

Sunnydale's good start

UNB, Dhaka

Holders Sunnydale crushed Bangladesh International School 12-5 in the Sunnydale 5th Mini Handball tournament in the opening match at the Dhanmondi Women's Sports Complex yesterday.

The boys from tournament hosts Sunnydale dominated the first half 6-3. In the day's other matches, Scholastica outplayed Mary Curie 16-2, South Point beat Mary Curie 8-3, SOS Shishu Palli beat Canadian International School 6-2, South Breeze defeated East Khilgaon Primary 9-4, South Points beat Loreto 7-4 and Banani Bidyaniketan defeated SOS Shishu Palli 21-1.

Fourteen school teams from Dhaka Metropolitan, split into four groups, are taking part in the tournament.

Sagar, Liza, Saif in pole position

UNB, Dhaka

Minhazuddin Ahmed Sagar, Shamima Akthar Liza and Abdullah Al Saif jointly lead the 29th National Junior (Under-20) Chess Championship securing five points after the fifth round matches at the federation hall-room yesterday.

AM Sharon followed the leaders neck and neck with 4.5 points.

In the day's fifth round matches, Sagar beat Saimon Siddiqur Rahman, Liza beat Masum Hossain, Saif beat Shamsuddoha Shakin and Sharon beat Nazmul Hossain.

Vettori ruled out of Eng opener

AFP, Wellington

New Zealand cricket suffered a twin blow Sunday with injured captain Daniel Vettori ruled out of the Twenty20 series against England and Scott Styris retiring from Test cricket.

Vettori, who rolled an ankle during training last week, said the injury was improving but he would not participate in the Twenty20 games in Auckland on Tuesday and Christchurch on Thursday.

He was also in doubt for the opening one-day international against England next Sunday but would undergo a medical assessment later in the week.

Experienced middle-order batsman Scott Styris announced his retirement from Test matches, saying he wanted to focus on the limited over versions of the game with the 2011 World Cup in India as his end goal.

In his 29-Test career, Styris scored 1,586 runs at an average of 36.04 and also proved a handy medium pacer taking 20 wickets at 51.15.

England meanwhile won their opening warm up match in New Zealand -- a 50-over encounter against Canterbury -- by 51 runs on Saturday.

Ian Bell topscored with 79 off 89 deliveries while Alastair Cook compiled a brisk 51 and Kevin Pietersen made 48.

Real take

FROM PAGE 20 properly and Juanito pounced to open the scoring.

Ten minutes later Almeria were fortunate not to have goalkeeper Diego Alves sent off for a blatant body check on Sergio Ramos metres outside of the penalty area.

Real's goalkeeper Iker Casillas was furious that Ramos only received a yellow card and his protests led to him receiving the same punishment.

Things got worse for Real two minutes after the restart when Italian defender Fabio Cannavaro was adjudged to have fouled Negredo in the penalty area.

The in-form striker picked himself up to convert the penalty sending Casillas the wrong way for his seventh goal of the season.

