Star Premier 2nd round on

Sports Reporter

Title aspirants Muktijoddha Sangsad Krira Chakra began their second round campaign of the Star Premier Division football league on a winning note when they beat Public Works Department yesterday on the eve of their departure for Qatar.

The fledgling forces of the domestic soccer, who are to leave Dhaka today to take part in the Independence Cup football tournament in Qatar, scored once in each half to chalk up a comfortable win.

Defender-turned midfielder Barun Bikash Dewan, one of the pricey buyings of the freedom fighters in a sensational transfer coup earlier this season that led other big teams in the lurch, put his team ahead midway through the first half.

Rakib freed Barun inside the box with a neat through and the sturdy tribal, who played for holders Mohammedans last year, found the net with a leftfooted placement in the 24th minute.

PWD muffed a fine opportunity to be at par shortly after this when Biplab got the better of national defender Jewel Rana and the vastly experienced Muktijoddha custodian, Mohsin, but his push into an open net was blocked by Masud Rana from the goalline.

Enjoying dominance throughout, Muktijoddha confirmed victory with another goal in the 50th minute.

Saiful Bari, another role reversed player, thanks to innovative tactical stroke by coach Kazi Salahuddin, floated in a centre from the right and Imtiaz Ahmed Nakib dived across the turf to head the ball home (2-0). Muktijoddha, who beat PWD 3-0 in the first leg, could have completed a treble but Rakib and Rumi Rizvi Karim wasted opportunities to repeat a similar margin.

Central defender Ataur Rahman brought down a menacing PWD's Biplab inside the box and the referee pointed to the dreaded spot. Kaikan shot wide from eleven yards.

Muktijoddha, who recorded their seventh win yesterday, took their tally to 15 points from ten matches.

PWD remained glued to their previous collection of ten matches.

LUCKY BROTHERS

While Muktijoddha got off to a bright start, Brothers Union stumbled and in fact were lucky to troop back home with a point from their engagement against Wari Club.

The day's second match at the Dhaka Stadium played under the floodlights ended in a goalless draw.

Brothers, who played with ten-men following the ouster of their defender Pijush Nandy, came back from the jaws of a certain defeat as their custodian Ponir, who passed a busy night under the bar, thwarted a poor spot kick by Wari's Razzaque.

Pijush, the Brothers right back, stopped a goalbound shot by Yusuf at the fag end of the first half that put the Gopibagh team at considerable peril. Fortunately for them, Ponir rose to the occasion though the loss of a player was one casualty that could not be averted.

Wari's Shankar, who tormented the Brothers defence like anything, came close to scoring on a number of occasion but a goal that would have crowned a fine night for the traditional club remained elusive.

Brothers' only chance came in the second half but skipper Satyajit Das Rupu hung on to the ball too long to allow substitute Wari custodian Apple recover after Ranjan had done the spade work.

Brothers increased their collection to 12 from ten matches while Wari upped their haul to ten having played as many outings.

Ranjan, who along with teammates Rupu and Moon are going to Qatar with Muktijoddha Sangsad on loan today, scored a hattrick in Brothers' 3-1 victory over Wari in the first round encounter of the teams.

Rahmatganj Muslim Friends Society sustained their lead in the points table when they cantered past babes Muslim Institute on the opening day of the second round of the Star First Division football league at the Mirpur Stadium.

The Dhaka team registered a three-one victory with Milon twice on target and Akhtar managing one.

Ainal pulled one back for the losers.

Rahmatganj reign head the table with 15 points from ten matches while Muslim face relegation axe with four points from ten matches too.

Meanwhile, authorities Dhaka Metropolis Football Association suspended all Star engagements for the next two days for unavoidable circumstances.

Leagues will resume on September only to go in hibernation from September 16 to 20, due to Muktijoddha's participation in a tournament abroad.

However, the Star First Division matches will go on unhindered.

Unique double for Popov

ROME, Sept 11: China's women set two world records in one race and Russia's Alexander Popov became the first swimmer to win the 50 and 100 freestyle titles at one World Championships Saturday, reports AP.

