



Cricket fans wave their beloved red and green flag during the Bangladesh innings of the Kityply Cup at the Sher-e-Bangla National Stadium yesterday.

PHOTO: STAR

## Asif's fate Sunday?

PTI, Karachi

The Dubai Attorney General is likely to take up the case of detained pacer Mohammad Asif on Sunday and may perhaps even deliver a verdict on the same day, according to the Pakistan embassy there.

Dismissing media reports that Asif might be deported today, a senior official of the embassy in Dubai said, "I think if any decision was taken to deport him, we would know about it." He said the embassy had designated a consular to follow the case and assist Asif.

"There has been no development on the Asif front as yet and we are expecting the Attorney General to handle the case on Sunday after going through the prosecutor's report," the official said.

"Maybe he might even take a decision the same day on whether to charge Asif or release or deport him," he added.

Asif remains in detention in Dubai since June 1 when he was returning from India after playing in the Indian Premier League on his way home.

## Mirza happy to be back

AFP, Birmingham

India's Sania Mirza, who has been sidelined for three months because of a wrist injury, insists she is just happy to be back on court despite losing the first match of her return.

The 21-year-old lost 6-3, 6-0 to New Zealand's Marina Erakovic at the WTA grasscourt event where she builds up her fitness ahead of Wimbledon which begins on June 23.

It was the first match for the world number 33 since she suffered her right wrist injury at Indian Wells in March, a setback which ruled her out of the entire claycourt season.

"When I stepped on the court I was very happy to be playing -- but at this point it's not whether I win or lose, I'm just happy that I'm playing," Mirza said.

"I don't have a choice but to take the injury in my stride. At the end of the day it's a tennis match, it's not like I'm going to die if I lose."

Later Thursday, Mirza's compatriot Sushma Rao, who came through qualifying, battles Ukrainian fifth seed Alona Bondarenko for a place in the last eight.

## Croatia upset

**FROM PAGE 17**  
Asked why his team failed to build on their opening 2-0 win over Poland, captain Ballack said: "Perhaps we thought we had already achieved something. We played poorer in all areas."

"We knew we were up against tough opponents so that surprises me. It's bitter. Now we have to win the next match."

## Second gold

**FROM PAGE 17**  
BKSP shooter Tripti Dutta claimed gold in the women's 10m air rifle (junior group) with a score of 393.

Anwar Hossain of Army Shooting Association won gold in the men's 22 rifle prone while Gulshan Chowdhury Sweety of Gulshan Shooting Club won the women's 25m pistol events.

## PCB blasts team

AFP, Lahore

Pakistan on Thursday sacked a high-profile cricket official who had been accused of leaking a confidential email to the media which criticised the team.

The Pakistan Cricket Board confirmed that former fast bowler Salim Altaf, who was overseeing the 2011 World Cup to be hosted in the subcontinent, was fired, but a top official played down the incident.

"Altaf's services were no more required but I would not say he was accused of leakage to the media," Pakistan Cricket Board (PCB) chief operating officer Shafiqat Naghmi told AFP.

But Altaf said he was sacked after local media published an email by Pakistan's cricket chief accusing the national team of lacking commitment after they suffered their biggest-ever defeat against arch-rivals India this week.

"I have worked to the best of sincerity and honesty but today PCB chairman Nasim Ashraf called me to his office and accused me of leaking news to the media," Altaf told AFP.

"He gave me the option of resigning or else said that he would sack me," Altaf added.

Altaf, 64, who played 21 Tests for Pakistan in the 1970s as a medium

fast bowler, was made director for special projects after serving as chief executive of the PCB until September last year.

Altaf said he would consult an attorney.

"After I left Ashraf's room he came to my office and told me to read the transcript of a taped conversation which had my voice. He accused me of leaking secrets to the media," Altaf said.

"I replied that most of the things in the transcript were public knowledge and nothing is proved in the transcript. I will consult my lawyer and then decide my course of action," said Altaf.

India thrashed Pakistan by 140 runs in the tri-series match held in Dhaka, Bangladesh on Tuesday. They posted a formidable 330-8 and then bowled Pakistan out for a paltry 190.

"The performance against India was embarrassing," Ashraf wrote in the email published in the Pakistani media.

"It is not a question of losing a match but our overall performance and the lack of resolve and commitment bothered me the most," it added.

The email, which was addressed to manager Talat Ali and copied to captain Shoaib Malik and Pakistan's Australian coach Geoff Lawson, demanded swift action.

It was unclear how Altaf was alleged to have obtained the email.

