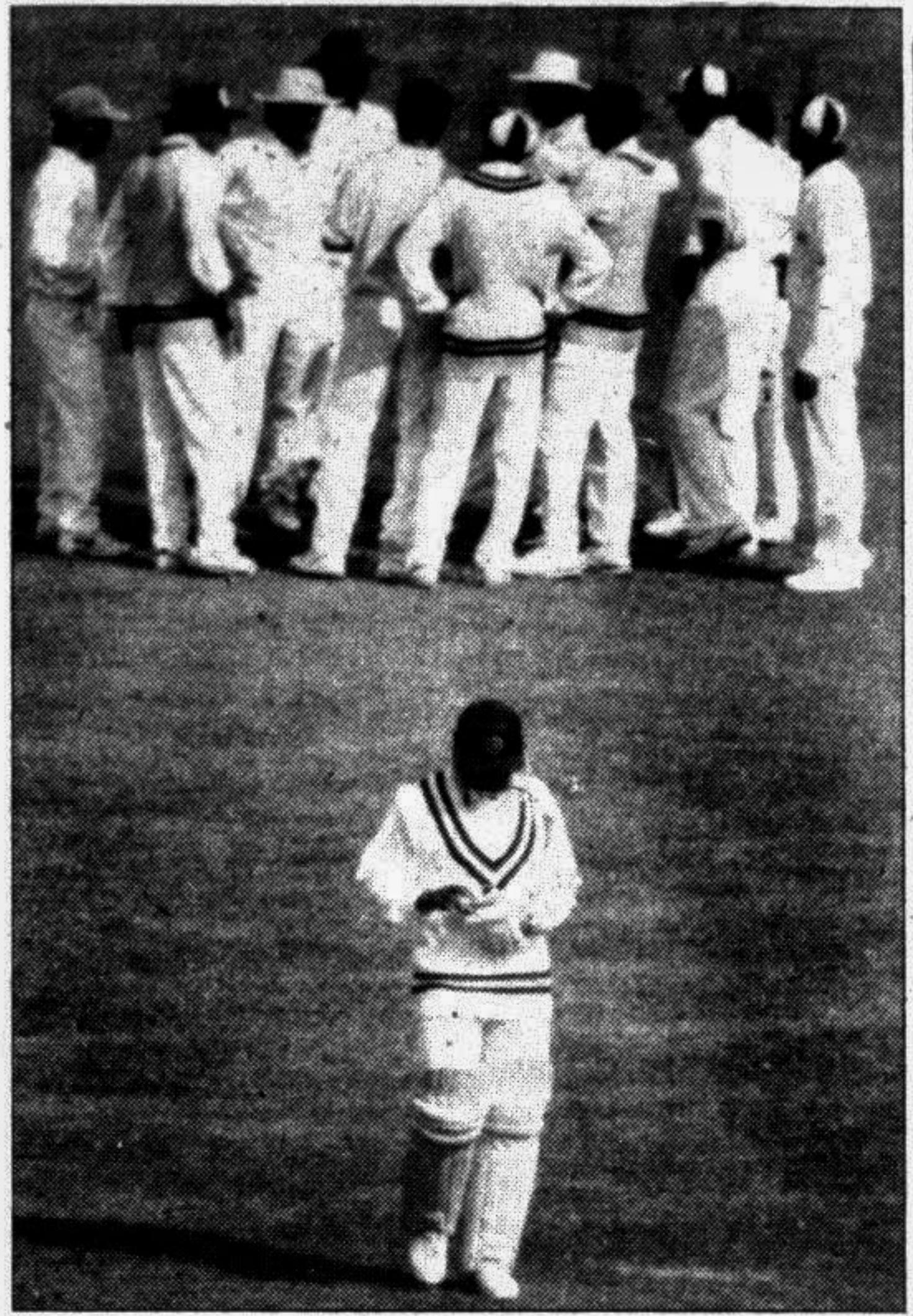
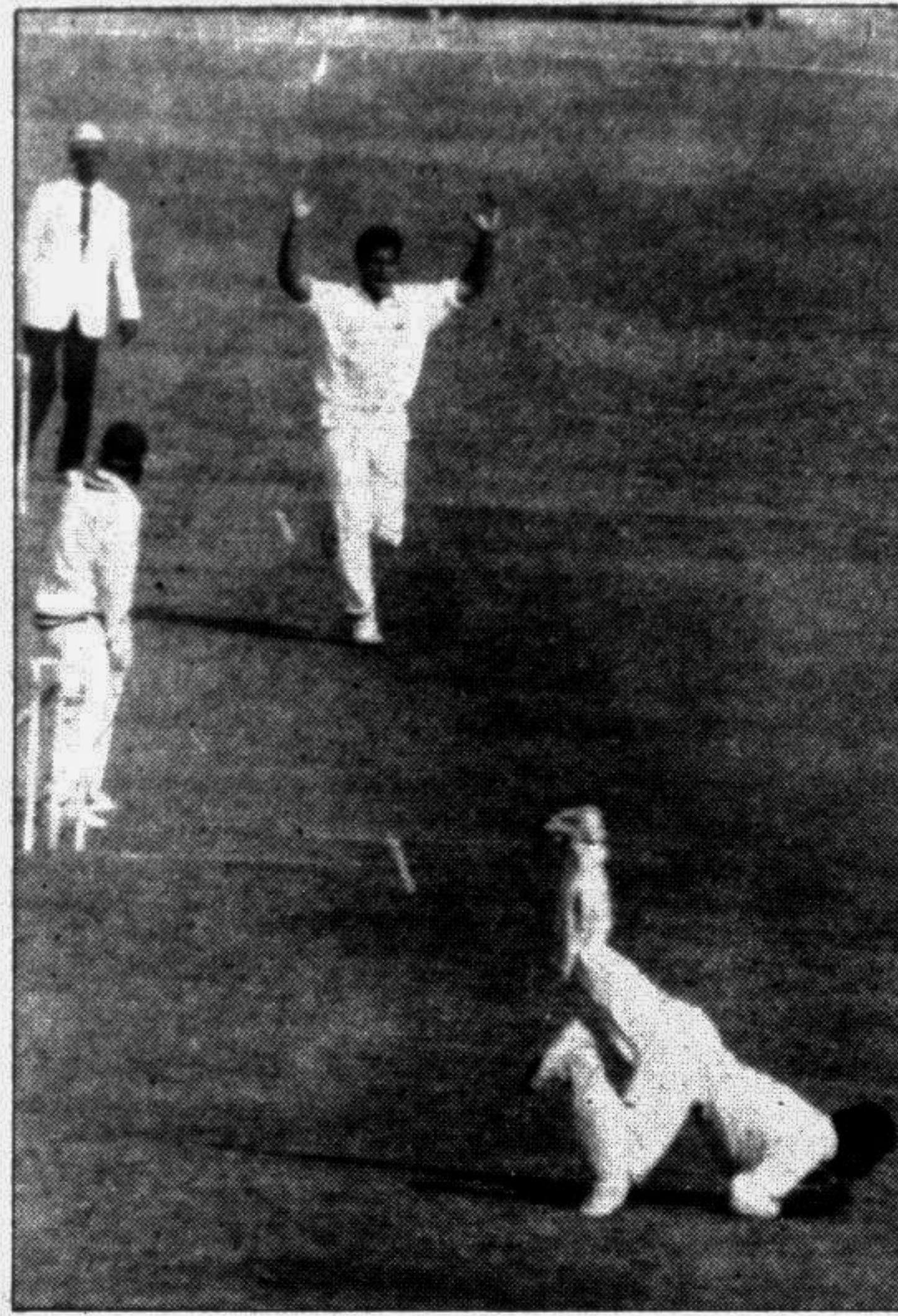


