

Brothers end title drought

Sports Reporter

Brothers Union, for ever the weaker cousin among the Big Three of Bangladesh football, have at long last won a major title which they can be proud of.

With a record that gave them only a partial mention in the roll of honour of the Federation Cup tournament — a joint championship along with Mohammedan Sporting in the inaugural year of the competition way back in 1980 — the boys from Gopibagh last night silenced the pundits by dethroning defending champions Dhaka Mohammedan Sporting 4-2 in the tiebreak after a barren 120-minute final at the Mirpur National Stadium.

It's been a long wait for Brothers Union — eleven years to be precise in this prestigious tournament before they finally broke their title drought. But if one takes into account all the close finishes in the other major competition — the Dhaka Senior Division league — then it's been a most interminably lengthy denial for this spirited side whose performance so often has belied its promise.

But Brothers were in no mood to be denied yesterday. Playing in their fourth final of the Cup, they refused to be daunted by the reputation of their more fancied opponents who had reached eight previous finals. And Brothers held their own against everything the Mohammedans could throw at them for two hours of the game which failed to produce a single goal. The 30 minutes of extra time left the teams where they had been after the regulation 90-minute period.

The match was held up for about 15 minutes midway in the first half following trouble outside the ground. Police teargas, fired in a bid to quell a stampede by people trying to gatecrash, wafted inside the ground, affecting both the spectators in the stands and the players and officials. Play had to be suspended until the air cleared again.

It needed one fine stop by Brothers goalkeeper Ponir and a bad miss by Mohammedans

seasoned veteran Imtiaz Sultan Johnny to transfer the ownership of the glittering championship trophy: for Brothers their first, true cup of joy.

After substitute Rouf Babul had cancelled the lead Kaiser Hamid had given the defending champions by converting the first penalty kick, Ponir under the bar became the instant hero for Brothers Union when he smartly parried prolific striker Naquib's kick for Mohammedans. As the young Mohammedan ace fired his shot, Ponir dived brilliantly to his left and blocked the ball from entering the net.

Brothers skipper Manik then made it 2-1 for his side with a neat passing play the Mohammedan skipper Kanan.

Shabbir made no mistake for Mohammedans, giving no chance to Ponir (2-2). Parvez retained good control over his nerves to make it 3-2 for Brothers after the sides had taken three spot kicks each.

Any hopes the Mohammedan fans still had of their team retaining the trophy vanished almost immediately when Imtiaz Sultan Johnny who has served his club with such distinction over the years sent his shot sailing high over the bar to the immense relief of Ponir and all the Brothers fans. It then fell to the young Pijush Nandi to step forward and put the issue beyond doubt for Brothers, making the fifth of the mandatory penalties redundant.

Pijush, who had scored Brothers' winner against last year's runners-up Abahani in the crucial robin league match — a result that made possible their eventual triumph yesterday — thus earned his revenge against Mohammedans who had chosen to leave him out of their team at the very last minute of the inter-club transfers. For the dethroned champions, they could have done without this touch of irony which must have added insult to their injury.

Going back to the game, it wasn't the most exciting of finals with both teams wasting several fine opportunities. While Mohammedans tried to

play their usual attacking game, dominating the major portion of the proceedings, a plucky, even lucky Brothers side succeeded in weathering each and every Mohammedan raid on their citadel.

Mohammedans took the field without two of their regular defenders — Montu who ruled himself out of the final following two yellow cards in earlier matches and the young Barun Dewan who nursed an injury.

Only Shabbir played to his true potential for the black-and-whites and came closest to winning the game for Mohammedans when Ponir so spectacularly thwarted his firm volley after a terrific solo down the right side in the second minute of extra time play.

Cruelly for Mohammedans, Ponir again denied them a sure goal by parrying a thunderous volley from Johnny from outside the box, the ball hitting the belly of the cross-piece before being hastily cleared by a Brothers defender.

Manik let Brothers down in the third minute of the second half, failing to beat a helpless Kanan under the Mohammedan bar after dodging past a host of defenders. With just Kanan between him and the goal Manik managed only a feeble shot straight at the goalkeeper.

Minister for Agriculture and Irrigation Maj Gen (retd) Majid-ul Haq gave away the trophies as chief guest. State Ministers Sadeq Hossain Khoka — and old Brothers hand — and Nurul Huda were also present.

