

Match-fixing

India extends investigation

CALCUTTA, Oct 7: Indian police are to extend their investigations into cricket match-fixing and illegal betting after a series of arrests in the eastern town of Calcutta, officials said today, reports AFP.

District Superintendent of Police Surajit Kar Purakayastha said the probe running parallel to an independent inquiry into allegations that Indian players have been involved in fixing results, would be extended to other cities including Delhi and Bombay.

But he said no evidence on top stars being involved in match-fixing had emerged.

"Eight people have been arrested in connection with illegal betting on matches. There is nothing on match-fixing," he said.

The first arrest came last month when police said they had recovered computer files "Containing names and information on cricket bookies in various parts of the world."

Further arrests, according to police have uncovered a link between illegal bookmakers and top Calcutta businessmen in betting syndicates. The Asian Age newspaper today reported that one businessman was believed to have lost 5.5 million dollars in recent bets on matches.

An independent inquiry by a former Chief Justice of India, backed by India's cricket chiefs was launched earlier this year in the alleged player involvement in match-fixing.

It followed claims by former Indian all-rounder Manoj Prabhakar that he was offered 72,000 dollars by a teammate to ensure India lost to Pakistan in a limited-overs tournament in 1994.

Jagmohan Dalmiya, the former Secretary of the Board of Control of Cricket in India (BCCI), said the probe would get full backing although he thought Prabhakar was involved in "kite-flying."

The player made the claim in Outlook magazine earlier this year. Similar allegations involving Indian and Pakistani players were later made by former Pakistan wicketkeeper Rashid Latif in the same magazine, although he claimed he had been misquoted.

Betting on cricket results is illegal in India but is believed to be widespread, involving millions of dollars wagered on single matches. No player, however, has ever been found guilty of involvement.

Stars to attend Baresi's farewell

MILAN, Oct 7: Several world soccer greats — recently retired or still active — will play in Milan in a farewell match for former AC Milan and national team captain Franco Baresi, reports AP.

Officials of the Milan team said Tuesday that Argentine star Diego Armando Maradona, Brazilians Antonio Careca, Romario and Zico, Germany's Andreas Sammer, Mexican striker Hugo Sanchez and Spain's Emilio Butragueno and Michel agreed to start on the "Rest of the World" squad which will play an AC Milan selection at San Siro Stadium on Oct 28.

Baresi will lead a Milan team which will field the mythical Dutch trio of Marco van Basten, Ruud Gullit and Frank Rijkaard.

Ticket revenues from the exhibition, expected to draw a large crowd, will go to UNICEF, the United Nations International Children's Emergency Fund.

Fencing awaits its fate

PARIS, Oct 7: France may decide this month whether to scrap perimeter fencing for the 1998 World Cup finals, reports Reuters.

"A decision will be taken soon, it could be in October or November but certainly by the end of the year," an organising committee (CFO) spokeswoman said on Monday.

"Each city is doing an audit. Each stadium is different and the interior Ministry will handle each case by case," she said.

The government of President Lionel Jospin, which took power in June, has said it is against perimeter fences in the city.

Naqvi: *veni, vidi, vici*

RAWALPINDI, Oct 7 (AFP): Ali Naqvi, the 20-year-old Pakistani batsman who had not even played first class cricket two months ago, has become his country's latest star on his Test debut.

Naqvi hit 115 Monday against South Africa's highly

regarded attack at Rawalpindi and immediately promised to add many more hundreds in future.

"I was just dreaming to score a hundred on debut and it has come as reality. Really I can't believe this but I assure you that I will score more runs, this is the beginning," a confident Naqvi told the news agency.

Pakistan Test great Javed

Miandad who also scored a century on his first attempt at the highest level, congratulated Ali Naqvi on his performance.

"I saw him bat on television and he looks good. Though it was a good batting wicket but Naqvi played well against quality bowlers. He has the potential but it will be up to him to remain consistent," said Miandad.

Naqvi's confident opening Test innings has raised hopes here he could be the latest in a long line of players in Test cricket's 120-year history who launched their careers with maiden centuries including WG Grace, RE Foster, George Headley, Peter May, Gundappa Vishwanath, Greg Chappell, Gordon Greenidge and Javed Miandad.

"It is an honour for me to be among such greats whose name I have always admired," he said. From an ordinary street cricket playing with a tennis ball, Naqvi was introduced to a department team by a former first class player.

"When we saw Ali Naqvi in the nets he looked a fine prospect and batted straight so we took him in the team," says Sharif Khan, his department sports officer.

Naqvi scored more than 400 runs in the Grade-II (non first class) competition for House Building Finance Corporation's team in the 1996-97 season and took his side to the semifinal. From there he won a place in the Pakistan 'A' team and has never looked back.

