



## Did U Know?

West Indies batsman Ramnaresh Sarwan scored his thirteenth century on the fifth day of the third Test against England on Thursday.



**Sir Alex Ferguson**  
(Manchester United manager)  
"I was shocked that Chelsea should part so soon with a manager of such great experience and proven success as Phil Scolari."  
On Luiz Felipe Scolari's sacking by the Blues.



**TEN Sports**  
Pakistan v Sri Lanka  
First Test, Day Two  
Live from 11:00am  
**ESPN**  
English Premier League  
Fulham v West Bromwich  
Live from 7:25pm  
Newcastle v Everton  
Live from 9:55pm  
**STAR Sports**  
English Premier League  
Liverpool v Man City  
Live from 8:55pm  
Primera Liga  
Deportivo v Valencia  
Live from 2:00am (Monday)



**WICB checked on Stanford**

**CRICINFO, undated**

Donald Peters, the chief executive of the West Indies Cricket Board (WICB), has said his board did attempt to do background checks on Allen Stanford before entering into a five-year deal with him along with the ECB.

"Both the ECB and the [West Indies] board did due diligence checks," he told the Trinidad & Tobago Express. When asked if the WICB did these checks independently of their British counterparts, Peters responded: "The ECB certainly have more resources than us, so they led the checks."

Both boards have been left with cricket projects in limbo as a result of fraud charges being laid against Stanford, who was sponsoring the Stanford Super Series, the first edition of which was held last year when a Stanford Superstars team won a 20 million dollar winner-takes-all match against England. English counties also received 50,000 pounds each from that game.

Stanford also ran the Stanford 20/20 regional series, from which territorial boards received money for cricket development, and was set to bankroll a quadrangular tournament in England later this year. Stanford was also supposed to contribute to the

## Table-toppers clash today

### Cricket

**SPORTS REPORTER**

Binam and Old DOHS face off with their sights on taking solo lead in the Premier Cricket League when the fifth round starts at three different venues of the city today.

When the two unbeaten sides lock horns at BKSP for the top spot, Mohammedan will desperately try to bounce back from two consecutive defeats when they meet winless City Club at the Sher-e-Bangla National Stadium in Mirpur.

Defending champions Abahani are pitted against Victoria, who upset Mohammedan recently at the Fatullah Cricket Stadium.

Abahani follow the leaders along with Surj Torun with six points as both have so far lost one game while BKSP newcomers Gazi Tank and Cricket Coaching School (CCS) have four points each.

Mohammedan, however, jeopardised their hopes in title race bagging only three points from four games.

The standings show the high level of competition among the teams in the league, especially the way the lowly sides have fought against big names and it has made it difficult to predict about who will win against whom.

Besides the contest among the teams, the focus is also on national players ahead of next month's home series against Pakistan. The national players are expected to play at least eight rounds before starting preparation for the two Twenty20 internationals and five one-day

internationals against the visitors.

Chief selector Rafiqul Islam, however, expressed his satisfaction over the Tigers' performance so far in the league and hoped that they will make it maximum in the next few rounds.

"There is nothing better than playing competitive matches. It's fantastic that the players got the opportunity to play the Premier League matches ahead of the series against Pakistan. On the other hand, they had also trained during the gap of the league matches. So, this time they have got a brilliant opportunity to prepare themselves," said Rafiqul.

"I think the performance of the national players are not bad, especially some top order batsmen got some runs. Shakib (Al Hasan) continued his good form while Tamim (Iqbal) also scored a few runs as he hit two half centuries," he added.

Bangladesh and Gazi Tank captain Mohammad Ashraful has been suffering from the same problem as the right-hander got starts but failed to capitalise on them. But the chief selector was not worried with his skipper's form.

"Ashraful looked confident in the Twenty20 competition and also got starts in league matches. There are still a few matches in hand and I hope all the players will take the opportunity (ahead of the series against Pakistan)," said Rafiqul adding that it would have been better if Rokibul Hasan and Zunaid Siddiqui got some big scores.

Abahani's young opener Rony Talukdar, however, hogged the headlines as the right-hander smashed a hundred and missed his second for one run in four games after his impressive performance in the Twenty20 competition and Rafiqul said: "Lethim play more big innings."

## AFC YOUTH CHAMPIONSHIPS U-19s in tough group

### Football

**SPORTS REPORTER**

Bangladesh have been drawn in a tough qualifying group for the AFC U-19 Championship 2010.

