

Linu distributes birth certificates

SPORTS REPORTER

Table-tennis legend and UNICEF Goodwill Ambassador Zohera Rahman Linu formally inaugurated a birth certificate distribution ceremony in the city's Mirpur area recently.

A Guinness Book of World Record-famed star for most number of national titles, Linu handed over 32 birth certificates to mostly underprivileged children of the locality.

In five wards under Baonia Bandh, the data of 10,690 children aged 0-18 have so far been collected by ARBAN (Association for Realization of Basic Needs) for finalising the birth registration process.

The programme was organised by ARBAN and supported by the Bangladesh government, Terre des hommes (TDH) Foundation Italy and UNICEF with funds from the Netherlands government and the European Commission.

"Birth registration is essential for every citizen of the country. It ensures the right of every citizen to an official identity that is recognised by the state. Everyone should, therefore, have their birth registered and carefully preserve their certificates," Linu told the audience at the ARBAN school premises.

She urged the local people to avail the free of cost registration offer until July 2, 2008 announced by the Bangladesh government as birth registration gives protection against social vices like early marriage, child labour, violence against children, criminal responsibility on children due to proper verification of age.

Also speaking at the ceremony, Laura Giani, country representative of TDH Foundation, describing the certificate awarding ceremony as a symbolic gesture to consolidate child rights, said that with UNICEF assistance TDH Foundation has been supporting NGOs like ARBAN to implement a pilot project of birth registration of 22,000 children.

UNICEF's programme officer Tirza Theunissen, project coordinator Robiul Alam, ARBAN coordinator Muhammad Kamal Uddin and Ismail Hossain Gazi, chairman of Baonia Bandh Development Committee, were also present.

Thakurgaon win Under-14 title

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Gaibandha

Thakurgaon emerged as regional champions of the national under-14 district youth cricket competition when they beat hosts Gaibandha in the final by six wickets at the local stadium yesterday.

After bowling out Gaibandha for only 101 runs in 48.4 overs, Thakurgaon took their time to reach the winning target as they scored 102-4 in 38.5 overs.

Scramble

Panionios Athens enter their all-important Group H clash with French club Bordeaux with renewed confidence after a domestic league win over city rivals Panathinaikos at the weekend.

"The win against Panathinaikos, one of the best teams in Greece and with a vast European experience, will certainly help us psychologically for the match against Bordeaux," said Panionios' Croatian midfielder Ivica Majstorovic.

"I believe we are 100 percent ready to win and go on to the next round of the UEFA Cup competition."

Turkish side Galatasaray, the 2000 winners, will join Panionios in a battle for the remaining ticket and have the easier fixture when they play bottom side Austria Vienna at home.

Group winners Bordeaux and Helsingborg have both qualified.

Terry faces long

FROM PAGE 20 said Ashley Cole could be punished for an offensive two-fingered salute at Arsenal fans, even though the incident was not mentioned in referee Alan Wiley's match report.

England full-back Cole was subjected to persistent verbal abuse from Arsenal supporters in what was his first game back at his old club since his controversial transfer across London last season.

He further angered Gunners fans' by making disparaging remarks about the club in his autobiography.

Photographs of Cole making his gesture appeared in British newspapers on Monday and the spokesman said: "None of the officials saw the incident."

"If an incident is not seen by the officials, it would depend on what evidence is available, whether there's any TV footage, any photographic evidence to be considered."

Arsenal's win ensured they stayed top of the Premier League by a point from Manchester United and left Chelsea in third place, six points off the lead.



Table tennis icon and UNICEF Goodwill Ambassador Zohera Rahman Linu is seen among recipients of birth certificates after a distribution ceremony at Baonia Bandh in the city's Mirpur area recently.

Waugh votes for Hogg

Cricket

CRICINFO, undated

Steve Waugh has backed the traditional line-up of three fast bowlers and a spinner for the Boxing Day Test against India. Despite a surge in popularity for Shaun Tait over the past two weeks, Waugh believes Brad Hogg should take the spot left by Stuart MacGill when he had surgery on his wrist.

"It's probably 50-50 right now, but Hogg deserves a chance," Waugh told the Daily Telegraph. "He has never let Australia down. He has proven one of our best one-day players in the last four years."

