

Shortage of fund hinders sports programme

Stadium for Cox's Bazaar

From Nizamuddin Ahmed

COX'S BAZAAR: Aug 4: The 'health city' of Cox's Bazaar is to have a new stadium, a proposal for which is under active consideration by the National Sports Council. This was disclosed by Nurul Huda Chowdhury, general secretary of the Cox's Bazaar Zilla Krira Sangstha, in an exclusive interview with The Daily Star.

The existing twenty thousand-seat stadium cannot accommodate a 400-metre athletic track and is in a dilapidated condition, revealed a burly Mr Chowdhury who has been the chief executive of the district sports association (DSA) since 1992. The acting chairman of the Cox's Bazaar unit of the Bangladesh Red Crescent Society was elected to the same position in the 1995 elections of the 23-member DSA executive committee.

The broken-down plight of the stadium does not come as a surprise considering that it was the third stadium built during the Pakistan regime after Dhaka and Chittagong. Built in 1957 with a 25000-rupee contribution from the then East Pakistan Chief Minister Ataur Rahman Khan and donations from the public, the stadium has suffered the vagaries of nature as well as the salt-laden wind of the coastal city.

Its poor condition has not escaped the empathy of the NSC, which recently spent six lakh fifty thousand taka in repairing the pavilion ceiling and the gallery, and for dressing the ground with earth fill, according to Mr Chowdhury.

The DSA has already done some groundwork as regards se-

lecting the site for the new stadium and has proposed two options to the NSC. A 21-acre land on the Chittagong by-pass road was the DSA's first choice, as it would allow expansion into a complex to cater to the burgeoning tourist industry. The second selection was a land of about eight acres west of the Cox's Bazaar airport. Although smaller, this will be adequate to house a district stadium as per the standard set by the NSC.

The present stadium ground is not large enough for cricket and as such the association organised the First Division Cricket League with six teams last year at the nearby Jeley Park, a field with no gallery. In the absence of any pavilion, tents have to be pitched to serve as dressing rooms. The league had to be abandoned midway because of shortage of funds together with inclement weather. The association is now better prepared and the cricket league will start in November with sixteen teams. "We will do it gorgeously this year," promised Mr Chowdhury.

The association was more fortunate with the First Division Football League which it was able to complete with ten teams last year. Jeep-Micro Samity and Friends Union were the joint champions. This year the league will start from September 7 with ten teams. There was no league the year before because development work by the NSC was underway.

Besides football and cricket, there are also plans to start a volleyball league with ten teams this year.

The Cox's Bazaar receives an

annual grant worth Taka one lakh eighty thousand from the NSC. "But this was not enough as nearly one lakh is spent on staff salary and bills", said the general secretary. "It is not possible to do anything with the remaining eighty thousand taka. Because we participate in the junior, youth and national championships, we incur an expenditure of three to four lakh taka for football alone. We need a minimum of five lakh taka. Sports is not possible without money." A DSA could not have a more modest ask.

As regards fund-raising the DSA has to depend on public donation "which is also difficult as the city is not home to big industries". The DSA has eight shops at the stadium but they cannot find any interested entrepreneurs to rent them. To raise funds the DSA tried to run a house, a gambling activity, which is the mainstay of many clubs in capital Dhaka. "But there are public opposition to it", said Mr Chowdhury.

Highlighting the achievement of athletes of Cox's Bazaar, Mr Chowdhury reported that local body-builder Maung A Tha Rakhine has been selected to represent Bangladesh in a competition in Vietnam later this year. "We have always maintained first to fourth positions in this event at national level."

Despite the lack of facilities and funds, Cox's Bazaar under-14 footballers are reigning national champions. Their youths are waiting in the wings to take the laurel. Judging from the enthusiasm of Mr Chowdhury their seniors may soon sweep the nation like a violent storm.



Bayern Munich's Brazilian striker Giovanni Elber (R) tries to get the better of Robert Kovac of Bayer Leverkusen during their league cup semifinal at Saxony on August 3. Bayern won 1-0. — AFP photo

Emirates to make debut in cricket

LONDON, Aug 4 (Reuters/Internet): The one-day tournament between England, South Africa and Sri Lanka later this month, the first international cricket series in England to be played in coloured clothing, is to be sponsored by Emirates airline.