After the final, jubilant Brothers supporters sang all the way to Gopibagh from Mirpur Stadium, literally painting the town red by sprinkling and spraying fellow fans and passersby with paint and coloured water. Firecrackers rent the air around the club neighbourhood late into the night.

Well done, Brothers Union for breaking the monopoly — and monotony — of the Big Two.

World Bank likely to help construct feeder roads

World Bank responded positively to government's approach for financing construction of some feeder roads in the flood-affected northern districts, Sylhet and Faridpur, reports UNB.

The World Bank assistance was sought in a meeting in Dhaka on Sunday between Communication Minister Oli Ahmed and visiting WB Director J. Craski.

The minister told the World Bank executive the country requires to construct at least 7500 kilometre of feeder roads to link big towns with upazila headquarters, which would cost about Tk 8000 crore. Craski responded positively, but stressed detailed discussion in this regard.

Post-flood situation

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tion of all-party relief committees to face the crisis.

Speakers at a joint rally of CPB, NAP, Samyabadi Dal and Gana Azadi League at Purana Paltan alleged that people were dying from starvation but relief was not reaching the victims due to the government's inefficiency. It is "shameful" for a democratic government which claimed no starvation deaths and said relief operation was going on smoothly, they said.

Presided over by the NAP General Secretary Pankaj Bhattacharya, the meeting was also addressed by the CPB General Secretary Nurul Islam Nahid and Shaikh Rahman of Samyabadi Dal and Alhaj Abdus Samad of the Gana Azadi League.

Pankaj Bhattacharya also accused the government of behaving and speaking like the fallen autocratic one and of concealing the truth about the post-flood situation. The elected government has made relief operation a party activity while people are dying, he alleged. Nurul Islam Nahid alleged false statement by the Ministers and demanded of the government adequate measure to save the people from starvation and diarrhoeal deaths.

DUCSU, hall union polls uncertain

By Nazmul Ashraf

Unabated terrorism on the Dhaka University campus is gradually leading to a total uncertainty in the holding of the DUCSU and hall union elections.

The term of the DUCSU and the 14 hall unions expired four months ago.

Non-holding of polls is seriously affecting the university's cultural, literary, sports and social entertainment activities. Office-bearers of the DUCSU and the hall unions are elected yearly to conduct the aforesaid activities.

Meantime, four dates announced for the polls, were cancelled in the wake of violence that ruled out a peaceful holding of the elections.

In the existing situation, where gunfire between rival student groups and other terrorist activities have become a regular phenomenon, the authorities are thinking very little about the elections.

A high level source in the DU administration said that the authorities were more engaged in protecting the primary interests of the university including the holding of classes, examinations and keeping it open to continue its academic and administrative activities undisturbed.

The authorities were also afraid about an eruption of a fresh wave of violence over the polls, if a polling date was announced, the source added.

It further said that with the abortive bid to contain terrorism, the authorities continued seeking cooperation from both the government and the opposition political parties to rid the campus of curse of terrorism.

Insiders of the two leading student organisations — the pro-BNP Jatiyatabadi Chhatra Dal (JCD) and the Awami League-backed Chhatra League (BCL) (S-A) said that they were least interested in the elections.

Both the organisations were now busy with intra-party activities including consolidating the organisations ahead of

their central conferences.

After expiry of the terms of the incumbent DUCSU and hall unions on June 8, the authorities first announced the elections for July 18, rescheduled it for July 25 due to campus violence and then for July 31 in quest of a peaceful elections.

But the polling date was again shifted from July 31 to August 5 as the leading student organisations including the BCL(S-A) decided to boycott it protesting an amendment to the DUCSU constitution that barred irregular students from participation in the elections.

The amendment barred from the prospective candidates of the leading student organisations including the BCL(S-A), JCD and JSD(Innu)-backed BCL (N-S).

These candidates demanded of the Vice-Chancellor to withdraw the ban, but the VC stuck to the decision taken at a Syndicate meeting.

The organisations that boycotted the polls termed the ban as part of a government conspiracy to make the DUCSU ineffective with an immature leadership.

At a stage of protests and especially terrorist acts, the authorities had to cancel the August 5 polls schedule also.

Since then, no initiatives either on the part of the authorities or on that of the student bodies were taken for holding the elections.