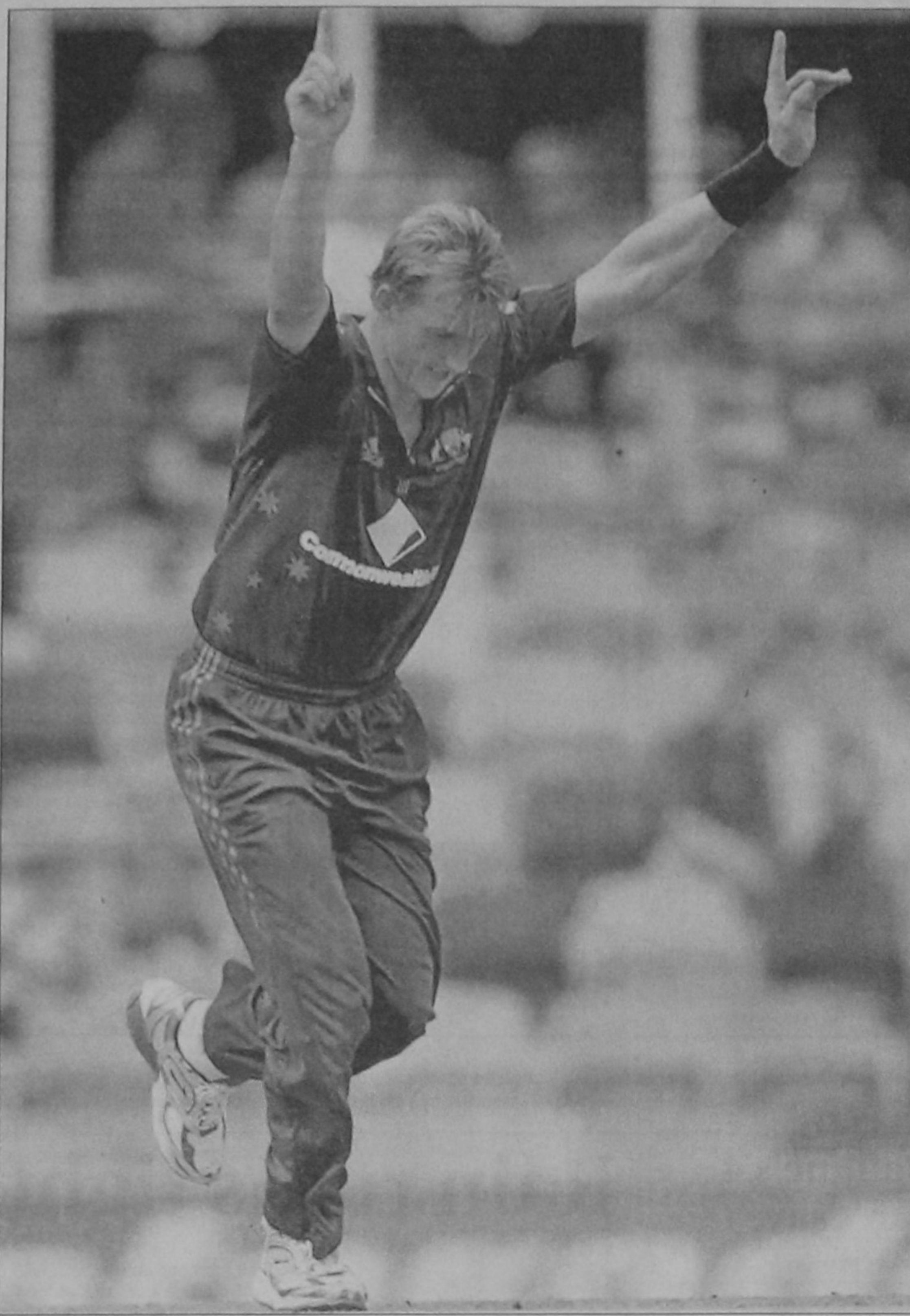
In Saturday's late match Deportivo La Coruna moved out of the bottom three with a 1-0 win at fellow strugglers Real Betis.

Pablo Amo scored the only goal as Deportivo climbed out of the relegation zone at Real Murcia's expense.



Did U Know?

The record for the world's shortest badminton match is six minutes between Ra Kyung-min of South Korea and Julia Mann of England.



FIVE-UP LEE: Australia fast bowler Brett Lee celebrates one of his five India wickets in the rain-abandoned first one-day international of the Commonwealth Bank Series at the Gabba yesterday.

Symonds irate, angry

AFP, Sydney

Australian all-rounder Andrew Symonds has rejected criticism that he sparked the racism row with India's Harbhajan Singh in the recent Test series in an article published Sunday.

In overturning a suspension against Harbhajan for allegedly calling Symonds a "big monkey," International Cricket Council's appeals commissioner John Hansen said there was not enough evidence to prove the off-spinner had made the remark.

Hansen was also critical of the behaviour of Symonds, whom he said unnecessarily instigated the verbal exchange.

"To have people questioning my integrity as a person and cricketer is pretty ordinary," Symonds wrote in Sydney's Sunday Telegraph.

"Anyone who knows me understands that I'm a very straight up and down bloke, what you see is what you get, so to have people saying I'm not playing cricket in the right spirit really makes my blood boil."

Match referee Mike Procter suspended Harbhajan during the controversial second Test between Australia and India in Sydney for allegedly making the remark to Symonds, Australia's only black player.

But Hansen said Symonds had challenged Harbhajan with an "unnecessary invective-laden attack" after the Indian patted Australian fast bowler Brett Lee on the behind in what he viewed as a sporting gesture.

India had threatened to quit the triangular one-day series beginning Sunday over the dispute.

Symonds wrote that the last month has been the most stressful of his career. "From the initial racism row to the threats about the whole series being called off, my head hasn't stopped spinning," he said. "It's been a rough ride and it's taken a pretty big toll on me personally, but more importantly, on my family, my girlfriend and those close to me."

Hansen downgraded the racism charge against Harbhajan to one of using general obscene, offensive or insulting language, overturned the suspension and fined him 50 per cent of his match fee.

"I'm quite happy for the general public to make up their own minds about what did or didn't happen, but I can assure you I wouldn't take a stand against something unless I really believed in it," Symonds wrote.

Australia beat India in a Twenty20 clash on Friday night. The two teams meet Sunday in a one-day international.

