### Bata clothing sponsors for cricket teams

SPORTS REPORTER

BATA Shoe Company (Bangladesh) Ltd became the official clothing sponsors for different national cricket teams.

The sponsors have won the rights for the Bangladesh men's and women's national teams, A Team, Under-19 team and the National Cricket Academy Team.

Under the agreement, which runs from January 2009 to December 2011, the BCB will receive US dollars 2,25,000 from BATA in clothing cost and sponsorship royalty.

An agreement in this regard was signed yesterday at the Sher-e-Bangla National Cricket Stadium in Mirpur.

BCB acting CEO Nizam Uddin Chowdhury and Douglas Hearns, managing director of BATA Shoe Company (BD) Ltd, signed on behalf of their respective organisations.

BCB director and chairman media and communications committee Mohammed Jalal Yunus, BCB marketing and commercial committee member Zulfigar Ahmed, MA Quader, consultant business development of BATA were also present at the agreement signing.

### Mostafa leads in qualifying chess

SPORTS REPORTER

Golam Mostafa Bhuiyan was leading the preliminary phase of the Mercantile Bank 35th National Chess Championship with 7.5 points after end of the 9th round yesterday.

Mostafa beat FM Syed Mahfuzur Rahman Emon at the Bangladesh Chess Federation hall-room to extend his lead by half a point over seven players, who shared second place with seven points each.

In the 9th round matches, Shakil drew with Jamal, Taibur drew with Debaraj, Parag drew with Nasir, Palash beat Shafiq Ahmed, Amin beat Delwar Hossain, Younus beat Shibu Prashad Dey, Javed beat Sarwar Hossain Ullash, Jewel beat FM Rezaul Haque and Monir beat Amir Hossain.

## India to go

FROM PAGE 17

made until Friday morning. Dhoni batted in the nets

on the Test eve but it remains an unknown whether he would be able to keep wickets for long periods. Otherwise India have no problems with injuries. New Zealand's only ques-

tion mark is over batsman Daniel Flynn, who missed the second Test after injuring his hand in the first.

He batted in the nets Thursday and a final decision will be made on Friday morn-

Their selection quandary is whether Jeetan Patel will stay in the side to partner Vettori as a second spinner, or be replaced by another pace bowler.

If New Zealand win the toss and decide on the strategy of taking advantage of any early favourable bowling conditions, Patel would likely miss out.

The 20-year-old pace bowler Tim Southee has returned to the squad after struggling in the one-day series against India, and he will be vying for the final place with Patel and pace bowler Kyle Mills.

The often windy conditions in Wellington may give the bowlers some assistance, and the cool autumn conditions in the New Zealand capital may favour the home team, who have won their last four Tests against India at the Basin Reserve.

### Bolivia

FROM PAGE 17

The La Nacion newspaper had the headline: "Argentina's worst defeat," adding the last time Argentina lost by a fivegoal margin was a 5-0 loss to Colombia in 1993.

"A historic humiliation," said sports newspaper Ole on its website, adding: "This is our worst defeat in the qualifiers. What now?"

"Argentina suffered a historic beating," said newspaper Clarin. "Bolivia were way superior and won 6-1 in La Paz."



BCB acting CEO Nizam Uddin Chowdhury (2nd from R) and MD of BATA Shoe Company (BD) Ltd. Douglas Hearns (C) exchanging files after signing on behalf of their respective organisations at the agreement signing ceremony for Official Clothing Sponsorship of National Teams at the BCB headquarters in Mirpur yesterday.

# Vaughan to open for MCC

Cricket

AFP, London

Former England captain Michael Vaughan has been included in the Marylebone Cricket Club (MCC) side to play county champions Durham in the traditional curtain-raiser to the English cricket season at Lord's, starting on April 9.

Yorkshire batsman Vaughan, who has scored six centuries for England at Lord's, is one of six players in the MCC team with Test experience.

