

India trounce Bangladesh in schools hockey

CHANDIGARH, Dec 20: India continued their winning spree with yet another resounding victory against Bangladesh, 7-1, in their last league match of the inaugural Asian schools hockey championship here today, reports PTI.

The hosts led 4-0 at half time. The Indians shot into lead in the very opening minute, with Preetinder Singh, Varinder Singh and Sukhwinder Singh combining to beat the entire Bangladesh defence. Varinder Singh then provided the finishing touch hammering the ball into the goal.

The Indian boys controlled the game for most of the match. Bangladesh had to be content with being the only team in the tournament to score a goal against the Indians. Sheikh Ramiz Ahmed came up with the lone goal for Bangladesh in the 61st minute.

For India, outside-left Chander Pal and inside-right Mukesh Kumar pumped in two goals each, while Alen, Varinder Singh and Deepak Sharma accounted for one goal each.

India got seven penalty corners of which two were converted. Bangladesh got five, all of which were wasted.

After this victory, India top the table with eight points from four matches. Bangladesh stand second with five points, two wins and a draw in four matches. The two teams now meet each other once again in the final tomorrow.

BEXIMCO U-16 soccer results

Sports Reporter

Rajshahi and Sunamganj won their respective openers in the BEXIMCO under-16 national football championship yesterday.

In the Natore zone, Rajshahi edged past Sirajganj by a solitary goal, thanks to a 17th minute strike in the first half from Sohel.

Sunamganj earned their victory without a fight as Chittagong failed to turn up in the Comilla zone encounter.

Biman Open squash results

Ram Jagdish and Bholu Lal moved into the final of the second Biman Open squash tournament at the Gulshan Club squash court yesterday, reports BSS.

Jagdish beat Sohel Hamid 9-8, 4-9, 9-1, 9-3 and Bholu Lal outplayed Muhit 9-6, 9-3, 9-0 in the semi-finals today.

The final will be held today, beginning at 5 pm.

Nuruddin al-Masud, secretary, Ministry of Civil Aviation and Tourism, will watch the final as chief guest.

Brazilian trio J-League bound

TOKYO, Dec 20: Three players from Brazilian club Palmeiras, including Zinho who played in the World Cup-winning team, are to join Japanese side Yokohama Flugels next year, reports Reuter.

The club said today midfielders Zinho and Sampaio as well as striker Evair, would join their spring training starting in February.

Nikkan Sports daily newspaper said the total transfer fees for the three players was estimated at eight million dollars, but the club was unavailable for comment.

Japan's professional J-League which started last year are eager to hunt big name players from Europe or South America to replace Brazil's Zico and former England captain Gary Lineker.

