

BCCB squad for tour of Pakistan Sports Reporter

Bangladesh Cricket Control Board (BCCB) yesterday announced a 17-member team for a tour of Pakistan from January 1 as a part of Bangladesh's preparation for the forthcoming ICC Trophy.

Skipper Faruque Ahmed of Abahani will have teammate Akram Khan as his deputy during the 15-day trip which will feature a number of friendly matches in Lahore and Karachi.

Bangladesh who recently played some prep matches both at home and abroad, are bidding seriously for one of the top three slots in the most important meet for associate members of the ICC.

Three top teams of the ICC Trophy, scheduled to start in Kenya from February will win the rights to compete in the next World Championship of cricket along with the nine full members of the ICC. India, Pakistan and Sri Lanka are going to be the joint hosts of the sixth version of over-limit championship.

The members of the BCCB team are: Faruque Ahmed (Captain), Akram Khan (Vice-Captain), Athar Ali Khan, Jahangir Alam, Aminul Islam Bulbul, Minhazul Abedin Nannu, Selim Shahed, Enamul Huq Moni, GM Nawsher Prince, Al Shaharar Rokon, Nasir Ahmed Nasu, Habibul Bashar Suman, Anisur Rahman Anis, Nurul Abedin Nobel, Mizanur Rahman Babul, Shaheen Shahed, Sajid Hassan and Mohindar Amarnath (coach).

Div II cricket Sports Reporter

Evergreen and East End Club won their respective matches in the Second Division cricket league at different venues in the city yesterday.

In a match, held at the Jagannath Hall cricket ground, Evergreen outplayed Azad Boys Club by five wickets.

Azad Boys, who batted first, were shot out for a paltry 139 runs in 39.4 overs.

Tahmid with 28, Shabbir 17, Yasir 15 were the main contributors for Azad.

Sujon captured three for 29 and Imrul two for 19.

Evergreen made 143 runs for the loss of five wickets in 32.2 overs.

Naimul with 53 from 47 deliveries was followed by Shamim 25, Foad 19, Sujon 16.

Shabbir took two for 27.

East End Club recorded a four-wicket victory over Bangladesh Boys Club at the Dhanmondi Cricket Ground.

Bangladesh Boys, batting first, were all out for 157 in 39.5 overs. Ashraf topscored with 38.

Rais claimed three for 31 and Bipul three for 27.

East End Club reached the target with 158 for six in 39 overs. Hassan contributed 45 runs. Noman and Rais were the other main scorers with 28 and 24 respectively. Kamrul got three for 27 and Shaheen two for 31.

Argentina to ask FIFA to reprove Caniggia's ban

BUENOS AIRES, Dec 28: The Argentine Football Association (AFA) will ask world soccer's governing body FIFA to shorten its ban against striker Claudio Caniggia. AFA president Julio Gronzotta said, reports Reuters.

Caniggia was banned for 13 months for cocaine use when he was playing for Italian club Roma. The ban runs out on May 8, little more than a month before Argentina's World Cup opener against Greece on June 21.

Non-title Lewis-Holyfield bout next year

LONDON, Dec 28: A Lennox Lewis-Evander Holyfield heavyweight showdown without any titles at stake could take place next year, Lewis' manager Frank Maloney said on Thursday, reports Reuters.

An angry Maloney disclosed the plan after the World Boxing Association (WBA) followed the International Boxing Federation (IBF) and refused to sanction a multi-million dollar unification fight between the pair next April in Las Vegas.

"I've recommended to Lennox and American promoter Dan Duva that Lewis and Holyfield give up their titles, fight a 12-round and call it the supreme heavyweight fight."

"I've spoken to Duva, American television and a site in America and they are prepared to give it their ultimate backing. Whoever wins will be recognised as the world champion anyway, the man the people will recognise. After that, nobody else could call himself champion."

Lewis holds the World Boxing Council version of the title.

Plans for Holyfield to fight Lewis to unify the world championship have been scrapped after the IBF blocked the bout until Holyfield, the WBA and IBF champion, makes a mandatory defence against top-ranked Michael Moorer.