Since resigning the England captaincy following last year's Test series loss at home to South Africa, Vaughan has been in the international wilderness.

But the four-day match against Durham give Vaughan, who led England to Ashes glory in 2005, an early chance to impress the selectors ahead of the national side's attempts to reverse the series loss with the West Indies and regain the Ashes from Australia later in the season.

Ian Bell, who has been vying with Owais Shah for the number three spot in England's batting order in Vaughan's absence, will play, and he will be captained by Robert Key, who has just returned from leading the England Lions, the Aside, in New Zealand.

England's national selector Geoff Miller, speaking after the team was announced here on Wednesday, said: "All the players in the MCC team will be hungry to prove a point to the selectors, so we are confident we will see four days of tough, hard-fought cricket.

involved with the national set-up this summer because the world's eyes will be on England for both the npower Ashes Series and the ICC

Essex and England wicketkeeper James Foster will be behind the stumps and the MCC side also features promising Yorkshire leg-

between them and MCC assistant secretary John Stephenson, himself an ex-England batsman, said: "This year's Champion County fixture has all the ingredients to be a classic.

will also be full of internationals."

England duo Stephen Harmison and Paul Collingwood are both Durham players. But it is not yet known whether fast bowler Harmison and/or all-rounder Collingwood will be playing in the MCC match.

Although it is 40 years since MCC, which owns Lord's Cricket Ground, ran English cricket, the club retains worldwide overall responsibility for the sport's laws.



PHOTO: COURTESY

Players, who will participate in the Asian Beach Volleyball Tournament in Thailand, pose for photographs with Golam Quddus Chowdhury (4th from R), CEO of sponsors Transcom Beverages Ltd, country manager of PepsiCo Tejinder Khuran (4th from L) and Khurshid Irfan Chowdhury (3rd from L), Transcom Beverages after a press conference in the city yesterday.

## Mashrafe off to IPL

FROM PAGE 17

players want to win and are hungry for success. We have experienced guys like dada, Agarkar, Karthik, Hodge while we have youth in Sharma and Angelo Mathews and we also have (Ajantha) Mendis who is a potent weapon. So its a good side and we will definitely start the tournament with the title in mind," added Mashrafe. The Knight Riders, who

were involved in controversy for the past week with their coach John Buchanan's multicaptain theory, have reverted back to keeping Ganguly as the sole captain.

Mashrafe believes that there are enough wise men in the team to keep things under control.

really renowned players playing for the KKR and dada himself has been such a great captain so when we get on the field that is when we will understand whether it will pay rich dividends or affect us adversely.

"Currently, not being on the field with the team is a little difficult for me to say how it all is going to work out in the field. But Buchanan is a great coach, we all know he has been hugely successful with the Australian team so I'm sure he will be going all out to help all of us and make us win," added Mashrafe.

Meanwhile, Tigers captain Mohammad Ashraful, who will play for the Mumbai Indians in the IPL, will leave the capital for Mumbai on April 5 to join his squad.

"Actually he is a very renowned coach and there are

## Boycott threat hovers

FROM PAGE 17 cleared for action, following separate medical scans.

Pietersen left the field on Sunday, when he suffered a back spasm while bowling, and Flintoff injured his left thumb attempting a sharp return catch.

England are likely to stick the combination that brought them victory in the fourth ODI and this means Flintoff and Pietersen will be central figures in their plans.

Indies have to decide whether to play with the spin option of Sulieman Benn, or boost their firepower with the addition of Ravi Rampaul.

TEAMS

WEST INDIES (from): Chris Gayle (captain), Lionel Baker, Sulieman Benn, Dwayne Bravo, Shivnarine Chanderpaul, Fidel Edwards, Kieron Pollard, Denesh Ramdin, Ravi Rampaul Dale Richards, Darren Sammy, Ramnaresh Sarwan, Lendl

ENGLAND (from): Andrew Strauss (captain), James Anderson, Gareth Batty, Ian Bell, Ravi Bopara, Stuart If they do turn up, West Broad, Paul Collingwood, Steve Davies, Andrew Flintoff, Steve Harmison, Dimitri Mascarenhas, Kevin Pietersen, Matt Prior, Adil Rashid, Owais Shah.