His ideal batsman is West Indian Desmond Haynes. "I always like to play as Haynes used to and I also admire Saeed Anwar, Brian Lara and Mark Waugh," he said.

Many people were surprised when Naqvi was selected in the Pakistan 'A' team but the selectors including the present Pakistan coach Haroon Rasheed were confident the youngster had the talent to go places.

"We selected him for the England tour as he looked a compact batsman, he plays with a straight bat and now he has turned his potential into performance," Haroon said.

Pakistan captain Saeed Anwar praised Naqvi's batting and said he "has the touch."

For Naqvi his century was the culmination of a long cherished dream.

"I would live in dream world, always thinking of becoming star of the game which I loved so much. But today when the crowd applauded, I realised that I have achieved what I wished for. It was like coming into real world," Naqvi said.

"Obviously I always want to live as a star and score runs for my country," he said.

Sydney report satisfactory

SYDNEY, Oct 7: Two men charged with getting sports fans around the world to stay tuned to the 2000 Olympics — and its deluge of commercials — are pleased with the path being cleared for them in Sydney, reports AP.

Peter Diamond of NBC and Jarle Hoeysaeter of the European Broadcasting Union are two of the most important people involved in feeding Olympic images to the world.

NBC paid 720 million dollars for the Sydney rights while the EBU paid 350 million dollars on behalf of 80 clients in 45 European countries.

The pair joined other rights holders for a progress report from the Sydney Organizing Committee for the Olympic Games and a tour of the venues this week.

SOCOG this month secured a site for the International Broadcast Centre, which is in the shadows of the 110,000-seat stadium, being built at the Homebush Games hub.

Diamond, NBC's senior vice president for Olympic programmes who won Emmy Awards for his work on the past two Games, described the progress report as "terrific."

Hoeysaeter said there were "thousands of problems" facing organisers but he said that was always expected and he was confident they would be solved.

The Olympics begin in just under three years.

"Everything we've heard this week makes us feel good about the progress of the Organising

Committee, about the progress of the Host Broadcaster and we went out to Homebush yesterday and it's just a marvel — we're very impressed," Diamond said Tuesday.

Broadcasters were far from happy with conditions in Atlanta last year but Diamond would not bedrown into making comparisons with that "home city and what he is expecting here."

"I hate to make comparisons. This committee has studied past Games and I think the subjects that needed addressing from those past two Games, such as transport and the look of the city, have been addressed," Diamond said.

Hoeysaeter said the EBU hoped for a better service in Sydney but broadcasters needed more information before he could say 2000 would be trouble-free.

"There's no secret that in Atlanta the media and the broadcasters in particular had problems with the technology, especially the results service," Hoeysaeter said.

"We also had problems with the housing, transport and security. We are very concerned about the things that did not go right in the past. Everyone is focusing on that so let's hope it will be better this time."

The Homebush site is home to 15 Olympic venues and it is way out in the western suburbs in a bland setting, well away from the city centre and its superb harbour.

Some venues are nearer the water, and neither NBC or the EBU are concerned about find-

ing enough images to keep early morning and late night watchers captivated.

"The setting for the Games here is marvelous and we think we will have beautiful pictures during the Olympics and that is important to us," Hoeysaeter said.

Derby deal Leicester a blow

LONDON, Oct 7: Leicester's hopes of going within one point of leaders Arsenal at the top of the English Premier league were destroyed by Derby's Italian striker Francesco Baiano in a 2-1 defeat on Monday, reports Reuters.

The former Fiorentina forward struck two goals as Derby dealt Leicester their first league defeat at home this season.

Leicester, who went out of the first Round of the UEFA Cup at the hands of Atletico Madrid last week, would have moved level on points with second-placed Manchester United if they had won.

But the home side went behind in the 21st minute after a well-worked Derby free-kick. Costa Rican Paulo Wanchope got on to the end of a long-range free-kick from the halfway line and provided a perfect first-time cross from the right for Baiano to tap in.

The Italian then pounced to score from close range again in the 62nd minute when Leicester keeper Kasey Kaller failed to hold on to a cross.

Damal Smriti cricket may be delayed again

Sports Reporter

The Cricket Committee of Dhaka Metropolitan (CCDM) is likely to defer the start of the 18th Damal Smriti cricket tournament for another five days as the pitches at different parts of the city were not completely prepared till yesterday.

The tournament, which is scheduled for a October 10 start, may now begin from October 15.

According to the tournament committee secretary Mahmudul Haque Manu yesterday, the CCDM will meet in an emergency meeting this evening to fix a new date for the commencement of the season's curtain-raiser which has already been deferred twice.

