

AN EFFORT TO LET THE GRASS GROW AGAIN: Workers pile up the rough surface of the famous Paltan Maidan once revered as the free home of budding talents but eventually turned into a lifeless meadow often occupied by addicts and thugs. Recently the custodian of the place the National Sports Council has decided to bring its brilliant self back.

# Feisty Rovers

FROM PAGE 20

with Webb's refusal to award a penalty for Rafael's challenge on Pedersen. "Sir Alex doesn't think it is a

penalty, but I think it is. It has to be pretty blatant to get a penalty here at Old Trafford. We all know that. For me, it is a big disappointment because the lads put up a really good fight." Arsenal's goalless draw at

home to Sunderland left them six points off the top four and struggling to qualify for the Champions League.

This was their the Gunners' third straight goalless league draw and manager Arsene Wenger did not hide his frustration at Sunderland's approach.

"Like everybody who comes here they put one striker up front and that's it," the Frenchman said. "If everybody plays like that it will be very boring in the Premier League.'

James Beattie was Stoke City's hero as they moved two points clear of the relegation zone with a 2-2 draw at home to fellow strugglers Portsmouth.

Beattie scored twice as Stoke came from behind in a match where all four goals arrived in the final 15 minutes.

Niko Kranjcar finished off a well-worked move to put Pompey in front but three minutes later Stoke were level when a penalty, controversially awarded for a handball by Glen Johnson, was converted by Beattie. Then, in the 80th minute the striker headed in from close range.

Pompey salvaged a draw that left them five points clear Ryan Shawcross put through

his own net in the 90th minute Bolton scored twice in two minutes as they beat West Ham 2-1.

Long-range specialist Matt Taylor curled in a free-kick from 22 yards before Kevin Davies made it 2-0. West Ham pulled a goal back through Scott Parker in the 66th minute.

Middlesbrough remained in the bottom three after a goalless home draw with Wigan Athletic.

# U-13 football

FROM PAGE 17

best players of this tournament will represent the national team in the AFC Football Festival in Tehran in May," told Nabil.

Each team will receive Tk 20,000 as appearance money, he informed adding that Tk 17.5 lakh will be spent for the qualifying stage. The total budget is Tk 22.5 lakh.

Tournament committee's member-secretary Mohammed Mohsin, development committee member Satyajit Das Rupu, BFF's technical director Shahidur Rahman Shantoo were present among others.

### Pakistan

FROM PAGE 17

"In Pakistan captaincy is a very difficult job. The captain not only has to look after the team but also do other things like keeping the board chairman happy and maintaining a good relation with the media,

Akram said. "In Asia, the media is very strong and assertive and the captain must learn to deal with them properly. Similarly, he must have good relations with the board chairman. If the chairman is changed the captain has to develop good contacts with the new person," he added.

The pace legend also hit out at critics who questioned his habit of helping Indian

bowlers. "Why shouldn't I help any fellow cricketer who comes to me for advice. I also want to do a lot for Pakistani players but I can't go to anyone and tell them give me a job that is not my stature. Whenever I have been asked to coach young players I have done it, "he said. 18, Mehrab 41, Riyad 24, Ejaz 98 runs.

SPORTS REPORTER

Nabajatak Majlish earned a 3-1 victory over Jubo Sangha (23-15, 25-18, 25-19, 25-19 points) in the National Bank Volleyball League at the Dhaka Volleyball Stadium yesterday.

In today's matches, Bangladesh Jails meet Sicily Club at 3pm, Nagar Samaj Kalyan take on Hazrat Ali Smriti Sangha, also at 3pm, and Nabodaya Sangha face Bangladesh Bank at 4.30pm.

### DIVIIIFOOTBALL

City United Club beat BKSP 2-1 in the Citycell Metropolis 3rd Division Football League at the Birshreshtha Shaheed Sepoy Mohammad Mostafa Stadium at Kamalapur.

Shahabuddin and Mojibar Rahman scored one goal each for the winners while Ali Akbar netted the lone goal for BKSP in the 2nd-half.

The day's other match between Rampura KC and Kasaituly Samaj Kalyan Parishad ended in a 1-1 draw at the same venue in the after-

Asaduzzaman Noor put Rampura KC ahead in the 62nd minute while Saimon Hossain restored the parity for the Kasaituly team in the 74th minute.

