

# Ashraf new PCB chief

AFP, Karachi

Pakistan President Asif Ali Zardari on Tuesday appointed close friend Zaka Ashraf as chairman of the cricket board to replace the controversial Ijaz Butt, despite never having played the game.

Butt had reportedly sought a six-month extension in the high-profile post but Ashraf will instead take over as Pakistan Cricket Board (PCB) chairman with immediate effect, state-owned Pakistan Television said.

Ashraf, 59, a member of the executive committee of the ruling Pakistan People's Party, said his priority was to improve Pakistan cricket's image abroad after a series of high-profile scandals.

"I will work day and night to live up to president Zardari's confidence," Ashraf told a private television channel. "My top priority will be to improve Pakistan's cricket image and stop bookies and match-fixers."

Ashraf said that he will also try to improve relations with other cricket boards, including great rivals India, with whom sporting and diplomatic ties have stalled after a terrorist attack on Mumbai in 2008.

"People in both Pakistan and India love cricket so I will try to resume ties," said Ashraf.

"I believe in cricket diplomacy and hope that relations with all the countries improve," added Ashraf, who is the 32nd PCB chairman since its inception in 1948.

The reign of former Test player Butt, 73, ended last week after three turbulent years.

Butt was criticised for his policies by former players and parliamentarians alike, but Zardari, who as president of the country is a patron of the PCB, resisted all calls and did not replace him until his tenure expired.

Coinciding with Butt's reign was an attack on the Sri Lankan team in Lahore in March 2009 which led to the halting of international cricket in Pakistan that continues to this day with teams too worried about security to tour.

An independent commission investigating the attack accused the PCB of negligence.

Butt also infuriated the England and Wales Cricket Board by alleging English players were involved in match-fixing. He had to retract his statement and apologised after England threatened legal action.

# Rating chess

SPORTS REPORTER

Seventeen players shared the lead in the Prime Bank 14th International Open Rating Chess Tournament at the close of the second round at the Bangladesh Chess Federation hall-room yesterday.

All of them secured maximum two points from as many matches.

FIDE master Mohammad Javed, FIDE master Syed Mahfuzur Rahman, FIDE master Mehdi Hasan, FIDE master Rezaul Karim, Shafiq Ahmed and Golam Mostafa Bhuiyan are among the leaders.

# Bad day

**FROM PAGE 16**  
Kong beat Sakchham Karki of Nepal by the same scoreline, Nofil Kaleem of Pakistan defeated Mala of Nepal 6-2, 6-1 while Lishani of Nepal won over Ming Chong of Hong Kong after the latter retired due to injury at 6-1, 1-1.

# Academy

**FROM PAGE 16**  
cricket's grassroots will have a unique appeal and probably encourage other such luminaries to come forward and give youths in their hometowns a chance through cricket.

The fact that he decided to open the academy in his native Moulvibazar was not only a huge boost for cricket in Sylhet, which has been languishing for several years, but also for other districts where cricket is big but the lack of infrastructure badly hurts its development.



Mohammedan players celebrate a goal during their 3-0 victory in the semifinal against Dipali Jubo Sangha in the Walton National Women's Football League at the Bangabandhu National Stadium yesterday. PHOTO: BANGLARCHOKH

# WOMEN'S FOOTBALL LEAGUE MSC roar into final

SPORTS REPORTER

Mohammedan Sporting Club advanced into the final of the Walton Women's Football League with an emphatic 3-0 win over Dipali Jubo Sangha in the second semifinal at the Bangabandhu National Stadium yesterday.

Sui Nu Pru, Tithu and Mainu struck one goal apiece to set up their final clash against Sheikh Jamal Dhanmondi Club to be held on Friday at the same venue.

It was not the one-way traffic like the first semifinal between Sheikh Jamal and Farashganj SC, rather it was a neck to neck fight between the two semi-finalists. Despite having experienced and national players, Mohammedan had to wait until the 28th minute to open their account.

Dipali, comprising mostly of inexperienced players put up a brave show to keep Mohammedan defenders busy until vice-captain Sui Nu found the back of the Diplai net from a free-kick outside the danger zone to put Mohammedan ahead.

Despite going one-goal down, Dipali, who came into the semifinal with two suc-

cessive victories after a 4-0 defeat against Sheikh Jamal, put up a much improved performance in their overall fourth game of the league and it never seemed that two uneven sides in terms of strength were playing what was a regular scenario in the group-phase matches.

However, Mohammedan had the final say as they doubled the lead three minutes from the breather as Sui Nu ran down from the right to advance into the box and provide the ball to substitute Tithu who placed the ball inside the far post. Mainu sealed the game ten minutes into the second half after availing a through-pass from Bilkis.

