# SPORT

#### Chamely powers Ansar to win

SPORTS REPORTER

An all-round performance from Chamely Khatun helped Ansar and VDP move into the final of the Parachute Women Open Cricket tournament when they beat Abahani by 21 runs at the Dhanmondi Cricket Stadium yesterday.

Despite the defeat, Abahani still have a chance to make it to the final when they meet Ispahani Sporting Club in the last final round game today.

Chamely shone for Ansar as she made 24 runs and then picked up three wickets.

Sent in to bat first, Ansar scored 125-9 in their stipulated 35 overs with opener Ayesha Akhter and skipper Panna Ghosh contributing 25 each.

Shirin Ruby claimed three wickets while Reshma Akhter took two for Abahani.

In reply, Abahani were all out for 104 in 33.5 overs with Chamely starring with the ball.

### BHF gearing up for 4 tourneys

UNB, Dhaka

The zonal round of the EXIM Bank 18th National Handball Championships will begin on February 7 at three venues.

Twenty-seven districts have so far confirmed their participation for the qualifiers competition, which will be held in Chittagong, Faridpur and Rangpur or Jamalpur. The finals will be held in the

second week of March in Dhaka. The Bangladesh Handball Federation (BHF) will organise more handball tournaments before the national championships with the Bata school and college handball

tournaments taking place in March. Meanwhile, the Bexi Fabrics 3rd Mini School handball tournament will begin on February 3 in the city.

Twelve metropolis schools, split into four groups, will compete in the four-day meet sponsored by Bexi Fabrics.

The four group toppers will play in the semifinals.

### 'Hosts lack the edge'

PTI, Melbourne

Legendary leg-spinner Shane Warne has said Australia cared too much about their image in the Perth cricket Test and lost the edge without their trademark aggression.

Warne said the main weapon for Australia was their aggressive body language on the field and by being careful of their conduct after the Sydney fiasco, they found it difficult to curb the Indians.

"There have been some suggestions that Australia lost their edge and were too concerned about their image going into Perth. Sport is about passion and attitude and knowing yourself. Australia play best when they get in the face of the opposition and are very aggressive, Warne wrote in his column for 'The Daily Telegraph'.

"Maybe they were not as aggressive in their body language in Perth as they normally are, but I think that was the nature of this Test, in which they were behind for most of the game," he said.

Warne appreciated India's effort to stop Australia from getting to their 17th consecutive Test win.

The former Aussie spinner hailed Indian captain Anil Kumble's feat of capturing 600 Test wickets, saying the Indian leggie was a true champion.

"Congratulations to Kumble on joining the 600 wickets club. He is one of the most competitive opposition players I have ever played against, a true champion and a credit to the game and his family."

#### Ganguly dropped FROM PAGE 17

The argument against Ganguly also included the points that he was not of much use either in the outfield or infield and his fitness really became an issue after 40 overs.

Vengsarkar, it is learnt, made a pointed reference about the runs which Ganguly still provides to the

However Vengsarkar told reporters last night, "We have to look ahead. What is the point in picking up some players whose career would last just a couple of

"I may or may not be the selector tomorrow. But we have to build up India with a futuristic projection and we have opted for the best blend of players in the current