Scoreboard of the first match in the triangular one-day international series between Australia and India at the Gabba in Brisbane on Sunday:

INDIA: Sehwaig b Bracken 6, Tendulkar hit wicket b Lee 10, Gambhir lbw b Johnson 39, Sharma c Gilchrist b Lee 29, Tiwary b Lee 2, Dhoni c Ponting b Lee 37, Uthappa c Clark b Noffke 5, Pathan run out 21, Harbhajan c Clarke b Lee 27, Sreesanth run out 4, Sharma not out 1, Extras: (lb-7, nb-2, w-4) 13, Total: (All out in 45 overs) 194

Some late hitting from Dhoni

Result: Match abandoned.

Toss: India; Umpires: Steve Davis (AUS), Rudi Koertzen (RSA); TV umpire: Bruce Oxenford (AUS); Match referee: Jeff Crowe (NZL)

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Scoreboard of the West Indies innings in the fifth and final one-day international against South Africa at the Wanderers Stadium in Johannesburg on Sunday:

WEST INDIES: Parchment c De Villiers b Pollock 2, Smith c Boucher b Langeveldt 91, Chanderpaul lbw b Langeveldt 51, Brown not out 49, Bravo c Smith b Steyn 40, Morton c Boucher b Kallis 4, Ramdin c Boucher b Langeveldt 6, Lewis run out (Steyn) 1, Sehwaig not out 28, Extras: (lb-8, nb-3, w-12) 23, Total: (For 7 wks in 50 overs) 295

Did not bat: Rampaul, Powell.

Fall of wickets: 1-19, 2-156, 3-167, 4-222, 5-232, 6-241, 7-242.

Bowler O M R W Lee 9 2 27 5 Bracken 9 0 55 1 Noffke 9 0 46 1 Johnson 9 2 33 1

Hopes 6 0 17 0 Clarke 2 0 5 0 Symonds 1 0 4 0

AUSTRALIA: Gilchrist c Dhoni b Sreesanth 14, Hopes b Sharma 17, Ponting c Sehwaig b Sreesanth 0, Clarke not out 2, Symonds not out 5, Extras: (lb-4, w-4, nb-5) 13, Total: (For three wks in 7.2 overs) 51

Did not bat: Hussey, Haddin, Noffke, Lee, Johnson, Bracken.

Fall of wickets: 1-33, 2-38, 3-39.

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Capello trims

FROM PAGE 20 when England's 2010 World Cup qualifying campaign begins against Andorra. But the Italian is keen to start the build-up immediately.

"We have seven months to prepare for our first competitive match, but the work really starts now," he said. "I'm looking forward to working with them on the training ground. There is a lot of work to do but I am ready for the challenge."

England's 23-man squad for Wednesday's friendly against Switzerland at Wembley:

GP Int'l Jr Tennis gets underway

STAFF CORRESPONDENT, Rajshahi

All but three of the 12 seeded players moved into the second round qualifying draw of boys' singles in the Grameenphone International Junior (U-16) tennis tournament at the Rajshahi Zafar Imam Tennis Complex yesterday.

Three Bangladeshi players were also defeated in the 24 matches decided on the first day of the meet.

In the days' matches, Indian Sagar Manjunath thrashed third-seeded Russian Kovalev Egor 6-3, 6-2 while Korean Yong-Jun Lee beat India's fourth seeded Naveen Sai 6-4, 7-6 (3) while Thailand's Kongpoo Lertchai upset tenth seeded Uzbek Shukhrat Gizatulin 7-6 (5), 6-2.

Top-seed Georgian Sikharulidze Sergi beat Bangladeshi Delwar Hossain 6-4, 7-5, 11th-seed Thia Wasin Wijaya beat Bangladeshi Taj Mohammad 6-0, 6-0 and Korean Geon-Hui Lee defeated Bangladeshi Rakibul Alam 6-0, 6-0.

Second seeded Russian Ilya Osintsev defeated Taipei's Yen-Ju Ho 6-3, 6-2, Korean Ki-Hoon Kim beat Indian Mohit Mayur 7-6 (4), 3-6, 6-1, Uzbekistan's Botir Sapaev beat Indonesian Prasetya Wibisana 6-2, 6-0, Korean Jong-Sun Moon beat England's Paul Brown 6-4, 6-3, Indian Shahbaz Khan won over Taipei's Chin Hsu 6-2, 6-1, Korean Yong-Jae Kwon beat Indian Veera Vasanth Venkas 6-3, 7-5 and India's Sagar Ahuja beat Indonesian Aditya Ichсанд Harris 0-6, 7-6 (3), 6-4.