"I am not happy with the performance though we moved into the final," said Mohammedan coach Poniruzzaman adding that they would need to be much improved if they wanted to win the first-ever women's league trophy.

"Despite losing the game, I am happy because the girls presented a competitive match but the experience made the difference between the two sides," said Dipali coach Akbar Ali.

# Axe surprises Harbhajan

CRICINFO, Hyderabad

Off-spinner Harbhajan Singh has said he was "more surprised" than hurt after being dropped from India's squad for the first two ODIs against England. Harbhajan was left out after a disappointing injury-ridden performance on the recent tour of England. The selectors chose to give Punjab legspinner Rahul Sharma a chance along with Tamil Nadu offspinner R Ashwin.

"I wouldn't say I was hurt. I was more surprised," Harbhajan told PTI. "I wish the younger guys all the best. I am more than happy to share my experience with them like I was helped by Sachin Tendulkar, Anil Kumble and Sourav Ganguly while I was coming up."

Harbhajan took only two wickets in 69.4 overs against England at an average of 143.50 and economy-rate of 4.11. He suffered a stomach injury during the second Test and was ruled out of the last two matches and the limited-overs series that followed. India lost the Test series 0-4 and the ODI series 0-3.

Harbhajan's bowling has been criticised of late, with his 17 wickets in 17 ODIs in 2011 coming at an average of 41.29. He has, however, conceded fewer than five runs an over in each of his previous seven ODI series.

Harbhajan said it was not always possible to take wickets in the shorter format with the emphasis being on stemming the run flow, which India's attack struggled to do.

"First of all you must decide what you expect from a bowler in limited-overs format. Do you expect him to take a five-for every time he bowls his 10 overs or do you want him to put the squeeze on and force the opposition to play into your hands. In a low-scoring match, you would expect him to take wickets. On a belter of a track, you want him to dry up the runs."

# Federation polls in Jan next year

SPORTS REPORTER

The National Sports Council (NSC) will finally hold the elections of different national federations in January next year after completing its annual general meeting (AGM) in December.

The decision was taken yesterday at the NSC executive committee meeting with its chairman and state minister for youth and sports Ahad Ali Sarker in chair.

Sources inside the meeting informed that the NSC chairman would fix the date of AGM and it may take place in the middle of December following Hajji in November.

After the AGM, NSC would go for the elections of 19 national federations which are now being run by ad-hoc committees over the last couple of years, added the source.

The last AGM of NSC was held in December, 2004 and since then sports' governing body failed to hold its general meeting.

The meeting also decided to name four district stadiums after four Birshreshthas of Liberation War and another two after freedom fighters.

Meanwhile, Jhalakathi Stadium will be named as Shaheed Birshreshtha Captain Mohiuddin Jahangir Stadium, Munsiganj stadium will be named Shaheed Birshreshtha Flight Lieutenant Motiur Rahman Stadium, Cox's Bazar stadium will be named Shaheed Birshreshtha Ruhul Amin Stadium, and Shariatpur Stadium will be named Shaheed Birshreshtha LanceNyack Munsri Abdur Rouf Stadium, it was decided in the meeting.

The meeting also decided to start the second-phase of training for different disciplines from December as the NSC picked up 680 athletes from 20 disciplines from 46 districts through talent hunt programme earlier in the year.

# Pakistan for DRS

AFP, Karachi

Pakistan on Tuesday announced it will employ the Decision Review System (DRS) during its one-day series against Sri Lanka later this month and against England early next year.

A Pakistan Cricket Board (PCB) release said it has acquired sponsorship to use the DRS in both the series to be played at the neutral venues of the United Arab Emirates.

"PCB announces that the DRS system (Hawk-eye Kitecore) is to be applied during both the Pakistan Vs Sri Lanka (Oct-Nov) and Pakistan Vs England (Jan/Feb 2012) one day International series to be held in the UAE," PCB release said.

The International Cricket Council (ICC) on Tuesday ended the mandatory use of DRS and reverted to its pre-June 2010 position.

The use of DRS will now be up to the competing countries, subject to bilateral agreements between the participating boards.

PCB chief operating officer Subhan Ahmad said the DRS will be helpful.

# Ferrer sails, Tsonga fails



AFP, Shanghai

Big-serving Jo-Wilfried Tsonga crashed out of the Shanghai Masters on Wednesday, beaten by Japan's Kei Nishikori 7-6 (7/1), 4-6, 4-6 but third seed David Ferrer eased through to the third round.

Tsonga, the fourth seed, appeared to be on his way to a straightforward win when he stepped up the intensity of his game to seal the first set tie-break with the loss of just one point.

But world number 47 Nishikori, who needed court-side treatment on his back, broke twice in the second set, levelling the match when the Frenchman netted with a forehand.

Nishikori, who has a poor record against top 10 players, produced two more breaks in the deciding set, taking advantage of an error-strewn performance by Tsonga and sealing the win on his third match point.