Leaders of the JCD and the BCL (S-A) who asked not to be named said that they did not want the DUCSU and the hall unions elections before the conclusions of their central conference where fresh leadership would be elected.

Transfer for negligence

SIRAJGANJ, Oct 20: District police administration today (Sunday) transferred OC Jafarullah to Kaptipur thana for his alleged negligence in duties during the killing of a constable on Friday, police officials said.

Fighting around Yugoslav port despite ceasefire

ZAGREB, Oct 20: Fierce fighting raged around the historic port city of Dubrovnik today despite ceasefire orders issued a day earlier by Croatian President Franjo Tudjman and Federal Defence Minister Veljko Kadijević, the Croatian news agency HINA reported, says AFP.

HINA said the federal army had been pounding the area with heavy artillery since 11 am (1000 GMT) in a bid to break through on to the main road along the Adriatic coast, about 10 kilometers (six miles) east of Dubrovnik between the seaside resorts of Plat and Cavtat.

Croatian television said the army had managed to get through into the Plat region and that federal tanks were firing at Minimi and Srebreno,

just outside Dubrovnik. Croatian forces were riposting violently, the television said.

Reports earlier said, the latest truce seemed to be holding, with heavy rain having doused the fighting spirit of troops on both sides.

The ceasefire, ordered Saturday, is the 10th since fighting erupted in Croatia after the republic declared independence on June 25.

Invest in country, PM urges Bangladeshis in London

LONDON, Oct 20: Prime Minister Begum Khaleda Zia has called upon the Bangladeshi community living in Britain to invest in industrial projects in the country to lead the nation towards progress and prosperity, reports BSS.

She was speaking at a reception in hotel Hilton here yesterday afternoon.

The function was also attended, among others, by Education Minister Jamiruddin Sircar, parliament members — Begum Raushan Elahi, Ahsanul Haq Molla, Shakhawat Hossain Bakul and Shahidul Islam.

The Prime Minister referred to the present economic situation in the country and said her government has inherited a ruined economy.

Moreover a devastating cyclone swept over Bangladesh in the month of April and very recently floods engulfed vast areas in Sylhet and northern districts of the country, she said.

She said the Bangladeshi community living abroad had always stood by their distressed brethren in Bangladesh. She said while the people had been fighting a relentless struggle in the country to topple the autocratic regime the Bangladeshis living abroad also lent their total support to oust the regime.

The Prime Minister said the BNP government would implement all its election pledges one by one. In this connection she referred to various measures taken by her government such as waiving of agricultural loan, exempting of tax on up to 25 bighas of land and raising the age limit for government job.



Opposition Leader in Parliament and Awami League Chief Sheikh Hasina talking to members of the EEC delegation at her office in the Sangsad Bhaban on Sunday.

Hasina

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meeting in the afternoon, they discussed the latest political and socio-economic developments in the country and matters of mutual interest.

Deputy Leader of the Opposition Abdus Samad Azad, Awami League leaders Amir Hossain Amu, Tofael Ahmed, MP, Mohammad Nasim PM, Rahmat Ali, MP, and Abul Hasan Chowdhury, MP were present.

Opposition Whip Abul Hasan Chowdhury said that Hasina apprised the 12-member delegation of the country's transition to democracy after the anti-autocracy movement for last 16 years and role of Awami League in restoration of parliamentary system of government.

She told the delegation members how democratic rule was thwarted in post-independence Bangladesh with the assassination of Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman and toppling of his democratically elected government in a bloody coup in August 1975.

Chowdhury said the delegation members showed keen interest in the move to repeal the Indemnity Ordinance of 1975 which blocked the trial of Bangabandhu's killers.

"The black ordinance was incorporated in the Constitution through the fifth amendment," she said, adding it allowed the confessed killers to go scot-free impeding the rule of law in the country.

Awami League which has been demanding the repeal of the ordinance moved a bill in the present parliament. She said such a black law cannot exist in the statute book, particularly after restoration of democracy.

Democracy earned in a mass movement will be in peril if the Indemnity Ordinance is not repealed immediately, she said.

Israel to attend ME peace conference

JERUSALEM, Oct 20: The Israeli government today agreed to send a delegation to a Middle East peace conference by a vote of 16-3, removing the final obstacle to Israel's participation at the forum later this month, reports AFP.

