

PHOTO: INTERNET

Amit Mishra of Delhi Daredevils tries to stop the ball during their Indian Premier League match against Kolkata Knight Riders at Eden Gardens on Wednesday.

Akhtar eying

has been done and the reha-

bilitation process has also

gone well, I am back to my top

fitness and the knee problem

is no longer a hindrance in my

giving my best on the field," he

Test and 223 One-day wickets,

said he was hoping to make a

comeback to the team for the

tour to England where

Pakistan will play against

Australia and the hosts. "The

England tour would be the

perfect place for me to come-

back as it has good conditions

for bowling and the best facili-

ties for a bowler coming back

dent of convincing the selec-

tors about his pace and experi-

ence in the two tough Test

series against Australia and

England. The fast bowler has

not played for Pakistan since

May 2009 when he played

plinary issues have kept him out

of the national team. "Playing for

Pakistan again is a big challenge

for me now and I want to be

given a central contract

suited to a role as

Twenty20 bowler for hire,

giving away less than seven

runs an over and achieving a

strike-rate of 19.8 during 19

Australian team Ryan Harris,

Clint McKay and Doug

Bollinger grew in popularity

and won contracts along with

Brett Lee and Shaun Tait. At

New South Wales there is

impressive younger talent in

Mitchell Starc, Josh

Hazlewood and Trent

Copeland. The environment

has changed and Bracken is

CA contract for the last eight or

nine years and it's been very

"Missing out is never a great

state to be in ... It's a chance to

get back and re-set goals. It's a

ready for New South Wales'

first game in October and the

overall aim remains. "I want

my contract back, plain and

He is determined to be

look at a few things."

"I've been lucky to be on a

While he was away from the

internationals.

aware of it.

The fast bowler was not

successful," he added.

recently by the board.

Since then injuries and disci-

against Australia in Dubai.

Akhtar said he was confi-

from an injury," he said.

Akhtar, who has taken 178

int'l return

Cricket

INTERNET, undated

Age is catching up, fitness was

never his strength and he has

lost his central contract as well

but controversial pacer

Shoaib Akhtar insists he is not

done just yet and would make

an international comeback

would be using the domestic

Pentangular Cup one-day

tournament as a platform to

convince the selectors that he

is ready to resume playing

named in the Federal Areas

team for the tournament

starting April 17. "I am thank-

ful to the board for giving me

this opportunity to prove

myself again and I want to give

He also made it clear that

it my best effort," Akhtar said.

people who were writing him

off are making a mistake. "One

of the reasons for my struggle

with fitness and form in the

last few series I played was

because of the knee problem I

had. I just never got the time to

management is now scouting

for other opportunities on and

off the field. Having started a

communications degree

before his international career

blossomed, he would enjoy a

Ideally he'd love to be a

sideline reporter or a

behind-the-scenes man who

details the extensive prepa-

ration of high-profile play-

ers. "Missing a Cricket

Australia contract gives me

these sorts of opportunities,"

he said. Support has come

quickly from his followers on

Twitter and Facebook and 47

per cent of voters in a poll on

Cricinfo's Australia home

page believe he didn't

happens next in New South

Wales' contract process but

he does know about the IPL

auction later in the year.

Injuries and Australian

commitments ruled him out

of the first two tournaments

and his contract for this

event was bought out by

Bangalore during his knee

rehabilitation. He is well-

Bracken isn't sure what

deserve to lose his deal.

"But now that the surgery

Bracken out

get it operated upon," he said.

FROM PAGE 17

role in the media.

The fast bowler has been

international cricket.

The 34-year-old said he

Now it is Asif's turn

PTI, Lahore

Hell has no fury like a woman scorned and after Shoaib Malik, another top Pakistani cricketer Mohammad Asif is learning it the hard way as he has been taken to court by a former lover over a financial dispute.

