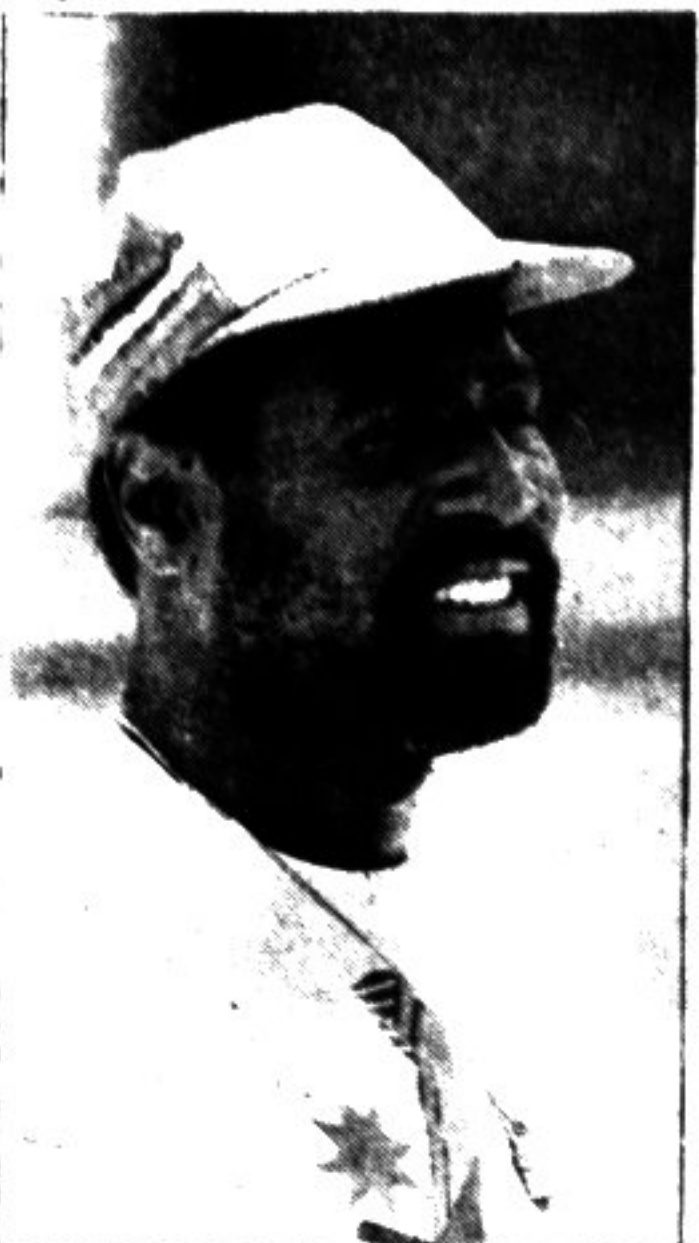


Column One SPORTS TALK



Vivian Richards (West Indian batting legend) "If I had to ask someone to play an innings for my life, it would be Javed Miandad" (On Javed Miandad)

DID U' KNOW? (The Professor does)

THAT cricket scribes a tribe are a hard-headed lot. From their privileged seats in the press-box, they dissect the happenings in the middle, magnify human failings, stress on errors of strategy, compare the present with the past and trade statements that are invariably cautions and qualified. Praise, when it comes, is miserly and measured.

A mere report or review is raised to the level of literature. For instance, a London newspaper in 1888 portrayed Dr William Gilbert Grace thus: "Bright phoebus Apollo (occasionally as the sun) swing high in the bending gloom, imparting a full flood of mellow, warmth and shedding a stream of golden glory over the level green as W. G. Grace, swing out of the tent, with his bat under his arm, resembling nothing so much as an Assyrian monarch on the frieze of an ancient entablature."

Sports WHIZZ KID COMPETITION FOR SCHOOLCHILDREN

Table with 5 rows of quiz questions and answers related to sports events and terminology.

Registration form for the Sports Whizz Kid competition, including fields for Name, Class, Roll No, School Address, and Phone.

