

## 'Task force report will get rid of corruption'

SPORTS REPORTER

Sports Adviser Tapan Chowdhury said that the government will try its best to implement the recommendations of the 'task force' report to make the sports arena corruption free.

While talking to reporters at the Youth and Sports Ministry conference room yesterday, the sports adviser informed that he received three volumes of the task force report yesterday.

Headed by Brigadier Najib Hassan, the task force prepared a 724-page report on corruptions in the National Sports Council.

"We will make this report public and also, take measures against the responsible persons according to the existing law of the country," Tapan said.

"Our top priority was to cut corruption in sports when we formed this task force. Now I believe that this (report) will also help us get rid of systemised corruption in the NSC," he added.

## Mohammedan

FROM PAGE 21 goal also in the inaugural match, will also be available at the Mohammedan bench after serving a touchline ban.

It would be a challenge for Manik who looks forward to record a win in normal time after failing to beat B. League champions Abahani so far this season.

B. League runners-up Mohammedan had lost one and drew the other game in the professional league before managing to beat the sky-blues in the tiebreaker on last Monday.

Everyone, however, hopes that return of the key figures will be for the better and the most popular clubs of the country will show patience instead of repeating typical on and off the field antics and disappoint their devotees.

## It's for Tushar's

FROM PAGE 21 practice has drawn most attention as the net bowlers, attired in New Zealand's black, bowled from 18 yards. There was a certain sense of excitement from some when wicketkeeper-batsman Mushfiqur Rahim wore one on his helmet. There were some misused hooks and pulls but it was heartening to see that the batsmen were adjusting well, especially skipper Mohammad Ashraful.

Siddons is making sure that no stone is unturned as far as preparation goes. A bowling machine set 15-20 yards away from a hard, marble-top surface with an upturned table (doubling as a slanted bat) near where a batsman would stand to face an 80mph delivery. An attendant lets a ball through the machine that pitches on that surface and hits the face of the table, resulting in slip catches. Siddons surely is well aware of Bangladesh's poor catching.

Tushar seems to have understood that, apart from fielding well, the team also needs a batsman of his experience to take up seaming challenge that waits in New Zealand.

"I know that a big responsibility will be on me and Ashraful to take care of the innings and I think that I am to be heard here, I must score runs," said Tushar, not breathless anymore.

## Dhaka struggling

FROM PAGE 21 Mehrah Hossain contributed 36 while Shamsur Rahman was unbeaten on 29.

### BRIEF SCORES

**CHITTAGONG:** First Innings 359 all out in 101 overs (Salahuddin 94, Nafis 40, Mahbubul 61, Nazimuddin 12, Ehsanul 78, Faisal 19, Dhiman 5, Younus 5, Kamrul 3, Yasin 15\*, Sajid 0; Ziaur 2-68, Robul 3-102, Murad 3-85, Fariduddin 1-51, Nahidul 1-17).

**KHULNA:** First Innings 216-6 in 77 overs (Sadat 91, Imrul 15, Mostafiz 10, Bashir 35, Nahidul 33\*, Sanjay 0, Salim 7, Ziaur 11\*; Kamrul 1-15, Younus 1-34, Yasin 3-38).

**BARISAL:** First Innings 182 and second innings 48-2 in 17 overs (Hannan 23, Nafees 11 ret'd hurt, Imran 6, Rokibul 2, Tariqul 2\*, Shahjada 1-22, Sajib 1-2).

**RAJSHAHI:** First Innings 204 all out in 77 overs (Jahurul 31, Rafiqul 1, Farhad 9, Anisur 3, Mashud 18, Naeem 68, Mushfiqur 7, Mahbub 27, Sajib 0, Kabir 0\*; Talha 1-63, Sajid 3-40, Arafat 2-37, Tariqul 2-16, Raisul 2-8).

**SYLHET:** First Innings 312 all out in 116 overs (Rahman 43, Intiaz 25, Sadiqur 4, Rajin 36, Kapali 1, Mahud 75\*, Ejaz 54, Rezaul 20, Enamul 38, Nabil 4, Rashid 0; Mahbubul 2-74, Sharif 4-60, Rafique 2-110).