### GIRLS' HANDBALL

The KFC-Pizza Hut 5th Mini Girls Handball Tournament, today at the Outer Stadium National Hockey Stadium. handball ground.

part in the meet.

Metropolis 2nd Division nament sponsors Transcom Foods Limited Akku Chowdhury will inaugurate tute team in the 2nd-half. the meet in the morning.

### WOMEN'S FOOTBALL

A double hattrick by Tithi Rani Sarkar powered Bangladesh Village Defence Party (VDP) to a massive 9-0 victory over Rangamati in the CityCell National Women's Football Championship at the Bangabandhu National Stadium.

Tithi, who scored six goals in the 21st, 28th, 52nd, 54th, 64th and 68th minutes to complete the double treble, was rightly adjudged playerof-the-match.

Shahnaz Khatun scored two goals in the 57th and 63rd minutes while Salma Khatun netted the other for VDP in the 47the minute.

In the day's other match, Jessore beat Khulna 1-0 at the same venue in the afternoon.

Rehana Khatun scored the winner in the 69th minute, but Mirona of Khulna was named

#### the player-of-the-match. SHAHEED SMRITY

HOCKEY an all win record in the Need For Speed Shaheed Smriti

Hamidul Islam, skipper Eighteen teams, split into Sirajul Islam and substitute four groups, will initially take Mostafa Sharif scored one goal each for the winners, all in the Executive director of tour- first-half, while Abdullah Al Mansoor netted the lone goal for the national sports insti-

> With their third consecutive victory, Bangladesh Army top the league table securing full nine points.

Earlier, they defeated Bangladesh Air force 4-0 and Dilkusha SC 4-2.

# Isinbayava

FROM PAGE 20 competing at the European

championships in Turin next month. "Coming here I've given up

two weeks of training and everything is focused on the outdoors but it's been good to come here. Birmingham is always one of the best grand prix and it's good to give something back to the fans."

Mo Farah slashed more than six seconds off his own British record in the 3,000m, winning in atime of 7min 34.47sec.

That was 6.52secs quicker than he ran in Glasgow at the end of January and the Somaliaborn 25-year-old admitted it was now time for him to deliver when it matters most, starting Bangladesh Army maintained with next month's European championships.

"I knew I was in great shape Hockey Tournament beating and wanted to go under 7:40, of the drop zone when Stoke's organised by Bangladesh BKSP 3-1 in the day's lone Farah said. "It was a good race Handball Federation, begins match at the Maulana Bhasani and I'm really pleased.



Action from yesterday's Citycell Women's National Football Championship match between Ansar & VDP and Rangamati at the Bangabandhu National Stadium.

# Big guns all win

FROM PAGE 17

But there was a pleasant surprise for them as Rokibul joined Shamsur to change the whole scenario to dash the lowly City's early initiatives. Shamsur smashed ten fours and three sixes during his 123ball 127 while Rokibul returned amongst big scores in the right time ahead of the coming home series against Pakistan with a 125-ball 102 that sawnine boundaries.

And then it was the turn of Marshal Ayub to put their opponents bowlers to the sword as the young righthander smote nine fours and two sixes during his unbeaten 69 off 32 balls.

In reply, Rasel Al Mamun (67) and Sirajullah Khadem (50 not out) hit half centuries but City were still restricted to 219 for 7.

Dollar Mahmud, Sohrawordi Shuvo and Murad Khan captured two wickets

BRIEFSCORES

DOHS: 192 all out in 49.3 overs (Anhoor 14, Rabbi 35, Wasim Result: Mohammedan won by

28, Emon 10 not out, extras 8 Shahadat 2-39, Shakib 4-20, Nabil 2-35).

BIMAN: 195-6 in 46.2 overs (Javed 75, Zahurul 35, Shakib 32, Sanwar 20, extras 14; Abul 2-36, Monir 2-25, Mehrab 2-48). Result: Biman won by four wickets.