The decision came at the end of several hours of heated debate during which headline cabinet members voiced objections to a peace conference with Arab and Palestinian leaders.

The conference, sponsored by the United States and the Soviet Union is due to open in Madrid on October 30.

Earlier the United States and the Soviet Union have asked Israel to announce its formal acceptance by 1600 GMT Wednesday.

Soviet Foreign Minister Boris Pankin, on arrival Sunday in Jordan, said that although Moscow wishes success for Arab-Israeli peace talks, it cannot guarantee the results.

"An opportunity for peace in this region has come," Pankin said. "We hope that the upcoming Arab-Israeli peace talks would give a momentum for peace and would achieve the aspired goals."

"But nobody can guarantee the outcome of the peace conference," Pankin told reporters at Amman's Marka airport. Jordan in his third stop on a regional tour which has taken him to Israel and Syria. He is also scheduled to visit Egypt.

Foreign Minister Kamal Abu Jaber greeted Pankin on arrival, and the two rode to the royal palace to meet with King Hussein.

Pankin told reporters that the Middle East peace process and preparations for a US sponsored Arab-Israeli peace conference will be the focus of

Quake

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recent memory.

Some of the few people working in high rise offices here on a Sunday reported minor damage, and in the 14-storey building housing the AFP office the elevator was struck between floors with part of its roof caved in.

Workers said the damage was caused by the quake.

In Dehra Dun, a hill resort south of Uttar Kashi, a fireman said some buildings had suffered and that he himself had fled his home along with his family after the tremor.

In another incident in Ludhiana, Reuters adds: At least 40 people, including 10 women, were burnt to death when fire swept through a market in the town of Ludhiana in Punjab state, police and witnesses said today.

Police said the fire broke out in a firework shop on Saturday night and spread rapidly to nearly 40 other shops in the crowded market area.

Witnesses said a firecracker went off inside the shop, causing panic among customers there who thought Sikh militants had opened fire. Shopowners swiftly closed their shutters, trapping themselves and their customers inside, witnesses said.

A police official said he was checking the witnesses account.

Police said some people took shelter in an old four-storey building and became trapped there. Rescue workers were removing the debris of the building which subsequently collapsed.

Several shops in the market were selling firecrackers ahead of diwali, the Hindu festival lights, on November 5.

Overcoming the interruptions, the procession finally managed to reach upto the Bijoy Sarani from where it had to return due to police obstruction. Before their return to the BUET campus, the processionists decided to stage a sit-in at the Bijoy Sarani and to contact the Prime Minister and the Home Minister. But they were informed that both were unable to meet them, teachers said.

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The Midnight File

Cambodian peace treaty signing Wednesday

PARIS, Oct 20: After decades of foreign interference, murderous regimes and civil war, Cambodia's warring factions are preparing to sign a UN sponsored treaty to bring peace and democracy. Nineteen nations have sent delegates to Monday's Conference on Cambodia and are scheduled to sign treaty documents on Wednesday. The signing ceremony will set in motion the UN Transitional Authority in Cambodia with vast civilian and military powers. It will share power with the four warring factions, reports AP.

Counting of votes begins in Turkey

ANKARA, Oct 20: Turkish officials began counting votes today evening after polling stations closed in a general election which may end eight years of Motherland Party rule. Most polls shut at 5 pm (1500 GMT), though those where voters were still queuing were permitted to stay open. Opinion polls before election day showed the True Path Party of former prime minister Suleyman Demirel in the lead, followed by the social democrat Populist Party, led by Erdal Inonu, and Motherland, led by Prime Minister Mesut Yilmaz, reports Reuter.

3,000 cops to watch over Middle East talks venue

MADRID, Oct 20: More than 3,000 policemen will be drafted to watch over the Middle East peace conference, due to open here October 30. In addition to possible threats by various Middle East extremists, Spain faces its own security problems with urban guerrilla attacks by Basque separatists, reports AFP.

C'wealth pledges

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watchdog bodies such as Amnesty International for human rights abuses and authoritarian rule.

The leaders declared their "determination to renew and enhance the value and importance of the Commonwealth as an institution which can and should strengthen and enrich the lives not only of its own members and their peoples but also of the wider community of peoples of which they are a part."

They sought to increase the effectiveness of the organisation, which mostly comprises Britain and its former colonies, in helping its own members "entrench the practices of democracy, accountable administration and the rule of law."

