F'pool stay on course

UNB, Dhaka

Youngmen's Club Fakirerpool crushed Wari Club 4-0 in the Metropolis First Division Football League at the Bir Shreshtha Shaheed Mohammad Mostafa Stadium in Kamalapur yesterday.

They led the first half 2-0. Raju opened Youngmen's account in the 28th minute, Kamal doubled the winners margin in the set up a clash with India in the 41st minute, Ronny netted the third goal in the 68th minutes and Sabuj scored the final goal a minute later.

With the day's feat, Youngmen's Club secured 27 points from 12 matches to top the point table.

In the day's another match, Agrani Bank beat Mohakhali Eleven 1-0 at the Bangabandhu National Stadium with Pashbon scoring the match winner in the 14th minute.

Rani, Eva on top

SPORTS REPORTER

Defending champion and International Women's Master Rani Hamid is jointly on top of the Aromatic Gold 29th National Women's Chess Championship with Nazrana Khan Eva at the end of the eighth round yesterday.

Both players are locked on seven points each, with Rani beating Roxana Titli of Chittagong and Eva trouncing Arifa Khatun Moni at the federation hallroom.

at a good rate. It was nice to be Women's FIDE Master involved in a major partnership Shamima Akhter Liza is in second and help set up a big total." position with 6.5 points after her draw with Syeda Shabana.

Kishaloy crush Jhankar

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Gaibandha

Kishaloy Krira Chakra crushed Jhankar Krira Chakra by 86 runs in the Naheed Cotton First Division Cricket League at the local stadium here yesterday.

Batting first, Kishaloy reached 211-9 in 45 overs with Shaheen scoring 38. Jhankar could not meet up to Kishaloy's score, being bowled out for 125 in 28 overs.

Deputy Commissioner of Gaibandha Abu Mohammad Yousuf formerly inaugurated the tournament in the morning.

CDS missing

FROM PAGE 17

"The decision was solely of the BCB's, that I can only tell you," the venue manager stuck to his lone answer when asked by The Daily Star whether they made any efforts for the giant screen.

In a frantic search for a satisfactory answer to the non-availability of the giant screen, this correspondent approached few more people within the BCB and local organisers. "It could have been arranged had there been timely initiatives from the concerned officials," they replied.

"The giant screen you got last year during India-Bangladesh match was indeed a complimentary gift to the BCB from a private company being offered to the cricket fans as part of its (the company) promotional programme, revealed a young BCB official, who preferred not to be named.

He said, "I heard that our concerned officials had approached before the company who refused this time to give the giant screen on complimentary basis and demanded unbelievable cash for providing the facility that actually prompted the BCB not to go for the giant screen."

The young BCB man however regretted that he had no knowledge of the actual amount the aforesaid company asked for.

Ali Abbas, eminent local sports organiser and media coordinator in Chittagong Test, expressed his frustration over the matter. But he too avoided the core query with a diplomatic smile.





Kaka

(AC Milan's Brazilian superstar) "I think I will stay at Milan until the end of my career. I've got used to the life here and I'm settled in the city. I can't see myself going anywhere else, even if we never know what

will happen in life." After extending his contract with AC

SA meet India in final

ICC U/19 CRICKET WORLD CUP MALAYSIA 2008

AFP, Kuala Lumpur

South Africa crushed defending champions Pakistan by 98 runs in a rain-hit semifinal on Saturday to under-19World Cup final.

Pakistan, set a revised target of 252 in 47 overs in a match spread over two days due to bad weather, were shot out for 153, dashing their hopes of a third successive title in cricket's premier junior event.

Off-spinner Mohammad Vallie lifted South Africa home with 4-25 as opener Ahmad Shehzad played a lone hand for Pakistan with a fluent 60 containing six boundaries and a

Proteas captain Wayne Parnell and Roy Adams chipped in with two wickets each as Pakistan lost their last eight wickets for 67 runs. The day-night final will be

played at the Kinrara Oval on

Sunday with a reserve day set aside in case of bad weather.

ship McKenzie said: "It is great to

bat with Smith because he always

keeps the scoreboard ticking over

On his maiden double century:

"I have been waiting for a long time

Africa and Bangladesh at the Chittagong

SOUTH AFRICA: First innings (overnight

Total: (For seven wkts decl in 161.1 overs)

Fall of wickets: 1-415, 2-514, 3-515, 4-519

Divisional Stadium on Saturday:

FROM PAGE 17

not used to."

