

Dalmiya dispels doubts over Pak tour of India

NEW DELHI, Sept 21: Jagmohan Dalmiya, president of the Cricket Association of Bengal (CAB), today asserted that Pakistan would be touring India as scheduled, reports PTL.

The tour is scheduled to start with the six-nation Hero Cup tournament of CAB (beginning from Nov 7) as part of its diamond jubilee celebrations nationwide.

Dalmiya, who is also the convenor secretary of the Pak-Indo-Lanka joint bid committee of the World Cup, said the Pakistan cricket board has confirmed the tour during his recent visit to the country and that he has "No information to the contrary."

He was reacting to a report today which quoted BCCP officials Arif Ali Khan Abbasi and Shahid Rafi expressing doubts over Pakistan's tour of India.

Dalmiya said in a fax message from Calcutta that after the Board of Cricket Control cleared a tour, the only way it can get cancelled is if the government has the power to restrain players from appearing in matches.

Dalmiya said this happens sometimes due to security reasons as in the case of India's non-participation at Sharjah.

The CAB president said the other requirements like foreign exchange, etc, are not major problems.

"There has not been any hitch whatsoever since we had our last meeting when the BCCP confirmed the Pakistan's tour."

Dalmiya said therefore he was confident that there was "No truth in the report."

Asked to comment on Abbasi and Rafi's doubts over the tour, Dalmiya said: "They have not conveyed any such doubts to me."

Dalmiya said the Hero Cup has been planned carefully, keeping their concerns in mind.

"Not a single match has been assigned to the Pakistan team in the riot-prone or sensitive areas. This has been extensively discussed and clarified to the BCCP during my recent visit to Pakistan," Dalmiya said.

Incognito charges against SL bowlers

CHRISTCHURCH, New Zealand, Sept 21: A New Zealand umpire who officiated at Sri Lanka's recent home Test series against South Africa said Tuesday he received an anonymous letter claiming two Sri Lankan bowlers were "chuckers," reports AFP.

Umpire Brian Aldridge said the letter, supported by newspaper clippings, claimed Sri Lankan bowlers Kahakatchchi Warnaweera and Muttiah Muralidharan were chuckers.

"I showed it to John Reid (the former New Zealand captain who was the series referee) and we had a bit of a laugh. Next day John got one, and so did the South African team," said Aldridge.

"They had been sent by someone who was obviously a bit sour. The local officials believed they were not from another player but a former administrator."

"By encouraging me to call one of the bowlers for throwing during the Test series, he was perhaps hoping to discredit the Sri Lankan Board of Control and the selectors," he said.

Warnaweera, who bowls off-cutters was not in the series but Muralidharan, and off-spinner, was in the Sri Lankan side.

"I felt the eyes were on me when he first came in to bowl at my end. After a while I stepped back but didn't see anything wrong with his action. Later, from square leg and point, I found his action was different but not a throw."

"He bowls a faster one occasionally which some opposing players might think is close to a throw," said Aldridge.

Chosen by the International Cricket Council to stand with Sri Lankan umpires for the three-match series — won 1-0 by South Africa — Aldridge later received more mail "which suggested I was supposed to be neutral and told me to go home to South Africa."

Stulce faces a life ban

LONDON, Sept 21: American Olympic shot put champion Mike Stulce faced a life ban Tuesday after failing a drug test at last month's World Championships in Stuttgart, Germany, reports AP.

Stulce, who won the gold medal at the Barcelona Olympics last year and the bronze in Stuttgart, tested positive for the second time in his career.

"Both the 'A' and 'B' samples have been confirmed positive," said Jayne Pearce, spokeswoman for the International Amateur Athletic Federation, the sport's governing body.

Rahmatganj skating on thin ice, but Victoria frozen to death

Sports Reporter

Rahmatganj had to wait a long time for the lucky break. It came 30 minutes into the first half when Lokman found the net with a powerful shot with Ranjan doing the spade work 1-0.

Road Transport Corporation (BRTC) in one of the two Star First Division football league yesterday.

At the hockey stadium, Boys trounced BRTC 7-2. The winners led the first half 3-0.



Action from yesterday's Star First Division football league match between BRTC and Bangladesh Boys at the Hockey Stadium. Bangladesh Boys recorded a thumping 7-2 win.

will have the axe of relegation coming on them as they registered an important 2-0 victory in yesterday's Star Premier Division football league at the Dhaka Stadium yesterday.