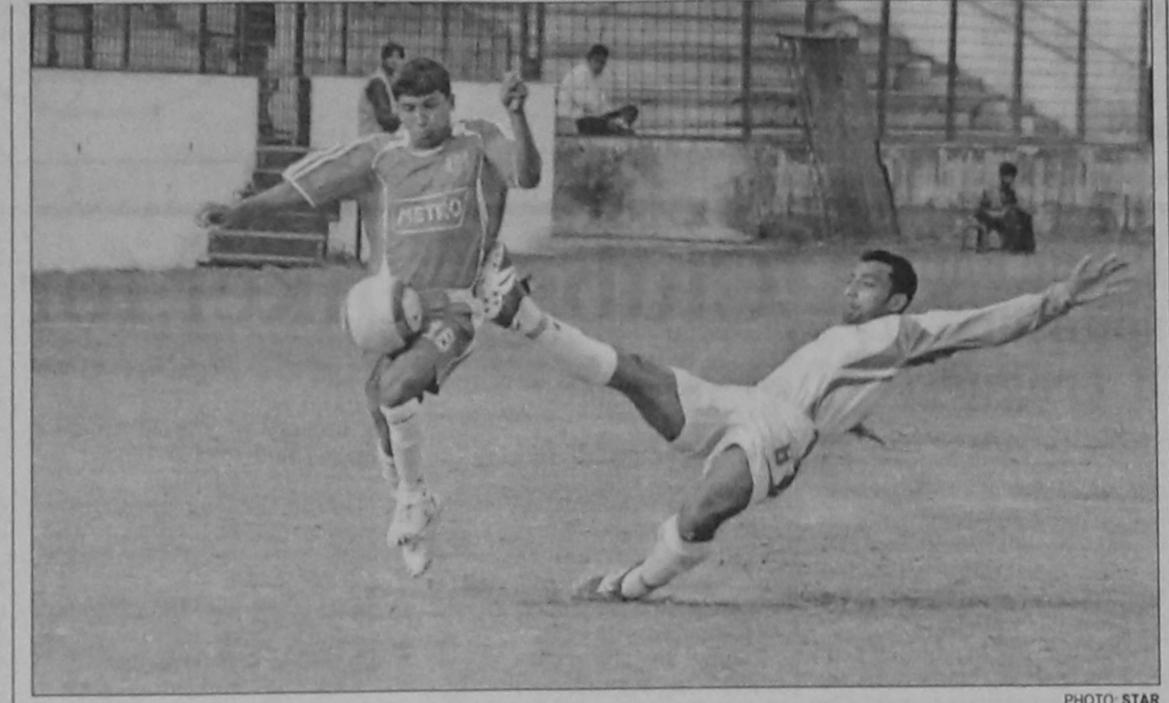
tour," Vengsarkar said. He refrained from making any comment on the exclusion of Ganguly on queries from reporters.

#### Kalou inspires FROM PAGE 20

complacent.' Of Alloudi's injury he said: "It's early days but it looks as though we might be missing his services for our next game (against Guinea on Thursday).

"It's frustrating, as he was in form."

Morocco, having made it to the final in Tunisia in 2004, were first round casualties in Egypt, packing their bags without even scoring a goal.



A Badda defender (R) tries in vain to stop a run by a Wari forward during their Senior Division Football League match at the Birshreshtha Shaheed Sepoy Mostafa Kamal Stadium in Kamalapur yesterday.

## Fight the fudge

Cricket

CRICINFO, undated

Many England supporters tend to regard the selectors as a bunch of jokers. Now it's practically official. The first full-time selection job in England's 131-year history has gone to a man who makes his living as an after dinner-speaker, cracking jokes to roomfuls of drunken men.

pick a good team, but at least he should give good quote. He may well go out of his way not to be One of the very worst selections funny at first, but he is at least a of recent times was that of Ashley professional communicator. We can probably rely on him to avoid the clotted jargon that David Panesar, who was (a) a better Graveney used to spread over his bowler, (b) fit, (c) in the team at

fault, that was one. And another, which may have been related, was a tendency to blur issues that needed to be clear. England's his character and his catching. selection habits improved quite a lot over the 11 long years of is the new selector? Ashley Giles. Graveney's chairmanship, but he never quite lost his taste for fudge.

You can see it in the last diffiabout the batting for the Test tour had a poor tour of Sri Lanka, failing to cash in on flat pitches. Peter Moores, decided to drop Strauss back.

was missed, but his batting wasn't at all -- the opening pair, Vaughan, were better balanced is ditched for not performing, he count quadruple? has to go out and perform before he is recalled. Strauss, by all appoint Giles. He is a great friend

well," he said of India's attack in

the bowlers out it would be a pretty

"If they do decide to leave one of

Australia will recall opener

He was missed at the top of the

Matthew Hayden, who missed the

Perth Test due to a hamstring

order, and his absence was also felt

in the Australian slips cordon, with

some crucial catches going to

Hayden has declared himself fit

to play and will replace debutant

Chris Rogers at the top of the order,

but Hussey said the Australians

could not expect the big left-

accounts -- well, Graveney's -knuckled down and worked hard in the nets at Middlesex. He's an admirable character who was treated roughly by England when he lost the captaincy after winning his only Test series, against Pakistan. But that's not a reason to recall him now. The place he will probably occupy in the next three Tests should have gone to Shah or Mark Ramprakash.