405 for no loss)

Smith b Razzak

Kallis not out

McKenzie b Shahadat

Amla Ibw b Shahadat

Prince b Shahadat

De Villiers b Shakib

5-524, 6-579, 7-583.

Boucher c Shakib b Rafique

Peterson c Rahim b Rafique

Extras: (b-10, lb-7, w-1, nb-2)

Did not bat: Steyn, Morkel, Ntini.

SCOREBOARD

the opposition,

The semifinal was carried over

to a second day after rain on Friday brought play to an early end with Pakistan on 86-2 from 18.5 overs in reply to South Africa's challenging

out after needing only five runs in seven balls if the stipulated 20 overs had been bowled on Friday.

hours and 20 minutes late on Saturday -- due to a wet outfield caused by heavy overnight rain --Pakistan made the worst possible

Umar Amin, who was on 22 overnight after sharing a 69-run stand for the third wicket with Shehzad, fell first ball to a brilliant piece of stumping by wicketkeeper Bradley Barnes.

Pieter Malan bowled wide down the leg-side and whipped off the bails with left-handed Amin short outside leg stump. of his crease. .

"Bradley's stumping had a huge role to play," said a beaming South African coach Ray Jennings. "We intatters at 124-6 in the 30th over. planned that dismissal.

"The idea was to bat around four wickets to seal Pakistan's fate.

"I told the boys to forget what

Amin who would be the anchor at

the runs," said Rana.

one end while the others went for

happened on Friday and see it as a Pakistan were unlucky to bow 29-over game in which we needed 166 more. But losing Amin off the first ball changed the whole game.'

Jennings said he looked forward When play finally began two to the final against India, who beat his team by six wickets in the preliminary league. "We are the underdogs because

there are huge expectations on India, but I like it that way," he said. "We have had a tough semifinal and the boys will be playing for third day in a row, but they are in

good spirits for the final.' Pakistan were dealt a blow when star batsman Ali Asad was given out Barnes collected a delivery from LBW to Adams by Sri Lankan umpire Tyron Wijewardene even though the ball appeared to pitch

> South Africa removed danger man Shehzad and Umair Mir in the space of three balls to leave Pakistan Shehzad miscued a lofted on-

Pakistani coach Mansoor Rana drive off Adams to point and Min said the early setback cost his team was bowled by Vallie for no score. Vallie then took three of the las

Quickie Steyn the quickest | Cock-a-hoop

BANGLADESH: First innings Iqbal c De Villiers b Steyn On the world record partner-Zunaed c Boucher b Stevn

> Nafees not out Ashraful c Boucher b Steyn Razzak not out Extras: (lb-6, nb-7)

Total: (For three wkts in 16 overs) To bat: Aftab, Shakib, Rahim, Rafique, Mortaza, Shahadat. Fall of wickets: 1-39, 2-49, 3-49.

for this landmark. What made it Bowler particularly satisfying was that I did it from a batting position that I am Toss: South Africa Scoreboard at stumps on the second day of the second and final Test between South

Elliott surprise in NZ team

AFP, Wellington

South African-born Grant Elliott was the surprise inclusion in the New Zealand cricket team named Saturday for the first Test against England starting in Hamilton on Wednesday.

Elliott, a middle-order batsman who can also swing the ball when he bowls, has previously played for New Zealand A.

SQUAD

Daniel Vettori (captain), Matthew Bell, Jamie How, Stephen Fleming, Mathew Sinclair, Ross Taylor, Jacob Oram, Brendon McCullum, Grant Elliott, Kyle Mills, Iain O'Brien, Jeetan Patel, Chris Martin.

