

Akmal, Razzaq get Pak recall

AFP, Karachi

Pakistan recalled wicket-keeper batsman Kamran Akmal, all-rounder Abdul Razzaq and opener Imran Nazir in their 15-man squad Tuesday for the World Twenty20 in Sri Lanka.

Kamran, 30, was cleared by a Pakistan Cricket Board (PCB) integrity committee last week after his name was mentioned at the trial in England last year of three Pakistani Test players over spot-fixing allegations.

Former Test captain Salman Butt and pacemen Mohammad Asif and Mohammad Aamer were banned and jailed for contriving deliberate no-balls during the Lord's Test against England in 2010.

Kamran last played for Pakistan in May last year in the semifinal of the World Cup against India, at Mohali, a match India won by 29 runs.

Razzaq, 32, last played against Sri Lanka in November 2011 while Nazir has not played since 2010.

Mohammad Hafeez will lead the team after replacing Misbahul Haq -- who also lost his place in the T20 side -- in May.

The 12-team tournament, in which England are the defending champions, will run from September 18 to October 7.

Chief selector Iqbal Qasim said the final squad was decided after thorough consultation between the selection committee, Hafeez and coach Dav Whatmore.

"We have selected the best possible squad after consultation and this Pakistan team has the capacity to win the World Twenty20," Qasim told AFP.

Pakistan, runners-up in the inaugural Twenty20 in 2007 and winners in 2009, are placed in group D of the event, alongside Bangladesh and New Zealand.

Qasim defended recalling Razzaq and Nazir.

"They are brilliant players and have experience of international cricket so we have given them another chance," said Qasim, also backing out-of-form pacemen Mohammad Sami and Umar Gul.

"Gul and Sami are experienced campaigners and their form may be in question but they have class and with their experience can deliver," said Qasim.

SQUAD

Mohammad Hafeez (captain), Imran Nazir, Nasir Jamshed, Asad Shafiq, Shoaib Malik, Umar Akmal, Kamran Akmal, Abdul Razzaq, Shahid Afridi, Sohail Tanveer, Umar Gul, Saeed Ajmal, Raza Hasan, Yasir Arafat, Mohammad Sami.

Wet London sends Liu to Germany

AFP, Beijing

England's miserable summer weather has prompted Chinese athletics star Liu Xiang to leave London and complete his pre-Olympics training in Germany, the China Daily said Tuesday.