Although Graveney has gone, the tendency to get the thinking Geoff Miller may or may not wrong remains in the system. You can see it in the appointment of one of Miller's new co-selectors. Giles for the first two Tests of the 2006-07 Ashes, ahead of Monty the time, and (d) a mystery to the If the affable Graveney had a Aussies. Giles was picked for being a good egg and a doughty batsman, in the same way that Strauss is now being picked for

No sooner had Giles retired than he was showered with job offers. He has already accepted cult decision he faced: what to do one and become Warwickshire's director of cricket. This could be of New Zealand. The batsmen an inspired appointment, but it's a risk. Giles has never managed anything, and he has barely had Something had to be done. any experience of captaincy. Even Graveney, along with Miller and if he is a natural at management, it will be, as Grav would have said, a Ravi Bopara (who made his Test steep learning curve. And it got a debut, played in all three Tests, bit steeper when Giles was also and flopped), retain Owais Shah asked to be a selector. Has he Swann -- weren't even that lucky: (who was in the squad but didn't picked teams before? Not as far as get a Test) and bring Andrew we know. Again, he could be a natural, but the chances are that Strauss is being recalled for the he will be doing his apprenticewrong reason: his slip catching ship in public. At the same time as doing his other apprenticeship. England hopefuls have long Alastair Cook and Michael known that runs made on telly count double. Now the same will and more successful without be true of runs made against him. He is also being recalled at Warwickshire. So will runs made the wrong time. If a senior player on telly against Warwickshire

There are other reasons not to

hander to be the answer to all their

winning the Test match on

Matthew Hayden playing or not,

we might be in a bit of trouble," he

"It would be great to have him as

"But hopefully we can have a

Despite the disappointment of

"It's not the end of the world,"

very good team performance

rather than relying or one or two

missing out on a world record 17th

straight Test win in Perth; Hussey

"If we're pinning our hopes of

problems.

batsman/first slip.

key players."

of Michael Vaughan, yet he may have to decide whether to strip Vaughan of the captaincy. His decency might even be a problem then. It's possible to be both a good egg and a square peg.

So the first hope for the Miller panel is that they won't fudge decisions. The second is that they will buck a curious trend in selection: that the more experts you have in one facet of the game, the more likely you are to mess it up. England currently have a wicketkeeper manager for the first time, in Moores, and another wicketkeeper among his assistants, in Andy Flower. Yet somehow they have contrived to make eight changes of wicketkeeper in 18 months (Jones, Read, Jones, Read and Prior in Tests; Jones, Read, Nixon, Prior and Mustard in one-dayers), and to head for New Zealand with two Test beginners

- Mustard and Tim Ambrose. Flower himself might be a more reliable option.

With Graveney and Miller, the The result was disastrous. So who selection panel of recent years had plenty of spin know-how. Yet several of the players they treated most cursorily were spinners. Ten specialist slow bowlers played for England in the last eight years since Miller joined Graveney on the panel, and only two of them were given ten Tests: Giles and Panesar. The other eight totalled 31 Tests and 45 wickets between them at an average of 60. See if you can name them (answers at the bottom). Some of their fellow spinners -- Jason Brown, Graeme they went on tours without playing a Test.

Now there are still two spinners on the panel, with Giles joining Miller. They are going to have to be better at picking spinners than Graveney was. Scyld Berry, the sage of the English press, thinks England's best chance in the 2009 Ashes lies in preparing turning pitches, to thwart Australia's possible fourman pace attack, and playing two spinners. Right now, it's a little hard to envisage.

Bhajji set for return

he said. "We've got to put it behind us and we've got to look forward positively to Adelaide.

"The guys are going to be very determined.

