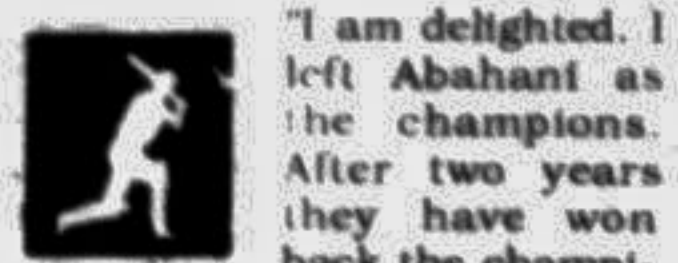


# Abahani regain Navana title

Sports Reporter



I am delighted. I left Abahani as the champions. After two years they have won back the championship and I am there with the team," quipped a delighted Abahani skipper Gazi Ashraf Hossain Lipu after the seven-time league champions added another league title to their cap beating arch-rivals Mohammedan Sporting Club by 46 runs in the last match of the 1992-93 Navana Premier Division cricket league at the Dhaka Stadium yesterday.

In a match marked by poor batsmanship, last year's champions Mohammedan Sporting Club, chasing 220 for victory, were all out for 173 in 42 overs to end up runners-up, ahead of Bangladesh Biman who, too, like Mohammedans finished the league with 22 points from 15 matches, for having a better run rate.

Coasting along happily at 64 for two in 15.3 overs Mohammedans were struck down by Khaled Mahmud Sujan, of all people.

Bowling from the pavilion end, the tiny wobbler bowled a teasing line, just outside the off stump to be precise, and Mohammedan's star batsmen — Aminul Islam Bulbul and skipper Minhazul Abedin Nannu — got tangled in the snare to precipitate the doom and the blowing out the lambent hope of some consolation in a success-lorn year for the popular club.

A crestfallen Nannu admitted after the match; "this has been the most unproductive year for Mohammedans in the six years of my association with the club."

Really yesterday Mohammedans were left with no consolation at all. Starting from the toss they had everything going their way till letting things fall apart midway through their innings.

Their nightmare, Athula Samarasekara, Abahani's tall Sri Lankan batsman who has topped the batting aggregate of the just-concluded season with 889 runs, did not stay long at the wicket. Moreover, the upright Abahani fielders proved absolutely butter-fingered later in the afternoon and the fact that Abahani's second wicketkeeper Jahangir Alam came up with five dismissals despite his poor reflexes, their batsmen's indiscretion contributed to Mohammedan's eventual collection of 173.

Nannu won the toss in the morning and his decision to send Abahani to bat first was a foregone conclusion since the wickets of the Dhaka Stadium have been behaving ideally for batting in the latter half of the day and also for losing the two previous matches with Abahani after being beaten in the spin of the coin.