The defeat puts a serious dent in the Frenchman's bid to reach next month's ATP World Tour Finals. He came into the Shanghai Masters in eighth place in the race to reach the show-piece, featuring the top eight players of the year.

"Of course I'm disappointed because I lost. But today I had a good opponent," said Tsonga.

"He was really good. Even if maybe I didn't play with a lot of energy, I played good tennis. And today my opponent was just better than me."

He praised Nishikori, saying: "He returned unbelievable. I think nobody breaks me many times like this." Tsonga struck 11 aces in the match but was broken four times in total and made 45 unforced errors.

Referring to his chances of reaching the

year-end ATP tournament in London, he said: "At the moment I'm confident. I will take some rest and then I will come back to qualify."

Spain's Ferrer came out on top 7-5, 7-6 (9/7) in his second round clash with Canada's Milos Raonic.

Earlier, Juan Carlos Ferrero came from a set down in an all-Spanish tie to oust 16th seed Fernando Verdasco 4-6, 6-3, 6-2, breaking six times during a match lasting a little over two hours.

There was also a win for 12th seed Alexandr Dolgoplov of Ukraine, who overcame Spain's Albert Ramos 5-7, 6-3, 6-2.

Austria's 14th seed Jurgen Melzer lost in three sets to Colombia's Santiago Giraldo while Australia's Matthew Ebden beat America's Ryan Harrison in straight sets.

In the evening session, world number two Rafael Nadal was on court against compatriot Guillermo Garcia-Lopez, to be followed by Britain's defending champion Andy Murray against Russia's Dmitry Tursunov.

World number one Novak Djokovic, Nadal, Roger Federer and Murray have already qualified for the year-ending ATP finals.

# Tigers' chance

**FROM PAGE 16**  
but the problem lies with the application and that's why everybody will be looking to see how the Tigers grab this opportunity against this West Indies side to state their renewed intent under the guidance of new coach Stuart Law. A better, smarter batting display will go a long way to healing the wounds of the memory of that infamous World Cup match against the same opponents.

# England eye reversal



AFP, Hyderabad

England will look to improve on their dismal one-day record in India when they clash with the injury-ravaged world champions in a five-match series starting Friday.

England have beaten India just once in their last 10 one-day internationals on Indian soil, which included a thrilling tie during the World Cup in Bangalore in March.

Alastair Cook's side will be buoyant after a dominant home season when they beat India 4-0 in the Test series to take over as the world's number one team, and also won the one-dayers 3-0.

Cook, however, refused to take victory for granted against a depleted home team missing key players such as Sachin Tendulkar, Virender Sehwag, Zaheer Khan and Harbhajan Singh due to injury or poor form.

England, who arrived in India on October 4 to acclimatise to local conditions, warmed up for the series by winning both practice matches against Hyderabad teams.

On Tuesday, they routed the local side by 253 runs after Jonny Bairstow smashed an unbeaten 104 off 53 balls and uncapped leg-spinner Scott Borthwick picked up five wickets.

The new-look Indian team has just four survivors -- skipper Mahendra Singh Dhoni, Gautam Gambhir, Virat Kohli and Suresh Raina -- from the side that beat Sri Lanka in

# 'They conspired against Afridi'



AFP, London

Pakistan cricketers were ready to throw one-day internationals and Twenty20s in a bid to undermine then-captain Shahid Afridi and make "a hell of a lot of money" doing so, a London court heard on Tuesday.

Mazhar Majeed, an agent for several Pakistan players, told an undercover reporter last year that the players wanted Afridi replaced by then-Test captain Salman Butt -- and were prepared to throw matches to do it, Southwark Crown Court heard.

The court also heard how a shadowy Indian contact offered the agent 1 million dollars if he got Pakistan cricketers to throw away a winning position in a Test match against England.

The jury in the trial of Butt and fast bowler Mohammad Asif saw video of meetings between Majeed and undercover reporter Mazher Mahmood.

The investigations editor for Rupert Murdoch's now-defunct News of the World tabloid was posing as a frontman for a Far East gambling syndicate.

Prosecutors allege Butt and Asif agreed for no-balls to be bowled as part of a spot-fixing betting scam.

The pair has pleaded not guilty to charges of conspiracy to obtain and accept corrupt payments, and conspiracy to cheat at gambling.

The jury saw covertly-filmed footage of a meeting between the agent and the reporter at a London hotel, at which Majeed took 140,000 pounds from Mahmood and counted it out.

"A lot of the boys, they want to .... up Afridi because he's trying to .... up things for them," Majeed claimed.

"They all want Butt to be captain... They want to lose anyway."

"We're going to be making a hell of a lot of money in the Twenty20s and the one-days."

