

Zia atop alone

Sports Reporter

Ziaur Rahman retained his position at the top of the points table at the end of the fourth round of the Dr Q M Hossain memorial International Masters' chess tournament at Purbani Hotel yesterday.

Zia beat his fellow International Master (IM) and compatriot Reefat bin Sattar in the day's most attractive encounter lasting 46 moves.

Playing with white pieces, Reefat took too many risks against Zia who adopted Sicilian defence. Both the players followed Taimanov variation.

Fide Master Tahmidur Rahman climbed to the second position in the points table beating Ziaul Qader Tuhin in another match of the day.

Pakistani IM Mahmud Ahmed Lodhi drew with Indian Shekhar Chandra Sahu, in a 17-move game.

In a less fancied clash of the locals Niamul Huq Niru beat IWM Rani Hamid as the queen bee of domestic chess surrendered under time pressure after 47 moves.

Two Indians — Rahul Shetty and Sharavanan recorded wins at the cost of a Bangladeshi pair. Respected Shetty beat Kalimullah Khan while Sharavanan made short work of Rafiqul Islam.

At the end of the fourth round Zia singularly led the points table with three points from four matches. Tahmid, Shetty, Reefat followed him with 2.5 points having played three matches each.

More axed

BOMBAY, Oct 26: India dropped veteran wicketkeeper Kiran More on Tuesday from the Indian squad for next month's six-nation one-day cricket tournament to mark the diamond jubilee of Calcutta's Cricket Association of Bengal, reports Reuter.

More was the only casualty from the squad who toured Sri Lanka in August, when they lost a three-match series of one-day matches.

The 30-year-old More, India's first-choice keeper since the 1986 tour of England, was replaced by Vijay Yadav, who is regarded as a better batsman.

Yadav, 24, was blooded in India's generally poor tour of South Africa last year and performed well with the bat.

The other teams scheduled to play in the tournament starting on November 7 are the West Indies, South Africa, Sri Lanka, Zimbabwe and Pakistan.

Indian squad: Mohammad Azharuddin (captain), Sachin Tendulkar (vice captain), Navjot Singh Sidhu, Manoj Prabhakar, Vinod Kambli, Pravin Amre, Ajay Sharma, Worker Raman, Vijay Yadav, Kapil Dev, Jagavaj Srinath, Anil Kumble, Salil Ankola, Venkatapathy Raju, Rajesh Chauhan.

Lamb stays at Northants' helm

LONDON, Oct 26: Former England batsman Allan Lamb has been reappointed Northamptonshire's cricket captain for next season, reports Reuter.

Lamb, 39, who led Northants to the 60 overs Natwest trophy in 1992, has been in charge for five seasons.

Jr gymnastics from Oct 28

Sports Reporter

The 10th National Junior Gymnastics competition '93 will be held on Oct 28 and 29 in Chittagong, according to a Bangladesh Gymnastics Federation press release issued yesterday.

Sixty participants, both boys and girls, from all over the country, will be taking part in this competition.

Belgian hopes ride on Cyprus

LONDON, Oct 26: Belgian soccer fans are hoping Cyprus can avoid defeat in Prague Wednesday in a World Cup qualifying match against the former Czechoslovaks, reports AP.

If they do, Belgium are certain to qualify for the finals in the United States next year.

Four of the six teams in European Group Four are still in contention for two qualifying places. The representation of Czechs and Slovaks, formerly Czechoslovakia, are expected to beat Cyprus on home turf and that would make things even tighter at the top.

Belgium lead the standings with 14 points, Romania are second with 13 and Wales third with 12. All three have one game to play while the RCS goes into Wednesday's game with 10 points and two to play.

In the final series of games Nov 17, Belgium host the RCS and Romania visit Wales.

Three other World Cup games are scheduled for Wednesday but none of the teams playing can qualify.