"Every English cricketer wants to be World Twenty20," the former England offspinner added.

spinner Adil Rashid.

MCC's team shares 159 England Test caps

"MCC is delighted to have so many top players turning out against a Durham side that

**SQUAD** 

Robert Key (captain), Stephen Moore, Michael Vaughan, Ian Bell, Tom Westley, James Foster (wicketkeeper), Adil Rashid, Kabir Ali, Chris Woakes, Steven Finn, Sajid Mahmood.

### Kirsten denies England link

CRICINFO, undated

Gary Kirsten has denied he is on the "very short shortlist" of candidates for the England coach's job. Kirsten has been linked to the role in the British papers but he told Cricinfo he has not been contacted by the England and Wales Cricket Board (ECB).

"I am not a candidate," he said in Wellington where he is preparing the side for the third Test. Kirsten's two-year contract with India began in March 2008 and Ratnakar Shetty, the chief administrative officer of the Board of Control for Cricket in India (BCCI), said, "His contract is till March 2010".

N Srinivasan, the BCCI secretary, refused to comment on the reports and dismissed them as "speculation by the UK media",

Andy Flower, who is currently the stand-in coach after the sacking of Peter Moores in January, remained the favourite to be appointed as England's new director of cricket, the Guardian and the Telegraph reported.

The reports claimed that a four-man ECB panel would interview the candidates on

## Nat'l athletics

**FROM PAGE 17** SAG contenders, the 52 athletes who are now at BKSP, will participate.

"It would be difficult for us to prepare a good team in the short distance runs for the SAG after losing Mithu, Abdullah and Shamsuddin,' told Shah Alam.

"But we will try our best to form a good team before the Games," he added.

Deputy managing director of UCB Shafiqul Alam was also present at the briefing.

## Nat'l handball

FROM PAGE 17 Bulbul also said that the BHF is looking forward to organise the Bangabandhu International Handball

Tournament next winter. "The Prime Minister (Sheikh Hasina) has appreciated the idea and we want to invite more than 24 teams from Asia and Europe," said the BHF president.

SPORTS REPORTER

Fahim Sinha emerged champion in the snookers singles title of the Independence Day competition of Dhaka Club on Wednesday.

He defeated SH Majumdar in the final while Mozammel Haque Babu won the billiard title defeating A Bari Chowdhury in the final.

Shahzada Hamid Saad lifted the tennis singles title

after winning over Zain Omar. Dhaka Club president Sadat Hossain Salim gave away prizes among the win-

### ners. DIVICRICKET

Masum's five-wicket haul propelled Khelaghar to an easy five-wicket win over Bangladesh Boys in the First Division Super League at the Dhaka University Ground yesterday.

The left-arm spinner took five for 49 from 10 overs as Bangladesh Boys were bowled out for 161 in 47.5 overs. Khelaghar overtook Boys score in 44.1 overs with wicketkeeper Firoz topscoring with an unbeaten 39 and Masum making 37.

In the other Super League match, Azad Sporting Club beat Eskaton Sabuj Sangha by three wickets in a high-scoring

Batting first, Eskaton made 271 from 50 overs with runs from Ahsanul (79), Saddam (69) and Rohan (44).

In reply, Mizan and Habibur blasted 80 and 91 respectively as the Motijheel based side made the score in 48.4 overs.

### BEACHVOLLEYBALL

Two teams from Bangladesh will participate in the Asian Beach Volleyball tournament to be held in Thailand from April 4.

Both sides have left Dhaka for Surat Thani, Thailand on Wednesday to participate in three tournaments, organised by Thailand Volleyball Association.

Transcom Beverages Limited will sponsor the teams' participation in the tournament, bearing cost of airfare, training and uniform.

