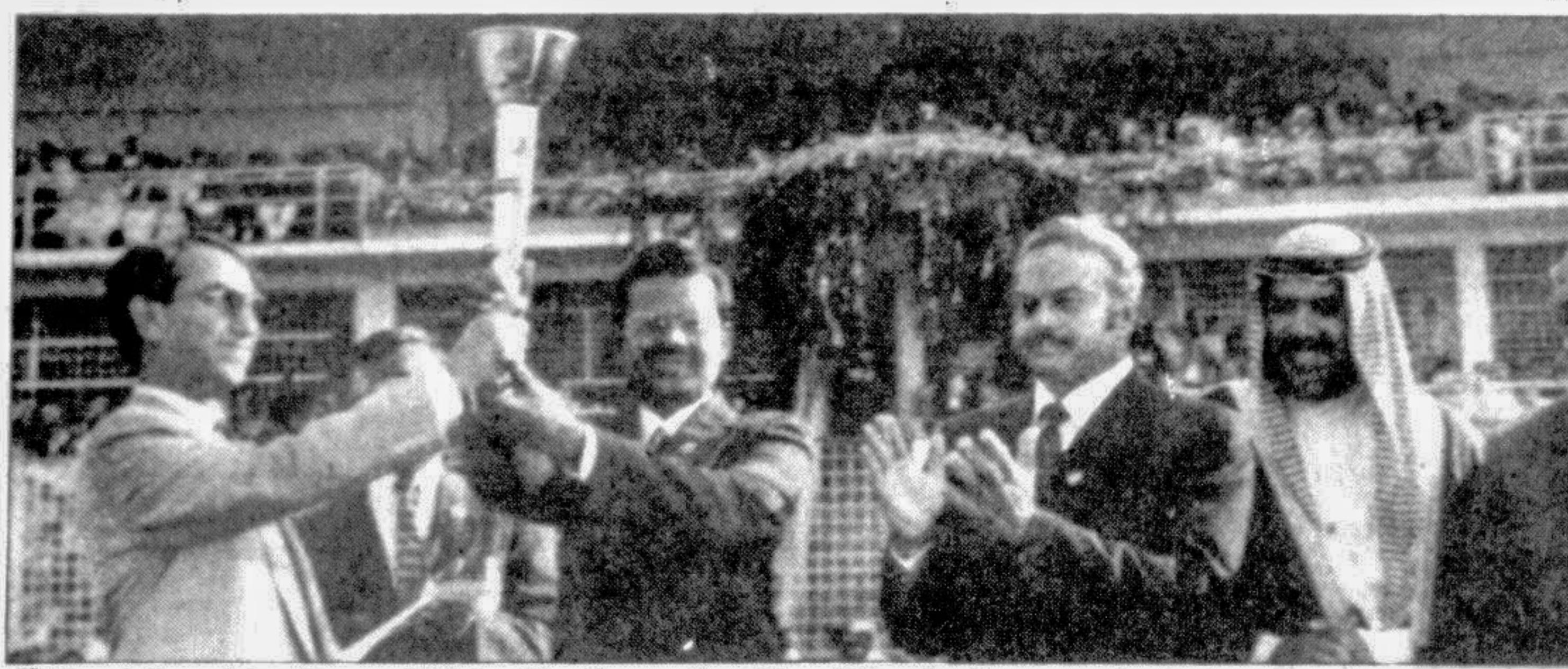


Sport



(From left to right) Mayor of Dhaka City Corporation Mirza Abbas handing over the Sixth SAF Games torch to the Education and Sports Minister of Tamil Nadu, Prof K Bonnusamy, who attended the closing ceremony on behalf of the mayor of Madras. Indian Olympic Association (IOA) chief B Adityan and president of the Olympic Council of Asia (OCA) Sheik Ahmed Al Fahd Al Sabah are also seen.