Sarwan goes into hiding

INTERNET, undated

According to published reports out of Guyana, West Indies middle order batsman has gone into hiding amid fears of escalating violence in the South American country.

Sarwan, who is currently training for the Stanford 20/20 tournament, abruptly left practice on Thursday after relatives called him and said that suspicious men were spotted in his neighbourhood, said team manager Carl Moore and cricket board president Chetram Singh.

The former captain of the West Indies team has not received any threats and is likely just taking preventive security measures, said Guyana Police Commander Paul Slowe.

Sarwan did not appear at practice on Friday as Guyana prepared for an upcoming match against Bermuda next week. He also was not expected at Sunday's practice.

Rampaging gunmen killed 11 people, including five children, in a senseless attack on the village of Lusignan on the East Coast.

Smith spurs

FROM PAGE 17 put on 53 off 34 balls in an unbeaten eighth wicket stand.

South African all-rounder Shaun Pollock, playing in his last international match, took one for 33 and was given a standing ovation when he finished his final spell. Bowling with the new ball, Pollock had a first spell of 7-1-14-1 in dramatic contrast to his fellow pace bowlers, who were all punished by Smith.

Pollock finished his career with 393 wickets at an average of 24.50 in 303 one-day internationals.

SCOREBOARD

Scoreboard of the West Indies innings in the fifth and final one-day international against South Africa at the Wanderers Stadium in Johannesburg on Sunday:

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Malik looks ahead

Cricket

CRICINFO, undated

A surprisingly elated Shoaib Malik credited his senior players after Pakistan completed a comfortable clean sweep of the Mobilink Cup against Zimbabwe. Pakistan, led by Malik, went on a lap of honour around Sheikhupura Stadium after their win, an unusually exuberant celebration as they were expected to win 5-0. But Malik had personal reasons for smiling, having been adjudged the Man of the Series after scoring 158 runs with two half-centuries and topping the bowling charts with 11 wickets.

Pakistan tried nine new players during the series, but Malik insisted the support they received from the senior players was a major factor behind their success. "We tried a lot of new faces in the series and it is not easy for young players to perform right from the start," Malik said. "However, I'm thankful to the senior players who helped these debutants make their entry into international cricket that much easier. It is due to that the changes worked so effectively."

Ever since their bowlers

received a mauling in the first ODI in Karachi, Zimbabwe have opted to bat after winning the toss. Hamilton Masakadza, Zimbabwe's stand-in captain, carried on the trend here, but he was left ruing it from the start as Sohail Tanvir and Abdur Rauf, one of four debutants, utilised overcast conditions to good effect. Malik was surprised by Masakadza's decision and confirmed he would have bowled first in order to give his bowlers the chance to make an impression.

"With overcast conditions and a relatively unknown pitch, I would've bowled had I won the toss," he said. "Even though we had helpful conditions, credit must also go out to our young fast bowlers, of which two were making their debut, for bowling in the right areas."

Masakadza, disappointed with his team's batting, blamed Zimbabwe's lack of all-round skills for the convincing loss. "We failed to capitalise on good, match-winning positions," Masakadza said. "We could've won at least three matches on this tour but let good positions slip too easily."

"We weren't thrashed or outplayed by the opposition in any of the matches so it all comes down to

triggered widespread violence.

Cricket Australia (CA) will send a security delegation to assess the situation in Pakistan after February 18 general elections before taking a final decision on the tour, Australia's first here in 10 years.

Pakistan had ruled out switching the series to neutral venues or relocating it to Australia. They were forced to do so in 2002 after Australia refused to tour Pakistan over security fears in the wake of the September 11 attacks in 2001.

Foreign teams have shown reluctance to tour Pakistan since New Zealand cut short a tour after a bomb blast outside their hotel killed 14 people, including nine French naval officials, in May 2002.

South Africa completed a tour of Pakistan in October last year. They played a four-day match and a Test in Karachi but refused to return to the port city for a one-day match following an earlier assassination attempt on Bhutto on October 18.

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Zim trip raises hope

Cricket

AFP, Sheikhupura

Zimbabwe's stand-in captain Hamilton Masakadza has praised security arrangements in Pakistan, raising hopes among cricket officials that it will convince Australia to tour next month.

Zimbabwe continued their Pakistan tour despite a bomb blast which killed nine people in Karachi last month. They played matches in Karachi, Hyderabad, Multan, Faisalabad and Sheikhupura during their three-week stay.

Australia are scheduled to tour Pakistan for three Tests, five one-day internationals and a Twenty20 match in March-April, a visit which has come under serious doubt over security fears.

"We were looked after very well and security wasn't a worry for us in Pakistan," said Masakadza after his team was whitewashed 5-0 in the one-day series here on

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