Bangladesh, who will play the Group-E qualifiers in Thailand, will face stronger opponents in 11-time champions South Korea, Vietnam and the hosts apart from lowly Laos and Macau.

The qualification draw for AFC's U-19 and U-16 championships was held at the AFC House in Kuala Lumpur on Friday, throwing up a number of riveting match-ups.

Bangladesh got a better U-16 group, in terms of less number of stronger oppositions, as they face 1994 and 2006 winners Japan and Indonesia beside Mongolia, Chinese Taipei and Philippines.

With the best overall third team to advance to the U-16 finals, Bangladesh have a bright chance to make the championship round.

The AFC.com adds: A total of 42 teams were slotted into seven groups of six teams each in

the U-19 qualifiers. Four groups belong to the West Asia zone and three to the East.

The winners and runners-up of each group will advance to the tournament proper, which will be held next year at an as yet undecided venue. One best third-placed team from the West Zone and one best third-placed team from the East also qualify for the finals.

#### U-19 GROUPINGS

Group A: Tajikistan, Jordan, Yemen, Nepal, Palestine, Kyrgyzstan.

Group B: UAE, Syria, Qatar, Bahrain, Bhutan, Sri Lanka.

Group C: Saudi Arabia, Iraq, Oman, Kuwait, India, Afghanistan.

Group D: Uzbekistan, Iran, Lebanon, Turkmenistan, Maldives, Pakistan.

Group E: Korea Republic, Thailand, Laos, Vietnam, Macau, Bangladesh.

Group F: Australia, Japan, Indonesia, Singapore, Chinese Taipei, Hong Kong.

Group G: China, DPR Korea, Malaysia, Myanmar, Guam, Philippines.

#### U-16 QUALIFIERS

The road to the AFC U-16 Championship 2010

SEE PAGE 18 COL 5

## Sun shines for India

### Cricket

**CRICINFO, Christchurch**

India have brought rains with them, locals in Christchurch claim. But when it came to India's first practice session, the clouds made way for the sun, and India trained in ideal conditions at the picturesque Bert Sutcliffe Oval on Saturday.

Equally warm was the reception that India got - largely from Indians living in New Zealand, at a ground half an hour away from the town and not known by many in the city.

Earlier in the day, though, the thoughts of outdoor activities looked unlikely. It was an ideal winter morning with the rain sounding pitter-patter on the canopy of a street cafe near Cathedral Square, a perfect place to enjoy a hot coffee. The radio announced: "The rockstars of cricket are here." So did a hoarding outside the

AMI Stadium, which was closed on the weekend. The "rockstars" campaign has been devised to advertise India's tour of New Zealand.

Elsewhere New Zealand Herald profiled some of the key Indian players under the headline, "The happy-slog millionaires".

The Indian team took a bus to Lincoln University, which houses the Oval, passing by lush green meadows and the idyllic Prebbleton village.

For someone new to the city, it is difficult to believe a team would go so far out of the city for the nets session. But the England Lions, here to face New Zealand Emerging Players, were already training there when the Indians arrived.

The Indians may be used to drawing attention wherever they go in the world but even they wouldn't have expected the numbers that

SEE PAGE 18 COL 6



A banner outside the AMI Stadium announces India's arrival in Christchurch on Friday. The "rockstars" campaign has been devised to advertise India's tour of New Zealand.



## Jayawardene first from Lanka

**AFP, Karachi**

Sri Lanka captain Mahela Jayawardene passed the 8,000 Test run mark on the opening day of the first Test against Pakistan here on Saturday, becoming the first from his country to do so.

Jayawardene, 31, crossed the milestone in his 101st Test when he hit Pakistani paceman Sohail Khan for a boundary at the National Stadium.

The Sri Lankan finished 136 not out on Day One, with his team closing at 406-3.

Jayawardene is the 20th batsman to score 8,000 or more runs in the 132-year history of Test cricket.

The list is topped by India's Sachin Tendulkar, who has so far scored 12,429 runs in 156 Tests.

Besides Tendulkar, Rahul Dravid (11,509) and Sunil Gavaskar (10,122) are the other Indians who have scored 8,000 or more runs in Tests.

From Australia, Alan Border (11,174), Steve Waugh (10,927), Ricky Ponting (10,750), Matthew Hayden (8,625) and Mark Waugh (8,029) have achieved the feat.

