



Finance Minister M Saifur Rahman, who was the chief guest on the concluding day of the three-day national workshop on sports policy, deliberating a short but very significant address to the audience at the Engineers Institute yesterday.

Biman, Ansars Karnaphuli TT champs

Sports Reporter
Bangladesh Biman and Ansars bagged both the men's and women's team events of the 20th Karnaphuli national table tennis tournament at the NSC wooden floor gymnasium yesterday.

In the men's team final, the Biman paddlers white washed Naogaon 3-0.

They advanced to final trouncing Ansars and Chittagong respectively, by identical three-nil margins.

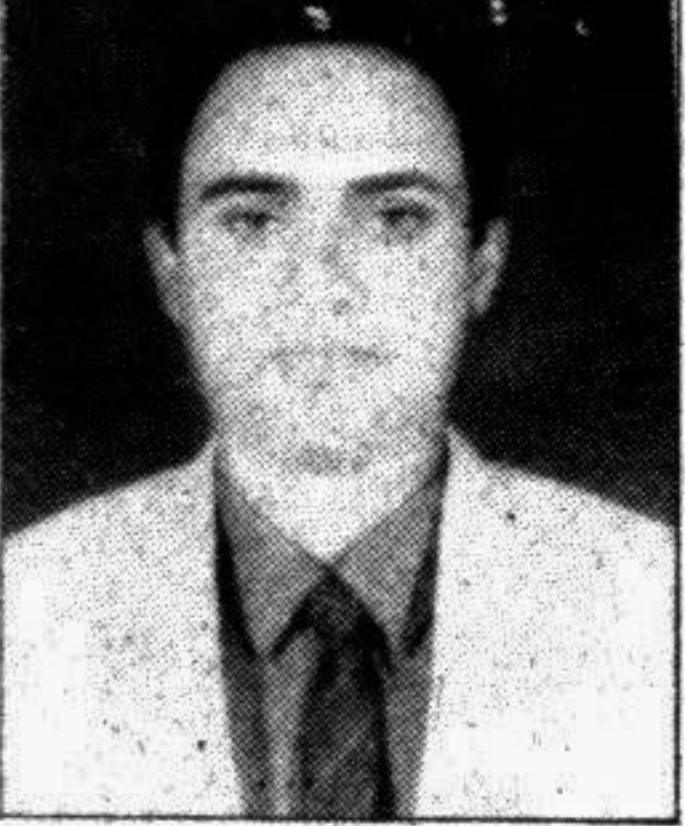
Earlier, Bangladesh Ansars blanked Barguna 3-0 in women's team final.

On their way to the final, Ansars demolished Khulna in straight sets and Barguna knocked off Gaibandha 3-1.

Dhaka clinched the boy's team crown beating Madaripur 3-2.

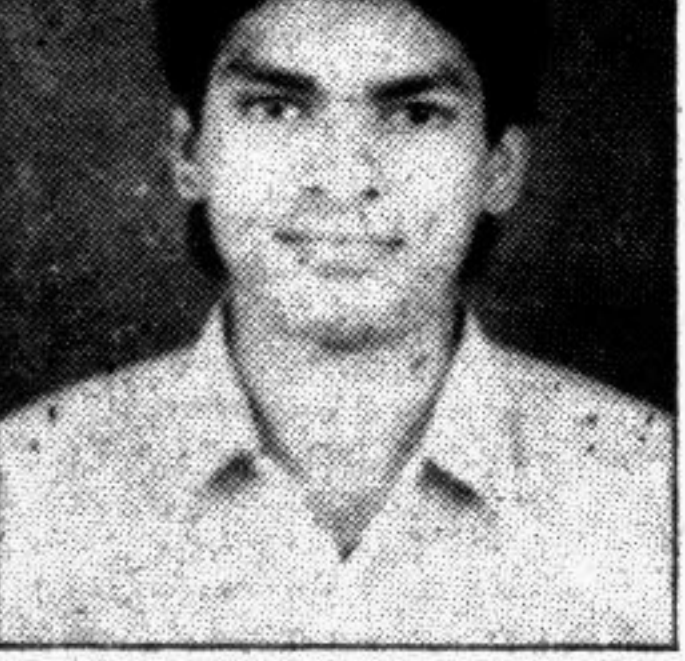
Imtiaz, Akhlaq earn FIBA badge

Two Bangladesh referees — Imtiaz Khan Babul, Syed Akhlaqur Hossain — were awarded FIBA referees' licence according to an Asian Basketball Federation fax message.



