Tendulkar calls for

'thorough' probe



Serbian Novak Djokovic celebrates after winning against German Philipp Petzschner during their second round match at the US Open in New York on Thursday.

Hot shots on collision course

AFP, New York



Maria Sharapova gave further indications on Thursday that she is close to being back to her best after an injury-

blighted 2009 as she stormed into the third round of the US Open.

The 23-year-old Russian glamour girl powered past Iveta Benesova of the Czech Republic 6-1, 6-2, sending out a warning that she is capable of winning for a second time at Flushing Meadows, four years after her first title.

"Last year here, the position I was in, I was trying to see where my game was, so it's nice to be back on the court and not having to worry about anything other than trying to win," she said.

The win sets her up nicely for a possible showdown with top seed and runner-

up here last year, Caroline Wozniacki of Denmark, in the fourth round. First though, she must overcome 18-

year-old American wildcard Beatrice Capra in Saturday's third round.

Wozniaci powered her way into the third round by handing out a 6-0, 6-0 thrashing to Taiwan's Chang Kai-Chen.

It was an impressive performance by the 20-year-old Dane, a surprise finalist here last year who, in the space of the last 12 months, has established herself among the elite in the sport.

She needed just 47 minutes to record her 11th straight win, which includes

England coach Andy Flower on Friday

said cricket "will survive" the spot-fixing

internationals against Pakistan at Sophia

Gardens here on Sunday in what will be

their first outing in the format since win-

ning the World Twenty20 title in the

owed by newspaper claims of spot-

fixing during last week's fourth Test at

Lord's involving the Pakistan trio of

Test captain Salman Butt and pace

bowlers Mohammad Aamer and

front or back page," Flower told reporters

at Sophia Gardens on Friday following an

Sunday the three players had conspired

with a 'fixer' to deliberately bowl no-balls

in a betting scam at Lord's in a match

England won by an innings and 225 runs -

Pakistan's heaviest Test defeat of all-time.

by the International Cricket Council

(ICC), pending a final decision which

could, if they are found guilty of various

All three have since been suspended

Britain's News of the World alleged

"No-one wants that sort of news on the

But the fixture has been overshad-

England play the first of two Twenty20

row engulfing the Pakistan team.

AFP, Cardiff

Caribbean in May.

Mohammad Asif.

England training session.

back-to-back titles in Montreal and New Haven, her third and fourth of the year, the most of any woman. In two matches at Flushing Meadows,

she has lost just two games. "I go out there and I don't give up. I

don't give any free points away and that is one of my strong points," said Wozniacki of her merciless display against Chang. "I am feeling fresh, all recovered (from an

ankle injury), from everything. I am happy to be playing injury-free. It's perfect." Wozniacki will play another Taiwanese

player, Chan Yung-Jan, for a place in the fourth round and a possible match against Sharapova. Chan advanced to the third round of a

Grand Slam tournament for the first time in 17 attempts when she defeated Austria's Tamira Paszek 6-3, 6-3. The previous best for the 21-year-old

from Taipei had been second-round appearances at the Australian Open in 2009, at Wimbledon this year and here in 2008.

She was in command from the start against Paszek, once touted as a budding star of tennis, but who has struggled with injuries over the last two years.

"I was not 100 per cent in my first match and was missing the easy ball," Chan said. "But that was better today and I am looking to play even better from now

The prospect of playing the top seed Wozniacki was not awesome, she said, as they had known each since they were

'Cricket will survive fix row'

charges under the governing body's code

upcoming two Twenty20s and subse-

quent five one-dayers between England

and Pakistan while 18-year-old Aamer

was interviewed by police on Friday as

part of an ongoing criminal investigation.

game. We've got a Twenty20 game on

Sunday that we are working towards,"

position that we seem to be finding our-

selves in right now but the game will

it, people love watching it, that's why it

will survive," the former Zimbabwe bats-

loid, has promised further revelations in

its next edition which will first hit the

streets just hours before England play the

first of two Twenty20s against Pakistan,

difficult but they held themselves very

tions) should be really interesting to

watch but obviously not very pleasant for

"Last Sunday, the guys did find it very

He added: "It (the promised revela-

The News of the World, a Sunday tab-

survive, there's no doubt about that.

Flower said.

man insisted.

both in Cardiff.

well," Flower said.

"We've got to focus on playing the

"Obviously, it's not a very healthy

They will not play any part in the

of conduct lead to a life ban from cricket.

juniors and had played several times. "Also I love playing on the big courts,"

she added.

Also through to the third round in early play Thursday was Russian seventh seed Vera Zvonareva, who eased past Sabine Lisicki of Germany 6-1, 7-6 (7/5), and semifinalist here last year Yanina Wickmayer of Belgium, who beat Julia Gorges of Germany 6-4, 7-5.

