

### LOCAL SNIPPETS

FROM PAGE 21  
Iran, Pakistan and Vietnam.

#### DANONE CUP

The final round of the Grameen-Danone Nations Cup kicks off today at the Bangabandhu National Stadium with six teams competing in two groups.

The winners will represent the country in the Danone Cup, to be held in France from June 29 to July 1.

Dhaka, Jhenaidah and Khulna make Group A while the other group comprises of Chittagong, Chapaina-wabganj and Narayanganj.

The final will be played on May 27.

#### DU SWIMMING

Golam Faruk of Haji Muhammad Mohsin Hall and Abdul Halim of Sir AF Rahman Hall emerged joint champions in the Dhaka University Inter-hall swimming championship. Shahidullah Hall student Mahbubur Rahman finished runner-up. A total of 30 swimmers took part in seven events.

## Satkhira make it

FROM PAGE 21  
Hasan Ripon at struck both the goals in the first half at the Satkhira Stadium to set up the home side's clash against favourites BKSP on May 27 in the last four.

In the other match, Tangail thrashed Jhenidah 6-0 with a hattrick by Rafiqul and a brace from Ripon. Awal added the other goal for Tangail, who face Noakhali in tomorrow's first semifinal.

The final is slated for May 29.

## Nothing less

FROM PAGE 21  
Bashar was also not bothered that match-winning legspinner Anil Kumble, who did not bowl in the entire first Test due to fever, is fully fit to test them in this game.

"Whenever Kumble plays, he always makes a difference. I think he has got 540 wickets. But every team has that kind of bowlers. So you have to face them," he said.

On other hand, Dravid understandably expressed his satisfaction over his bowling trump card's full fitness.

"Not just now, Anil has been a big factor for Indian cricket for more than a decade now. Him being fit, having to use him in situations where we probably need a few wickets, you know, that might help us. Obviously that to happen Anil has to bowl well as well," said Dravid.

"There is no pressure at all because you sometime go to your next match with one-up or one-down, so it doesn't matter," replied the Bangalore-born skipper when the question was raised whether his side are under pressure to win the series after the no-result in the first game.

What might make the visiting skipper happy was the news from his counterpart about the weather and ground condition.

"The weather looks good. I think we will have a full five-day Test match. The drainage system is pretty good in this ground as well," informer Bashar.

In Chittagong, it was hard to dry the ground due to poor drainage system but here it hardly takes two hours to prepare the ground.

## Milan erase

FROM PAGE 24  
accuracy and Dida was able to make a straightforward save.

With 13 minutes to go, Benitez brought on Peter Crouch for Mascherano, hoping to benefit from the giant striker's aerial presence.

Inzaghi pounced again eight minutes from time, running onto Kaka's sublime pass before rounding Reina and slotting home from a tight angle.

Kuyt's header gave Liverpool hope, but Milan clung on to banish those dark memories of Istanbul.

## Liverpool look

FROM PAGE 24  
"We can be proud of ourselves. We've done so well getting to the final and I know we'll play in another one of these finals.

"We've got to pick ourselves up, have a good rest in the summer and then go again next season.

"We're going places, there's no getting away from that."

Liverpool surprised Milan with their attacking verve in the first-half and would have levelled the tie if Gerrard had been able to beat Milan goalkeeper Dida in a one-on-one situation just after the hour mark.

"I think we controlled in the first half but not as much as we would have liked in the second half -- but let's not forget that we were playing a top side with top players," he added.

"Credit to AC Milan -- they won and maybe they just about deserved it. In the build-up to the game we said it would be decided on small details and a bit of luck and AC Milan got that.

"We need to strengthen and bring some quality into the club. The manager and the people in charge of the club know that and it will be an interesting summer."

# Vaughan to end mix-up



AFP, Leeds

Michael Vaughan hopes his return for the second Test against the West Indies will end the "confusion" surrounding the England captaincy.

Vaughan has not played a Test for 18 months since appearing against Pakistan in Lahore in December 2005 after being sidelined mainly with knee and hamstring problems.

And just when he was on the verge of making a Test return, he missed the drawn series opener against the West Indies at Lord's after having his finger broken by Hampshire's Australia seamer Stuart Clark while playing for Yorkshire.

But he is now set to make his comeback in the five-day game in the second Test of a four-match series starting at his Headingley home ground on Friday.

In his absence, England have been led by Marcus Trescothick, currently injured all-rounder Andrew Flintoff and Andrew Strauss.