While Shoaib has managed to get out of his marriage controversy with Indian girl Ayesha Siddiqui in Hyderabad, Asif is in trouble with his former girlfriend, actress Veena Malik.

Veena has served a legal notice on Asif after two cheques he gave her to settle an outstanding money dispute bounced.

"He gave me two cheques amounting to 11.3 million rupees as part of an agreement to clear an amount of nearly 18 million rupees that he owes me,"Veena said.

F1 may go to Russia & NY

INTERNET, undated

Bernie Ecclestone has revealed that he aims to have F1 race in Russia and New York by 2013.

The commercial rights holder told Bloomberg that an event in Russia would probably be held by 2012 in either the capital city Moscow, or in Sochi -- which will play host to the Winter Olympics in 2014.

A race in Manhattan would then follow in 2013, with a decision on the location for the race being made in the coming months. According to Ecclestone, the planned race would 'see New York in the background'.

FI has expanded greatly beyond mainland Europe in recent years, with the likes of Bahrain, Singapore and Abu Dhabi now featuring on the calendar and Korea set to join the schedule later this season. Should races in Russia and

New York come good, it would mean some of the current races in Europe losing their place on the calendar -- with Ecclestone stating that he would review some of the 'traditional events' currently involved in the sport. "We're going to lose some

races for sure, there are some races we can afford to lose without too much problem," he said. "I've spoken to the countries to see what we can come up with."

Franchises

FROM PAGE 17

competition.

"I think Naeem should lead the side. I will be there in the field but I think Naeem has a future in this format and he should be the captain," said Mashud.

All the franchises are going for either Pakistanis or Sri Lankans since the IPL has kept most Twenty20 specialists busy but teams are ready to splurge on foreign imports for the weeklong tournament. According to a tournament organiser, the team owners, most of whom are top entrepreneurs, are looking to get the best available foreign players and are keenly awaiting for the IPL players to show up in the latter part of the

Meanwhile, the Sultans of Sylhet will disclose their team details including the status of Mashrafe Bin Mortaza and name their team sponsors, coowners, chief patrons, advisors and also reveal their foreign players in a press conference at the Sher-e-Bangla National Stadium today.

corner. United were dominant at that stage but Bayern wasted a chance to get back in the match when Thomas Muller's pass released Olic, only for the Bayern striker to take a poor

Sar to save.

Ferguson's side looked to been cautioned for dissent,

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Manikganj

Div II cricket

Garpara Association scored a three-wicket victory over Aricha Sir Sadat Ali Club in the Khan Real Estate Second Division Cricket League at Shaheed Miraz-Tapan stadium in Manikganj yesterday.

Aricha Sir Sadat Ali Club batted first and made 141 for nine wickets in 25 overs. Siam scored 31, Shohagh 25 while Ankur added 25 runs. Sajib picked up four wickets and Shihab took two wickets for Garpara Association.

Garpara Association reached 144 for seven wickets in 21.5 overs. Sajib top-scored with 46 runs while Shawon added 18. Nazmul picked up three wickets and Mohidul took two wickets for Aricha Sir Sadat Ali Club.

In another match, Manikganj Cricket Academy defeated Pouli Bulbul Club by five runs.

KL chess

SPORTS REPORTER

GM Ziaur Rahman shared second position along with five other players at 3.5 points each after the end of the fourth round of the third Kuala Lampur Chess Championship at Kuala Lumpur yesterday. In the fourth round, Zia drew with IM Swapnil Dhophade of India while GM Niaz Murshed beat FM Robert Smith of New Zealand. A total of 111 players including 12 grandmasters, four women grandmasters and 18 International Masters from 22 countries are participating in the event which began last Wednesday.

Nigerian trio

make arrangements so that the dues are cleared as soon as possible.

FROM PAGE 17

League committee manager Abu Nayeem Shohag confirmed the receipt of such a letter when contacted over phone last night.

A day earlier, member secretary of Mohammedan's ad-hoc committee Lokman Hossain Bhuiyan had claimed that the three players were due only two months wages, not more than that and cited an ongoing financial crisis as the reason.

