

Action from yesterday's Premier Hockey League match between Mariners and Sadharan Bima at the Maluana Bhasani National Hockey Stadium.

### PHOTO: STAR

### Upper hand for Royals

PTI, Jaipur

On a roll after a hattrick of wins, Shane Warne's Rajasthan Royals will have their tails up when they take on a depleted Kolkata Knight Riders, which is struggling after back-to-back defeats, in Indian Premier League on Thursday.

Warne has transformed his team from underdogs to frontrunners and hopes to continue the winning streak against the Knight Riders who have performed well below expectations in their losses to Bangalore Royal Challengers and Mumbai Indians.

With little time in hand to get used to scorching heat and ground conditions, the visitors may find the going tough in a day match.

They are also hit by the loss of overseas players like New Zealand's Brendon McCullum and Australian skipper Ricky Ponting, who are leaving for their national assignments.

The form of Knight Riders' skipper Saurav Ganguly has also been a worrying factor and he has failed to make any impression so

West Indian Chris Gayle apparently has not recovered from his injury.

However, the visitors can take heart from the fact that local players like Lakshmi Ratan Shukla, Ajit

reasonably well. On the other hand Rajasthan

Agarkar and DB Das have done

Royals are on a roll. Playing like a well-gelled unit, they have executed their strategies

### 'Ban Bhajji for life'

PTI, Melbourne

to perfection.

Former Australian Test umpire Lou Rowan on Wednesday labelled Harbhajan Singh a menace on the field and called for a life ban on the temperamental off-spinner for slapping India teammate S Sreesanth.

"This fellow (Harbhajan) doesn't belong to the game of cricket. He has shown he is no good. They should just get rid of him from the sport," Rowan told 'The Courier

"I don't know what other sport would want him, though," he added sarcastically.

Rowan, who stood in 25 Tests between 1963 and 1971, said Harbhajan comes across as a rogue player in whatever he has seen of the Indian tweaker's on-field behaviour.

The Australian felt the 11-match ban imposed on him by the Indian Premier League (IPL) was a light punishment and his actions deserved a stricter sentence.

"I certainly don't think he would have been allowed to get away with what he has been allowed to get away with in any other sport. They should just get rid of him and move

on," he said. After being banned from the IPL, Harbhajan is now awaiting the verdict from a separate disciplinary inquiry to be conducted by the

BCCI. The temperamental bowler has already given his reply to the Board's show cause notice and has

apologised for his conduct. However, his penchant for landing in disciplinary trouble with alarming frequency has not gone down too well with the Board, which backed him to the hilt during the racism row with Australian all-rounder Andrew Symonds a couple of months ago.

# Drop worked for Bopara

Cricket

CRICINFO, undated

Ravi Bopara has cited his dropping from the England side in Sri Lanka as the catalyst which has led to his remarkable early-season form.

Bopara was discarded by England following a miserable tour of Sri Lanka in which he failed to score in his last three innings. Fast forward four months and Bopara has amassed 499 in just four innings since the season began, with Championship hundreds against Northamptonshire (150) and Derbyshire (137).

"The tough time I had in Sri Lanka has helped me - it has made me more determined to get back in there," he told the ECB's website. "Being dropped was a kick up the backside in a way because it shows what you need to do to survive at that level. I'm glad it happened now, at a young age. I'm more hungry for runs - to perform well and get my place back in that England team.

He has a fight on his hands to mentally tougher."

Sagar, Shakil SPORTS REPORTER

FIDE Masters Minhazuddin Ahmed Sagar and Abu Sufian Shakil secured one International Master's (IM) norms each with the outcomes of their respective tenth round matches in the 34th National Chess Championship at the federation hall-room yesterday.

IM norms for

Sagar held table-topper Grand Master Ziaur Rahman to manage seven points from ten games for his IM norm while Shakil beat FM Mahfuzur Rahman Emon to earn 6.5 points for nine games for his

Zia however maintained the solo lead with eight points and IM Enamul Hossain Rajib and Sagar followed the leader with seven points each.

Rajib drew with FM Mohammad Javed in the other match.

### MU set

**FROM PAGE 17** 

front, where United need to beat West Ham on Saturday and Wigan on May 11 to wrap up the Scot's 10th Premier League title.

harm, that is for sure," he said "And if the fans on Saturday are like they were for the Barcelona match, we have got a fantastic chance."

#### do to perform well at international level. I went away and worked on certain areas of my game, a couple "It certainly won't do us any "I didn't have to do a great deal

next, everybody knows."

dollar auction fee. While condemning Harbhajan's act, Saheba said Sreesanth wasn't a favourite in the India dressing room. "He is one of India's main bowlers, and yet, he is not doing anything to get rid of that schoolboy image of his. His colleagues are not too happy with that."

