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## China on security alert

AFP, Beijing

China vowed Sunday to step up security for the Beijing Olympics, warning of an unprecedented terrorist threat with up to 80 heads of state expected to attend the opening ceremony.

Rioting and looting in Tibet this year and recent armed battles between police and "terrorist groups" in the western-most Xinjiang region were evidence of real threats to sabotage the Games, the leading People's Daily said in an editorial.

"As far as China is concerned, the international situation and the political environment is becoming increasingly complicated by the day and the dark clouds of terrorism on our borders is a fact that cannot be ignored," it said.

"Up until the present, we know there will be 80 heads of state attending the Beijing Olympics opening ceremony, as the host nation we are faced with unprecedented pressure and a huge responsibility."

The commentary defended massive security efforts that have resulted in a missile battery being placed outside the main Olympic Stadium and a raft of new regulations controlling the movement of people and goods.

It also derided Western press reports that have criticised stringent security measures they said would result in a "cold and cheerless Olympics."

"These incidents (in Tibet and Xinjiang) show... that the Beijing Olympics is facing a terrorist threat unsurpassed in Olympic history," the commentary said.

"Especially as the peaceful protests of anti-China forces like those linked to 'democracy movements' outside the nation become violent attacks by Tibetan and Xinjiang separatists."



## Did U Know?

The guest list at the Wimbledon Championships is released on the day of the match for security reasons.



## Sourav Ganguly

(Former India cricket captain)  
"I've been out of India's one-day team for the last three months and I am not going to play one-dayers for the next three. So I'm not thinking about ODIs at the moment. I'm concentrating on Tests and the upcoming Sri Lanka series. I'm still enjoying cricket and as long as I do that, I'm not going to hang up my boots."



**STAR Cricket**  
England v South Africa  
First Test, Day Five  
Live from 4:00pm



Bangladesh Cricket Board's acting CEO Nizam Uddin Chowdhury (L) shakes hands Nimbus Sport vice-president Yannick Colaco after the signing ceremony at a local hotel yesterday.

## SA solid in 2nd innings

Cricket

AFP, London

Graeme Smith and Neil McKenzie continued to frustrate England in the first Test at Lord's as South Africa got through their second session here on Sunday without losing a wicket.

The Proteas, following on, were 128 without loss at tea on the fourth day, still needing a further 218 runs to make England bat again but with both their openers having shown what was possible on a pitch still good for batting.

South Africa captain Smith was 71 not out and McKenzie 50 not out after four hours and 14 minutes of resistance, having defied all attempts so far by England captain Michael Vaughan to bemuse them with unusual field settings.

They resumed after lunch on 67 without loss. Left-hander Smith was then 36 not out with McKenzie unbeaten on 24.

Both men continued to bat in unhurried fashion and chose which balls to go after with care.

Smith's cut four off fast bowler Stuart Broad saw him complete a fifty off 106 balls -- a fair run-rate for someone conscious of the need to preserve his wicket -- with six fours.

As over after over passed without a wicket, the normally reserved Lord's crowd did their best to encourage England by roaring and clapping as the bowlers ran-in. They 'appealed' as well, but all to no avail.

McKenzie had a lucky break when he went to 48 with an edge off left-arm quick Ryan Sidebottom. But Vaughan had decided to do without a second slip and the ball went through the gap.

His single off left-arm spinner Monty Panesar saw McKenzie to a

190-ball fifty with seven fours. The closest England had come to taking a wicket on Sunday was during the morning session when Smith, on 26, got a thin inside edge off Panesar.

But wicketkeeper Tim Ambrose had stood up too soon and the, admittedly difficult, chance bounced off his pads.

South Africa resumed on Sunday on 13 without loss, a huge 333 runs behind England's 593 for eight declared, built on Ian Bell's Test-best 199 and 152 from Kevin Pietersen in his first Test innings what was possible on a pitch still good for batting.

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## Nazmul can't stop surge

Cricket

AFP, London

Despite Nazmul Hossain's five-wicket haul, Bangladesh A struggled to contain the Warwickshire batsmen as their three-day game headed for a draw on the final day at Edgbaston in Birmingham yesterday.

The hosts declared their first innings at 361-9, responding to Bangladesh A's score of 252 in their first dig. In their reply, the tourists reached 23 for one in the second innings after captain Zunaed Siddiqui fell leg-before for five.

Paceman Rubel Hossain, who bowls with a slinging action, took the first three wickets and Nazmul took two, as the Bears were 157 for five at lunch.

