NAT'L WOMEN'S CHESS

#### Liza takes solo lead

SPORTS REPORTER

IWM Shamima Akter Liza assumed solo lead of the Arlin Developer 32nd National Women's Chess Championship, defeating Nazrana Khan Eva in their eighth round bout at the Chess Federation yesterday.

Liza now has seven points to her name while Eva, who was joint leader till the seventh round, slips to third position with 6 points. Rani Hameed moved to the second spot with 6.5 points after she beat Sharmin Sultana in this round.

In the other matches of the day, Jahanara Haque beat Arifa Khatun and Dilara Jahan beat Masuda Begum. Mahmuda Haque drew with Zakia Sultana while Tanjina Akter drew with Roksana Titly.

### Bima, Navy in semis

SPORTS REPORTER

Sadharan Bima KS beat Bangladesh Navy 4-2 in the lone match of the Lyric Group Independence Day Hockey Competition at the Maulana Bhasani National Hockey Stadium yesterday.

Turjo, Rajan, Kaushik and Chandan scored one each for Bima whileRimon and Shohagh scored for Navy.

Despite the result, both teams moved into the semifinals of the competition which will be held on Friday. Sadharan Bima will take on Bangladesh Army in one semi while Navy will play against Wari in the other.

#### Hockey FROM PAGE 16

the tournament, a good

moment of the year," the FIH chief said.

The IPL revolutionised cricket when it burst onto the scene in 2008 with a highoctane blend of international star players, scantily clad cheerleaders and Bollywood glamour.

Using the short Twenty20 form of the game, IPL matches are usually threehour events packed with music, delirious crowds and countless television advertisements.

#### Mash op

FROM PAGE 16 December last year during a

FROM PAGE 16

Premier Division Cricket League match at BKSP. It is believed that the

country's leading paceman has hardly any chance to make his international return this year.

#### MSC's reunion

get underway with a recitation of the holy Quran followed by a theme song on the club written by Shahidul Azam and

sung by rock band Feedback. Lokman Hossain Bhuiyan will then deliver a welcome speech to the guests before a 25-minute documentary on Mohammedan's past, present and future which will be

shown on a giant screen. Local and foreign guests will also recall their memories of the club followed by a concluding speech by president Kutubuddin Ahmed. Later a cultural show will be held.

### Obituary

Aftabuddin Khan, former general secretary of Mohammedan SC, breathed his last on Tuesday evening at his Lalmatia resident, said a

press release yesterday. The prominent organiser, who had been suffering from cancer for long, served as general secretary of the club from 1988 to 1990 before holding various other positions in the club.

He was laid to rest at the Mirpur Martyred Intellectuals graveyard after three Namaze-Janazas held in Lalmatia, Manikganj, and the Mirpur graveyard. A number of former players, officials, relatives and neighbours attended his Janaza.



Defending champion Shamima Akter Liza (R) concentrates on her next move during her victory over rival Nazrana Khan Eva (L) in the 32nd National Chess Championship at the Chess Federation yesterday. PHOTO: STAR

# PCB for day-night Tests

Cricket

PTI, Karachi

After staging the final of its premier domestic tournament under lights early this year, the Pakistan Cricket Board (PCB) is now backing the ICC's idea to introduce day-night Test matches.

Along with the controversial Umpire Decision Review System (UDRS), the future of daynight Tests is one of the subjects that is being discussed at the ICC's ongoing meeting at Lord's, London. The feedbacks from the PCB and Cricket Australia (CA) along with the Marylebone Cricket Club (MCC) which experimented with floodlit first-class matches is supposed to play vital role in making a decision on future of day-night Tests.

Though the MCC and CA's views are yet to be revealed, the PCB has given thumbs up to the idea on basis of its experiment. The PCB hosted its first official day/night first class match -- the final of the Quaid-e-Azam Trophy that was played between Pakistan International Airline and Habib Bank at the National Stadium in Karachi.

Played with an orange ball after mutual

consent of both teams, the final though failed to draw enough crowd.

PCB officials are, however, optimistic about the future of day-night Tests. "It was a successful experiment," PCB's Director Domestic Sultan Rana was quoted as saying in "The Express Tribune".

"We have sent a positive report to the ICC [International Cricket Council] and the idea should go on at the top level," he added.

Rana said the report that has been sent to the ICC was prepared after taking feedbacks from the competing players, both team managements, umpires and the other boards officials who were assigned to make their assessment.

"It was a comprehensive report that included feedbacks from all those involved in the match," he said.

Rana played down post-match reports that suggested some players were unhappy with the experiment, citing weak sighting under lights. "We got mixed reactions from players but the majority of them had no issues and backed the idea," he said. "It's not possible to get the same viewpoint from all stake holders and the issues raised were not serious and can be resolved."