## Because of Wright'

PTI, Wellington

Jesse Ryder, New Zealand's number one Test batsman in ICC charts, has attributed his red-hot form to inputs from John Wright, the former opening batsman and coach of

"Andy Moles has been a great support for me, just lets me play my game. John Wright is another one that's been helping with my batting, he's always in my ear, 'Play straight, play straight' every ball and that's what I've been trying to focus on while I've been batting. It's been work-

ing for me," said Ryder. Ryder's magnificent 201 in Napier, on the back of his equally controlled century in Hamilton, has catapulted his world ranking to 30 after just eight Tests.

If Ryder hits another century at the Basin Reserve in the third Test against India starting tomorrow, he will become the first Kiwi to reach the milestone in three successive

"It's been good to be able to sit back and just play a couple of Test innings and not get carried away with trying to score runs too quickly," Ryder

"I hadn't thought about that [record] till now but hopefully, all going well, it's something that'll be able to happen for me," he was quoted as saying by 'Dominion Post'.

Averaging 64 in Test cricket, Ryder yesterday inked a longterm sponsorship deal with Gray Nicolls to add to his lucrative IPL contract.

# Afghans off

killers Afghanistan nudged closer to a first Cricket World Cup appearance.

Forced by a finger injury to abandon wicketkeeping at Vaal University south of Johannesburg, Sadiq turned to bowling instead snatched four Banish wickets for the loss of 27 runs in a five-wicket 2011 World Cup qualifier triumph.

Sadiq proved useful with their 50 overs.

# LOCAL SNIPPETS | Federer ousts Roddick

Tennis

AFP, Miami

World number two Roger Federer overcame American Andy Roddick in three sets Wednesday to set up a semifinal clash with Novak Djokovic at the ATP Masters 1000 hardcourt tournament here.

The second-seeded Swiss, still in search of his first title of 2009, defeated Roddick 6-3, 4-6, 6-4, avenging a quarterfinal loss to the

American here last year. In the semifinals 13-time Grand Slam champion Federer will face third-seeded Serbian Djokovic, who beat 10th-seeded Frenchman

Jo-Wilfried Tsonga 6-3, 6-4. Federer, who won back-to-back titles here in 2005 and 2006, closed out the match with a service break, earning a match point with a backhand winner that clipped the net cord and

found the corner. Another backhand found Roddick helpless at the net.

Federer said he enjoyed playing the hometown favourite, but he wouldn't have minded putting it away sooner.

control in the second set," Federer said. "Kind of lost that and was under quite a bit of pressure in the third set. So I'm happy I got through it.

passing shot. Bu, I hit it well and came up with a great shot and match point. So I was really happy. It was a good win for me tonight."

Roddick thrilled the crowd of 14,000 by taking the second set, but he was disappointed that he couldn't hold off Federer in the third.

"Got maybe a touch lucky at that deuce

"It's easier if I would have just played terrible the whole time," said Roddick, who failed to convert two game points in the final game.

"I at least gave it a go there in the third, and didn't really catch a break there," he said.

Djokovic, who had lost his last four encounters with Tsonga, reversed that trend despite receiving treatment for apparent heat-related

symptoms in the second set. Djokovic broke Tsonga to take a 4-2 lead in the second, saved two break points in the eighth game and was under pressure again as he served for the match at 5-4 but closed out the

victory in just under two hours. Djokovic, who said he had been battling a stomach ailment on Tuesday, said that the after-effects, the heat and the pressure of the match combined to affect him.

But he still displayed precise, powerful groundstrokes that had Tsonga on the defensive from the start.

"I have to be very happy with today's performance, because I have been struggling to find a way to win against him in the last four encounters," he said. "I just knew that I needed to stick in and try to wait for my chances and be aggres-

"Today I think I tried to be closer to the line, "I thought that I should have had it under more in control, and just put the pressure on

him. So I think that's what I did. The other men's quarterfinals on Thursday pit world number one Rafael Nadal against sixth-seeded Argentinian Juan Martin del Potro and fourth-seed Briton Andy Murray against Spain's eighth seed Fernando Verdasco.