Swiss veteran Patty Schnyder used her experience to outplay Spanish 22nd seed Maria Jose Martinez 7-6 (7/2), 6-4 and she will next play Wickmayer for a place in the fourth round.

Also through was 2004 champion Svetlana Kuznetsova of Russia who breezed past Anastasija Sevastova of Latvia 6-2, 6-3 and fourth seed, Jelena Jankovic of Serbia, who edged past Mirjana Lucic of Croatia 6-4, 3-6, 6-2.

There was an upset on the Grandstand Court though as the unheralded Capra ousted French 18th seed Aravane Rezai 7-

5, 2-6, 6-3. Capra is making her debut in a WTA Tour tournament, and was the youngest player remaining in the women's draw

and also the lowest-ranked at 371. "A year ago I was playing the juniors here. I've been playing mostly the juniors tournaments the entire year and concentrating on that. I played a couple of pro circuit events and one okay, but its been mostly juniors," she said.

Playing Sharapova she said would be "an amazing experience."

Div I football

PHOTO: AFP

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Manikganj

Dragon Sporting Club came from behind to beat Nabajagaran Sangsad 2-1 in the Hafijul Islam Khan Uttu Smriti First Division Football League at the Shaheed Miraz-Tapan Stadium yesterday.

Toriqul put Nabajagaran Sangsad ahead in the 35th minute but Jewel leveled the margin for Dragon after thirteen minutes.

Joy netted the match winner in the 72nd minute.

With the victory Dragon Sporting Club raised their tally to eight points from six matches while Nabajagaran Sangsad remained at eight points from the same number of outings.

Diamond Friends Club will take on Sonali Atit Club in the today's match.

Sarwan told to get in shape

REUTERS, Miami

West Indies batsman Ramnaresh Sarwan has been told to get in shape by the national selectors after failing to earn a central contract for the coming year.

Sarwan, Jamaican pace bowler Jerome Taylor and Trinidadian wicketkeeper Denesh Ramdin were the most notable absentees from the list of 15 players handed the retainers.

"The team management the selection committee and the West Indies Cricket Board are concerned about Mr. Sarwan's extremely indifferent attitude and sporadic approach towards fitness, particularly in recent years," said a statement released by the board.

Injuries have kept the 30 year-old Sarwan, who has test average of 41.73, out of test action throughout 2010.

Delneri

while for Kaladze it's something else altogether.

"But all the others came here running like (Fabio)

Champions League this season and he brushed off the scepticism surrounding him, partic-

as a coach was guiding Sampdoria to fourth place last season. "Even (Nelson) Mandela

he'd be killed.

"To tell the truth I've felt a lot of warmth around me. But

who's sceptical? "I'd say they're right because they don't know me, even if my career numbers are

"Not least given that last year when I didn't finish last but 12 points ahead of | tional."

several Pakistani cricketers, told the newspaper he worked for an "Indian party". "They pay me for information," Majeed was recorded as saying. Tendulkar, the world's senior-most active cricketer, who made his debut in 1989, said he had never heard of an instance when an Indian player was contacted by a bookmaker. "In my 21 years of international cricket, I have never heard of an Indian player being

and take appropriate action if the players are approached by bookies," the star batsman said. Tendulkar is cricket's leading run-getter in "If the allegations are true, they will cerboth Test and one-day formats. A British tabloid claimed last weekend that He has scored 13,837 runs from 169 Tests a middleman gave undercover reporters exact

spread in illegal South Asian betting circles.

Majeed, who claimed to be an agent for

with 48 centuries and 17,598 runs in 442 oneday matches with 46 hundreds.

Tendulkar's name did not figure during the match-fixing scandal in 2000 which saw life bans being imposed on three Test captains, Hansie Cronje of South Africa, Mohammad Azharuddin of India and Salim Malik of Pakistan.

Ganguly predicts tough time for Dhoni

Cricket

Cricket

guilty should be punished.

India's batting great Sachin Tendulkar on

Friday called for a "thorough" investigation

into Pakistan's spot-fixing scandal, saying the

should make a thorough probe in the scandal

found guilty," Tendulkar, 37, told reporters here.

details of no-balls to be bowled by Pakistani

seamers Mohammad Aamer and Mohammad

middleman, Mazhar Majeed, 150,000 pounds

(230,000 dollars) for information on the prac-

tice of spot-fixing, which allegedly is wide-

The News of the World said it had paid the

Asif during the Lord's Test against England.

tainly bring the game into disrepute."

"The ICC (International Cricket Council)

AFP, New Delhi

CRICINFO

Sourav Ganguly, the former India captain, has said MS Dhoni's leadership will face a stern test in the next couple of years if the younger members of the team continue to underperform and the senior players retire. While Ganguly acknowledged India's form

in Tests had been good, the inconsistency in the shorter formats, he said, was a worry. India won the Asia Cup recently but were beaten in the final of the subsequent tri-series in Sri Lanka. They failed to make the semifinals of the World Twenty20 and Champions Trophy in 2009, as well as the World Twenty 20 in 2010.