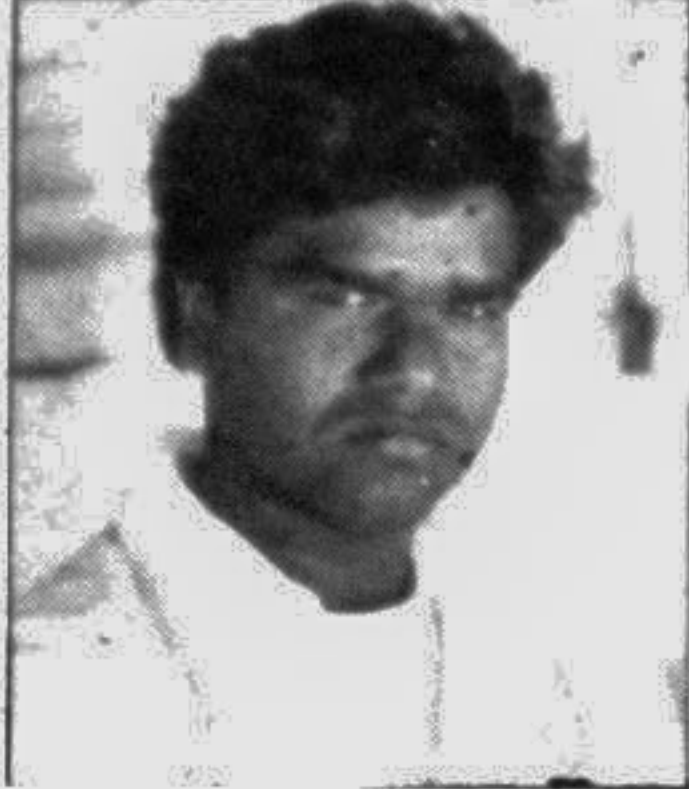
Turkey host Poland in Group Two, Luxembourg visit Hungary in Group Five and Israel, who upset France in their last game, welcome Austria.

Biman duo not enough for BCCB

Sports Reporter



Board (BCCB) XI lost their third



SHANU... 70

exhibition match of the Shri Lankan tour according to a faxed message received at the BCCB office last night.

BCCB XI went down fighting to Galle District Cricket Association President's Eleven (GDCA's XI) by 13 runs at the Galle Esplanade ground yesterday.

Shanu scored 70 off 112 balls to dead-lift the tourists from a disastrous start but teammates with the lone exception of Jahangir Alam Dulu failed to respond to his efforts.

Dulu with his unorthodox and at times hilarious batting technique remained unconquered on a stormy 55 off just 35 balls, as the BCCB XI innings came to a standstill at 203 for nine when the stipulated fifty overs were completed.

Earlier in the morning, GDCA's XI's skipper won the toss and elected to bat first on a docile wicket.

Although Bangladeshi new ball bowlers — rookie Mizanur Rahman Babul and veteran

Jahangir Talukdar Dulu bowled well within themselves, the GDCA innings prospered slowly but steadily with useful knocks from one of the openers and almost all the middle order batsmen.



DULU... 55 n.o

Opener Janaka Kumudu was the topscorer with 58 grafted off 102 balls. He was followed by Suman Jayantha with 44 whirlwind 32 off 20 balls from Fatumi 25 each from Test player Marvan Attapattu and Wickremasinghe (not the Test playing one).

Bangladeshi fielders and bowlers gave little away as the 12 extras would bear out in GDCA's grand total of 216 for seven wickets from 50 overs.

Skipper Athar Ali Khan, normally a miser with the ball had a rare and dubious distinction of being a spendthrift giving away 66 runs in 10 overs for the two wickets.

Off spinner Salahuddin on the national duty for the first time was the pick of the bowlers taking one for 25.

Dulu and Akram Khan bagged one wicket apiece.

Athar Ali and Harunur Rashid Liton — the Bangladeshi openers returned to the pavilion with the score board showing three when BCCB XI started

their victory chase. Hopes of an entertaining afternoon of cricket further waned when Faruque Ahmed, so far the most consistent of the batsmen trooped back for nine only.

Just when everything looked bleak for the visitors, the dark, stuggy Shanu started his rescue operation. A clean hitter of the ball, the right handed middle order batsman who plays for Biman in the local league carried the fight to the enemy camp with a long-missing sense of purpose.

He was backed, albeit briefly by Mahbubur Rahman Selim, the former Biman batsman who joined GMCC recently. He made 26 off as many balls.

Shanu enjoyed an electrifying partnership with Dulu who with his inimitable style batted like bull in a China shop.

Another Biman player Dulu cracked 55 off 35 balls but in the end too many runs were needed off too few balls and the BCCB XI had no other way but to accept defeat by the narrow margin of 13 runs.

Sunamganj soccer

SUNAMGANJ, Oct 26: Shahabg Sporting Club clinched the title of Deputy Commissioner Cup football league defeating Mohammedan SC in the final here at the local stadium today, reports UNB.

Shahabg SC won the cup collecting nine points.

