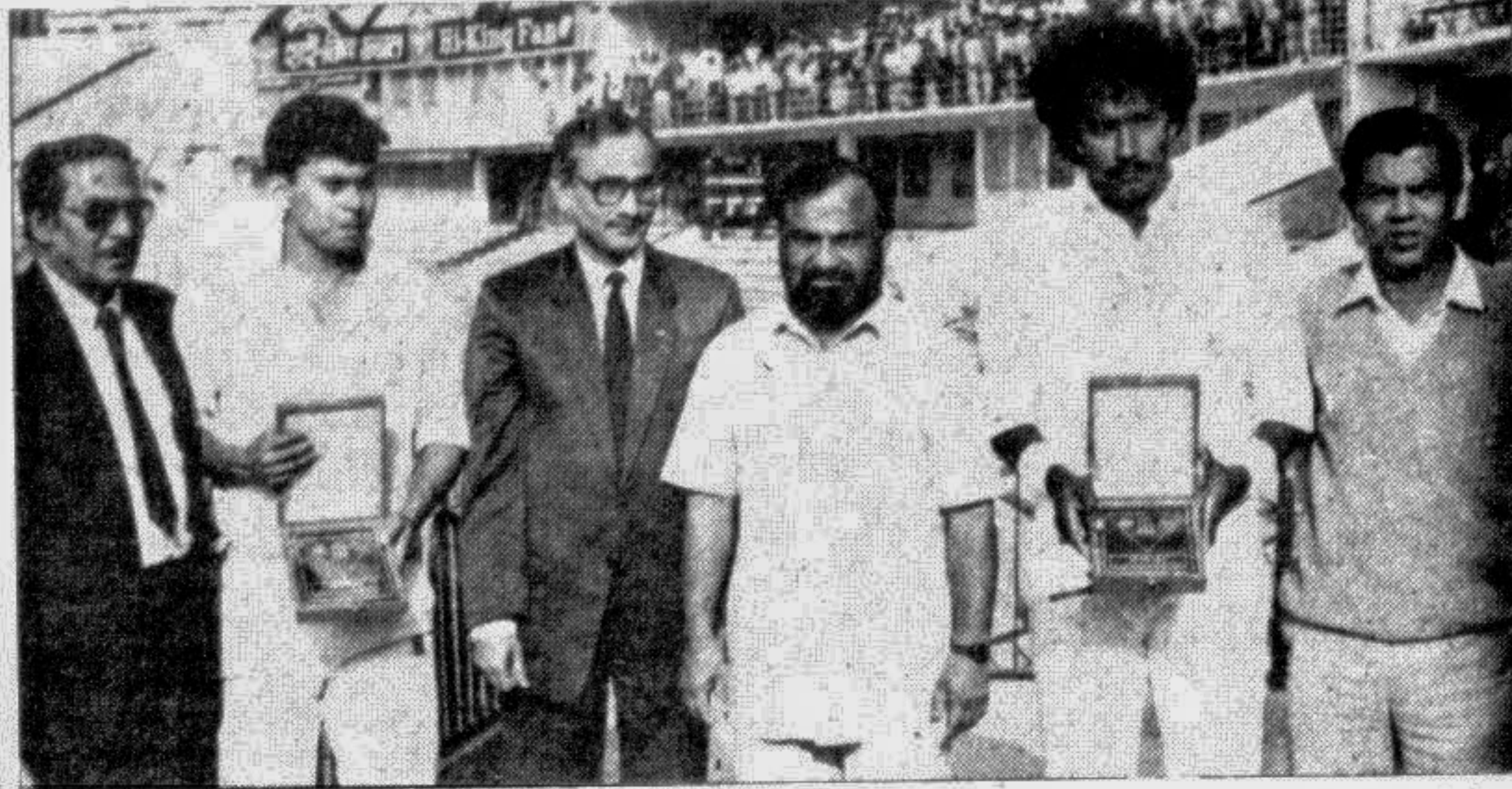


Beximco nat'l youth cricket begins today

Sports Reporter
The qualifying round of the 13th Beximco national youth cricket championship begins today simultaneously at five different venues across the country.



State Minister for Youth and Sports Sadek Hossain yesterday gave away the trophies of the Biman single-wicket cricket tournament at the Dhaka Stadium.

