

Bangladesh open against India in Asiad hockey

Sports Reporter
Bangladesh national hockey squad begin their Hiroshima Asian Games campaign against India on October 4. Bangladesh, who have been placed in Pool B along with South Korea and China in the 12th Asiad hockey tournament, play their second match against South Korea on October 7 before wrapping up their group engagements against China on October 10. With a one-all draw against South Korea in the Asia Cup hockey championships their best showing so far at the international level, Bangladesh's lone realistic hope for a positive result rests in the match against China.

AB Bank TT begins today

Sports Reporter
The metropolis AB Bank table tennis league, featuring sixteen outfits, begins at the Dharmaseni wooden floor gymnasium today. Defending champions Bangladesh Biman will take on Purbachal Parishad in one of the four matches scheduled for the opening day. In the other three matches, Armanitola JSC will take on Bangladesh Bank, Inter Sports will vie with Dhaka Mariners and Wari Club will start their campaign against Synthia Sports Club. Ramjanul Siraj, vice chairman of sponsors AB Bank, will declare the month-long meet open at 5 pm.

Abahani lift golf title

Sports Reporter
Abahani KC created history of sorts as they clinched the Bengal Aviation Services quadrangular golf title, at the Dhaka Club Golf course on Friday. The tournament featured Abahani, Mohammedan Sporting Club, Bangladesh Biman and hosts Dhaka Club in a rare encounter on a golf course for the first time in Bangladesh. Abahani captain, Iqbal Azim led from the front and was largely instrumental in helping Abahani winning the latest feather for their chequered cap. Inspired golf from the other members of the Abahani side namely Marwar H. Chowdhury who landed the day's best score, Tareq Taber, Imran Ahmad and Shawkat U Zaman enabled Abahani to hold off the determined challenge posed by their traditional rivals, Mohammedan Sporting. Shakil Kasem, the Mohammedan captain tried valiantly to marshal his side in winning this prestigious competition. Masud Ahmad played brilliantly for Mohammedan Sporting, while Aftab Hossain, Farruque Ahmad, and M A Mannan played well enough to ensure Mohammedans the runners up position. At the end of the day, the early pressure from Iqbal, Manwar and Abahani's ex-cricketer Imran, made all the difference as Abahani coasted home deserving winners.

