

SPORTS

India Looks To Book Their Ticket To The Tri-Series Final

ADELAIDE, JAN 23
After quelling a late charge by Zimbabwe at Brisbane on Tuesday, India would be looking to score a comprehensive victory against the Africans at the Adelaide Oval here tomorrow to book their place in the triangular series final. The Indians were in roaring form throughout the Australian tour and ran the world champions close in all the three ODI matches, though they lost two out of the three.

They would be hoping that star batsman Sachin Tendulkar and

Virender Sehwag would quickly get back to their groove, if they return to play against Zimbabwe in the day-night match. If fit, Tendulkar, who missed two matches with an ankle injury, and Sehwag, who skipped three games due to a shoulder sprain, would get three matches before thinking about the finals against Australia which begins at Melbourne on February 6. Zimbabwe were bracing themselves for another batting onslaught by the Indians, who with or without top stars, have carried enough punch to

even stagger Australia. So Zimbabwe should matter little to them on the morrow. Though the game is full of surprises and opinions come back to haunt the gun-jumpers, Zimbabwe (1 point) would find it difficult to pick themselves up from the floor against the Indians (on 18 points). Zimbabwe's confidence has been handed a shattering blow through the injury to opener mark Vermeulen whose fractured skull has been operated upon but is ruled out of the equation for months.

Indian Hockey Team Undergoing Commando Training

NEW DELHI, JAN. 23
After a humiliating last-place finish in an international tournament, the Indian hockey team is now undergoing commando training to become mentally and physically stronger before the tough Olympic qualifiers in Spain in March. A rather inexperienced Indian team earned a solitary point to finish seventh and last in the Azlan Shah Tournament at Kuala Lumpur this week, inviting the wrath of millions of fans and experts.

Now eight-times Olympic champion India's only assignment before the crucial Olympic qualifiers, to be played at Madrid from March 2 to 13, is a home three-Test series with Holland next month. The 24

Asia Open: Agassi Enters Fourth Round

MELBOURNE, JAN. 23
Andre Agassi topped his tempo, evened an old score and advanced to the fourth round at the Australian Open with a 6-0, 6-3, 6-3 win today over Thomas Enqvist. Agassi has won 24 consecutive games at Melbourne Park, spanning championships in 2000, 2001 and 2003. The 33-year-old American pulled level at 5-5 in head-to-heads with Sweden's Enqvist, a finalist here in 1999. Agassi wrapped up the first set in 21 minutes with a second-service ace.

players are learning to be fitter and mentally stronger at Manesar, a small Haryana town where the elite National Security Guards (NSG) commandos normally train. The training began January 15.

Motorcyclists Journey In Memory Of Netaji

BHUBANESWAR, JAN. 23
Netaji Subhash Bose was born in Cuttack and went to the Ravenshaw Collegiate school in the city. On his 108th birth anniversary, the citizens of Cuttack are gearing up for grand celebrations. A team of motorcyclists from Kolkata are in Cuttack to receive some soil from the birth place of Netaji.

"It's the love and respect we feel for Netaji that has brought us here. We'll carry the pot of sacred soil by road and hand it over to the West Bengal Chief Minister near the Netaji statue in Kolkata," explains Jauhar Ghosal, leader of the motorcycle expedition. "I do not miss any function held anywhere in the country in honour of Netaji. I would reach the place even if I am unwell," says Saswati Rajamani, Member, Indian National Army.

Bhupathi-Mirnyi Advance To Third Round

NEW DELHI, JAN. 23
Second seeds Mahesh Bhupathi and Max Mirnyi of Belarus registered an unconvincing victory over Julien Benneteau and Arnaud Clement of France to scramble into the third round of men's doubles at the Australian Open in Melbourne today. Bhupathi and Mirnyi were hardly near their best form against the unseeded French pair but still came out victors recording a hard fought 6-7 (4/7) 6-4 6-4 win in the second round. The duo will now take on Hicham Arazi of Morocco and Nicolas Mahut of France who upset the sixteenth seeded pair in three sets today.

Chief Selector Aamir Sohail Sacked

ISLAMABAD, JAN. 23
The volatile nature of Pakistani cricket continues. Chief selector Aamir Sohail was sacked on Thursday coinciding with the team's return from New Zealand. He will be replaced by former cricketer Wasim Bari. Sohail has been a controversial figure ever since he was appointed after the team's debacle in the World Cup in South Africa last year. He has also been involved in several spats with the present coach Javed Miandad. Pakistan recently won a two test series in New Zealand but they lost the one dayers 4-1.

Islands Team Wins Medals

PORT BLAIR, JAN. 23
The XIV National Kayaking and Canoeing Championship 2004 got underway at the Hussain Sagar Lake, Hyderabad today. A 24 member Andaman & Nicobar Team is participating in the Championship.

On the opening day, the islands has secured 2 medals each from 1000 mtrs. double and single Kayaking. In the double, Kumari Ragina and Kumari Abha Manjula won a silver medal, while in the single, Kumari Ragina won a bronze medal, a communication from the Asst Director (SAI) said here today.

Laxman A Thorn In Aussie Flesh: Ponting

SYDNEY, JAN. 23
Australian captain Ricky Ponting was delighted his side could keep its nose in front of India in the tri-series match today but was worried about the "thorn" VVS Laxman had become for his side this summer. "Laxman is becoming a bit of a thorn in one-day cricket. He has now hit four one-day hundreds against us. If somebody can tell us (how to curb him), he can join our coaching side," said Ponting after his side had sneaked past the Indians by two wickets.