Australia is also likely to recall a spinner, with veteran Brad Hogg set to return at the expense of tearaway fast bowler Shaun Tait.

Tait barely bowled in Perth and didn't take a wicket. Australia's decision to dispense with a special ist spinner for the first time in 16 years in favour of a pace quartet backfired as it was forced to bowl said the Australians would bounce part-time spinners to counter slow overrates.

## Nadal storms into semis

Kafelnikov in the 2000 decider.

of claiming the world number one year's tournament.

Federer could lose the position he to beat James Blake on Wednesday and misses the semifinals, while Nadalgoes on to win the title.

Nadal stretched his record over fellow left-hander Nieminen to 4-0 and was always in control after the Finn squandered two set points in the 10th game of the opening set.

It was the furthest Nieminen had advanced at the seasonopening major and capped a strong start to his 2008 season after

he finished runner-up to Frenchman Michael Llodra at this

Nieminen, in his 12th season on the men's tour, had two set points at 15-40 in the 10th game but wasted both opportunities to seize the opening set.

wide and netted a backhand to lose his chance and was broken in his next service game for Nadal to go on and take the set on his second of three set points.

confirmed participation in the qualia third time to take a two sets lead. Another mistake from

Nieminen netting an easy forehand the second game of the final set.

semifinals of the Australian Open with a 7-5, 6-0, 7-6 (8/6) win over 14th Russian seed Mikhail Youzhny on Tuesday.

## Poor response for JFA cup

fiers of the JFA Cup Under-15 football tournament to begin next month. The Bangladesh Football Federation (BFF) received 32 entries

the tournament committee is expected to increase the time for entry after its today's meeting.

### Ohidul keeps Jatrabari atop

SPORTS REPORTER

Jatrabari consolidated their position atop the Senior Division Football League table with a 2-1 win over Purbachal Parisad at the Birshreshtha Shaheed Mostafa Kamal Stadium in Kamalapur vesterday.

Prolific striker Ohidul struck both the goals either side of the break to give the newcomers their fourth win in five matches, taking Jatrabari's collection to 12 points after five rounds.

Shipon reduced the arrears for Purbachal, who remained on two points after five outings.

In the day's second match, Badda Jagarani drew 1-1 with Wari Club to move to the second place

with eight points after four games. Badda went ahead after 37 minutes through an own goal by Shahin but Munna shot the equaliser for Wari from a 47minute penalty.

Mid-table Wari raised their tally to six points after five rounds. Victoria will take on Mohakhali XI while Dhaka Wanderers play

#### **England confirm** Ireland matches

BBC ONLINE, undated

Dipali in today's matches.

England will play Ireland in three one-day internationals over the next five years, it has been con-

The sides have scheduled a ODI to be played in 2009, 2011 and 2013. England were 38-run victors in the first official ODI against Ireland in 2006 and won by 48 runs in the Super Eights phase of the 2007

World Cup. Irish Cricket Union chief executive Warren Deutrom said it "was a logical step to enter into a more formal agreement" to play England regularly.

Deutrom added: "Having England play in Ireland will give the game a huge boost and I'm sure our cricketing public will be looking forward to welcoming the English England and Wales Cricket

Board chief executive David Collier, said: "The matches with Ireland will create a lot of interest and the participation in our domestic competitions by the Ireland team will help build on their outstanding World Cup achievements." Ireland famously beat Pakistan

at the World Cup in the Caribbean to progress beyond the group stages into the Super Eights. But in the 50-over English domestic competition last season

they did not win any of their nine matches.

#### India draw Lee

FROM PAGE 17

very well in different parts but it wasn't the Australian complete game that we're used to," Lee said. Lee, who picked six top order

wickets at Perth including Sachin Tendulkar and VVS Laxman in each innings, refused to accept suggestions that the defeat indicated downslide for Australia. "The way we've been playing

recently, we've lost one Test out of 17, so I think we've had a pretty good effort, it's great for world cricket, the Australian team was beaten last week, so be it, we can put that behind us now and focus again," he said. Lee also came in defence of

slinger Shaun Tait, who is expected to lose his place in the Australian XI for his home Test in Adelaide after a flop-show at Perth.

