

## Bagai quits captaincy

CRICINFO

Ashish Bagai has stepped down as captain of Canada ahead of the Intercontinental Cup which begins in June. The 29-year-old wicketkeeper-batsman Bagai, who made his debut in 2003 and has had two stints as captain, will still be available for selection as a player. Bagai led Canada in the 2011 World Cup in which they beat higher-ranked Kenya in the group stages. He made two half-centuries during the tournament.

## Contador claims it again

AFP, Milan

Spain's Alberto Contador of the Saxo Bank team secured his second Tour of Italy title on Sunday, after Scot David Millar of Garmin won the final stage time trial in Milan.

Contador, who came into the race in the shadow of a doping controversy regarding last year's Tour de France, has dominated the event, spending the bulk of the 94th edition in the leader's pink jersey.

Although Millar took the plaudits with his swashbuckling showing in the 26km final stage, the headlines will belong to Contador, who will now seek to add a fourth Tour de France to his glittering record.

## Badminton's

FROM PAGE 16  
while runners-up in each group would get Tk 50,000 each. In addition, the best player in both men's and women's group would get Tk 20,000 each.

Of an estimated budget of Tk 6.44 lakh, sponsors Auto Museum will provide Tk 5 lakh while co-sponsors BJ Group will give Tk one lakh to conduct the league, which was last held in 2008. However, this is the first time that the league will be conducted under the ad-hoc committee that was formed in early 2010.

BBF's joint secretary Mariam Tareq, tournament committee chairman Golam Faruque Dewan and Auto Museum's deputy director Habibullah Don were among others present at the press meet.

Participating teams are: Knit Concern Badminton Club, Ahoban Badminton Club, Biman Krira and Sangskriti Parasad, Maha Sporting Club, Pacific Associates Badminton Club, Gulshan Sporting Club, Surj Tarun Club and Dewan Textile Badminton Club.

## GP Open

FROM PAGE 16  
The final of the Premier Division takes place today with Swapan Parvez of Basundhara Group facing Shaheed of Gulshan Club. State minister for youth and sports Ahad Ali Sarker will be present as chief guest.

## School cricket's

FROM PAGE 16  
The final will be played at the Sher-e-Bangla National Stadium in Mirpur on June 5.

As many as 540 schools from all 64 districts of the country took part in the competition.

## Sheikh Jamal

FROM PAGE 16  
Two minutes from the break, Ayuk doubled the lead with a side-volley from close range and made it 3-0 five minutes into the second half with a tap in after meeting a low cross from Wali Faisal from the right.

Emily, who came in place of Sergio Chico after the break, sealed the match in the 70th minute with his sixth goal of the league as he ran down the middle to dance past two defenders and placed the ball to the right of advancing keeper James Paul, who had come in as a substitute after the breather.

Two medical doctors with extensive experience of sports medicine were included in



World number one Rafael Nadal of Spain is fully focused during his French Open fourth round clash against Croatia's Ivan Ljubicic at Roland Garros in Paris yesterday. Nadal won 7-5, 6-3, 6-3.

PHOTO: AFP

## Rafael rolls on, Novak gets semi pass

AFP, Paris

Five-time champion Rafael Nadal reached the French Open last night on Monday as title rival Novak Djokovic enjoyed a major psychological boost when he was handed a free pass into the semifinals.

Top seed Nadal enjoyed a 7-5, 6-3, 6-3 win over Croatian veteran Ivan Ljubicic and could next face Roland Garros bogeyman Robin Soderling, the only player to have beaten the great Spaniard in Paris in 43 matches.

Djokovic, meanwhile, was excused quarterfinal duty when scheduled opponent Fabio Fognini of Italy withdrew with a torn left thigh muscle.

Nadal, bidding for a sixth French Open title to take him level with Bjorn Borg, has looked a shadow of his usual self in Paris, shaken by the super-charged form of Djokovic, who could take his title and number one spot before the week is out.

On Monday, he was a break to the good to lead 2-1 in the opening set before Ljubicic, a 2006 semi-finalist, hit back for 3-3.

Nadal stepped up the pressure on the Croatian's serve, however, and snatched the set when Ljubicic sent his single-handed backhand wide.

Two breaks in the seventh and ninth games of the second set helped Nadal stretch

his lead, the set secured with a smart, down-the-line whipped forehand.