Government Jubilee School and Zara Sporting Club jointly became the runners-up securing six points from their respective matches in the league.

Six teams took part in the league that began in October 7. The teams are — Mohammedan Sporting Club, Shahabg SC, Government Jubilee School, Mechant SC, Young Star SC and Zara SC.

Crowe craves for a break

SYDNEY, Oct 26: New Zealand cricket captain Martin Crowe is looking for a win — and a one-day match against the youthful Australian Institute of Sports Cricket Academy would do just nicely, reports AP.

Crowe, who has watched his team lose its first two matches on a four-month Australian tour, warned his players on Tuesday to be focussed for Wednesday's match at the North Sydney Oval.

New Zealand crashed to an innings and nine runs loss to the Western Australian state team at the WACA Ground on Sunday after earlier losing their tour opener against an Australian Cricket Board Chairman's XI.

But Wednesday's match against the Adelaide-based youngsters won't be an easy one for the visitors. Two years ago, the Academy beat New Zealand by eight wickets.

New Zealand plays the New

South Wales state team in a four-day match in Newcastle beginning Friday. The first Test against Australia in Perth begins on Nov. 12.

"Every game is important and going on what we've showed so far we need every match we can get," Crowe said Tuesday. "We know the Academy side is a good one because they beat us a couple of years ago."

"We want to play well and we want to get our first win on tour because we need to start producing results."

New Zealand have been hit by injuries and other problems during the first seven days of their tour.

Opener Mark Greatbatch is expected to be sidelined for a week with a broken finger, while senior batsman Andrew Jones is expected to return home in mid-December for the birth of his wife Amanda's first child.

The New Zealand team for Wednesday's match: (from) Blair Pocock, Bryan Young, Martin Crowe, Andrew Jones, Ken Rutherford, Chris Cairns, Tony Blain, Dipak Patel, Danny Morrison, Willie Watson, Simon Doull, Mark Haslam, Murphy Su'a.

Cullinan's feat

JOHANNESBURG, Oct 26: Darryl Cullinan hit 337 not out, the highest first-class score recorded in South Africa, in Transvaal's drawn match against Northern Transvaal on Monday, reports Reuter.

It belted Terence Lazard's 307 for Boland against Western Province a month ago.

Cullinan's 656-minute innings helped his side to 602 for nine declared in reply to Northern Transvaal's 517-8 declared.

He faced 528 balls and struck 41 fours and three sixes.

The highest first-class score by a South African anywhere was Barry Richards's 356 for South Australia against Western Australia in the 1970-71 season.

Daai keeps Iran on course

DOHA (Qatar), Oct 26: Two headed goals from striker Ali Daai gave Iran a 2-1 victory over North Korea on Monday and resurrected their hopes of a passport to next year's World Cup finals in the United States, reports Reuter.

The result put North Korea out of the running for one of the two qualifying berths from the Asia final round, but all other five teams still have a chance of going through.

Japan beat South Korea 1-0 earlier on Monday to go to the top of the tournament standings. J-League sensation Kazuyoshi Miura, who scored twice in their 3-0 win over North Korea, was Japan's hero again with a second half goal.

The three final games on Thursday, to be played simultaneously, will decide Asia's two representatives in the 1994 Finals.

Japan on five points, take on fourth-placed Iraq who are a point adrift, while Saudi Arabia, second behind Japan on goal difference, meet Iran who are currently fifth with four points.

Third-placed South Korea, also on four points and attempting to reach the finals for the third time in a row, clash with cold war rivals North Korea.

With the five teams separated by just one point, the qualifiers could well be decided on goal difference.

Daai's goals, the second a carbon copy of the first, came in the 50th and 65th minutes, the tall striker rising at the far post to head home strongly.

North Korea, remembered for their 1-0 win over Italy in the 1966 World Cup Finals, opened the scoring in the 21st minute through Choe Won-Nam.

Daai, the tournaments top scorer with four goals, revealed after the game that he had turned down a chance to play

for German giants Bayern Munich.

"There have been approaches but I am an Iranian player and will be to the end of my life," he said.

Iranian coach Ali Parvin, who played for his country in the 1970 World Cup finals in Argentina, said he believed his side could beat Saudi Arabia in the final game.

"I think we can beat the Saudis and by a good score," was his confident prediction.