Yamaha Div I cricket

Sports Reporter Bangladesh Boys Club posted a win in the ongoing Yamaha First Division cricket league with a two-wicket victory over Gopibagh Friends Association at the City Club ground yesterday.

BRIEF SCORES\* GOPIBAGH FA: 138 in 42.1 overs (Azim 45, Saad 18, Sumit 5/28) BANGLADESH BOYS: 139 for eight in 44.4 overs (Nasim 35, Sumit 26).

Acme Div II cricket

Sports Reporter Azad Sporting Club and Kathalbagan Green Cricket Club won their respective Acme Second Division cricket super league matches on Thursday.

BRIEF SCORES AZAD SC: 208 for five in 40 overs (Adil 66, Jashim 35, n.o., Rabi 28) NAWABGANJ EVERGREEN: 200 in 40 overs (Ashiq 68, Nirmal 34) NIRMAN XI: 138 in 31.1 overs (Sumon 47, Riad 4/16, Mithu 3/27)

KATHALBAGAN GCC: 143 for five in 29 overs (Riad 46, Taj 23, Sajal 2/7)

Luck smiles on E Bengal

CALCUTTA, Feb 8: Defending champions East Bengal kept their cool in the crucial stages to retain the IFA Shield with a thrilling 4-2 victory via tie-breaker over Dhaka Mohammedan Sporting at the Salt Lake stadium here today, reports PTI.

Both the teams were reduced to ten players as early as the seventh minute of the contest when East Bengal's star striker Baichung Bhutia and Mohammedan Sporting's Arman were given marching orders by referee Sagar Sen for rough play.

East Bengal, however, restored parity just two minutes before the long whistle as stopper back Ranjan Dey climaxed a combined move with a gentle placement inside the box, sending the East Bengal supporters into the frenzy.

Eskaton falter again

BRIEF SCORES ESKATON 88: 226 for nine in 50 overs (Pappu 64, Liton 44, Sanwar 40, Babu 4/31, Talha 3/32) GULSHAN YOUTH: 227 for four in 38.2 overs (Ripon 66, Arun Lal 49 n.o., Malhotra 27 n.o)

