

## West Bengal clinch title

UNB, Dhaka

West Bengal sprung a major surprise after they beat Japan 17-12 in the final of the Fresh Independence Day Women's Kabaddi Championship at the outer stadium Kabaddi court yesterday.

The match was locked at 6-6 in the first half. West Bengal clinched the game with one creditable lona.

Bangladesh Kabaddi Federation president IGP Noor Mohammad was the chief guest on the occasion and distributed the prizes among the winners.

Moushumi of West Bengal and Kaneko of Japan were adjudged best players while Sato of Japan received the best catcher award in the match.

**Robin to stay, says BCCI**

REUTERS, New Delhi

The Indian cricket board said on Wednesday that fielding coach Robin Singh would be retained for the home test series against South Africa, denying media reports that said he would be fired.

"Yes, he will be there. We will put out a release on this," board secretary Niranjan Shah told Reuters when asked about the reports. He did not elaborate.

The Hindustan Times reported that Gary Kirsten, who has taken over as India coach before the series against his home country, had told the board that Singh's services would not be required.

The former India all-rounder joined the team along with bowling coach Venkatesh Prasad last year following their shock first-round exit from the World Cup in the West Indies.

Prasad and Singh had a dispute with the board over their involvement with the lucrative Indian Premier League (IPL), due to be launched next month, the paper said.

The first match of the three-test series starts in Chennai on March 26.

## Carquefou

**FROM PAGE 20** Belgian coach Eric Gerets played tribute to the Vendee (French Atlantic coast) side saying that they had fought like lions to hold out to their lead.

"We tried to play good football, but just could not manage it," he said.

"What we saw tonight was the same Marseille that was eliminated from the UEFA Cup, although given the gap in levels that existed between the teams this is even more painful for us."

Carquefou could be heading for more David versus Goliath challenges as also through to the last eight were first division big guns Lyon and Bordeaux as well as Paris St German who are struggling in the league but are always dangerous in cup competition.

The quarterfinals line-up was completed by Lorient, Amiens, Sedan and Dijon.

## It's a recall

**FROM PAGE 20** Chelsea's John Terry and Frank Lampard, who both missed Capello's first match in charge, return to the 30-man provisional squad after recovering from injuries which kept them out of last month's 2-1 win over Switzerland.

There was no place in the side for Manchester United's highly-rated young goalkeeper Ben Foster, who had been tipped to be included following his recovery from knee surgery and an impressive United debut last weekend.

The squad will be whittled down to a final group of 23 on Saturday night, even though many of the players will remain in the Manchester United v Liverpool and Chelsea v Arsenal Premier League matches on Sunday.

## Domestic

**FROM PAGE 17** team will be busy in May and June for the AFC Challenge Cup in Kyrgyzstan and the SAFF Championship in Maldives and Sri Lanka.

When asked about the players' decision not to participate in any activities under the BFF till the transfer, Sultan hoped that the booters would understand the situation and move from the decision to not attend national camp.

Ahamed director Kazi Nabil, who was present, said they have already talked with the players who have agreed to join national camp.

But still, they will not play in domestic football until the transfer.

It would kill BFF's remaining hopes to stage the Swadhinata Cup this month.



Yellow balls were used for the first time at the Wimbledon Championship in 1986 partly to make the speeding balls more visible for television cameras.



PHOTO: STAR  
Ireland cricketers are seen with the children of sex-workers during a function organised by Concern Worldwide, an NGO working in Bangladesh, to celebrate the 40th anniversary of St. Patrick's Day, the Irish National Day, at the NGO's country office in Gulshan last night. Bangladesh cricket team members also attended the function.

## Zondeki steps in

### Cricket

AFP, Johannesburg

Monde Zondeki was Wednesday named as the replacement for fellow fast bowler Charl Langeveldt as the controversy over South Africa's selection policy continued.

Andre Nel, who was controversially left out for Langeveldt to conform with Cricket South Africa's transformation policy, was again overlooked. Zondeki's selection maintained the target of six players of colour in the 14-man squad.

