

Anis holds Mehdi

Sports Reporter

Table leader Mehdi Hasan lost his first half point in the qualifying phase of the United Insurance International Masters' chess tournament when he drew with Anisuzzaman at the NSC chess room yesterday.

But despite the day's disappointing outcome Mehdi kept his place atop the table with five and a half points on completion of the sixth round.

However, the drawn encounter left Anis in the crowded second position along with Aminul, Shahidul Amin, Sohail Chowdhury, Kazi Taherul Islam, Nour Uddin, Nasir Uddin and Mainuddin — all having collected five points each.

Davis Cup

SA squad unchanged

JOHANNESBURG, Feb 10: The South African tennis team to face Germany in the World Group first round of the Davis Cup in April will be identical to the one that came close to beating last year's eventual champions Sweden, selectors said Monday, reports AFP.

The team that will travel to Bremen, Germany, is Wayne Ferreira, Grant Stafford, Marcos Ondruska, Ellis Ferreira and David Adams, under the leadership of captain Denie Visser, the South African Tennis Association (SATA) announced.

The same squad came within a couple of points of ousting the Swedes in the 1997 tournament, with both the doubles and the final singles matches going five sets.

"As the tie against Germany is also going to be played indoors and there is little change overall to the rankings, the selectors obviously felt no new faces should be added," SATA said in a statement.

South Africa's junior Wimbledon champion Wesley Whitehouse will accompany the team as a practice partner and to "toughen up" for future competition.

SATA spokesman Bruce Davidson said the German team's inexperience in the Davis Cup tournament made it the best of the 15 qualifying teams for South Africa to play.

But this could change if Boris Becker was included in the team, he said.

Davidson said Germany's two highest-ranked singles players, Nicolas Kiefer and Tommy Haas, had not yet played Davis Cup matches.

Atletico abase Oviedo

MADRID, Feb 10: Two goals by Atletico striker Christian Vieri helped Atletico Madrid sink mid-table Oviedo 4-1 on Monday to bring the team back into the Spanish league championship race, reports AP.

The victory edged Atletico up a place into No 4 in the 20-team division with 41 points, just four behind leaders FC Barcelona while Real Madrid have 44 and Real Sociedad 43.

Less than two months ago, Atletico trailed the leaders by up to 10 points and looked to be out of the race.

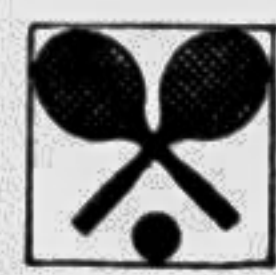
Atletico took the lead in the 25th minute when youngster Jose Mari Romero headed in from a corner by Yugoslav Milinko Pantic. Vieri got his first 10 minutes later and then in the 66th minute he made it 3-0. Panamanian striker Dely Valdes pulled one back for Oviedo in the 85th minute but Atletico nailed down the victory three minutes later with a goal by new Yugoslav signing Veljko Paunovic.

Vieri now said third in the leading scorers table with 13 goals, one behind joint leaders, Luis Enrique Martinez and Rivaldo of Barcelona.

Atletico was the only team in the top five of the table to win this round with No 3 Real Sociedad drawing 1-1 against No 5 Athletic Bilbao on Saturday while Barcelona drew 1-1 against Tenerife and Real Madrid finished 2-2 against Deportivo de la Coruna on Sunday.

Other 24th-round results were: Mallorca 2, Compostela 1; Espanyol 0, Orense 2; Betis 2, Merida 1; Salamanca 0, Celta 1; Valencia 1, Valladolid 2; and Sporting Gijon 2, Racing Santander 1.

Bangladesh baffle UAE



Hosts Bangladesh earned a well merited 3-0 win over United Arab Emirates to record their second consecutive victory in the Davis Cup Asia-Oceania Group Four competition at the Ramna National Tennis Complex yesterday, reports UNB.

Favourites Bangladesh who registered a 2-1 win against Oman in their inaugural match on Monday, smartly won all three matches — two singles and one doubles.

Local number two Dilip Passia, who conceded defeat in a marathon singles against his rival from Oman, did not give any scope to Mahmoud Nader Al-Balooshi of UAE and handed him 6-2, 6-3 defeat in one of the two singles.

In the other singles, Bangladesh number one Shibulal outplayed Othman Alulama 6-0, 6-1.