The triangular series starting on August 14 is being staged on a round-robin basis with the winners receiving a hand-crafted silver and gilt model of a dhow and a cheque for 15,000 pounds (£24,680).

Announcing the deal on Tuesday, Emirates said it was their first cricket sponsorship, though they are to be one of the sponsors of next year's World Cup in England.

South Africa and World Cup champions Sri Lanka contest the opening match at Trent Bridge, Nottingham, on August 14 with England v Sri Lanka at Lords on August 16 and England v South Africa at Edgbaston, Birmingham, on August 18. The final is at Lords on August 20.

BCB's emergency meeting Friday

Sports Reporter
Bangladesh Cricket Board has called an emergency meeting next Friday to announce a new three-member selection committee. The previous five-member committee headed by Lutfor Rahman Makhan was dissolved last April.

According to sources, the new selection committee will be given approval in the meeting and will be asked with selecting the team for the 16th Commonwealth Games, to be held in Malaysia from September 11. The committee must select the squad within three days.

The last date for sending the national team list to the Games organising committee is August 11.

Pak cricket in a spin



LONDON, Aug 4 (Internet): With only four weeks to go for the Sahara Cup to be played in Toronto against India, Pakistan cricket affairs remain confusing. A new captain is yet to be named, a coach is to be appointed and most of all, the findings of the committee probing into match fixing and bribery allegations is to be handed over to the Pakistan Cricket Board (PCB).

Ever since the culmination

South Africa owing to neck injury. His deputy, Sohail, led the team, and successfully at that.

Rashid lost the final Test at Port Elizabeth and a lot of goodwill on the rest of the tour despite a win in two Tests against Zimbabwe. His handling of the team was poor and his disposition unimpressive.

Only recently when Sohail's name was being strongly mentioned there were reports of players like Ijaz Ahmed, Inzamam-ul-Haq and some others showing disapproval. They were reported to have met the Sports Ministry official to show their resentment.

Moin Khan, another candidate, is being labelled as a close friend of Wasim Akram who was relieved of the captaincy on alleged suspicion of being involved with the match-fixing racket.

Wasim was even dropped from the team after his successful series against the West Indies but was later sent to South Africa to join the team in the final Test and for the rest of the tour.

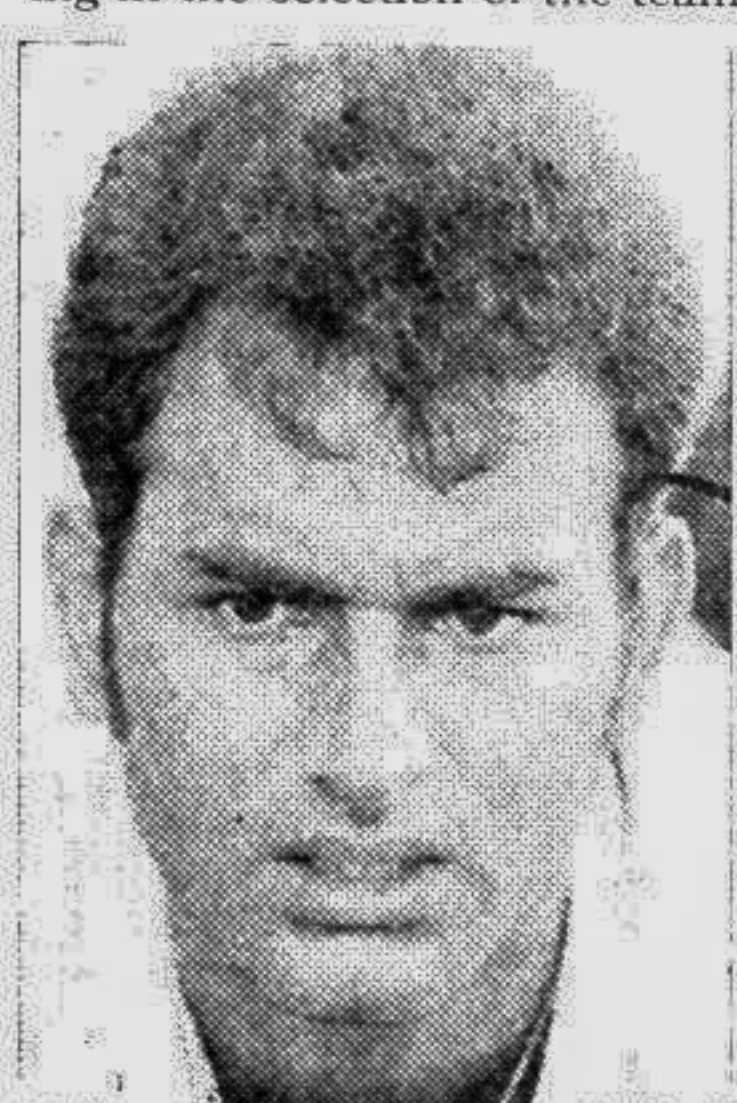
Wasim had vowed then that he would never take charge again as the leader of the team. Things, however, work in funny ways in Pakistan cricket and one will not be surprised if Wasim Akram takes over again if Aamir Sohail does not get the nod.