The Chinese relay squad of He Cihong, Dai Guohong, Liu Limin and Le Jingyi set a world record for the women's 400-metre medley relay. They clocked 4 minutes 01.67 seconds and sliced 0.87 off the mark the Americans set at the Barcelona Olympics two years ago.

He Cihong also set a new mark for the 100 backstroke, swimming the first leg in 1:00.16 to beat the record of Hungary's Kristina Egerszegi by 0.15.

Backstroker Lea Loveless and freestyler Jenny Thompson, who were on the squad that set the previous mark at the Barcelona Olympics two years ago, placed second here to win the silver, though 4.86 seconds behind the winners.

American long-distance specialist Janet Evans held on to her 800-meter title by a whisker but countryman Jef Rouse, like Evans the world record holder, lost his 100 backstroke championship in the last 20 meters to Spain's Martin Lopez-Zubero, world record owner over 200.

Host nation Italy won its first gold medal of the championships by defeating Spain 10-5 in men's water polo in a rematch of the three-overtime 1992 Olympic final, also won by the Italians.

Russia defeated Croatia 14-13 in overtime to capture the bronze.

The United States had success in the synchro swimming pool when BeckyDyroen-Lancer won her second gold of the championships, teaming up with Jill Sudduth in the duet.

Popov, the Russian with the slow, almost leisurely-looking stroke, moved smoothly down the Foro Italico pool to win the 22.17 the fastest time of the year.

American swimmer Gary Hall, also silver medalist behind Popov in the 100 final, was second in 22.44, almost half a body length behind.

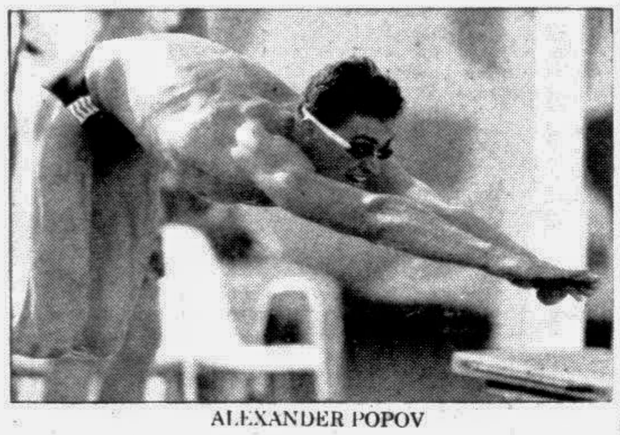
Raimundas Majolis won Lithuania's first world championship medal by taking third in 22.52 ahead of Brazilian Gustavo Borges, bronze medalist in the 100.

In the 800 freestyle, 23 year old Evans, who is two time Olympic Champion, took over the lead from Australia's Hayley Lewis after 300 and appeared in control.

Rouse was already leading when the backstrokers got into their first strokes but was caught near the end of the race by Lopez-Zubero. The Spaniard clocked 55.17 for a championship record with Rouse, whose world mark is 53.86, touching in 55.51.

Hungary's Tamas Deutch won the bronze.

Lu Bin, who won silver medals in the 100 and 200 freestyle in times that were inside the world records, collected the gold medal in the women's 200 individual medley.



ALEXANDER POPOV

Lu clocked 2:12.34 to finish well clear of American swimmer Allison Wagner, who had 2:14.40. Wagner also won the silver in the 400 medley.

Australia's Elli Overton, the Commonwealth champion, took the bronze.

Russia's Denis Pankratov, who won a bronze in the 100 butterfly final, made it gold in the 200 with a start-to-finish triumph, clocking 1:56.54.

New Zealand's Danyon Loader, the Olympic silver medalist, was second, 1.45 behind with Germany's Chris-Carol Bremer third and American swimmer Ugur Taner fourth.

In the synchro pool, Dyroen-Lancer and Sudduth finished ahead of Japan's Fumiko Okumo and Miya Tachabana to win the gold medal.

The United States is favoured also to win Sunday's team event final and if it does, Dyroen-Lancer would have picked up three gold medals.

