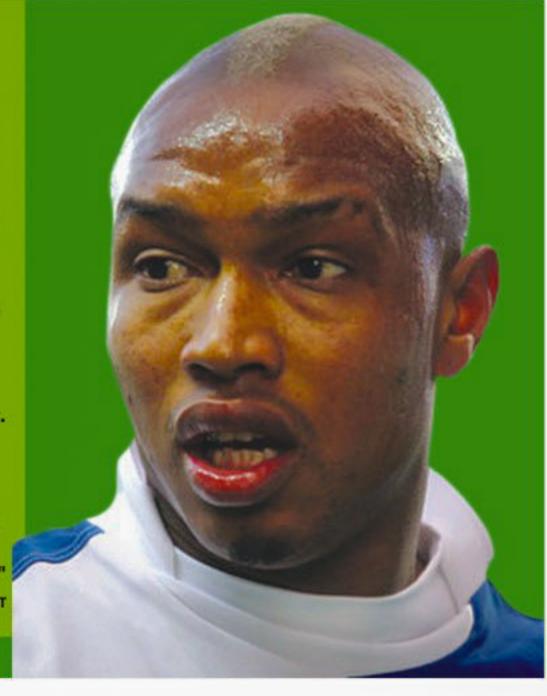
Diouf launches Carra tirade

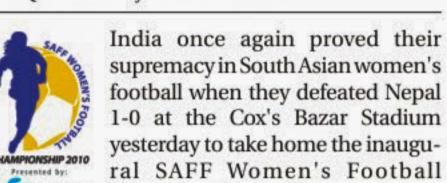
El-Hadji Diouf has launched an astonishing verbal assault on Jamie Carragher, claiming the Liverpool vice-captain has "done nothing with his life".

"Carragher, for me, is nothing. He's like a make of ketchup or mustard to a normal person: not important. I played for Liverpool for two years and Carragher never spoke to me. That's life - some people are like that. We didn't have a team at Liverpool. We had the English somewhere and the French boys somewhere. "Carragher is just a guy who loves to talk, but Caragher doesn't sell papers, Carragher doesn't sell shirts.



Glory goes to India

ATIQUE ANAM from Cox's Bazar



A 66-minute freekick from Sasmita Mallik made the difference in an entertaining final before a full-house crowd and in the presence of local dignitaries and BFF high-ups.

Championship trophy.

The scenes at the end of an intriguing final were what one expects to see every other day. Both teams were celebrating in their own style. The euphoric Indian players did a lap of a tribal dance with Sasmita being the toast of the party. A delighted Sasmita thanked God at being able to score the winning goal from the freekick.

"I had practised freekicks in the last two training sessions as per my coach's direction. I tried to float the ball over the keeper's head and it went in. I thank God that that ball went in," exclaimed a humble Sasmita, who finished top of the goalscoring chart with 14 goals to her name.

At the other end of the ground were Nepal, merry and content firstly at having reached the final and then for putting on a brave fight in it.

Jamuna Gurung, the Nepal captain expressed her satisfaction over their effort and conceded that the better team won.

"We are satisfied with our effort, because India are a stronger opponent. We wanted to defend as well as we could and were looking to

go up on counterattacks. But they did not give us much opportunity to attack," said Jamuna who has led her team from the front in the tournament scoring 10 goals.

However, amongst the satisfied Nepal faces, one face looked strikingly glum, that of goalkeeper Chandra Dahal who had foiled numerous attacks till she was found wanting on that Sasmita freekick.

India threatened the opposition goal from the very beginning, with their three-pronged strike force of Tababi Devi, Bala Devi and Sasmita creating havoc in the Nepal defence. It was only thanks to Nepal's resolute defending and the valiant efforts of Dahal that the first half stayed scoreless.

India stepped up the pressure early in the second half but for the profligacy of the strikers, failed to take the lead.

When it looked like the regulation time would remain barren, Sasmita came up with a trick up her sleeve, floating a dipping freekick from 25 yards out deceiving the Nepal keeper in

And India's held on to their slender lead with relative comfort as the Nepalese failed to muster any meaningful attacks. As the final whistle was blown, the ecstatic Indians revelled in glory while Nepal prided themselves with the second best status and the fair play

And it was fair play more than anything else that shone all through the tournament, and a message of friendship from all the eight participating teams for the last 12 days.



The Indian players are overjoyed as they hold aloft the SAFF Women's Football Championship trophy following their 1-0 victory over Nepal in the final at Cox's Bazar Stadium yesterday.

Mashrafe blow frustrates Jamie

Cricket

SPORTS REPORTER

Coach Jamie Siddons expressed his frustration over the latest injury to country's leading paceman Mashrafe Bin Mortaza with less than two months to go for the World Cup, which will be co-hosted by Bangladesh, India and Sri Lanka.