IMTIAZ KHAN

sage received in Dhaka on Sunday at the Bangladesh Amateur Basketball Federation office, says a press release.



AKHLAQR HOSSAIN

Imtiaz and Akhlaq took part in the ABC/FIBA referees' exams and clinic held in Bangkok from March 23rd to 27th. They became the third Bangladesh basketball referees to earn the FIBA badge. Earlier last year, BABF general secretary Mainul Ahsan Manju had the distinction of being the first Bangladeshi referee to earn the FIBA badge.

Both Imtiaz and Akhlaq played regularly in the First Division basketball league for a number of years. They began their career in 1985. These two referees got their 'B' grade referee licence in 1990 and 'A' grade licence in 1994.

Imtiaz and Akhlaq have been officiating in the national championship and in different tournaments with great efficiency.

Army hockey

JESSORE, Apr 18: Hosts Jessore, Bogra, Savar and Chittagong area moved into semi-finals of the Army Hockey Championship at the Jessore Cantonment here today, an ISPR press release said, reports BSS.

Bogra Area emerged as champions in Group-A followed by Chittagong Area who became runners-up in the group. In Group-B, hosts Jessore Area came out as champions while Savar Area became runners-up.

Nat'l sports workshop ends

The three-day national sports workshop ended yesterday at the Engineers Institute with the participants deliberating on the problems in the sports arena and giving suggestions for their solution, reports BSS.

Earlier, Prime Minister Begum Khaleda Zia opened the workshop at the Osmany Memorial Hall on April 16.

Six key-note papers were presented in six sessions of the workshop during the three-day.

Fifty four sports organisers participated in the discussions, giving their views. Eminent sports personalities, organisers, president and secretaries of different sports federations, president and general secretaries of the district sports associations and others related with sports attended the workshop.

Finance Minister M Saifur Rahman was the chief guest at the concluding session yesterday, presided over by the State Minister for Youth and Sports Sadeque Hossain.

Speaking on the occasion, the Finance Minister said, "Investment in sports is investment in human resources to make life better in Bangladesh."

He said, "Sports pursuit is better than politics sportsmen will not be self-seeking politicians." Rather, he said "they can be good politicians."

Saifur Rahman said sports and games was a part of developing human resources. A congenial atmosphere has to be created to increase amity among the youths of the country so that they keep them away from indulging in violent activities, he emphasised.

The Finance Minister added nothing could be achieved in sports and games without training and practice. He said consistency in practice gives perfection in everything.

He said the government was quite conscious about the needs in the sports sector and allocation was increased adequately. He also called for private sector initiative for the promotion of the country's sports.

In the presidential speech Sadeque Hossain emphasised the need for proper training and practice for the development of sports.

He said, "No one is born famous in the world. Appropriate training and practice have helped them become so."

He said mere establishment of infrastructural facilities for sports will not be sufficient for raising the standard of sports. Each one of us has to put in our best in this regard.

Sadeque Hossain said, "Winning a medal in a competition is not everything," adding, he said, "One can shape himself up as a true human being through sports activities."

Presenting the key-note paper on 'sports facilities, finance and other related matters' Mohammed Helaluddin Ahmed, joint secretary in charge of the Ministry of Youth and Sports said, "Development of infrastructural facilities for sports and adequate funding play a great role in the promotion of sports in a country."

He said competition in the present day world has increased as advancement in technique and technology is making the old ways obsolete.

Neuro Surgeon Dr Rashiduddin Ahmed, Prof Shamunuzzaman Basunia, Dr Abbasuddin Khan, Mr Nurul Alam, Kazi Mishu and Khairul Alam Pearu among others spoke.

Earlier, in the morning Hafizuddin Ahmed MP presented his key-note paper on "administration of sports in school, college and university."

Hafizuddin said sports and games should run in a very planned way at the educational sector as practised in the developed countries.

He stressed the need of identifying talented athletes during their student life and put in best effort to increase their quality through proper training.