Abahani, MSC win

FROM PAGE 17

Ashraful

then anchored the Abahani innings with a polished 66 off 89 balls as the Sky Blues won with 8.4 overs to

CITY-SONARGAON

City Club had another heartstopping victory after their Twenty20 semifinal exploits against Victoria Sporting Club last Wednesday. And once again, they came up trumps in the tense finish. Earlier, captain Imran Ahmed smashed 128 off 155 balls laced with nine boundaries and four sixes as City made 244-4 in 50 overs. He found good support from Sumon Barua, who hammered 67 off 56 balls with seven fours and a

couple of sixes. Sharifullah took two wickets for Sonargaon.

During their 245-run chase, Sonargaon had healthy contributions from the top-order --Mehrab Hossain (32), Arman Hossain (37) and Fahadullah's 35. But none could manage a halfcentury like Elias Sunny's 64 off 79

MSC-BKSP

Much talked-about fast bowler Moshiur Rahman snatched four Mohammedan wickets for 52 runs as BKSP restricted the big guns to 209-9 in 50 overs.

From 74-5, national discard Faisal Hossain cracked 87 off 78 balls with six fours and three huge sixes to lift the Mohammedan total. He found an able ally in Suharwardi Shuvo, the under-19 captain who returned on Friday night from Kuala Lumpur. Shuvo scored 35 off 51

In their reply, the sports institution could not emulate their Twenty20 win over the Motijheel-based club. Tapash Baisya, who took three for 40, put them in a tight spot early on and later, it was Shuvo's 1-11 in eight overs.

SCORES IN BRIEF

SURJO TORUN: 178 all out in 49.2 overs (Shakil 60, Nizamuddin 29, Shamsur 29; Rezaul 2-45, Arafat 2-

ABAHANI: 180-4 in 41.2 overs (Tushar 66*, Mahbubul 41; Younus

Result: Abahani won by six wickets. CITY CLUB: 244-4 in 50 overs (Imran 128*, Barua 67; Sharifullah 2-25).

SONARGAON: 242-8 in 50 overs (Sunny 64, Arman 37; Arafat 1-41). Result: City won by two runs. MSC: 209-9 in 50 overs (Faisal 87* Shuvo 35; Moshiur 4-52). BKSP: 156-7 in 50 overs (Sumon 47, Tapash 3-40). Result: MSC won by 53 runs.

FROM PAGE 17

"I'm still enjoying the game and I would definitely continue to play domestic cricket. I have taken the decision of quitting international cricket after consulting with my family members. And you know my 11-year old son (Piyal) is my best friend and I always share my opinions with him," said Rafique, who once wanted to become a curator after leaving the game.

He reiterated his observation that Mosharraf Hossain Rubel will succeed him in the highest level of

"I have seen Rubel very closely and I believe that he has the ability to become a good international spinner because he has the patience to bowl for a long time which is very important for any bowler," he said.

On the special day, Rafique also reminded the contribution of the local coaches behind his success in both international and domestic

"I am really grateful to my local coaches because they helped me a lot in my career. Imran bhai (Sarwar Imran), Osman bhai (Osman Khan) and Jalal bhai (Jalal Ahmed Chowdhury) always helped him whenever I asked for any tips, he recalled.

The encouraging part of the briefing was that the veteran spinner gave some hopes despite the fact that his team are struggling in international cricket right now.

"The main thing is that the batsmen must learn how they can stay in the middle. I am very optimistic about Bangladesh cricket because you will see a different team after 10-15 years. Time is a factor. Right now you may say that as bowlers we could not get enough opportunities to bowl because of our batsmen's failures. But don't lose the patience. Everything will be okay one day," he said with optimism.

Jamal grabs

FROM PAGE 17

Sharon la me Yen showing some outstanding skill and visionary play to wrap up her personal championship with a score of 147 or 3 over par. Her fellow countrywoman Aneel Johani Abu Bakr was always hot on her heels but had to be content with second place as she managed only a gross score of 152.

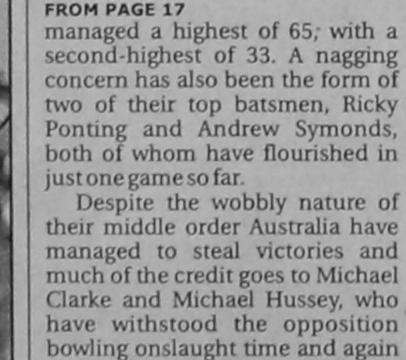
The combined score of the two propelled Malaysia to top spot in the team rankings with the ladies from Myanmar finishing second.