**DHAKA:** First Innings 148-5 in 66 overs (Uttam 0, Anwar 31, Riyad 8, Mehrah 36, Shahrar 2, Shamsur 27\*, Nadif 29\*; Rashid 1-18, Golam 1-2, Nabil 3-36).



Pakistan's Ghazanfar Ali (L) and South Korea's Lee Nam-Yong (R) fight for the ball during the Champions Hockey Tournament in Kuala Lumpur on Thursday. The match ended in a 3-3 draw.

## Dutch surrender crown

AFP, Kuala Lumpur

European champions the Netherlands surrendered any remaining chance of retaining the Champions Trophy after drawing 3-3 with world number ones Australia here Thursday.

The Netherlands only managed nine points after six matches and now have no chance of getting into the final after a thrilling draw.

"That's it," Dutch coach Roelant Oltmans conceded of his team's chances.

"But actually we were not thinking of making the final even before this match," he confessed.

"I'm quite pleased with the overall performance but it is always a regret that we are not able to get

into the final but that is the way it is -- sometimes you win, and sometimes you lose."

Both teams started the match at a ferocious pace but it was the Dutch who took the lead in the 10th minute after an excellent interchange in midfield between Jeroen Hertzberger and Rob Reckers, leaving the 21-year-old Hertzberger free to score his first senior international goal.

The Aussies got back into the game in the 26th minute when Russell Ford scored from close range.

However, the Netherlands again went ahead when veteran Taeke Taekema converted a penalty corner.

But yet again the Aussies equalised, this time when Eddie Ockenden scored from close range in the 33rd minute to make it 2-2 at

half-time.

The Aussies went behind again shortly after the break. A through-ball found Matthijs Brouwer alone on the left of the circle and he unleashed a ferocious shot past keeper Stephen Lambert.

But for a third time Australia drew level, in the 63rd minute, when Luke Doerner thumped home a penalty corner to ensure both teams grabbed a point each.

The Australians were pleased with the result, saying there was still a glimmer of hope for a place in the final.

"The result was fair, both teams had wanted to win but coming out with a draw, so its not sure what it means at the moment," assistant coach Colin Batch said.

"Now we have to wait and see what happens to other results. It all depends on the last match now."

## Rahul form worries India

REUTERS, Bangalore

Less than three weeks before India's high-profile Test series in Australia, concerns persist over the form of batting mainstay Rahul Dravid.

Since quitting the captaincy in September, the 34-year-old has struggled to recapture the kind of form that established him as one of the world's top batsmen.

While his place in the line-up for the four-Test tour starting on December 26 is not in doubt, the final Test against Pakistan beginning on Saturday presents him with a final opportunity to find his touch before heading to Australia.

"It's very important for the team, that Rahul plays long innings in Australia," former coach Aunshuman Gaekwad told Reuters on Thursday.

"He needs to stay to stabilise the entire innings to have the required effect. The role of the number three batsman is crucial for any team."

Dravid averages 64.72 in seven Tests in Australia and was the highest run-getter for the side during the 2003-04 tour with 619 runs at an astonishing average of 123.80.

His double hundred helped India win the second Test at Adelaide and he also had two scores in the 90s among his three half centuries in a remarkable series that ended in a 1-1 draw.

However, Dravid has failed to deliver in his starts in the first two

Tests against Pakistan.

He was unfortunate to be given out for 50 in the second Test in Kolkata, where the two sides stacked up nearly 1,500 runs combined, but the manner of his dismissals in the first Test was so untypically Dravid, renowned for his technical excellence.

Just 378 shy of joining the exclusive 10,000-run club in Test cricket, Dravid fell in the first innings playing across the line to debutant pacer Sohail Tanvir and was bowled by a quick ball from Shoaib Akhtar that sped through the gap between bat and pad.

"(But) he is a classy player, and is just one innings away from regaining form," former captain Ajit Wadekar told Reuters on Thursday. "Hopefully that will be soon."

## Khan bats for Yousuf as Test captain, Raja differs

PTI, Chandigarh

Former wicketkeeper Moin Khan feels Pakistan can continue with Shoaib Malik as the one-day captain but if they are to do better in the longer version of the game, veteran batsman Mohammad Yousuf should be made skipper of the Test squad.