A break for 3-1 in the third set seemed to be the foundation that the 24-year-old required, but Ljubicic, at 32 the oldest man left in the draw, hit back for 2-3.

But an immediate break to love gave Nadal a 4-2 lead and he claimed the tie in the ninth game when Ljubicic again went long with a loose backhand.

Fognini, who had been due to play his first career Grand Slam quarter-final, suffered a tournament-ending injury in his marathon five-set fourth-round win over Albert Montanes on Sunday.

Djokovic said he felt sympathy for Fognini, a player he has defeated in both of their career meetings.

French ninth seed Gael Monfils, a 2008 semi-finalist, set up a last eight clash with third seed Roger Federer after defeating Spain's David Ferrer, the seventh seed, 6-4, 2-6, 7-5, 1-6, 8-6.

Monfils had led by two sets to one when the tie was suspended on Sunday night and despite squandering three match points in the ninth and 11th games of the decider on Monday, the 24-year-old eventually held his nerve.

Argentina's Juan Ignacio Chela shattered Alejandro Falla's dreams of becoming the first Colombian man to reach a Grand Slam quarter-final with a 4-6, 6-2, 1-6, 7-6 (7/5), 6-2 win.

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## Sania-Elena in doubles semis

PTI, Paris

Sania Mirza and Elena Vesnina shocked top seeds Gisela Dulko and Flavia Pennetta 6-0, 7-5 to reach the women's doubles semifinals in the French Open here on Monday.

The seventh seed Indo-Russian pair wrapped up the quarterfinal clash in one hour and six minutes after blanking the Argentine-Italian duo in the first set.

This is for the first time that Sania has reached the women's doubles semifinals in a Grand Slam event.

The quarterfinal appearances in the 2007 US Open and 2008 Wimbledon were her best performances so far at the big stage.

They will take on the winner of the Liezel Huber/Lisa Raymond vs Victoria Azarenka/Maria Kirilenko clash in the semifinals.

### All talk but

FROM PAGE 16  
changed little in one decade. So, the general consensus seems to be that it is high time to start the work first rather than spending time only sharing the views.

If someone looks at the current Test teams, the reason why Australia is still a top team is because the gap between their first-class cricket and the standard of their Test cricket is minimal. For the world's top teams any player from the first-class structure can walk into the national team, so we should look at ways and means of strengthening the first-class structure because that is the structure that is going to provide cricketers for the national team.

These are the issues which had been discussed individually and as well as in the different forums and the need of regional cricket associations was also discussed on many occasions and it has been said many times that the infrastructure would also have to be improved. In reality though, the progress has been limited.

Things might have improved a little bit in terms of facilities but still the 'picnic mood' has prevailed with the country's most important domestic competition; the National Cricket League and there was no exception in the last competition which ended a few weeks back.

So, the problem is not with the ideas but in its implementation.

# England pull off a miracle



**SPORT DESK**

A magnificent bowling effort from England, particularly four-wicket heroes Chris Tremlett and Graeme Swann after the tea break on the final day, gave England an unexpected innings and 14-run victory in the first Test against Sri Lanka at Sophia Gardens last evening.

Sri Lanka, in their second innings were shot to bits -- bowled out for 82 -- after England's first innings 496 for five declared. The hosts now have a 1-0 lead in the three-Test series.

Tremlett took two wickets for four runs in three balls to remove both Sri Lanka's openers and reduce the tourists to 10 for two right after tea. He struck with his sixth ball to have Tharanga Paranavitana well caught low down at first slip by England captain Andrew Strauss. But it was all the fiftieth in Surrey paceman's own work when he caught and bowled Sri Lanka skipper Tillakaratne Dilshan after a review confirmed the batsman had gloved a lifting delivery back to the bowler.

Apart from the openers, Tremlett took the wickets of Mahela Jayawardene and his namesake and first innings centurion

Prasanna as the Lankans fell to 43 for seven at one stage.

Swann, regarded the best spinner in world cricket, took out Kumar Sangakkara, Thilan Samaraweera, Farveez Maharoof and Rangana Herath.

Thisara Perera and Ajantha Mendis added 30 as the visitors look to restore some pride after a fine first innings showing, but Perera fell to Stuart Broad for 20 off 17 balls.

Earlier England, after rain washed out the morning session, added just five runs to their overnight total.