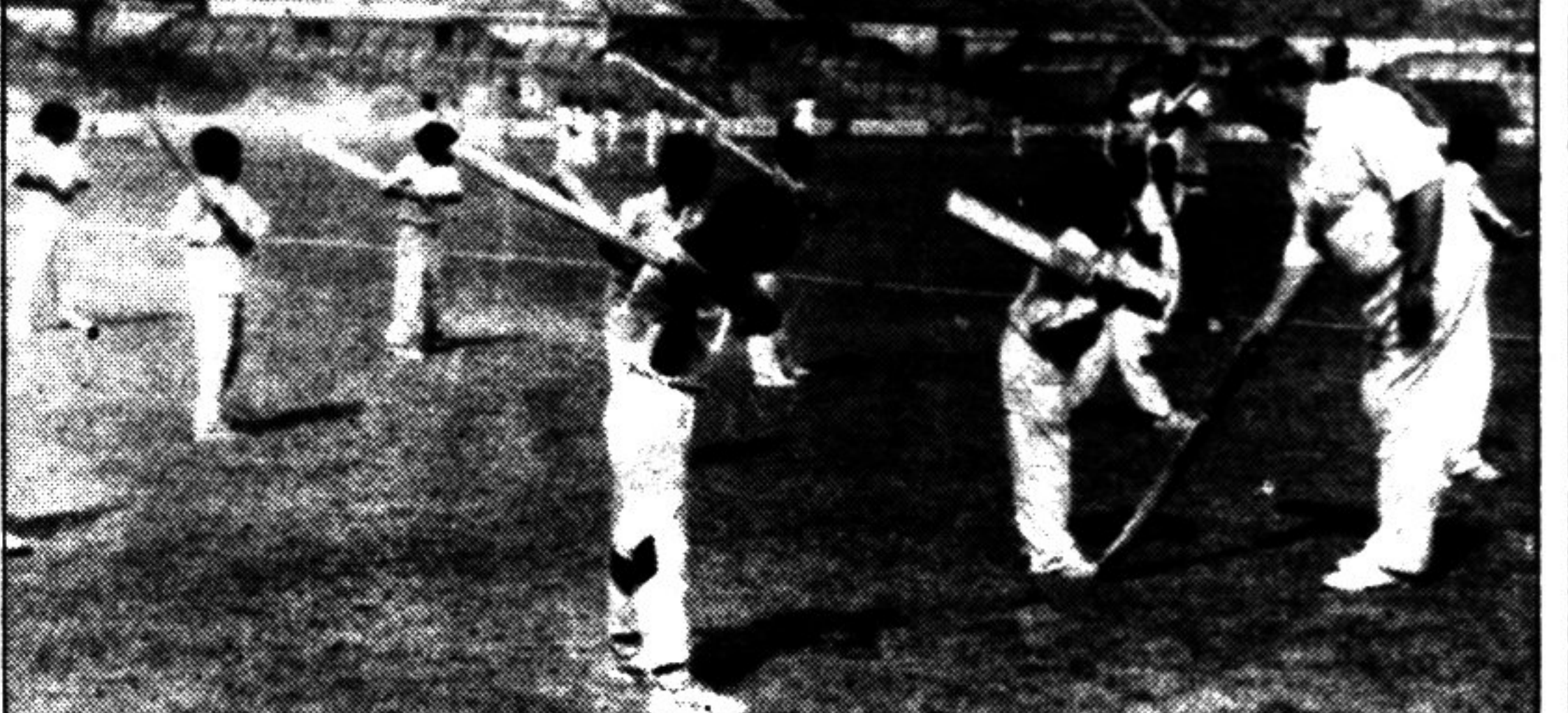
74 deliveries while skipper Sarwar Imran added 40 to Eskaton account. Gulshan's new bowler Saifuddin Ahmed Babu grabbed four wickets conceding 31 runs in eight overs while right-arm pacer Mohammad Talha took three wickets giving away 32 runs in ten overs.

off 63 balls while Malhotra remained unbeaten on 27 off 26 balls. With yesterday's match, the first phase of the 12-team elite league was completed with Mohammedan Sporting Club leading the table having 20 points from eleven matches.

Gulshan Youth Club recorded their fourth win in the Premier Division cricket league when they handed Eskaton Sabuj Sangha a six-wicket defeat at the Dhanmondi cricket stadium yesterday.

Chasing 226 to win in 50 overs, the Gulshan outfit took only 38.2 overs to reach the pinnacle losing only four wickets.

POINTS TABLE The Premier Division cricket league points table on completion of the first phase of the league.



John Jameson (extreme right) manager of the visiting MCC team gives some tips to the tiny-tots gathered for the under-12 cricket coaching camp at the Dhaka stadium yesterday. — Star photo

Craving against all odds

BOMBAY, Feb 8: New Zealand, who play England in the opening World Cup game next week, are confident of making the quarterfinals despite the absence of two stalwarts, team manager and coach Glen Turner said on Thursday.

"It is good to see the two bowlers Chris Harris and Deepak Patel back in the team," he said. Turner refused to comment on the controversy over Sri Lanka as a venue for World Cup matches following a bomb blast last week in the island capital Colombo that killed more than 80 people.

Australia and West Indies have refused to participate in the matches to be held in Sri Lanka on safety grounds. Lee Germon, the New Zealand captain, said the last couple of months had set up quite a few things for New Zealand cricket.

Cartoon strip titled 'Tribute to Rag Woolton, the cartoonist Sporting Sam' showing various sports-related scenes.

Sushmita's plea to Sachin

CALCUTTA, Feb 8: "Make India proud, Sachin" is the message of former Miss Universe, Miss Sushmita Sen for the Indian vice-captain Sachin Tendulkar just a few days before the opening ceremony of the Willis World Cup, reports PTI.

The beauty queen, who flew in here last night for rehearsals for the opening ceremony, felt that it was a great honour to take part in such an event.