The new president of the PCB, Khalid Mahmood, however, has a soft corner for Aamir Sohail and also likes Wasim Akram. But the chief executive of the board, Majid Khan, does not approve of either of them. Thus the tussle goes on.

The coach, Haroon Rashid, was relieved from the team after the Africa tour. Former opener Mohsin Khan, cricketer turned actor, was suddenly asked to look after the camp and coach the boys, but his presence would be only brief as the former captain, Javed Miandad, has offered to take charge. Negotiations are going

on. Mushtaq Mohammed was sacked by the PCB when he demanded salary hike after the tour of Sri Lanka. Miandad, who is employed by the Sultan of Brunei along with Viv Richards, and former squash champion Jehangir Khan, knows all about that and will not accept the job unless he is well paid.

"I have offered myself for the coaching job and have told the board that unless I have a say in the selection of the team



AAMIR SOHAIL

and day to day management of the team, I would not like to take up the assignment. I need complete control of the team. I would not like to play second fiddle to anyone once I take charge," Miandad said.

The cricket board has sent him a questionnaire to answer before approving his position as a coach. Controversial as he has been, it will be interesting to see how well he will be able to handle the players. Anyway there has rarely been a dull moment in Pakistan cricket and with Miandad taking over as coach and Aamir Sohail as captain, there will be little if any?

English umpires strike back

LONDON, Aug 4 (The Mirror/Internet): England's umpires yesterday called for Allan Donald to be punished for his outburst against Mervyn Kitchen.

And they have urged a 24-hour deadline for the ICC to deal with the outspoken South African pacesetter.

Barrie Leadbeater, chairman of the English Umpires' Association, said last night: "There is a feeling of outrage among the umpires about the comments made by Donald."

"He is completely out of order. What he said was quite unacceptable."

"We want the ICC to take the toughest possible action against Donald."

"He is clearly in breach of their code of conduct regarding players making public statements about Test umpires."

"If there is any justice he should be dealt with severely, bearing in mind that recently the match referee fined Mark Ramprakash £850 and imposed a one-match suspended ban."

"Mark made an aside to umpire Darrell Hare after being given out. What Donald has done is far more serious, publicly slugging off a senior um-

pire. "If the ICC don't take prompt action or the South African Cricket Board fail to deal with Donald, the umpires will call on the English Cricket Board to intervene before Thursday's Test."



ALLAN DONALD

Leadbeater pointed out that it was even tougher for Kitchen, who has no right of reply.

He added: "Mervyn has been an international umpire for three years, standing in close on 20 Tests around the world."

"We are desperately disappointed that he is talking about quitting because of things that went wrong for him at Trent Bridge."

Toni Polster retires but..

VIENNA, Aug 4 (Reuters/Internet): Austria's veteran captain Toni Polster said on Monday he will no longer be a regular in the national team but may play in European championship qualifiers if his services are required.