### Afridi to lead one SLPL team

Cricket

CRICINFO

Pakistan's limited-overs captain Shahid Afridi has accepted an offer to lead one of the provinces in the inaugural edition of the Sri Lanka Premier League (SLPL) later this year.

"I've accepted an offer to be captain of one of the teams in the SLPL," Afridi, 31, told Pakistani daily the News. "It's a good opportunity and I will try to make the most of it. There is a comfortable window for us [Pakistan's cricketers] to feature in the league in Sri Lanka. We have a sufficient break from international cricket this summer."

The SLPL comes as a shot in the arm for Pakistan's cricketers who have been ignored by the lucrative Indian Premier League since the inaugural edition in 2008. Afridi revealed that he has signed a three-year contract, and will receive US 35,000 dollars for the first season of the SLPL, with the amount doubling in 2012. He is expected to be joined by Pakistan team-mates Misbahul Haq, Shoaib Akhtar, Abdul Razzaq, Umar Gul and Umar Akmal in the tournament.

SLPL 2011 will be a seven-team interprovincial tournament played over approximately 18 days in July-August. The teams will play each other once, with the top four teams qualifying for the semifinals. All the games will be played at the R Premadasa Stadium in Colombo and the winner of the tournament will qualify for the Champions League Twenty20.

Each team will have a mix of Sri Lanka and international players with total squad sizes varying between 16 and 18 players. The playing XI must consist of a minimum of seven Sri Lanka players and a maximum of four international players, with one Sri Lanka player being a current Under-21 cricketer. Each team will also have its share of icon or marquee players, as well as a prominent ex-Sri Lanka player as a mentor or coach.

International players will also be assigned to the various teams by the SLC national selection committee depending on the needs of each team. In this respect, SLC's approach differs from the IPL, in which teams were sold to franchises who then bid for players in an auction. Among the international players who will be taking part are Kieron Pollard, Chris Gayle, Shahid Afridi, Daniel Vettori, Daniel Christian, Herschelle Gibbs and Kevin O'Brien.

# Kevin signs for Gloucs

Cricket

AFP, London

IrelandWorld Cup sensation Kevin O'Brien has joined Gloucestershire for the rest of the sea-

son, the English county announced Tuesday. In March, O'Brien scored the fastest-ever particular reference to his one day skills. World Cup century, reaching the landmark in just 50 balls against England in Bangalore to set up a thrilling group stage win for Ire-

land over their old rivals. The 27-year-old all-rounder, who has previously played for Nottinghamshire, joins a growing list of Ireland players at county sides with his brother Niall at Northamptonshire, Ireland captain William Porterfield and Boyd Rankin both at Warwickshire and teenage spinner George

Dockrell on Somerset's staff. An excited Kevin O'Brien said in a statement: "I am looking forward to getting over there and hopefully helping the team to achieve its goals in all forms of the game, but especially t20 and one-day cricket.

"Hopefully I can have a great season, help Gloucestershire win trophies and improve my game even further."

Gloucestershire director of cricket John Bracewell said: "We are delighted to have signed Kevin O'Brien to our squad with

"Given his heroics in the World Cup the Gladiators have a genuine lion slayer in their midst," the former New Zealand off-spinner and coach added.

O'Brien can also look forward to the prospect of playing in Sri Lanka's Twenty20 tournament later this year.

"I'm still not 100 per cent who I'll be playing for in Sri Lanka, although I have been told that [Sri Lanka's] Sanath Jayasuria will be the team's captain, and that Darren Bravo [West Indies] and Lonwabo Tsotosbe [South Africa] will also be on the team.

"It's going to be a magnificent experience, and hopefully I'll acquit myself well in what's sure to be a terrific tournament."

### Cheerleader asked to go back home

AFP, Johannesburg

A South African cheerleader has been fired from her Indian Premier League (IPL) gig after writing a behindthe-scenes blog about cricketers misbehaving at postmatch parties, media reportedWednesday.

Gabriella Pasqualotto said she is considering taking legal action after the Mumbai Indians sent her home following a complaint from an unnamed cricketer about her blog, "The Secret Diary of an IPL Cheerleader", South Africa's New Age newspaper said.

"I wrote what I experienced as a cheerleader. But I am considering taking legal action because I feel that I was fired over something small and silly," Pasqualotto told the New Age. "I also think that the

situation was handled unprofessionally." In her blog for the website

thealternativecricketalman ack.com, Pasqualotto wrote about her experiences in India and the post-match naughtiness of cricketers, "the most loose and mischievous sportsmen I have come across".

"Usually only after day matches there is an exclusive after-party and at night is when it all happens. The music pumps, the drinks flow and the cricketers come and go," she wrote.

"The real fun happens in the VIP rooms where the players and night owls can cause scandal!"

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# Playing teams cannot choose wicket: BCCI

AFP, New Delhi

his team lost.