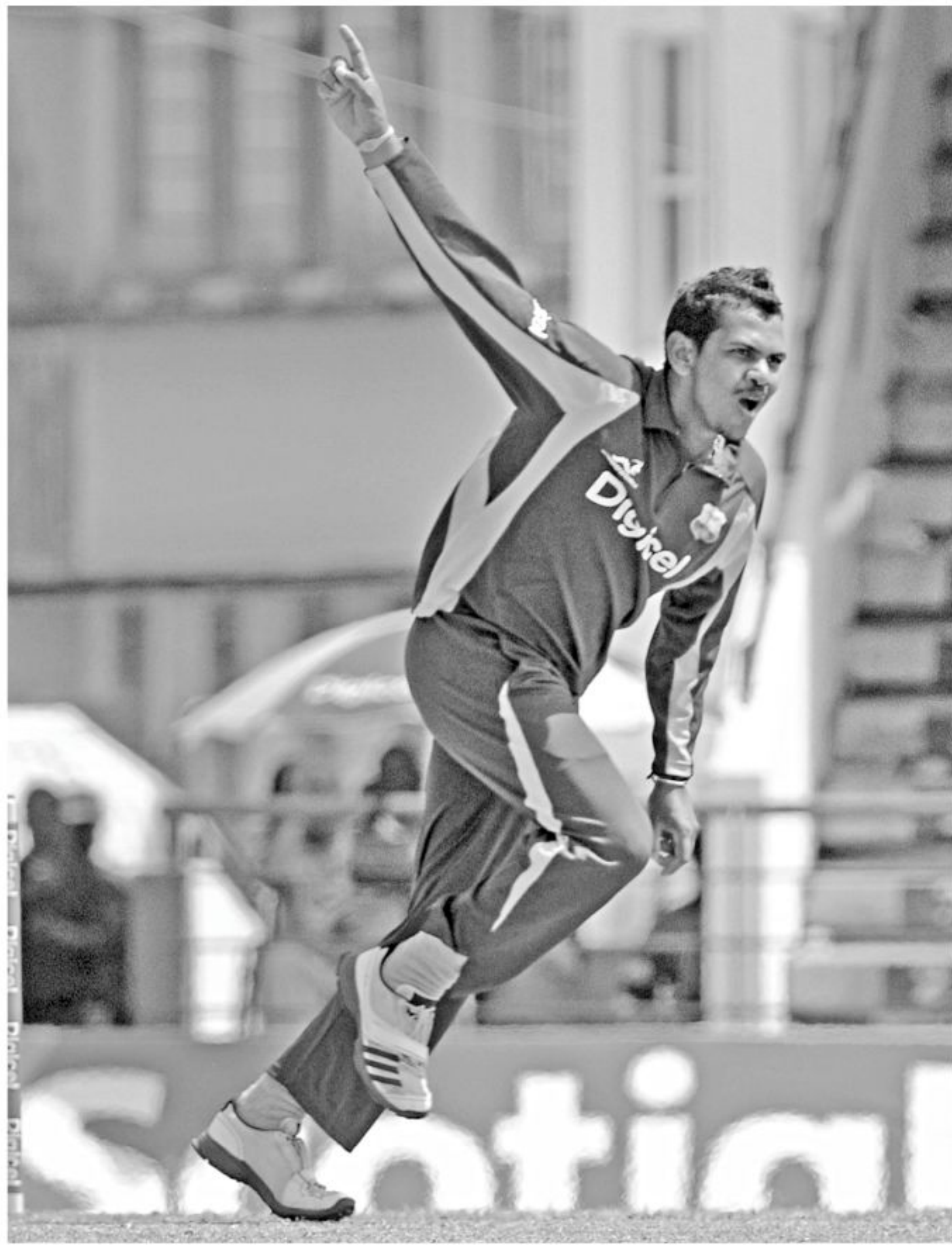
Coach Sun Haiping said hurdler Liu, who won a gold medal at the Athens Olympics in 2004 but had to pull out of the Beijing Games, was among a number of athletes who had left London because of the wet weather in the British capital.

"Other Chinese teams have also chosen to move their base thanks to London's cold weather, so Liu Xiang is not the only one," the paper's website quoted Sun as saying.

Liu, 29, left fans devastated when he pulled out of the Beijing Games because of an Achilles injury and has continued to struggle with injury ever since.

Nonetheless, he is among the leading contenders to win gold at the London Games, where his main rival will be Cuban Olympic champion and world record holder Dayron Robles.

London has suffered one of its wettest summers on record in the run-up to the Olympics, and weather forecasters are predicting at least some downpours during the event.



West Indies off-spinner Sunil Narine celebrates one of his five wickets in the fifth and final one-day international against New Zealand in Basseterre on Monday.

PHOTO: INTERNET

5-star Narine ensures 4-1 victory for hosts

Cricket

AFP, Basseterre

A superb bowling performance by Sunil Narine saw hosts West Indies to a 20 run win over New Zealand here on Monday in their fifth and final one day international.

The 24-year-old took 5-28 as the Kiwis were bowled out for 221 in reply to the West Indies 241 all out and gave the hosts a 4-1 win in the series.

The New Zealanders -- who left out experienced all rounder Jacob Oram and were already without several experienced players who have been struck down with injury -- saw several of their top order make a decent start before failing to move beyond 40.

The only one to do so was Kane Williamson as the 21-year-old threatened to take them to victory with an impressive 69 and it took a superb catch by Gayle at mid wicket, off the bowling of Narine, to dismiss him.

The West Indies had been teetering on 37-3 before a 60 run partnership between Marlon Samuels and Dwayne Bravo steadied the ship.