"In Perth it's a unique problem because you will play four fast bowlers, and when you've got guys who can bowl 150k/h with decent run-ups there is always going to be a problem pushing the 90 over mark," Lee said.

"That's something we have to address, there is possibly a way to get through overs a bit quicker, so we'll be trying all we possibly can to work on that. Every time Shaun Tait plays he always gives his best, it's good to see a guy pushing up that speed gun... It's always good when Shaun Tait's in the side," Lee said.

## Hayden boosts

we can play, we all know that, particularly in the batting depart-

order to fire and I'm sure we'll have Although Australia have already retained the Border-Gavaskar

trophy, Jaques said they would not be satisfied unless they won the "We'll obviously be looking at

"To draw the series will be really disappointing, we really want to win as many games of cricket as

"We'll be trying to be as aggressive as possible without crossing

## Laxman still special

Cricket

REUTERS, Mumbai

Like a recurring bad dream, tion." Vangipurappu Laxman has come back to haunt the all-conquering Australia cricket side.

stroked a crucial second-innings 79 to set up India for their 72-run victory in the third Test in Perth and deny the Australians a world-record 17th consecutive win.

defeat Australia at home, winning in Adelaide in December, 2003, when Laxman (148) shared a 303-run stand with Rahul Dravid (233).

helped to end Steve Waugh's hopes of a 17th successive victory at Eden Gardens in Calcutta in 1999 with 281 after India had been asked to follow

seventh wicket with Mahendra Dhoni to help India recover on the third day at Perth after the top order had collapsed to 160 for six.

He then shepherded the tail for 59 Laxman, who has scored 5,595 runs crucial runs to take the total to 294 as with 12 centuries in 89 Tests since his with Dravid, Sourav Ganguly, the tourists built on a first-innings lead of 118 to set Australia a nearimpossible target of 413.

"Whenever the team is under carded from the one-day side in 2005 pressure I think it gets the best out of me," he told reporters. "When I do well and help the team out in these situations it gives me a lot of satisfac-

Laxman has saved his best for Australia, scoring 1,760 runs in 19 Tests against the world number one The wristy Hyderabad batsman side at an impressive average of

Although the "Miracle of Calcutta", that sparked a comeback 2-1 victory for the hosts, remains his career-defining knock, four of his India were also the last team to other hundreds have been scored in Australia and each has been top

Laxman has scored 1,018 runs from 10 Tests at an average of 56.55 in It was also Laxman who famously Australia, while his career average is hovering around the mid-40s. He bats low in the middle order and, more often than not, with only the tail for company.

His place in the XI was not assured Laxman, 33, put on 75 for the at the start of this tour with Yuvraj Singh vying for the middle-order slot on the basis of his remarkable form in the shorter formats of the game.

> The stylish, softly spoken debut in 1996, has often lamented doubt, especially after he was dis- years away.

due to his inability to accelerate the run rate in the closing overs.

However, the touring committee realized that his vast experience would be too much to sacrifice considering that Laxman (494 runs) was the second highest run-getter after Dravid on the previous tour in 2003-04, a remarkable series that ended in

a 1-1 draw. India addressed the problem by promoting Dravid to open the batting with Wasim Jaffer in the first two Tests before reinstating the former captain at his regular number three slot in the third Test where he scored

a93 in the first innings. Laxman scored a century in the second Test in Sydney which was marred by many umpiring errors followed by a three-Test ban on Harbhajan Singh for alleged racial abuse of all rounder Andrew Symonds, against which the off-

spinnerhas appealed. India can draw the four-match series if they win the final Test in Adelaide starting on Thursday.

It seems certain to be Laxman's last Test on Australian soil, along Sachin Tendulkar and captain Anil that his Test spot was perennially in Kumble, as the next tour is four

## Utseya defends choice

Cricket

CRICINFO, undated

Zimbabwe were always likely to be up against it, no matter what side Pakistan turned out, but to win the toss and field on a pancake-flat Karachi track was surely not going to help their cause. Still, Prosper Utseya, the quiet, young captain, had his reasons for doing so.