It was the Commonwealth's firmest attestation to democracy, the rule of law, peace and freedom of the individual, non-racism and sexual equality since a landmark meeting in Singapore in 1961.

President Robert Mugabe of Zimbabwe, speaking in Victoria Falls where the leaders spent the weekend alongside one of the seven natural wonders of the world, told reporters the declaration had been agreed unanimously. It pledged promotion of "fundamental political values" such as democratic processes,

the rule of law, an independent judiciary and "just and honest government."

All people were entitled to basic human rights regardless of race or political belief, it said. Equality for women was enshrined as the declaration's second point.

The nations promised to pursue "sustainable development" and alleviation of poverty through a "stable international economic framework and sound economic management recognising the central role of the market economy."

They pledged to pursue "the freest possible" flow of world trade with a special eye on the needs of developing countries and an "adequate flow of resources" from the developed to developing world.

They promised action to ease third world debt burdens, protect the environment, fight drug trafficking and communicable diseases and support disarmament and effective arms control.

NGOs

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In its declaration the forum said the model of development imposed by bilateral and multilateral arrangements and particularly by institutions like the World Bank, the IMF and the General Agreement on Trade and Tariffs — has failed. While rejecting the model, the forum also called for a reduction in the financing of the organizations that promote it.

Cyclone

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November 1, 1876 cyclone and about ten lakh in another disaster on November 12, 1970. The November 29, 1988 cyclone had also devastated the areas.

"So we are keeping an eye on the changing pattern of weather by our computerised equipments and we will be able to give an accurate forecast of the cyclone timely," he added.

He however said that the scientists are yet to have full knowledge about all factors which cause the formation of a cyclone in the sea.

BBC team in BBC Bazar

PAKSEY, Oct 20: Several thousand of people today gathered at BBC Bazar here to meet the travelling team from the British Broadcasting Corporation's (BBC) Eastern Service, reports BSS.

The bazar was founded in 1971 when an enterprising tea shop owner, Abul Kashem allowed people to listen to the BBC's broadcasts about the War of Liberation on his radio.

The arrival of the BBC team was celebrated by a lively but orderly crowd despite the mid-day sun and they listened to the speeches by leaders of local freedom fighters and BBC staffers Serajur Rahman, Dipankar Ghose, Barry Langridge of Eastern Service and correspondent for BBC in Bangladesh Ataus Samad.

The freedom fighters recalled the BBC's coverage of War of Liberation and how it helped them. Serajur Rahman said that BBC Bazar was a living link between BBC and Bangladesh.

The crowd was entertained by delightful songs and dances composed on the theme of liberation struggle and also the establishment of BBC Bazar through the independence struggle.

Present at the function was the owner of the tea shop, Abul Kashem and Rahimuddin Sardar, father of Raju, the first martyr of liberation struggle in Paksey.

The function was presided over by Azizul Haq Mallik. The BBC team visited Paksey as a part of the 50th anniversary celebration of Bengali Department of BBC.

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This so-called "development" transfers resources from the control and use of the people of the developing countries to feed the continuous growth of industrial countries, through the activities of "Transnational Companies" (TNCs) the declaration said.

These TNCs have emerged as the motive force behind national and international policies, and yet they are not accountable to the public. This now "superstate" denies local people access to their resources and control over the fate of their communities. The World Bank and the IMF, similarly, are not accountable to the people.

The forum noted that any alternative must be based on the principle of self-determination and effective people's participation. At the international level the decision-making processes that have led to present inequities between the industrialized countries and the third world in terms of trade and the flow of financial, natural and human resources have to be "delegitimized and replaced."

The forum observed that the model had failed in the third world, as well as the newly industrialized countries (NICs) and the industrialized countries.

Increasing homelessness, drug use, unemployment, deteriorating educational systems, family breakdown, militarism, environmental pollution and increasing concentration of wealth and the incidence of poverty are demonstrations of this failure in the industrial countries, the declaration said.

Emphasizing the need for a radical change in production and consumption patterns the forum said the people are capable of developing their own development alternatives if they control their resources and are able to make their own decisions.

The forum applauded the farmers' women's and other groups to protect their ecological spaces from powerful global economic actors and called for multiplication of these efforts as the principal way of building a countervailing global force to save the planet from irreversible degradation.

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