"I think Yousuf is the key batsman for Pakistan and commands great respect among the team members. If he is made captain, the team would

put up better performance," Moin, who is coach of Hyderabad Heroes, an ICL Twenty20 team, told PTI here on Thursday.

He said Malik could continue as the ODI captain, adding "but if they want good results, in the Test they should not delay appointing Yousuf as captain." "After the ongoing series against India gets over, I think the Pakistan Cricket Board (PCB) will have to seriously decide about the captaincy issue," felt Moin.

Asked about another senior batsman Yousuf Khan, Moin said, "He can also be considered, but I feel

Yousuf is a more deserving candidate." Moin advised the Pakistani side to approach the third and final Test in Bangalore with a positive frame of mind and go all out for a win to square the series.

However, lack of quality bowlers might affect the side's show, fears Moin.

Meanwhile PTI reports from Karachi add, his penchant for bizarre dismissals notwithstanding, Misbahul Haq has excelled in both forms of the game and is an ideal candidate to take over as Pakistan's Test captain, believes former captain Rameez Raja.

With the PCB deciding to review the performance of skipper Malik in January, Rameez said Misbah's form and his educational qualifications made him the ideal choice to replace the incumbent as the Test captain.

"Misbah has resolved a lot of problems in the Pakistan batting and at a time when questions are being asked about Malik's ability to lead the captain in Test matches and Yousuf has also refused the captaincy, Misbah seems to be the ideal person for the job," Rameez said.

Rameez pointed out that like him, Misbah had done his MBA and given a new lease of life to his career at the age of 33, when most contemplate retirement.

"I admire that person who is respected in the dressing room. I don't bother about what he does off the field in his spare time. But at an age (33) when most people think about retiring, Misbah has shown strength of character by excelling at the top level and surprised everyone with his performances," Rameez said.

"The fact is if Malik cannot establish himself... Misbah appears to be an ideal choice to take over as Test captain," Rameez said.

## Inter-district eves' soccer from today

UNB, Dhaka

The 2nd Inter-district Women's football competition, organised by Bangladesh Women Sports Association, will begin tomorrow at the Dhanmondi Women's Sports Complex.

Women and Children Affairs Adviser Geetara Safiya Chowdhury will formally inaugurate the eight-day meet as chief guest at 3 pm.

Bangladesh Football Federation president SA Sultan and acting secretary general of Bangladesh Olympic Association Kutubuddin Ahmed will be present as special guest.

## Asif could be out for two months

PTI, Karachi

Pakistan fast bowler Mohammad Asif is expected to be out of action for two more months after surgeons in Australia recommended that he needs to have corrective surgery for his nagging elbow problem.

The Pakistan Cricket Board (PCB) sent Asif last week to Sydney to consult a sports medicine specialist after the pacer failed to recover from an elbow strain to make the Indian tour last month.

"We have got a detailed report from the surgeon in Sydney and he has recommended surgery for which he has been given a go-ahead," a PCB official told PTI Thursday.

Asif will have the corrective surgery on Monday after which the board reckons he could be out of cricket for two months as part of his rehabilitation process.

## Wolfsburg after

FROM PAGE 24 "Jens Lehmann is one of the top people in his position," Magath told German television channel DSE.

"He is a man with vast experience and he would be a welcome addition to the team."

"Of course we are interested in signing someone like him, we want to improve our position both in Germany and Europe," Magath told German television channel DSE.

Both Lehmann and Germany's reserve goalkeeper Timo Hildebrand, who is struggling for first-team football at Valencia, have been targeted by Magath.

"Everyone knows that I am a big fan of Timo Hildebrand, I coached him at Stuttgart and I would be interested in hearing from him."

## Nancy snatch

FROM PAGE 24 But Toulouse were struggling after their goalie Nicolas Douchez was sent off just after the break and coach Elie Baup was banished from the touchline ten minutes from time.

Toulouse missed a string of chances to put the result beyond a doubt, notably when midfielder Achille Emana lost his duel with Nancy goalie Gennaro Bracigliano three minutes from time.

Nancy pressed home their numerical advantage with Malonga's goal in the final minute of play leaving fourth-from-bottom Toulouse two points above the relegation zone.

Nancy with 31 points from 16 games are five points behind Lyon.