## Sport



**IN DOUBT ONE MOMENT AND OUT THE NEXT:** Bangladesh opener Jahangir Alam is all awe and anxiety as the Pakistani wicketkeeper Rifaqat completes a catch behind the wicket off Mohsin Kamal's bowling. Only moments later the gutsy opener was set on the long trudge back to the pavilion as up went the dreaded finger with the Pakistani players huddling behind him in celebration of an encouraging start in the SAARC cricket tournament opener at the Dhaka Stadium.

— Star photo

## Mayor Gold Cup soccer

CHITTAGONG, Dec 22: Regency Sports Club beat Rising Star Club 2-0 in the inaugural match of the first Mayor Gold Cup football tournament at the Chittagong Stadium here today, reports BSS.

The first half of the match was scoreless. Biplob Marma and Kaisar Hamid scored one each for the winners.

Regency comprising six players of Dhaka Mohammadan Sporting Club spoilt at least half a dozen chances.

Regency broke the deadlock in the 55th minute.

Two minutes later Regency completed the tally when Kaisar Hamid beat Rising custodian Shahadat with a spectacular header off a corner from Asad.

Twenty-two teams including Dhaka Abahani, Brothers Union and Mukti Joddha are participating in the tournament.

Earlier M Morshed Khan, Special Envoy to the Prime Minister, inaugurated the tournament as the chief guest. He was introduced to the players of both the teams before kickoff.

## Ajax win

Ajax Sporting Club defeated Farashganj SC by 2-0 goals in the only match of the metropolis Green Delta First Division hockey league at the Hockey Stadium yesterday, reports UNB.

After a barren first half, Khwaja Wais put the former champions ahead in the 50th minute utilizing a penalty corner. Moshar Salam Mukt added one field goal five minutes later to seal the victory.

