

WorldCupUSA94



Share The Passion



Nearly nightmare revisited

PASADENA, Calif. July 14: Brazilians have a maxim for a team that dominates a game but fails to score.

It goes: "Whoever doesn't make it, takes it." It means a team will probably allow a goal if it doesn't score when it should. It's almost a sense of divine justice — or injustice, depending on your point of view.

For a while, it looked like Brazil was going to trot out that saying against Sweden on Wednesday, reports AP.

The Brazilians dominated their World Cup semifinal match from start to finish. They stifled Sweden's vaunted air game and outshot them 26-3.

Yet through 80 minutes, they sweated through a 0-0 tie. The ball whizzed by the post and was tapped out from the line, but it did not, would not go in.

They were saved by Romario with 10 minutes left to play. Jorginho's cross from the

right side found the striker unmarked in the penalty area, and he headed the ball home for the game's only goal.

"Technically, tactically and physically, we controlled the whole game," Brazilian coach Carlos Alberto Parreira said. "We took the initiative from the beginning, and 1-0 doesn't translate Brazil's supremacy. The only difficulty was putting the ball in the goal."

Yes, but isn't putting the ball in the goal the object of the game?

It could have been a lot easier if Brazil, who face Italy in the final Sunday at the Rose Bowl, had capitalized on any of the many chances they blew.

Sinho was first. In the 13th minute, he took a feed from Bebeto and raced in on goal alone, but his shot missed wide to the left.

Twenty-five minutes into the game, Romario made a solo run, dribbled past Swedish goalie Tomas Ravelli and lazily tapped the ball toward the net. But fullback Patrik Andersson streaked in to knock it away.

"I'm still trying to figure out where that guy came from," Romario said.

Seven minutes later, Bebeto served Romario on a breakaway, but he stepped on the ball and couldn't get off a decent shot.

Uncomfortable memories began to stir of past World Cup setbacks.

One was in 1986 in Mexico when Brazil dominated their quarterfinal match with France, but Careca clanked shots off the post and Zico missed a penalty shot.

The game went into overtime, and then into a penalty-kick tiebreaker. Socrates and Julio Cesar came up short, and Brazil were out.

Four years later in Italy, Brazil again "deserved" to win in a second-round game with Argentina. But in their only serious chance, Diego Maradona and Claudio Caniggia teamed up to give Argentina a 1-0 victory.

Romario kept it from happening again.

"I'm here to make goals and to miss them," he said.



Players of the Brazilian World Cup team pose for photographers before their semifinal match against Sweden at the Pasadena Rose Bowl in Los Angeles on July 13. Brazil won 1-0. — AFP photo

Dismayed, but not daunted

SOFIA, Bulgaria. July 14: Bulgaria took their defeat to Italy in their World Cup semifinal with aplomb.

proud that their little-heralded team had advanced so far, reports AP.

Hopeful that their "miracle team" would continue its winning ways after upsetting defending titlist Germany, thousands of Bulgarians gathered in Sofia late Wednesday to watch the match against Italy on a huge screen in front of the Palace of Culture.

Roberto Baggio scored two goals to propel Italy into the finals, against favored Brazil. But faithful fans celebrated with fireworks the Bulgarian team's only goal Wednesday — a penalty kick late in the first half by Hristo Stoichkov.

Despite the Bulgarians' inability to knot the score, fans were dismayed but not daunted.

"Bulgarians, tonight you can cry, but there's no reason to be ashamed. We thank you that you made a whole people happy," was the first TV comment after the game ended.

"Although I feel sad, I'm proud to be a Bulgarian, because our team has shown it's among the best in the world," said a 44-year-old fan, Kamen Tiholov.

The Bulgarian team has taken part in six world cups and only once proceeded to the second round, in 1986 in Mexico. They had never won a match before they thrashed

Greece 4-0 and proceeded to defeat two-time champions Argentina 2-0, Mexico 1-1 on penalty kicks, and defending titlist Germany 2-1.

Then the bubble burst, and Italy prevailed 2-1 over Bulgaria at Giants Stadium. Bulgaria play Sweden in the consolation match for third place Saturday in Pasadena, Calif.

Commentators were kind the day after the loss.

"The game gave us several huge celebrations, sent many and mighty opponents home. Did anyone ever hope to see Bulgaria among the four leading soccer teams in the world? This championship changed the attitude toward our country, and it changed us, too," read a commentary Thursday in the Daily Standard.