Hogg has appeared in only four Tests, the last coming in 2003, while Tait was called twice on the 2005 Ashes tour. Waugh said if Hogg was not chosen now he might never come back.

"Tait is probably ready to go and there would be a temptation to play him," he said. "Hogg deserves a chance. If you don't give him a chance now, he will probably never

get a chance. If it doesn't work, you can always make a change for the second and third Tests."

Tait's limited-overs speed against New Zealand has been fierce and he has proved his right elbow has recovered from surgery. However, Waugh would prefer Brett Lee, Stuart Clark and Mitchell Johnson in the side if three fast men were picked.

Waugh said India were more comfortable against spin than pace. "If they can get stuck into their top order with some short stuff and be very aggressive, it's a bit of an ageing batting line-up, too," he said. "There are a few question marks over India although on the other side is that they have a lot of experience."

India start their tour with a three-day game against Victoria at the Junction Oval on Thursday and Ian Healy felt they had arrived too late to adjust to the conditions. "Another fortnight might have been perfect," he told the paper.

"They are coming off some hard cricket of late, but hard cricket in totally opposite conditions. That's

not good. I just think they are going to have to cram too much, too quickly at a time when they really need to be spot-on for Melbourne and Sydney because Perth could be dangerous for them."

Opportunity

FROM PAGE 17

Forhad Reza got Marshall (21) caught behind with an away swinger before Mark Orchard and K Williamson steadied the innings.

The first rain interruption came after 37.4 overs with Knights on 145-4. Following an early lunch the players returned to the middle to finish the 3.2 overs in the reduced-over game.

Orchard (43) was bowled by Razzak after smashing the bowler over mid-wicket for a six and Shahadat uprooted the stumps of Peter McGlashan before dismissing Ian Butler two balls later.

Shahadat was impressive throughout and bowled with hostility and pace. His sharp bouncers were on the money and he was unlucky not to finish with more than two wickets.

The Bangladeshi batsmen will practise tomorrow at Seddon Park in the morning to try and make up for the lost opportunity today.

Meanwhile, pace bowler Sajidul Islam is expected to arrive in New Zealand tomorrow afternoon to replace Rassel. Rassel will however stay back to undergo further examination by specialists.

The Tigers round off their preparation for the ODI series against the Black Caps with their last warm-up fixture against the Auckland Aces, the leaders in the ongoing first class competition here, on Friday at Eden Park Outer Oval.

BRIEF SCORES

NORTHERN KNIGHTS: 173 for 7 in 41 overs (Williamson 47 not out, Orchard 43, Walsby 30; Razzak 2-26, Nazmul 2-32, Shahadat 2-38, Forhad 1-38) Result: Match abandoned

India land

FROM PAGE 17

Australia coach Tim Nielsen said while India was always competitive, they would need something special to beat this team.

"It's all great to talk the talk, the real challenge for both sides is to walk the walk come Boxing Day," he said.

The Indian team for the first Test has not yet been determined, but Kumble said his strong batting line-up would seek to exploit weaknesses in Australian bowling following the retirement of leg-spinner Shane Warne.

"They miss Warne, somebody like him, so that's something, an area, we can (exploit)," he said. Australia's 12-man squad for the Melbourne game, announced Tuesday, includes spinner Brad Hogg who joins the team as leg-spinner Stuart MacGill recovers from hand surgery.

Cricket Australia said who takes the field will depend on conditions at the Melbourne Cricket Ground on Boxing Day.

India will play a three-day match against Victoria state starting Thursday, before the first Test starts. They will also play a triangular one-day series, which will include Sri Lanka.

Yousuf gets board help

PTI, Karachi

Pakistan Cricket Board has vowed to provide all possible legal help to senior batsman Mohammad Yousuf after an Indian arbitration panel barred him from playing in next year's Indian Premier League.

"Legal experts will be consulted to finalise a strategy to help Yousuf," who initially signed up for the rebel Indian Cricket League, PCB's Chief Operating Officer Shafiqat Naghm told PTI.

Rajshahi one-day

FROM PAGE 17

The hosts' palty total of 196 quite comfortably.

Nafees hammered eight boundaries during his 99-ball 61 and Faruque smashed seven fours in his 55 off 77 balls as Barisal raced to 197-2 in 47.2 overs.

Earlier, Mahmudullah Riyad (50) and Nadif Chowdhury (51 not out) smashed half centuries but their efforts were not enough to put on a fighting total after deciding to bat.