Laxman smashed his second unbeaten hundred in four days against Australia and now has 744 runs from Tests and one-day internationals combined on this tour. Ponting put down Laxman's success to the fact that the batsman was not taking undue risks in his innings.

Asia Cup Cricket In Sri Lanka In July

COLOMBO, JAN 23
Sri Lanka will host the long-awaited Asia Cup limited-overs cricket tournament in July, cricket board officials said here today. "Sri Lanka has agreed to host the tournament after touring Zimbabwe, but we don't have the exact dates confirmed as yet. We are working on it right now," an official said.

The six-nation Asia Cup, Asia's premier cricket tournament has not been held since May 2000 because of tensions between India and Pakistan.

OTHER NEWS

India To Display Military Might At Republic Day

NEW DELHI, JAN. 23
Missiles like the long-range, nuclear-capable Agni-II and sophisticated weapon systems like T-90 tanks and Il-78 air-to-air refuelling aircraft will be among the attractions at this year's Republic Day parade. The parade, held every January 26 to mark India's emergence as a republic in 1950, will also feature the BrahMos, a missile jointly developed by India and Russia, the home-grown Windy 505 fast attack vehicle and a flypast by the indigenously developed advanced light helicopter.

"The whole parade is a highlight as it showcases the might of the armed forces and India's cultural

heritage," said Maj. Gen. Thomas Mathew, the general-officer-commanding Delhi area, who will lead this year's parade. For Mathew, the event will be particularly nostalgic because he will be leading the parade exactly 40 years after he participated in it as a young member of the National Cadet Corps.

President, Dr. A.P.J. Abdul Kalam, the supreme commander of the armed forces, will take the salute and his Brazilian counterpart, Luiz Inacio Lula Da Silva, will be the chief guest. Dr. Kalam will also give away posthumous gallantry awards to the kin of two soldiers - paratrooper Sanjog Chhetri and Lt. Triveni Singh

- who died in counter-insurgency operations in Jammu and Kashmir.

This year's parade will feature several firsts, including the fielding of two mounted marching contingents and a tableau by the Indian Army. Besides the contingent from the 61 Cavalry, the world's only mounted regiment, there will also be a mounted contingent from the Army Service Corps. Besides the 29 tableaux sent by states across the country, the Indian Army would provide a tableau commemorating last year's successful joint expedition to Mt Everest by the armies of India and Nepal. The BrahMos supersonic cruise

missile, which derives its name from the Brahmaputra and Moscow rivers, will be shown off for the first time at the parade.

"The parade presents a major security challenge. Delhi Police will lead the security drill and it will be backed up by agencies like the National Security Guard and the bomb disposal squads," said Mathew. Indian Air Force (IAF) helicopters will mount vigil in the skies over Delhi while the parade makes its way down Raj Path to the Red Fort, and anti-aircraft guns will be deployed at strategic sites to guard against aerial threats.

EC Deletes 64 Lakh Voter Names

NEW DELHI, JAN 23
The Election Commission has deleted 64 lakh names from the electoral rolls of Andhra Pradesh after verifying officials found them to be bogus. "Lakhs of names have been deleted from the rolls of every district," Commission sources said. With the deletion, the percentage of voters with respect to the state's total population has come down to 64 from 71.

An eight-member Commission team visited the state recently twice to scrutinise the rolls after complaints from different political parties about the large scale presence of bogus voters.

India Seeks IEA Aid On Oil Reserves

NEW DELHI, JAN. 23
In a bid to expedite the process of developing strategic oil reserve of five million metric tons, the Indian government today

XII Boards: Now Even The Average Can Shine

NEW DELHI, JAN. 23
Throw away the notion of cramming for the Board exams. This year, the Central Board of Secondary Education (CBSE) is putting maximum weightage on marking Class XII students for simple understanding of some subjects and not just its application. A tried and tested formula world-wide, the Board has adopted the practice as it provides the average student more chances to excel. With the CBSE introducing the revised syllabus, based on the National Curricular Framework prepared by NCERT, from session 2002-03, the weightage of testing different learning outcomes has been slightly modified. G. Balasubramanian, Director (Academics), CBSE, said: "Since most students are average, this system gives them the opportunity to excel. Understanding, knowledge and application are the three conventional parameters of educational psychology."

- SCIENCE**
- * In Chemistry, while understanding based questions get 50 per cent weightage, knowledge will be 30 per cent and application 20 per cent.
 - * The number of questions has been reduced in Chemistry (from 34 to 27) and Biology (30 to 28). Biology will have no multiple choice questions.
 - * The time required to answer every question has been put down by the Board as 12 minutes for long answer type, 8-4 minutes for short answer and just 2 minutes for very short answer.
 - * Biotechnology, which has been included for the first time, has sample papers to guide students.
 - * There are no changes in Physics and Mathematics papers as they were modified in the preceding academic session.
- COMMERCE**
- * In Accountancy, a project work/practical work worth 20 marks has been introduced. However, the duration for the new 80-mark question paper will remain three hours.
 - * Understanding-based questions have been increased from 60 per cent to 70 per cent with a corresponding decline in application-based questions.
 - * There will be internal choice in all long answer questions in Business Studies.
- ARTS**
- * In History, understanding based questions have been increased from 45 per cent to 50 per cent.
 - * In Political Science, knowledge based questions have been increased from 20 per cent to 40 per cent.
 - * There are no changes in Geography.
 - * Web and Multimedia Technology will be introduced in Class XI and XII from 2004 and the first exam will be