"Great team in a great match — that's what the Bulgarians were. They lost to three-time champions Italy 1-2, but fought bravely and were the Italians' equals throughout the match."

"And though the series of their wins in the past two weeks raised the expectations of millions of Bulgarians to unprecedented heights, hardly

anyone was bitter about the 1-2," the Daily Express commented.

Immediately after the match state TV aired interviews with members of the squad and with coach Dimitar Penev.

"The Italians played very well. They deserved to win. They are experienced and knew how to get what they wanted. We tried to tip the beam in the second half, but we hardly got any chance," the coach said.

The players complained they did not get a penalty for Italian defender Alessandro Costacurta's handplay.

Bulgarian midfielder Krasimir Balakov echoed the opinion of teammates as to the reason French referee Joel Quiniou didn't give the other penalties.

"The referee was French and he probably cannot forget that we eliminated the French team," said the midfielder, referring to Bulgaria's goal 10 seconds before time in the last qualifying match against France.

The team players and coaches were declared honorary citizens of Sofia.

Vogts may change his mind

BONN, July 14: Germany's soccer coach Berti Vogts under acute pressure since his side were dumped out of the World Cup in the quarter-finals by unfancied Bulgaria, has hinted that he is prepared to quit, reports Reuter.

Vogts, who took over the side after they won the Cup in 1990, suggested the Germany Soccer Federation (DFB) had not given him enough support.

"One false statement from DFB headquarters, from whatever direction, could mean my resignation," he said in an interview to be published in today's edition of the sports magazine Kicker.

Since the defeat, a stunning blow for a team which had played in every World Cup final since 1982, Vogts has said he still enjoyed his job, wanted to go on and had the backing of DFB president Egidius Braun.

But he told Kicker: "Perhaps it's simpler for the DFB to get rid of Vogts, the focus of the criticism. For four years I have been the dustbin for public criticism of the DFB."

Even before the defeat, Vogts and Braun had come under fire for sending home midfielder Stefan Effenberg for making an obscene gesture at the crowd.

But Vogts was unrepentant. "I always listened too much to what the players said. It was a mistake to take Effenberg. I should have thrown him out in 1992."

Vogts had harsh words for other players too.

He said midfielder Andreas Moeller, who had been expected at last to show on the international scene the prodigious talent he displays for Juventus in Italy, "completely let down the team and myself."

Of Bodo Illgner, the goalkeeper chosen for his World Cup experience but who was rooted to the spot when Bulgaria struck a crucial equaliser and who has now quit the national side, Vogts said, "It was as if he was on remote control. If he hadn't quit I'd have thrown him out."

Miandad to miss SL tour

LAHORE, Pakistan, July 14: Pakistan's master batsman Javed Miandad will miss the upcoming tour of Sri Lanka because of a knee injury, reports AP.

"We have received the doctor's report about his knee injury and according to it Javed will need at least six weeks to recuperate," chief selector Imtiaz Ahmad said here Thursday.

Miandad tore a ligament of his knee earlier this week while playing football in a training camp here, the official Associated Press of Pakistan said. He will therefore miss the forthcoming three Test series against Sri Lanka. It quoted Imtiaz as telling reporters in Lahore.

Miandad, who was dropped from Pakistan cricket team during its tours of New Zealand and Sharjah early this year was recalled last month.

Imtiaz said no decision had yet been taken to name his replacement.

Ravelli, reveller in ruins

PASADENA, July 14: Thomas Ravelli was the star for Sweden so many times that when the fateful goal finally skid-ded past him he still seemed more hero than goat.

In the quarterfinals against Romania, Ravelli's two key saves in the penalty-kick shootout gave Sweden the victory. When Romario's 80th minute header bounced past him Wednesday to give Brazil a 1-0 victory, there were few blaming Ravelli, reports AP.

"They had a lot of good opportunities (to score) and we felt that the first team to score would win the match," Swedish coach Tommy Svensson said. "I thought Ravelli was excellent as was (Tomas) Brodin."

Ravelli, playing in a record 116th game for Sweden, kept the Scandinavians in the game for 79 minutes, despite Brazil outshooting the Europeans nearly 9-1. He dove he leaped, he scrambled.

But when Jorginho served in a long cross from outside the right of the penalty area, Romario went unchallenged and put a header from the edge of the goal just inside the left post.