Brian Lara (11,953), Viv Richards (8,540), Shivnarine Chanderpaul (8,279) and Gary Sobers (8,032) are the West Indians who have crossed the milestone, while Graham Gooch (8,900), Alec Stewart (8,463), David Gower (8,231) and Geoff Boycott (8,114) from England have also achieved the mark.

Pakistan's Javed Miandad (8,832) and Inzamamul Haq (8,830), and South Africa's Jacques Kallis (9,988) are also in the elite group of batsmen.

Jayawardene made his Test debut against India in 1997.

PHOTO: AFP

Sri Lanka's batting icon Mahela Jayawardene (R) punches the air as he celebrates his fantastic century while his partner in crime Thilan Samaraweera, who also scored his hundred in an attacking 229-run unbroken fourth wicket stand, looks on during the opening day's play of the first Test against Pakistan at the National Stadium in Karachi yesterday.

## NZ call back Oram, Ryder

**BBC ONLINE, Wellington**

All-rounder Jacob Oram and batsman Jesse Ryder have both been recalled for New Zealand's Twenty20 internationals against India in February.

Oram returns to the Kiwis' 13-man squad as a batsman only after recovering from an Achilles tendon injury while Ryder has shaken off a shoulder complaint.

Pace bowler Ewen Thompson comes in for Kyle Mills, who has an Achilles injury.

The Twenty20 matches take place in Christchurch on 25 February and in Wellington on 27 February.

India will also play five one-day internationals and three Tests during their tour of New Zealand.

Six members of the India squad will be allowed to play in New Zealand's domestic cricket competition before the Test series begins on 18 March in Hamilton.

New Zealand Cricket chief executive Justin Vaughan says the deal has been struck because of the absence of an official warm-up match.

India added an extra Test and Twenty20 international to their tour last month.

## TWENTY20 SQUAD

Daniel Vettori (captain), Neil Broom, Ian Butler, Grant Elliott, Martin Guptill, Brendon McCullum, Nathan McCullum, Iain O'Brien, Jacob Oram, Jesse Ryder, Tim Southee, Ross Taylor, Ewen Thompson.

SEE PAGE 18 COL 6

## Mahela, Thilan put Pakistan to sword

### Cricket

**AFP, Karachi**

Mahela Jayawardene and Thilan Samaraweera hit punishing hundreds to lead Sri Lanka's run charge against Pakistan on the opening day of the first Test here on Saturday as the tourists reached 406-3.

Jayawardene was unbeaten on 136 -- his 25th Test hundred -- while Samaraweera notched 130 not out for his eighth hundred after the tourists won the toss and decided to bat.

The 31-year-old Sri Lankan skipper, whose lack of form in recent one-day matches forced him to step down from the captaincy after the two-Test series against Pakistan, also completed 8,000 career Test runs during the innings.

Samaraweera matched his skipper shot for shot and the pair added 229 for the unfinished fourth-wicket stand, blunting Pakistan's three-pronged pace attack on an unresponsive pitch.

Jayawardene has so far knocked 20 boundaries during his 101st Test series. Samaraweera said Pakistan had an off day.

"It can happen because Pakistan is playing a Test after a long time. We punished every loose ball," he said.

In the first session, opener Warnapura and Sangakkara added 90 runs for the second wicket to help Sri Lanka recover from the early

SEE PAGE 18 COL 2

## Flintoff ruled out

### Cricket

**AFP, London**

England all-rounder Andrew Flintoff was ruled out Saturday of the fourth Test against the West Indies in Barbados with a right hip injury, the England and Wales Cricket Board (ECB) announced.

Flintoff, 31, underwent a scan on his hip on Friday and the results showed a muscle strain.

The ECB added the fast bowler and middle-order batsman would be reassessed over the coming days in the hope that he will be fit for the final Test in Trinidad and the one-day series which follows.

Flintoff bowed through the pain barrier on Thursday's final day of the drawn third Test in Antigua which ended with England narrowly failing to level the series at 1-1 after they were unable to take the final West Indies wicket.

Such is Flintoff's importance to England they have called up two men as potential replacements.

Amjad Khan and Ravi Bopara have both been summoned from the England Lions tour in New Zealand, to Barbados over the next few days, as cover for Flintoff.

Khan, 23, has yet to earn his maiden Test cap and was last involved in the England squad in India before Christmas, as cover for the injured Ryan Sidebottom.

Bopara, aged 23, last played for England in the One-day International series against India. The Essex batsman's last Test was



ANDREW FLINTOFF