Asafuddowlah re-elected SASF president

President of the Bangladesh Swimming Federation, M Asafuddowlah has been re-elected president of the South Asia Swimming Federation (SASF) for another two-year term, according to a press release issued here in Dhaka by the Bangladesh Water Development Board yesterday.

Asafuddowlah has been holding the post of the president of the Bangladesh Swimming Federation since 1976.

Circus animals' desertion

Sports Reporter

The circus that held Dhaka in a trance of delight and excitement over the last eight days is gone. With the exception of the Bhutanese contingent all the foreign participants of the Sixth South Asian Federation (SAF) Games left Dhaka yesterday.

The 14-member Bhutanese team which captured more attention for being the smallest party in the carnival than any worthwhile achievement will leave the city today.

India, the traditional superpower of the seven-nation biennial extravaganza, who had a maximum haul of 139 medals including 61 golds in the just concluded meet left Dhaka on Monday in two batches.

Their bitter neighbours Pakistan who staged a magnificent late rally to finish second in the medals table left yesterday morning. Moving gingerly through out the meeting Pakistan suddenly found their desired thrust from the boxers who brought them nine golds in one day. Pakistan finally collected 66 medals. Besides the 23 golds, they bagged 22 silvers and 21 bronzes.

Another three teams — Nepal, Sri Lanka and the Maldives — also returned home yesterday.

Sri Lanka finished third in this eight-day long championship with 83 medals. Their position in the final team standing was lowered because of their 21 golds, two less than runners up Pakistan. Sri Lanka got 23 silvers and 39 bronzes as well.

Nepal made the most of the

penultimate day of the meet as their footballers beat fancied India in a marathon match to clinch the lone gold in this meet for the Himalayan kingdom. Nepal the hosts of the inaugural SAF Games, collected six silvers and 15 bronzes.

Bhutan and the Maldives were the only two contingents to go without any medals in this competition.

President of the Olympic Council of Asia, (OCA), Sheikh



Ahmed Al Sabah of Kuwait who attended the closing ceremony of the Sixth SAF Games as the special guest left Dhaka yesterday.

Rashida Yousuf, the Sports and Women's Affairs Minister of the Maldives and D M Aradessa, the State Minister for Sports and Youth of Sri Lanka flew back home yesterday.

Minister for Religious Affairs, Keramat Ali and officials of the Bangladesh Olympic Association (BOA) were present at the airport to see the distinguished guests off.

Hosts Bangladesh who staged the Games for the second time having hosted the second Games in 1985 managed the fourth position in

the medals table. Bangladesh equalled the feat of their haul of 64 medals in the second Games but set a new mark for themselves by winning eleven gold medals, two more than the nine they got in 1985.

Although the air is still heavy with the pangs of separation and the poor performance of the local footballers, the sixth Games left Bangladesh with one great consolation. The fastest man of South Asia is our very own Bimal Chandra Tarafdar. The 21-year old BKSP student clocked 10.61 seconds to set a new SAF record in men's 100m sprint.

It was an unexpected gain for the hosts as Golam Ambia, the experienced sprinter of army, withdrew from the competition with a bad leg injury during the heat. It turned out to be a good omen as Bimal like a true dark horse took the nation by a pleasant surprise with his marvellous feat.

But the saga of our footballers will not fade away so easily. Bangladesh became last in a competition of six teams drawing with the Maldives and then losing to eventual champions Nepal in the second and last group match.

The Sixth SAF Games will remain etched in the memory for a long time for more than one reasons. From the next meet, which is scheduled to be held in the Indian city of Madras, two years later, the Games will be rechristened as South Central Asian Federation (SACF) Games as two more countries — Uzbekistan and Afghanistan — will join the fray.

Boon goes into Aussie history books

MELBOURNE, Dec 28: Australian star batsman David Boon marched into the history books Tuesday as the first cricket Test against South Africa resumed at the Melbourne Cricket Ground, reports AP.

Rain wiped out all but two hours of the opening two days but play got away on time Tuesday morning under grey skies. During the session, which was interrupted for 20 minutes by rain, Boon ambled past a major landmark.

He lifted himself into fourth spot on the all-time Australian run-makers list when he took two runs to advance to 20 just after drinks, advancing past Neil Harvey.