# 'Players need right advice'

of mental work because the hard

time I had in Sri Lanka made me

regain his Test spot, however

Alongside him are Robert Key, who

struck 178 not out against the New

Zealanders at Canterbury on

Monday, and Owais Shah who

many believe has been unlucky not

to break his way back into the team.

Key will captain them both in

England Lions' match against New

Zealand on May 8, the tourists' last

warm-up game before the first Test

knock-back and not come back for

it," Bopara said. "That's not me.

want to be put under that pressure

again and I want to play for

England. Playing Test cricket tells

you where you are with your cricket

- and to be able to do well there

you've got to be a cut above anyone

need to work on and what I need to

"Sri Lanka showed me areas

else in your county team.

of technical things.

"Some people might take it as a

on May 15 at Lord's.

### Cricket

REUTERS, Mumbai

Indian cricketers need professional help to cope with their fame and wealth, Test captain Anil Kumble said on Wednesday.

Kumble's comments in a newspaper column came two days after his spin partner Harbhajan Singh was banned for the remainder of the cash-rich domestic Twenty20 league after being found guilty of Shanthakumaran Sreesanth.

"There's so much money in the game now, especially with the India Premier League (IPL), "Kumble wrote.

"Instead of people blaming whatever happens on "too much money" or justifying incidents by saying things happen in the heat of

the moment, it's important that someone ensures that players are given the right kind of advice, that there are professionals to help them cope with fame and the money it brings... "Education is essential here and should be made

part of the system." India, where cricketers are feted like pop stars, has the largest global cricket audience and multi-million sponsorship deals.

At an IPL players' auction in February, India one-day captain Mahendra Singh Dhoni topped the slapping compatriot bidding with 1.5 million dollars (762,000 pounds) per year for a three-year contract. Harbhajan was bought for 850,000 dollars.

The slapping incident occurred last week after the Mumbai team, captained by Harbhajan in the absence of the injured Sachin Tendulkar, lost to Sreesanth's wrote.

Television pictures showed Sreesanth, an international teammate of Harbhajan's, sobbing after the game.

Harbhajan's ban came three months after he was involved in a row on the controversial tour of Australia. The 27-year-old was initially

banned for three Tests after being found guilty of making alleged racist remarks towards Australia all-rounder Andrew Symonds. But the spinner was subse-

quently let off with a fine following an appeal.

"Players need to learn to respect the opposition and, most importantly, gain the respect of everyone. It's important to understand what you should not say instead of what you would naturally say," Kumble

FROM PAGE 17

Batting first after winning the toss, Chandpur were all out for 140 in 38.5 overs with Sakhawat scoring 41 runs.

runs. In reply, Udayachal reached

two wickets. In the day's other two matches, Wari Club (239 all out) beat Prime Doleshwar (174 all out) by 56 runs at the Dhanmondi Cricket Stadium while the match between Eskatan Sabuj Sangha (269-9) and

INTER-VARSITY

National University defeated Dhaka University 76-74 in the inaugural match of the Inter-University Basketball competition at the Jahangirnagar University

rated the meet as chief guest.

## Coach Murali?

Cricket

AFP, New Delhi

Record-breaking Sri Lankan 305 games after retired Pakistani bowler Muttiah Muralidaran said Wednesday he plans to team up with Indian counterpart Anil Kumble to coach spinners when he retires from international cricket.

"I will do a little bit for the game, not for money but for enjoyment," Muralidaran told the Mumbaibased Daily News and Analysis newspaper.

we will try and get together and do some coaching in the spin departers I have seen and he knows a lot.

help. We are looking at subcontinent countries and academies." The Sri Lankan off-spinner is the world's leading bowler in Tests with 735 wickets in 120 matches.

Shane Warne (708) and leg-spinner Kumble (608).

Murali is also the secondhighest wicket-taker in one-day internationals with 464 scalps in fast bowler Wasim Akram (502).

Coaching bowling is not about technique but about how to use the conditions, he said.

"When both of us call it a day we will look at coaching together. Hopefully, it will help future generations," he added.

Muralidaran said his twin objec-

tives were to reach 800 Test wickets "I've already spoken to Anil and and surpass Akram's one-day "I am targeting 800 Test wickets.

If I get that I will be very happy. "He is one of the greatest bowl- Then I will try for a few more wickets in one-dayers to get the world We will see which country needs record of Akram. When it is done there is nothing more to achieve for me," he said.