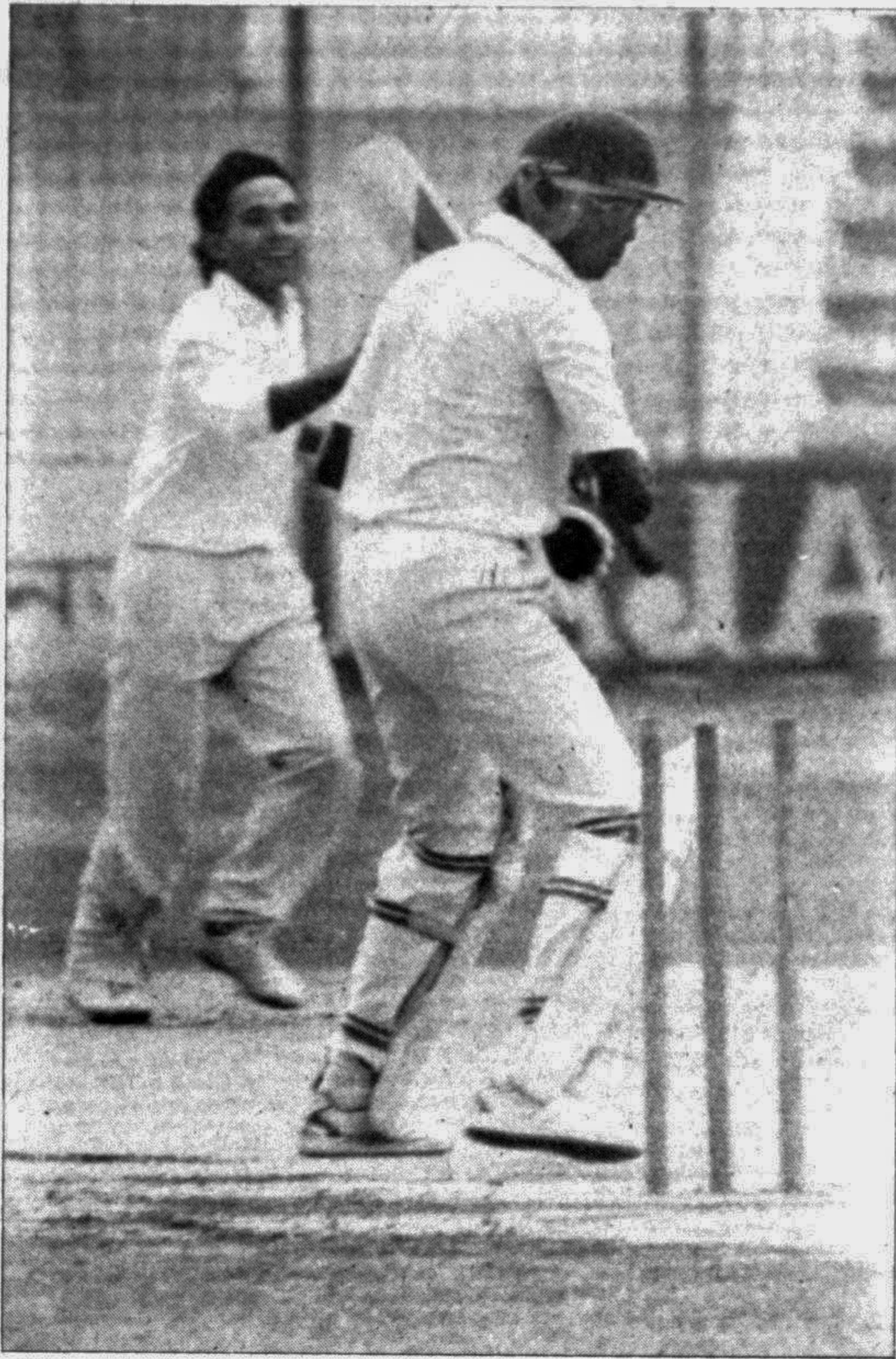
The day seemed destined to belong to Mohammedans as Abahani tottered at 10 for two in the fifth over. Lipu's experiment of holding back Samarasekara by sending left-hander Ashoka de Silva to open the innings along with Jahangir Alam backfired.

De Silva, the Sri Lankan test discard known more for his accurate leg-spin and lusty hitting as a tail-ender was bowled round his legs by a delivery from Mohammedan pacesman Zakir.

The dark scamer was cock-a-hoop four balls later when Ziauddin Shovon, before opening his account, played a mindless stroke to hear his death knell in the onomatopoeic way of the rattling of the stumps.

Jahangir and Samarasekara, with the latter coming at number four, then dead-lifted Abahani to 70 before the wicket-keeper batsman gave his counterpart a low catch off Sanjeev Sharma while trying to run down Mohammedan's Indian allrounder down to thirdman.

Two runs later Abahani were almost stilled to death when Samarasekara went to pull not-too-short a ball from leg-spinner Wahidul Ghani and an agile Bulbul anticipated well to take smart catch at mid-wicket. The gangling Sri Lankan who won Abahani the first phase match of the league



Mohammedan Sporting opener Ashraf Hossain Shantu looks back at his stumps after a Khaled Mahmud Sujan delivery cut back sharply to dislodge them during the vital Navana Premier Division tie at the Dhaka Stadium yesterday. Sujan ended the day with three Mohammedan scalps to his name. — Star photo

against Mohammedans single-handed with a memorable innings of 169 yesterday made 37 off 40 balls with the help of five hot hits to the fence.

Perhaps to prove that life without Samarasekara is not unbearable both Faruque, Abahani's former captain, and the big Akram Khan set about rebuilding the broken innings.