"Dhoni's biggest challenge will be in the coming one or two years when [Sachin] Tendulkar, [Rahul] Dravid and [VVS] Laxman retire," Ganguly told PTI. "Next year, we have about five away series and it will be a test of his captaincy and his players. His future as Indian captain will be determined.

"Yuvraj Singh has a lot of ups and downs despite playing for so long. Virender Sehwag too is inconsistent when it comes to onedayers, while the youngsters Ravindra Jadeja, Yusuf Pathan and Rohit Sharma are short of expectations," Ganguly said. "They [the youngsters] were termed as the future, but they are yet to perform at the highest level and blossom. There has been a big gap as we are not getting the combination right."

During Ganguly's tenure as captain, India began to taste success overseas with more frequency, registering Test wins in West Indies and England after many years and winning a series in Pakistan for the first time. "Those were the performances that mattered the most for us. Performance is 40 per cent captaincy and 60 per cent player's contribution," Ganguly said. Ganguly also said that age should not be the

deciding factor when picking a player. "It's Sachin Tendulkar who is still your best, while for the Aussies it's Ricky Ponting who is still taking the team through. And, remember Laxman's contribution in saving the series in Sri Lanka."

Injury adds to Pak woes

Cricket

PTI, Taunton

In yet another blow to Pakistan ahead of the two Twenty20s and five One-Day Internationals against England, four key players of the team suffered injuries during their warm-up match against Somerset. Pakistan are already without Salman Butt Mohammad Asif and Mohammad Aamer, all three of whom are implicated in a 'spot-fixing' scandal.

And compounding the team's problems were injuries to four important players ahead of and during the practice match which the visitors won narrowly by eight runs. In-form batsman Umar Akmal had a concussion after suffering a blow in the nets before the match while seamers Umar Gul and Wahab Riaz ended up with up finger and shoulder injuries respectively. Both, however, are likely to be fit for Sunday's first Twenty20

match against England. Abdul Razzaq's back injury, suffered during practice, is a cause for concern for the tourists, as the allrounder's absence will mean Pakistan taking the field without three of their frontline pace bowlers against England. There was, however, some consolation for Pakistan as the

warm-up match ended in a victory for them yesterday after Butt's replacement, Shahzaib Hasan, notched up a century for the visitors.

"That team fully firing might have cleaned us up a bit earlier but when you saw the death period and business end of game you could see they were well drilled in what they had to do, Somerset's stand-in captain Peter Trego was quoted as saying by 'The Daily Telegraph'.

"If there is any cloud hanging over those guys it needs to be addressed. The shame is it is three exceptionally good players they have lost and might detract away from the quality of the series with England. But on the whole with the issues around it is best they are out of the limelight now."

Pakistan

he added.

FROM PAGE 17 until their names are cleared.'

serious doubts on the authenticity of the News of the World's expose, saying, "What is the reputation of those people who have brought us this story?" In an interview on BBC television, Hassan had said, "We are not seeing on the video what the date is or what the time is." "Do you have answers to these questions? The video wasn't timed or dated. It could have been filmed before or after the match, or at a different time.

Hassan had also raised

I was never

FROM PAGE 17 He further said those found

guilty in the spot-fixing' scandal should be "heavily punished". Without naming the accused -- Pakistan Test skipper Salman Butt and pacer duo of Mohammad Asif and Mohammad Aamer -- the lefthander said," we should wait for the outcome.

"The guilty should be heavily punished. These are all allegations, there is no proof yet. We should not make comments. he said. "Not just Pakistan is involved. I hear players from Australia and Bangladesh have been approached. It boils down to the players, it's their as well as captain's responsibility," Ganguly said.

Former Japan coaches on the

bid team are his immediate

predecessor, Takeshi Okada of

Japan, as well as Brazilian

legend Zico, Bosnian tactician

Ivica Osim and Frenchman

Calling it a complex investiga-

tion, he said that if the players

were found guilty, they could

evidence takes us," he said,

adding that the ACSU was

working very closely with the

British police in their separate

Lorgat expressed his "extreme

ICC chief executive Haroon

but parallel investigation.

"We will go where the

Philippe Troussier.

A case

FROM PAGE 17

face a life ban.

Zac joins Japanese bid

dent that a World Cup hosted by

Japan in 2022 would be some-

thing really and truly special,"

said Zaccheroni, the sixth for-

eigner and the first Italian to

manage Japan, former Asian

Football's world governing

body FIFA will choose the

hosts for the 2018 and 2022

World Cups on December 2 in

Korea, Australia, Russia,

England, the United States

and Qatar as well as joint

bidders, Netherlands-

Belgium and Spain-Portugal.