Viqarunnissa

FROM PAGE 17

good to be on them," he said. Champions Vigarunnissa received Tk 20,000 while the runners-up Agargaon got Tk time to sit back and have a 10,000.

Chief operating officer of Pacific Telecom Limited David Lee distributed the prizes among the winners while minister for water transport Shahjahan Khan was also present as the chief guest.

Robben breaks MU

In the seventh minute, United winger Antonio Valencia teased Holger Badstuber on the right edge of the Bayern penalty area before whipping over a low cross to Nani, who timed his run perfectly and deceived Butt with a superb back-heeled flick into the far

touch and allow Edwin van der

have wrapped up the tie four minutes before half-time as Valencia surged away from two Bayern defenders before referee Nicola Rizzoli for his crossing into the penalty area second booking. for Nani to dispatch a sublime

first time finish past Butt. lifeline in the 43rd minute United's defence, but Bayern when he met Muller's header with a fine finish that beat van der Sar from a tight angle.

United were looking surprisingly shaky and Ferguson's team still hadn't steadied their nerves after half-time.

danger when Ribery pulled clear of Rafael just inside the United half, but the young right-back, who had already showed his inexperience as he tugged at the France winger,

Ferguson responded by sending on John O'Shea for Yet Olic gave Bayern a Rooney to plug the gap in went close as Ribery's stinging volley forced van der Sar to parry with his fists.

Substitute Mario Gomez went close with a glancing header that skimmed over the crossbar and the pressure finally told as Robben broke There was no immediate United's hearts in the 74th minute.

Robben was unmarked on the edge of the penalty area as he met a corner with a magnificent volley past van der Sar to leave England without a Champions League semifinalearning a red card from Italian ist for the first time since 2003.

Heavy fine on KKR

PTI, Kolkata

Kolkata Knight Riders skipper Sourav Ganguly was fined 40,000 dollars and his teammates 10,000 dollars each for maintaining a slow over rate during their Indian Premier League (IPL) match against the Delhi Daredevils here on Wednesday.

"The Indian Premier League today [Thursday] advised that Kolkata Knight Riders have been fined for maintaining a slow over rate during last night's [Wednesday] IPL match against Delhi Daredevils in Kolkata," the IPL said in a statement.

At the end of the match, Kolkata were assessed to be two overs behind the required rate after allowances were taken into consideration.

"Since it was Kolkata's second offence of the season, under the IPL's Code of Conduct relating to minimum over rate offences, captain Sourav Ganguly was fined 40,000 dollars and each player in the team 10,000 dollars," the IPL statement said.

Ganguly could be banned for a match if Kolkata repeat the offence for a third time.

Nike to run new Tiger ad

AFP, Washington

Disgraced golf superstar Tiger Woods will debut in his first new television ad since embarrassing revelations about extra-marital affairs emerged, The Wall Street Journa reportedWednesday.

The paper's website said an advertisement for Nike -- airing on the eve of Woods's muchanticipated return to competitive golf after a five-month layoff -- would feature a voice recording of the golfer's late father appearing to talk about the golfer's personal woes. "I want to find out what your

thinking was; I want to find out what your feelings are. Did you learn anything," the paper reported a voice-over as saying. Woods has admitted an

adultery scandal that has seen more than a dozen women claim sexual relationships with the married father of two, destroying the squeaky-clean image that made Woods the world's first billion-dollarsportsman. Nike reportedly paid Woods

around 40 million dollars a year. Sponsors had sought to distance themselves from the troubled star as sordid details of his person life emerged.

But as Woods embarks on his comeback this week -teeing off at Augusta National Golf Club for the Masters -- his star-appeal could be too much for firms to shun. Play begins on Thursday,

with Tiger facing 95 rivals trying to deny the world's number one golfera 15th major title. The ad is to air on the Gold

Channel and ESPN later Wednesday, the Wall Street Journal reported.