In the doubles, Muammer Husain Khan in his first appearance in the tourney, pairing with Sheikh Moinuddin Waliullah Jhilan defeated Mahmoud Nader Al-Balooshi and Mohammed Alamri 6-3, 6-2.

Another title contenders Bahrain also piled up their second successive win in the seven-nation competition beating Oman by straight 3-0 matches at the same venue on the day.

Bahrain made a flying start in the tourney outplaying United Arab Emirates 3-0 on the opening day.

In the day's other match, Jordan got off on the right foot defeating Brunei by 3-0 matches after enjoying a rest day on Monday.

Muster advances

DUBAI, Feb 10: Thomas Muster survived a three-set thriller against Sandon Stolle to score his first victory of the year and advance into the second round of the Dubai Open on Monday, reports AFP.

The defending champion won in 2hrs 09mins to secure a 6-3, 6-7 (4/7), 6-4 victory against an opponent who claimed a shock win over him in the same event two years ago.

But the win was marred by controversy as Muster clashed with umpire Rudi Berger over a series of disputed line calls.

"When I have a bad match I have to come to the press and explain myself. This was a bad match for Rudi Berger," said seventh-seeded Muster, who received a warning early in the final.

In other matches, sixth-seed Felix Mantilla of Spain beat Moroccan Karim Alami 6-4, 6-2. Magnus Norman of Sweden overcame Spaniard Albert Portas 6-2, 4-6, 6-3 and former champion Wayne Ferreira struggled to a 6-7 (3-7), 6-3, 7-5 win over Javier Sanchez.

Morocco, Zambia draw



BOBO DILOULASSO, Feb 10: Kalusha Bwalya's star shine brightly on the African stage again as he engineered a fightback that earned Zambia a 1-1 draw with Morocco in the African Nations' Cup on Monday, reports Reuters.

Bwalya was Africa's footballer-of-the-year 10 years ago and showed his class a decade later to force a point for Zambia in a bruising encounter with the pre-tournament favourites.

Morocco, who will meet world champions Brazil in the World Cup later this year, came out storming in their opening Group D match and might have snatched the lead inside the first five minutes.

A goal eventually arrived after 37 minutes when Ahmed Bahja curled a delightful shot into the top corner of the net from the edge of the penalty area.

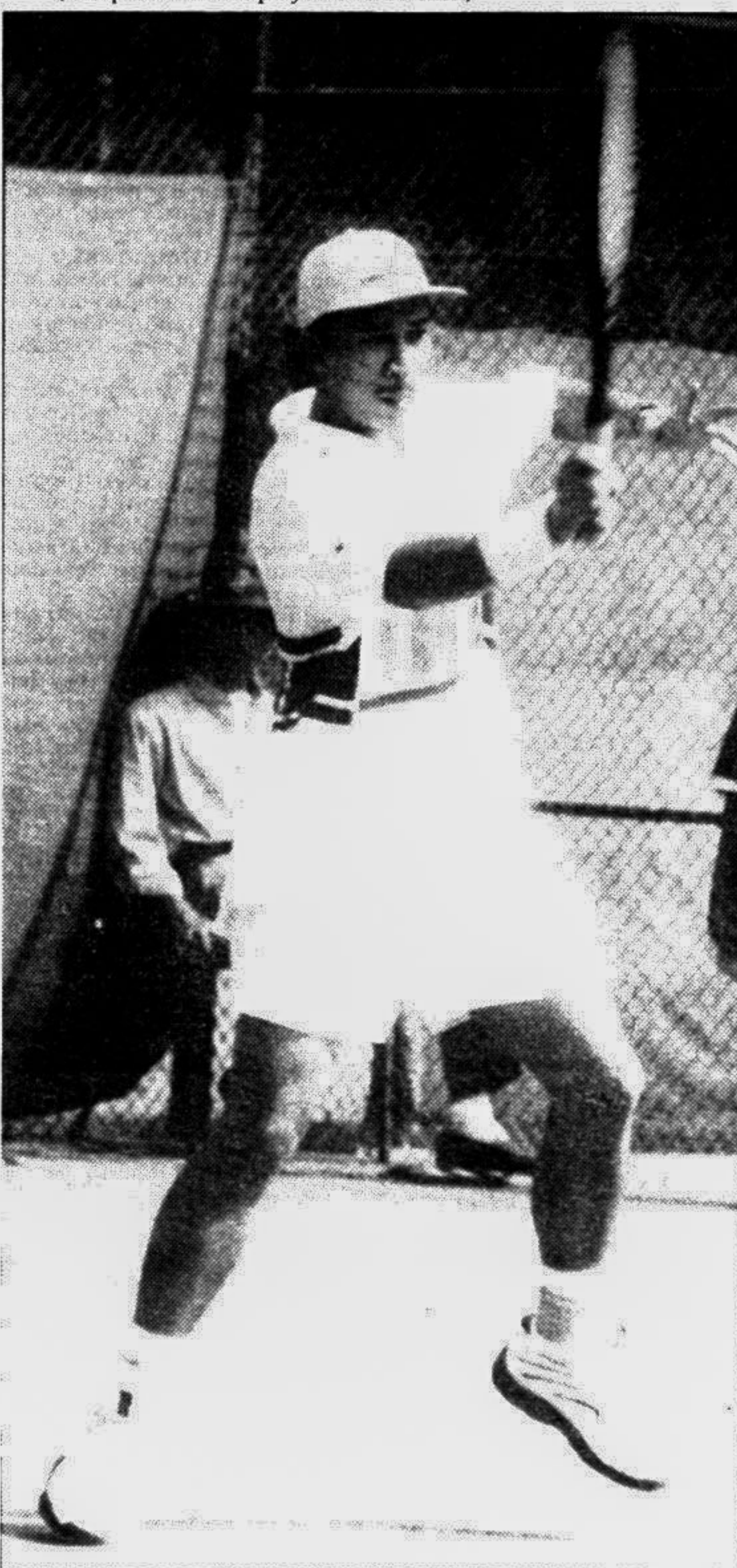
But Bwalya's experience and guile took centre stage after the break as he almost single-handedly took on the opposing defence.