"I couldn't leave my line when Jorginho hit the cross," Ravelli recalled. "I stood on my line. Romario came between two defenders I think and was first at the ball. He made a very good header. It was impossible for me to save it."

Ravelli, 34, is only nine games short of the now retired English goalkeeper Peter Shilton's world mark of 125 national team appearances. But he said breaking the team record that stood since 1978

wasn't that important. "I didn't think about that at all today," he said. "I said before that this game was so important that you just don't think about the record. You only think about the game you're going to play."

Like the other Swedes, Ravelli felt the Swedes had a chance to beat Brazil going into the game.

"But I felt more and more during the game that they were better than us," he said.

Ravelli made two saves in a penalty shootout against Romania in Sunday's quarterfinal that gave Sweden a 5-4 victory on penalties and made Ravelli a national hero.

The Swedes will return to the Rose Bowl Saturday to play the third-place game against Bulgaria, which lost the other semifinal to Italy 2-1 earlier Wednesday.

But Ravelli, whose team lost 3-2 to Germany in the 1992 Europeans in Sweden, is looking forward to Saturday's game against Bulgaria despite a long, grueling World Cup tour.

Intentional error!

COPENHAGEN, July 14: A Danish tabloid ended its article Thursday reporting Brazil's 1-0 defeat of Sweden in the world Cup semifinal by giving the win and praise to the Swedes, reports AP.

The faux pas in the BT sports daily came when a prepared story on the Swedish victory was wrongly printed on two columns at the end of its all-page report on the Rose Bowl game. The article had described the Brazilian play as "amazing" and the Swedish as "ordinary."

But then it suddenly wrote: "They beat the Brazilians blue and yellow," referring to the Swedish colours.

Ravelli said the Swedes, who never have beaten Brazil

THOMAS RAVELLI

"We were very tired in the second half. They had so many good scoring chances. They could have capitalised on many of them."

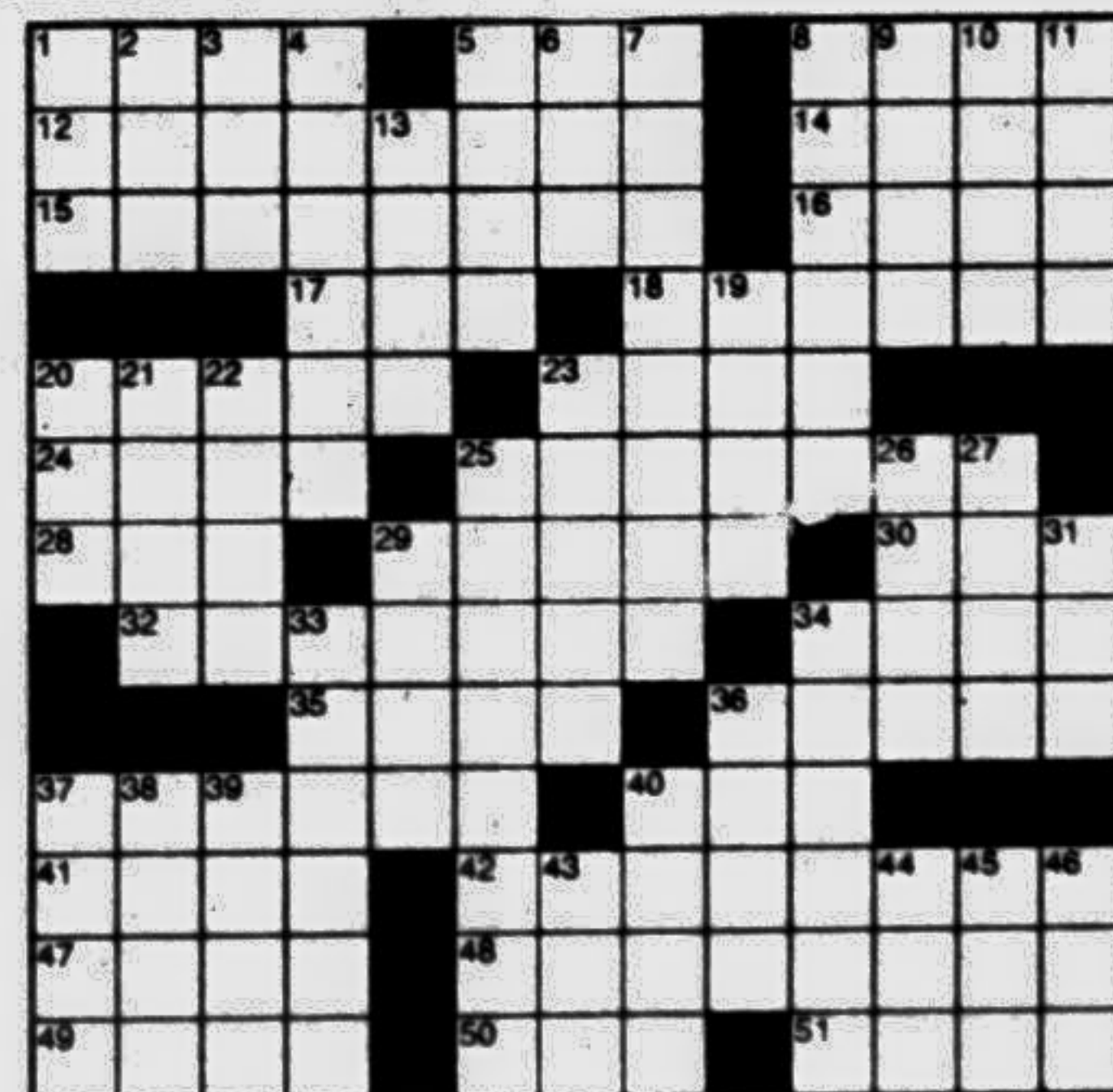
Ravelli gave up an early second-half goal to Romario in the two teams' first-round encounter, which earned the Brazilians a 1-1 draw.