New ball pair Sumon Kumar and Arafat Salahuddin equally shared six wickets to restrict the home team below two hundred.

BRIEF SCORES

RAJSHAHI: 242 all out in 47.2 overs (Shakil 95, Robul 19, Mahbub 10, Delwar 6, Naem 14, Farhad 8, Mushfiqur 22, Anisur 31, Mashud 1, Shafiq 0, Saqlain 15, Mahmud 3-52, Sajjadul 3-64, Sajju 1-39).

CHITTAGONG: 172 all out in 37 overs (Gazi Salahuddin 13, Mahbubul 2, Mazhar 6, Nazimuddin 1, Dhiman 21, Faisal 91, Ehsanul 5, Sajjad 0, Kamrul 5, Sajju 1, Mahmud 4, Delwar 5-34, Shafiq 2-21, Mushfiqur 1-23, Mahbub 1-29, Saqlain 1-31) RESULT: Rajshahi won by 70 runs.

MOM: Shakil Haider and Delwar Hossain (Rajshahi). SYLHET: 278-8 in 50 overs (Imtiaz 14, Mabud 17, Rajin 32, Alok 73, Rahman 65, Sharifullah 34, Ejaz 12, Enamul 0, Rezaul 13, Nabil 3, Manjurul 3-42, Ziaur 2-52, Nazmus 2-52, Robul 1-52).

KHULNA: 192 all out in 45.1 overs (Imrul 22, Nazmus 83, Mostafizur 16, Habibul 14, Nahidul 12, Sahagir 2, Sanjay 1, Farid 1, Ziaur 2, Manjurul 0, Robul 9, Alok 3-45, Enamul 2-19, Nabil 2-23, Imtiaz 2-28, Rahman 1-22).

RESULT: Sylhet won by 86 runs. MOM: Alok Kapali (Sylhet). DHAKA: 196 all out in 49.2 (Mehrab 44, Anwar 8, Mosharraf 0, Al-Shahrar 4, Shamsur 20, Mahmudullah 50, Nadif 51 not out, Nazmul 8, Sharif 2, Mahbubul 2, Niaz 0, Arafat 3-38, Sumon 3-39, Tarikul 2-45, Monir 1-28, Abul Bashir 1-44).

BARISAL: 197-2 in 47.2 overs (Shahrar 61, Nasiruddin 55, Imran 36, Raquibul 21, Mosharraf 1-32, Sharif 1-45). RESULT: Barisal won by 8 wickets. MOM: Shahrar Nafees (Barisal).

Jamie excited

FROM PAGE 17

and the 2007 World Cup.

Many of those was under former England coach Duncan Fletcher who employed Maynard as one of his assistant coaches, having coached him when in charge of Glamorgan.

After making the decision to leave Middlesex, the county he joined full time in 2004, Dalrymple opted for Glamorgan despite them finishing bottom of both the County Championship Division Two and the Pro40 Division Two.

"It was a difficult decision," Dalrymple said. "No decision to leave somewhere where you've been for a while is easy."

"But I'm pretty confident I've made the right decision and very excited about the new start ahead of me."

"The appeal of playing at Glamorgan, where there's such passion for the game, things added up pretty quickly."

Glamorgan's Sophia Gardens home in Cardiff was awarded Test status in April 2006, with the England and Wales Cricket Board giving its approval to the rebuilding work made so far after a site visit last August.

Sophia Gardens will host an Ashes Test match between England and Australia in 2009.

'It's not impossible'

Cricket

BBC ONLINE, undated

Sourav Ganguly believes the absence of Shane Warne and Glenn McGrath could see India clinch their first ever Test series victory on Australian soil.

Fresh from victory over Pakistan, India travel to Australia this week hoping to improve on their 2003-04 series draw.

"I think we are the two best sides in the world," former India captain Ganguly told BBC World Service Sport.

"We did well in 2003 but without McGrath and Warne, I'm sure that will make a difference."

Australia have played just one series since the retirement of McGrath and Warne -- who boast 1,271 Test wickets between them -- at the end of the Ashes series last January.

Ricky Ponting's side are currently well clear at the top of the ICC Test rankings, while India are one of four teams vying for second place.