Nadal, the Australian Open champion, is gunning for his second straight prestigious Masters 1000 title in as many starts after his triumph in Indian Wells, California.

Mickey Arthur was confident the squad would

the series, and there's a nice air around the

squad," Arthur said. "The guys are very fresh

and looking forward to it. We're getting a nice

balance now. I'm very happy with the mix we

"We've prioritised what we want to get out of

## Johnson targets Smith

have now.

be able to hit top gear.

Cricket

CRICINFO, undated

Graeme Smith must have nightmares about facing Mitchell Johnson after the fast bowler broke both of Smith's hands in separate incidents over the past three months. Friday's first ODI in Durban will provide Johnson with another chance to bowl to Smith, who has been

passed fit for the five-match series. It will be Smith's first game since a rising delivery from Johnson struck him on the right hand in the Test at the same venue. Johnson said he was keen to get stuck into the South African captain once more on a bouncy Kingsmead pitch.

"I'm look forward to the challenge again," Johnson told SAPA. "It's always good to get the opportunity to bowl with the new ball against an opening batsman like Smith. He's such a great player. He's a strong leader and his team look up to him. They will enjoy having him back in the squad and I'm looking forward to trying to get his wicket."

Smith will take over the reins from Johan

Botha, who led South Africa to a 2-0 victory in

the Twenty20 internationals. It could be a chal-

lenge lifting his side for the final leg of what has

essentially been a four-month campaign

against Australia but South Africa's coach

"Within our squad, we have two recognised spinners, and we have JP Duminy, who can bowl for us as well, so we're starting to get quite a nice mix in terms of variation in our attack. And the return of Makhaya [Ntini] and Morne [Morkel] in our attack is really good because

they give us variation of a different kind." The return to the 50-over format, in which South Africa triumphed 4-1 in Australia, will be a change after the Twenty20 games. Arthur said it was pleasing to have had such success in the shortest format but it would be dangerous to assume the momentum would carry through to

the ODIs. "It's always good to be in a dressing room that's winning -- it's a good place to be -- but we're not looking too much to that," he said. "Friday is where we want to put our marker in the sand, and that's why we've been building up hard this week. Friday, for us, is huge. We want to go one-nil up, and hopefully take momentum from that. So, yes, nice to win the

Pro20s, but it's a different beast.

# Symonds's fingers crossed

Cricket

CRICINFO, undated

Andrew Symonds could gain

at the club premises on Wednesday.

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12 Like

he remains in Australia's plans Monday, but Symonds had not on Friday as he waits to learn whether he has been forgiven for his season of indiscretions. The preliminary squad for the World Twenty20 in England in

his first indication of whether June has to be announced by

over a trophy to a winner of the Independence Day Billiards,

Snooker and Tennis Tournament during the prize giving ceremony

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portrait

Dhaka Club president Sadat Hossain Salim (3rd from L) hands

received an official clearance from Cricket Australia on Thursday afternoon. If Symonds makes the 30man list it will increase his chances of being included in

the limited-overs trip to play Pakistan in the UAE later this month. Symonds, 33, would usually be a certainty for these engagements, but he was suspended from the South Africa tours following a series of incidents and ordered into an extensive rehabilitation. James Sutherland, Cricket Australia's chief executive,

said at the time of the ban Symonds would have to undergo a formal review of his progress to win back his international status. Symonds, who has been having regular counselling sessions, finished the Australian summer in Queensland's Sheffield Shield team and struggled

for form with the bat.

CRYPTOQUIP

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Yesterday's Cryptoquip: WHEN DANCERS GREGORY HINES AND ELEANOR POWELL WERE

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the bat, too, hitting 39 runs as the Afghans reached their 205run target in 46.2 overs after Denmark amassed 204-9 in