The tournament was to start on September 27 originally but was shifted for three days initially. Later, it was again delayed for another ten days due to inclement weather.

Biman U-14 soccer Five teams in final round

Sports Reporter

Shariatpur, Manikganj, Barisal, Nilphamari and Jessore moved into the final round of the Biman under-14 national football championship after winning their respective zonal finals at different venues across the country yesterday.

At the Narayanganj Stadium, an early second half strike by Johnny steered Shariatpur to a solitary goal victory over Munshiganj.

After a barren first half, Johnny struck the all-important goal in the 48th minute.

In Manikganj, the host team recorded a 2-0 win over Bangladesh Krira Shiksha Protisthan to make their way through.

Rakib put the home side ahead in the 29th minute while Masum sealed the match in the 47th.

In way in Barisal, forward Shafiq scored the lone match winner to guide Barisal to a 1-0 victory over Bagerhat.

Shafiq struck in the 49th minute.

In Nilphamari, Babul scored in both the sessions to enable his side Nilphamari edge past Gaibandha by two goals to nil.

In a one-sided affair, Babul put the home side into the lead in the 33rd minute and then sealed the match in the 62nd minute with his second.

In Jessore, the hosts were declared winners as their opponent Kushtia refused to play in protest of what they said over-aged players fielded by Jessore.

The remaining three zonal finals will be held today.

At the Joypurhat Stadium, Pabna will take on the home side while in Noakhali, Rangamati will face Bandarban. The other zonal final will be held at the Mymensingh Stadium between Netrakona and Sherpur.

The 10-team final round of the tourney will begin at the resort town of Cox's Bazar on October 20.

Holders Dhaka and hosts Cox's Bazar are the automatic qualifiers for the final round.

New format for Premier Div soccer?

Sports Reporter

The Dhaka Mahanagari Football League Committee (DMFLC), is likely to change the format for the forthcoming Premier Division league which will start from October 12.

In a meeting of the DMFLC last night, all the 22 club representatives unanimously opted to have super and relegation leagues after the first phase which will be held on round robin league basis.

After the first round, top five teams from the ten-team Premier league will play in the super league while the bottom five will fight in the relegation league. Besides, the meeting also discussed to find out the way to stop playing fixed-matches in the league.

The meeting was adjourned for two days and will resume tomorrow evening to finalise the decisions.



Leicester City's Neil Lennon (R) and Derby County's Francesco Baiano fight for the ball during their English Premier league encounter at Leicester's Filbert Street ground on Oct 6. Baiano scored two goals as Derby won 2-1.

England miss Ferdinand



LONDON, Oct 7: A stomach injury forced striker Les Ferdinand on Tuesday to pull out of England's squad for World Cup qualifier against Italy in Rome, report agencies.

The Tottenham forward, suffering from a recurrence of the strained muscle which kept him off the Spurs lineup last month, withdrew from the England squad after seeing a doctor Tuesday morning.

"It's a disappointment because everybody else in the squad is in good condition — it's

just the way things happen I suppose," England coach Glenn Hoddle said. "I hope that Les doesn't need surgery but I don't know that. That's something that he and Spurs will have to work out."

Ferdinand's absence should not be a huge blow since he was not expected to be in England's starting lineup in a match, which will determine which country qualifies automatically for the 1998 World Cup in France.

Hoddle has five other strikers on the roster: Teddy Sheringham, Ian Wright, Robbie Fowler, Paul Scholes and Stan

Collymore.

The coach said he would not bring in anyone to fill Ferdinand's spot.

"This is the big one," he said. "I don't want to be disrespectful but if it were Moldova at Wembley again it would be a different story."

"Then you could think about bringing in youngsters for the experience but to bring somebody in for first time for a game like this wouldn't be fair."

"And I'm happy with what I've got. I look around the rest of the squad and I feel secure with that."

World's shortest boxer aims for new heights

Gavin Evans writes from Johannesburg

THE world's shortest professional boxer — "Baby" Jake Matlala — is suddenly walking tall in the country that once reviled him.

Matlala, who is less than 4 feet 10 inches tall, was scorned in the South African press after his 1995 loss of the World Boxing Organisation world flyweight title to the formidable Mexican, Alberto Jimenez.

The referee stopped the fight after eight rounds when the South African went down on one knee, and the local newspapers were merciless, castigating Matlala for showing "cry baby" tendencies and lacking "guts."

Abuse was heaped on him even though the fight had been postponed for two weeks to enable him to undergo surgery for an intestinal infection. By the seventh round, he was suffering severe abdominal pain.

Now that he is back on top, journalists are falling over themselves to praise him and President Nelson Mandela has invited him to his home.