"But they were more concentrated this time," Ravelli said. "Last time they had already qualified (for the second round)."

Ravelli said the Swedes, who never have beaten Brazil

CROSSWORD By Eugene Sheffer

ACROSS	36 Miss out at diploma time	bio	premium
1 Nativity figures	37 Deli meat	3 Prized possession	22 Hum-dinger
5 Visibility hindrance	40 Bud's buddy	4 Stab	23 Southerner's inflection
8 Hacienda, for example	41 "— and Away"	6 Valdez spillage	25 Dancer nee Tula Finklee
12 Schubert piece	42 Ran	7 Vintage sailing ships	26 Birthright barterer
14 Noted fashion model	43 Barcelona boy	8 Some say "It's a girl"	27 Stitched
15 "Galveston" singer	44 "— Loves Me" (1924 song)	9 Frenzied	29 Reticent one
16 Winner's medal	45 Summer-time pest	10 Mail over	31 Wapiti
17 Heady brew	50 Outgo: abbr.	11 Mayberry sheriff	33 Setting for "The Tempest"
18 Familial anthropologist	51 Snicker—	13 Skillfully	34 Jacket ads
20 Harry's love	DOWN	19 It's right on the map	36 Links cry
23 Expensive	1 John Doe, slangily	20 React to gravity	37 Crooned
24 Chills and fever	2 Gardner	21 Exchange	38 Neat as
25 Spans	Solution time: 25 min.	39 Silver, to an alchemist	40 Mattress spoiler
28 Hodges of baseball	FLIC MAGI BID	43 Wally of "Mr. Peepers"	44 Tiriad of tennis
29 Gregorian rendition	LAVA IRAN ONE	45 Dutch commune	46 Turn blue?
30 Witness	OVEN LINK NEW		
32 Bandits	WEST DAD COZY		
34 Cry out loud	ENE ERA		
35 Actor Holliman	HARROW RANDOM		
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	SPOUSE STAGED		
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	HAZY PAR OKRA		
	ORO GIVE UNUM		
	RAW AROW POLO		
	ABE SEND EWES		



CRYPTOQUIP

ANGLIJ DVGQK AHWWR -
VHN KHPVD, Y AGL
WYAI GLJ QGL YL
VOR OHPDR.

Saturday's Cryptogram: AS PROFICIENT AS HE WAS AS A JURIST, SOFTBALL-PLAYING JUDGE MERELY WARMED THE BENCH.

Today's Cryptogram clue: A equals C

The Cryptogram 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. Single letters, short words and words using an apostrophe give you clues to locating vowels. Solution is by trial and error.

Stoichkov bitter

NEW YORK, July 14: Bulgaria striker Hristo Stoichkov hit out at French referee Joel Quiniou after their 2-1 World Cup semifinal defeat to Italy here on Wednesday, reports AP.

