

Now a coach from ROK

South Korea has assured to provide a football coach for the Bangladesh national team...

The assurance came from a meeting between the Communications Minister of Bangladesh and the president of the Korean Football Association...

The KFA president agreed to provide a coach for 18 months from June this year.

The national team came under fire following its disastrous performance in the sixth SAF Games.

Bangladesh Football Federation in a recent meeting cancelled the proposal to bring Swiss coach Oldrich Svab...

DMFA Cup kicks-off today

Sports Reporter



Amid uncertainties over the participation of one of the most popular and top clubs, the Dhaka Metropolis Football Association (DMFA) Cup...

Mohammedan Sporting Club, the reigning champions who had earlier written to the organisers — Dhaka Metropolis Association (DMFA) — for a deferment of the second round...

With DMFA seemingly resolved not to get a load on of the appealing Mohammedans, the first soccer tourney of the season is well and truly poised for a scheduled start.

Eight teams divided into two groups will fight it off for semifinal berths on a round robin basis.

For the first time in its history, the tournament offers prize-money. While the champions will get Taka one lakh, the runners-up will have to be content with Taka 50,000.

Meanwhile, the authorities have fixed the rates of tickets for the first round. The galleries will cost Tk 10 while Gate No: 3B Taka 20.

The rates of season tickets have been fixed at Taka 350, 275 and 225 for the VIP Gate No: 1, VIP Gate No: 2 and VIP Gate No: 3B respectively.

Earlier this year by roping in some of the star footballers of the country, much to the amazement of soccer fans and, of course, the anguish and embarrassment of the supremos of the fancied big clubs, will be on show on the inaugural day.

Rechristened Muktiyoddha Kriya Chakra, the former Muktiyoddha Sangsad take on East End Club in today's second match, scheduled to start at 7:30 pm.

Bangladesh Boys and the Pioneer Eleven will feature in the inaugural encounter billed for a 5:30 start.

Samir Shakir to coach Abahani

Sports Reporter

Samir Shakir, the familiar Iraqi footballer who is reportedly reliving his old association with Abahani Kriya Chakra, is expected to arrive in the capital on April 30.

A member of the Iraqi World Cup team in 1986 Shakir, who along with his compatriot Karim Mohammed played for Abahani in 1987, will come to Dhaka to coach the team.

"We have confirmed him today and he's coming shortly to train Abahani," said an official of the club, yesterday. Besides, three foreign booters are also expected to arrive before Abahani appear in their first DMFA Cup engagement on May 6.

Jabbar wrestling held

CHITTAGONG, Apr 26: The traditional Abdul Jabbar memorial wrestling popularly known as "Jabbarer bolly khela" and Baishakhi Meha was held at Laldighi Maidan here today, reports BSS.

The eminent wrestlers (bolly) from different parts of the country participated in the competition. Zafar Ahmed of Chokoria and Malek of Bashkali became joint champions in the meet.

Minister for Fisheries and Livestock Abdullah Al-Noman was present as the chief guest and distributed prizes among the winners.

Earlier, the Mayor of the Chittagong City Corporation Alhaj A B M Mohiuddin Ahmed inaugurated the event.

China coast in Asian eves b'ball

SENDAI, Japan, Apr 26: Olympic silver medalists China overwhelmed Hong Kong 129-39 after leading 69-23 at half-time as they opened their campaign at the Asian women's basketball championship here Tuesday, reports AFP.

Timely booster for Napoli



ROME, Apr 26: Renato Buso and Ciro Ferrara scored first-half goals as Napoli beat Cup Winners Cup finalists Parma 2-0 on Sunday to stake a claim to a place in next season's UEFA cup, reports Reuter.

The result leaves Napoli, still struggling to pay their players' wages, sixth in the Italian First Division and narrowly ahead of three other teams also battling for a place in Europe — Torino, Roma and Foggia.

AC Milan, who clinched their third successive league title last weekend, were held 0-0 at relegations threatened Cagliari on Saturday.

Buso put Napoli ahead in the 21st minute, bursting through Parma's defence to slip the ball past the advancing Luca Bucci.

Captain Ferrara sealed victory for the home side on the brink of half time, finding the target with a firm header.

To make sure of qualifying for the UEFA Cup, Napoli must win their final game of the season against rival contenders Foggia.

Napoli, who won the UEFA Cup in 1989, have the same number of points as Torino but their edge in encounters between the two. They are a point ahead of Roma and Foggia.