"Please discuss these points and give us your considered response within the next 24 hours so that timely action can be taken before the next match against India on the 14th which will be the final," the message said.

India take on Bangladesh on Thursday, with Pakistan set to meet their foes again on Saturday.

"The team selected for India game had four fast bowlers. Also, you clearly told me that Malik was 100 per cent fit and therefore was the second spinner in the side. What happened to that? Why did Malik not bowl?"

Ashraf also lashed out at poor fielding against India. Pakistan dropped three crucial catches to allow the Indian openers Virender Sehwag (89) and Gautam Gambhir (62) put on 155 for the opening stand.

"We dropped some catches in the beginning as well but, watching from here, one felt that we were paralysed in the field. Nobody suggested to the captain that he must have a mini conference -- and take corrective action."

Ashraf criticised the selection of the team, which did not include a regular spinner.

"The previous game against Bangladesh had clearly highlighted the characteristics of the track in Dhaka, that the spinners were going to play a crucial role," said Ashraf of Pakistan's 70-run win over the hosts on Sunday.

## BCB selects 25 for Academy

SPORTS REPORTER

The Bangladesh Cricket Board (BCB) has picked up 25 cricketers for the GP-BCB National Cricket Academy for the 2008-09 season.

Former national captain Khaled Mahmud, who operations manager, has been given the added responsibility of the assistant coach to the Academy head coach Ruwan Kalpage of Sri Lanka.

The names of the captain and vice-captain will be announced later.

The squad: Zunaid Siddique, Imrul Kayes, Mahbubul Karim, Jahurul Islam, Shamsur Rahman, Naeem Islam, Farhad Hossain, Nadif Chowdhury, Marshall Ayub, Nasir Hossain, Arafat Salauddin, Sohravardi Shuvo, Arafat Sunny, Raihanuddin Arafat, Nabil Samad, Sajedul Islam, Delwar Hossain, Talha Jubair, Mahbubul Alam Robin, Nazmul Hossain, Rubel Hossain, Ziaur Rahman, Dhiman Ghosh, Sahagur Hossain Pavel, Ashiqul Islam Rajib.

## Hockey team's departure delayed

UNB, Dhaka

Bangladesh national hockey team will fly to Singapore today to play the 3rd Men's AHC Cup Hockey after their Bangladesh Biman flight was delayed twice yesterday.

The Singapore-bound Biman flight, originally scheduled to fly yesterday at 10.30 am, was rescheduled for midnight due to some internal problems. But Biman further rescheduled the departure at 6 pm today.

The 9-nation qualifying tournament for the Asia Cup will be held from June 14-22.

Bangladesh are pitted against hosts Singapore, Chinese Taipei, Uzbekistan and Brunei Darussalam in Pool A while Pool B comprises of Hong Kong, Sri Lanka, Oman and Thailand.

Bangladesh will play Brunei on June 14, Chinese Taipei on June 15, Singapore on June 18 and Uzbekistan on June 18.

Four teams will qualify for the Asia Cup finals.

## Pioneer League

SPORTS REPORTER

Pavel scored all three goals in Surjosepa Sporting Club's 3-1 victory against Arambagh KS Juniors in a West Zone match of the Pioneer Football League at the Outer Stadium yesterday.

Pavel, who opened the scoring after 13 minutes, added his second four minutes later and completed the hat-trick on the half hour. Tuhin reduced the arrears for the losers in the second half.

In Central Zone, Samaj Kalyan and Kriya Sangsad crushed Nandipara Komololi Sangsad 3-0 at the Basabo Tarun Sangha ground with a brace from Riaz.

In North Zone, Dhaka Eleven edged Khelegar Kriya Chakra 1-0 with Faisal slotting the match winner at the Mohakhal T&T ground.

# Chelsea appoint Scolari

Football

AFP, London

Luiz Felipe Scolari's appointment as the new manager of Chelsea was given widespread support on Thursday, although the Brazilian World Cup winner has yet to fully satisfy some of his detractors.

Chelsea stole the football spotlight from the Euro 2008 late Wednesday when they announced, to general surprise, that Scolari would replace the sacked Avram Grant after the European Championships.

The 59-year-old Scolari was a big favourite to replace Grant as manager of the English Premier League high-flyers although the timing of the announcement -- Scolari saw his Portugal side qualify for the quarterfinals of the Euro on Wednesday -- appeared bizarre.

Scolari, considered a no-nonsense coach with a reputation for rigour and discipline, won the World Cup with Brazil in 2002 and was coach of Portugal when they were beaten finalists in the Euro 2004.