The Barcelona striker claimed Quiniou cost them the game.

"God was on our side, but the referee was French," Stoichkov said. "Today's match proved the officiating in this tournament has been the worst in history of the World Cup."

Quiniou turned down penalty appeals from Emil Kostadinov and Yordan Letchkov as Bulgaria attempted to pull level.

In Sofia, Bulgarian newspapers had said before the match that they had no chance of winning because the referee was French.

Bulgaria qualified for the finals by beating France in April last year. France's defeat put them out of the finals.

"France will not forget for a long time the humiliation of being eliminated last November 17 in Paris," wrote the Daily Sport.

"Quiniou is a man and could, without wanting to, be tempted to take revenge," it added. The devastated Stoichkov went even further, hinting that FIFA wanted to ensure Bulgaria did not reach the final.

"You have a referee on the verge of retirement," Stoichkov said. "It's not just coincidence he was chosen to officiate this match."

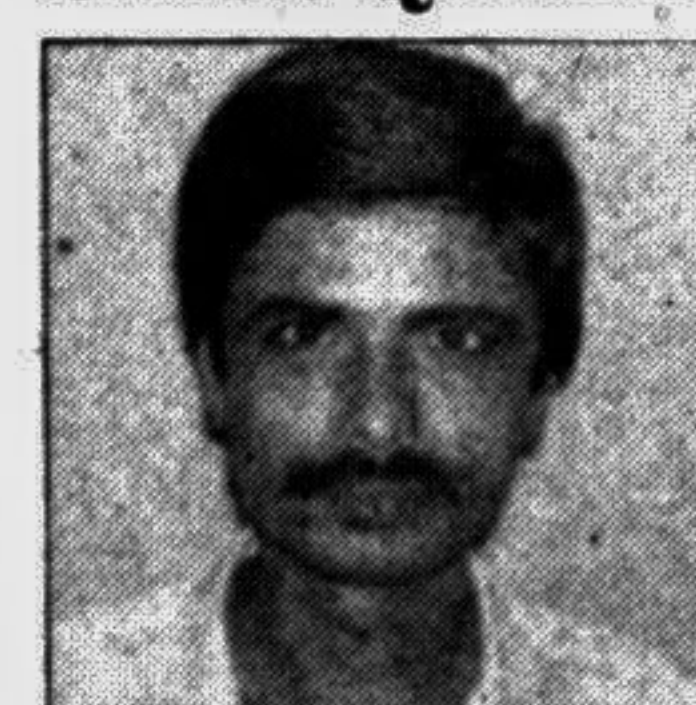
Stoichkov added that he may not play in Saturday's third play-off between Bulgaria and Sweden.

He has been plagued by a strained muscle throughout the tournament. "It is not serious but I do not want to aggravate it," he said.