The prizes were distributed amongst the winners at the poolside of the Kurmitola Golf Club yesterday evening with Chief of Naval Staff, Vice Admiral Sarwar Jahan Nizam doing the honours as

chief guest. The Bangladesh Amateur Golf Championships is the most renowned international golf tournament held in the country with numerous foreign players battling it out with the cream of the local crop. Cotton Group is sponsoring the

event for the third time.

Start of a gripping end



to consolidate and push the side

also helped the Australians, who

have preferred to bat first and then

call upon their magnificent bowl-

ers to strangle the opposition. On

the two occasions when they have

chased a target, it's been hard

work: in the series opener, against

India at the Gabba, Australia were 3

Calling it right at the toss has

out of danger.

ended the game; on Friday they were 1 for 107 in the 15th over chasing 221, and yet managed to lose the game by 13 runs.

teams has been their bowling attack. Ishant Sharma, Irfan Pathan and Harbhajan Singh have proved to be constant thorns for the opposition, while Brett Lee has been an outstanding spearhead for Australia. He has bowled throughout the summer with a hostility that no batsman has been able to consistently stand up to. Lee's closing spell at the MCG when India were chasing a small total was while Mitchell Johnson, Nathan Nathan Bracken.

offered excellent support. off-field banter has fuelled the Mahendra Singh Dhoni (captain, tension on the field. If it was the Praveen Kumar, Irfan Pathan, Harbhajan- Symonds clash that Harbhajan Singh, Sreesanth, for 51 in the eighth over when rain ignited the Border-Gavaskar Ishant Sharma.

Trophy, Matthew Hayden's comments on Harbhajan and Ishant have ensured there will be no love lost between the two sides on the The success story for both last leg of the season. Sydney is hosting its annual Mardi Gras celebration on Saturday, and the CB Series final couldn't have come at much better time. On the field, though, it's likely to be much more than fun and games. TEAMS

AUSTRALIA (likely): Adam Gilchrist, Matthew Hayden, Ricky Ponting (captain), Michael Clarke, Andrew Symonds, Michael Hussey, James Hopes, Brad Hogg, one of the best of the summer, Brett Lee, Mitchell Johnson,

Bracken and James Hopes have INDIA (likely): Sachin Tendulkar, Robin Uthappa, Gautam Gambhir, Just like in the Test series, the Rohit Sharma, Yuvraj Singh,

Dhoni's focus on cricket

CRICINFO, Sydney

Mahendra Singh Dhoni is proud that his young team has reached the finals of the tournament given the scepticism that greeted the squad's announcement. And, as at the World Twenty20 in South Africa last year, he has asked his players

not to worry about the end result. "Winning is important, but winning is not everything," Dhoni said on the eve of the finals when asked if lifting the trophy would be a fitting answer to those who questioned his decision to back youth over experience. Then, his voice more animated, he added: "Those doubting this young side when we came in should now analyse how good this side has been from the previous teams that played in Australia. They should analyse the capabilities of the youngsters, how good they are at the international level.'

Dhoni has led by example India wouldn't have reached this stage without his rescue acts with the bat and his assured captaincy but believes the team has been improving since the crushing defeat in the Twenty20 game against Australia. "From then, this team, after the eight ODIs, has shaped up very well. The bowling, batting and running are improving but it can be better still."

While providing a word of caution to his team -- "It doesn't matter if it's the finals or the semis, we have to get the basics right" --Dhoni emphasised the need to keep things in perspective. "Sometimes we are desperate to win and that's when the pressure mounts, so it's important to be relaxed."

That mantra worked for Dhoni when he led an unfancied and inexperienced side to victory at the World Twenty20. They faced some tough situations during the campaign but managed to stay focused, hold their nerve and emerge victorious. The key was Dhoni's leadership.

Dhoni knows the finals will not be easy, especially given the controversies in the lead-up, like the Ishant Sharma-Andrew Symonds incident and Matthew Hayden being reprimanded for his remarks on Harbhajan Singh, that have distracted both teams.

