schoolboy error and a "selfish" climax to Kumar Sangakkara's unbeaten 100.

Sri Lanka's spin-master was run out by New Zealand wicketkeeper Brendon McCullum when he went to congratulate century-maker Sangakkara while the ball was still in play.

The dismissal ended Sri Lanka's second innings, leaving New Zealand a 119-run target which they achieved for the loss of five wickets as they struggled to read Muralidaran's spin.

Had the Sri Lankan innings

continued for another 50 runs, they may well have won given New Zealand's batting woes.

But Fleming spiced up interest in the second Test saying New Zealand would not hesitate to effect a similar dismissal in future.

"It's a mistake by them and they covered it up by taking the moral high ground," he said.

"We won a good Test match and it's been diluted by that situation. We're very proud of any Test win we get and to have that not mentioned or talked about is annoying."

Sri Lankan captain Mahela Jayawardene was surprised Fleming had fired up the issue but stood by his original opinion.

"I've played enough cricket to know that was unprofessional," he said.

"It's over for us now. If Stephen wants to talk about it then he obviously has something in his mind which is bothering him."

Fleming admitted his team had taken extra motivation from the fallout and will be "as intense and aggressive as we can" to have the record show a 2-0 series scoreline -- although he admitted there were no guarantees.

"We weren't convincing winners (in Christchurch), there's still enough areas of concern to have us twichy going into this game," he added.

Batting is the obvious area that needs improvement as New Zealand's top and middle order continues to struggle, particularly against Muralidaran.

While his batting blunder may have been the main talking point of the first Test, the Sri Lankan match-winning bowler tied up the New Zealand batsmen.

He sprung a major surprise by bowling around the wicket to some right handers and was rewarded with the wickets of Craig Cumming, Jamie How, Mathew Sinclair and Nathan Astle (twice).

Five of his seven match dismissal's were to leg before wicket decisions as ultra-cautious batsmen prodded forward to smother spin, on a pitch that never really turned.

Fleming said subject to a final inspection he would be keen to bowl first in Wellington, which would almost make the toss redundant as Jayawardene wants to bat first regardless of conditions.

The Sri Lankan skipper's philosophy is to give his proven match-winner Muralidaran last use of a wearing pitch -- a policy which backfired in Christchurch where the New Zealand seamers ensured the Test was over inside three days.

CROSSWORD By Eugene Sheffer

ACROSS		34	Spam manufacturer	52	She loves Schroeder	9	Stereo hookup
1	Diner offering	36	Nab	53	Finished	10	Smell
5	Eremite's home	37	Coach	54	Grazing territory	11	Skin opening
9	Go like a frog	38	Poeshian	55	As well as	20	Boss
12	From one end to other	39	Gun the engine	56	Deli loaves	22	External
13	Still unpaid	40	Become a member	DOWN		24	The Treasure of the Sierra —"
14	Altar affirmative	42	1940s headline word	1	Leave a lasting impression?	25	Volcano output
15	Henhouse	44	Grooving on	2	"Hi, sailor!"	26	Plato's P
16	Singer Mousekouri	48	"Not only that, but ..."	3	Stomped (on)	27	Craggy peak
17	Gilt-tag word	49	Frizzy do	4	Herculean	28	Anger
18	Fictional villain	50	Country singer	5	California vulture	30	Type squares
19	Go blue?	51	Evans	6	Vacationing	31	"You dirty —!"
20	Paddock pop	52	Lemieux milieu	7	Surface	35	Legal
21	Kanga's kid			8	Writer LeShan	36	Desert water-course
22	Ostrich's kin					37	Hoosergow
23	Camelot king					40	Never again?
24	Edged sword					41	Concept
25	Holler					43	"Lobs" paths
26	Skin (prefix)					45	Almost black
						46	Generalogy chart
						47	Galley supply
						49	Carte lead-in

Solution time: 27 mins.

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