Two goals from Stefano Borgonovo and one by Fabio Rossitto looked to have sealed victory for the home side. But three in 16 minutes from Alessandro Pedroni, Davide Lucarelli and Andrea Tentoni gave Cremonese a point.

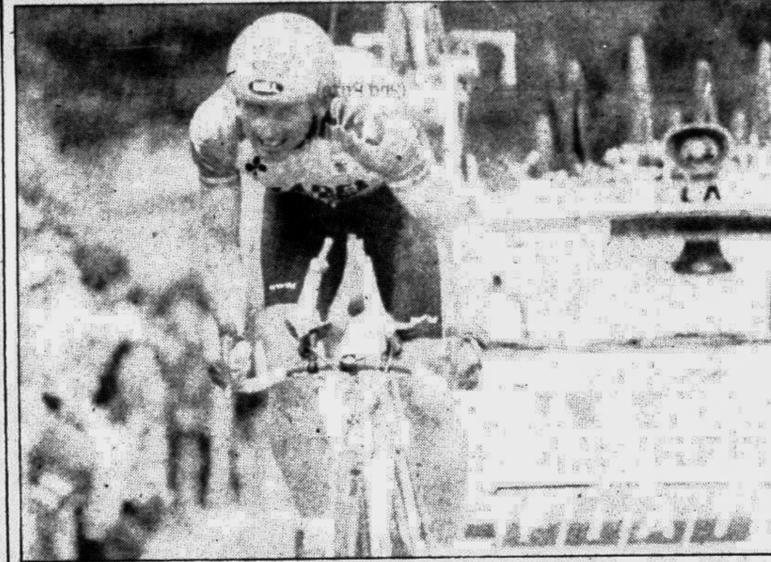
Udinese now languish third from bottom on 28 points and are firm favourites to join Atalanta and Lecce in Serie B next season.

Piacenza, who had two goals disallowed in a scoreless draw with second-place Juventus, currently lie fourth from bottom on 29 points, even with Reggiana, who held third-placed Sampdoria to a 1-1 draw.

Bolivar in Libertadores Cup qtrs

LA PAZ, Apr 26: Three players were sent off as Bolivar of Bolivia became the first team to reach the quarter-finals of the South American Libertadores Cup on Sunday, reports Reuter.

Bolivar, who qualified for the competition as Bolivian runners-up, beat Bolivian champions The Strongest 4-0 in Sunday's second round, second leg match for a 6-1 aggregate win.



Swiss cyclist Toni Rominger pedals hard on his way to win the first lap of the "Vuelta a Espana" cycling tour in Spain on Monday. Rominger clocked 10.35 minutes. — AFP photo

Techvally in office cricket Cup final

Sports Reporter

Star-studded Techvally Computers stepped into the Cup final of the first office cricket league when they eliminated the fancied Bangladesh Biman in the first semifinal played under the floodlights at the Dhaka Stadium yesterday.

Needing 126 runs for victory, Techvally reached the target in 33 overs at the cost of seven wickets.

National all-rounder Aminul Islam with 25 was the top scorer for the winners followed by opener Biddyt who made a patient 22.

Saiful Islam hammered a quickfire unbeaten 15 with the help of three hits to the fence to complete the rout of the airlines team with two overs spare.

Earlier, sent in to bat first, Biman could muster 125 runs in the stipulated 35 overs losing nine wickets.

Opener Jahangir, the only twenty plus scorer in the Biman innings made 20 off only 16 deliveries falling to spinner Aminul Islam who finished with two for 19 from his seven-over spell.

However, Athar Ali was the most successful Techvally bowler claiming three for 20. New ball bowler Saiful who captured two wickets was expensive giving away 30 runs in six overs.

Warwickshire bank on Lara



BIRMINGHAM, England, Apr 26: World number one batsman Brian Lara's world-record breaking Test form has given his English county Warwickshire a huge boost in support for the new season, reports AFP.

Such is the interest created by the signing of the world record-breaking Trinidad and Tobago left-hander that Warwickshire have attracted a further 200 new members and are now close to their 8,000 maximum.

Lara, who hit 375 runs against England in the fifth Test in Antigua to break Sir Garfield Sobers' world record of 365, is due to arrive here today, he will make his Warwickshire debut in the opening county championship game against Glamorgan on Thursday.

Expectations are mounting on Lara with the news that opening batsman Andy Moles is in hospital with an appendicitis and could miss the first six weeks of the season.