ABAHANI: 280-7 in 50 overs (Rony 39, Imran 109, Venugopal 20, Sahagir 20, Nasir 66, extras 23; Taposh 3-48, Tarigul 2-45). VICTORIA: 227-7 in 50 overs

(Amit 55, Arman 56, Sharifullah 29, Salahuddin 52, extras 10; Mashrafe 1-26, Nazmul 2-52, Venugopal 2-30). Result: Abahani won by 53

MOHAMMEDAN: 317-5 in 50 overs (Shamsur 127, Rokibul 102, Marshal 69 not out, extras 14; Shafaq 3-55).

CITY: 219-7 in 50 overs (Mamun 67, Lalmon 13, Abbas 15, Hamidul 11, Raisul 15, Khadem 50 not out, Mahfuz 11, extras 23; Dollar 2-31, Shuvo 2-55, Murad 2-23).

### I will stay FROM PAGE 20

The stalemate has turned out well for Barry however as muchimproved Villa are in contention for a top-four finish.

Despite Saturday's home defeat to Chelsea, Villa are still well placed to knock Arsenal out of the top four and Barry insists he will be content to stay with O'Neill's side if their current form continues.

"There's nowhere else would want to be playing at the highest level," Barry told the The News of the World.

"It's easy for me to want Aston Villa to play Champions League football. It is also easy for me to give 100 per cent when I am playing for Villa and to want them to finish as high as possible "It has been great to be

loyal to one club for all these years and have that good rapport with the fans. "To play at the very top

level is even better. The games are coming thick and fast now but I am looking forward to each one of them.

"I feel fresh because the manager has rotated the squad well.

# Kottan now Pakistan

coach SPORTS REPORTER

Austrian coach George Kottan, who guided Bangladesh to win the 2003 SAFF Championship in Dhaka, has been named as the new head coach of Pakistan national team on Saturday.

Bangladesh coach, who also coached local side Muktijoddha, has been asked to prepare the team for the AFC Challenge Cup qualifiers this year and 11th South Asian Games to be held in Bangladesh next year, reports the-AFC.com.

Pakistan Football Federation (PFF) president Makhdoom Syed Faisal Saleh Hayat told the AFC website: "We have asked Kottan to build the team looking at future international events and bring Pakistan at par with other South Asian countries."

Kottan, who succeeded Shahzad Anwar, said his main mission will be to take the team to the AFC Challenge Cup finals and get silverware in the SAF Games.

There is no dearth of talent in this country but a lot of improvement is needed to build a winning side," said the Hungary-born after the team's first training session.

"I will first concentrate on improving players' fitness level and technical skills. The new team will be a blend of youth and experience for the AFC Challenge Cup qualifiers."

Pakistan have been pooled in Group D with Sri Lanka, Chinese Taipei and Brunei Darussalam with winners and the best second-placed team from among all the four groups advancing to the eightteam finals.

## Records roll

FROM PAGE 17

behind the stumps. The Sri Lankan skipper hit 32 boundaries during his 531minute stay at the crease. Samaraweera was bowled by leg-spinner Danish Kaneria after hitting 31 boundaries during his 457-minute innings, while Kaneria finished with 3-170.

Jayawardene also shares the record for the highest ever partnership of 624 in Test cricket -- made for the third wicket with Kumar Sangakkara against South Africa in Colombo three years ago.

Pakistan are playing their first Test match in 14 months after security problems prompted teams to cancel tours of the country.

injury to strike bowler Shoaib Akhtar, as well as international bans against 17 first-class players for taking part in the rebel Indian Cricket League.

SCOREBOARD Scoreboard at close on the second day of the opening Test between Pakistan and Sri

Lanka at the National Stadium in Karachi on Sunday: SRI LANKA: First innings (overnight 406-3) Warnapura c Misbahul b Arafat 59 Paranavitana c Misbahul b Gul Sangakkara c Misbahul b Kaneria 70 M Jayawardene c Akmal b Malik 240 Samaraweera b Kaneria Dilshan c Akmal b Malik P Jayawardene b Kaneria Vaas not out

Extras: (lb-4, nb-9, w-1) Total: (For seven wkts declin 155.2 overs) Did not bat: Fernando, Mendis, Muralidaran. Fall of wickets: 1-3, 2-93, 3

177, 4-614, 5-614, 6-614, 7-644. Bowler OMRW Gul 92 Sohail 3 131 Arafat 90 3 140 Kaneria 5 170 Younis