Faruque was particularly impressive, playing every ball on its merit and never appearing hesitant to punish whenever the apparently complacent Mohammedan bowlers erred in direction and ceded in length. He made 35 off 49 balls embellished with three fine fours before being brilliantly caught by Bulbul at square on the side off a slightly aired sweep.

Akram departed in the same manner, of course, but not before making the highest score of the Abahani innings, with 42 off 48 balls. He topped an attempted sweep off Rafiq to Shantu a backward square-leg.

Leading Abahani on his return from the GMCC after a couple of years, Lipu was in no mood of spoiling the recovery work of his younger teammates. Mixing caution with occasional aggression, exemplified by a lofted sixer off Rafiq followed by an almost patented "back-scoop" for two, Lipu struck a highly useful 34 off 40 balls in the slog overs.

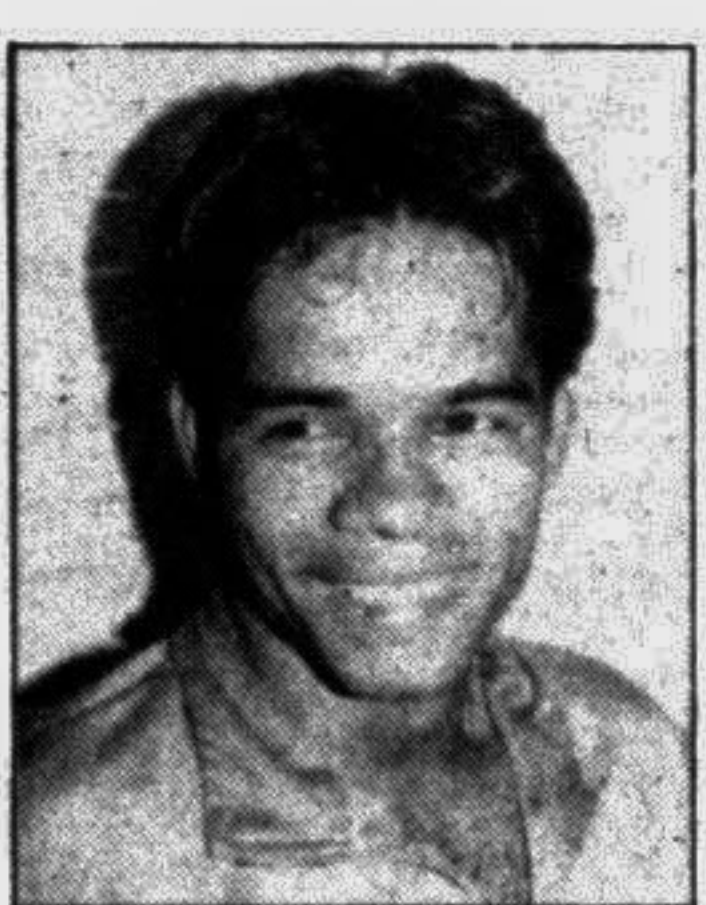
With Sujan chipping in with 20 Abahani ended on 219 for nine from their quota of 45 overs.

Sanjeev Sharma took his haul of wickets in the league to 25 with three for 36 runs. Rafiq bagged two for 47 while Zakir with early inroads finished with two for 23. Shantu got one for 43.

Needing to score at a rate of

4.88 per over Mohammedans got off to fairly good start, making 48 off 11.5 overs before Sujan bowled Azhar Hossain Shantu for 18.

A terrible stroke brought Rafiq's downfall with Ashoka's held-back delivery spoiling the batsman's rush for a sweep, bowling him round his legs.



JAHANGIR ... 5 victims

Sujan, who was bowling from the pavilion end and making the ball pop a bit — a characteristic of the wicket at the Paltan end observed earlier in the morning when Mohammedan's Sri Lankan pacesman Gamagee was bowled — then conjured up the most memorable spell of his life.

Aminul Islam Bulbul, who went to the wicket after the fall of Rafiq, reached out to get the feel of a delivery outside the off stump only to be deprived of the right of getting the feel of the ball on his bat for the rest of the match.