STANDINGS

Standings in the Asian final qualifying group for the World Cup Finals after Monday's games:

Played	Won	Drawn	Lost	Goals for	Against	points
Japan	4	2	1	1	5	25
Saudi Arabia	4	1	3	0	4	35
South Korea	4	1	2	1	6	44
Iraq	4	1	2	1	7	74
Iran	4	2	0	2	5	74
North Korea	4	1	0	3	5	92

Top two qualify



A ten-day long Olympic solidarity regional volleyball coaches' course organised by Bangladesh Olympic Association (BOA) ended yesterday. On the concluding day participants were awarded certificates at a city hotel. BOA president Gias Kamal Chowdhury was the chief guest on the occasion. —Star photo

Baba, 'the most worried man in the world'?

DOHA, Oct 26: Ammu Baba, a former Iraqi army major turned soccer coach, says he is the "most worried man in the world." A defeat of his team in the Asia World Cup qualifying could end his career in sports, reports AP.

On Tuesday, Baba sat in his 6th floor room at the Gulf Sheraton hotel, gazing at a wrist watch bearing a picture of Saddam Hussein which the Iraqi leader gave him for Christmas many years ago. He wondered what Thursday's make or break match against Japan would bring — a new gift, or a stick.

"Yes, I am the most worried man in the world today," said the 59-year-old Amanoliel Dawood Baba, popularly known as Ammu Baba.

"If my team wins and goes to the United States I get the laurel... if we lost I will get the stick," he told The Associated Press.

Iraq have staked their prestige on qualifying for the 1994 World Cup in the United States, the country that mauled his army during the 43-day Gulf War in 1991. Saddam hopes that sending his national team to the United States would help break Iraq's international isolation and revamp the nation's morale.

Six teams are competing for Asia's two slots in the soccer championships. In Thursday's decisive games, Iraq meet Japan, North Korea play against South Korea and Saudi Arabia battle Iran.

Asked what he was likely to do if the Iraqi team makes it to the top, Baba said: "The laurel can be anything — money, car, a new house, and the stick will surely be my sacking."

Baba was sent in last week to take over from head coach, Adnan Dirjal who was sacked after Iraq lost 3-2 against North Korea in the opening match of the six-nation tournament on Oct 15.

As much as Baba loves being Iraq's head coach, he admits the job has drawbacks in a police state like Iraq, especially that the head of the National Football Association is the president's eldest son, Odai.

"The bad part is you get fired very often," he said. "I have been fired at least 10 times until now, the last time was in the Seoul Olympic games when we lost to Italy 0-2."

But this time it is different, the whole nation is waiting, our president is watching, this is very important and very scary," said Baba, who is married and has two daughters and a son.

"I have given my whole life to Iraqi and Arab football and I have nothing left to give," he said.

He has only one wish: "Victory over Japan, so that I can tell my President here I am with American visas for your soccer team."

Haunting humiliation

SEOUL, Oct 26: South Koreans, who revere soccer as a major national sport, received with shock the news of their national team's 1-0 defeat to Japan in the Asian final qualifying round for the World Cup, reports AP.

The defeat effectively ended South Korea's chances of reaching the World Cup, though it has a final game left against rivals North Korea. Six Asian nations are competing in Doha, Qatar, for two spots in the Cup.

"It's a second national humiliation day," the national Yonhap news agency said in a dispatch from Doha, equating the defeat to Japan's takeover of Korea in 1910 as a colony. That day is remembered by many Koreans as a national humiliation day.

"(We) lost to Japan in every sense, in skills, teamwork, fighting spirit," Yonhap said.

Millions of South Koreans lling because South Korea has always dominated Japan in soccer. It had of Monetary Union.

Fillip for Argentine hopes

SYDNEY, Oct 26: Argentina's preparation for Sunday's World Cup soccer qualifier against Australia was set to move into high gear following the remainder of the South American squad's arrival on Tuesday, report agencies.

The last five players on the 18-man team, including brilliant striker Gabriel Batistuta, flew in from Europe to a low-key welcome, five days before the first-leg match at the Sydney Football Stadium.

In contrast to last week's reception when 3,000 fans packed the airport to catch a glimpse of comeback star Diego Maradona, only a handful of Argentinian photographers were on hand to meet the players.

Batistuta, who plays with Italian First Division side Fiorentina, flew in with fellow European players Jose Chamot (Foggia), Fernando Redondo (Tenerife), Abel Balbo (AS Roma) and Fernando Caceres (Real Zaragoza).

Although he is yet to play alongside Maradona, Batistuta poses a lethal threat working of the midfielder's razor-sharp passing.