Presided over by the Education Secretary Ershadul Haq, the morning session was participated, among others, by Major (ret'd) Aminul Islam, Zafar Imam, Abdul Hye, Khairul Islam Khan, Ms Lutfunnessa Haq Bakul, Manzoor Hassan Mintoo, Rasiduddin Ahmed and Saima Rupa.

Windies XI-Aussie tie drawn

BASSETERRE, St Kitts, Apr 18: Otis Gibson staked his claim for a place in the West Indies side to tour England this year with a fine all-round performance for the Board XI against Australia in their three-day match ending on Monday, reports Reuter.

The match finished in a draw with the West Indies Board XI 253 for six in their second innings when play ended an hour early.

Gibson followed his first innings score of 55 batting at number 10 with four for 45 in Australia's first innings 317.

Opener Robert Samuels also advanced his four chances with a disciplined 95 in the second innings against a lacklustre Australian attack as the match dawdled to a draw.

The Board XI proved as polished and focused as the tourists appeared ragged and disinterested on the final day.

Resuming at 278 for five in reply to the Board XI's 261, the Australians crumbled against some fine fast bowling from Gibson and Antiguan Hamish Anthony, who took four for 70.

The tourists lost five wickets while adding just 39 runs to finish 317 all out during the first session. Test discard Sherwin Campbell hit 53 in a first wicket partnership of 135 with Samuels.

First drop Keith Semple (39) was the only other top order batsman to get amongst the runs on an afternoon when Australian captain Mark Taylor decided to have a brief stint behind the stumps, an Australian supporter doubled as 12th man and Michael Slater failed to baffle the opposition with his leg spinners.

Justin Langer also had a bowl, but spent the majority of time behind the stumps standing in for Test wicketkeeper Ian Healy who injured a finger on his right hand in the first session on Monday.

"I got one on the end of the finger in the third over of our innings today," Healy said. "But there's nothing to worry about. It'll be fine."

SCOREBOARD
Scoreboard at close on Monday, the third and final day of the three-day match between the West Indies Board XI and Australia.

WEST INDIES BOARD XI:
First Innings 261 (Nehemiah Perry 57, Otis Gibson 55; Tim May four for 73)
AUSTRALIA: First Innings (overnight 278 for five)
David Boon lbw b Anthony 28
Mark Waugh not out 30
Ian Healy lbw b Gibson 3
Paul Reiffel lbw b Anthony 4

Navy cricket
CHITTAGONG, Apr 18: The annual cricket championship of the Bangladesh Navy concluded at the BN Sports Complex at New Mooring in Chittagong yesterday.



A goalmouth melee during yesterday's Phoenix Insurance national women's handball tournament match between Bangladesh Ansars and Rangpur at the Dhanmondi Women's Sports Complex. Ansars won 19-11.

Pepsi nat'l cricket Rajshahi stun Mymensingh

Sports Reporter
Rajshahi caused an upset on the opening day of the 21st Pepsi national cricket championship when they eliminated mighty Mymensingh DSA by five wickets in one of the two matches played at different venues in the city yesterday.

On the eastern strip at the Dhanmondi Cricket Stadium, Rajshahi set to score a modest 147 for a win in the stipulated 45 overs, reached the target for the loss of five wickets with more than four overs to spare.

The Rajshahi innings was built around a brilliant 50 from opener Nayan, who clubbed six fours in his 74-ball knock. Mati with chipped in with a sedate 86-ball 34 while skipper Saad hammered an unbeaten 20 to announce the premature exit of Mymensingh.

Earlier, electing to bat, the star-studded Mymensingh were bundled out for a meagre 146 in 41.1 overs with Moniruzzaman scoring 45.

Opener Harunur Rashid Linton, who played for Abahani Krira Chakra in the Dhaka league made 22 while Mahabubur Rahman Selim scored a painstaking 17 off 42 balls.

Tariq, the most successful Rajshahi bowler, finished with three for 20 in his seven overs.

In the other match of the day at the Dhaka Stadium, Jessore recorded a facile six-wicket win over Barisal in yet another low-scoring affair.

After winning the toss and using the wicket, Barisal could muster only 160 before being all out in 44 overs.

In reply, Jessore rattled up the required 161 for four in 41.2 overs with Hassan scoring an unbeaten 50.