When asked whether he would call it a day after achieving these aims, he said: "I think so. Looking He is followed by retired Australian ahead there is no future because if

some bowlers are coming through in Sri Lanka I would like to give

them a chance. "I can achieve 1,000 Test wickets, but the thing is it is too long and too hard to achieve. I am 36 now and you have to retire when you are on the top. Numbers are going to be

just numbers for your own satisfac-

Muralidaran's bowling action has been questioned during his illustrious career, but the ace spinner said he has never allowed the controversies to affect his perfor-

"You don't want to give up just because of what some people say. You want to prove yourself. That is the way I look at life," said Muralidaran, who was called for throwing on Australian tours in the

"I want to go forward instead of taking a backward step. I knew that I had the talent to go forward. So anyone trying to stop me, they tried their best, but couldn't."

### Mumbai's first win

FROM PAGE 17

fours and a six each off Bravo and Dilhara Fernando as 44 runs were scored in the last four overs.

Despite the below-par score, Kolkata refused to surrender and their new-ball bowlers gave them an excellent start. Ajit Agarkar had Ajinkya Rahane chipping to midwicket in the third over and, at the other end, Jayasuriya was in a fascinating battle with Ishant Sharma. After several swings-andmisses and powerful hits to the boundary, Ishant sent Jayasuriya's off stump cartwheeling. Manish Pandey then fell for a duck to the impressive Ashok Dinda and, at 25 for 3, Mumbai were in danger of squandering their advantage.

Uthappa and Bravo, though, carried them to victory with a century stand for the fourth wicket as the spinners were unable to carry on the good work of the fast bowlers. Uthappa had a chancy start -- Das grassed a sharp chance at point, and there were several close shouts for lbw -- before he unfurled some horizontal-bat

shots and his favourite paddle. Bravo played a stylish knock in which two shots early on stood out - an audacious back-foot squaredrive off Ishant and a cracking lofted on-drive off Hafeez. They were some lovely straight hits as well in his unbeaten 64 -- the highest score by a Mumbai batsman in the tournament.

The win, and news that their icon Sachin Tendulkar is likely to be Zealand) and AV Jayaprakash fit for the next game, is a relief for Toss: Kolkata Knight Riders.

Mumbai, who lost their first four games and will miss the services of 850,000-dollar signing Harbhajan Singh for the rest of the tournament after his row with Sreesanth during the match against the Kings

XI Punjab. After a thumping start, Kolkata's magic looks to be wearing out. None of their batsmen, besides McCullum, have made a halfcentury and, to make matters worse, they will be missing much of their batting firepower after this game -- McCullum and Ricky Ponting leave to fulfil international commitments while a groin injury has forced Chris Gayle out of the tournament.

**SCORES IN BRIEF** 

KOLKATA KNIGHT RIDERS: 137 for 8 in 20 overs (McCullum 1 Ganguly 4, Ponting 19, Das 29, Hussey 17, Hafeez 2, Shukla 40 not out, Agarkar 2, Kartik 10; Pollock 2-27, Fernando 1-41, Bravo 1-25, Jayasuriya 3-14)

MUMBAI INDIANS: 138 for 3 in 18.4 overs (Rahane 4, Jayasuriya 18, Uthappa 37 not out, Bravo 64 not out; Agarkar 1-23, Sharma 1-33, Dinda 1-12)

Result: Mumbai Indians won by 7

Man-of-the-match: Sanath

Jayasuriya. Umpires: BF Bowden (New

### Salahuddin

FROM PAGE 17

Salam Murshedi, who was elected from losing president candidate Maj Gen (retd) Amin Ahmed Chowdhury's panel, said that there is only one team now.

"The election is over, so are the two panels. We are all united for Team BFF. Salahuddin is our leader. He will give us direction and we will work," said the former striker.

"In any election there are two parties, so we were under different banners. But we are now one team for one leader. To me, this is the best team I'd ever play for. We have many experienced organisers and footballers who have vowed to give the nation something we dream for."

### Outcome

FROM PAGE 17 two losses of the tosses. I'll always remember walking out there with the blazer on."

How will certainly have no qualms about welcoming the IPL contingent back into the bosom of the team. "We were expecting this situation and we talked about it a lot back home," he said. "Our young guys have had a nice little time to break into the tour, but it'll be great to have our best players

"It could seem as though there's a danger of a them-and-us situation," said How, "but this team is a tight unit, and the guys who've been away are a special type of team-first player. I know they are looking forward to coming and joining us, and sharing their Indian stories. As Kiwis we enjoy being the underdogs, but we are confident and will work hard, and come the first Test, we'll be up to speed."



42 43 44

Mumbai's Sri Lankan all-rounder Sanath Jayasuriya (L) celebrates one of his three wickets against Kolkata in the Indian Premier League at the Eden Gardens on Tuesday.