Not the happiest of batsmen against the ball that bounces a bit, Mohammedan skipper Nannu, his eyes hardly in, tried a square-cut too close to his body and Jahangir took another simple catch behind the wicket.

The fluctuations of fortunes associated with this game of glorious uncertainty was perceptibly reflected in the atmosphere as the muggy morning gave away to a windy, blustery afternoon which might have helped Sujan in foxing the Mohammedan batsman.

Sanjeev Sharma, however, belied all those speculations, working his way to a quiet 37 off 54 balls before spooning an easy catch to Faruque at mid-wicket.

Nadir Shah, one of the two umpires, raised his finger when Ptal, after making a brisk 15, ventured out against Lipu to make the score 158 for seven.

Although Gamagee looked unhappy when Tanjeeb Ahsan

Saad, the other umpire, signalled the end of his tenure at the wicket, Mohammedans were well and truly out of the game by then.

Ashoka de Silva had the highest haul of four wickets for 30. Sujan took three for 29 and Lipu, for whom the match marked a personal achievement, got two for 39.

### SCOREBOARD

Scoreboard of the Navana Premier cricket league title deciding match between Abahani KC and Mohammedan SC at the Dhaka Stadium on yesterday.

#### ABAHANI KC:

Jahangir c Ratan b S Sharma	17
Ashoka b Zakir	3
Shovon b Zakir	1
Samarasekara c Bulbul b Wahid	37
Faruque c Bulbul b Shantu	35
Akram Khan c Shantu b Rafiq	42
Lipu c sub b S Sharma	34
Sujan lbw b S Sharma	20
Ripon c Ratan b Rafiq	2
Babu not out	4
Eftee did not bat	
Extras: (b-1, lb-9, w-10, nb-4)	24
Total: (for nine in 45 overs)	219

Fall of wickets: 1/8, 2/10, 3/70, 4/72, 5/146, 6/164, 7/212, 8/212, 9/219.

#### Bowling:

	O	M	R	W
Zakir	6	0	23	2
Gamagee	7	2	25	0
Shantu	9	0	43	1
S Sharma	7	1	36	3
Wahid	6	1	25	1
Rafiq	9	1	47	2
Bulbul	1	0	10	0

#### MOHAMMEDAN SC:

Shantu b Sujan	18
Liton st Jahangir b Eftee	57
Rafiq b Ashoka	11
Bulbul c Jahangir b Sujan	0
Nannu c Jahangir b Sujan	2
S Sharma c Faruque b Lipu	37
Ptal st Jahangir b Lipu	15
Gamagee st Jahangir b Ashoka	1
Zakir lbw b Ashoka	9
Ratan not out	3
Wahid b Ashoka	0
Extras: (b-1, lb-5, w-9, nb-2)	17
Total: (all out in 42 overs)	173

Fall of wickets: 1/48, 2/64, 3/65, 4/68, 5/123, 6/149, 7/158, 8/162, 9/173, 10/173.

#### Bowling:

	O	M	R	W
Bixu	4	0	19	0
Samarasekara	5	0	18	0
Eftee	9	0	32	1
Sujan	7	0	29	3
Lipu	9	0	39	2
Ashoka	8	0	30	4

Result: Abahani KC won by 46 runs.

### FINAL POINTS TABLE OF NAVANA PREMIER DIV SUPER LEAGUE

TEAMS	M	W	L	Pts
Abahani KC	15	12	3	24
Mohammedan SC	15	11	4	22
Biman	15	11	4	22
Gulshan Youth	15	9	6	18
AMCC	15	8	7	16
Brothers Union	15	7	8	14

### FIDE- Kasparov reconciliation suspected

LONDON, Mar 21: World chess supremo Garri Kasparov and challenger Nigel Short have had five offers to stage their new title match, officials said on Saturday, but doubts emerged about the champion's true intentions, reports Reuter.

The Grandmasters broke with the International Chess Federation (FIDE) last month over plans to stage their world final in the English city of Manchester and invited bids for their own alternative championship.

Lawyers handling the bidding on behalf of Short, a Briton, and Azeri-born Kasparov said on Saturday that five sealed tenders had been submitted by Friday's deadline. The bids are due to be opened at a London news conference on Monday.