But wily veteran Darren Maddy shared a 108-run fifth wicket stand

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## BCB okays Nimbus deal

Cricket

SPORTS REPORTER

Bangladesh Cricket Board (BCB) finally struck the much-talked-about Long Form Agreement (LFA) with Nimbus Sports International Ltd for its Worldwide Marketing Agency Rights for a period of six years.

It's taken the board long twenty months to put pen to the paper since the groundbreaking deal of 56.88 million-dollar heads of agreement was signed on November 21, 2006.

BCB's acting chief executive officer Nizam Uddin Chowdhury and executive vice-president of Nimbus Sports International Yannick Colaco signed the MoU on behalf of their respective organisations at a local hotel yesterday.

BCB president Major General Sina Ibn Jamali and most of the ad-hoc committee members were present on the occasion.

Nimbus Sports International won BCB's Worldwide TV Marketing rights (for six years) during the tenure of Ali Asghar but

in the changed scenario after the 1/11 the new board led by Major General Jamali had decided to give a long hard look into the sensitive financial deal after questions were raised about the transparency of the deal.

However, after the long scrutiny the original deal actually stood with minor adjustments clearing the air of any foul play by the previous committee of the board.

It was clearly evident after the signing of the deal when BCB's Finance Committee Chairman Abdul Momen, who also headed a review committee, avoided making comments on the dark part of the original deal (if there was any). Rather he was interested to talk about the bright part of it and some minor changes that according to him strengthened BCB's regulatory position.

While the board officials talked about the win-win situation, Nimbus representative Colaco was very bold in his assertion.

"In this subcontinent we always smell something in any kind of financial deal. In my life I have had the experience of involving in million, million dollars deals and I

must say it was the most, most transparent deal I have ever done," said Colaco.

Momen was more interested to elaborate the changes that have been made.

"Our main focus was to improve and strengthen our position both in legal and financial aspects and we believe we could manage it. And we are now in a win-win situation after some adjustments in the deal," stressed Momen.

"Under the LFA the BCB will have true copies of every contract that Nimbus enters into with third party licensees. The BCB will also be allowed to review and audit or appoint an auditor to do so, the books of accounts and other relevant information of Nimbus twice per contract-year and upon five days written notice. We could add this because of the negotiation and these provisions will facilitate transparency in monitoring the revenues/receivable from Nimbus Sport," he explained.

"And another thing is that we could cap-in the minimum guaranteed amount which was vague in the heads of agreement. Now the

## BFF connects Citycell with landmark deal

Football

SPORTS REPORTER

Bangladesh Football Federation (BFF) has struck a landmark sponsorship deal with Citycell worth Tk 16.5 crore for three years, the biggest ever trade in the country's football history.

Although it was reported that Citycell, one of the leading cellular phone operators, will give the governing body of football Tk 15 crore, BFF president Kazi Salahuddin yesterday confirmed that the deal was worth more.

"We are going to get 16.5 crore taka for the next three years when Citycell will be our partner in progress," the BFF boss, who was given sole authority to complete the deal by his executive committee, told The Daily Star.

An MoU (Memorandum of

Understanding) will be signed between the two parties this afternoon at the BFF Bhaban, two and half months after the newly elected BFF body's takeover. The details of the deals will be disclosed to the media after signing of the MoU.

The former national footballer added that Citycell will get title sponsorship rights of two major tournaments under the federation, this month's Federation Cup and the B. League, apart from the school competitions.

Citycell, however, looked to snatch the sponsorship from the grasp of rival cellular phone operators Aktel, who at one stage were seemingly ahead in the race.

It was learned that Aktel -- now in the backseat -- had wanted a few more days to convince its high-ups for a contract but the delay probably paved way for the country's only CDMA network, which sealed the victory around midnight on

Saturday. The BFF president, who had begun negotiating with major corporate houses to get a worthy sponsorship deal since occupying the hot seat of Bangladesh football, has already said that he would need a number of co-sponsors to meet the demand of organising tournaments and run development programmes according to his plans.

"I want to our my own fund for the development programmes and events so that I can use the money we get from FIFA and AFC to concentrate on bringing full professionalism to the management of the federation," he said.

It can be mentioned that the FIFA gives the BFF 2.5 lakh dollars per annum as donation and the AFC provides 70,000 dollars for salary of BFF coaches.