He struck the upright with a free kick soon after the break and continued to have with his probing runs and darting turns.

"We were a bit disorganised in the first half but we had to come out and press them after

STANDINGS						
Standings after the second day (Tabulated under points, match won, set won, set lost, game won and game lost):						
Country	Pts	W	L	W	L	CL
Bahrain	2	6	12	1	75	22
Bangladesh	2	5	11	2	73	33
Iraq	1	3	6	0	36	11
Jordan	1	3	6	1	44	23
Oman	0	1	3	11	38	76
Brunei	0	0	1	12	37	80
UAE	0	0	0	12	17	72

(*Iraq and Jordan played one tie each)



Aki Isamasufian Ibrahim of Brunei follows through after returning the ball against Fares Sabri Said Azzouni of Jordan during their singles tie in the Davis Cup at the Ramna Tennis Complex yesterday. — Star photo

Mahfuz carves Wanderers' win

Sports Reporter

BRIEF SCORES

GOPIBAGH FRIENDS: 204 for 7 wickets in 50 overs (Santu 64, Murtaza 36; Islam 3/33, Tapu 2/38)

DHAKA WANDERERS: 206 for 8 wickets in 49.2 overs (Mahfuz 30, Jewel 27; Shavmol 3/37, Ripon 2/34)

Result: Dhaka Wanderers won by 2 wickets.

Opener Mahfuzur Rahman hammered a brilliant half-century to help Dhaka Wanderers to a two-wicket win over Gopibagh Friends in yesterday's lone First Division super league match at the Dhanmondi Cricket Stadium.

Mahfuz, who played the sheet-anchor role in his side's chase, scored a match-winning 90 off 130 balls embellished with seven fours as Dhaka Wanderers, facing a fighting Gopibagh total of 204 in the stipulated 50 overs, rattled up 206 with two wickets in hands and four balls to spare.

The young right-hander shared 59 runs for the first wicket with Jewel before the latter fell for a 35-ball 27. Mahfuz then went on to feature in some small but very useful partnerships before being out in 42nd overs, leaving his side at 164 for five.

His departure however inflicted a mini-collapse that saw the Motijheel outfit stuttering at 188 for eight in 46.2 overs. But an invaluable unbeaten 13 from lower-order bat Tapu gave Wanderers a sensational win.

Tapu had earlier captured two wickets including the prized scalp of Santu, who scored a defiant 64 to give the Gopibagh boys a fair total to defend. For Wanderers Islam returned most successful with three for 33 in his quota of 10 overs.