"I feel really, good after the long flight, and I seem to have rested most of the way" Batistuta said. "I'm really looking forward to joining up with the team. I'm confident that we'll come away with a victory from Sydney."

ZELIC WARNS

Australian sweeper Ned Zelic has warned his countrymen against placing too much emphasis on stopping Argentine superstar Diego Maradona.

Zelic, who also plays for Borussia Dortmund in Germany, returned to Sydney with six other European-based Australians today for the vital soccer clash against the two-time World Cup champions at the Sydney Football Stadium.

Gullit to be Cruyff's main man

PARIS, Oct 26: Ruud Gullit will be an automatic choice if Johan Cruyff takes over as Holland coach for the World Cup finals next year, reports APF.

"If I become national coach then Gullit will be in my first team," the Barcelona coach said.

Gullit has refused to play for his national side since he was substituted by current coach Dick Advocaat during the 2-2 draw with England at Wembley in April.

That was the second time the former European player-of-the-year had retired from international football but he has said he would be willing to make another comeback if, as expected, Advocaat takes over the national side for the World Cup finals.

Advocaat was appointed coach for the World Cup qualifying period after Cruyff declined to leave Barcelona. But he was given a contract only until May 1994 on the understanding that Cruyff would step in for the finals.

Holland need one point from their final Group 2 match in Poland on November 17 to ensure they make the trip to the United States.

After some sluggish performances earlier in the group, Advocaat's side proved they are still a force to be reckoned with by beating England 2-0 in Rotterdam earlier this month to virtually book their finals berth.

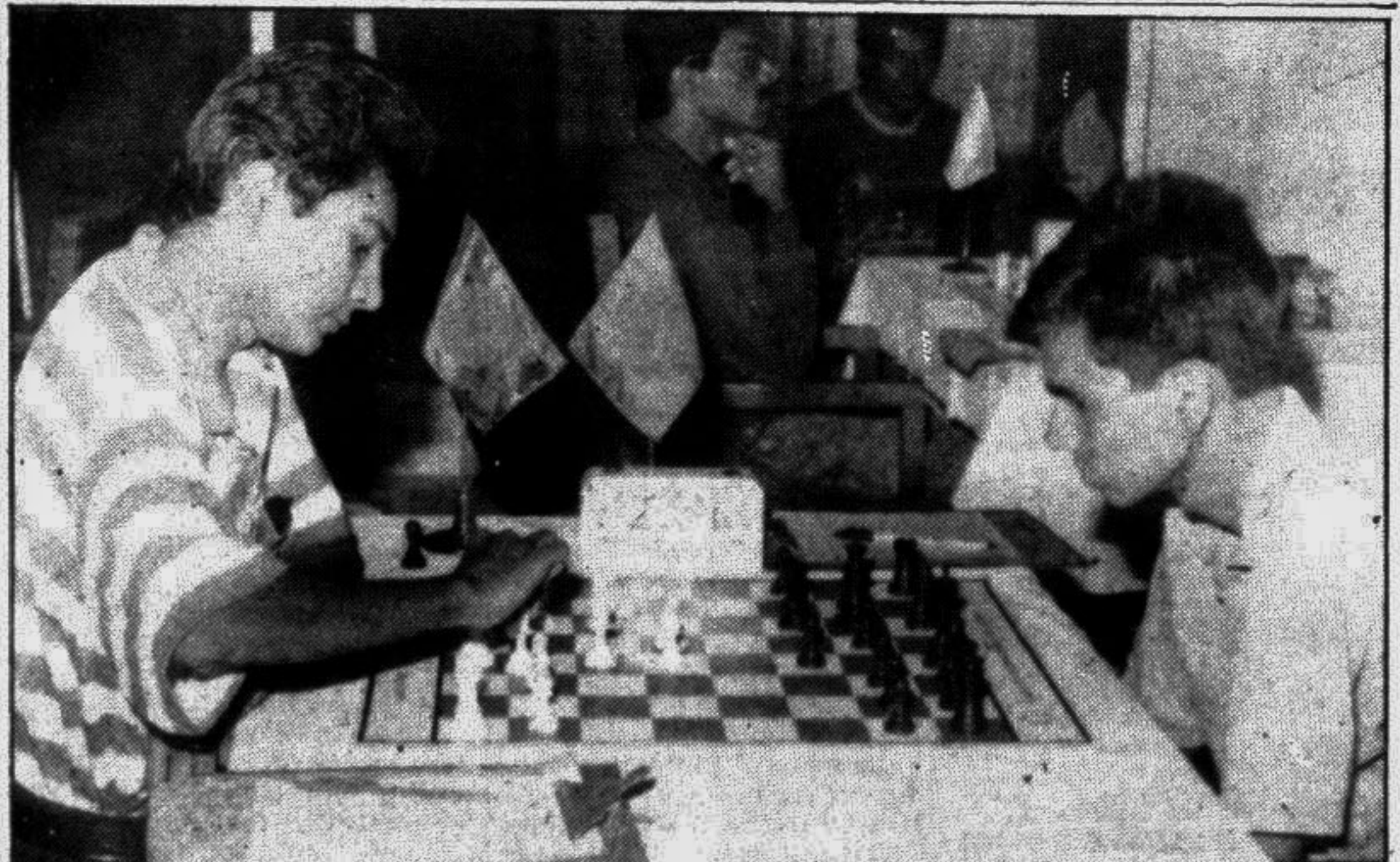
But Cruyff was not overly impressed with the sides performance. "I didn't like the way they played," he said.