Samuels fell when on 43, caught by Mar-

tin Guptill off Tim Southee, but Bravo played an unaccustomed patient innings to make his slowest ever half century before he fell for 53, caught by Brendon McCullum off Andrew Ellis.

The hosts faltered again only for Andre Russell to come to their rescue batting at nine as he rattled off a stunning 59 not out to at least give his side a reasonable target to defend.

Veteran New Zealand bowler Kyle Mills had something to celebrate as having become New Zealand's joint second highest wicket taker in this form of cricket when he had Chris Gayle caught for just five, he moved into second on his own with a further two in the innings.

SCORES IN BRIEF

WEST INDIES: 241 for 9 (Samuels 43, Bravo 53, Thomas 20, Russell 59 not out; Mills 3-40-3, Southee 3-37, Ellis 2-54)

NEW ZEALAND: 221 all out (Guptill 33, McCullum 33, Taylor 28, Williamson 69, Ellis 28; Best 2-58, Narine 5-27, Bravo 2-30)

Result: West Indies won by 20 runs and clinched five-match series 4-1.

Man-of-the-match: Sunil Narine.

Man-of-the-series: Sunil Narine.

Lankans' threat to SLPL

Cricket

CRICINFO, Colombo

Sri Lanka captain Mahela Jayawardene has said the country's cricketers may decide against taking part in the inaugural season of the Sri Lanka Premier League (SLPL) if the Sri Lanka Cricket (SLC) doesn't "settle" the players' central contracts.

"We will only sign SLPL contracts once the central contracts of Sri Lanka players are settled," Jayawardene said at the launch of the SLPL. "We discussed it about a month ago, before the Pakistan tour. I hope we can sort it out within the next few days."

SLC president Upali Dharmadasa, however, said that the issue would be sorted out by July 25. The players and board have been negotiating contracts since March this year.

The contract issue follows a year in which SLC ran into financial problems after running up debts of close to 70 million dollars to finance the building of two international stadiums in Hambantota and Pallekele, and to renovate the R Premadasa Stadium in Colombo, for the 2011 World Cup. As a result the players were not initially paid their salaries for eight months. In December 2011, 42.36 per cent of the fees due to the players from the World Cup to September 30, 2011 were paid.

The payment of 2 million dollars was made directly into the players' bank accounts, instead of routing it through Sri Lanka Cricket (SLC), on December 16.

SLC claimed to have paid the remaining dues in March 2012 after the state-owned Bank of Ceylon agreed to release 600 million rupees (approx 5.07 million dollars) to the board, following discussions with sports minister Mahindananda Aluthgamage.

However, the players have not been paid since the previous contracts expired, as the new contracts have not been signed and therefore the terms and conditions of payments have not yet been established.

Jayawardene, who is part of the Wayamba franchise, also said the focus of the tourna-

ment should always remain on developing the game in Sri Lanka. "While we say all good things about the tournament, let me caution everyone ... While we are making financial gains, the commitment of the people involved should be to harness the talent, develop the game in the outstations, get every possible youngster involved and let them realise their dream of playing for Sri Lanka one day."

SLC had released a list of 107 local players and 56 overseas players for the first edition of the SLPL, which is set to start on August 10. The tournament, which features seven franchises this year, will have two more the next year, covering all nine provinces. However, the board is yet to finalise the budget for the tournament.

"We are yet to estimate the cost. We are working out the budget," SLC's treasurer Nuski Mohammed said. "I don't think there will be a big cost. It'll be a very marginal net cost."

Foreigners quota

FROM PAGE 16

test which is currently in place. The decisions came at a meeting of the committee at the BFF House yesterday. The meeting also decided to force the clubs to form under-16 squads who will play a tournament among themselves annually. This provision has been in the by-laws of the Professional Football League since its inception, but so far has not been implemented.

The meeting also decided that if a player receives nine yellow cards or four red cards in a single season, he will be summoned by the Disciplinary Committee, and upon a hearing they may impose penalties on the player. The meeting also decided that if any player or club official carries any mobile telephone or such device on to the field on match day, he will be banned for three matches.