Vaughan, 32, said he felt underused during England's 5-0 Ashes series thrashing, arguing his tactical input could have helped the team.

But critics, including former England captain Michael Atherton, have said Vaughan's wish to be involved while unfit to play has been an unnecessary distraction for the side.

"If you've continuous leadership rather than stop-start of

course the team are going to get used to the way I captain and it will be better for everyone," Vaughan told reporters at Headingley here Thursday.

"There'll be no confusion. We've just got to make sure I stay on the park and get a good run of games in," said the Yorkshire batsman, who in 2005 led England to their first Ashes series victory in 19 years.

And Vaughan, who has scored 4,595 runs in his 64 Tests at an average of nearly 43 with 15 hundreds, insisted he had not been made a special case, joking comparing himself to Chelsea manager Jose Mourinho, the self-styled 'special one'.

"Are you going to start calling me Jose? Excellent. I'm the England captain, I've made myself available for selection. I've been selected. Surely, that's a positive thing?

"The finger's fine, it's had three weeks now. I certainly wouldn't put myself up for selection if I didn't think I could get through.

"There's absolutely no reason why I can't go out there tomorrow (Friday) and get a big score because I feel in a good frame of mind."

England were in a strong position at Lord's, four batsmen scoring hundreds in the first innings alone and five in the match in all.

But the bowling, with the exception of left-arm spinner Monty Panesar, was disappointing with spearhead quick Stephen Harmison off-target.

Vaughan said it was important the Durham fast bowler didn't put himself under undue pressure at Headingley.

"Sometimes you can try too hard and maybe he just tried too hard at Lord's and it got a bit further away from himself. He's just got to relax and bowl."

England, already without Matthew Hoggard after the Yorkshire seamer sustained a thigh strain at Lord's, will once again be missing Flintoff after the Lancashire star's ongoing left ankle problem saw him withdrawn from the squad after practice on Wednesday.

However, that meant England could bring Vaughan back in a straight swap for Owais Shah at three without also having to drop one or other of Lord's centurions Paul Collingwood and Ian Bell.

As for Flintoff, Vaughan added: "We need him back, need him firing and hopefully back to what we all see as his best.

"If that needs a few more weeks, play a few games to get confidence in that ankle, then that is what he's going to have to do," said Vaughan, who indicated England would like to see Flintoff bowl in Lancashire's Championship match away to title-holders Sussex later this month before including him for the third Test at Old Trafford starting on June 7.

England have still to announce whether James Anderson or left-arm quick Ryan Sidebottom, recalled six years after his lone Test appearance, will take Hoggard's place at Headingley.

"It's going to be a tough decision," said Vaughan. "The left-arm is a different option and Jimmy has got the potential to bowl great swing."

## Ireland claim Intercon Cup

BBC ONLINE, undated

Defending champions Ireland beat Canada by an innings and 115 runs within two days to retain the ICC Intercontinental Cup at Grace Road on Wednesday.

Canada were 92 all out in their first innings with Trent Johnston taking four wickets and Thinus Fourie three.

Ireland replied with 352 all out, Jeremy Bray hitting 146 off 152 balls, Eoin Morgan scoring 84 and Umar Bhatti claiming five wickets for Canada.

Kyle McCallan took five wickets as the Canadians then stumbled to 145 all out.

Skipper Johnston's bowling figures in the first Canada innings were 4-12 while Fourie recorded 3-31.

Eglinton player Bray and William Porterfield then set an Intercontinental Cup record for the first wicket, sharing a stand of 202.

Opener Bray thumped his 146 off 112 balls, an innings which included 19 fours and a six.

Ashif Mulla was top scorer with 48 in the Canadians' second innings in which McCallan finished with figures of 5-38 and Johnston, 3-48.

"This is a fabulous result for us and a first innings lead of 260 ended up being plenty," said McCallan afterwards.

"We won the toss and then bowled well to put ourselves in a dominant position in helpful conditions.

"We wanted to bat longer than we did but the Canadians bowled well on Wednesday morning and we did not bat so well."

## Sharif added

FROM PAGE 21

Bangladesh think-tank are interested in picking three seamers, likely keeping left-arm spinner Enamul Haque out of the final eleven. The wicket to be used today at the Mirpur venue has some grass and it is likely that left-arm seamer Syed Rasel will get a go.