Harvey scored 6,149 runs from his 79 Tests and the two runs to Boon took him along to 6,151 runs, behind only the impressive trio of Allan Border (10,876 runs), Greg Chappell (7,110) and Sir Donald Bradman (6,996).

The match is the first on Australian soil between the two foes since Trevor Goddard's South Africans drew a series one-all in 1963-64.

Baggio owes it to Buddhism

ROME, Dec 28: Newly-crowned footballer-of-the-year Roberto Baggio has dedicated his award to the leader of a Japanese lay Buddhist organisation, reports Reuters.

"I dedicate it to Daisaku Ikeda, my master, the president of Soka Gakkai, the Buddhist school which I follow," Baggio said in an interview in Monday's Gazzetta Dello Sport.

Baggio, of Juventus and Italy, was awarded the prestigious European title on Sunday to add to the world title he received from FIFA last week.

He was an easy winner in the annual poll of European sports journalists conducted by the weekly France Football.

The pony-tailed Baggio converted to Buddhism five years ago. He said he met Ikeda in Japan last summer, describing the meeting as "very important."

Soke Gakkai, the lay affiliate of a Buddhist community set up in the 13th century, backs Japan's Komeito political party. Ikeda has headed Soke Gakkai since 1960. Since then it has established schools, colleges and one of Japan's largest art collections.

Baggio has reached the top despite rupturing cruciate ligaments in his knee in 1985 when playing for Third Division Vicenza, an injury which threatened to put a premature end to his career.

The Juventus attacker said he has to perform special exercises to prevent further injury problems.

"For eight years I've had to work with weights several times per week, two hours per session to maintain the muscle tone at its maximum. The knee doesn't give me problems but the tendon does. If I lose a bit of tone there is a high risk of injury," Baggio said.

"For eight years I've not known a real holiday I've always have to think of this need. I've even had a gym built at home so as to be able to spend more time with my family."

Hayat, Shah join ICC umpires panel

LAHORE, Pakistan, Dec 28: Two seasoned Pakistani Test umpires Khizer Hayat and Mahboob Shah have been nominated to the international panel of cricket umpires, reports AFP.

Rafi told reporters the panel of the International Cricket Council (ICC) will come into force during Pakistan's tour of New Zealand next month.

English umpires Dickie Bird will supervise the three-Test series along with a local umpire.

Ramos makes an appeal

MANILA, Dec 28: President Fidel Ramos in a statement issued here today, called on Philippine athletes to produce the country's first Olympic gold medal at the next Games in Atlanta, reports AFP.

However, Ramos also admitted that "today's sports development programme needs a lot of reworking, not just warming over," in a speech to sports writers at a private party late Monday.

The palace quoted Ramos as saying that "in 1994 we must make a strong and committed bid for a historic Olympic gold medal in the 1996 summer games in Atlanta."

"My great wish is to have this Olympic gold medal within this decade," Ramos, an avid sportsman, was quoted as saying.

The Philippines best ever Olympic performance was a silver medal in boxing.



South African fast bowler Allan Donald signs autographs as rain again interrupts play during the third day of the first Test between Australia and South Africa in Melbourne yesterday.

Mark Taylor on the verge of history as

It only rains in Melbourne

MELBOURNE, Dec 28: Opener Mark Taylor was poised to reach a personal milestone as rain and a bad light combined to frustrate Australia and South Africa in the first Test today, reports Reuters.

At the premature close on the third day at a wet and gloomy Melbourne Cricket Ground, where only 58 overs have been bowled over three days, Australia were 140 for three in their first innings.

With just two days remaining, the first Test encounter between the two countries since 1970 appears certain to end in a draw.

Taylor was left needing to add one more run to his undefeated 63 to reach 1,000 runs in Test cricket during 1993.

The left handed batsman was delighted with his form during a four-hour innings spread over three days because of poor weather.

"I have been moving my feet better and striking the ball well in this innings," Taylor told reporters.

Taylor, who averages 47 in Test cricket, said he had been motivated by criticism in the media which has questioned his place in the Australian side.