The SA Cricketers' Association meanwhile condemned political interference in team selection which it said could cause South Africa to lose two of its premier fast bowlers, Langeveldt and Nel.

"Charl Langeveldt's request to be removed from the squad to tour India is the desperate unhappiness of a player who knows that he has been selected for this tour for quota reasons," said Tony Irish, chief executive of SACA.

"Charl spoke to both (Cricket SA chief executive) Gerald Majola and to me on Wednesday to say that he was so upset that he did not feel that could give his best for South Africa on the tour under these circumstances".

A SACA statement quoted Langeveldt as saying: "As players we all have a good idea of when we are clearly in the running for selection and when we aren't. You just have to look at Andre's Test record compared to mine and the fact that he has been part of all the Test match plans while I haven't played a Test match for two years."

"I have always fought for a place in the team but I don't want to be put there because of my colour. Up to now I have been very happy in

## Nadal avenges

**FROM PAGE 20** "A victory like this is always special and gives me confidence," he said.

In the quarterfinals, Nadal will meet US ninth seed James Blake, who defeated eighth-seeded Richard Gasquet of France 6-4, 6-2. Blake has won all three of his prior encounters with Nadal.

Federer, who revealed earlier this month that he is just recently recovered from a debilitating bout with mononucleosis, will face unseeded German Tommy Haas, who rallied to beat 11th-seeded Briton Andy Murray 2-6, 7-5, 6-3.

Haas, on the comeback trail again after undergoing a third shoulder surgery in November, admitted he was pleased to settle the score after failing to Murray in the fourth round here last year.

"It's nice to get your revenge back at the same place," Haas said.

## Dhoni defends youth

**FROM PAGE 17** Dhoni made it clear that the aggressive tactics against Australia were premeditated, going so far as to ensure that a few individuals made life difficult for the opposition. "In the CB Series you hardly saw any conflict between India and Sri Lanka," he said. "We had set the standards back in India, when we played (the ODI series) against Australia. We knew what we really wanted to do on the field. If we were not up to the mark in Australia, people would have said it was fake aggression, something just for the public when playing at home. We were with the same set of standards even when we played against Australia in Australia. It was not fake aggression, that's how this team can play."

Did he think the best way to beat Australia was by playing their brand of cricket? "If your playing against an aggressive side, you need to play an aggressive game," he said. "Especially against Australia, you can't just look to play

"It was another great match, very exciting. I came up with the goods at the right time."

Australian Open champion Novak Djokovic of Serbia, the third seed, booked a quarterfinal berth with a no-nonsense 6-2, 6-3 victory over Argentina's Guillermo Cañas.

Djokovic, 20, was runner-up to Nadal here last year. He will face unseeded Swiss Stanislas Wawrinka, a 6-1, 5-7, 6-4 winner over South Korean Lee Hyung-Taik.

Unseeded American Mardy Fish ended Lleyton Hewitt's bid for a third Indian Wells title with a 7-5, 3-6, 7-6 (7/4) win over the Australian.

Fish will face seventh-seeded Argentinian David Nalbandian, who beat Spain's Juan Carlos Ferrero 6-2, 6-2.

## France name

**FROM PAGE 20** Giel Givet (Marseille), Philippe Mexes (AS Roma/ITA), Adil Rami (Lille), Bakary Sagna (Arsenal/ENG), Sébastien Squillaci (Lyon), Lilian Thuram (Barcelona/ESP)

**Midfielders:** Mathieu Bodmer (Lyon), Alou Diarra (Bordeaux), Lassana Diarra (Portsmouth/ENG), Mathieu Flamini (Arsenal/ENG), Claude Makelele (Chelsea/ENG), Rio Mavuba (Lille), Samir Nasri (Marseille), Jeremy Touzal (Lyon), Jerome Rothen (PSG), Patrick Vieira (InterMilan/ITA)

**Strikers:** Nicolas Anelka (Chelsea/ENG), Hatem Ben Arfa (Lyon), Karim Benzema (Lyon), Jimmy Briand (Rennes), Djibril Cissé (Marseille), Thierry Henry (Barcelona/ESP), Florent Malouda (Chelsea/ENG), Sidney Govou (Lyon), Franck Ribéry (Bayern Munich/GER), Louis Saha (Manchester Utd/ENG), Mathieu Valbuena (Marseille)

and win -- it's batting, bowling, fielding, aggression, everything. Fortunately this side has got a few players who can speak and do well at the same time and won't get disturbed by it. And there are others who don't speak that much.