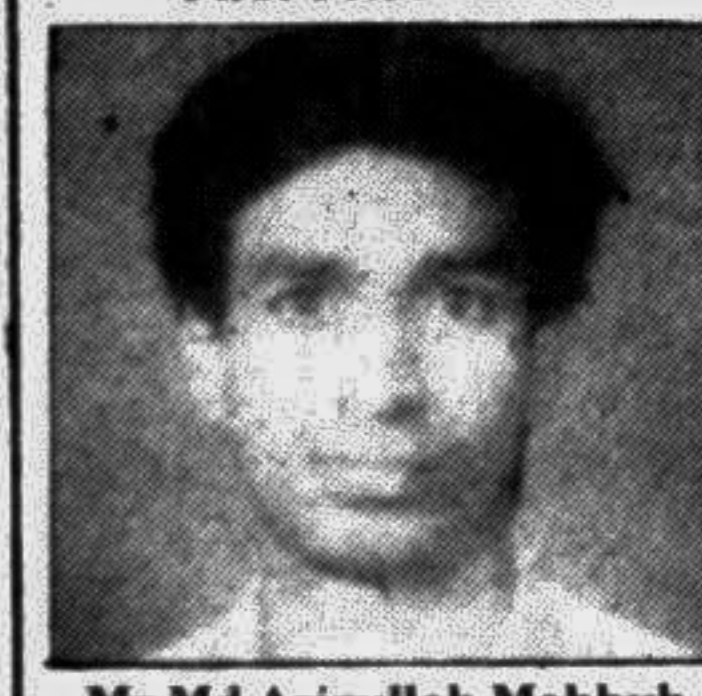
WINNERS OF STAR QUIZ 6



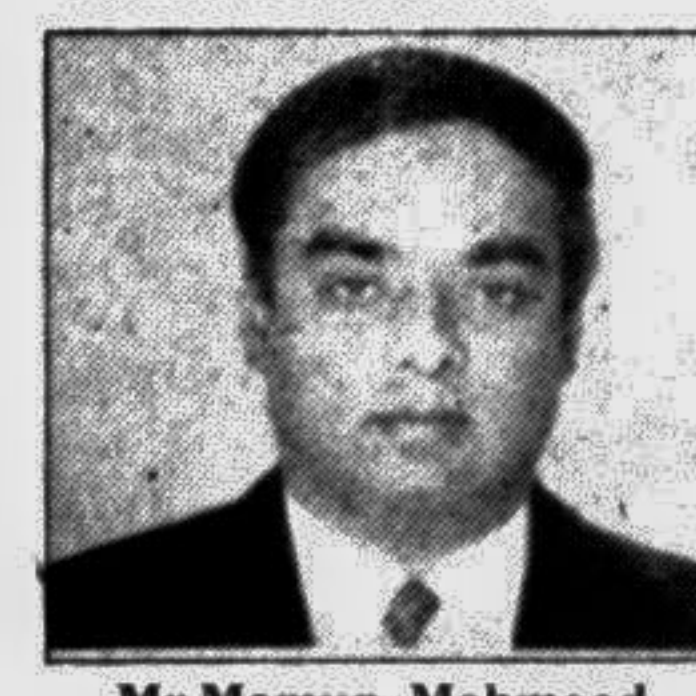
Mrs Naz Mustafa
First Prize Winner



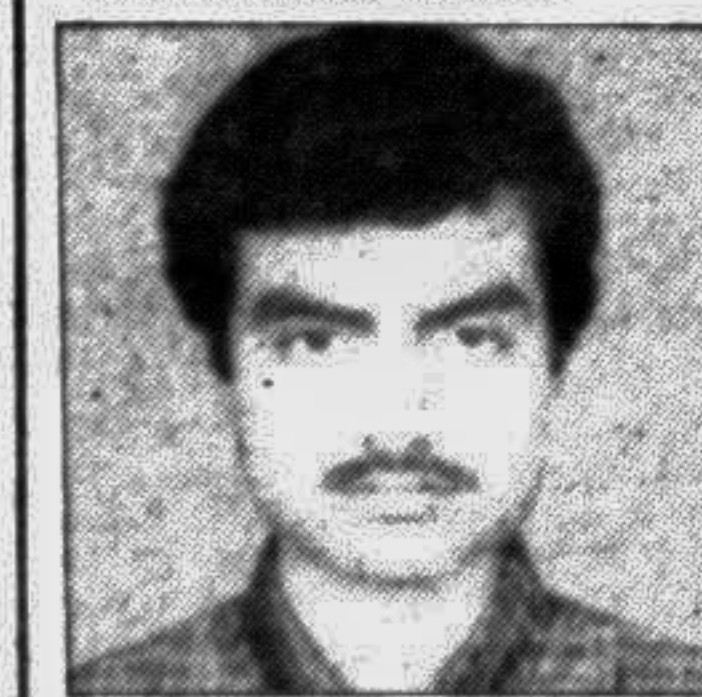
Mr Md Masroor-e-Sattar Ujjal
Fourth Prize Winner