But the future of the Short-Kasparov alliance was called into question on Saturday by a newspaper report which said the world title-holder was in secret talks with the federation about a possible revised deal to make Manchester the venue after all.

The Daily Telegraph said Kasparov, 29, was on the point of making up with FIDE after being offered cash incentives to drop the plans for the rival championship under the auspices of the Professional Chess Association, which he founded with Short.

The chess world, used to bluff and counterbluff over the chessboard, has been rife with rumours about the likely outcome of the player's challenge to FIDE, the game's ruling body.

Officials from Manchester stoked the speculation on Saturday when they said they were still confident that the dispute would be resolved in their city's favour.

"We believe that Garri Kasparov will decide where that final is played and we are confident that it will be played in Manchester in the autumn," said a spokesman for the Manchester bid, Tony Ingham. He declined to say why he was confident.

One source close to negotiations about the chess final said there was a view that Kasparov might want to keep open the Manchester-FIDE option as an alternative.

Short, 27, the first Briton to challenge for the world title and Kasparov, who plays for Russia, accused Swiss-based FIDE of failing to consider their wishes when it accepted Manchester's 2.54 million Swiss franc (1.68 million dollar) bid. The bids essentially cover prize money, not operating costs.

Neither Kasparov, who the Daily Telegraph said was flying to London on Saturday for meetings about the match, nor Short, who is in the United States, could be reached for comment.

The London lawyers in charge of the bids, Jaques and Lewis, would not comment on who had submitted tenders.



IT'S TIME TO REJOICE ... Players of Abahani Kriya Chakra celebrate after their side comprehensively defeated arch-rivals Mohammedan Sporting in the title-deciding Navana Premier Division super league tie at the Dhaka Stadium yesterday. — Star photo

### Mujtaba, Ali spare Pak blushes

KINGSTON, Jamaica, Mar 21: Asif Mujtaba and Basit Ali hit half-centuries to rescue Pakistan on the third day of their four-day opening tour match against Jamaica on Saturday, reports Reuter.

Pakistan, 23 for two at one stage in their second innings, finished on 213 for five, an overall lead of 249.

The tourists wrapped up the Jamaican first innings for 283 in the first hour but lost openers Aamir Sohail and Zahid Fazal to the promising young fast bowler Franklin Rose with just 22 runs on the board.

Mujtaba then came to the rescue with 79, striking seven four from 177 balls while Ali hit five boundaries from 69 deliveries.

Jamaica, replying to Pakistan's first innings 319 for four declared, collapsed from an overnight 249 for four against the leg spin of Mushaq Ahmed, losing their last six wickets for just 34 runs.

Mushaq, captured five for 86 from 33 overs.

#### SCOREBOARD

Scoreboard on the third day

of the four-day match between Pakistan and Jamaica at Sabina Park on Saturday.

PAKISTAN: First innings: 319-4 declared (Inzamamul Haq 106, Zahid Fazal 62, Basit Ali 51, not out)

JAMAICA: First innings (overnight 249-4): D Morgan c Moin b Akram 0, R Samuels run out 32, J Adams st Moin b Mushaq 27, J Dujon lbw b Mushaq 7

PAKISTAN: Second innings: Aamir Sohail c Dujon b Rose 10, Zahid Fazal c Gayle b Rose 2, Asif Mujtaba c and b Williams 79, Wasim Akram b Williams 20, Moin Khan b Andrews 32

Jamaica: First innings: 283: D Morgan c Moin b Akram 0, R Samuels run out 32, J Adams st Moin b Mushaq 27, J Dujon lbw b Mushaq 7

PAKISTAN: First innings: 319-4 declared: Inzamamul Haq 106, Zahid Fazal 62, Basit Ali 51, not out

Jamaica: First innings: 283: D Morgan c Moin b Akram 0, R Samuels run out 32, J Adams st Moin b Mushaq 27, J Dujon lbw b Mushaq 7

Extras: (b-7, lb-20, w-1, nb-13) 41

Fall of wickets: 1-0; 2-58; 3-73; 4-78; 5-249; 6-251; 7-262; 8-276; 9-283.

Bowling: O M R W: Rose 13 4 59 2, Andrews 15 1 44 1, Williams 16 6 37 2, Adams 10 2 24 0, Haynes 12 3 35 0, Morgan 3 0 9 0

Umpires: V. E. Harrison and L U Bell.