Moles, who broke his arm on a pre-season tour to Zimbabwe, was Warwickshire's leading run-maker last season with 1,228 at an average of 39.61.

Lara might also be sidelined for a short period during the summer because he needs an eye operation to clear up a minor problem, but Warwickshire have admitted that this could be delayed until the end of the season.

Reuter adds: Lara missed his scheduled flight to London en route to his first season with English county Warwickshire, cricket officials said.

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tion's highest award, the Trinity Cross, by President Noor Hassan Ali on Saturday and was given a house by the Trinidad government.

AMBROSE BACK SOON

West Indies pace bowler Curtly Ambrose, who also missed his flight to England for the start of the county cricket season, said on Tuesday he would rejoin his club Northamptonshire by the weekend.

Ambrose had been due to play in Tuesday's Benson and Hedges Cup qualifying match against Middlesex at Lord's, Northamptonshire officials waited for him at London's Gatwick Airport on Monday but Ambrose failed to turn up.

Ambrose, speaking by telephone from Antigua, told BBC radio on Tuesday: "I should be there by the weekend if I can get a seat on the plane."

But he refused to be drawn on the reasons for the delay, saying: "I wouldn't want to go into details."

Northamptonshire captain Allan Lamb, who spoke to Ambrose on Monday, said the bowler told him he wanted a break from cricket after his 26-wicket haul for the West Indies in their 3-1 series victory over England.

Ambrose made his Northamptonshire debut in 1989 and has taken 196 first-class wickets in 55 games.

Indian TV viewers in for sports feast

Sports Reporter

NEW DELHI, Apr 26: Espn International, the US-based television network, plans to launch a 24-hour sports channel for India early next year, a network official said today, reports AFP.

The pay-per-view channel the largest sports cable network in the world catering to some 110 million households in America, Europe and parts of Asia, expects to operate over India via new Chinese and European satellites.

Espn's general manager Andrew Brilliant, who is here on a fact-finding mission, said today that the channel will cater to sports of regional interest like cricket, field hockey, football and tennis.

"We drew up plans to come to India about two years ago but could not find a suitable platform. But this should be resolved when some new satellites come into operation early next year," Brilliant said.

Espn's entry will be in direct competition with the popular Prime Sports channel of the Hong Kong-based Star TV network, but Brilliant said he was not worried about competition.

"We are not unused to competition," he said... and our track record's pretty good. We hope to serve the Indian market by putting together a first-class sports service.

"We will try to improve upon what's there and offer viewers what's not available in terms of content and scheduling of events."

Former Indian tennis ace Vijay Amritraj, whose weekly international sports programme on Indian network Doordarshan contains clips from Espn, will help the new channel set up base in India.

Amritraj said, "Espn expects to work closely with Doordarshan and the joint venture would help to increase awareness of sport in the region."

Threats won't deter Graf



HAMBURG, Apr 26: Steffi Graf said Monday she intends to play in the Hamburg tennis tournament despite threats to be attacked at the same event where her rival Monica Seles was stabbed last year, reports AP.

"I am not afraid," Graf said after practicing on the Center Court of the Rothenbaum Club. "By playing here I want to show that I am not worried about an attack."

The police received an anonymous letter Friday, which threatened that Graf will be attacked if she plays in the tournament.

"If Steffi plays in Hamburg, there will be another attack," said the hand-written letter, a copy of which was published by the Hamburg newspaper Morgenpost.

"But this time the slimy Graf will be the target... and we are not playing with kitchen knives."

"Graf was the beneficiary after the attack on Monica Seles, but she was also the background figure for this attack."

Seles, who was born in Yugoslavia but now is a US citizen, was stabbed in the back by an obsessed Graf fan last April 30, and has not played since. Meanwhile, Graf has regained the No. 1 ranking from Seles.

Graf is scheduled to play Tuesday, against compatriot Silke Frankl, in the 400,000 clay-court Citizens Cup tournament.

Jens-Peter Hecht, spokesman for the German Tennis Federation, said security at the tournament was sufficient and more police protection would be available if necessary.

Players in Hamburg have been assigned 150 bodyguards and undercover police have been deployed at the Rothenbaum Club.

In addition, benches used by players during changeovers have been moved further away from the stands, and only accredited photographers will be allowed to use the first row.

Police spokesman Hartmut Kapp said security at the tournament already had been beefed up, but no new security measures were planned after the threatening letter.