"The coach basically took the decision for me", the striker told Austrian radio ORF. "I'm sad but if he thinks it's time for a new, younger team then I re-

spect that. (Coach Herbert) Prohaska always stood up for me in the past."

Polster, who scored an Austrian record 44 goals in 94 appearances over 16 years, gave more detail on the Internet, saying: "Of course I would like to reach 100 caps and score 50 goals. I would never say no if the team needed me."

Prohaska said the decision to revamp the squad had been taken before the World Cup in France where Austria were very disappointing and failed to make the second round.

"We have to think about the

future and form a team with players such as (Mario) Haas, (Herfried) Sabitzer or (Christian) Mayrleb", he said. "But I think it is great that Polster is willing to play for Austria if he is needed."

Polster, who this season joined Germanys Borussia Moenchengladbach from relegated Cologne, made his last appearance for Austria in the 2-1 World Cup defeat against Italy on June 23 when he was replaced by Haas after 62 minutes.

The last of his 44 goals was an injury-time equaliser against Cameroon in Austria's opening World Cup match in France June 11.

What's Kluyvert going to do?

MILAN, Aug 4: Dutch striker Patrick Kluyvert has ruled out a move to the English Premiership and will be staying with AC Milan, a club spokesman announced here on Monday, reports AFP.

Kluyvert, who had a good run with Holland at the World Cup, had been linked with Manchester United, reigning champions Arsenal and north London rivals Tottenham Hotspur in recent weeks.

But a Milan spokesman said that an agreement to stay was thrashed out on Monday at a meeting in Amsterdam between the club's general manager Ariedo Braida, Kluyvert and his agent, Sigli Lens.

Kluyvert, who joined the Serie A club from Ajax Amsterdam, in the summer of 1997, agreed to a modest increase in his salary, details of which were not disclosed. The duration of his contract, which runs until June 30, 2001, was left unchanged.



Sampdoria's hot signing Ariel Ortega speaking at a farewell press conference at his former club Valencia of Spain on August 3. — AFP photo

Owen versus Inter Milan

UNDATED, Aug 4 (AFP): England's teenage sensation Michael Owen is as good as Brazilian superstar Ronaldo, the world's number one footballer, according to Liverpool skipper Paul Ince.

Liverpool play Inter Milan at Anfield tonight but sadly for the 40,000 plus fans, Ronaldo will not be there to face England's new idol.

But England midfielder Ince said: "Michael has a long way to go but then so has Ronaldo. People forget that Ronaldo is only 21 and they say he is the greatest in the world."

"But that's because they haven't seen anything like him for a while and because he is so young."

"But as far as I'm concerned, Michael is up there with him. They are different kinds of strikers but both very good indeed."

"It's a shame Ronaldo won't be playing but I'm sure the crowd will not mind too much because they will have Michael to welcome home."

Ronaldo is still on his holidays and Inter Milan will field a virtual shadow squad for the prestige friendly with six of



MICHAEL OWEN

their superstars being left behind. Inter's new crowd-puller Roberto Baggio too has joined Ronaldo in giving their friendly a miss.

Baggio is staying at Inter's Appiano Gentile training base, where he will prepare for next week's crucial European Champions League second preliminary round tie in Pisa against Skonto Riga.

Ronaldo is not expected here until after August 20, an Inter spokeswoman told AFP.

Inter's 18-man squad for their Pirelli Cup game against Liverpool includes three men from France '98 - veteran skipper Giuseppe Bergomi, goalkeeper Gianluca Pagliuca and Chilean striker Ivan Zamorano.

Zamorano will lead the assault with two of Italian football's most promising youngsters - 20-year-old striker Nicola Ventola, just signed from Bari, and Andrea Pirolo, 19, an attacking midfielder snapped up from Brescia.

Both Ventola and Pirolo hope to win places in next week's squad against the Latvians after finding the target in Inter's pre-season friendlies.

Club Cup hockey begins today

Sports Reporter
Mohammed Sporting Club take on Bangladesh Sporting Club in the inaugural match as the Jiban Bima second Club Cup hockey tournament begins at the National Hockey Stadium at 4 pm this afternoon.