Among the first to welcome Scolari to Stamford Bridge was Chelsea goalkeeper Petr Cech.

"He is a manager with great charisma, great experience, great results, I look forward to working

with him," the Czech national goalkeeper said in an interview published on the national federation's website on Thursday.

"I hope that his (past) results are confirmed with us at Chelsea."

Scolari's first competitive game as Chelsea manager will be the first Premier League match of the 2008-09 season on the weekend of 16-17 August.



LUIZ FELIPE SCOLARI

One of England's biggest football pundits, former Scotland international Alan Hansen, believes the man known as 'Big Phil' will get the best out of Chelsea's squad of highly-paid stars.

Hansen added: "If you're going into that dressing room you've got

to have one, a presence -- he's got that -- and two, a great track record, and he's got that as well."

"He's got the right credentials and he's done fantastically well with Portugal. The big players will find you out in a minute and a half, so it's a great choice."

Going on past results, Scolari has few black marks on his curriculum vitae, if not for the fact he has not coached at club level since his spell with Cruzeiro in 2000-01.

Scolari has no experience of European club football, but in a rich career spent mainly in South America he has won two Copa Libertadores -- the equivalent of the Champions League -- in 1995 with Gremio Porto Alegre and in 1999 with Palmeiras.

Grant led Chelsea to the final of the Champions League in 2008 only for the Blues to lose out to Manchester United.

It seems Chelsea's relentless bid to become European champions has moved up a notch, with some newspapers claiming Scolari -- despite Chelsea's massive debts -- will be given 100 million pounds to spend on talent.

However there are some who question just how Scolari, whose English is said to be basic, will be communicating with his players.

# Roddick gets lucky break

Tennis

AFP, London

Andy Roddick got a lucky break in his bid for a record fifth Queen's title as Mardy Fish withdrew after just one set of their third round match on Thursday.

Roddick, the reigning Queen's champion, had just taken the first set on a tie-break when Fish, who fell awkwardly while trying to make a diving volley late in the set, was forced to pull out with a foot injury.

The former US Open champion now faces either British number one Andy Murray or Latvian teenager Ernests Gulbis in the quarterfinals.

Roddick, seeded three, was playing only his second match since suffering a shoulder injury in Rome five weeks ago, and may have wished for a longer spell on court to get some valuable grass-court practice.

But he has a phenomenal record at Queen's, winning the pre-Wimbledon warm-up event four times in the last five years to draw level with Lleyton Hewitt, John McEnroe and Boris Becker on the

all-time list.

Although he still needs treatment on the shoulder problem after every match it didn't unduly restrict his thunderous serve against Fish, the 15th seed.

The American needed two big serves to get out of jail when he gifted Fish two break points in the fifth game.

That was the closest either player came to making a breakthrough and a tie-break was needed to decide the set. Roddick took it thanks to a booming forehand from the baseline that earned him a decisive early mini-break.

Fish had tumbled while trying to return a powerful forehand from Roddick during the tie-break and he immediately took of his shoe after the set. An injury time-out didn't ease the pain and he was soon shaking hands with Roddick to concede the tie.

Roddick was joined in the last eight by giant Croat Ivo Karlovic, who over-powered Fernando Gonzalez 6-3, 7-5.

At 6ft 10in Karlovic is the tallest player on the ATP Tour and he uses that height to good effect with a ferocious serve, hitting over 1,300 aces last year.

# All set for group

FROM PAGE 17

that the criteria used is, in order, the head-to-head results, the goal difference in the head-to-head clashes (if more than two teams are equal), the number of goals in the head-to-head clashes (again, if more than two teams are equal), goal difference overall, and the number of goals scored overall.

If, at the end of all of that, the teams can still not be separated, then the coefficient of the qualifying competitions for the 2006 World Cup and the 2008 Euro are taken into consideration.

The coefficient is determined by the number of points divided by the number of games played.

This would give the Czech Republic the advantage as they have a coefficient of 2.333, while

Turkey has 1.958.

If teams have the same coefficient, then the fair play ranking would be applied and if they are still the same, drawing of lots would take place.

However, there is also regulation 7.08, which states that if teams are equal on points and goals (scored and conceded) after the last game and are playing against each other, they would then compete in a penalty shootout, which would start immediately after the 90 minutes.

Thus, if Turkey and the Czechs draw in Geneva, the game would move straight into a penalty shootout, without extra time.

This would be the first time that this has happened at a major championship.

## CHAMPIONS TROPHY Pakistan vows full security

AFP, Islamabad

An International Cricket Council (ICC) official said Thursday that Pakistan's government had made stringent security arrangements for the upcoming biennial Champions Trophy.