The win is no guarantee for Rahmatganj's survival, but certainly boosted their struggle for survival. They have played their part having 13 points from the stipulated 18 matches.

They have to keep their fingers crossed with a rather selfish and existential hope that Arambagh, who have one match left with 12 points in their kitty, would come a cropper against Wari in their last match.

However Victoria are gone as a team. They have finished their eighteen match engagements with 12 points.

Yesterday, Rahmatganj put up a spirited display and fully deserved the win. However

Rahmatganj full-back Badal confirmed the win when he converted a spot kick 36 minutes into the second half. The Sri Lankan referee awarded them the penalty kick when Victoria's Sohail fouled Rahmatganj's Ranjan inside the box 2-0.

Iqbal of Victoria was cautioned with the yellow card for deliberately handling the ball.

RAHMATGANJ MFS: Milton, Badal, Rubel, Sufian, Jaglu, Azim, Nazim, Mushtaq (Javed), Sohail (Angur), Lokman and Ranjan.

VICTORIA SC: Arun (Aslam), Aman, Sohail, Iqbal, Farhad, Kongplak, Zia Babu, Biplob (Zakir), Hiro, Leekamnerdai and Moshir (Twofix).

Referee: Che Mat (Sri Lanka).

BOYS' FEAST
Promotes Bangladesh Boys feasted on lowly Bangladesh

Mintu, Nasim and Bayezid scored two goals each while Liton scored the other one for the winners.

The shameless fixed match, second successive one following East End's seven-nil drubbing of Adamjee, leaves Boys with 19 points from 16 matches while BRTC have 13, also from 16 matches.

In the other match played at the same venue yesterday, Farashganj beat Dhamond Club 2-0.

Shimu and Tipu Sultan scored once each in each half. Farashganj now jointly secure the top position with Fakirpool Youngmen's Club with 20 points from 16 matches.

Dhamond remain at their previous collection of 17 from 16 matches.

Frazier fends Maleeva off

TOKYO, Sept 21: American Amy Frazier eliminated fifth seed Katerina Maleeva of Bulgaria 6-1, 6-4 Tuesday in the first round of the Nichirei International ladies tennis championship, reports AP.

Fourth-seeded Amanda Coetzer of South Africa, the highest seed in action Tuesday, trounced American Lisa Raymond 6-2, 6-4 in 73 minutes.

Sixth-seeded American Lindsay Davenport outlasted Japanese women's singles champion Mana Endo 6-4, 5-7, 7-5 in a more than 2 1/2 hour battle at the Ariake Coliseum.

After her lopsided loss in the first set, Maleeva, ranked 18th in the world, threatened to turn things around at the start of the second set, taking a 40-0 lead on Frazier's serve. But Frazier, ranked No. 74, won the next five points.

Maleeva suffered a fatal serve break in the 10th game, bowing out of the 1-hour, 23-minute match with a crosscourt shot wide and a forehand into the net.

"I think I hit my ground strokes very well and moved well. She (Maleeva) made some errors," said Frazier.

The 17-year-old Davenport, ranked 21st in the world, said her battle against the 22-year-old Endo, who won the All-Japan Tennis Championship on Sunday, "was a tough match but a good beginning in Japan."

"I served well but my ground strokes sometimes go off. I am trying to make forehands my big weapon," said Davenport, who won the 1992 US Open junior singles and doubles titles.

Endo said, "She (Davenport) constantly served well but my serves were getting worse as the match went on."

Seventh-seeded Naoko Sawamatsu of Japan won the last nine games in a row in a 3-6, 6-

Barada breaks Martin down

DUBAI, Sept 21: Sixteen-year-old Egyptian Ahmed Barada nearly pulled off a shock win against third seed Brett Martin of Australia in the first round of the Dubai Classic squash tournament on Monday, reports Reuters.

Barada saved three game points in the opening game before winning a sudden-death finish and then went on to lead by two games to one.

Martin fought back to win the match 16-17, 15-5, 11-15, 15-7, 15-5, in exactly an hour, but he was full of praise for the teenager.

"This boy showed tonight that he is a player for the future. I had to work very hard to beat him," said Martin, winner of the Hong Kong Open three weeks ago.