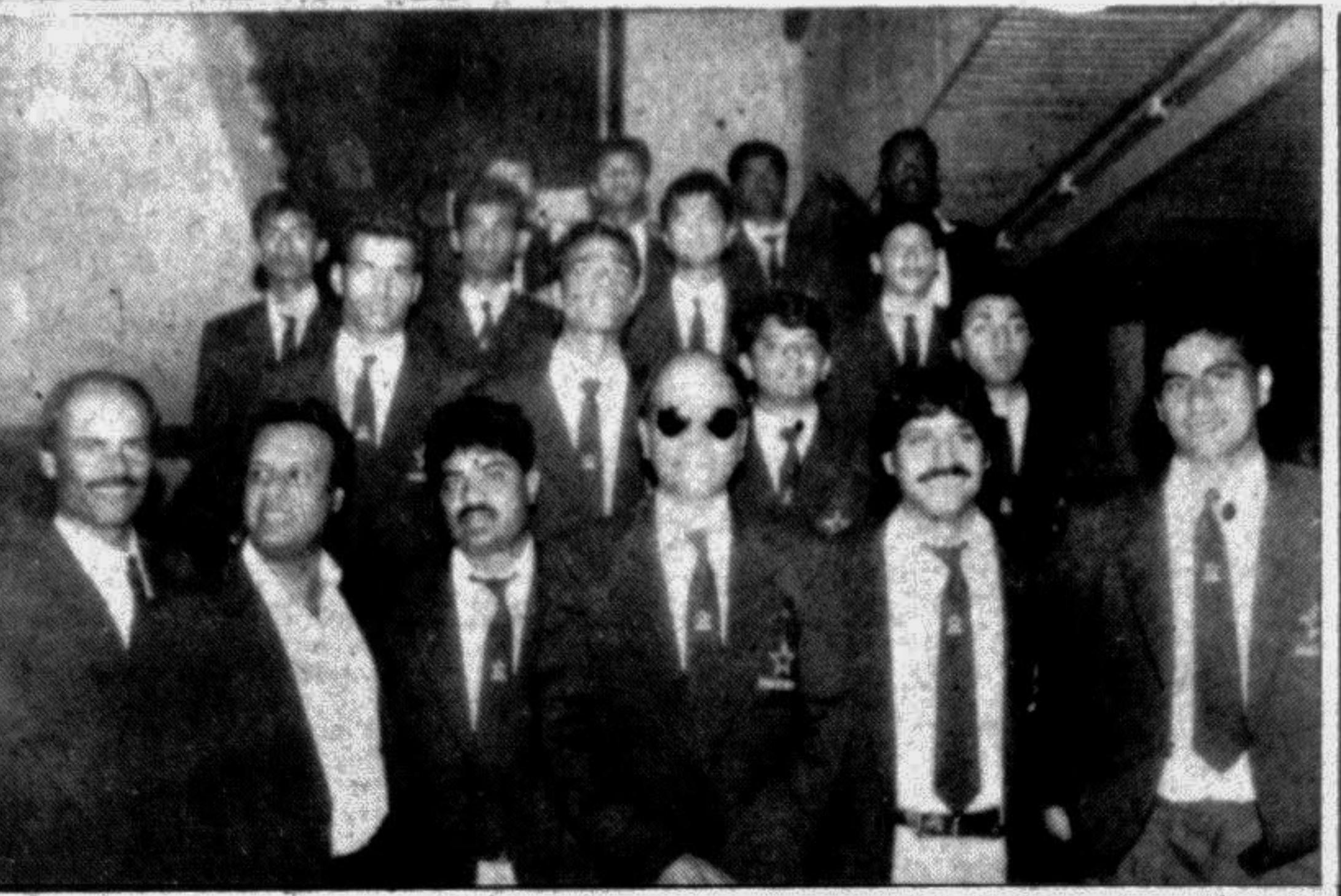
China complies with OCA

BEIJING, Dec 20: China announced today it had suspended 11 top athletes from competition for up to four years, formally accepting the findings of the Olympic Council of Asia that they used performance-enhancing drugs, reports Reuter.

The 11 Chinese athletes who failed dope tests at the Hiroshima Asian Games last October have been banned from competitions by their relative sports associations, the state-run China sports daily said in a brief front-page report.

The report said officials vowed to take unspecified "further steps" to curb doping, which Beijing maintains is an isolated problem and not officially sanctioned or organised as alleged by some trainers and athletes in the west.

The OCA this month stripped the 11 of their Asian Games medals after their urine samples showed traces of DHT, a performance enhancing hormone also called dehydrotestosterone that is banned by the International Olympic Committee.



A beaming Rameez Raja (standing second from right) captain of the Pakistan A team which arrived yesterday, seen at ZIA along with peers and manager Nasimul Ghani for whom it was the beginning of a happy walk down the memory lane.

— Star photo

Pakistan first to arrive

Sports Reporter

A 14-member Pakistan team, led by Test discard Rameez Raja, arrived here yesterday to participate in the forthcoming SAARC cricket tournament, beginning at the Dhaka Stadium from Thursday.

Pakistan, who will field their second string side, will take on hosts Bangladesh on the inaugural day of the week-long meet, which also involves India and Sri Lanka.

This is the second time Bangladesh the only nation in the sub-continent sans Test status, will stage the unofficial one-day championship following its first abortive attempt two years ago which was suspended midway due to political unrest resulting from the demolition of Babri Mosque in Ayodhya, India.

Raja, veteran of 140 one-day internationals and 47 Tests for Pakistan, top a group of six specialist batsmen in the Pakistani squad.

Raja, who scored eight hundreds in one-day internationals and two in the Test and presently out of the national team, has been in fine nick, scoring consistently in the domestic cricket.

The former national opener, who captained Allied Bank recently achieved the distinction of being the first batsman to score 300 runs in an innings since 1972.

Raja, who had earlier visited Bangladesh twice — first as a member of the Omar Qureshi Eleven and then for the Asia Cup in 1988 — became the first player to reach the 300-mark in first class cricket, after Javed Miandad scored 311 eighteen years ago.

The right-handed stylish batsman, eagerly awaiting a Test recall, said: "The tournament is important for my bid to return to the national team."

Replies to a query, Raja said: "Among the upcoming



players here, seamer Hasnain Qasem and off-spinner Sakilain Mushtaque are really good."

Hasnain, who is regarded only second to Waqar Younis in terms of sheer pace, finished with a haul of 12 for 58 for United Bank Limited against Railway in the Patrons' Trophy at Lahore recently.

The 21-year-old right-hand paceman, who started his first class career in 1992, opens the attack along with his skipper Raja for United Bank.

But Sakilain Mushtaque, a right-arm spinner of PIA team who can produce a lot of variation, is a strong contender for a Test slot, said Nasimul Ghani.

"We are confident of winning the title here," said the balding manager, who expressed his ignorance about the standard of Bangladeshi cricket but promptly added, "I'm delighted to hear that many Pakistanis are playing in the domestic cricket of Bangladesh."

"We had five days to form a team," said Ghani whose squad was taken to the Dhaka Sheraton Hotel from the airport.

The Pakistan team had a practice session at the Dhaka Stadium yesterday afternoon.

Meanwhile, two other participants — India and Sri Lanka — will arrive in the capital at midnight tomorrow.

PAKISTAN SQUAD

M Rameez Raja, M Sajed Ali, Ghulam Ali, Zahid Fazal, Ijaz Ahmed (jr), Mohammad Hamid, Zafar Iqbal, Naeem Ashraf, Mohsin Kamal, Aamer Naser, Hasnain Karim, Nadeem Khan, Saqlain Mushtaq and Raheeq Ali.

The officials are: Nasimul Ghani (manager), Eric Johnson (assistant manager) and Shakil Khan (umpire).

Ataul Huq Mullick's training as a football referee served him well as the infinitely familiar figure in country's sports arena celebrated his recent selection as one of the three local umpires for the SAARC tournament by running across the turf after a group of irate cricket fans chased him up at the Dhankondi Cricket Stadium yesterday during Bangladesh national cricket team's trial match.

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