— Star photo

Bimal, Shahana best athletes of Bangladesh

Fastest man of South Asia, sprinter Bimal Chandra Tarafdar and shooter Kazi Shahana Parveen were adjudged the best sportsman and sports-woman of Bangladesh in the Sixth SAF Games, reports BSS.

The two athletes will be awarded with crests by Bangladesh Sports Journalists' Association at a function later.

Bimal won the gold in the men's 100m sprint in a record time of 10.61 seconds to achieve the rare feat.

Shahana earned a gold medal in standard rifle in shooting.

Mohun Bagan enter DCM semis

NEW DELHI, Dec 27: Mohammedan Sporting, Calcutta and Punjab State Electricity Board (PSEB) played out an exciting 2-2 draw in a high-tension quarter-final league match today to share points and help Mohun Bagan squeeze through to the DCM football semi-finals here, reports PTI.

Though Mohammedan Sporting finished with three points, the same as Mohun Bagan, the latter qualified by virtue of a better goal average.

The match was halted for about 15 minutes in the second half following rioting by a large section of the crowd who were agitated over 'disallowed goal' by referee B Chauhan.

Earlier, Tousif Jamal put Mohammedan Sporting ahead in the 12th minute heading in a defence splitting cross from Mushtaq Ali.

Strengthening their defence and coming up with better co-ordinated moves in the second half PSEB looked all set to overcome the first half deficit and they did as Dhanwant Kumar struck 11 minutes into the second half to equalise.

Twelve minutes later Dhanwant slammed in again past an advancing Debachish Mukherjee to consolidate the team's position.

But Mohammedan Sporting bounced back into the game as Tousif Jamal restored parity in the 71st minute through a deftly executed goal.

Varteks Club of Croatia will now play Royal Nepal Airlines in the first semifinal tomorrow while Mohun Bagan will take on JCT, Phagwara in the second semifinal on Wednesday.

Brazilians pick their WC XI

RIO DE JANEIRO, Dec 27: Rio soccer fans, in a poll released Sunday, chose the team they would send to the 1994 World Cup and their choices were very different from the squad picked by manager Carlinho Alberto Parreira, reports AP.

The poll by the Rio daily O Globo, showed the following roster:

Lineup: Gilmar (Flamengo), Cafu (Sao Paulo), Ricardo Rocha (Santos), Rogerio (Flamengo), Leonardo (Sao Paulo); Cesar Sampao (Palmeiras); Mauro Silva (La Coruna, Spain); Marquinhos (Flamengo) and Zinho (Palmeiras); Bebeto (La Coruna-Spain) and Romario (Barcelona-Spain).

Rio fans chose three players from Flamengo, the city's most popular team. Goalkeeper Gilmar, defender Rogerio, and midfielder Marquinhos. They received more votes than Parreira's choices for goalkeeper Taffarel (Reggiana-Italy), defender Ricardo Gomes (Paris St Germain), and team captain midfielder Rai (Paris St Germain).

Rio fans also chose Cesar Sampao, midfielder of the 1993 Brazilian champs Palmeiras over Parreira's choice Dunga, of Stuttgart, Germany.

Fans agreed with Parreira, that Spanish league heroes Bebeto and Romario should be on the national team, but the fans would move Bebeto to midfield, with top sub Edmundo, scoring sensation of the Palmeiras national champs, forming a front line with Romario.

Edmundo and Romario are former teammates on the Rio Vasco club, and Romario has publicly asked Parreira to play Edmundo together with him.

A mixed Games for the hosts

Sports Reporter

From the viewpoint of chronological order in the medals table, the just-concluded Sixth SAF Games have not marked any spatial improvement for the hosts.

Bangladesh have finished fourth, following champions India, Pakistan and Sri Lanka. In the fifth Games in Colombo,



the pattern was more or less the same with hosts Sri Lanka finishing second after India and Bangladesh settling for the fourth slot.

The path to success in football, the most adored and popular of all the disciplines added and chopped off in the annals of the Games, has remained unbroken, and shooting has once again proved to be the forte of the hosts with seven of the eleven golds in a total medal haul of 64 coming from marksmanship.