Nike and ESPN both refused to comment.

Shoaib

14 Burden

word

19 Scanty

and

crafts

24 Donkey

28 Min.

25 Nuisance

fractions

30 Venusian

33 Ostrich's

cousin

35 Debtor's

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36 Tire pres-

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FROM PAGE 17

Meanwhile, the Hyderabac police have said that the case filed against Shoaib has not been taken back and investigations would continue. Sources close to both fami-

lies said the police complaint against Shoaib would be taken back and it was also agreed that the cricketer would pay an amount of 15, 000 rupees to Ayesha as alimony as per Islamic law.

'Blessing in disguise'

PTI, Lahore



Missing the third season of the Indian Premier League (IPL) is actually a blessing in disguise for the Pakistani cricketers since it has allowed

the players to gel well as a team and prepare better for the Twenty20 World Cup, skipper Shahid Afridi said. The flamboyant all-rounder, who was asked to lead the team in the West Indies by the

Pakistan Cricket Board (PCB), insists that he has no regrets on missing the lucrative league. "No I don't have any regrets at all. In a way it is a blessing in disguise for all our players that we are not playing in the IPL before the World

Cup." "Given the problems that have besieged Pakistan cricket in recent months it is good that we have got time to work together as a team in the World Cup training camp, it has allowed us to settle down and focus on the World Cup," Afridi said. Afridi and several other leading Pakistani players were included in the list of

cricketers who were put up for auction but none of the franchises bid for any of 11 players.

But Afridi said that issue was now behind him and he was focused on the World Cup. "We really are not following the IPL closely. We don't know who is playing or who is not playing because the purpose of holding this training camp has been to gel the players and allow them to prepare as a team for the World Cup," he added.

Afridi feels his side badly needed a break after the disastrous Australian tour so missing IPL has actually helped the team. The spin allrounder said defending the title in the West Indies would be a difficult task and also acknowledged his responsibility as a senior player.

"I would definitely feel that I have achieved the biggest landmark of my career, I want the team to do well in the World Cup. It is a big ambition for me and I know as a senior player I will have to show the way in every department of the game," he said. The World Cup is scheduled to begin from April 30 with Pakistan drawn to play its opening match against Bangladesh.

Naved pleads guilty

Cricket

AFP, Lahore

Pakistan all-rounder Navedul Hasan appealed Thursday against a one-year ban and heavy fine for indiscipline, saying he wants justice from the cricket authorities.

"It is a matter of reviving my career, so I have filed an appeal against the ban and fine with a hope that I get justice," Naved told reporters. "I want to play for Pakistan again." Naved, 32, and former captain Shoaib Malik,

rupees (24,000 dollars) on charges of breach of discipline during the team's December-February tour of Australia. The penalties were imposed after a Pakistan Cricket Board (PCB) committee examined the

were banned for one year and fined two million

team's dismal performances and off-field problems in Australia, where Pakistan lost all three Tests, five one-day and a Twenty20 international. Former captains Younus Khan and Mohammad Yousuf were banned indefinitely

over infighting during the preceding tour of the

United Arab Emirates in November. Brothers Kamran Akmal and Umar Akmal, who were fined three million (35,000 dollars) and two million rupees respectively and put on probation for six months, filed appeals on Tuesday.