Pakistan hosts the Champions Trophy from September 11-28 with top eight Test playing countries -- Australia, South Africa, India, England, Pakistan, New Zealand, Sri Lanka and the West Indies -- competing.

The matches will be staged in Karachi, Lahore and Rawalpindi, cities that have been hit by several suicide attacks over the past year before a lull in recent months.

A meeting took place between officials from the interior ministry, the Pakistan Cricket Board and ICC event management in Islamabad on Tuesday to oversee the arrangements, he said.

This will be the first time that Pakistan has staged a major sporting event since hosting a quadrangular tournament in 1997. Pakistan also co-hosted matches of the 1996 World Cup with India and Sri Lanka.

## Tigers' timid

FROM PAGE 17

Chawla 10 0 42 1  
Yuvraj 2 0 10 0  
Yusuf 2 0 9 1  
Sehwag 7 0 33 0

INDIA  
Gambhir not out 107  
Sehwag c Tamim b Mahmud 59  
Sharma c Mashrafe b Razzak 26  
Yuvraj b Forhad 26  
Raina not out 5  
Extras: (w-5) 0  
Total: (For 33 wks in 35.1 overs) 223

Fall of wickets: 1-85, 2-141, 3-216  
Did not bat: Dhoni, Irfan, Yusuf, Chawla, Rudra Pratap, Kumar

Bowler O M R W  
Mashrafe 8 0 33 0  
Forhad 5.1 0 45 1  
Mahmud 4 0 42 1  
Razzak 10 0 48 1  
Riyad 7 0 42 0  
Kapali 1 0 13 0

Result: India win by seven wickets.  
Man-of-the-match: Gautam Gambhir.

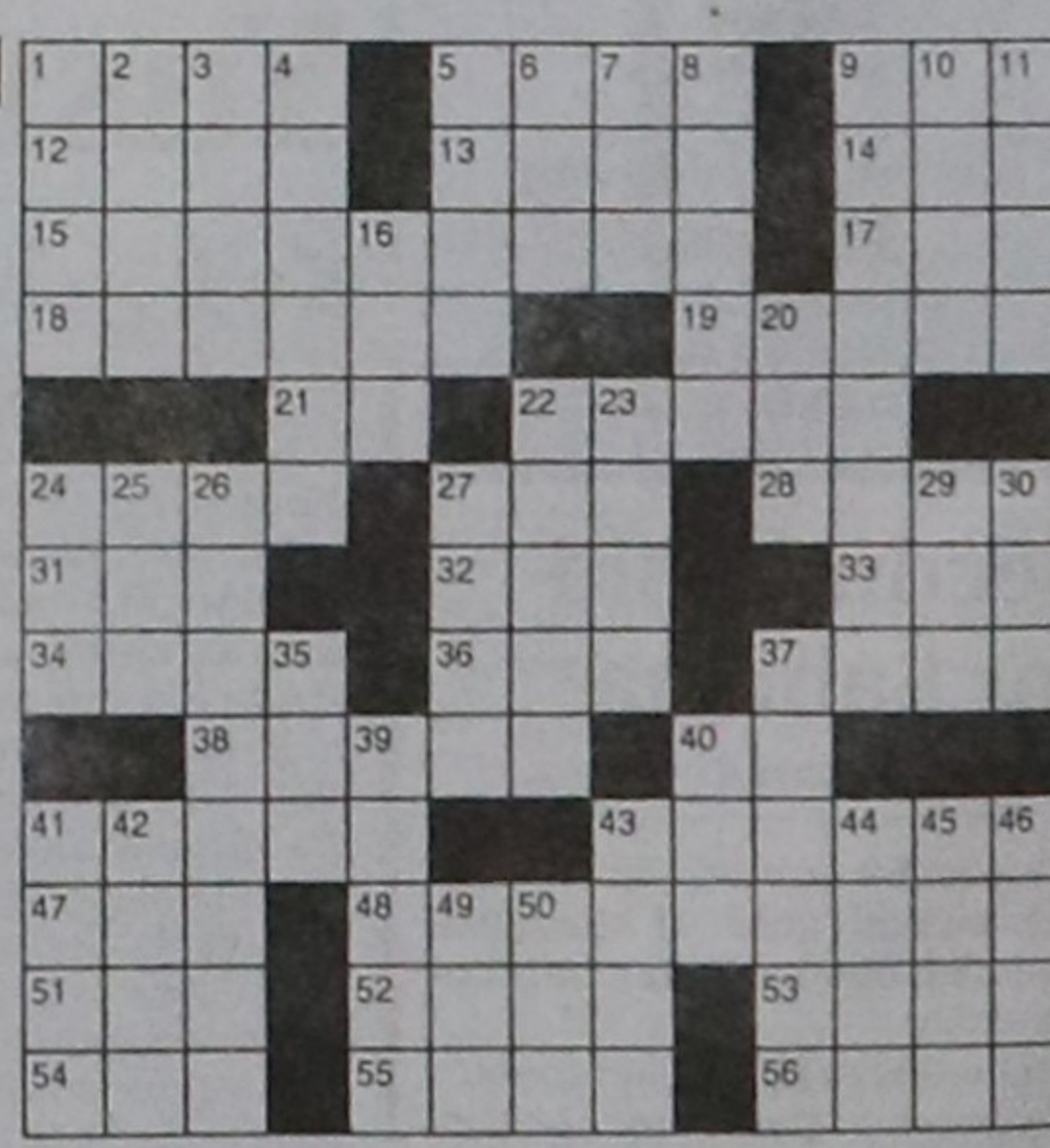
Toss: Bangladesh.  
Umpires: Asoka de Silva and Nadir Shah.