TODAY'S MATCHES

- Comilla : Sunamganj vs Tangail
Tangail : Kishoreganj vs Rajbari
Jhenidah : Sathkhira vs Thakurgaon
Sathkhira : Jhenidah vs Jhalokathi
Thakurgaon: Gaibandha vs Kurigram

Orient SC win

Sports Reporter
Orient Sporting Club recorded an easy 35-run victory against Nirman XI in the Second Division cricket league at the Dhanmondi Cricket Stadium yesterday.

Nannu lifts single-wkt title

Sports Reporter
Earlier in one of the semifinals, Nannu beat Khaled Mahmud Sujun of Abahani Krira Chakra. The skipper of the national team battled first to rattle 33. Sujun managed 30 in his turn.

In the quarterfinals held earlier in the morning, Nannu beat Golam Nowsher Prince of Victoria Club by a solitary run. Prince managed 26 in reply to Nannu's 27.

Pioneer soccer results

Sports Reporter
Azimpur Kishore Sangha edged past Arambagh Krira Chakra (Jrs) by two goals to one in one of the three matches of the Janata Bank Pioneer league at the Outer Stadium yesterday.

Defiant Dexter refuses to quit

LONDON, Feb 24: England chairman of selectors Ted Dexter refused to bow to demands for his resignation here on Tuesday as the clamour increased for his head after the humiliating Test whitewash by India, reports AFP.

all their supporters calling for changes. 'They got back to winning ways in their own country and we must do the same against Australia this summer.'

Sections of the British media called for Dexter and skipper Graham Gooch to shoulder the blame for the 3-0 thrashing.



TED DEXTER

But Dexter, who still has 12 months of his contract to run, is confident he can answer any questions that might be thrown at him.

'Everyone has tried their best, but the results in the Tests have been very disappointing. Man for man, in their conditions, India were better than us.'

BOYCOTT'S VIEW

Former England opener Geoff Boycott accused the team of showing a lack of commitment.

England's hapless cricketers face wrath of the press

LONDON, Feb 24: The wrath of the sporting press fell on England's hapless cricketers on Wednesday after the 3-0 series defeat by India, one of their worst ever humiliations, reports Reuter.

The tabloid Sun, leading the way with the headline 'Bombay Potatoes' carries an unflattering picture of captain Graham Gooch's head in the shape of a potato.

Faisal in boys' semis

Sports Reporter
The top-ranked local player Faisal Syed Huq moved into the boys' singles semifinals of the seventh Bangladesh international junior tennis championships.

They will play the Indonesian pair of Radjab Agung and Utomo Cipto, in today.

Ali in Beijing

BEIJING, Feb 24: Muhammad Ali is known, as 'the greatest' the world over; and Beijing proved Wednesday it's no exception to the rule, reports AP.

A small tornado of Chinese hotel workers, reporters and boxing fans whirled around Ali at a news conference to promote Saturday's 'Brawl at the Wall,' China's first professional boxing bouts since 1949.

'When I tell you stand back, stand BACK,' said a member of Ali's entourage, unsuccessfully trying to hold off a group of Chinese with T-shirts for Ali to sign.

'I stayed after work to see Muhammad Ali,' said Yang Jie, a men's room attendant at the New Century Hotel. 'The best fighters of all are Ali and Bruce Lee' - the late American movie actor and martial arts expert.

'I'm going to save this for the hotel archive,' said hotel salesman Paul Yang, waving a signed boxing programme.

Alli, his head trembling slightly from Parkinson's syndrome, patiently posed for dozens of pictures and signed scores of programmes, shirts and even Chinese 10-yuan notes, which are worth dhs 1.70.

'I don't like China,' said the champ, toying briefly with his audience. 'I love China.'

He smiled devilishly when heavyweight Mike Hunter did an imitation of Ali's former fast-talking style.

'I came a champ. I'll leave a champ. I was born a champ,' chanted Hunter, the US Boxing Association heavyweight titleholder, who fights Kevin Ford on Saturday.

Professional boxing ended in China when the Communist Party took power in 1949, and amateur boxing was banned after 1957. Chinese boxing officials credit Ali with helping revive the sport when he met with China's senior leader, Deng Xiaoping, in 1979. Ali has visited several times since.