Moody in a marauding mood

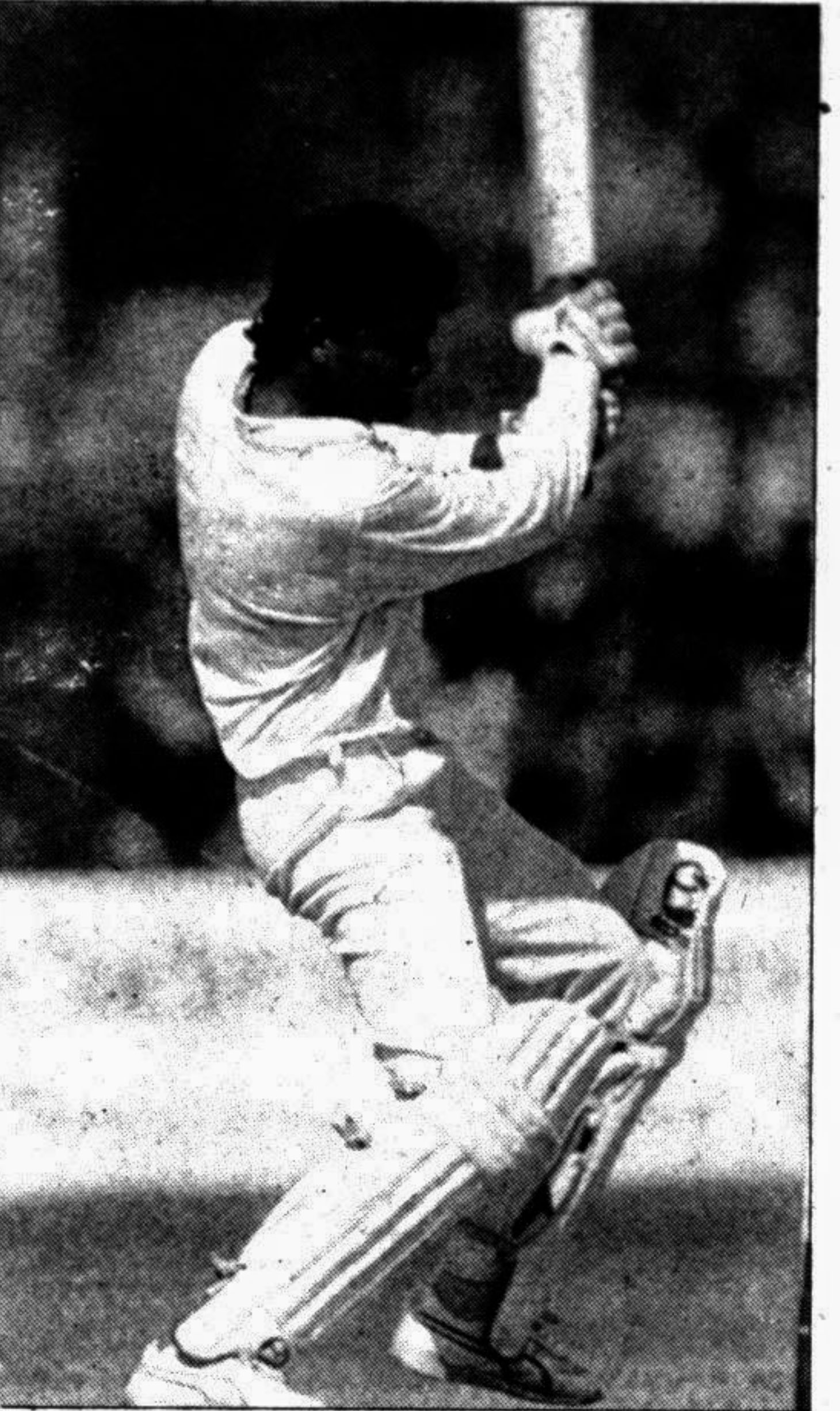
LONDON, Sept 17: Australian Tom Moody enlivened another day of weather interruptions in the English county championships with a 97-ball hundred for Worcester against Durham on Friday, reports Reuter. Moody smashed three sixes and 12 fours to reach an unbeaten 103 after the rain-hit match had finally begun at tea-time on the second day. His second fifty took only 37 deliveries and took him past 1,000 runs for the season. Former England batsman Allan Lamb chose the final round of four-day championship matches to play one of his best innings of the year, hitting a magnificent 114 against Essex at Chelmsford. The South African-born Lamb struck three sixes off left-arm spinner John Childs as he hoisted Northamptonshire to 348 for eight. Leicestershire's hopes of cementing second position in the table were frustrated in bizarre fashion against Lancashire at Old Trafford. After they had been bowled out for 206, the low position of the sun behind the bowler's arm halted Lancashire's reply for the day with 12.2 overs to go.

Amunike's dilemma

ZURICH, Sept 17: Emmanuel Amunike, Nigeria's World Cup star, must honour his contract to join German club MSV Duisburg instead of Sporting Lisbon, FIFA ruled Friday, reports AFP. Amunike signed contracts with both clubs but preferred Sporting after claiming that Nigeria's Dutch coach Clemens Westerhoff had forced him into the deal with Duisburg.

India's revenge indeed

COLOMBO, Sept 17: India ended Sri Lanka's dream run in the four-nation World Series Saturday with a six-wicket victory in a rain-hit final neither team wanted to play, reports AFP. Chasing Sri Lanka's modest 98 for nine in the stipulated 25 overs, the Indians overcame early setbacks to romp home with eight balls to spare at the packed Sinhalese Sports Club ground here.



AZHARUDDIN, man-of-the-final. Club ground here.

The match was reduced to 25-over-a-side after the start was delayed by four-and-a-half hours because of a damp wicket and soggy outfield. Umpires Brian Aldridge and local man K T Francis overruled objections from the rival camps that the ground was unfit for play following heavy rains over the last three days which continued early Saturday. "The wicket was still damp and the outfield slippery when play began," Indian captain Mohammad Azharuddin said. It am surprised the umpires agreed to start the match because Sri Lanka too were reluctant to play. He said: "We were lucky to win the toss, the match could easily have gone the other way if we had batted first." The decision to play delighted some 15,000 home fans, who came hoping Sri Lanka would climax their on-

Baggio heaps it on TV

TURIN, Italy, Sept 17: Italian World Cup star Roberto Baggio said on Friday that a surfeit of televised soccer was putting fans off going to games, reports Reuter. "There are so many soccer games on television now — that's why fewer people are coming to the stadium," says Baggio, who plays for Juventus of Turin but is currently out with a thigh strain. Armchair fans have been able to feast on three successive nights of live televised soccer around Europe this week with UEFA Cup matches played on Tuesday, Champions League matches on Wednesday and Cup Winners' Cup matches on Thursday. Attendances in Italy were considerably down and Baggio told reporters on Friday, people now prefer watching soccer from their armchair, echoing teammate Gianluca Vialli, who made similar comments earlier this week. Napoli drew a crowd of just under 10,000 to the San Paolo Stadium for their UEFA Cup tie with Skonto Riga on Tuesday while Inter's glamour tie with Aston Villa on Thursday attracted less than 25,000 to the San Siro. Both games were televised