Pakistan's Twenty20 captain Shahid Afridi

was fined three million rupees and put on a sixmonth probation for ball-tampering in a oneday match in Australia which "brought the game and country into disrepute".

reasons for the punishment. "The charge sheet that I have received only mentions that I under-performed in the

Naved said the PCB did not give specific

Twenty20 match in Australia. My plea is that no player can ever perform well in all matches. I did my best but we lost," he added. Naved, who has played nine Tests, 74 oneday and four T20 games for Pakistan, conceded

27 runs in his four overs and scored one in his team's narrow two-run defeat at Melbourne. He has been signed by Sussex for the opening few weeks of the English county season as cover for countryman Yasir Arafat who will be

busy playing in the World Twenty20 Cup for Pakistan until May 16. Naved, who is only banned from playing internationals, took 139 wickets to help Sussex

win the County Championship titles in 2005 and 2006. PCB legal adviser Tafazzul Rizvi confirmed Naved has filed an appeal, adding that Malik

has also written to the PCB seeking clarification on his punishment. The PCB last month appointed two retired Supreme Court judges -- Muneer Sheikh and

Jamshed Ali Shah -- and a former high court judge, Irfan Qadir, to deal with the appeals. The deadline to appeal is April 16.

Sreesanth in trouble again

INTERNET, undated



Shanthakum aran Sreesanth, the Kings XI

bowler, has been fined 20 per cent of his match fee for showing dissent towards the umpire during the nine-wicket defeat to Rajasthan Royals in Jaipur on Wednesday.

The incident occurred in the third over of the chase after Sreesanth was no-balled off successive deliveries for overstepping.

The free-hit that followed was slashed over point for four by the batsman Michael Lumb, who got a sarcastic round of applause from the bowler, who then turned towards the umpire and clapped to show his displeasure at the no-ball calls. Sreesanth pleaded guilty to

a Level 1 offence and match referee Srinivas Venkataraghavan fined him 20 per cent (9,000 dollars) of his match fee. It has been a tough IPL for

Sreesanth so far, struggling to

hold down a regular place in

the Punjab XI due to a series of expensive bowling spells.

Wednesday was no different -- his three overs being taken for 40 runs.

He has had plenty of disciplinary troubles in his career both on the domestic circuit and internationally.

It was only six months ago that the BCCI gave him a 'final warning' threatening him with suspension from domestic cricket in case of further violations of the Code of Conduct after a run-in with Dhawal Kulkarni during the Irani Cup.

Bangladesh **FROM PAGE 17**

runners-up Pakistan in the 2nd semi at 4pm today at the same venue.

Two bottom teams of the two groups -- Nepal and Afghanistan -- will meet in the fifth place-deciding match today at 9 am.

Sen quashes speculation

PTI, Mumbai

Bollywood star Sushmita Sen has sought to put rest to speculation about her relationship with Wasim Akram saying that she is not marrying the former Pakistani cricketer.

Media reports had said that former Miss Universe and Akram, who is in India as Kolkata Knight Riders bowling coach, had grown close ever since they hosted a reality show together on television around two years ago.

However, after the death of Akram's wife Huma in October last year, it was reported that their romance got stronger with a wedding on the cards.

And recently the couple were reportedly spotted together at a suburban nightspot where they spent the evening in each other's com-

However, the 34-year-old actress has quashed rumours of a link up and wedding

"It is not true. I am not getting married. Wasim is a wonderful man."

CROSSWORD By Eugene Sheffer

ACROSS 37 Tennes-58 Golf **16** Jam 1 Not see ball ingredipizzicato emblem holder ent? 5 Matter-38 Undo a 59 Cruci-20 Right horn, for fix dele on the **39** AAA map? one 8 Addition-DOWN 22 Despot job 1 Turkish 23 Old ally 41 Church title photo 12 Fish's recess 43 Frenzied tint breather 2 Money 25 Energy 13 Greet 46 Plankton, Cambodia 26 Type the in part villain 50 Mormon 3 Applaud measures

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CRYPTOQUIP

XN FR FRXJFK'Y FRFEPJG

IDBD JOML ELD YFJD FY F IDFYDK NFJXKG JDJADB,

MPOKH XE AD YFAKD-APHXDH?

Yesterday's Cryptoquip: SINCE HE LOVES ANTLERED ANIMALS, MY FRIEND'S FAVORITE

DESSERT IS DEFINITELY CHOCOLATE MOOSE.

Today's Cryptoquip Clue: F equals A