Div II soccer Lalbagh relegated

Lalbagh Krira Chakra have almost confirmed their relegation from the Social Bank Second Division football league when Bashaboo Tarun Sangha inflicted the old-town outfit their tenth defeat at the Mirpur Stadium yesterday.

Progoti soccer Prantik's maiden defeat

Prantik Krira Chakra collapsed to their first defeat in the Progoti Insurance Third Division football league when Moghbazaar Kishalaya Sangha handed them a more goal defeat at the Rajuk ground adjacent to the Dhaka Stadium yesterday.

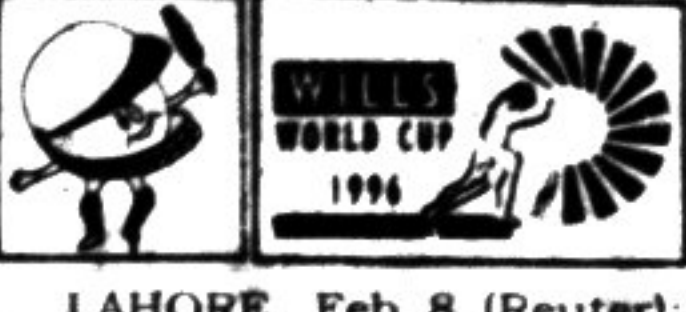
Incontrad v'ball semis today

Semifinal matches of Incontrad Inter-District Men and Women's volleyball championship will be held at the Dhaka volleyball stadium today, reports UNB.

Nat'l Jr snooker

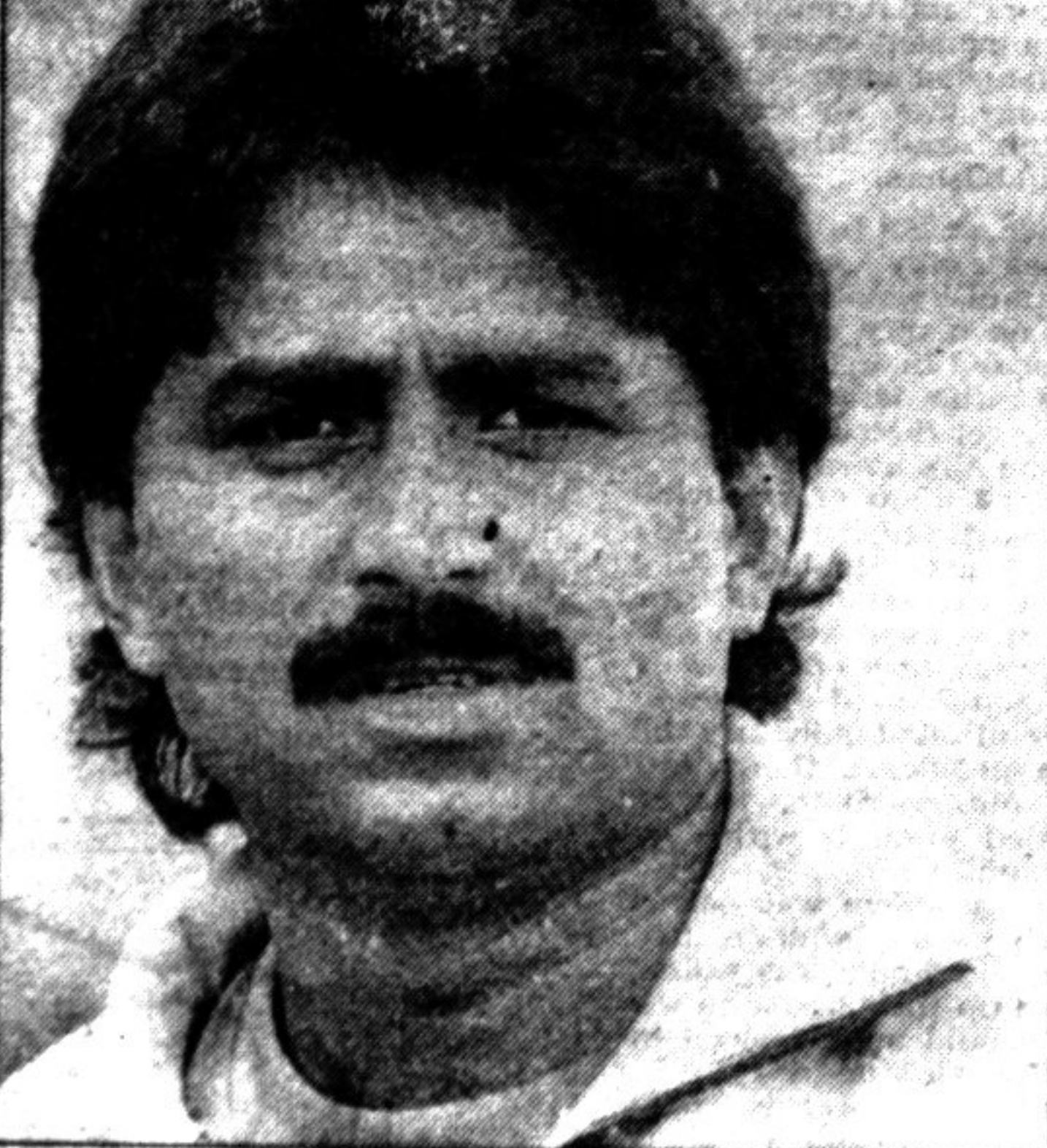
Naweed Al-Haq, a 12-year promising snooker player of Gulshan Club beat his clubmate Rahat Kamal 3-2 in the Ashok Leyland National Junior (U-21) snooker championship held at Gulshan Club billiards room Wednesday, says a press release.