The meeting was chaired by chairman of the Professional Football League Committee and senior vice-president of BFF Abdus Salam Murshed.

Anderson ready for SA test

AFP, London

James Anderson believes England will have to be patient as never before if they are to maintain their world number one Test ranking against a South Africa side who are masters of playing under pressure.

South Africa will replace England at the top of the International Cricket Council (ICC) rankings if they emerge victorious in a three-Test series that gets underway at The Oval here on Thursday.

Both sides boast arguably the world's two best pace attacks, with Anderson leading an England line-up that includes the likes of Stuart Broad.

South Africa are set to give the new ball to Dale Steyn, officially the world's leading Test bowler and a genuine quick whose record stands comparison with some of the game's all-time greats.

Steyn is set to be supported by paceman Morne Morkel and Vernon Philander, who in just seven Test has already taken a staggering 51 wickets while a further seam bowling option is provided by veteran all-rounder Jacques Kallis.

Meanwhile the Proteas' batting order boasts of four players in the world's top 10 and England spearhead Anderson told Sky Sports: "It's going to be a huge challenge."

"The last couple of times South Africa have been over here they've played really well and beaten us. Both attacks have shown in the last 18 months that they are strong units. I think it'll be a good battle."

"It's going to be really important that our bowling attack's on top form because their batting unit's really strong."

Bangladeshi

FROM PAGE 16

"He is planned to be with the other young French in Prague," Verat said, adding that permission needed to be obtained from the Bangladesh Chess Federation.

"It's done," Alam's coach Xavier Parmentier said, confirming he would be able to take part and adding that the boy "has begun to work and concentrate on chess after the media hurricane" surrounding his case.

French officials, including former prime minister Francois Fillon, had said Alam's case would be examined "with the greatest attention" after it came to light earlier this year.

Friendship is forever

BBC ONLINE, London



Yohan Blake insists his friendship with fellow Jamaican, training partner and sprint rival Usain Bolt will survive whatever happens at London 2012.

Blake confirmed he will be the main threat to Bolt's 100m and 200m crowns when he beat the Olympic champion over both distances at the Jamaican trials.

"Win, lose or draw we are friends, even though it is business and he wants to win and I want to win," said Blake.

The men's 100m and 200m finals are on August 5 and 9 respectively.

Blake's performances in Kingston at the end of June delivered world-leading times in both events and established his credentials as a potential successor rather than just leading bridesmaid to Bolt in London.

Blake is the reigning world champion over 100m after winning in Daegu in 2011 in 9.92 seconds, although that victory was achieved after world record-holder Bolt was disqualified for a false start in the final.

Six days later Bolt stormed to victory in the 200m to underline his status as favourite for both sprint titles in London.

Blake believes that his decision to leave his school coach in October 2008 and join Bolt under coach Glen Mills at the Racers Track Club in Kingston has helped him chip away at that aura of invincibility ever since.

"Every time in training I want to win but he's always there. So I say 'OK, how am I going to win on the big day?'" added Blake.

"That's why some of the time I tend to be at the front so when I get on the track I can say 'OK, I beat him in training'."

Far from resisting Blake's rise, Bolt has been key in helping to develop the man he dubbed 'the Beast' and tipped as a future rival back in 2009.

"He will say to me: 'Yohan, look, you're not doing this for the people, you're not doing this for the fans, you're not doing this for your family, you're doing this for your self.' He can motivate me," added Blake.

Motivation is not something that Blake has ever appeared to lack.

The 22-year-old is famed for his serious-minded dedication to training harder and longer than any of his rivals, while Bolt's light-hearted confidence has become as much part of his fame as landmark times and yawning winning margins.

Bolt jokes that he is nervous about tipping Blake as the man to win gold if he cannot at the Olympics.

"We train every day, I know how hard he works, so I would love for Blake to win if I wasn't in the 100m, but let's not ask this question again please, let's not jinx me on that one," he said.