"They had a bit of luck on a few shots when it was still 0-0. But I don't want to go into that too much. Every time I say something, Advocaat takes it as a personal attack on him."

"That said, if I was coach you would see a different Dutch team."



Japanese player Hasegawa Kenta (L) duels with South Korean defender Park Jung Bae (R), during their World Cup qualifying match at the Khalifa Stadium in Doha on Oct 24. Japan won 1-0. —AFP photo



Scene from yesterday's fourth round of the Dr Q M Hossain memorial International Masters' chess tournament at the Purbani Hotel. —Star photo

He is among three players suggested by Australian coach Eddie Thomson as candidates for the task of keeping Maradona in check. The others are Paul Wade and Mehmet Durakovic.

But Zelic delivers Australia should concentrate on its own game and not become overly anxious about defending against Maradona.

"I don't think we can ignore him but I can't see myself spending 90 minutes closely watching him," Zelic said. "Sure, he's a good player but we're on our home turf and Australia should be setting the pace."

Zelic, who joined the German Bundesliga team last year, said he was not worried by the prospect of marking the Argentine captain so long as he did a good job for Australia.

He said concentrating on playing as a team had so far brought Australia to within two games of qualifying for next year's World Cup finals in the United States.

Switching to an individual game for different players could be upsetting and have an adverse effect on the team buildup, Zelic said.

The other overseas-based Australian players to arrive in Sydney today were strikers Graham Arnold and Robbie Slater, midfielders Aurelio Vidmar and Jason Van Blerk and defenders Dominic Longo and Milan Balgojevic.

Many people thought Gullit, who has been hampered by injury in the last two seasons, was finished when, at the end of last season, AC Milan were only prepared to offer him a one year contract on reduced terms.

Since moving to Sampdoria through he has enjoyed a new lease of life and has managed to stay clear of injury.

His two goals against Torino on Sunday, the first a spectacular diving header, were his fifth and sixth of the season — making him joint top scorer in the Serie A and justifying his own belief that he is best used in an attacking role.

Advocaat's preference for playing him on the right of midfield was one of the reasons behind their bustup.

With Gullit back on form, Frank Rijkaard enjoying a renaissance at Ajax and Marco Van Basten, who has been out all season after ankle surgery in June, back in training at AC Milan, the Dutch look like mounting a formidable challenge in the United States.

When they were together at Milan, the Dutch trio formed the basis for one of the best club sides the world has ever seen.

Although they inspired Holland to the 1988 European Championships they have never quite managed to transform their club influence to the international stage.

With Cruyff at the helm all that could change next summer.

FIDAL dismisses rumours

ROME, Oct 26: Italy's athletics federation (FIDAL) on Tuesday dismissed reports of alleged bribing of Australian sprinter Dean Capobianco into taking Italian citizenship, reports Reuter.

"FIDAL has nothing to do with this initiative," the federation said after reports Capobianco had been offered 195,000 plus a house and Ferrari to run for Italy.

Capobianco, whose parents were born in Italy, reportedly told Melbourne's The Age newspaper that the offer had been made to him by a leading, but unidentified, athletics official during the World Championships in Stuttgart last August.

"We must admit that we don't know who could make such an offer... and it amazes us that an athlete, who has previously expressed an interest in coming to our country, could have refused." The FIDAL statement added.