Barada, who won the Arab Championship in Bahrain two days ago, matched his opponent stroke-for-stroke until he tired during the closing stages.

"I am just pleased to have the chance of being on court with players like Brett. This is the way I will learn the game," said Barada.

The Egyptian is ranked 68th in the world, having moved up more than 100 places this year.

World champion Jansher Khan of Pakistan was a man in a hurry as he scored a 15-1, 15-7, 15-6 victory in 34 minutes over Hong Kong number one Abdul Faheem Khan.

Jansher now plays South African qualifier Craig Van Wath, who caused an early surprise with a 15-13, 15-9, 8-15, 15-6 victory over Scotland number one Mark Maclean.

Australian Anthony Hill upset the rankings when he beat England's world number nine Chris Walker 15-5, 12-15, 15-10, 11-15, 17-14 in 61 minutes.

Schools b'ball

Tejgaon Shaheen School, St Nicholas School and Nabakumar Institution won their respective matches in the National King Fan schools basketball tournament at the NSC wooden floor gymnasium yesterday, reports UNB.

In the first match, BAF Shaheen School beat St Gregory's School 58-53 after leading the first half 30-15.

Anwarul scored 24 and Fahmid 20 for the winners while Yahub caged 34 and Moinul six for the losers.

St Nicholas School registered an impressive 61-24 victory over Bangladesh Navy School in the day's second match. The victors led the first half 34-14.

Abdul Ali contributed 29 and Nirmal 14 for the winners while Manzur and Faisal scored eight and six points respectively.

In the third match, Nabakumar Institution outplayed Mirpur Siddhanta School 46-19 after leading the first half 20-6.

Nazrul scored 22 and Gulzar eight for the winners.

Kabaddi league

Mirpur Juba Sangha defeated Bara Ghat Samaj Kalyan Juba Sangha by 27 points to ten in the Metropolitan Kabaddi league played at the Outer Stadium court yesterday, reports UNB.

The winners earned two lonas and comfortably led the first half 12-3.

Earlier, in the day's first match, BRA Recreation Club beat Anirban Sangskritik Sangha 34-30 in a keenly contested match.

The winners, who earned two lonas, trailed 11-18 in the first half.

Karpov keeps Timman at bay

AMSTERDAM, Sept 21: Anatoly Karpov held off a strong attack by Jan Timman Monday as the ninth game of the FIDE Chess World Championship match ended in a draw after 47 moves, reports AP.

Karpov now leads the match by 5 points to 4. Six of the nine games have been drawn.

Timman used the same opening moves as when he played the Russian ex-world champion for the first time in the 1966-67 European Youth Championships.

On that occasion a dynamic and sacrificial game was drawn after just 18 moves by the two 15-year-olds.

Monday's game went into the Torre attack, which is considered a fairly simplistic opening and rarely is used in top level play. White gives up a bishop for a knight on move 4 to gain a

hold on the centre.

After the players castled on different sides of the board, both began attacks, with Timman marching his pawns up on the queenside and Karpov on the kingside.

Tension heightened as the game looked to depend on which player could win the race to expose the other's king first.

But the Dutch Grandmaster managed to attack and defend at the same time and began to get the upper hand.

Victor Korchnoi, who twice played Karpov for the world title and was observing the game, said the Russian lost control of the position after move 20.

"Many Grandmasters would have gone to pieces in this kind of position, but somehow Karpov manages to defend a bad position quite smoothly," said Dutch Grandmaster Genna Sosonko, also watching the game.

"If you want to beat Karpov,

you have to kill him," he added.

Timman lacked the killer instinct as he let winning chances slip between move 30 and 40, and on move 43 Karpov was able to exchange queens and take the game into a drawn endgame.

Timman looked pale and disappointed as he left the hall after once again letting Karpov off the hook.

A rival world title match is being played concurrently in London between rebel world champion Garry Kasparov and his British challenger Nigel Short.

The FIDE contest resumes at Amsterdam's City Hall on Wednesday with game 10 of the 12 to be played in the Netherlands. The match will then move to the Gulf Sultanate of Oman for the concluding 12 games.

The first player to reach 12 1/2 points wins \$75,000. The loser gets \$75,000.

Bradley firm on his stance

WASHINGTON, Sept 21: Beijing should not be rewarded for failing to respect human rights by being allowed to host the Olympics, influential US Congressmen said here Monday, reports AFP.