Captained by Anil Kumble,

India begin a three-day warm-up match against Victoria in Melbourne on 20 December, with the first of four Tests starting in the same city on 26 December.

Ganguly, currently India's fifth-highest overall run-scorer in Tests, admitted a trip to Australia is the hardest tour in cricket but claimed India are full of hope.

"It will be a massive series in their backyard, they are a very strong team -- probably the best in the world -- so we will really have to raise our game if we are to compete," he said.

Ganguly, who in the past year has made a remarkable return to international cricket after being dropped from the national team in early 2006, says spin bowling could prove crucial.

While India have Kumble and Harbhajan Singh, Australia may have to look to one-day specialist Brad Hogg and first choice Stuart MacGill is recovering from wrist surgery.

"All good Test teams have good spinners and for Australia to lose Warne is going to make a difference," Ganguly continued.

"For us, (pace bowler) Sreesanth

will definitely be missed.

"But at the same time we have two quality spin bowlers. And out of the four Test matches we are playing at three venues -- Sydney, Melbourne and Adelaide -- which spin."

"Definitely if we can put runs up on the board that will be the key and put us in a position to get them out."

While denying that Australia "fear" India, Ganguly insisted the home team will know they face a tough challenge.

"I spoke to some of the other players when they were in India, and they feel we are the only team which competes with them," he said.

"They have probably beaten most other teams quite easily, apart from the Ashes in 2005, so it is for this reason it will be a tightly-contested series."

"We just want to do well in the four Test matches and take one match at a time."

"Obviously if we can win the series, that will be fantastic. But we know we will have to play really well to do it."

"It's not impossible."

A new Bracewell bluff

Cricket

CRICINFO, undated

John Bracewell claimed to have inside knowledge on why Adam Gilchrist was rested for Thursday's final match of the Chappell-Hadlee Series before apologising to Australia's vice-captain for being misleading. Less than a week after refusing to pass Shaun Tait's action, Bracewell was back in the limelight with a strange response to a question about whether he was surprised by Gilchrist's omission for the deciding game in Hobart.

"No, not at all because of the circumstances of why he's left out of the team," Bracewell was reported by NZPA. "The reasons are not for me to reveal. It's down as 'rested', but they're not for me to reveal. Could it be family reasons? I don't know. It's not necessarily rested."

Gilchrist told the Australian: "I don't care what they say. They've had a lot to say over the last week. I wonder what they'll say next?" A New Zealand spokesman later told the Sydney Morning Herald Bracewell had phoned Gilchrist to "clarify the

situation and apologise".

The incident continues a string of strange accusations involving Bracewell when New Zealand play Australia. Before the Test series in 2004-05 he said Australia were vulnerable the longer the match lasted, during the tour he claimed Hawkeye was altered to suit the home team and at the end of it he complained a pitch had been swapped to negate the spin of Daniel Vettori.

In 2005 he suggested Brett Lee could be taken to court if one of his high full-tosses hurt a batsman and he also believed the Australians, who were being hit by objects thrown from the stands, stopped play to disrupt a New Zealand chase in a one-day game. Bracewell had refused to comment on the Tait issue in Adelaide and this time said it was "never mentioned in our camp".

He deflected queries about whether he was satisfied Tait operated within the laws by saying: "I just haven't spoken to the match referee. He's a bowler like everyone else. He's damn fast and good on him."

Australia lead the series 1-0 and New Zealand need a victory at Bellerive Oval to retain the trophy. The second match in Sydney was

washed out with the visitors in severe trouble at 3 for 30, but Bracewell was not concerned.