India's cricket board has dismissed criticism by Australian spin great Shane Warne over the playing surface selected for a crunch Indian Premier League (IPL) game

Warne, captain of the Rajasthan Royals, had hinted at foul play over a decision to change the wicket for a home match against Chennai Super Kings in Jaipur earlier this week from the one used in previous games. "It's strange for the first time in four years

we were told we are to play on end wicket and it was prepared completely differently," Warne wrote on his Twitter account after his team crashed to a 63-run defeat.

The previous track had generally been slow and turning, which favoured Rajasthan's spin-heavy attack and helped them notch up four home victories before Monday's game. The Chennai Super Kings franchise is

owned by N Srinivasan, who is the secretary lid on the controversy, saying they were of the powerful Board of Control for Cricket "happy" with the playing conditions. in India (BCCI). The sacked former head of the IPL, Lalit

Modi, suggested on Twitter that the pitch change "shows clearly how small things like a pitch selection can affect a game can be used by the powers that be. And it goes unnoticed."

Others have accused Warne of seeking to switch the focus away from his side's poor performance.

Reacting to Warne's comments, the BCCI said selecting the playing surface was up to the groundsman, who is appointed by the local state cricket association, and the teams have no choice on the matter.

"The BCCI wishes to clarify that the wicket used in the match between Chennai Super Kings and Rajasthan Royals was as per the decision of the curator and the Ground and Pitches Committee," it said in a statement Tuesday.

"This decision was taken in the best interests of the game. Neither of the playing teams has a choice of the wicket."

Venkat Sundaram, chairman of BCCI's Grounds and Pitches Committee, defended the change of tracks, saying the "primary objective" behind the move was to provide a good playing surface.

"The IPL is being played at the end of the Indian domestic season, and after the World Cup," said Sundaram.

"Therefore, the main pitches are bound to have wear and tear. The extreme heat has also taken its toll. Hence it becomes necessary to change the pitches in some cases, as good playing conditions will result in good cricket." Later in the day, Rajasthan sought to put a

"We have enjoyed considerable success

playing on our home ground and have developed a game plan to best suit the prevailing conditions," the franchise said in a state-"Whilst all pitches might vary and some

suit our style better than others, RR (Rajasthan Royals) are happy with the quality of the conditions we play under in Jaipur and at all other grounds we have visited in "At no time have we attributed our results

to the conditions of the pitch at any ground.'

## Australia after Donald

### Cricket

CRICINFO

Australia and New Zealand could be battling for the services of Allan Donald as bowling coach, after the South African made it to the final round of interviews to replace Troy Cooley in the Australian setup. Donald worked with New Zealand for several months before and during the World Cup, and while they are keen to retain him, the decision may be taken out of their hands.

Craig McDermott, the former Australia fast bowler and Academy coach, and the Tasmania assistant Allister de Winter also made the cut for a second interview with Cricket Australia. However, Donald would be a more unexpected choice if he was offered the job, as Australia have traditionally not been inclined to employ foreign talent on their coaching staff.

Cricket Australia's general manager of cricket, Michael Brown, has conducted the final round of interviews and was expected to put an offer to the chosen candidate this week. An announcement on who will replace Cooley, who is now the head coach at the Centre of Excellence in Brisbane, is likely to come over the next week.

"I am waiting on a call from Cricket Australia in the next 48 hours [from Tuesday's final interviews] and then I'll make my decision," Donald told ESPNcricinfo on Wednesday. If he does not win the Australian position, Donald is expected to remain with New Zealand.

Both teams could benefit from the experience of Donald, who is reportedly strong on the mental aspects of the game, not just the

technical. That could be ideal for an Australian attack led by Mitchell Johnson, although a New Zealand bowling group that has lost the veterans Shane Bond and Iain O'Brien in the past couple of years would also gain from working with a champion such as Donald.

New Zealand's director of cricket, John Buchanan, said the role of bowling coach would be of great importance in the immediate future for their youthful attack. The veteran spearhead Chris Martin turns 37 later this year and can't go on forever, so young men like Tim Southee and Hamish Bennett will need to take on more responsibility over the coming seasons. "I spoke to [the coach] John Wright at

length and he was very impressed with him [Donald], the way he went about what he did," Buchanan told ESPNcricinfo. "He probably spends more time with bowlers in terms of the way they think about the game and their game awareness, as opposed to being too technical about what bowling requires. John's comment was that his group responded very well to him and he was very keen to keep him on board if he could.

"Having that sort of experience and knowledge around is one way of upskilling the younger guys who have less of that, but offer a lot of other things. It is a critical role, certainly for the next couple of years anyway." In addition to having taken 330 Test wick-

ets at an average of 22.25, Donald has plenty of coaching experience on his CV. He spent a short time as England's bowling coach in 2007 and took charge of the Zimbabwe domestic side Mountaineers last year, before taking up his role with New Zealand.

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### CROSSWORD By Eugene Sheffer

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