"There is no getting around the fact that awarding China the Olympics for the year 2000 would be perceived as a reward by the world community," Senator Bill Bradley, himself a 1964 basketball Olympic gold medalist, told the Senate Monday.

"We should not allow the Chinese government a huge propaganda victory while it routinely tortures and imprisons political dissidents," Bradley added.

Wei, 43, is one of the six prominent dissidents released since Beijing formally launched its Olympic bid in January.

Bradley has been a leading figure in congressional opposition to Beijing's bid to host the 2000 Olympics because of its human rights record, and drafted a letter to the IOC signed by 60 Senators urging them not to choose China when they meet Thursday in Monaco to announce the host of the 2000 Games.

The House of Representatives also has passed a resolution opposing Beijing's bid.

Representative Tom Lantos, a Democrat from California and

chairman of the House Human Rights Subcommittee, said Monday that "hosting the Olympics is a plum — an honour and a privilege" and it should not go to a country whose "human rights record is absolutely appalling."

If the IOC decides to let Beijing host the Games, "it would wrongly reward a government whose lawlessness has been condemned around the world, provoke political controversy and overshadow and undermine the spirit and meaning of the Olympics themselves," Lantos said in a commentary published in the USA Today newspaper.

Beijing officials in Monaco meanwhile defended China's record and said that the Communist government's success in feeding the starving were more important than criticising a government's showing on human rights.

Games, the great leveller

BEIJING, Sept 21: If, as western critics say, human rights abuses make Beijing unfit to host the 2000 Olympic Games, they might be interested to know that prominent victims of such violations could hold a dissenting view, reports AFP.

Wei Jingsheng, China's longest serving political prisoner until his parole last week, spent 14 1/2 years in jail for seeking full democracy.

Five of those years were spent alone in the infamous "K-block," an underground maximum-security wing at Beijing No. 1 prison totally deprived of sunlight. Most of his teeth fell out and his girlfriend left for Germany, where she married and had four children.

With plenty of reasons to be angry with China's paramount leader Deng Xiaoping — the man responsible for putting him in jail and first proposing Beijing bid for the Olympics — Wei must surely be an opponent of the Games.

Right? Wrong.

"I personally support (the bid)," Wei, 43, said Monday in his first public appearance since being freed.

"I think this is a major event for the whole nation. I think political factions should cast aside their prejudices or disputes when addressing this issue."

Since Beijing formally

launched its bid in January, US lawmakers, British Foreign Secretary Douglas Hurd, Australian Prime Minister Paul Keating, human rights watchdogs in the west and some Chinese exiles have all come out against Beijing's quest for the Games, arguing that a repressive regime would only be legitimised if it were selected.

The western media have also focused on the controversy over the human rights issue ahead of the International Olympic Committee (IOC) vote Thursday.

But in an ancient land where blood runs thicker than water, many Chinese regardless of their political views feel China deserves to be recognised for the important country it is.

Beijing, hoping to silence human rights criticism, has freed six prominent jailed dissidents since January, including Wang Dan, the student leader of the 1989 Tiananmen Square protests, and former People's Daily editor Wu Xuecan — both of whom have also spoken in favour of Beijing's bid.

A day after his release, Wu said Friday his treatment during 30 months of solitary confinement was "inhumane." He said he still suffered frequent nose bleeds, diarrhoea and dizziness.

But for Wu, the Olympics and his nightmare in jail are unrelated.

"As a Chinese person, it would be an honour for Beijing

to host the Olympics," the 42-year-old said. "For a dissident to say that he supports the Olympic bid doesn't mean he is supporting certain people (in power), he is supporting the Chinese people."

With some 3,500 dissidents still in jail for "counter-revolutionary" offences, other dissidents disagree. Besides supporting a dictatorship, they say, the Games would siphon off money better spent on easing housing shortages and alleviating poverty.

Pro-Olympics dissidents argue that if Beijing hosted the Games it would force the Communist Party to introduce more political reform and respect for human rights. At the same time, it would boost economic growth by attracting more foreign investment, they say.

In the meantime, they say, dissidents will continue to fight for democracy and they stress the need for continued international pressure.

Wang Dan, the student leader who said the Olympics would bring "advantages" to China, perhaps best reflects the seemingly contradictory attitudes expressed by some dissidents over swapping dissidents for IOC votes.