## Long lay-off

FROM PAGE 24 Grant has complained about the scheduling of the tournament and will resist any requests from Ivory Coast, Nigeria and Ghana for early call-ups for Drogha, Salomon Kalou, John Obi Mikel and Michael Essien with concern about the standard of medical care provided by the African associations.

Drogha's absence will increase the pressure on Grant to sign a striker, with a bid for Nicolas Anelka, the Bolton Wanderers player, expected.

## Milan plot

FROM PAGE 24 Ronaldo, the Brazilian phenomenon who has featured in just one match this season due to a thigh injury; will be fit to play in Japan, according to Milan vice president Adriano Galliani.

Milan won the Intercontinental Cup in 1989 and 1990. But, in the 2003 final, the Argentinians beat the Rossoneri 3-1 on penalties after a 1-1 draw in 120 minutes, adding to their previous honours in 1977 and 2000.

With the pride of their countries and regions, other continental champions refuse to be written off as also-rans in this year's event.

Tunisia's Ettoualeh will clash with Mexico's Pachuca here on Sunday for the right to face Boca in the semifinals.

On Milan's side of the tournament, the winners of the Sepahan-Waitaker play-off will face Asian champions Urawa Reds of Japan in the quarterfinals. Sepahan, the runners-up in the AFC Champions League, are taking over the berth reserved for the hosts.

## Coach wants Bond to go on

AFP, Perth

New Zealand coach John Bracewell Thursday urged veteran strike bowler Shane Bond to continue his international career, despite his latest injury setback.

There have been reports in New Zealand that Bond was considering retiring and Bracewell admitted here that the career of the 32-year-old Bond, who is missing the limited-overs tour of Australia due to an abdominal problem, was in some jeopardy.

"To be fair, that's been going on now for four or five years," he said of the retirement talk.

"But he keeps coming back and he's a bloody good trainer who works damn hard."

"But eventually it has got to get you down, that sort of stuff, and he is not getting any younger."

"I would discourage it, mainly from a selfish point of view, because he is such an outstanding bowler for us."

The injury-plagued Bond, with 125 one-day scalps at 19.32, has been New Zealand's premier fast bowler for many years.

He was the quickest New Zealander to reach 50 one-day international wickets, but the tale

of his career is in his tally of just 17 Tests over seven years, for 79 wickets at 22.39.

Bond has battled stress fractures in his feet and back.

While Bracewell claimed New Zealand's fast bowling stocks were healthy, with some emerging talent coming through, he said Bond was

the paceman.

With Bond resting at home, New Zealand open their Chappell-Hadlee Trophy tour of Australia with a festival match against the Cricket Australia Chairman's XI here on Friday at Lilac Hill.

With Vettori not playing, wicketkeeper Brendon McCullum will captain the Black Caps for the first time.

On Tuesday, the Kiwis also play the Australians in a Twenty20 clash at the WACA.

The Australians will be led by Michael Clarke, with skipper Ricky Ponting being rested.

Ponting and Adam Gilchrist missed last year's Chappell-Hadlee Trophy series, but Bracewell dismissed suggestions the Australians did not take the Kiwis seriously.

TEAMS

NEW ZEALAND: Brendon McCullum (captain), Mark Gillespie, Gareth Hopkins, Jamie How, Chris Martin, Michael Mason, Iain O'Brien, Jacob Oram, Jeetan Patel, Mathew Sinclair, Scott Styris, Lou Vincent.

CA CHAIRMAN'S XI: Luke Ronchi, Jo Angel, Ryan Campbell, Liam David, Theo Doropoulos, Shawn Gillies, Aaron Heal, Phillip Hughes, David Hussey, Trent Kelly, Matthew Olsen, Luke Pomersbach, Trevor Penney.

SHANE BOND

still required.

"It would be nice for some of those guys to bowl with Shane for a while and get that experience rub off on them," he said.

Kiwi captain Daniel Vettori said on Tuesday he would be surprised if Bond retired, but he too admitted the injuries were taking their toll on

## Mahela hails bowlers Michael looks on the bright side

BBC ONLINE, undated

Sri Lanka captain Mahela Jayawardene praised his bowlers after their 88-run victory over England in the first Test in Kandy on Wednesday.