#### CROSSWORD By Eugene Sheffer 20 "- O' My ACROSS DOWN Heart" 1 Idolaters' 36 For 1 Met 23 The whole melody example enchilada 4 Punctur- 37 "Eureka!" 2 Desire 24 Deposit 38 Close 3 Sicilian ing 25 "Rocks" tools combat 26 One may 45 27-4 Concurs 8 Teensy hold the 5 Relin-Across 23 |24 | 25 12 Snitch quish mayo measure 27 Smith or Claiborne flavor 14 "Clue" sackful

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CRYPTOQUIP

UX GZCDIT SVLDT UD KY AYYVD GSZU

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SEYQK, VY C KYYL S ASITDZ Yesterday's Cryptoquip: HAVE YOU EVER HEARD THE PLAYFUL RIVER MAMMAL CALL HIS GIRLFRIEND HIS SIGNIFICANT OTTER?

Today's Cryptoquip Clue: U equals M

## Shoaib loses ban appeal But cleared to play abroad

## Cricket

AFP, Lahore

A Pakistani appeals committee on Wednesday temporarily upheld a five-year ban imposed on fast bowler Shoaib Akhtar but said he was free to play cricket outside the country.

The 32-year-old paceman was ofthe nation," he said. banned earlier this month for breaching the players' code of conduct by publicly criticising the Pakistan Cricket Board (PCB) after he was not offered a central contract.

"Shoaib Akhtar can play anywhere outside Pakistan. The disciplinary committee did not restrain him from playing anywhere in the world," retired judge Aftab Farrukh, the head of the threemember tribunal, told reporters.

Akhtar has expressed a desire to Mohammad Asif with a bat a few play in a domestic cricket tournament in India.

Farrukh said the main hearing Championship in South Africa in into Akthar's appeal against the ban would take place in June and that the ban on playing in or for Pakistan would stay in place until then. "We have seen Shoaib's track

record and believe that he has not learnt any lesson. He flouted discipline of the board, he harmed the chairman of the board and fellow cricketers and above all sentiments Akthar this week tendered an

unconditional apology to the public, the PCB and his teammates in an apparent attempt at mitigation.

The fiery paceman, who has a history of discipline problems and injuries, hit out at the PCB in January after he was not on a list of 15 contracted players and was then hauled up before a disciplinary committee. He was already on two years'

probation for hitting teammate

days before the Twenty20 World

September last year. **BCCI** announces

winter venues PTI, New Delhi

Ahmedabad will host the first Test between India and England when Michael Vaughan's team come to India for a two-Test and seven-ODI series in November-December, the final itinerary of which will be announced soon by the Board of Control for Cricket in India (BCCI).

The second Test of the series will be played in Mumbai before the two teams lock horns in a one-day series. The first of the seven one-dayers will be played in the capital. Indore, Rajkot, Jamshedpur,

series.

BASKETBALL

Cuttack, Guwahati and Kanpur will host the remaining matches of the

#### CRICINFO, undated The Board of Control for Cricket in India (BCCI) has sought an explanation from umpire Amiesh Saheba for his remarks, made to a Mumbai-based tabloid, about

Shanthakumaran Sreesanth's

Saheba asked

to clarify

remarks

behaviour. Saheba, one of the on-field umpires during the match in Mohali after which Harbhajan Singh and Sreesanth had their now-infamous exchange, has been withdrawn by the governing council of the Indian Premier League

from his next two matches. Saheba told Mumbai Mirror Sreesanth had been warned by him and fellow umpire Aleem Dar, and went on to say the fast bowler was "disliked in the Indian dressing room". "Sreesanth was sledging Mumbai's batsmen right from the start," Saheba said. " He was over the top throughout the match and was acting like a petulant schoolboy. My colleague Aleem Dar and I warned him twice and we warned (Punjab captain) Yuvraj (Singh)

Saheba said Sreesanth didn't heed the warning. "It was obvious by then that victory for Kings XI Punjab was a mere formality, but Sreesanth kept at it. Musavir Khote was the last man out for Mumbai, and Sreesanth was the one who got him. He even sledged Khote when he was on his way back to the pavilion. Surely, this would not have escaped the eyes of the Mumbai

"During the post-match handshake between the two teams, we came to know that Sreesanth said something to Harbhajan, who was in a foul mood. What happened

Saheba and Dar were not called for a hearing held by the IPL on Monday, at which Harbhajan pleaded guilty to the charges of slapping Sreesanth and was banned by the match referee, Farokh Engineer, for the rest of the first IPL season. He was also fined 100 per cent of his match fee and will now be paid for only two of the matches he played in the tournament instead of his full 850,000-

## LOCAL SNIPPETS

Asif claimed three wickets for 30

their target in 30.4 overs for the loss of five wickets. Tanmoy contributed 44 runs and Mahbub bagged

Dhanmondi Pragati Sangha (269-8) ended in a tie at the Dhaka University ground.

basketball court yesterday. JU VC Dr Mohammad Muniruzzaman formally inaugu-