11 Butt PAKISTAN: First innings Manzoornotout Butt c Jayawardene b Muralidaran 23 Younis not out

Extras: (nb-3) Total: (For one wkt in 22 overs) To bat: Faisal Iqbal, Shoaib Malik, Misbahul Haq, Kamran Akmal, Sohail Khan, Yasir Arafat, Umar Gul, Danish

Kaneria. Fall of wickets: 1-44. RW Bowler 11 0 22 0 Fernando 10 0 Mendis Muralidaran 3

### FA, fans reject FROM PAGE 17

centage of people who can escape back into the warm and do various things in that time and I am sure it has got some merits somewhere but I think we support the Football Supporters' Federation here. "We don't think it has got

Extending the break by five minutes would not go down well with fans, Malcolm Clarke, chair of the Football Supporters federation, said.

# NZC's India windfall

Cricket

CRICINFO, undated

India's tour will deliver New Zealand Cricket (NZC) the biggest payday in its history -- probably in excess of 25 million dollars -- thanks to a multimillion-dollar deal for television rights. The board will pocket a staggering 1 million The 62-year-old former dollars for each of the 22 days that India will be in action, making the deal the biggest one-off broadcasting windfall in New Zealand sport.

insurance against being unable to deliver matches to Indian broadcaster Sony. "We normally have insurance for gate receipts if a match is rained out, but for a tour of the magnitude of India we're insuring everything, including TV rights," NZC boss Justin Vaughan told the Sunday Star Times.

the expenses of visiting teams, but in turn gets sole access to all broadcast rights and gate receipts. Over the past two years, NZC's income has been around 30 million dollars, but this year Vaughan hoped to bring in "north of 40 million dollars" from broadcast rights, sponsorship and ticket sales.

cent of NZC's income and after the previous it on the field as well. Because an Indian tour is so tour by West Indies and the upcoming series important for our finances, we'd like an Indian against India, broadcast revenue is expected to tour to come in the next four-year cycle."

be in excess of 30 million dollars. Vaughan did not give away the exact figures, but said a tour by India generated "many times" more income than tours by Australia, South Africa and England, who are on the next tier. He said the Indian tour was worth more to NZC than the payout from the 2007 World Cup, which was around 20 million dollars.

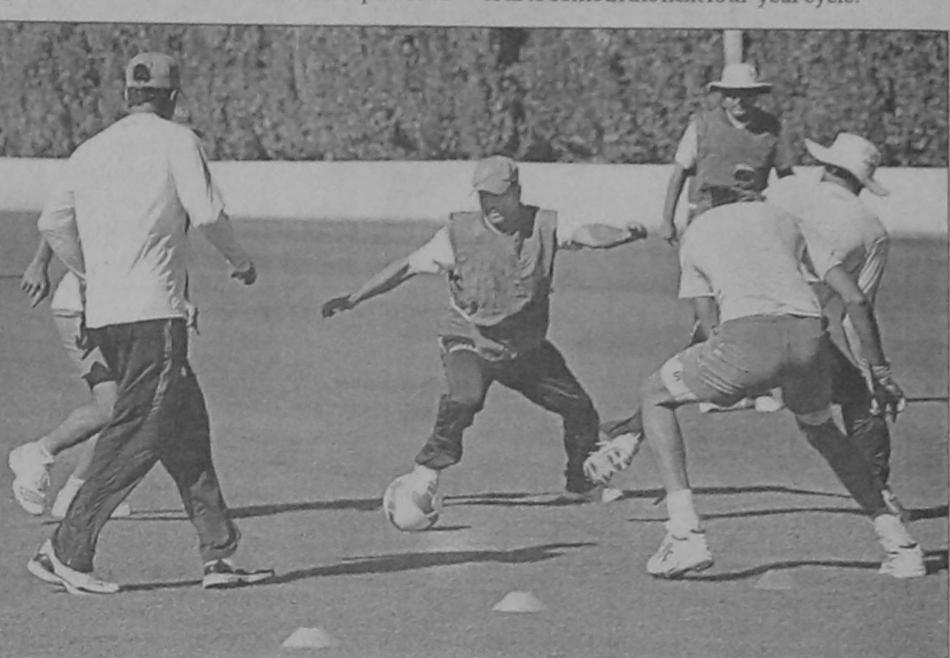
"I doubt we've had a bigger year than the one that's in front of us, "Vaughan said.