"Relying (on the release of dissidents) to fight for hosting the Olympics is a very lamentable way of doing things, but China is that way," he said.

Battle of belles and beaux

LOS ANGELES, Sept 21: When Billie Jean King and Bobby Riggs played in the famous battle-of-the-sexes match two decades ago, disco was in and male chauvinism was out, reports AP.

This time, on Wednesday, they will play with partners more famous than they — King with Elton John, Riggs with Martina Navratilova — and everything will be different.

Or will it?

"All the clothes look exactly the same today, the bell bottoms. I should have saved everything," said King, now a television commentator. "It's amazing what an impact that match did have, but I thought it would be because of the exposure worldwide."

The match she referred to was the Sept 20, 1973 rumble pitting King against Riggs, an elder former champion. King, then 29, used long rallies and soft shots to tire the 55-year-old Riggs and won 6-4, 6-3, 6-3.

Their duel drew 30,472 to the Astrodome in Houston, still a record for a tennis match.

King has vivid memories of it — like wanting to throw up before she got on the court — even though she never watched a video of the match until last year.

The King-Riggs match,

viewed by a television audience estimated at 50 million, meant more off the court than on, with many heralding King's victory as proof that women can be as athletically accomplished as men.

"I think it helped a lot of people realize that everyone can have skills whether you are a man or woman," King said in a recent conference call with reporters. "I talked about opening the game up to everybody as well as helping men and women understand each other and also help women to have higher self-esteem, to just believe in themselves and go for their dreams."

The match also did a world of good for the popularity of women's tennis.

"Billie and I did wonders for women's tennis," Riggs said. "They owe me a piece of their checks."

It was in 1973 that women's tennis gelled, when champions including Chris Evert, Evonne Goolagong and Rosie Casals had a chance to play in a unified tour instead of split between the USA and the fledgling WTA. It was also a year after mandated Title 9 scholarships in which women, for the first time, could have their college education paid for because they were athletes.

King said she was never comfortable with the battle-of-the-sexes label.

"Anyone that knows my philosophy of life knows... everyone is supposed to cooperate and help each other," she said. "I grew up in a family where my mom and dad helped each other as a team, so it was very foreign to me to think in those terms. I don't think in terms of man vs woman, to me that it just outrageous."

That may be how many fans think today and it could explain why a gender-clash match between Jimmy Connors and Martina Navratilova didn't garner as much attention as the Riggs-King match did.

"It reflected the times," King said. "I think people had come a long way in their perception of women athletes. They accept us as great athletes, instead of just discounting us as they did in the past."

"Bobby and mine was historical making and Jimmy and Martina's was more of a money, fun, Vegas hype. No one had anything to prove. We had a lot more riding on it."

Wednesday's match at the Forum in Inglewood, Calif will be to raise money for AIDS education and patient care.

"And let me tell you Elton John plays tennis much better than I sing," King commented.

Well, what about her former foe?

"I'm definitely not looking for a rematch, at least not in singles," Riggs said.

Chandigarh heat annoys Aussies

CHANDIGARH, India, Sept 21: The Australian Davis Cup tennis team trained Monday in intense heat and humidity that left them drained, reports AFP.

Adding to their discomfort was the uneven practice courts adjoining the Centre Court at the Chandigarh Lawn Tennis Association Stadium which hosts this week's semifinals with India.

The players hurriedly left the court for the comfort of their dressing room as soon as non-playing captain Neale Fraser said, "Enough."

The temperature pushed close to 40 degrees Celsius (104 degrees Fahrenheit) and the only respite was provided by brief periods of shade when clouds passed over.

"It is very hot and humid," Fraser said after the practice session.

The visitors trained Sunday on the Lake Club courts, where a breeze blowing across the Sukhna Lake had provided welcome relief from the burning heat.

Fraser gave Wally Masur, Jason Stoltenberg, Mark Woodford and Todd Woodbridge 10 minutes break in between games.

The players had to repeatedly change their sweat-soaked T-shirts and drink liquids to



American Amy Frazier makes double-fisted backhand return during her first round match of Nichirei women's tennis tournament against Bulgarian Katerina Maleeva yesterday. Frazier moved into the second round with a 6-1, 6-4 victory.

— AFP photo