MSC, F'ganj kick off super league

Sports Reporter

Leaders Mohammedan Sporting Club will take on Farashganj Sporting Club in the first match of the Premier Division football super league on February 14 at 5 pm at the Mirpur Stadium. This was decided by the Dhaka Mahanagar Football League Committee (DMFLC) when it met last night to finalise the fixtures of the super and relegation leagues of the Premier and First Division football leagues.

The other match on the opening day will be the Shantinagar Club-Bangladesh Boys tie of the First Division relegation league.

On the following day, Badda Jagarani Sangsad will take on Dhaka Wanderers Club in a First Division super league engagement while Rahmatganj Muslim Friends Society will encounter Agrani Bank in the Premier Division relegation league.

The three most attractive matches of the Premier Division super league will be held on March 1 (Mohammedan vs Abahani), March 6 (Muktijoddha Sangsad vs Abahani) and March 8 (Mohammedan vs Muktijoddha Sangsad).

Aussie offer for cricketers

Australia yesterday offered to train two Bangladeshi cricketers, reports BSS.

The Australia Minister for Foreign Affairs Alexander Downer said this during the official talks with Foreign Minister Abdus Samad Azad at the state guest house Meghna.

WTA's top 10

WASHINGTON, Feb 10 (AFP): Leading WTA rankings released on Monday:

Player	Points
1. Hingis	6007
2. Davenport	4283
3. Novotna	3656
4. Seles (USA)	2988
5. Majoli	2954
6. Coetzer	2853
7. Anantix	2674
8. Conchita	2484
9. Pierce	2421
10. Spirlea	2343

Pele himself, who was denied at point blank range by Tunisia goalkeeper Ali Boumijel, and Charles Akonner both came close to adding to the total while Felix Abogay hit the crossbar just before halftime.

Akonner, who plays for the Bundesliga, was outstanding throughout.

Atherton blames the pitch

Hooper breaks English hearts



PORT OF SPAIN, Feb. 10: Carl Hooper played one of the greatest innings of his career Monday to lift the West Indies to a gripping three-wicket victory over England in the second Test, reports AP.

Hooper hit an unbeaten 94,

the pressure. Atherton's tactics also came under fire. Twice, once at the start of the day and then when the second new ball was taken at 207, Atherton preferred the out-of-form Andy Caddick to Headley.

Atherton finally turned to Headley with the West Indies to

12th delivery and then, with the third ball of his next, had Curtly Ambrose caught at the wicket for one.

Lunch was then taken with the West Indies suddenly 259 for seven but, in the end, the 129 that Hooper and Williams added in their magnificent sixth-wicket stand proved decisive.

England were left to rue the moment when Fraser, in the cruellest of incidents, dropped wicketkeeper Williams off the very first ball of the day.

The West Indies had resumed needing another 101 runs at 181 for five and Williams spooned up an attempted push towards mid-on.

Fraser, stopping to his right as his follow-through took him away from the cut strip, fumbled the chance.

Then, when Williams was on 45 and the West Indies were 207 for five Jack Russell failed to hold a diving one-handed catch to his left after Fraser summoned the last reserves of his strength and hit the gloves of the batsman with a rising delivery aimed into his ribs.

Fraser was unlucky with an lbw shout against Williams on 229 but, although the little wicketkeeper needed luck to survive, the West Indies always had the reassuring presence of Hooper there to keep them going.

The Guyanese all-rounder played superbly and thoroughly deserved to hit the winning runs.

England's despair was summed up, though, when Fraser was recalled for one final effort with the West Indies 11 runs from victory — and his first ball, a grubber, crept through Russell's gloves and straight into a helmet on the ground behind him. That cost England and Fraser five runs.

It was salt rubbed into an already open wound. England are well aware that they have never come back from 1-0 down in a Caribbean series to win.

The third Test of the six-match series begins here on Friday.

In his post match comments England captain Mike Atherton criticised the Queen's Park Oval pitch.

But the England skipper added: "Having said that, it produced an outstanding Test match, with the bowlers who bowled well getting some wickets and batsmen like Carl Hooper getting some runs as well."

Brian Lara, who tasted victory in his first Test as skipper of the West Indies, was unsurprisingly full of praise for Hooper's match-winning knock.