Miandad gunning for the goodbye gift



LAHORE, Feb 8 (Reuters): Javed Miandad, one of the toughest competitors to step on to a cricket ground, pursues a final ambition in the sixth World Cup starting next week.

"I have conditioned myself mentally to put up with strains of top-class competition. I know it is going to be very difficult to make a successful comeback because there is a lot of pressure on me but I have always cherished challenges."



JAVED MIANDAD

Miandad also captained his country in 34 Tests spread over 11 series, winning 14 matches, losing six and drawing 14.

When Imran Khan retired after leading Pakistan to victory in the 1992 World Cup final at Melbourne, Miandad again took over the captaincy.

But after winning Test series in England and in New Zealand, he was dumped again as a captain in favour of Wasim Akram.

A new twist to his career came when he was ignored for the AustralAsia Cup in Sharjah in 1994 after earlier being dropped from the tour to New Zealand.

Saddened the deeply hurt over this humiliation, Miandad announced his retirement from international cricket but rescinded his decision when Prime Minister Benazir Bhutto personally persuaded him to change his mind.

Miandad says Pakistan has every chance of retaining the Cup. "There will no doubt be enormous pressure on our team because we are the defending champions and are playing in front of our own crowd. We have to sustain the pressure if we are to retain the title," he said.

Venue won't be switched

NEW DELHI, Feb 8: World Cup cricket organisers on Thursday rejected last-minute attempts to shift matches out of Sri Lanka, insisting Australia and West Indies must play there or forfeit the games, reports AFP.

But Zimbabwe, who play in Colombo on February 21, and Kenya, who play in Kandy on March 6, say they will go ahead as planned.

The International Cricket Council (ICC), the game's governing body, have called together officials from the three host nations and Australia, West Indies, Zimbabwe and Kenya for the meeting in Calcutta.

At this juncture, I seek your fullest cooperation as a friendly neighbour with long-standing relations to stand firm and ensure that the matches are held in Sri Lanka as originally scheduled," Dissanayake wrote.

Hollanders stumble

BOMBAY, Feb 8: Holland, preparing for their first World Cup, were whipped by 118 runs in a warm-up match against the Cricket Club of India (CCI) at the Brabourne Stadium here today, reports AFP.

Chasing CCI's 224 for five from 40 overs, the Dutch were bundled out for 106 in just 25.2 overs.

CROSSWORD By Eugene Sheffer. Includes crossword puzzle grid and a list of clues for across and down words.