Australian Kieren Perkins, who broke the 800 and 1,500 world records two weeks ago at the Commonwealth Games and the 400 mark here Friday, appeared to take it easy in the 1,500 heats. The final is Sunday, the last day of the championships.

This time he swam 15:13.95, well over a half minute slower than his world record 14:41.66 set in Victoria, British Columbia.

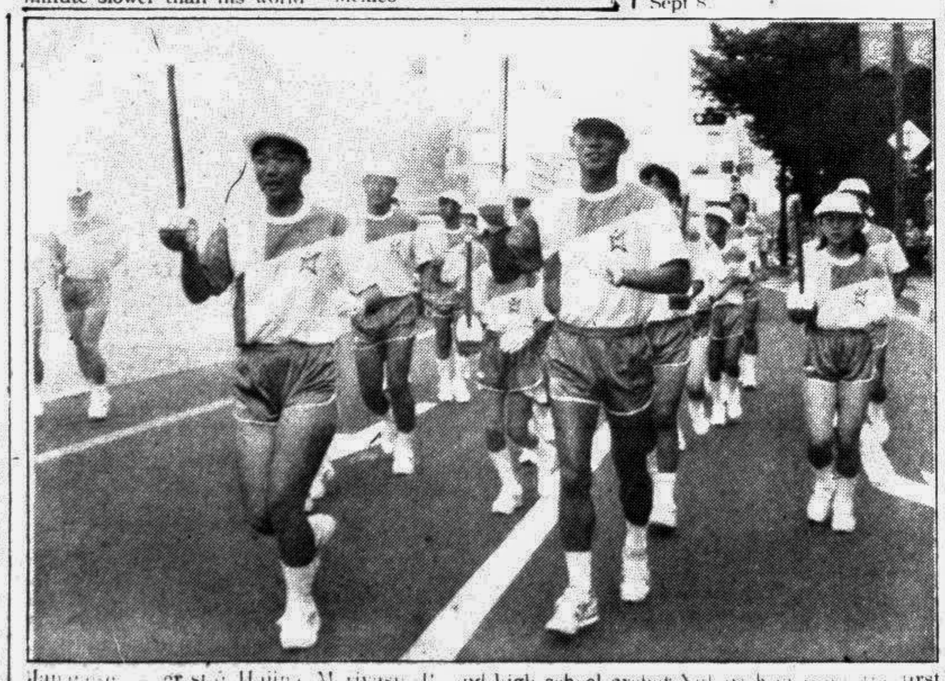
Behind him in heat four, Japan's Masato Hirano broke the Japanese record by some 10 seconds as he came home in 15:15.44 to beat Americans Carlton, Bruner and Chad Carvin. Bruner made the final but Carvin didn't.

Perkins' countryman Dan Kowalaski was fastest qualifier in 15:11.43.

MEDALS TABLE

Medals table after the 10th day of the World Swimming Championships on Saturday (tabulate under gold, silver, bronze):

China	13	9	2
United States	5	9	7
Russia	5	5	5
Australia	5	2	3
Hungary	3	2	3
Germany	1	2	5
Finland	1	2	-
Spain	1	2	-
Sweden	1	2	-
Canada	1	-	3
Italy	1	-	1
Poland	1	-	-
Zimbabwe	1	-	-
Japan	-	2	-
New Zealand	-	1	2
Netherlands	-	1	-
Belgium	-	-	2
Brazil	-	-	2
Costa Rica	-	-	2
Lithuania	-	-	1
Mexico	-	-	-



Japanese former stars Hojing Moriyasu (R) and high school archer Yukari Kawano are the first torchbearers, run with the sacred flames for the 12th Asian Games yesterday. The flames will travel through a total of 86 cities before reaching Hiroshima Athletics Stadium on Oct 2.

— AFP photo

Muktis leave for Qatar today

Sports Reporter

Muktijoddha Sangsad Krira Chakra leaves Dhaka for the Qatar capital of Doha today to take part in the Independence Cup invitational football tournament, scheduled to begin from September 14.