A total of 15 Senior Division clubs will split into four groups for the first round of the 15-day long meet. Two teams from each group will make it to the last four.

Defending champions Abahani Krira Chakra, who have been pencilled in Group C, will begin their campaign on August 7 against Dhaka Ansars while Usha Krira Chakra, in Group B, will play their first match against Bachelor Sporting Club tomorrow.

Bayern in final

AUE, Germany, Aug 4: Holders Bayern Munich beat Bayer Leverkusen 1-0 in the German League Cup semifinal on Monday, reports Reuters.

A powerful 30th minute shot from 25 metres by midfielder Mario Basler enabled the Munich club to win their opening match in the pre-season tournament.

Bayern gained an automatic place in the last four of the lucrative six-team event because they won last year.

Champions Kaiserslautern play VfB Stuttgart on Tuesday with the final on Saturday. The winners collect 2.5 million marks (1.41 million dollars).

Discussion on France '98

Sports Reporter
A panel discussion on "World Cup Football 1998 and the glorious victory of France" will be held at the Jatiya Press Club auditorium on Friday afternoon from 3 pm under the auspices of Bangladesh France Friendship Society.

Two sports journalists - Dilu Khondaker of Daily Ittefaq and Dr Nizamuddin Ahmed of The Daily Star, who went to France to cover the World Cup 1998, will take part in the discussion which will be chaired by Tahmid Aziz Khan, the Executive Editor of The Daily Star. Besides eminent sports writer Azam Mahmood of Jajiddin and Manab Zamin Editor Matur Rahman Chowdhury will participate in the discussion.

The discussion meeting will be followed by a musical programme.

Monitor gymnastics

Sputnik, Biman become champs

Sputnik International and Bangladesh Biman emerged champions in the men's and women's group of the Bangladesh Monitor gymnastics competition which concluded yesterday at the NSC, reports UNB.

In the boys' and girls' events of the meet, Bangladesh Krira Shikkha Pradikshhan (BKSP) emerged supreme.

State Minister for Youth and Sports Obaidul Quader distributed prizes as the chief guest.

President of Bangladesh Gymnastics Federation Dr Shah Mohammad Farid and secretary general of Bangladesh Olympic Association Golam Quddus Chowdhury Babu were present on the occasion.

RESULTS

Women's Floor: 1st - Sharmin Sultana Sumi (Biman), 2nd - Karima Akhter (Biman), 3rd - Parveen (St Margaret Tutorial).

Men's Long Horse: 1st - Dulal Gomes (Sputnik), 2nd - Dilwar Hossain (Biman) (Sputnik), 3rd - Masud Al Firoji (Dhaka University).

Men's Floor: 1st - Jewel (Sputnik), 2nd - Dulal Gomes (Sputnik), 3rd - Masud Al Firoji (Dhaka University).

Girls' A Floor: 1st - Happy (BKSP), 2nd - Risha (BKSP), 3rd - Sathi (BKSP).

Girls' B Floor: 1st - Riza (BKSP), 2nd - Poly (BKSP), 3rd - Bithi (BKSP).

Girls' Trance Floor: 1st - Soma (BKSP) & Jenny (Dilkusha School), 2nd - Meem (BKSP) 3rd - Erina (BTMC).

Boys' A Floor: 1st - Asad (BKSP), 2nd - Muntasir (BKSP), 3rd - Jamil & Shamim (BKSP).

Boys' B Floor: 1st - Al Mamun (BKSP), 2nd - Sohel (BKSP), 3rd - Mamun & Milon (BKSP).

Boys' Trance Floor: 1st - Momin (BKSP), 2nd - Michael (BKSP), 3rd - Romel (BKSP).

Army aquatic

Three more events were finalised on the third day of the annual Army aquatic meet of the Bangladesh Army at the BKSP Swimming Pool at Savar yesterday, says a press release.

The Comilla Area clinched gold in 4x100m midlay relay while Havilder Asaduzzaman of the Jessore Area bagged gold in 1500m free style and UP Lance Naik Md Sikder Shabuddin of the Comilla Area won gold in 100m freestyle.