In a one-sided match, Ajax managed five penalty corners and seven long corners while Farashganj got two short corners and a long corner.

## Nat'l shooting on

The 15th national shooting championship began at the Gulshan Shooting Range yesterday, reports UNB.

Vice president of the National Shooting Federation and secretary of the Land Ministry Abdul Muyeed Chowdhury formally opened the meet.

One hundred and seventy three shooters including 18 women representing 32 rifles and shooting clubs of the country are taking part in the competition.

## National karate begins

The national karate competition began at the Mirpur Indoor Stadium here yesterday, reports BSS.

Director General of the Bangladesh Rifles Major General Mohammad Anwar Hossain, who is also the president of Bangladesh Judo and Karate Federation, inaugurated the two-day meet.

## Fed Cup b'ball

Dhanketu Club registered a 53-48 victory over Dhaka Wanderers Club in the opening match of the Purabi General Insurance 7th Federation Cup basketball tournament at the NSC wooden floor gymnasium yesterday, reports UNB.

Managing Director of Purabi General Insurance Company, the sponsor of the tournament, Hashmat Ali inaugurated the meet.

The winners led the first half 27-22.

## Lost yes, defeated no

Sports Reporter

Bangladesh cricketers went down fighting by one wicket against Pakistan in the inaugural match of the SAARC cricket tournament at the Dhaka Stadium yesterday.

Although the second national squad of one-day world champions Pakistan was smitten upon by the lady luck at the end of the day, it was the young and relatively inexperienced hosts, who emerged psychological and moral victors of a gripping drama that fittingly climaxed in the finale.

Chasing 168 for an outright win from 50 overs, Pakistan, who had convalesced considerably from a jumpy start, suddenly discovered themselves in great danger of losing a match, irrespective of its statistical significance to an ICC associate member — the ultimate ignominy for a major Test-playing nation.

It was truly near as dammit.



EJAZ AHMED... m-o-m pitch that behaved inconsistently.

Although Aminul Islam and others intermittently played a few elegant, authoritative strokes, the top half perished by nibbling at deliveries that were better left alone and the Pakistani wicketkeeper enjoyed his tenure behind the stumps picking up four catches and went to top with a stumping later.

From five down for 62 Bangladesh were salvaged to some extent by skipper Akram Khan and left-handed Enamul Huq.

Allrounder Enam, who later bore a hand to dead-lift Bangladesh in the afternoon, remained unbeaten on 43 made of 85 balls including a massive sixer over long on — the day's only overboundary and two fours.

On his debut as the captain Akram, the big right-hander batted with restraint to contribute 90-ball 37 including three boundaries in a 73 run partnership. His vigilance came to an end when Ejaz Ahmed, in an object lesson for off-spinners bowling in the slog overs, spun one short down the leg side and a charging Akram Khan was rendered helpless like a child to Rifaqat, who effected an easy stumping.

As it is the case with every close result, yesterday's match too was replete with many should-have-beens and could-have-beens.

After a heady concoction of a tricky wicket, inspired bowling and little impatience on the part of the top order batsman had reduced Pakistan to 61 for four in 18 overs, a vital 89-run partnership for the fifth wicket toned down the soaring Bangladeshi spirit.

The recovery operation was conducted by man-of-the-match Ejaz Ahmed, who fell two short of a well-deserved

Man-of-the-match: Ejaz Ahmed (jr) Pakistan

Result: Pakistan won by one wicket.

**Bowling:** O M R W  
Amir Nazir 9 2 38 1  
Mohsin Kamal 6 0 26 2  
Naeem Ashraf 10 0 34 1  
Nadeem Khan 8 2 16 1  
Saqlain Mushtaq 10 0 22 1  
Ejaz Ahmed (jr) 7 1 17 2