"But you need to identify those who can be pepped up and do well while they're speaking. In a way I'm fortunate to have those players in the side, rather than ask those who are not comfortable doing it. If you have a guy who is able to do it and who should do it, I make it a point that he is doing it. I won't name names but there were individuals who were saying things, within the boundaries."

Despite all the elation over the win, Dhoni said it was important not to get carried away with this victory and urged his players to cultivate the winning habit. "Of course you can't live by it," he said of the recent win. "You need to perform consistently and if you're raising the standard you have to stand by it. You have to keep on doing well."

Hechawara

**INDEPENDENCE DAY CYCLING**

The Independence Day Cycling competition, organised by Bangladesh Cycling Federation, will be held in and around the streets of Bangabandhu National Stadium from 2:30pm on Saturday. Interested participants have been requested to enlist their names by Friday at the federation office at the Big Bowl.

## SUMMIT CUP GOLF

Abdur Rashid Salam, a member of Gulshan Club won the Summit Cup Golf Championship's senior trophy at the Kurmitola Golf Club on March 7.

Chief of Air Force Air Marshall Shah Mohammad Ziaur Rahman gave away prizes among the winners.

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**LOCAL SNIPPETS**

**FROM PAGE 17** which Hechawara replied to 105 all out in 32.4 overs.

Today, Gorستانpara Krira Chakra face Munshpara Krira Chakra.

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## Wari hold Youngmen's

UNB, Dhaka

Youngmen's Club Fakirpool could not quite celebrate their Senior Division Football League triumph as they drew 1-1 with Sunrise in a super league match at the Bangabandhu National Stadium yesterday.

Aziz scored in the 89th minute for Sunrise after Towhid put Youngmen's ahead in the 20th minute.

Meanwhile, Wari Club blanked Arambagh 2-0 in a relegation league match at the Bir Shreshtha Shaheed Sepoy Mohammad Mostafa Stadium at Kamalapur.

Absar and Layek scored one goal each in the 46th and 53rd minutes for the winners.

**Pakistan, India**

**FROM PAGE 17**

was in doubt after Australia postponed their tour of Pakistan over security fears earlier this month following a wave of Islamic militant attacks.

"Australians are unaware of our culture and they don't have an idea that no sporting activity has ever been hurt in Asia. All the teams are going to take part barring any major disaster," said Huq.

The three sides in each group play each other once. The top two teams will qualify for the second phase, where teams will again play each other once. The top two teams qualify for the final.

Karachi will host ten of the thirteen matches, while Lahore will host three and since the event is played in the summer season all matches will be day-night, starting late in the afternoon," said Huq.

The tournament, which runs between June 24 and July 6, carries prize money of 200,000 dollars (around 12 million rupees), said Huq.

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**SCOREBOARD**

Scoreboard of the second one-day international between Bangladesh and Ireland at the Sher-e-Bangla National Stadium in Mirpur yesterday.

**IRELAND**

Porterfield c Aftab b Forhad

Tamim c O'Brien b McCallan

Nafees run out (Langford-Smith)

Aftab c Johnson b Thompson

Ashraf c Porterfield b Botha

Forhad lbw Langford-Smith

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11

12 13 14

15 16 17

18 19 20

21 22

23 24 25 26 27 28 29

30 31 32

33 34 35 36 37

38 39 40 41 42 43 44 45 46

47 48 49 50 51 52 53 54 55

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