Dhoni says he doesn't mind the aggression but his primary focus will always be cricket. "Throughout the series many things have been said about individuals but we have still gone on to play good cricket. Cricket is about batting, bowling and fielding. The verbal part remains but we should focus on our cricket.'

ICC CHAMPIONS TROPHY

England earn seventh seed

BBC ONLINE, undated

England have been made seventh seeds for September's one-day ICC

Champions Trophy in Pakistan. Holders Australia will be named the top seeds on the March 12 cutoff date after the completion of the preliminary CB Series matches down under.

The Aussies will head the rankings irrespective of how they fare against India in the three-match CB Series finals.

South Africa, winners of the inaugural Champions Trophy in 1998, will be seeded second for the

tournament. New Zealand, India, Pakistan, Sri Lanka, England and the West Indies will all then be seeded in

sequence. The groupings will be

announced on March 12. It will be the sixth edition of the ICC Champions Trophy, which was previously known as the ICC Knock-out, with matches to be played in Karachi and Lahore.

Mansoor touts India to win

PTI, Karachi

Pakistan's under-19 coach Mansoor Rana believes India are the favourites to win the World Cup final against South Africa in Kuala Lumpur on Sunday.

Mansoor was on Saturday disappointed after his team's 98-run loss to South Africa in the semifinal. But he thought India had some talented players who had the temperament to tackle the pressure in the final against the Proteas.

"The South Africans are a very

clinical outfit and their bowlers bowled in the right areas against us and their fielding was up there. "But India has some players who can perform in the final and

that is a very important factor,"

Mansoor told PTI from Kuala Lumpur. Mansoor said India had been performing very well in the tournament and if they won the toss they would field first in the title clash.

"They won against New Zealand

in the semifinal because the ball

gets wet under the lights making it

easier for the batsmen," he said. Mansoor said his players had been talking about a possible final with India, but unfortunately things did not go as planned.

Murali's final exit

Cricket

AFP, Melbourne

It was the scene of the lowest point of his career, but Sri Lankan star Muttiah Muralidaran said his one regret about playing cricket in Australia was that he did not perform better at Test level.

Muralidaran, and fellow veteran Sanath Jayasuriya, bid farewell to Australia as international cricketers in Friday's tri-series clash with the home side at the MCG. The Australian team formed a

guard of honour for each player as they came out to bat and although the match carried little weight, with Sri Lanka missing the finals, Muralidaran and Jayasuriya went out on a winning note, the tourists recording a remarkable 13-run victory.

Both veterans played key roles in the result, Muralidaran bowling superbly and picking up two crucial wickets, while Jayasuriya secured the win when he bowled Brett Lee with his first ball when

brought on in the 49th over. Muralidaran, 35, saidhe bore no Jayasuriya. grudges against Australian cricket, despite being called for throwing in Melbourne in the 1995 Boxing Day Test and also later in Adelaide.

However, he said he would always regret not performing with more distinction in Australia in Test cricket.

downs in Australia, but still enjoyed my cricket here," he said hereafter Friday's game. "The Boxing Day was most mem-

orable time for me, it was hard. "I got over it, but still I want to Australia," he said.

play after that in Australia. "So I tried to perform, but the only country I couldn't really perform in Tests was Australia.

"I played only five Tests and my average was not good enough, but in one-dayers I did really well in the Australia.

"But that disappointment will be there forever."

Muralidaran has taken 723 Test wickets, but managed just 12 wickets in five Tests in Australia at 72.41. He was appreciative of the nities and we can learn from that."

Australians recognising him and

"It's going to be the last tour for me, I won't be able to come any more to Australia, so it was a good

honour," he said. "We have been involved in the game for the last 17 years, Sanath

for almost 20 years." The 38-year-old Jayasuriya, who "Sometime there were ups and struggled to have his usual impact with the bat in the tri-series, said he would have fond memories of

> Australia. "This is my last tour to Australia and I've enjoyed my cricket in

"I'm disappointed only that we

couldn't make the finals." Despite a generally poor series, Sri Lankan captain Mahela Jayawardene was pleased his side

finished the tour with a win. "It has been a disappointing tournament, but the way we finished today (Saturday) showed a lot of character and we can take a lot of

positives out of this game," he said. "We had a lot of opportunities but we didn't take those opportu-

English to play

next IPL: Modi

Indian Premier League commis-

sioner Lalit Modi will stand by an

"informal understanding" with the

ECB that keeps England players out

of the IPL for the first season as it

clashes with the county season.