Basically, the BFF's previous executive committee survived on

## Prince rues follow-on

Cricket

AFP, London

South Africa vice-captain Ashwell Prince apologised to his teammates despite a gutsy century in his maiden Test innings against England and on his first visit to Lord's here Saturday.

Sadly for Prince, his 101 couldn't prevent England bowling out South Africa for 247 and enforcing the follow-on after the home side had piled up an imposing 593 for eight declared in the first of this four-Test series.

Left-arm spinner Monty Panesar did the bulk of the damage with four for 74 and South Africa, at stumps on the third day, were 13 without loss -- still needing a further 333

runs to make England bat again.

The Proteas were in a parlous position when Prince came in at 47 for three but the 31-year-old left-hander fought hard, and played some fine shots too, in a near five-hour innings featuring one six and 13 fours.

Prince, whose wife and baby son were among the crowd, was hard on himself for being dismissed shortly before the close.

"I thought I let the team down, getting out just a few overs before the end of the day's play," he said.

"The last thing I wanted was to have the captain and Neil McKenzie go out again tonight and face a few overs."

He added: "It's a proud moment for me -- but having said that, it would have meant a lot more if it was more meaningful for the team."

Prince, often regarded as a blocker, showed intelligent judgment while making his eighth hundred in his 42nd Test.

"People call me 'obdurate' but I just played the ball," he explained. "I try to do that every time. If it's a good ball, respect it, and if it's there to hit, hit it."

Prince, whose Test career began controversially in 2001-02 after he was helped into the national side by a racial quota system, although he top-scored on debut with 49 against the all-conquering Australians, added: "When I was a youngster I used to come out and try to play every shot in the book."

"But I've been left out of the Test side and went into the wilderness for a bit. I used to make a lot of fifties and not make the big scores."

## Lots of rooms available

AFP, Beijing

Rooms are going begging one month out from the Beijing Olympics with hotels reporting lower-than-expected advance bookings and crossing their fingers for a late influx of tourists.

After being warned that an accommodation crunch was likely during the Games, Beijing went on a hotel building binge after winning the right to host the Games in 2001 -- and now the opposite appears to be in prospect.

With few exceptions -- notably some niche hotels in Beijing's old quarter -- hotels are in fierce competition to attract Olympic customers.

So far the luxury sector has come off best with top hotels achieving 75 percent booking rates while four star hotels are less than half full and bookings for three-star hotel rooms are running at 30 percent, according to the Beijing Tourism Bureau.

Only 10 per cent of rooms in the more modest tourist hotels are

booked, it said. The boutique hotels that have recently begun to emerge in what is left of Beijing's old city seem to be acquitting themselves well in the intense pre-Olympic struggle for customers.

They offer traditional courtyard accommodation in old Hutong, the lanes that once connected up the fabric of old Beijing.

Hotel proprietors were expecting to make a killing during the Olympics and room charges have more than quadrupled in the run-up.

Home owners were also hoping to cash in on Olympic fever with some deciding to offer their apartments for rent to visitors at a significant premium.

Three-bedroom apartments that normally rent for around 6,000 yuan (880 dollars) are on offer for 1500 yuan a day during the August 8-24 Games.

"We were told there would be a lack of beds so property owners got rid of tenants and upped the rent for the Games period. Or if they were living in the apartment themselves, they decided to move out so they could rent the space," said Song Zhi, who helps run the accommodation service

lodgingatbeijing.com. Song offers apartments for all budgets including premier locations near the main Olympic venues. "But at least for now, supply exceeds demand," he said.

The head of the Beijing Tourism Administration, Zhang Huiguang, said that Beijing has 336,000 hotel rooms with 660,000 beds. Administration officials say that the Games are expected to attract between 450,000 and 500,000 overseas visitors, in addition to 1.2 to 1.6 million Chinese visitors from outside the capital.

However, expectations concerning the number of overseas tourists could prove optimistic.

Some travellers may already have been put off by early reports of huge tourist numbers expected to flood an already congested city. Others may have been discouraged by diplomatic tension between China and the outside world earlier this year over issues including its handling of the unrest in Tibet.

In addition, reports about heavy handed Olympic security measures and a tougher policy on giving visas to overseas applicants may have further discouraged potential tourists.



A man rides a foldable bike on tiny wheels past the National Stadium in Beijing on Sunday. The state of the art venue called the 'Birds Nest' will host the opening and closing ceremonies as well as the athletics events of the Summer Olympics beginning on August 8.