## CROSSWORD By Eugene Sheffer

**ACROSS**  
1 Mexican money  
5 Hits on the head  
9 Trampcar load  
12 Black-and-white trout  
13 Con  
14 Without further ado  
15 Traveling abbr.  
17 Calendar  
18 Quit  
19 Old number?  
21 007's doctor foe  
22 Pussy-cats' leader  
24 Enthusiastic  
27 Pickle  
28 Sail support  
31 B&B  
32 Freudian subjects  
33 Mamie's man  
34 Hybrid pooch  
36 Past  
37 Overly

**DOWN**  
38 "Steppen-1" indigent  
2 Sea eagle  
3 Hardens  
4 Pyrotechnics reaction  
5 Hay there?  
6 "Sail — Ship of State!"  
7 Bake sale org.  
8 Facelions  
9 Broad-casting  
10 Libertine  
11 Basin accessory  
16 Swelled head  
20 Alien or Burton  
23 Approximate  
24 Pick a target  
25 Wildebeest  
26 Trying to avoid  
27 Prejudice  
29 Winter sport  
30 President pro —  
35 Affair  
37 Confined  
39 Fire indication  
40 Travail  
41 Robin Cook book  
42 Laugh-a-minute  
43 Climb, in a way  
44 Top-notch  
45 Doppelganger  
46 Picnic hamperers  
49 Bill  
50 What 35-down may be for?

**Solution time: 25 mins.**  
ACROSS: 1. MEXICO, 5. HIT, 9. TRAM, 12. BLACK AND WHITE, 13. CON, 14. WITHOUT FURTHER, 15. TRAMP, 17. CALENDAR, 18. QUIT, 19. OLD, 21. 007'S DOCTOR FOE, 22. PUSSYCATS, 24. ENTHUSIASTIC, 27. PICKLE, 28. SAIL, 31. B&B, 32. FREUDIAN, 33. MAMIE'S MAN, 34. HYBRID, 36. PAST, 37. OVERLY.  
DOWN: 38. STEPPEN, 2. SEA, 3. HARDEN, 4. PYROTECHNICS, 5. HAY, 6. SAIL, 7. BAKE SALE, 8. FACELIONS, 9. BROADCASTING, 10. LIBERTINE, 11. BASIN, 16. SWELLED, 20. ALIEN, 23. APPROXIMATE, 24. PICK, 25. WILDEBEEST, 26. TRYING TO AVOID, 27. PREJUDICE, 29. WINTER SPORT, 30. PRESIDENT PRO, 35. AFFAIR, 37. CONFINED, 39. FIRE, 40. TRAVAIL, 41. ROBIN COOK, 42. LAUGH-A-MINUTE, 43. CLIMB, 44. TOP-NOTCH, 45. DOPEL, 46. PICNIC, 49. BILL, 50. WHAT.



CRYPTOQUIP

H N I T T S N M E S I D S I P U  
C H L W R P E N J E R W J R J Q E  
N M C H S I N N S D D M C T P J E M C H N  
J L S J P - S C H M Q R M U T M C N S Q  
Yesterday's Cryptquip: IF A FILTHY INDIVIDUAL TRAVERSED THE ROAD TWICE, WOULDN'T HE BE A DIRTY DOUBLE CROSSER?  
Today's Cryptquip Clue: E equals Y