Czech booter in trouble in Singapore

SINGAPORE, Sept 17: A Singapore court today granted a defence request to postpone a case against a Czech footballer charged with six counts of corruption for fixing matches, reports Reuter. "After the World Cup, not all players are in tip-top shape and, despite the incessant rhythm of the soccer calendar, you've still got to keep playing," said Baggio, due to return against Sampdoria on September 25.

men, three of whom ran themselves out in the quest for quick runs. With the ball turning sharply on the uneven wicket, Sri Lanka were in early trouble as openers Roshan Mahanama and Sanath Jayasuriya were dismissed in the third over with the score at five. The home team were reduced to 28 for four by the ninth over when the hard-hitting Ravindra de Silva was removed for 10 and left-hander Hashan Tilakaratne went for seven. Skipper Arjuna Ranatunga and Kalpage carried the score to 64 in the 18th over when leg-spinner Anil Kumble struck a vital blow by getting rid of the in-form Sri Lankan captain. Ranatunga, who made 82 and 59 in his last two innings, had scored 13 when he swept a flighted ball straight to Rajesh Chauhan on the mid-wicket fence.



SCOREBOARD
Scoreboard in the World Series final between India and Sri Lanka at the Sinhalese Sports Club ground here Saturday.

SRI LANKA:
Mahanama run out 2
Jayasuriya c Bedade b Prabhakar 10
De Silva c Prasad b Chauhan 10
Tilakaratne c Kambl b Kapil 7
Ranatunga c Chauhan b Kumble 13
Kalpage c Mongia b Prasad 39
Chandana run out 3
Dassanayake run out 1
Dharmasena b Prabhakar 8
Vaas not out 2
Wickramasinghe not out 3
Extras: (lb-2, w-5, nb-3) 10
Total: (nine wickets) 98
Fall of wickets: 1-5; 2-5; 3-24; 4-28; 5-64; 6-74; 7-76; 8-91; 9-95.

Bowling: O M R W
Prabhakar 5 0 19 2
Prasad 5 0 17 1
Kumble 5 0 22 1
Chauhan 5 0 21 1
Kapil 5 0 17 1

INDIA:
Prabhakar c Jayasuriya b Wickramasinghe 10
Tendulkar c De Silva b Vaas 10
Sidhu lbw b Wickramasinghe 24
Aharuddin c Mahanama b Vaas 45
Kambl not out 8
Bedade not out 4
Extras: (lb-4, lb-1, w-3) 8
Total: (4 wts) 99
Did not bat: Dev. Mongia, Kumble, Chauhan, Prasad.
Fall of wickets: 1-6; 2-15; 3-86; 4-88.

Bowling: O M R W
Wickramasinghe 5 0 13 2
Vaas 5 0 16 2
Dharmasena 5 0 22 0
Kalpage 5 1 23 0
Jayasuriya 3 0 15 0
De Silva 0 4 0 5 0
Overs: 23.4
Result: India won by six wickets

AWARD WINNERS
Award winners in the four-nation World Cricket Series.
Best batsman: Sachin Tendulkar (India)
Best bowler: Steve Waugh (Australia)
Man-of-the-final: Mohammad Azharuddin (India)
Man-of-the Series: Arjuna Ranatunga (Sri Lanka)



Brazilian soccer legend Pele (C) poses with Hungarian referee Sandor Puhl (R) who was designated to referee the World Cup final in Pasadena on July 17, as one-time referee Abraham Klein (2-L) looks on prior to the kick-off the Brazil-Hungary seniors game. Others officials are unidentified. — AFP photo

Milon saves Rahmatganj

Sports Reporter
Milon's ninth goal of the Star First Division football league saved current leaders Rahmatganj Muslim Friends Society from an embarrassing defeat at the hands of midlings Shantinagar Club as the old towners settled for a one-all draw at the Dhaka Stadium yesterday. Rahmatganj began the day's lone league encounter on the wrong foot when an 18th minute goal from Masud Karim put Shantinagar into the lead. Milon, the lanky forward of Rahmatganj, restored parity shortly after the breather when he dodged past a couple of Shantinagar defenders before slotting home past an on-rushing goalkeeper Nizami for his ninth goal — so far highest in the league. However, Rahmatganj could have run away with a victory had not Milon's 80th minute left-footer hit the woodwork. Rahmatganj, who beat Shantinagar by a lone goal in the first leg, raised their collection to 16 points from 11 matches while Shantinagar upped their tally to 11 points on completion of 11 matches.