Muktis, who open their campaign against neighbours India on the inaugural day, have loaned three Brothers Union booters for this trip. The 25-member contingent will be led by veteran politicians and BFF member Saifuddin Ahmed Manik.

Local Star TV viewers will have the opportunity to see the Federation Cup winners in action on Prime Sports when the emerging force of the domestic soccer circuit takes on Yemen on September 16. The match kicks off at 10.00 pm BST.

Currently leading the Star Premier Division football league after their second round victory over Public Works Department (PWD) SC yesterday, Muktijoddha, placed in Group B along with India and Yemen, are hopeful of registering at least one win in the preliminary round which will qualify them for the round of last four.

Kazi Salahuddin, who in his first year as the team's coach led the side to its first major title this year, said his players would surely give it a hundred per cent to ensure a semifinal slot.

"Since we are representing our country in that tournament, my boys will definitely play their level best to ensure a respectable result for Bangladesh," said Salahuddin, the most celebrated footballer in the annals of football in this country.

Referring to the three loaned booters from Brothers, he said, "Ranjan, Rupu and Moon have been drafted in mainly as stand-bys. In case of something happens to one of the regular eleven, any one of them will be fielded."

Salahuddin, downplaying the Bangladesh Football Federation's claim that it is sending the national team, said, "I can't quite agree with BFF's claim because, in my opinion, there are quite a few players in the league who have the eligibility to don national colours."

The six-nation tournament, which also features Sudan, Oman and hosts Qatar, will run through to September 23.

Following is the schedule of the Independence Cup:

Sept 14	Bangladesh vs	India
Sept 15	Oman vs	Qatar
Sept 16	Bangladesh vs	Yemen
Sept 17	Qatar vs	Sudan
Sept 18	India vs	Yemen
Sept 19	Sudan vs	Oman

Asian Games torch ignited

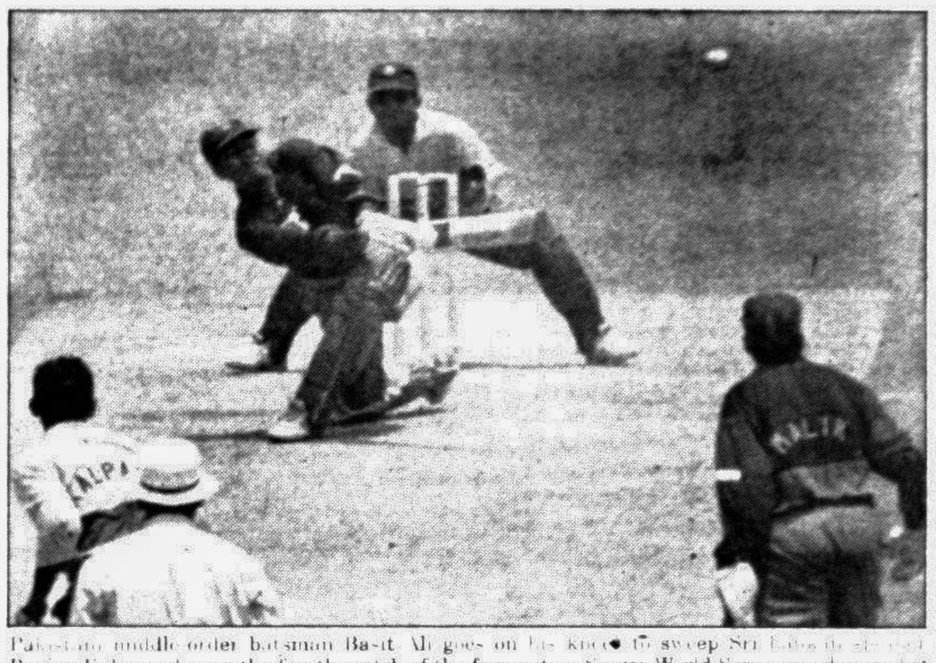
HIROSHIMA, Sept 11: The torch for the 1994 Asian Games was ignited Sunday from flames from the last Games in Beijing and from a monument dedicated to the abolition of nuclear weapons, reports AP.