Biplob, who played the perfect lobe of Hassan, also remained unbeaten on a 56-ball 44 while opener with a patient 40 was the other notable run-getter for the winners.

Phoenix eves' handball semis today

Sports Reporter
Bangladesh Ansars and Bangladesh Jute Mills Corporation (BJMC) moved into the last four after emerging group champions in the Phoenix Insurance national women's handball tournament at the Dhanmondi Women's Sports Complex yesterday.

In the semifinals billed for today, Ansars will take on Dhaka while BJMC will meet Rangpur.

In one of the three matches, Ansars beat Rangpur 19-11 after leading the first half 9-5.

BJMC edged past Dhaka District Women's Sports Association 10-8 after trailing 3-4 in the first half.

In the day's other encounter, Rajshahi trounced Dinajpur 13-4.

Bruising Rio derby

RIO DE JANEIRO, Apr 18: Five players and a coach were sent off and nine players shown the yellow card in a brutal Rio de Janeiro derby at the weekend, reports Reuter.

Botafogo beat Flamengo 1-0 with striker Guga coming on as a substitute, scoring the winner and then joining the dismissals, all in the space of 10 minutes.

The result put Botafogo three points ahead of Flamengo at the top of the final stage of the Rio de Janeiro Championship.

Flamengo, missing injured striker Romario, lost winger Savio, their most dangerous player, in the fifth minute when he was taken off injured after a scything tackle by Botafogo defender Wilson.

Botafogo full back Jefferson and Flamengo defender Fabinho were dismissed early in the second half when they squared up after a foul by Fabinho and Flamengo coach Vanderley Luxemburgo was sent off for dissent.

Guga was sent off for clashing with Flamengo defender Valber, who was also shown the red card, and Botafogo defender Wilson Gottardo was dismissed in the last minute for a bad tackle on Flamengo substitute Mauricio.

There were numerous other vicious tackles, some of which earned the perpetrators yellow cards, many of which went up punished.

Referee Claudio Cerdeira said that Luxemburgo had called him a "mental retard" while Guga described Valber as a crook after he had been sent off.

Keane sorry

MANCHESTER, Apr 18: Disgraced Manchester United midfielder Roy Keane on Friday publicly apologised for the stamping incident that looks set to cost him an FA Cup final appearance, reports Reuter.

M United owe Walsh one

LONDON, Apr 18: Paul Walsh threw Manchester United a title lifeline as rivals City stunned Blackburn Rovers 3-2 on Monday providing the Ewood Park miracle Alex Ferguson had been praying for, reports AFP.

Alan Shearer's 35th goal of the campaign after a dreadful howler by Tony Cotton looked set to move Blackburn eight points clear of United with just four matches left.

Even when an astonishing decision by referee Keith Cooper handed City a penalty which Keith Curle converted with ease, Colin Hendry's second goal in three days put Blackburn back in front before the interval.

But Uwe Rosler's beautifully executed 21st goal of the season deservedly put the relegation-threatened Maine Road side back on terms before the hour.

And with Rovers' raw nerves exposed Walsh stroked home a rebound 19 minutes from time to hand Kenny Dalglish's men only their second home Premiership defeat of the campaign and leave them needing eight more points from their last four outings.

United's goalless draw with Chelsea had left Alex Ferguson hoping for divine intervention but providence seemed to be on Rovers' side after just seven minutes.

Curle's seventh minute back pass to Cotton seemed straightforward enough, even though Chris Sutton was bearing down on the City keeper.

But Cotton made a complete mess of his clearance, scuffing the ball straight at Shearer and even though the England man's first-timer from 25 yards was not his best of the season, it had enough power to elude Cotton's dive and finish in the corner.

A brave block from Alan Kernaghan denied Shearer a second on the volley from

Stuart Ripley's cross but it soon became clear City were not content merely to make up the numbers.

Tim Flowers had to be at his best to turn aside a searing free-kick from Fitzroy Simpson and when Kernaghan flicked on Nicky Summerbee's resulting corner, Flowers was relieved to watch Jeff Kenna head off the line.

City, with Niall Quinn making even Hendry look less than masterful at the back, were causing plenty of problems but their 32nd minute equaliser was certainly controversial.

When referee Cooper blew as Flowers fumbled Summerbee's cross from the right it appeared he had given Rovers a free-kick.