"A fit and firing Mash (Mashrafe Bin Mortaza) was obviously our first preference for the World Cup and this is a huge disappointment for Mash and the team as well," Siddons said from Australia when asked whether Mashrafe's injury dented his World Cup plans, particularly given that he was starting to show some form of late.

Mashrafe sustained an injury on his right knee during a Premier Division Cricket League match at BKSP on Tuesday and the right-arm paceman, who is now under conservative treatment, is uncertain for the showcase event.

Siddons however



JAMIE SIDDONS

confident about his team even if Mashrafe was not available for the World Cup.

"My job is to always be prepared for the worst and there was always a chance that Mash may not get through the Premier League program. The team defeated New Zealand 4-0 not so long ago with Mash on the sidelines," said a confident Siddons.

"The inclusion of Rubel (Hossain) or Nazmul (Hossain) would change the dynamics of the opening attack but I believe

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Anand wants **Bharat Ratna** for Tendulkar

PTI, Greater Noida

World chess champion Viswanathan Anand joined the growing list of top athletes on Thursday supporting the demand that iconic batsman Sachin Tendulkar be conferred the Bharat Ratna -- the highest civilian honour in

When asked whether Tendulkar, who recently hit his 50th Test century, deserves to be awarded the Bharat Ratna Anand said, "Sure, he has done a great job.'

"Especially the form our guys are showing should be great for the World Cup. It is not even that the team is depending on one guy, threefour guys are doing well, and hopefully we will pick the World Cup next year. He (Sachin) has been doing a great job," Anand told PTI.

Tendulkar had slammed his 50th Test century in the second innings against South Africa in the first Test in Centurion last Sunday.

> **SPORTS POLL WEEKLY QUESTION** Which team you think will win the Bangladesh League this season? Visit the sports page of

Follow The Daily Star Sport on twitter www.twitter.com/dssport

www.thedailystar.net to cast vote



ESPN

Sportscentre India Sports News Live at 8:30pm



Premier Division Cricket League

Abahani v Gazi Tank Venue: Bogra Biman v BKSP Venue: Rajshahi Mohammedan v Surjo Torun

Yousuf shores up MSC

Cricket

SPORTS REPORTER

Mohammedan Sporting Club have brought Pakistan batsman Mohammad Yousuf yesterday in an attempt to retain the Premier Division Cricket League title.

The defending champions registered the 36year old right-hander, who has so far played 90 Tests and 288 ODIs for Pakistan, ahead of their today's clash against Surjo Torun Club at the BKSP.

The popular Motijheel outfit got off to a flying start beating Orient Sporting Club in their first game but shared points with newcomers Prime Doleshwar Sporting Club in the second round game. Mohammedan roped in Yousuf in place of Sri Lanka all-rounder Farveez Maharoof, who returned home after sustaining an injury.

The frustrating result against Doleshwar also forced the Mohammedan management to bring changes to the captaincy as Shakib Al Hasan will lead the team from today instead of Khaled Mashud, who will act as a coach-cum-player.

After putting pen on paper, Yousuf talked with the reporters at the Bangabandhu National Stadium but he was not ready to give any opinion on the other issues, like controversy with the Pakistan cricket, except the Premier Division Cricket League.

"I will talk only about the competition (Premier League Cricket) nothing else," cautioned Yousuf adding that he was looking forward to making his debut in Bangladesh's domestic competition.

Yousuf however has no idea about the standard of the Premier Division Cricket although an estimated number of Pakistani players including Wasim Akram have played in this competition over the last three decades.

"I have no idea about the competition but you know cricket is cricket. I can understand the standard and nature of the competition after playing first one to two games. I want to play all the matches if I am not selected for the national duty. As a professional cricketer it would not be hard to motivate myself in this competition," said Yousuf.

He was however aware about the pressure of **SEE PAGE 17 COL 7**



Pakistani master batsman Mohammad Yousuf signs the contract papers for Mohammedan at the Bangabandhu National Stadium yesterday, making him the club's overseas player. Yousuf's first assignment is the Premier Division Cricket League match against Surjo Torun at BKSP today.

Rubcic unhappy with Sheikh Jamal

Football

SPORTS REPORTER

National football coach Robert Rubcic is visibly unhappy with Sheikh Jamal Dhanmondi Club's move to not releasing two players selected for the national U-23 side for Olympic pre-qualifiers against Kuwait.

Rubcic had picked 26 players through a oneday trials where two Sheikh Jamal players -defender Mintu Sheikh and striker Touhidul Alam Sabuj -- were chosen for the preliminary squad and they were asked to join a five-day training programme. But Mintu and Sabuj did not report at the programme on the due date, allegedly

because of restrictions imposed on them from the club management as well as their Serbian coach. Before yesterday's second practice match

against Mohammedan at Birshreshtha Mostafa Kamal Stadium in Kamalapur where his selection suffered a 2-0 defeat, the Croat coach expressed dissatisfaction over Sheikh Jamal's attitude towards the national team and hinted that he might not call up any player from the club in future.