"Say for example Twenty20. I will tell you the bowlers, how many minimum runs they

the World Cup final in Mumbai on April 2.

Tendulkar, Sehwag, Yuvraj Singh, Zaheer Khan and Munaf Patel are recovering from injuries, while Harbhajan and Shanthakumaran Sreesanth were dropped due to poor form.

India's 15-man squad for the first two one-dayers includes three players -- leg-spinner Rahul Sharma, 24, left-arm seamer Sreenath Aravind, 27, and fast bowler Varun Aaron, 21 -- who have yet to play international cricket.

Ravichandran Ashwin, Ravindra Jadeja and Sharma are the three spin options, while Praveen Kumar will lead a new-ball attack that also includes Umesh Yadav and Vinay Kumar.

Kevin Pietersen returns for England after being omitted for the one-dayers against India at home, but the tourists are without pace spearheads James Anderson who is being rested, and Stuart Broad who is injured.

Tim Bresnan, Jade Dernbach and Steven Finn will head the tourists' pace attack, which also includes 22-year-old uncapped Surrey bowler Stuart Meaker.

Despite injuries to star players and the humiliating defeats on English soil, India appeared unfazed.

The remaining four matches after the Hyderabad opener will be played in New Delhi on October 17, Mohali on the 20th, Mumbai on the 23rd and Kolkata on the 25th.

England will round off the tour with a Twenty20 game in Kolkata on October 29.

are going to concede, which is much more than usual. They are going to concede those runs.

"I'm going to tell you how many, say for the example, the two opening batsmen Salman and Kamran [Akmal] for example, you've only got 20 overs, they're going to waste two overs, three overs... The Twenty20s are the easiest."

The jury also saw footage of an earlier meeting in Majeed's London home, where the reporter recorded the agent on the telephone with an unidentified man in India, discussing deliberately throwing the England v Pakistan Test match at The Oval, which was under way at the time.

Majeed called his Indian contact and told him: "What offer can you give me for today's game? Tell me, just give me a figure now."

"There's a possibility, I'm just telling you that now, they're talking at least 1.2 [million] -- at least. In dollars."

The prosecution alleged that Majeed and the mystery contact were floating the possibility of Pakistan deliberately losing the game.

Referring to the Pakistan players under his wing, Majeed said: "Boss, you know how many I've got, you know that they do it. So of course that's not a problem. But you just give me the figure and I'm going to get back to you."

The Indian contact replied: "I give you one [million dollars]. One I give you, but has to be a definite game score."

In the event, Pakistan beat England by four wickets.

The court heard a secretly-recorded phone call later that day, in which the agent told Mahmood his players were offering to spot-fix elements of matches for 150,000 pounds.

The agent said they could not understand why he was reluctant to hand over that amount on trust, especially when the usual fee was 250,000 pounds.

Majeed said: "What they're saying is if this guy gives 150 we'll give him two brackets [periods of play during which elements can be pre-arranged], whatever he wants, for the next game."

# CROSSWORD By Eugene Sheffer

ACROSS

- 1 Birthday party highlight
- 5 Witty one
- 8 Cotillion
- 12 Elliptical
- 13 Ram's mate
- 14 -- podrida
- 15 Attendance check
- 17 King of the jungle
- 18 Away from WSW
- 19 Day divs.
- 20 Roulette bet
- 21 Remuneration
- 22 Japanese theater
- 23 Monastery head
- 26 Shoulder-borne rocket launcher
- 30 False god
- 31 Insect
- 32 "Once -- a time, ..."
- 33 Recorded a score, with "up"
- 35 Ancient port on the Tiber
- 36 Can metal
- 37 Exist
- 38 Place
- 41 By way of
- 42 Tackle the slopes
- 45 Bobcat
- 46 Highway with booths, e.g.
- 48 Tom Joad, for one
- 49 Noshed
- 50 Ringlet
- 51 Marries
- 52 Foundation
- 53 Wartime partner

DOWN

- 1 Apple's center

Solution time: 21 mins.

BBS	ASH	COLA
LATIC	GOO	IBEX
OSLO	OAK	TIGE
GHOUL	RUBY	
	NIP	MISFIT
WALTZES	GLIDE	
ICER	TAJ	ISLE
TRAYS	PATCHES	
TERCEL	WOK	
	LAOS	YEAST
DIEU	DNA	RUNE
ARAB	GOP	STAN
METS	EW	OPT

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# CRYPTOQUIP

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N U I F A , U ' C K G P A D Y M G O O  
D K G D G P A I C Y V N A I C A V .

Yesterday's Cryptoquip: NAME OF A COMMERCIAL PASSENGER BOAT WITH AN ARRAY OF PROMINENT WARNING BLASTS: THE TOOT FERRY.

Today's Cryptoquip Clue: D equals T