Seles was stabbed during a changeover when a man leaned from the stands and plunged a kitchen knife into her back. The convicted assailant, Guenther Parze, was given a suspended sentence.

Graf is the second German tennis star to be threatened recently.

Police said last week that an extortionist had threatened to kill three-time Wimbledon champion Boris Becker, his wife and baby son, his manager and is manager's family.

Martin mauls Herr

ATLANTA, Apr 26: A million-dollar dream evaporated quickly on Monday when Howard Herr was beaten by Todd Martin 6-1, 6-1 in the first round of the AT and T Challenge men's tennis tournament, reports Reuter.

Herr, an unranked South African teaching tennis in Atlanta, earned a wildcard into the main draw after winning a pre-qualifying event last month. Tournament promoters offered a prize of one million dollars, along with the 42,000 dollars winner's purse, to Herr if he could also become the AT and T champion.

Herr, a former collegiate player who last played a tour event in 1987, fell in 54 minutes to Martin, ranked eighth in the world.

Herr was not the only disappointed player, as three seeds were ousted, in opening-day play.

Fourth-seeded American Aaron Krickstein, playing in his first clay court tournament this year, was dispatched by Uruguay's unseeded Marcelo Filippini 6-4, 6-2.

Brad Gilbert, the sixth-seeded American, was beaten by unseeded American Steve Bryan 6-2, 4-6, 6-4.

Mikael Pernfors of Sweden, the seventh seed, lost to Brazil's Fernando Meligeni 6-0, 6-2.

On Tuesday, top-seeded Michael Chang and third-seeded Andre Agassi will play their first-round matches, as will 36-year-old American Jimmy Connors, who will face unseeded American Doug Flach.

"I thought I might have been able to win a few more games," said 31-year-old Herr, who won 29 points in the match. Herr broke Martin at love in the third game after trailing 2-0, but only held serve once himself in the match.

This year's tournament, July 18-24 in Frankfurt, Germany, will be the last played under the one week, single-venue format. Next year, the Federation Cup will adopt a format similar to the men's Davis Cup.

The top eight teams from this year's tournament will enter a new World Group, with the next eight qualifying for Group One. The remaining teams will play in regional qualifying competitions. Nations will be promoted and relegated from the groups each year, as in the Davis Cup.

Federation Cup July 18

LONDON, Apr 26: Twelve of the world's top 15 women tennis players, including No. 1 Steffi Graf, have committed to represent their countries in the 1994 Federation Cup, reports AP.

This year's tournament, July 18-24 in Frankfurt, Germany, will be the last played under the one week, single-venue format. Next year, the Federation Cup will adopt a format similar to the men's Davis Cup.

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CROSSWORD By Eugene Sheffer

Crossword puzzle grid with clues for Across and Down. Includes a solution for the previous day's puzzle.

Cryptoquip puzzle grid with numbers 1-51 and a key for the substitution cipher.

Yesterdays Cryptoquip: AS HIGH NOON APPROACHES, GUNSLINGER WILL BE SWEATING BULLETS. Today's Cryptoquip clue: O equals M. The Cryptoquip is a substitution cipher in which one letter stands for another. If you think that X equals O, it will equal O throughout the puzzle.

Zaman Gul banned

CARDIFF, Apr 26: Mir Zaman Gul, the player disqualified at the British Open in London three weeks ago for head butting his opponent, has been banned for four months and fined 1,500 pounds (2,241 US dollars) sterling, reports Reuter.

The 27-year-old Pakistani will not appeal against the punishment.

The Cardiff-based Professional Squash Association (PSA) announcing their decision on Tuesday, said they had taken into account video evidence of the whole match, filmed by a Pakistan TV crew, which they say showed Gul had been provoked by opponent Anthony Hill of Australia.

After the incident at Lambs Club, London, on April 6, Gul insisted that Hill had sworn at him and insulted him throughout the match and the referee did nothing to stop it.

"Finally he said a terrible thing about my mother and I just lost my head," said Gul at the time.

Hill, who was floored by the head-butt but got up and went on to reach the quarter finals in London, has also been punished for disciplinary offences during the match, where he threw the ball at Gul and picked up a conduct warning.

He has not indicate whether he will appeal against his punishment-believed to be at hefty fine.



New Zealand's rookie fast bowler Heath Davis perfects his bowling rhythm under the watchful eyes of Geoff Howarth during the practice nets at Lord's on Monday. — AFP photo