Sharif, who has 14 wickets from his eight Test appearances, last played for Bangladesh in the Zimbabwe tour in February this year. He is also handy with the bat, a quality that the chief selector also mentioned while talking to the Daily Star last night. He made a superb comeback with two stellar seasons in local cricket after being sidelined with a career-threatening groin injury.

## Dav's swansong

FROM PAGE 21

"We have got to win more; we have got to try to be consistent, to get a better team formation," he added.

He also explained the reason behind not to continue with the team he has been worked for last four years.

"It's not a case of I can't wait to get out of Bangladesh. It's not that I don't like the place, don't like the country, don't like the food, and don't like the traffic. It's not a case that at all. It's a case of having been here for four years, I just need to have a break. It's simple I have been in a country that hasn't enabled the family to come and reside that often. It's mainly because of the schooling of the children and that sort of stuff. I am leaving on very good terms. The door is always open, the relationships are still very good, it comes at a time that it needs to happen," he informed.

Whatmore was not ready to comment on his next job and his opponents rather said that his boys are keen to do something in his last match.

Bangladesh captain Habibul Bashar also said that nothing could have been better if they did something in their coach's last game.

"If we do something that pleases him, we will be very happy."

## Pippo repays

FROM PAGE 24

"It's something we've worked on in training and every now and again it's been successful," he said, tongue firmly in cheek.

Milan owner Silvio Berlusconi insisted he knew Inzaghi would find the target.

"I told Inzaghi before the match that he was guaranteed to score," said the former Italian prime minister.

Inzaghi, whose brace took his career tally in the Champions League to 38 goals, said he was looking forward to the summer break after a long season.

"Don't forget we were on the pitch on August 9 for the preliminary round," he said.

"I will take a well-earned rest over the summer, as I didn't have any real holiday this year. It will be a very enjoyable time."

Many questioned whether Milan should even be allowed in the competition due their involvement in the Italian match-fixing scandal, but AC Milan president Adriano Galliani insisted they were worthy of their place.

"It's an immense joy after everything this club has been through this season," he said.

"We deserve this for all the effort everybody has put in."

# Spirit cheers Sarwan



AFP, Leeds

West Indies captain Ramnaresh Sarwan hopes his side can continue to upset the odds when they play England in the second Test starting at Headingley here Friday.

The tourists, ranked a lowly eighth in the world Test rankings, and with just a day of match practice in England before the opening contest of a four-match series, fought hard to draw the first Test at Lord's.

"Playing so well at Lord's, and drawing a Test match a lot of people said we would lose -- that meant a lot to us," Sarwan told reporters at Headingley on Thursday.

"That should give us momentum for this match," Sarwan, captain following the retirement of star batsman Brian Lara, added.

Sarwan, who said West Indies were likely to name an unchanged XI, was also heartened by the aggression his pace bowlers showed as the match at Lord's wore on. "One positive we can

take from the last game is that we bowled quite a few short balls in the second innings.

"In the first innings, we were very hesitant about it -- a couple of our players looked very shy. That is one of the tactics we might use in this game."

"There was a lot of talk about us not getting too much practice before the first game. But now we've had sufficient practice and spent plenty of time in the middle bowling and batting, so I think we've come on a long way.

"We played very competitively throughout the Test match, and we showed some sort of fight. That is something which has been lacking from us for some time," Sarwan explained.

"It's very important we continue to compete. When I got here in England I said I need us to be much more consistent than in the past."

England are set to be captained by batsman Michael Vaughan, out of Test cricket for 18 months with a variety of injuries.

"I can remember when I was much younger he captained England, and it is good to play against those people you look up

to," Sarwan, 26, said of his opposing skipper. "He's been very good for England; he usually does a good job for them and gets everyone in good spirits -- which is important.

"It's very important for us to try to get at his weaknesses, because he's the sort of player who tends to get very big scores if he gets set."

West Indies were undone at Lord's by left-arm spinner Monty Panesar, who took six for 129, to leave the tourists 116 behind on first innings, including five lbws.

"He was quite new to most of us," batsman Sarwan said of Panesar. "We hadn't seen much of him before Lord's.

"He didn't get many wickets with the turning ball; it was his arm ball.

"We should have a better feel of him this time."

But West Indies stayed on top of England fast bowler Stephen Harmison, who had disappointing match figures of one for 138 and Sarwan said: "We saw when Australia played them they were very positive against Harmison and kind of threw him off. We have a similar sort of approach."

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