Instead, to the consternation of the Ewood Park crowd, the official had spotted Ian Pearce tugging Quinn's shorts as he jumped for the cross and Curle tucked home the spot-kick with aplomb.

That was the spur Rovers needed to up their game. A superb turn from Sutton was followed by a shot which whistled past the post and then Mark Atkins headed off target from Ripley.

And six minutes before the break, Ripley's corner from

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ALEX FERGUSON

Bayern, Ajax clash today

AMSTERDAM, Apr 18: Two giants of the 1970s will attempt to recapture past glories on Wednesday as Ajax Amsterdam take on Bayern Munich for a place in the European Cup final, reports Reuter.

The two clubs, who between them won Europe's premier cup competition six times in succession from 1971 to 1976, played out a goalless first leg in Munich a fortnight ago, making Ajax favourites to reach the final for the first time in 22 years.

The Amsterdam club, who have a seven-point lead in the Dutch First Division, have played 477 minutes in the European Champions' Cup since last conceding a goal.

While Bayern continue to be plagued by long-term injuries to several key players, including skipper Lothar Matthaeus, French striker Jean-Pierre Papin and Bulgarian international Emil Kostadinov, Ajax have no injury worries.

The only absentee will be free-kick specialist Frank de Boer, out through suspension after picking up his second yellow card of the tournament in the first leg. The Dutch international defender will be replaced by Winston Bogarde.

Finnish striker Jari Litmanen and veteran Frank Rijkaard return after being rested for Sunday's 4-2 league win at Groningen. Teenager Patrick Kluijvert, who scored twice in that match, vies for the central striking role with Nwankwo Kanu.

Ajax, who had much the better of the first leg against a largely inexperienced German side, expect a similar pattern on Wednesday, with Bayern defending and hoping to capitalise on the counter-attack.

"We need to be alert to a quick break. If they score one, we have to score two. But we're averaging two or more goals at home this season," Ajax coach Louis van Gaal said.

Ajax, bidding to record their 100th win in European competition, have smashed eight past Sparta Rotterdam and seven against Willem II in league matches in the last month.

"It's easier to play defensive soccer than to attack. That's why so many coaches opt for defence," Van Gaal said. "We play seven men in front of the ball, the rest of the world plays with just three. May be Bayern will play just one in front."

Bayern coach Giovanni Trapattoni remains confident his side can still reach the final, boosted by their 5-2 win over Eintracht Frankfurt on Saturday.

But club president Franz Beckenbauer warned: "Ajax is a different calibre from ... Frankfurt. But Frankfurt was a good game for us. I'm much more optimistic now about Wednesday's game in Amsterdam."

Stand-in Libero Thomas Helmer, who was substituted midway through the first half on Saturday, is set to retain his place, and defender Oliver Kreuzer is fit after a knee ligament injury.

Defender Hansi Pflueger, 35, a member of Germany's 1990 World Cup squad who last played European football in 1991, travels to Amsterdam and may make a surprise comeback.

The Dutch ANP news agency said around 400 police would be on duty at the Olympic Stadium, a normal precaution against trouble at Ajax's bigger games.

A Honduran apology

DOHA, Apr 18: A Honduran player, one of four sent off in a World Youth Championship match, apologised on Monday for the "very bad behaviour" of his team, reports Reuter.

"Our behaviour was very bad and as Hondurans we are very sorry for what happened," said defender Luis Lagos who was sent off in the 73rd minute of Sunday's match against Netherlands.

Japanese referee Masayoshi Okada declared Netherlands the winners 7-1 in the 77th minute after Honduras were reduced to six players when Luis Osegueria was stretched over the field.

Alex Bailey was the first to be sent off in the 17th minute followed by Orvin Cabrera in the 45th and Hector Rodriguez in the 70th minute.

According to FIFA, Sunday's incident was the first time a match had been halted in such circumstances.

FIFA officials promised an inquiry after Sunday's incident and Honduran coach Luis Camargo said his players would be punished by the Honduran Football Association.

"I apologise to the Dutch and the people here for what happened Monday night," said Camargo on Sunday.



Ansars' Rinu makes a forehand return against Shamama of Barguna during their singles encounter in the best of three team event final of the 20th Karnaphuli national table tennis championships at the NSC wooden floor gymnasium yesterday.