MUSHTAQ ... 5 for 86

C Davidson run out 86, L Williams c Moin b Mushaq 65, P Gayle b Waqar 4

### England return empty-handed

COLOMBO, Mar 21: England's demoralised cricketers left for home, Sunday, after suffering humiliating defeats in India and Sri Lanka — with a taunting "annus horribilis" headline marking their departure, reports AFP.

Their arduous three-month tour of the sub-continent finally ground to a halt, Saturday, with England in the now familiar role of the vanquished, crushed by eight wickets in their second and last one-day international against Sri Lanka.

Having arrived in Colombo straight from a 3-0 drubbing in the Test series in India, England were subjected to further ignominy, losing the one-off Test and the two limited over games during their short tour here.

Comprehensively defeated by their former colonies, England's departure was greeted by the headline "Annus Horribilis for Her Majesty's

cricketers" from one Sri Lankan Sunday paper, echoing the queen's summation of the royal family's horrible year in 1992.

It aptly summed up the disastrous tour by Alex Stewart's squad — the worst ever in the history of England cricket.

While tour manager Keith Fletcher admitted that the Indians "had totally outplayed us in the Test series", he was miserly in praising Sri Lanka on their historic first Test win against England.

Instead the England camp blamed the four itinerant, the wickets, the umpires, and even the weather for a sorry display of the game they introduced to the world.

"It is too hot for us Europeans to play cricket in Sri Lanka," moaned Fletcher, immediately after England had tumbled to a five-wicket loss in the Test match.

The accompanying British media chipped in by questioning the bowling actions of Sri Lanka's two off-spinners in the Test, Jayananda Warnawera

and Muttiah Muralidharan — who took 13 wickets between them in the match.

Sri Lankan captain Arjuna Ranatunga was not impressed by the excuses: "When things go wrong, you blame the pitch, you blame the umpires and you blame the bowlers who are taking the wickets. These things happen all over the world," he said.

"England's problem was that they could not cope with spin bowling," added Ranatunga.

Spin bowling, an elegant technique nurtured mainly in the sub-continent, was the downfall time and again of the flat-footed English batsmen as they floundered across India and in Colombo.

Fletcher admitted: "We are not used to playing on turning wickets. We had to learn to play spin bowling while on tour."