Takashi Hiraoka, mayor of the host city of Hiroshima, which was destroyed by a US atomic bomb attack in the closing days of World War II in 1945, joined Hiroshima Prefecture Governor Yuzan Fujita and about 2,000 other people for the torch ceremony at the Peace Memorial Park.

More than 7,000 athletes and officials from 42 countries and regions are expected to compete in Asia's version of the Olympics Oct. 2-16.

The first torch bearer, Hajime Moriyasu of Sanfrecce Hiroshima of the Japanese Professional soccer league, ran one kilometer, (0.6 miles) to carry the torch to the city's government of office.

The Asian Games torch arrived in Japan from Beijing, site of the 1990 Games, on Sept 8.



Pakistan's middle order batsman Basit Ali goes on his knees to sweep Sri Lanka's slow left arm Ruwan Kalpage during the fourth match of the four-nation Singer World Series one-day cricket tournament played in Colombo yesterday. The world champions lost by seven wickets.

— AFP photo

Ranatunga leads SL to an upset victory

World champs outclassed

COLOMBO, Sept 11: Arjuna Ranatunga's smashing splendid half-century helped Sri Lanka score a seven-wicket victory over Pakistan and led them into the finals of the four-nation Singer World Series in Colombo on Sunday, reports AP.

Pakistan now have a very slim chance of entering the final after losing both their matches to Australia and hosts Sri Lanka.

Sri Lanka coming off a 1-4 drubbing in one day international series and a 0-2 Test series defeat by Pakistan last month, exacted revenge. They lead the tournament with two wins in as many games, with world champions Pakistan in last place.

SINGER WORLD SERIES

Australia and India have one victory from two matches each.

Ranatunga's sparkling knock of 82 came off only 78 balls and was studded with seven fours. He reached his 27th half-century in 146 one-day internationals from 53 balls and ended the match by glancing paceman Kabir Khan to the third-man boundary.

He was well supported in a 116-run unbroken fourth-wicket stand by middle-order batsman Hashan Tillekeratne, who made 39 off 62 balls with three boundaries.

The flamboyant Ranatunga came to the crease with Sri Lanka in trouble at 65 for three in reply to Pakistan's 209 for six in 50 overs.

Earlier opener Sanath Jayasuriya was caught by Pakistan skipper Salim Malik at mid-off for four in the fourth over to give Khan his maiden wicket in one day internationals.

Ranatunga's brother Sanjeewa, then perished in the 15th over trying to loft off spinner Akram Raza over the fence, only to be caught at long-off by Inzamam ul Haq.

Vice-captain Aravinda de Silva was caught and bowled by Mushtaq Ahmed for 11 in the 21st over, and Ranatunga

RANATUNGA man-of-match

joined right-handed veteran opener Roshan Mahanama in the middle.

They put on 32 runs before Mahanama was forced to retire hurt (39 from 88 balls) with a recurring knee injury. Tillekeratne than joined his skipper and the pair set about reaching the target methodically, gathering singles almost at will.

Pakistan sorely missed the services of their best paceman, Wasim Akram, who sidelined with a hamstring injury.

Pakistan were restricted to 210 runs for six wickets in 50 over by some brilliant fielding and tidy bowling by Sri Lanka.

The Pakistani innings featured three runouts and two spectacular catches, and a solid half century from Malik, after Ranatunga put Pakistan in to bat at the Sinhalese Sports Club grounds.

Malik 52 from 86 balls in 113 minutes with three fours shared two important stands, 51 for the third wicket with Amir Sohail (31 from 54 balls) and 54 for the fourth wicket with Basit Ali (40 off 63 balls).

SCOREBOARD

Scoreboard in the match between Sri Lanka and Pakistan in the four-nation limited overs cricket series today.