The five-day programme, which started with a practice match against Muktijoddha, followed by a three-day training at BKSP, ended yesterday through the Mohammedan game and the players have been released for their club commitments for the upcoming Bangladesh League, beginning on December 27.

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Now it's a 13-year-old schoolboy!

AFP, Mumbai

A 13-year-old Indian cricketer has smashed 498 runs off 490 balls in a match in Mumbai to claim the national record for the highest score by a schoolboy.

Armaan Jaffer, nephew of former Indian Test opener Wasim Jaffer, achieved the feat in an under-14 Giles Shield match while playing for Rizvi Springfield School against IES Raja Shivaji Vidyalaya.

His marathon two-day innings, which finished on Wednesday, beat the previous leading individual score of 461 in Indian school cricket, set recently by Nagpur boy Ali Zorain Khan.

"I had decided not to play any aerial shots," Armaan told the Hindustan Times. "I knew as long as I occupy the crease, the runs will keep flowing. It would have been better if I had got 500, but there is no grudge.'

Jaffer cracked 77 fours in his eight-and-a-half-hour innings.

His uncle, Wasim, scored 1,944 runs in 31 Tests with five centuries before playing his last match in 2008.

PCB offers contracts to women

AFP, Lahore

Pakistan Cricket Board (PCB) on Thursday awarded women cricketers central contracts for the first time, honouring the team which scooped gold at the Asia Games. Pakistan defeated

Bangladesh by 10 wickets in the final of the first Asian Games women's cricket tournament, held in the southern Chinese city of Guangzhou last month. The PCB said it would issue

central contracts to women players from January 1, 2011, without specifying how much money they would earn. Gold-medal winning team

captain Sana Mir welcomed the move. "It's a positive step from the

PCB," Mir told AFP. "It [central contracts] was something badly missing and now the PCB has acknowledged that we can play the game professionally and this will spur us on for more achievements." There are around 600

women players in Pakistan under the age of 19 and around 1,200 seniors, whose earnings are meagre.

ICC CRICKET-

Cup Facts

ICC Cricket World Cup SOUTH AFRICA 2003

The 2003 World Cup, the eighth cricket World Cup, was the first to be held in Africa. The cohosts were South Africa, Zimbabwe and Kenya. The majority of the matches were played in South Africa, with

Zimbabwe hosting six matches and Kenya two. The 2003 World Cup had the highest number of participating teams till then, with fourteen teams taking part.

There were ten Test nations, with Bangladesh being the most recent addition. Kenya had won ODI status, and there were three associate nations in Namibia, Canada and Netherlands.

The teams were divided into two groups of seven with the top three from each group going through to the Super Six.

Group A consisted of Australia, India, Zimbabwe, England, Pakistan, Netherlands and Namibia while group B had Sri Lanka, Kenya, New Zealand, South Africa, West Indies, Canada and Bangladesh.

Teams qualifying for the Super Six would carry forward their points won from matches against fellow qualifiers. In the Super Six, teams would have to play each of the three teams that qualified from the other group, and the top four would qualify for the semifinals. When Kenya played India at Durban on March 20, they were

the only non-Test playing nation in history to contest a semifinal. In the final at Johannesburg on March 23, Australia scored 359 for two against India, which uniquely was the highest score of the tournament.

The highest individual score of the Cup was achieved in the second match of the tournament when Zimbabwe's Craig Wishart scored an unbeaten 172 against Namibia at Harare on February 10.

India's Sachin Tendulkar created a Cup record by hammering 673 runs during the tournament. He was an astonishing 208 runs clear of second-placed Sourav Ganguly, the Indian captain.

Sri Lankan swing bowler Chaminda Vaas accomplished a feat that was unprecedented in one-day internationals till then and

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ICC's no to Butt's plea

AFP, Karachi

Cricket authorities have rejected a plea by Pakistan Test captain Salman Butt to delay a hearing scheduled for next month into a spot-fixing scandal which rocked the sport, the player said Wednesday. The International Cricket

Council's anti-corruption tribunal made the decision in a teleconference held by code of conduct commissioner Michael Beloff QC, after the suspended Salman had asked for time to deal with another possible criminal case.

"Yes, my request has been rejected," Salman told AFP, without elaborating. Mohammad Asif and Mohammad Aamer, two other players suspended when the scandal broke, had not backed the postponement of the January 6-11 hearing in Qatar which will determine whether the three players are banned or exonerated.

The trio were provisionally suspended by the ICC on charges of spot-fixing during Pakistan's Lord's Test against England in August -- a charge which carries a maximum life ban, and a minimum of five years, under the ICC code of conduct. British tabloid the News of

the World claimed several Pakistani players, including **SEE PAGE 17 COL 4**

Know Bangladesh Better

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