TODAY'S MATCHES
East End vs Dhanmudi 4:30 pm (Dhaka Stadium)
Victoria SC vs Eskaton SS 6:30 pm (Dhaka Stadium)

Maradona to coach Boca Juniors

BUENOS AIRES, Sept 17: Soccer star Diego Maradona, his playing days behind him, said Friday he will begin a coaching career with his former Argentine league team Boca Juniors, reports AP. The 33-year-old midfielder signed up as unpaid assistant to Boca coach Cesar Menotti beginning Saturday. "I want to learn the coach's trade with someone like Menotti," Maradona told reporters after a meeting with Menotti and Boca officials. Menotti coached Argentina to their first World Cup in 1978 and to the quarterfinals in 1982. Maradona has played in four World Cups, leading Argentina to the title in 1986 and the finals in 1990. In this year's World Cup he tested positive for the use of the banned stimulant ephedrine. FIFA, world soccer's governing body, kicked him out of the tournament after the second match and later suspended him for 15 months. Maradona said two weeks ago that he was "almost certainly" retiring from professional play.

Chelsea boss does not like it at all

LONDON, Sept 17: Chelsea chairman Ken Bates hit out on Friday at the confusion surrounding the second leg of his club's European Cup Winners' Cup tie with Viktoria Zizkov in the Czech Republic, reports Reuter. The London club, who won the first leg 4-2 on Thursday, still do not know where the return game in a fortnight is going to be played after Viktoria's Prague Stadium was ruled unsuitable by UEFA for security reasons. Several solutions have been proposed, but all have run into problems. "The whole situation is a shambles, and appeals to UEFA to resolve it have had little effect," said Bates. The Czech club was to avoid playing at the National Stadium because they felt it would be half empty, but plans to switch the tie to Jablonec, a small town on the Polish border, were not welcomed by Czech police.

Germany, most racist country?

DORTMUND, Germany, Sept 17: Brazilian defender Julio Cesar says Germany is the most racist country he has played in, reports AFP. "I've played everywhere in the world and I've never had trouble before. This is unthinkable," the 31-year-old said of the constant taunts he has had to endure since joining Borussia Dortmund from the Italian side Juventus last month. Cesar, capped 61 times by Brazil, said he was turned away from a discotheque on Wednesday night and his Dortmund coach Ottmar Hitzfeld agreed the player had been made the target of racists. Borussia are worried because Cesar's contract has a get-out clause which allows him to leave if he or his family are subject to racial abuse. Borussia general manager Michael Meir revealed. Last year Chancellor Kohl had to apologise to President Clinton when an American Olympic Luge Toboggan competitor was beaten up in a discotheque when he went to the help of a black team-mate.



Action from yesterday's Star First Division football league encounter between Rahmatganj and Shantinagar at the Dhaka Stadium. The match ended in a one-all draw. — Star photo

Revised groupings and draw for Asian Games soccer

TOKYO, Sept 17 (Reuter): Revised groupings and draw for the Asian Games soccer competition in Hiroshima, Japan, starting on October 1.
Group A: Iran, Yemen, Bahrain, Turkmenistan, China.
Group B: Thailand, Malaysia, Hong Kong, Saudi Arabia, Uzbekistan.
Group C: South Korea, Kuwait, Oman, Nepal, Palestine.
Group D: Japan, Burma, United Arab Emirates (UAE), Qatar (Top two teams in each group qualify for quarter-finals).