The 25-year-old's continuing problems with his start suggests the pressure of staying ahead of his friend is beginning to tell on the track as well as in news conferences.

PAKISTAN'S PROPOSED TOUR OF INDIA

BCCI to seek govt clearance

Cricket

AFP, New Delhi

India's cricket chiefs are confident they will secure the government's clearance to host Pakistan for a short tour later this year, an official said on Tuesday.

The Board of Control for Cricket in India (BCCI) has invited Pakistan to play three one-dayers and two Twenty20 matches in December-January, the first bilateral contests between the arch-rivals in five years.

"We will of course need to take a formal clearance from the government," BCCI spokesman Rajiv Shukla told AFP.

"But I have spoken to both the home ministry and the external affairs ministry and we have no doubt the tour will take place."

The rivals have not played a series since Pakistan's tour of India in 2007, after cricket ties were snapped following the 2008 terror attacks on Mumbai, which were carried out by militants from Pakistan.

Shukla said the BCCI was not interested in hosting Pakistan at a neutral venue and so slotted in the matches when England, also due to tour India later this year, return home briefly for Christmas and New Year.

Indian captain Mahendra Singh Dhoni, speaking to reporters in Chennai on Tuesday ahead of a tour of Sri Lanka starting this week, said his team will be ready to face Pakistan.

"Now that the series has been announced, we will be ready for it," he said. "As professional cricketers that is what we are supposed to do."

"The country's name is at stake. We will try and win every game, especially if it is against Pakistan."

Cricket ties have been the subject of discussions between the governments of both nuclear-armed countries, who have been holding regular meetings in a bid to improve ties and eventually thrash out a peace agreement.

The countries -- where cricket is hugely popular -- have fought three wars since independence in 1947.

The Indian and Pakistani cricket teams have only met in international tournaments since 2007.

They clashed in the World Cup semifinal in the north Indian town of Mohali last year, a high-profile game that was attended by the prime ministers of the two countries.

They also played during the Asia Cup in Bangladesh in March. Both matches were won by India.

Imran hails Indo-Pak series

AFP, Islamabad

Former Pakistan captain Imran Khan on Tuesday hailed the revival of cricketing ties with India, saying the resumption of one of the world's great rivalries was good for the sport.

India on Monday invited Pakistan for a short limited overs series in December-January, the first bilateral encounter between the neighbours in five years.

India stalled cricketing ties with Pakistan in the wake of terror attacks on its commercial hub Mumbai in November 2008, which were blamed on militants based across the border.

"I welcome India's decision to revive cricket with Pakistan," Khan told reporters. "Anything which can bring both the countries to negotiations and normalcy is very good and we must appreciate that."

The thaw came after Pakistani President Asif Ali Zardari asked Indian Premier Manmohan Singh to restore ties during a lunch meeting in New Delhi in April this year.

India also invited Pakistan's domestic Twenty20 champions Sialkot Stallions for the Champions League to be held in South Africa this year.

Khan, who captained Pakistan to World Cup glory in 1992 before forming his own political party -- Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaaf (Movement for Justice) -- said India and Pakistan playing each other was a boost for world cricket.