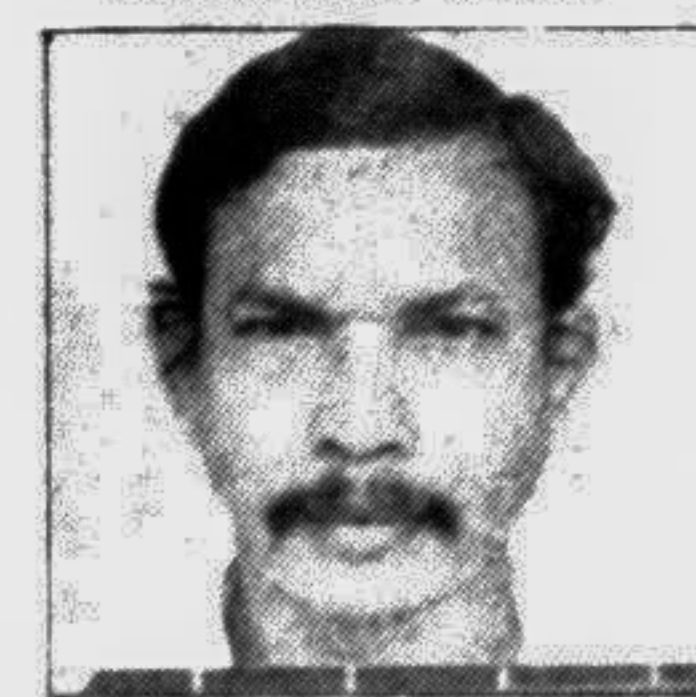
Mr Md Azizullah Mahbub
Second Prize Winner



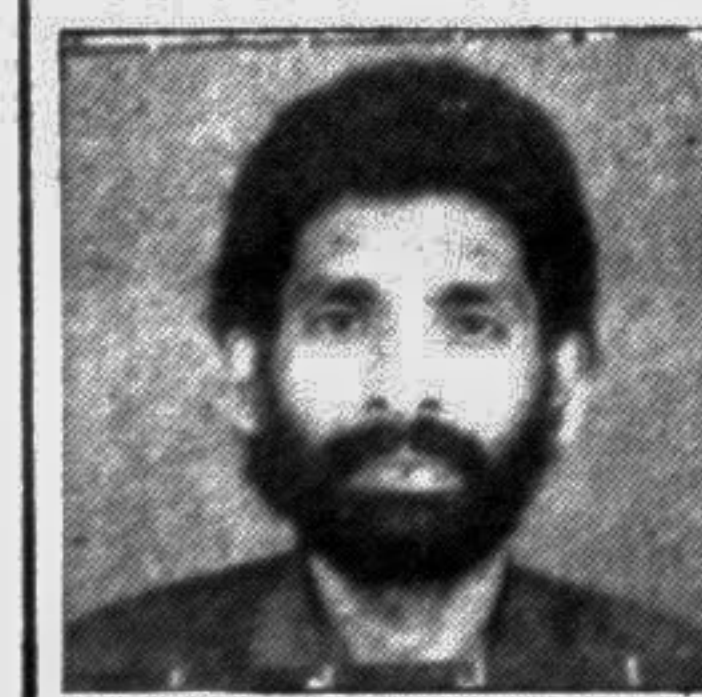
Mr Mamun Mahmood
Fourth Prize Winner



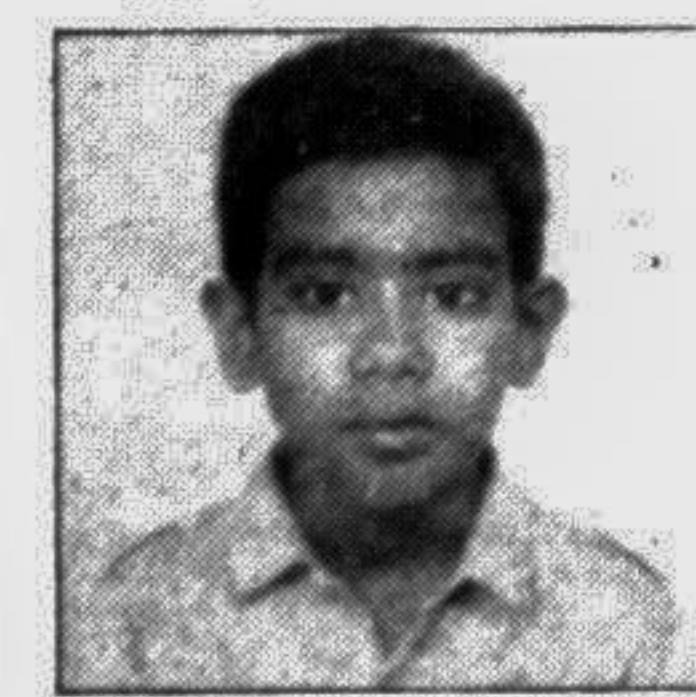
Mr Md Khaled Saifullah
Third Prize Winner



Mr Mojahid
Fourth Prize Winner



Mr Munawwar Bin Abdul Aziz
Fourth Prize Winner



Shahab Huda
Fourth Prize Winner