However, he has warned things

could be different in the future.

CRICINFO, undated

Ponting expects bounce back

AFP, Melbourne



Australian captain Ricky Ponting said he believed Friday's shock loss to Sri Lanka was a timely wake-up call for his side ahead of Sunday's first tri-series final against India at

the SCG. Australia appeared to be cruising at 107 for no wicket chasing 222 to win, but collapsed to be all out for 208, handing Sri Lanka an unexpected 13-run win.

The defeat boosted spirits in the Indian camp, but Ponting said the poor performance was just an aberration and expected his side to bounce back. "I guess the positive for us to

got that performance out the way now," Ponting said after the loss. "We can worry about the finals

come out of tonight is that we have

mance came tonight than on

Sunday. "It is always painful when you lose, especially when you seemingly have a game in the bag like we did tonight.

"But it's not the end of the world. we've got some finals games to start on Sunday." While it was another disappoint-

Australians, Ponting said he was confident his batsmen were generallyingood form. Ponting said he believed some of his players were guilty of looking

ahead to Sunday's final. "We've know for a while we were playing India in the finals," he said. "Our guys have shown through the series at different times that they

are in good form." Wicketkeeper-batsman Adam Gilchrist, who belted 83 from 50 balls against Sri Lanka but blamed himself for the defeat because he believed he threw his wicket away and I would rather that perfor- echoed Ponting's thoughts.

"I know a lot of our owners are in touch with the English players," he told the Daily Telegraph. "I know ing batting performance by the that the players' agents have been in touch with me, and I've been telling them we cannot do anything for the moment. After this season, it will be more difficult to do that." Modi had earlier suggested that the dates for future IPL events could be altered to ensure that it

doesn't overlap with the English county season to allow England players to be accommodated. In exchange for ensuring England players are out-of-bounds to franchise owners in the first season, Modi wants the counties to keep out any player connected

with the unofficial Indian Cricket "We accept that people are committed to certain pre-existing contracts, but it's not acceptable for any county to knowingly sign an ICL player," he said. "They need to keep to that understanding, otherwise the trickle-down effect is that none of the English counties could end up being invited to the

Champions Twenty20 Trophy in

the autumn." Strauss, Bell

make merry

Saturday.

REUTERS, Wellington Andrew Strauss and Ian Bell both scored centuries for England in their drawn practice match against a New Zealand Invitational XI on

Strauss retired on 104 and Bell

finished 104 not out as England made amends for their dismal first innings total of 131 by making 325 for seven in their second knock. The match was abandoned at tea on the third and final day at

Dunedin's University Oval because of rain with neither side in a position to push for a win. Strauss virtually assured himself of a recall to the Test side for next week's opening match against New

Zealand with a patient display over four and a half hours. Bell continued his impressive form in the series with a chanceless innings including 15 fours and a six but Paul Collingwood failed to get some valuable practice ahead of the

test, departing for a fourth ball duck.

50 51 52

ACBFQST YPUSD

51 Carte OS MCS EHXACSF GFHAS? lead-in Yesterday's Cryptoquip: I HEARD A MAN IN "A 52 Noon, in

PHOTO: INTERNET England batsman Ian Bell spent valuable time in the middle making an unbeaten 104 against New Zealand Select XI at University Oval in Dunedin yesterday.

CROSSWORD By Eugene Sheffer

37 Com-

43 Not taped

monarch

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56 Hodge-

57 Genie's

32 Canceled, Solution time: 21 mins.

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10 Football 38 Wood-

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CRYPTOQUIP

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XPYSMCHUQ, YHQCM MCBM

CHRISTMAS CAROL" OPENED A TOOL SHOP AND NAMED IT "CRATCHIT'S RATCHETS." Today's Cryptoquip Clue: O equals B

Milan until 2013.