SCOREBOARD

ENGLAND: First innings 214 (N Hussain 61 n. o. A Stewart 50)

WEST INDIES: First innings 191 (B Lara 55, A Fraser 8-53)

ENGLAND: Second innings 258 (A Stewart 73, C Ambrose 5-23)

WEST INDIES: Second innings (overnight 181-5)

Campbell c Stewart b Headley	10
S Williams c Crawley b Fraser	62
Lara c Russell b Fraser	17
Hooper not out	94
Chanderpaul c Thorpe b Tufnell	0
Adams c Stewart b Fraser	2
D Williams c Thorpe b Headley	65
Ambrose c Russell b Headley	1
K Benjamin not out	6
Extras: (lb-10, lb-8, nb-7)	25
Total: for seven wickets in 98.2 overs	282

Fall of wickets: 1-10; 2-68; 3-120; 4-121; 5-124; 6-253; 7-259

Not out: N McLean, C Walsh

Bowling	O	M	R	W
Headley	16	2	68	3
Caddick	16	2	58	0
Tufnell	34.2	9	69	1
Fraser	27	8	57	3
Holloake	5	0	12	0

Result: West Indies won by three wickets.

Player-of-the-match: Carl Hooper.

Third Test: February 13-17, Queen's Park Oval, Port-of-Spain, Trinidad.

Fourth Test: February 27-March 3, Bourda, Georgetown, Guyana.

Fifth Test: Kensington Oval, Bridgetown, Barbados, March 12-16.

Sixth Test: Recreation Ground, St. John's Antigua, March 20-24.

OPINION

The best batsman of the world

Zafrul Q Siddique



In the sports page of The Daily Star dated February 4, I read the opinion of M. Ali Sattar about the finals of the Independence Cup. To me his opinion seemed to be biased.

I don't dare to call myself a cricket pundit. But I am a very keen follower of the game and watch the game very seriously.

The review of the first two finals over very fine. But at the third one the writer seemed to get very shocked by something. He suddenly declares Saeed Anwar the best batsman in the world. And the reason that let him to do this is that Anwar is equally strong in both sides of the wicket.

He compares this ability of Anwar to the abilities of Sachin and Lara. To me, and I think to everyone else, this seemed ridiculous. Both Sachin and Lara have a large range of shots all around the wicket as far as I know from watching them play and by listening comments of experts. Both of them have played well on any type of wicket — slow, turning, bouncy, etc. and have scored runs against every attack. But Saeed Anwar always seemed to be vulnerable on bouncy wickets. This is true for all of them, not only for Anwar as the writer mentioned.

Mr. Sattar also commented ridiculously on Robin Singh's batting. As he is playing more and more matches he is becoming better and better as a batsman. He gave India an unbelievable win in Pakistan with Saba Karim. He played outstandingly against Zimbabwe at Paarl in S. Africa to tie the match. He also has a century under his belt. He batted clumsily in the third final, I agree. But Mr. Sattar should also mention that Anwar got three lives that day on his way to 140 runs. I strongly believe that if players like Sachin, Lara, Anwar, Mark Waugh, D Silva and some others play with their heads down and refrain from going after every delivery after they are set, they all can score a big hundred all the matches they play.

This is true for all of them, not only for Anwar as the writer mentioned.

The Daily Star TV Guide

Wednesday 11th February

(All programmes are in local time but subject to last minute change.)

BTV

3:00pm Opening announcement
Al Quran, programme summary
3:10 Recitation from the Geeta
3:15 Patriotic Songs 3:20
Drama Serial: Sai Nik (Rpt)
4:00 News in Bangla 4:10 Art
Write 4:50 Geetiban 5:15 Hum
an Right Day Programme 6:00
Srishti Sukhar Ullasa 6:30
Bangladesh Biman Bahini 7:00
News in English 7:05 Programme
on Health 7:25 Muktijuddhar
Ronokoushal O Agragati 8:00
News in Bangla 8:30 Package
Drama: Sabui Shathi 9:00 Package
Drama: Uttarakar 10:00
News in English 10:30 Juddha Di
nar Gatha 11:30 News in Bangla
11:35 Tomorrow's News in Bangla
summary 11:40 Close down

BBC

7:30am BBC World News 8:00
World Focus: Reporters 8:30
BBC World News 9:00 Hardtalk
9:30 The World Today 11:00
World Living: Earth Report —
Georgia & Turkey 11:30 BBC