"We don't have enough experience of playing in such conditions," he explained after his side lost the opening ODI of the series by 104 runs. "We thought we could do well chasing. 347 was obviously too much of a target but if we had kept them to under 300, it was doable."

There is logic there, for Zimbabwe are not a poor batting side. In their last eight ODIs they have only failed to go past 200 twice and have scored over 240 four times, Indeed, their batting wasn't the problem here either. Vusi Sibanda and Chamu Chibhabha might even have entertained vague notions of a chase until the 20th over: both scoring confident, contrasting fifties. Sean Williams added a battling, if ultimately futile one at the end, but as Utseya noted, Malik said. "Every bowler gets hit part on Monday," Malik recog-

there is something there. "Three of our guys got fifties and does, you have to see what he is probably won't be enough over the that is definitely a positive for us. trying to do when he is being hit. Is next four matches.

our next match," he said. "We also fielded well and took our catches, mistake."

What he didn't linger on, and what is likely to be a factor as the series progresses, is their bowling, which appears desperately weak on Monday's evidence. Shoaib Malik, who capped a fine match with three wickets to add to a fifty, was probably stretching the bounds of Pakistani hospitality when he said Zimbabwe bowled well.

Perhaps it was the effort they put in he was lauding, but at no stage in Pakistan's innings did the batsmen appear under any pressure. Nasir Jamshed, with the honesty of a debutant, seemed to get it about right when asked which bowler troubled him most during a commanding 48ball 61: "None of them." Jamshed was one of five bats-

anything -- and it is nitpicking really -- it would be the stick Samiullah Khan and Rao Iftikhar Zimbabwe out here. Anjum received. "It was a very, very flat wicket,"

record -- and one of eight in the

match -- also a record. But if

We can take that confidence in to he bowling restrictively, is he trying to take wickets?"

Pakistan's combination might so I don't think fielding first was a also need tinkering and it might be the case in Hyderabad as Malik later hinted; they played with only five bowling options, two of whom are allrounders. They ended the game bowling Younis Khan and Misbahul Haq. "We had only five bowlers on Monday so I wanted to give some confidence to our nonregular bowlers," was Malik's response, which may or may not have been said with tongue fully in

The imbalance was the result, it is learnt, of a selectorial disagreement a few days before the match. Malik was keen -- as he said publicly -- on using Kamran Akmal as an opener, thus letting him try out another specialist bowler. The selectors wanted, however, to try out Jamshed, as a possible solution. men to score fifty for Pakistan -- a to the eternal opening conundrum. Nobody will be too unhappy with the results, but Pakistan will be Pakistan will be perturbed about keen to try out an extra bowler somewhere along the line, especially as they couldn't bowl

"Zimbabwe are a good side. There was a lot of effort on their around occasionally, but when he nised. That is undeniable, but it



Winners of Dhaka Bank Cup golf tournament pose with chief guest Major General Sina Ibn Jamali (4th from L, back row), Chief of General Staff of Bangladesh Army, during the prize-giving function at the Kurmitola Golf Club recently.

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Today's Cryptoquip Clue: D equals E

FROM PAGE 17

Perth.

ground.

FROM PAGE 20 amid anticipation of a world number one versus two final with Federer on Sunday, the first here since Andre Agassi beat Yevgeny The Spaniard has the possibility

ranking off the Swiss star at this has held since February 2004 if he fails

month's Adelaide ATP event.

He pushed a forehand well

The Finn went down a doublebreak early in the second set but broke back with a forehand winner in the sixth game, but Nadal broke him

earned another break to Nadal in Unseeded Frenchman Jo-

SPORTS REPORTER Only half of the 64 districts have so far

before yesterday's deadline. In the wake of poor response,

Wilfried Tsonga powered into the ment," Jaques said. "We'll be looking at our top a better effort this time."

that line.

series. They currently lead 2-1. winning this Test match and really ramming home that series win," he

possible. "We'll approach it as we always approach it which is fiercely competitive and play the game the right way but play the game hard.

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> LOCKSMITH, IT WAS THE KEY DECISION IN MY LIFE.