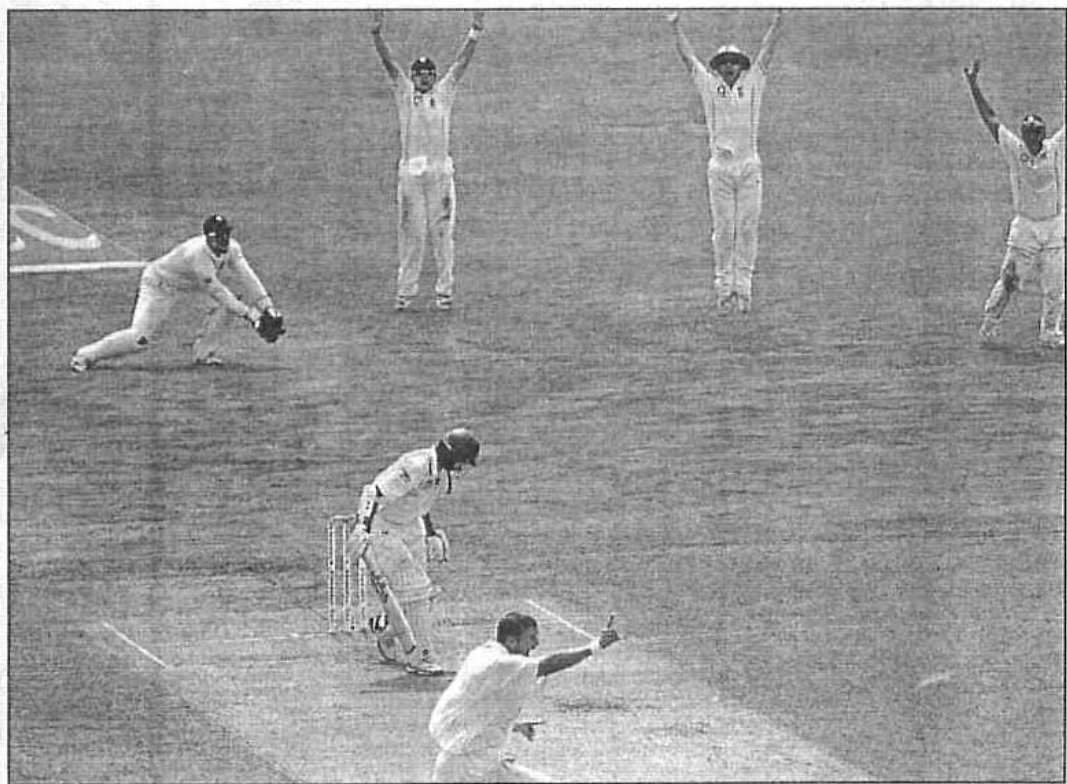
"To go down to Hobart and have to win a game to win a trophy is a good position to be in," he said. "It was only a six-over game. Everything starts afresh so the psychological advantage finishes with a non-result."

Bayliss shocked

FROM PAGE 17

"Batting first on that wicket this morning is probably sort of a fairly even sort of a day. We could have gone in with no more than three down tonight. But we still got a few batsmen who can still score some runs and push on for 300 plus at least tomorrow."

Bayliss clarified on the team management's decision to hand left-arm seamer Chanaka Welagedara his debut instead of sticking with another left-armer, Sujewa de Silva, who has played three Tests. "We thought he was a little bit taller and he hits the deck a little bit harder. Sujewa is a little bit lower and skiddier. On this type of wicket, with the moisture, we thought Chanaka might be a little harder to handle."



England fast bowler Steve Harmison (foreground) appeals successfully for a leg-before decision against Sri Lanka opener Upul Tharanga during the opening day of the third and final Test at the Galle International Cricket Stadium on Tuesday.

CROSSWORD By Eugene Sheffer

ACROSS 38 Run 58 Disen-cumber 9 Often-risque poem 10 Valhalla VIP 11 Impudent 16 Drop shot 20 Hot tub 23 Fool 24 Sort 25 Mellow position 27 Panuka 29 -- Lanka rig 30 Bottom line? 32 Eccen-trics 34 Displayed ostenta-tiously 37 Beam of light 39 Newborn 42 Re Ra 44 Heming-way's yacht 45 List- ending Latin 46 Oliver Twist's request 48 Mussolini title 49 Perver-ate 50 "The -- the limit" 53 Mr. Baba

DOWN 1 Scandina-vian city 2 Ca-stage boose's position 3 Big rig 4 End 5 Slip 6 Computer key 7 "Sorcer-er's Appren-tice" composer 8 Take for granted

Solution time: 21 mins.

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CRYPTOQUIP

P O T M G A Q B N J B A N W A

T Q E O K G P C M G G V M Z Z M E G Z Q

Z E K Z Q W Q T F V M Z M

FAEOGMG: "MMV QH HQEZZJM."

Yesterday's Cryptoquip: IF A COUPLE OF BIRDS ARE PERCHED ON A BRANCH OF A CITRUS TREE, THEY MAY BE OUT ON A LIME.

Today's Cryptoquip Clue: M equals E