PAKISTAN

Saeed Anwar c Jayasuriya b Vaas	21
Amir Sohail run out	32
Inzamam ul Haq run out	2
Salim Malik c Tillekeratne b Kalpage	52
Basit Ali c Mahanama b Jayasuriya	40
Zahid Fazal run out	15
Rashid Latif not out	28
Akram Raza not out	9
Extras: (lb-2, w-4, nb-2)	8
Total: (six wickets in 50 overs)	210

Fall: 1-28; 2-31; 3-82; 4-136; 5-169; 6-171

Did not bat: Waqar Younis, Mushtaq Ahmed, Kabir Khan

Bowling:	O	M	R	W
Wickremasinghe	8	0	37	0
Vaas	8	0	38	1
Arjuna Ranatunga	8	0	29	0
Dharmasena	8	0	30	0
Jayasuriya	10	0	33	1
Kalpage	8	0	32	1

SRI LANKA

Mahanama retired Hurt	39
Jayasuriya c Malik b Kabir	4
Ranatunga c Inzamam b Raza	16
De Silva c and b Mushtaq	11
Ranatunga not out	82
Tillekeratne not out	3
Extras: (b-5, lb-10, nb-1 w-6)	22
Total: (three wickets, 47.2 overs)	213

Fall of wickets: 1-9; 2-14; 3-65

Did not bat: Kalpage, Dassanayake, Dharmasena, Vaas, Wickremasinghe

Bowling	O	M	R	W
Waqar	9	1	21	0
Kabir	9.2	1	34	1
Raza	10	0	49	1
Sohail	8	0	28	0
Mushtaq	8	0	31	1
Malik	3	0	14	0

Result: Sri Lanka won by seven wickets.

Man-of-the-match: Arjuna Ranatunga.

Is it anti-Asian bias, or else?

ROME, Sept 11: Allegations of doping against China's women swimmers are the product of western jealousy and anti-Asian racism, according to one of the men behind the country's great leap forward in the sport, reports AFP.

"The doping problem is political now," national coach Zhou Ming said after watching his 4x100m medley relay team smash two world records in one race on Saturday night.

"Sport has traditionally been an area in which the West has dominated and they just cannot tolerate Asians being good in sport.

"Economically we are still behind but it is only a matter of time before we catch up. It's the same in sport."

Zhou also claimed that the doping claims — fuelled by the parallels between China's sudden emergence as a swimming superpower and East Germany's pharmaceutically-driven rise in the 1970's — were based on ignorance of China as a society and the new training methods developed by Chinese coaches.

"As a coach I travel around the world and we are always asked questions about doping," he said. "I can say that western critics know hardly anything about the training going on in China. They just make guesses. They're not aware of the tremendous changes that have taken place in China over the last few years."

The presence of some doping in Chinese swimming has been confirmed by positive tests this year for Zhong Weiyue and Ren Xin, both top class international competitors.

But while international federation officials privately express concern that these simply represent the tip of a doping iceberg, testing of gold medal winners and world record breakers at the Barcelona Olympics, the world short-course championships last year, and, so far, here in Rome, has failed to produce a solitary positive test.

Western coaches are openly dismissive of Zhou's suggestion that China might have outstripped them in the quality of their swimming training.

"I would like not to be convinced about doping," British coach Dave Haller, who was one of the first to raise the issue when he was in charge of Hong Kong at the Asian Games in 1990.

"I just can't see any other way to come from oblivion to total domination of the world in such a short space of time. It has all the hallmarks of East Germany unfortunately."

The revolutionary training argument is also difficult to square with the Chinese men's dismal lack of success.

Zhou, however, argues it is only a matter of time before the men start to match their training partners.

"In terms of stature our women are closer to westerners than the men. Then the fact that they train with the men is probably more beneficial for them than for the men," Zhou said.

"There also might be a psychological problem because the men are not used to winning international competitions. But the men's times have improved a lot over recent years and I'm sure over the next three to four years you'll see them having the same success as their female counterparts."

All the evidence, however, suggests the Chinese men have got a long march ahead of them.

While the women went into Sunday's last night of finals with nine of the 13 swimming golds to have been decided, the men have yet to get within a splash of a medal here.

Saturday's medley relay triumph was the perfect illustration of the Chinese strength in depth that has prompted predictions of a clean sweep of all the women's golds at the Atlanta Olympics two years from now.