The saga of eleven golds, no matter coming in how disproportionate a ratio in terms of disciplines, has been the most significant achievement for the hosts. It meant a great leap for the millions of soccer crazy people of the country because the defeat meant an ouster for Bangladesh from perhaps the weakest international football

team in the second Games in Dhaka playing hosts for the first time. Bangladesh garnered

64 medals from seven disciplines that year, a feat they emulated in the sixth version of the Games.

The increase in the number of disciplines did not really serve the purposes of the hosts. India, the traditional super power of the biennial sporting carnival, made a clean sweep in judo, the newly-introduced discipline. Tennis and football remained the untouched terrains, and only pinched and rarified success was achieved in disciplines like kabaddi, volleyball and table tennis.

The biggest source of disappointment was, of course, football.

Ranked by FIFA only recently above any other of their South Asian neighbours, Bangladesh managed the sixth position in a competition of six teams? Prepared, perhaps in the best way over the longest time in the whole history of Bangladesh's football, the team put the whole nation in a pool of despair.

The FIFA coach from Switzerland Oldrich Svab who imparted two and a half months of concentrated training at the faraway Bangladesh Krira Shiksha Protishthan at Savar, attributed the reasons of a goalless draw with the Maldives in the opening encounter to sheer bad luck. But the footballers left no place to retreat for the poor coach in the second match when they lost to Nepal by a solitary goal. It was heart break for the millions of soccer crazy people of the country because the defeat meant an ouster for Bangladesh from perhaps the weakest international football

team in the second Games in Dhaka playing hosts for the first time. Bangladesh garnered

sion and skill. Too many undeserving apologies, replete with excuses like tension, were sought for our footballers, and none had any validity. Because the pressure, the tension of winning by a big margin to earn a slot in the final, was something they asked for. Luck or no luck, they had no busi-



ness to settle for a draw against an unfancied team in familiar conditions and before a partisan crowd.

Smarting under the reason-betraying debacle of the footballers, the hosts got soothing salve when Bimal Chandra Tarafdar, the 21-year-old BKSP student won the men's 100m sprint to emerge as the fastest man of South Asia. It was great gain for the hosts because not only had Tarafdar set a new SAF record by clocking 10.61 seconds, Bangladesh had actually got a gold in athletics after a lapse of four years.

The late Shah Alam, who twice won the honour of being the fastest man of South Asia, had brought the last gold for Bangladesh from athletics in 1987, following his similar feat in the second Games in Dhaka.

Bimal's achievement in the just concluded Games proved a good omen for Bangladesh as the shooters, who had brought four golds on the second day of the Games, not to forget swimmer Mizanur Rahman Garai's record breaking feat, added two more, with another one coming from boxing.

Never before in the nine year history of the Games which started in the Nepalese capital of Kathmandu in 1984, had Bangladesh managed so many golds. Their biggest golden haul was nine, earned during the second Games in 1985 with Dhaka playing hosts for the first time. Bangladesh garnered

11 golds in the 1987 Games in Colombo.

The hostile crowd reaction, the anger of the football buffs, was a study in modesty. Because Bangladesh just did not play well enough to avoid a defeat that day. The Nepalese played to a plan and defeated the hosts in intelligence, cohe-

rence and teamwork.

The Nepalese victory, certainly the best in their football history, owed much to their never-say-die spirit and the way they capitalised on the dead-ball situation. Both of their

goals came from the last weapons of modern football, that is, corners, free kicks and penalties. Mani Shah's free-kick was a gem of a goal and simply world class. But apart from scoring the goal, Mani was otherwise off colour, and that left the Indian defence in a holding mood, particularly in the first quarter of the match.

Nepal, who won the championship once, and that too on their own ground, should be congratulated. To them, it was as good as winning the World Cup. Trailing by a first goal, and then again conceding one eight minutes from time, they not only equalised, but fought well to push the match into the tie-breaker, in which they excelled.

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