"I have scored quite a few runs, especially for Australia and I thought I had proved myself over the past four or five years," Taylor said.

"Those comments have hurt but perhaps they've helped to make me a little bit tougher," he added.

The other batsman at the crease when bad light ended play to minutes before the scheduled close was Mark Waugh on 11.

Should Taylor reach his hundred, he would become the

first batsman to hit centuries in debut matches against four different Test nations.

He would also become only the second player after New Zealand's Martin Crowe to hit centuries against seven different countries.

Taylor faced a barrage of criticism as he walked to the pavilion.

"I told them I'd like to see them put a pair of pads on and face Donald in those conditions," Taylor said.

"I can understand their frustration at not seeing the cricket they wanted, but it wasn't my fault the weather has been so bad," he added.

The local weather bureau was forecasting warmer and sunnier conditions on Wednesday.

SCOREBOARD

Scoreboard on the third day of the first Test between Australia and South Africa today.

AUSTRALIA: (overnight 71 for two)

M Taylor not out 63
M Slater c Kirsten b Donald 32
S Warne lbw b De Villiers 0
D Boon b Matthews 25
M Waugh not out 11
Extras (b-2, nb-2 lb-5) 9
Total (for three wickets) 140

Fall of wickets: 1-57, 2-58, 3-127.

Did not bat: S Waugh, Border, Martyn, Healy, Reffel, May, McDermott.

Bowling O M R W
Donald 17.3 2 54 1
De Villiers 20 4 46 1
Matthews 12 4 19 1
Cronje 5 3 11 0
Symcox 4 2 3 0

SOUTH AFRICA:

Wessels (captain), Hudson, Cronje, Cullinan, Rhodes, Kirsten, Richardson, Symcox, Matthews, De Villiers, Donald.

Anand going great guns

GRONINGEN, Netherlands, Dec 28: The top five games in Monday's eighth round of the 230,000 dollars Professional Chess Association (PCA) qualifying tournament ended in draws, with India's Viswanath Anand retaining the tournament lead, reports Reuters.

The Groningen tournament, which is being played to find a challenger for the unofficial PCA world chess champion Garry Kasparov, allows seven players to qualify for the next stage of the championship cycle. Few players with a good position in the tournament are inclined to take risks.

Anand retained the lead in typically rapid style, drawing in only nine moves, and seven minutes against Boris Gulko, 46, of the United States.

The 24-year-old Indian accepted Gulko's queen's gambit opening but the American initiated an early exchange of queens, leaving Anand no

choice but to offer a draw.

Anand, the number three ranked player in the world behind Casparov and official world champion Anatoly Karpov, remains half a point above his main rivals in the race for the 40,000 dollars first prize.

The most eventful battle of the day was an error-prone game between the world's fourth and fifth ranked players, Latvia's Alexey Shirov and Vladimir Kramnik of Russia.

Shirov, 21, who has built his reputation on spectacular attacks, sacrificed his queen in order to attack his opponent's king. The attack was unsound but Kramnik, 18, missed two chances to counter-sacrifice his own queen and win the game, leaving Shirov a draw through perpetual checks.

"I was sure that Kramnik had seen the win — he thought for half an hour on his 20th move," said a relieved Shirov after the game. "I just tried to keep a straight face and it worked."

The draws on the top boards

gave England's Michael Adams an opportunity to move into a tie for second place by defeating Bosnia's Ivan Sokolov after 49 moves of a Spanish opening. Adams will now have a chance to take over the lead if he can defeat Anand in today's ninth round.

Adams, 22, shares second place with Gulko and 20-year-old Russian Sergei Tiviakov who drew a six-hour battle against Joel Benjamin of the United States.

The PCA qualifying tournament features 54 of the world's best grandmasters in an eleven-round tournament which concludes on December 30.

Standings (after 8 games):
1. Anand (India) 6 points.
Joint 2. Tiviakov (Russia), Gulko (USA), Adams (England) 5.5.

Joint 5. Belyavsky (Ukraine), Shirov (Latvia), Bareev (Russia), Kramnik (Russia), Kamsky (USA), Nikolic (Bosnia), Kaidanov (USA), Piket (Netherlands) 5.