The revival of Matlala's fortunes results from his July victory in Las Vegas over American Michael Carbajal, the International Boxing Association's light flyweight champion.

Promoter Rodney Berman, who put up 150,000 dollars for Carbajal's purse, was not alone in thinking that Matlala had little hope.

"I didn't think there was anything in it for us," said Berman. "I figured Jake was nearing the end, but I felt sorry for him, and he's such a nice guy, so I agreed to sign him up."

The American was eight inches taller, six years younger and a bigger puncher. But Matlala delivered the performance of his life, defying the eight-to-one odds against him by staying close to restrict Carbajal's range, working the body incessantly and throwing far more punches (1,155 to 620).

His persistence sapped Carbajal's resistance and after cuts opened over Carbajal's eyes, the referee stopped the contest in the ninth round.

"Jake's a tough guy," said the defeated champion. "He was so busy and has a lot of heart — just a damn great fighter."

With television executives waving their cheque books, Matlala was delighted.

Before the fight, 35-year-old Matlala said it would be his last. But afterwards, euphoria took over. "This was my dream fight," he said. "I waited five years for it and I feel fantastic. Carbajal was tough, but I'm the tough kid from Soweto. I worked even harder than normal — more pull-ups and push-ups — so I felt very strong."

"They're all tripping over themselves to get to me now. For the first time in my career I'm in a position to pick the

"Ever since I turned pro I've been getting up at 5.30 am for my five-mile run, and I spend at least two hours in the gym, six days a week," he said. "I don't smoke. I'm a teetotaler and I always leave parties early. That's why I keep on improving."

His professional record shows 46 wins (22 on knockouts), 10 defeats and two draws.

According to Berman, his options are either to unify the light flyweight title by fighting one of the other champions (the World Boxing Council's Saman Sorjaturong or World Boxing Association's Pichitnoi Sitbanprachan, both for Thailand) or to drop to straw-weight, boxing's lightest division.

There, the prize would be Mexico's WBC champion Ricardo Lopez, unbeaten in 45 fights and regarded as one of the top three boxers — pound for pound — in the world.

"These days I'm more comfortable at light fly," said Matlala. "But if they can get me Lopez I think I can still make [the weight limit of] 105 pounds at a push."

"I have the style to beat him, which would make me the first boxer in history to win three world titles, in descending weight order."

He is financially secure, owning garages and gymnasium, securing several advertising contracts and having a stake in a celebrity public-appearance outfit as well as a healthy bank balance. But he gives himself another three years of action.

As his friend, mentor and trainer Theo Mthembu puts it: "Everyone thought this was the end for Jake, but he fought the fight of his life and has succeeded in re-creating himself."

— Gavin Evans

ABOUT THE AUTHOR: GAVIN EVANS is a London-based writer and freelance journalist who contributes to the Guardian newspaper and several sports magazines. He worked for many years in South Africa for newspapers including the Rand Daily Mail and the Mail and Guardian.

shots, and from now on I'm only going to accept big-name, big-money opponents."

At first glance, he looks an unlikely champion. Apart from his age — most flyweights peak at 25 — he is bald, has a business degree from South Africa's Wits University and has never fought outside the ring. "Even before I was famous, nobody picked on me," he explained.

"They just seemed to like me." The son of a fruit and vegetable hawker, he was raised in a stable family and took up boxing "just for fun" at the age of 10.

He achieved 198 wins against a single loss before turning professional under Soweto trainer Theo Mthembu in 1980.

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— Gavin Evans

The Daily Star TV Guide

<p>Wednesday 8th October (All programmes are in local time. There may be changes in the programme.)</p> <p>BBC</p> <p>6:00am BBC World News 6:30am BBC World News 7:00am BBC World News 7:30am BBC World News 8:00am BBC World News 8:30am BBC World News 9:00am BBC World News 9:30am BBC World News 10:00am BBC World News 10:30am BBC World News 11:00am BBC World News 11:30am BBC World News 12:00am BBC World News 12:30am BBC World News 1:00am BBC World News 1:30am BBC World News 2:00am BBC World News 2:30am BBC World News 3:00am BBC World News 3:30am BBC World News 4:00am BBC World News 4:30am BBC World News 5:00am BBC World News 5:30am BBC World News 6:00am BBC World News 6:30am BBC World News 7:00am BBC World News 7:30am BBC World News 8:00am BBC World News 8:30am BBC World News 9:00am BBC World News 9:30am BBC World News 10:00am BBC World News 10:30am BBC World News 11:00am BBC World News 11:30am BBC World News 12:00am BBC World News 12:30am BBC World News 1:00am BBC World News 1:30am BBC World News 2:00am BBC World News 2:30am BBC World News 3:00am 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