Strauss declared as soon as Ian Bell, who resumed on 98, cut debutant seamer Thisara Perera to complete a 159-ball hundred featuring a six and 11 fours.

Bell's was the third century of an England innings that saw his Warwickshire teammate Jonathan Trott score 203 and opener Alastair Cook 133.

### SCORES IN BRIEF

**SRI LANKA:** First innings 400 and second innings 82 all out (Perera 20, Jayawardene 15; Tremlett 4-40, Swann 4-16).

**ENGLAND:** First innings 496 for 5 decl (Strauss 20, Cook 133, Trott 203, Bell 103 not out).

**Result:** England won by an innings and 14 runs.

## Gayle left out

WI name squads for T20 & ODIs against India



AFP, St John's

Former skipper Chris Gayle has been left out of the West Indies squad to face India in the Twenty20 clash and two opening one-dayers in a continuing stand-off with selectors.

Gayle remains out of favour with the West Indies Cricket Board (WICB) after he was dropped for the recent home series against Pakistan, a decision which left him free to play in the entire IPL with Bangalore.

Despite Gayle finishing the tournament as the leading run-getter, the WICB said in a statement that the big-hitting batsman will not be recalled until he explains comments he gave in a radio interview in which he lambasted selectors.

All-rounder Kieron Pollard has been recalled for the first two ODIs, while fast bowler Kemar Roach has been rested.

Uncapped Jamaican left-arm seamer Krishmar Santokie is the only change in the T20 squad which defeated Pakistan in St Lucia in April.

Pollard and Dwayne Bravo were not included in the Twenty20 squad having not played in the recent Caribbean Twenty20 tournament.

Fast bowler Jerome Taylor has again been overlooked with selectors insisting he must play a full season of regional cricket to prove his fitness.

West Indies and India will play five ODIs as well as three Tests.

West Indies squad for the Twenty20 match and the first two ODIs against India on June 4, June 6 and June 8, all at Port of Spain, Trinidad.

### SQUADS

**Twenty20:** Lendl Simmons, Andre Fletcher, Darren Bravo, Marlon Samuels, Danza Hyatt, Darren Sammy (captain), Christopher Barnwell, Andre Russell, Ashley Nurse, Devendra Bishoo, Ravi Rampaul, Krishmar Santokie.

**ODIs:** Lendl Simmons, Kirk Edwards, Darren Bravo, Marlon Samuels, Ramnaresh Sarwan, Dwayne Bravo, Kieron Pollard, Darren Sammy (captain), Carlton Baugh, Andre Russell, Anthony Martin, Devendra Bishoo, Ravi Rampaul.



Winners of the Mir Ceramic Cup Golf Tournament pose for a photograph at Dhaka Cantonment's Army Golf Club on May 28.

PHOTO: COURTESY

## Tharanga fails dope test



AFP, Colombo

the panel headed by sports ministry secretary Udaya Seneviratne to probe Tharanga's case, Abeykoon said.

Cricket officials in Colombo said no Sri Lankan player had ever failed a dope test before, but current skipper and Tharanga's opening partner, Tillakaratne Dilshan, has been subject to allegations in the media.

Dilshan said in a statement in March that unidentified sources were trying to distract him from his game with allegations of doping.

The embarrassing development of Tharanga failing the dope test comes amid allegations by a former skipper that Sri Lankan players have been responsible for match fixing since 1992.

Sri Lanka says the allegations of match-fixing are still under investigation.

A press report on Sunday said Tharanga had already retained a lawyer to defend himself at an upcoming ICC inquiry into his doping results.

It said Tharanga has claimed that he was given a steroid by a faith healer in Colombo who also treated other international players.

There was no immediate comment Monday from the ICC's anti-doping committee, but ICC spokesman James Fitzgerald told AFP on Sunday that he had "nothing to say."

There was also no comment from Tharanga. He is not part of the Sri Lankan side currently on tour in England, but opened against England in their World Cup semi-final and went onto score an unbeaten century.

Under ICC rules, Tharanga can seek a test of his "B" sample.

Two medical doctors with extensive experience of sports medicine were included in

## CROSSWORD By Eugene Sheffer

### ACROSS

30 Round

51 Pail

10 Cut and

11 Grin

12 Rang

13 List of

14 Daze

15 Veggie

16 Color

17 Variation

18 Pastoral

19 Piece

20 "Peanuts"

21 Singers