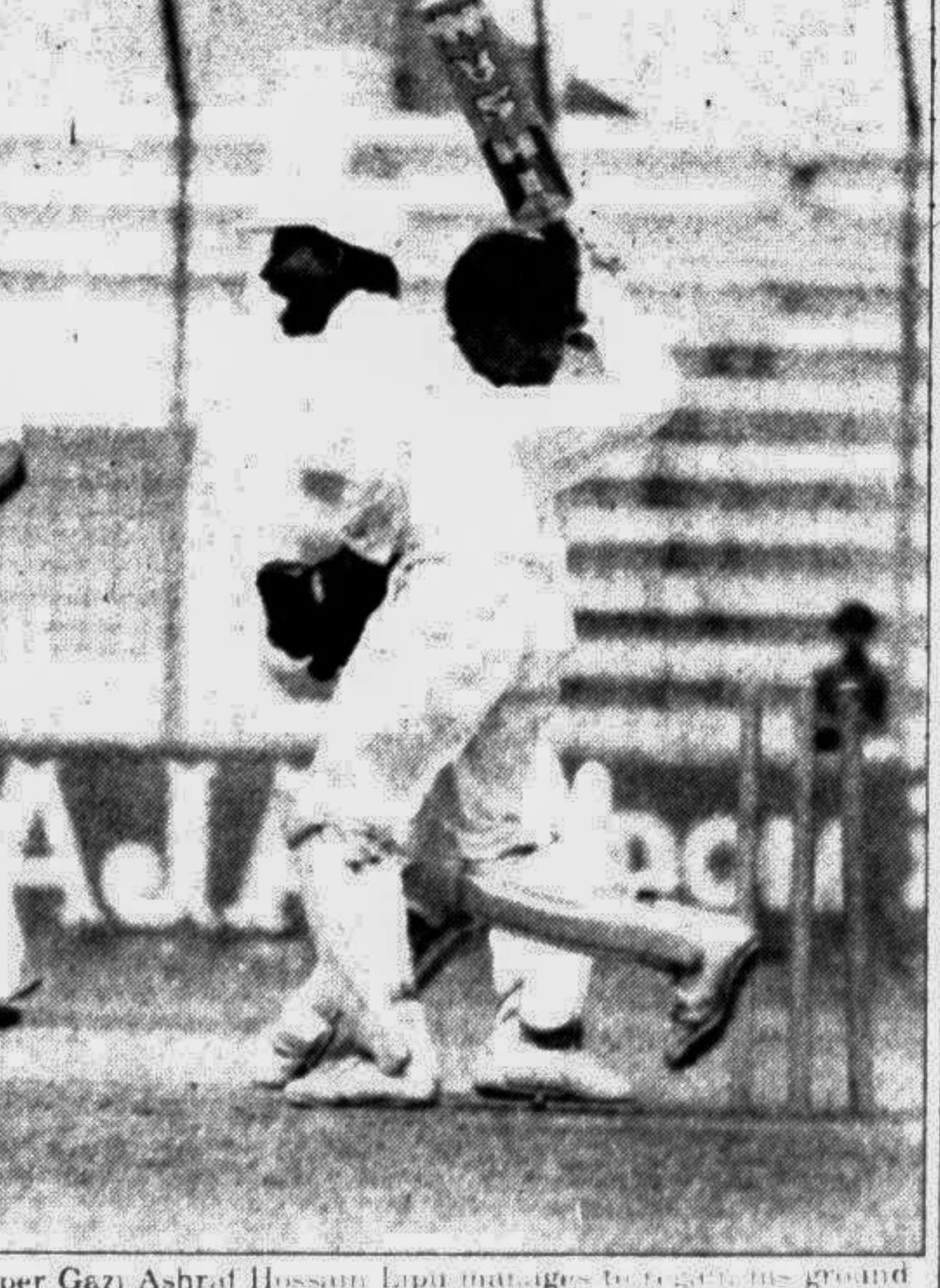
Batsmen Robin Smith and Graeme Hick did develop a technique against spinners, but they were in the minority with most of the squad repeatedly caught in its intricate web.

Among the bowlers, only Chris Lewis and Paul Jarvis enhanced their reputations.

For the rest of the tourists, the chance of securing a place in the squad for the forthcoming ashes series looks slim.

"A lot of preparation was done before the tour and we brought what we considered to be the best touring squad. But we did not perform as expected," Fletcher said.

"If you do not perform in Test matches, then there is no guarantee you will keep your place," he warned, adding that changes would be made for the six-Test home series against Australia beginning June.



CLOSE CALL ... Abahani skipper Gazi Ashraf Hossain Lipu manages to get his bats off after a Rafiq Alam delivery fooled him during the crucial Navana super league tie at the Dhaka Stadium yesterday. Lipu went on to score 34 in his side's 219 for nine. — Star photo

### ROLL OF HONOUR

Following is the roll of honour of the Navana Premier cricket league since its introduction in the 1974-75 season after independence:

Year	Champion	Runners-up
1974-75	Abahani KC	Shantinagar Club
1975-76	Victoria SC	Abahani KC
1976-77	Abahani KC	Victoria SC
1977-78	Mohammedan SC	Abahani KC
1978-79	Mohammedan SC	Abahani KC
1979-80	Bangladesh Biman	Azad Boys Club
1980-81	Bangladesh Biman	Mohammedan SC
1981-82	Mohammedan SC	Abahani KC
1982-83	Abahani KC	Mohammedan SC
1983-84	Bangladesh Biman	Mohammedan SC
1984-85	Abahani KC	Mohammedan SC
1985-86	Abahani KC	Mohammedan SC
1986-87	Abahani KC	Mohammedan SC
1987-88	Mohammedan SC	Abahani KC
1988-89	Bangladesh Biman	Abahani KC
1989-90	Abahani KC	Rupali Bank CC
1990-91	Brothers Union	Bangladesh Biman
1991-92	Mohammedan SC	Abahani KC
1992-93	Abahani KC	Mohammedan SC