Seamer Chaminda Vaas took the first three wickets, while spinner Muttiah Muralidaran removed Matt Prior and Ian Bell after a crucial stand of 109.

"After two losses in Australia, it was a great comeback by us," he said.

"The fast bowlers came to the party early -- we had to be patient as Belly (Ian Bell) and Matt (Prior) batted well, and the second new ball did the trick for us."

Reflecting on the five days' play, he added: "Having been 42-5 on the first day, it was a great achievement to come back and win the match."

"England had a good first-innings lead, so we had to dig deep but Sanga (Kumar Sangakkara) batted brilliantly and we just had to bat around him."

"Once the ball got older, it was very difficult for us to get anything out of the wicket, so we had to wait for the new ball -- and once Murali

came to the party, it was all over."

It was the final Test for opener Sanath Jayasuriya, who is stepping down from Test cricket.

Jayawardene added: "We're going to miss him, he's been a role model but he went on his own terms."

"I wish him all the very best, but we're still going to see him in one-day cricket."

England captain Michael Vaughan paid tribute to Bell and Prior after they almost enabled England to avoid defeat.

The pair resisted for 44 overs before Muralidaran struck after tea to set up an 88-run win for the hosts.

"Belly and Matt's partnership was exceptional in the middle period but full credit to Sri Lanka, they fought right to the end," said Vaughan.

"There's a lot of real positives we can take out of the Test match."

Vaughan said it was always going to be a "really tough ask" for England to bat out the final day in Kandy.

Resuming on 9-1, England lost four wickets in the morning session before Bell and Prior's defiance gave the visitors hope they could avoid defeat.

However, once they fell to Muralidaran defeat seemed inevi-

table and the end came when Lasith Malinga ripped a yorker through Matthew Hoggard's defences with less than half an hour of light remaining.

"When we lost early wickets this morning it made it more difficult but the partnership of Belly and Matt got us back into it," said Vaughan.

"Towards the end we thought we were going to get over the line but Lasith Malinga produced a great delivery to get rid of Hoggard."

The three-Test series now moves to Colombo and Vaughan insisted his side would not be downhearted going into the second Test on Sunday.

"We take a lot of positives to Colombo. Obviously we're 1-0 down and we'll have to fight back hard to make sure we make it 1-1 in Colombo," said the England captain.

England wicketkeeper Prior, who made a defiant 63, echoed his captain's positive tone.

"Vaughny this morning asked us to fight and that's what we did," said Prior.

"We fought hard -- it was a war of attrition at points. It was not quite enough in the end but we'll take a lot from it."

## Pakistan look back

FROM PAGE 21 solve their middle-order batting problems after a below-par performance in the opening match.

Misbahul Haq, Kamran Akmal and Younis all made centuries at Kolkata, while Yousuf contributed an unbeaten 44 in a crucial 136-run stand for the unfinished fifth wicket with his captain on the final day.

India will again pin their hopes on spinners Anil Kumble and Harbhajan Singh, especially after naming a new-look pace attack due to injuries to key fast bowlers.

Left-arm seamer Zaheer Khan (heel) and Munaf Patel (back), who

shared the new ball in the first two Tests, are out because of injuries. They were replaced by Irfan Pathan and Vikram Rajvir Singh.

Pathan looks set to play his first Test since June 2006. He has so far bagged 91 wickets in 25 matches, while Singh has played only five Tests.

Kumble, retained as captain for the forthcoming tour of Australia, said the team was focused on wrapping up the series with a win on his home ground.

TEAMS

INDIA (from): Anil Kumble (cap-

tain), Wasim Jaffer, Dinesh Karthik, Rahul Dravid, Sachin Tendulkar, Sourav Ganguly, Venkatesh Laxman, Mahendra Singh Dhoni, Harbhajan Singh, Irfan Pathan, Ishant Sharma, Vikram Rajvir Singh, Yuvraj Singh, Murali Kartik. PAKISTAN (from): Younis Khan (captain), Salman Butt, Yasir Hameed, Mohammad Yousuf, Misbahul Haq, Faisal Iqbal, Kamran Akmal, Sohail Tanvir, Mohammad Sami, Shoaib Akhtar, Danish Kaneria, Yasir Arafat, Rao Iftikhar, Abdur Rehman.

## CROSSWORD By Eugene Sheffer

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