CROSSWORD By Eugene Sheffer

ACROSS

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9 Pitch

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15 Karaoke event

17 Solidify

18 Without difficulty

19 Frost-covered

21 Yours truly

22 Glorify

24 Advantage

27 Round Table address

28 Georgetown athlete

31 Commit perjury

32 Khan title

33 Without delay

34 Crumbly cheese

36 Bashful

37 Malaria symptom

38 Preferred invitees

40 What @ symbolizes

41 European fashion city

43 Fear

47 Fuss

48 Make progress

51 X rating?

52 Troop group

53 Crazy

54 Crone

55 Cincinnati squad

56 Unforeseen problem

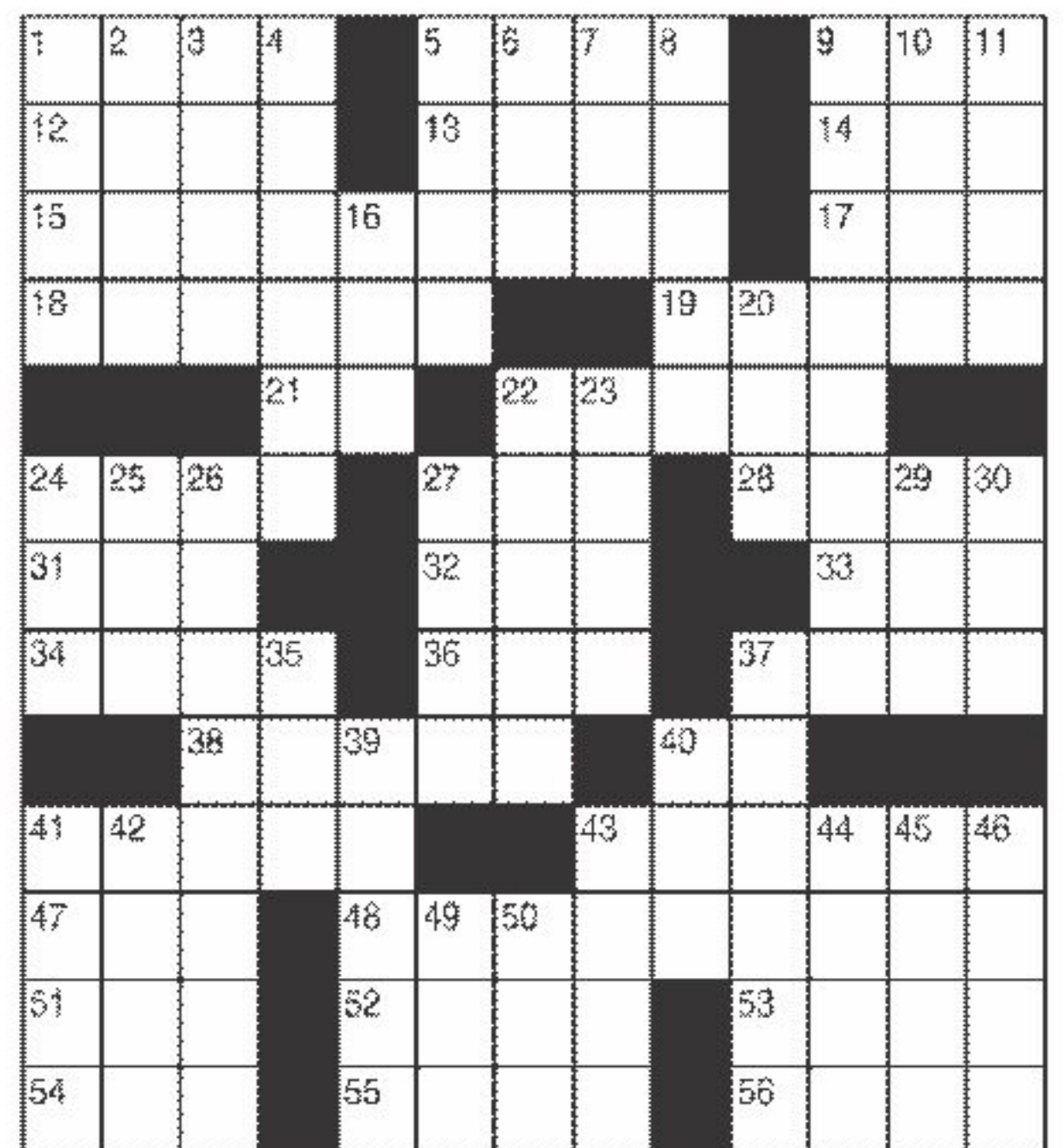
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CRYPTOQUIP

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Yesterday's Cryptquip: IF YOUR APPRENTICE'S FISH-CATCHING MESH IS VERY NEAR YOU, YOU MIGHT HAVE INTERNET ACCESS.

Today's Cryptquip Clue: Z equals E