The oldest of the four swimmers, Le Jingyi, is only 19. Three of the four — Le, He Cihong (who broke the 100m back stroke record on the opening leg) and Liu Limin (fly) — had already won individual golds in their respective specialities, only a world record by Australia's Samantha Riley prevented 16-year-old Dai Guoohong doing the same in the breaststroke.

As well as He's record — on the only leg which counts for individual records — the relay saw He clocked 53.81sec for the closing 100m free, comfortably inside the world record of 54.01 She set last week.

He, Le and Liu were all in action again in qualifying on Sunday but only Le looked a likely gold winner.

18 coaches urge FINA to take strict measures

ROME, Sept 11: Eighteen coaches Sunday called on FINA, swimming's governing body, to take immediate action to halt the apparent re-emergence of cheating through drugs or run the risk of wrecking the sport, reports AP.

The 18, who include American national team director Dennis Pursley, Australia's Don Talbot and Dave Johnson from Canada, signed a declaration to step up the fight against drug abuse which they described as "the single greatest threat to the progress and integrity of the sport."

The declaration comes against a background of widespread rumor and allegation largely aimed at Chinese women athletes who won nine of the 13 titles contested on the first five days at the world championships, breaking four world records along the way.

China was not mentioned in the declaration and has not yet been invited to sign it, said Paul Quinlan, vice president of World Swimming Coaches Association.

"It's not simply a Chinese problem, it's world problem," said Quinlan, an Australian. "People now are having real difficulty accepting that any good performances today aren't achieved without the help of some sort of performance-enhancement."

"It's negative situation for swimming to be in."

The 18 are calling on FINA to make financial resources, manpower and technology immediately available to set up short-notice, out of competition testing. Federations who refuse would be subject to punishment such as suspensions from the Olympics and World Championships.

Quinlan said his organization also was pressing FINA to accept that swimmers positively drug tested should have their medals taken away and records removed from the lists.

Talbot, a long-time nation coach of the Australian team whose athletes Kieren Perkins and Samantha Riley also have broken world marks at these championships, said the drug allegations, even though unproved, were damaging the image of the sport.

"At the moment it's detrimental to win and to break a world record," he said.

"People think you're swimming too fast.

"I have never before seen a situation where, if you win, you are tarred with doing something crooked," Talbot said.

"If this is allowed to keep going, then we are not going to have a sport. You may as well disband and go back to having your own domestic competitions."

FINA had to take action soon to prevent drug-boosted swimmers winning most of the medals at the Atlanta Olympics is 1996, he said.

"This (drugs issue) is a hot potato," Talbot said. "And people keep dropping it."

Pursley said FINA appeared to have the technology to impose short-notice testing. The problem appeared to be the delay in getting visas to visit certain countries and test the athletes.

"Some government could be uncooperative in granting the visas and the swimmers would benefit from the delay," he said.

"There is a level of concern that it's an unwinnable battle," Pursley said. "But we can't give up trying and we have to start somewhere.

"My personal view is that those athletes caught should be banned, if not for life, then for minimum of four years so that they miss the next Olympics."

Barcelona's maiden win

MADRID, Sept 11: Spanish league champions Barcelona scored their first victory of the season on Saturday when a penalty gave them a 2-1 home win against Racing Suntander, reports Reuter.

Dutchman Ronald Koemann hammered home the vital shot in the 29th minute.

Russian Dimitri Popov scored for Racing after just six minutes, but Jordi Cruyfl, making his First Division debut, pulled Barcelona level two minutes later.

Chilean striker Ivan Zamorano scored twice in the 20th and 48th minutes to give Real Madrid a 2-0 victory at home against lowly Logrones.

Khulna sports

KHULNA, Sept 11: A four-day summer football, handball and swimming competition of Khulna sub-regional schools and madrassah began today at Khulna Zilla School, reports BSS.

Divisional commissioner Abdul Muktadir Choudhury inaugurated the meet. Five hundred and twenty students of 30 schools and madrassah from 10 districts of Khulna region are taking part in the competition.