He also said it was vital for New Zealand to perform well on the field, as he was looking to negotiate the rights for the next cycle in the The New Zealand board has also taken out Future Tours Programme (FTP) and was keen on another Indian tour as soon as possible.

"This series is as important as any I can remember," he said. "The tour is important on so many levels, obviously financially, but we cannot emphasise enough how important it is for us to do well against them on the field.

"This Indian team rates itself extremely During a tour, it is the host nation that bears highly and if we are competitive against them then the levels of respect New Zealand gets in terms of international credibility will increase and that's really important as we look at the planning of the FTP beyond 2012.

"To have some influence over that [FTP] people have to understand that we're a serious player. We can't always rely on good relationships with Broadcast rights account for up to 75 per England and Australia we have to be able to prove



Indian cricket great Sachin Tendulkar (C) tries out his football skills with his teammates during a practice session at Lincoln Oval in Christchurch yesterday.

# Ponting, Katich dominate

Cricket

AFP, Potchefstroom

Simon Katich and skipper Ricky bowling attack as the touring Australians flourished in the second day of a three-day

match at Senwes Park Saturday. Katich hit 124 before retiring while Ponting made 93 in a second-wicket stand of 185 scored in just 35.1 overs.

The tourists finished the

day on 360 for four in reply to the President's XI total of 403 for seven declared. The Australian pair scored

easily and there were no real problems for the batsmen,

24 before he was first man out. Hughes looked impressive in making his runs off 34 balls before he was caught behind off

ACROSS

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freely as they made up for their team's lacklustre bowling performance on the first day. The pitch continued to play

although new opening batsman Phil Hughes made only

a bouncer from Ethy Mbhalati. But Katich and Ponting then put a weak bowling war when we played because attack to the sword. Among we both wanted to win but those who suffered was afterwardsitwasgood."

legspinner Imran Tahir, who was hit for 92 runs in 18 overs,

although he picked up the

Andrew McDonald. Tahir, who was born in African Board President's XI South Africa in April and has been touted as a potential international player.

McDonald made 23 before he was leg before to Tahir. Marcus North, McDonald's rival for the number six batting spot in the first Test starting in Johannesburg Thursday,

made an unbeaten 52. The President's XI added only 10 runs to their overnight total of 393 for five before declaring, with wicketkeeper Heino Kuhn falling one run short of a century when he was caught behind off Ben Hilfenhaus.

# Trust me

FROM PAGE 20

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Solution time: 24 mins.

58 Cut

DOWN

"The thing I like is that after the game, no matter what the result, we always had time to share a few minutes with each other and have a joke. I don't like relationships that change when you win or lose. "There was always a real

AFP, Kingston

Olympic sprint sensation Usain Bolt continued his early season preparation with another comfortable 400m wickets of Ponting and victory at Jamaica's National Stadium on Saturday.

400m mark

Running out of lane five in They have also been hit by an Ponting flayed the South Pakistan, qualifies to play for the timed-final 400m at The University of West Indies Invitational, Bolt won in 45.54sec, an improvement on the 46.35sec he ran last week-

Bolt's coach Glen Mills

said the improvement was

expected, and showed Bolt

was on course in his training in the World Championship season. "It's part of his training, so we expect him to improve

every week," Mills said. Bolt said a week earlier that he was behind in his season preparations compared to last year, in part because of travel and distractions as a result of his

Olympic heroics in August. But Mills said Saturday that he was comfortable with Bolt's form heading into major competition, the first of which will be the Jamaica International Invitational, an IAAF Area Permit meet, on May 2, also at the National Stadium.

# By Eugene Sheffer purchase

CRYPTOQUIP

ESXAAOE ZOSH XGKVJ JUI UXMWEPXZJOMN KZ X ZOMI OMWOXM AJPOMNIW OMAJPVHIMJ:

X AOJXP OA GKPM.

BAND TOGETHER WHILE WORKING ON A TASK. COULD YOU SAY THEY ARE CON-JOINED?

Saturday's Cryptoquip: WHEN TWO JAILBIRDS

Today's Cryptoquip Clue: Z equals F