The featured bouts in the 'Brawl at the Wall' match former World Boxing Association heavyweight champion Mike Weaver against Bert Cooper and light heavyweight Mike Sedillo against the current World Boxing Organization champion, Leonzer Barber.

'In 1985, I had the chance to spar with Ali,' said Zhang Lide, a Chinese trainer who learned his skills at the Beijing YMCA before 1949. 'It was my greatest enjoyment.'

Clinton has to wait a while
WASHINGTON, Feb 24: Lack of money has stopped construction of President Clinton's White House jogging track in the starting blocks, reports AP.

The administration halted the dhs 30,000 project until private contributions are raised to pay for it, Press Secretary Dee Dee Myers said Tuesday.

Workers had peeled cement from a four-foot-(1.20-metre)-wide section of the circular South Lawn driveway when reporters inquired about the work last week. Clinton said he had approved a track on the condition that tax money not be used to build it.

Ben not selected for 60 metres
OTTAWA, Feb 24: Ben Johnson, who came within a fraction of a second of a world indoor record in the 50 metres earlier this month, was left off Canada's team for the World Indoor Championships in Toronto on March 12-14, reports AP.

Athletics Canada announced Tuesday that Bruny Surin and Derrick Sutherland would represent the country in the 60 metres in the meet at the SkyDome.

Surin set a Canadian record of 6.45 seconds in the 60 two weeks ago in Lieven, France. Sutherland qualified for the team with a time of 6.67 seconds at last weekend's Canadian championships in Winnipeg, Manitoba.

Johnson recently appeared to have found his former form after returning to competition two years ago following a ban for steroid use. On Feb 7, he missed the world mark in the 50 by 0.04 seconds with a time of 5.65 seconds.

Three days later, Johnson injured his hamstring in Ghent, Belgium. He went to Winnipeg for the Canadian championships, but was unable to compete.

BCCB u-19 off to Nepal
A 16-member Bangladesh Cricket Control Board under-19 team led by Sharifuddinul Ibrne-Shahid Shaikat left the city yesterday for Kathmandu to participate in the silver jubilee tournament in Birganj.

The former national skipper Roquibul Hassan and Osman Khan are accompanying the squad as manager and assistant manager respectively.

Bangladesh, placed directly in the quarterfinals, will begin their campaign tomorrow.



Boxing legend Mohammad Ali, flanked by Chinese officials, listens to questions during a press conference in Beijing yesterday. Ali is in Beijing on the occasion of the first professional boxing bout in the People's Republic of China.

Aussies-Kiwi first Test begins today

Border will hold centre stage

CHRISTCHURCH, New Zealand, Feb 24: Allan Border's likely passage into cricket history in the Test between Australia and New Zealand starting here on Thursday might overshadow what is likely to be a very tight contest, reports Reuter.

Border needs just 50 runs to overtake Sunil Gavaskar's total of 10,122 to become the biggest scorer in Test cricket.

one-off Test by a New Zealand team spearheaded by Sir Richard Hadlee.

'I would rather just get it out of the road. I'm not striving for it. It's not consuming me,' he said in a recent interview.

Border's own batting, where he made his first pair in his career, contributed to the defeat.

Australia are smarting from a 2-1 defeat at the hands of the West Indies after going into the last two matches with a 1-0 lead.

Lodhi back in the lead

Mahmud Ahmed Khan Lodhi captured his position at the top of the points table despite drawing with English GM Daniel King at the end of the fifth round of the Grandmasters' chess tournament at Purbani hotel yesterday.

Lodhi, who had to appear in the arena twice in a day, opened with d4. King, who played with black pieces, adopted the Nimzo Indian defence.

blunders in the 18th and 25th moves, to push his young opponent up by two pawns.

The Pakistani International Master, who had a pawn up, settled for a draw after 63 moves. The draw took Lodhi's collection to four points from five matches following his win against India's Arun Vaidya in Tuesday's adjourned match procrastinated into yesterday.

National champion Fide Master Reefat bin-Sattar won his match against compatriot IM Zillur Rahman Champak in another match of the day to raise his collection to three.

opened with his customary g3 and accepted a draw after 35 moves.



Players and officials of the Bangladesh Cricket Control Board under-19 team which left for Kathmandu to take part in the silver jubilee meet in Birganj yesterday.