DRAW
Oct 1—Group A—Turkmenistan v China, Yemen v Bahrain; Group B—Saudi Arabia v Uzbekistan, Malaysia v Hong Kong; Group C—South Korea v Nepal, Kuwait v Oman.
Oct 3—Group A—Yemen v China, Iran v Bahrain; Group B—Malaysia v Uzbekistan, Thailand v Hong Kong; Group C—Oman v Palestine, Kuwait v Nepal; Group D—Burma v Qatar, Japan v UAE.
Oct 5—Group A—Bahrain v China, Iran v Turkmenistan; Group B—Hong Kong v Uzbekistan, Thailand v Saudi Arabia; Group C—Kuwait v Palestine, South Korea v Oman; Group D—Burma v UAE, Japan v Qatar.
Oct 7—Group A—Iran v China, Yemen v Turkmenistan; Group B—Thailand v Uzbekistan, Malaysia v Saudi Arabia; Group C—Nepal v Palestine, South Korea v Kuwait.
Oct 9—Group A—Bahrain v Turkmenistan, Iran v Yemen; Group B—Hong Kong v Saudi Arabia, Thailand v Malaysia; Group C—South Korea v Palestine, Oman v Nepal; Group D—UAE v Qatar, Japan v Burma.
Oct 11—Quarter-finals: Group A winners v Group B, Second-Placers; Group B Winners v Group A second-placers; Group C Winner v Group D second placers; Group D winners v Group C second-placers.
Oct 13—Semifinals.
Oct 15—Play-off for third and fourth.
Oct 16—Final.

Cold, circuitous Klondike

WHITEHORSE, Yukon, Sept 17: It's hard to believe even the most masochistic distance runner could find this race fun. One hundred ten miles (177 kms). Incredibly steep grades that, in the toughest spot, gain 1,800 feet (540 metres) in less than 6 miles (9.6 kms). Half of the run is in darkness on a narrow, cliff-lined road, reports AP. Add the threat of bears, wolves, moose, bitter cold, rain and snow and you've got the Klondike Trail of '98 International Road Relay. But to those who have "done the Klondike" — mostly Alaskans and Yukoners used to seeking fun outdoors — it's also a big end-of-summer party they wouldn't miss. Even if they're sore for a week. The Klondike is held the second weekend of each September on the remote, two-lane Klondike Highway. Runners start Friday night in half-hour shifts, the slowest teams leaving first and the fastest last, from the port town of Skagway at the northern tip of the Alaska Panhandle. From there the race heads straight up the mountains 3,293 feet (988 metres) to White Pass, a summit made famous by the Klondike Gold Rush of 1897-98. The race crosses the border into Canada, passing through a narrow arm of northern British Columbia and ends Saturday afternoon at Whitehorse on the Yukon River. Runners run through spectacular wilderness: soaring peaks, fall colours, wildlife — even glacial sand dunes in what's dubbed "the world's smallest desert." The 12th annual race, held last weekend, also treated runners on the 81 teams to a display of the northern lights. "I love doing the Klondike," said Kim Metcalfe-Helmar, a recreational runner from Juneau, Alaska. "The first time I did it, it was really the most fun I'd had since I was a kid." Metcalfe-Helmar, 45, has run the last five Klondikes. "It's such a crazy event. It's a heroic kind of thing — 110 miles (177 kms), more than half of it in the middle of the night. Even for a good runner, it's a difficult course." The race is done in 10 legs that range from 5.8 to 16 miles (9.3 to 25.7 kms). Most legs are a mix of uphills and descents. In this year's race, runners on the pass endured snow flurries and low temperatures. When the sun rose Saturday morning, the mountaintops were white with "termination dust" — the first snow marking the end of another short Yukon summer. Support vehicles follow directly behind most runners for the first half of the race at night, their headlights casting eerie shadows on the road and mountainsides. Vern Haggard, executive director of race organizer Sport Yukon in Whitehorse, said the vehicles tend to keep away the bears, wolves and moose. "We've had people who have been chased by them," Haggard said. "But we've had nobody who's been bitten."

Zambia, Gabon renew rivalry

JOHANNESBURG, Sept 17: Gabon and Zambia, whose relations have been tense since an air crash which killed Zambia's soccer team last year, have been ordered to go ahead, as planned with two African Nations' Cup ties against each other, reports Reuter. The Confederation of African Football (CAF) turned down a request from both countries for neutral venues for their two Group Five qualifying matches. The CAF, in a statement released on Thursday, said the matches, scheduled for Libreville this month and Lusaka next April, would have to go ahead in the respective countries. The match in Libreville, which was postponed at both countries' request, was to have been played on September 4 and would have been the opening game for both in the campaign for a place in the 1996 Nations Cup finals in Kenya. A new date has yet to be set. The two countries are the seeded teams in their qualifying group, which also includes Madagascar, Mauritius and South Africa. The CAF said failure by either country to turn up for the Nations' Cup games would lead to automatic disqualification. Zambia has accused Gabon of failing to co-operate with an investigation into a Zambian Air Force plane crash off Gabon's coast in April 1993 which killed 18 members of the Zambian soccer squad on route to a World Cup qualifying match in Senegal. The plane went down shortly after a refuelling stop in Libreville, the Gabonese capital.