**Fall of wickets:** 1-16; 2-28; 3-46; 4-62; 5-62; 6-135; 7-156; 8-163.

**Bowling:** O M R W

Rameez Raja c & b Anisur Rahman 11

Akram Khan st Rifaqat Ali 37

Enamul Haq not out 43

Md Rifaqat c Zahid Fazal 07

b Ejaz (jr) 01

Saqlain Islam c Mohsin Kamal 01

b Sajal 00

Did not bat: Anisur Rahman 00

Extras: (b-9, lb-5, nb-9, w-8) 31

Total: (for 8 wkt in 50 overs) 167

**Fall of wickets:** 1-16; 2-28; 3-46; 4-62; 5-62; 6-135; 7-156; 8-163.

**Bowling:** O M R W

Rameez Raja c & b Anisur Rahman 01

Sajid Ali c Jahangir 10

b Anisur Rahman 16

Gholam Ali c Akram Khan 16

b Sajal 16

Zahid Fazal c Aminul Islam 19

b Enamul Haq 48

Ejaz Ahmed (jr) c Enamul Haq 48

b Rifaqat 44

Rifaqat Ali lbw 00

b Sajal Chowdhury 00

Nadeem Khan b Rifaqat Ali 00

Saqlain Mushtaq c Jahangir 00

b Anisur Rahman 10

Mohsin Kamal not out 2

Amir Nazir not out 00

Extras: (b-1, lb-4, nb-3, w-10) 18

Total: (for 9 wkt in 50 overs) 168

**Fall of wickets:** 1-4; 2-20; 3-49; 4-61; 5-150; 6-155; 7-155; 8-155; 9-167.

**Bowling:** O M R W

Sajal Chowdhury 10 1 32 2

Anisur Rahman 8 0 29 3

Saqlain Mushtaq 10 3 24 1

Enamul Haq 10 2 33 1

Mohammed Rafeeq 8 1 31 2

Naimur Rahman 4 0 14 0

**Man-of-the-match:** Ejaz Ahmed (jr) Pakistan

Result: Pakistan won by one wicket.

**RUN SCORING PATTERN**

**Bangladesh Pakistan A**

After 5 overs 19/1 16/1

After 10 overs 42/2 35/2

After 15 overs 56/3 50/3

After 20 overs 65/5 64/4

After 25 overs 83/5 78/4

After 30 overs 92/5 97/4

After 35 overs 107/5 131/4

After 40 overs 121/5 147/4

After 45 overs 137/6 156/8

After 50 overs 167/8 168/9

**TODAY'S MATCH**

India A vs Sri Lanka A

**Revnice's Martina**

REVNICE, Czech Republic

Dec 22: Martina Navratilova, the Czech-born tennis legend, was on Wednesday proclaimed honorary citizen of this small town where she began her tennis career, reports AFP.

Her parents still live in the town of 3000 population just south of Prague, where in 1960 she played tennis for the first time on the local club's clay courts.

Navratilova, who won 55

Grand Slam titles and who

reigned as world number one

for a record 332 consecutive

weeks back in 1982, was still

ranked eighth when she made

an emotional farewell at the

WTA's end-of-season champion-

ships at Madison Square Garden.

## Great game, great gesture

By Al Amin

"It is the greatest moment of my life," said Akram Khan, the newly-appointed skipper of the Bangladesh team which went down fighting gamely by one wicket against pre-tournament favourites Pakistan in the inaugural match of the SAARC cricket competition at the Dhaka Stadium yesterday.

Akram's words simply echoed the feelings of the country's cricket lovers, who never saw their side get so close to beating Pakistan in its history. Left-arm seamer Anisur Rahman showed we are sporting above everything and if we win we like it fair and square.

With Pakistan needing one run from the last ball for a victory with one wicket in hand, Anis just warned the batsman at the bowlers' end when he could have simply whipped the balls up and enforce a tie, setting another example of sportsmanship a la Courtney Walsh, who did the same at a similar situation and incidentally against the same country in the 1987 World Cup.

"To be honest, it is a victory for Bangladesh. They have beaten us in every respect," said Nasimul Ghani, the manager of the Pakistan team, who was all praise for the hosts' valiant fightback.

I must convey my heartfelt felicitation to your left-arm seamer (Anis) who set a perfect example of sportsmanship, something I have never seen in my life," Ghani said.

Ghani further added: "Our boys didn't perform up to expectations and I'm especially disappointed with the recognised batsmen.

"We cannot afford to lose in our next two matches," said a defeated Ghani.

But Rameez Raja, the skipper of the Pakistani team, was more open about the outcome of the match, saying, "We may have won but it is a moral victory for Bangladesh."

For those, especially the reporters of the internationally-acclaimed news dailies like Hindu and Divina, who for a moment, forgot cricket's age-old adage, it was a pleasant reminder that a game is not over until the last ball is bowled. With all of them halfway through their reports predicting a facile victory for the Pakistanis, the local boys fought back and made the wise lot re-assess their works.

Not only for them, but also for the cricket lovers, who have developed a tendency of foretelling any game's future with a great many lopsided match-ups taking place, our boys, who haven't yet got the Test status, provided a lot of space to change their outlook.

Well done boys, well done cricket.

Rain interrupted the Sri Lanka innings at 75 for four and again at 101 for five. Two hours play were lost and their eventual adjusted target was 184 in 30 overs.

They never really got going, after man-of-the-match Chris Matthews captured three wickets in the opening 12 overs of their innings.

He had Roshan Mahanama well caught in the gully by Clive Eksteen for three, Sanath Jayasuriya spectacularly caught.

Sunny sworn in

BOMBAY, Dec 22: Indian cricketer Sunil Gavaskar, who beat Don Bradman's record of 29 centuries in Test cricket in 1983 to enter the Guinness Book of World Records, was sworn in as Sheriff of Bombay on Thursday, reports Reuter.

Gavaskar, the 99