World News 12:00pm World Focus

Reporters 12:30 BBC World
News 1:00 Hard Talk 1:30 BBC
World News 2:00 World Living:
Film 9:20 The World Today
4:00 Wild World: Natural World
4:00 Call Of Kakadu 2:2 4:30
BBC World News 4:45 World
Business Report 5:00 The World
Today 6:00pm World Living:
The Clothes Show 6:30 BBC World
News 7:00 Hard Talk 7:30 BBC
World News 8:00 World Focus:
Reporters 8:30 BBC World News
9:00 World Living: The Travel
Show 9:30 The World Today
11:00 Hard Talk 11:30 BBC
World News 12:00pm World Focus:
The Money Programme
12:30 BBC World News in Business
Report 1:00 World Living:
Top Gear 1:30 BBC World News
1:45 Europe Direct 2:30 BBC
World News in Business Report & 24
Hours 3:30 BBC World News
3:35 USA Direct 4:00 World
Living: The Travel Show 4:30
BBC World News in Business
Report & 24 Hours

CHANNEL V

6:00am Turn on TV 6:30 V
News 7:30 VHS, V Hour Special
7:30 Rewind 7:30 Sonya
Turn on TV [V] 8:30

World News 12:00pm World Focus

Reporters 12:30 BBC World
News 1:00 Hard Talk 1:30 BBC
World News 2:00 World Living:
Film 9:20 The World Today
4:00 Wild World: Natural World
4:00 Call Of Kakadu 2:2 4:30
BBC World News 4:45 World
Business Report 5:00 The World
Today 6:00pm World Living:
The Clothes Show 6:30 BBC World
News 7:00 Hard Talk 7:30 BBC
World News 8:00 World Focus:
Reporters 8:30 BBC World News
9:00 World Living: The Travel
Show 9:30 The World Today
11:00 Hard Talk 11:30 BBC
World News 12:00pm World Focus:
The Money Programme
12:30 BBC World News in Business
Report 1:00 World Living:
Top Gear 1:30 BBC World News
1:45 Europe Direct 2:30 BBC
World News in Business Report & 24
Hours 3:30 BBC World News
3:35 USA Direct 4:00 World
Living: The Travel Show 4:30
BBC World News in Business
Report & 24 Hours

STAR PLUS

6:30am Ninasad 7:30 Good Morning
India & Election Special
10:30 Ek Din Ek Jeevan 11:30
The Oprah Winfrey Show
12:00pm Mind Your Language
12:30 Heartbeat 1:30 Santa
Barbara 2:30 The Bold & the
Beautiful 3:30 WWF Superstars
— Tu Tu Main Main 4:30 Elec
tion Special 8:00 Election Special
by Rajat Sharma 8:30 Daal
Mein Kaala 9:00 Yeh Hai Raaz
9:30 Star News 10:00 Alo Alo
10:30 The X Files 11:30 Awaaz
12:00 The Bold & the Beautiful
12:30 Star News 1:00 Newhart
1:30 L A Law 2:30 Duce South
3:30 Vega 4:30 The Oprah Win

World News 12:00pm World Focus

Reporters 12:30 BBC World
News 1:00 Hard Talk 1:30 BBC
World News 2:00 World Living:
Film 9:20 The World Today
4:00 Wild World: Natural World
4:00 Call Of Kakadu 2:2 4:30
BBC World News 4:45 World
Business Report 5:00 The World
Today 6:00pm World Living:
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11:00 Hard Talk 11:30 BBC
World News 12:00pm World Focus:
The Money Programme
12:30 BBC World News in Business
Report 1:00 World Living:
Top Gear 1:30 BBC World News
1:45 Europe Direct 2:30 BBC
World News in Business Report & 24
Hours 3:30 BBC World News
3:35 USA Direct 4:00 World
Living: The Travel Show 4:30
BBC World News in Business
Report & 24 Hours

STAR MOVIES

7:30 Action: Alien Nation —
Body And Soul 15 9:30 Romance:
Fine Things 15 11:30 Action:
Excessive Force II: Force on Force
15 1:30 Film Club: Silas Marner 15
3:30 Film Club: Too Young The Hero
15 5:30 Family: Carl Gustav And
His Gang 12 (English Subtitles)
7:00 Movie Television 7:30 Classic:
My Favourite Brunette 12
9:30 The Movie Show 10:00
Double Bill: Christian Slater Broken
Arrow 15 12:00 Valentine's
Week: (Double Bill) Christian
Slater Bed of Roses 15 1:30 India
Star 5 2:00 Adventure: The
Viking Sagas 15 4:00 Thriller:
Dangerous Desire 18 5:30 Action:
Rising Sun 15

STAR SPORTS

7:00 FI World C'ship — The
Stewart Team 8:00