Australia and Qatar, all mem-

Japan, South Korea

The candidates are South

champions.

Zurich.

Football

AFP, Tokyo

Japan's new coach Alberto Zaccheroni Friday joined a team of "ambassadors" promoting the country's bid to host the 2022 World Cup, just four days after his appointment.

"I've always had a lot of respect for Japan as a country," the 57-year-old Italian, who won the 1998-1999 Serie-A title with AC Milan, said in a statement. "Let's all do our best to bringtheWorldCup to Japan."

The bid committee said it was delighted to have Zaccheroni, who has coached a levels."

bers of the Asian Football Confederation (AFC), have dozen Italian clubs, citing his submitted bids for 2022 only, "wealth of experience at while the others are cam-European football's highest paigning for both -- amid growing expectations Europe Asian neighbours Japan and South Korea co-hosted the 2002 Brazil in 2014. World Cup which, Zaccheroni

said, was "a fantastic tourna-

Other ambassadors included some of his prede-

will get the 2018 edition after Zaccheroni will be the 32nd

disappointment and sadness" at the situation, but repeated that "we will not tolerate any sort of corruption in the sport.' "There is absolutely no

truth to the suggestion that there is a conspiracy towards Pakistan cricket," the South

"There is a lot of sympathy

his quickest US Open exit since 2005.

Davydenko joined a US Open seeded scrap heap that includes No. 7 Tomas Berdych of the Czech Republic, US ninth seed Andy Roddick and Croatia's Cilic, who dropped the longest match of the week

just 60 seconds shy of five "It was very humid. It wasn't easy to get oxygen," Cilic said. "I started to feel cramps in the end of the fourth set. But with that, I was all right toward

ROM PAGE 17 the end of the match. It was reach the second round, lost just the general tiredness and only seven of 52 points on his exhaustion." first serve as Davydenko made

Roger rolls, Nikolay falls

Nishikori, ranked 147th, fought off cramping in the hottest day of a scorching week to defeat Australian Open semifinalist Cilic 5-7, 7-6(8/6), 3-6, 7-6(7/3), 6-1 in an exhausting five-hour

"I was cramping from the second set but I kept fighting and fighting and got the fourth set tie-breaker. That was key for me," Nishikori said.

play well every match. So "It was hot but I feel good anything can happen. I can

lose first round. I can go on Nishikori, whose run to the US Open fourth round in 2008 really deep as well.'

the best here by a Japanese man since 1937, next faces Spanish 21st seed Albert Montanes, who beat Australian Carsten Ball 6-4, 6-

was his best Slam showing and

Swedish fifth seed Robin Soderling reached the third round in straight sets as well,

dumping American Taylor Dent 6-2, 6-2, 6-4. "I'm pretty confident. I know I can do well when I play well," Soderling said. "But you need to play well. No one can

last month, eliminated Uruguay's Pablo Cuevas 7-5, Next in Fish's path is France's Arnaud Clement, who led 6-3, 5-5 when Argentina's Eduardo Schwank

> Fish said he feels like he can crack the world top-10 next year and is confident he could win a possible fourth-round match against Djokovic.

retired with an ankle injury.

"I've never put myself in Fish said.

US 19th seed Mardy Fish,

who won two titles in July and

was runner-up at Cincinnati

position to be a guy who is talked about at a Grand Slam,"

batsman, man of the tournament at the World Twenty20, was dropped for the first time in his four-year international career following a run of poor form.

The upcoming series will see England

anyone involved in this game but we can't

without Kevin Pietersen after the star

speculate on what might come out."

The hope is that by playing for Surrey, where he is on loan until the end of the season, Pietersen will regain his touch ahead of England's defence of the Ashes in Australia starting in November.

"Selection matters are always very tricky because you are talking about people's careers and their lives," Flower "It's a great game, people love playing

"Kevin would acknowledge himself he's under-performed over the last 12 to 24 months and we decided to leave him out of the two Twenty20 matches because there's a four-day game starting for Surrey on the day (Tuesday) the second

Twenty20 takes place. "With our priority at this stage being the Ashes, we thought it best that he gets the opportunity of four days of cricket at The Oval on a good pitch to get time in the middle.

"That will be very important for him to get his confidence back and to find the rhythms of batting for a long time again."

FROM PAGE 20

"Borriello preferred another team for contractual reasons

Quagliarella, showing that they love the shirt." Delneri insists Juve will be aiming to qualify for the

ularly from fans expecting a bigger name at the club's helm. This is the biggest job of Delneri's career. Prior to joining Juve his best achievement

was suspicious when he was freed because he was afraid

on my side.

Juventus.

"bid ambassador" for Japan. ment" where "the level of organisation and the passion of the fans were quite excep-

cessors and current and former national team players. "That's the reason I'm confi-

African added.

for Pakistan and its players."