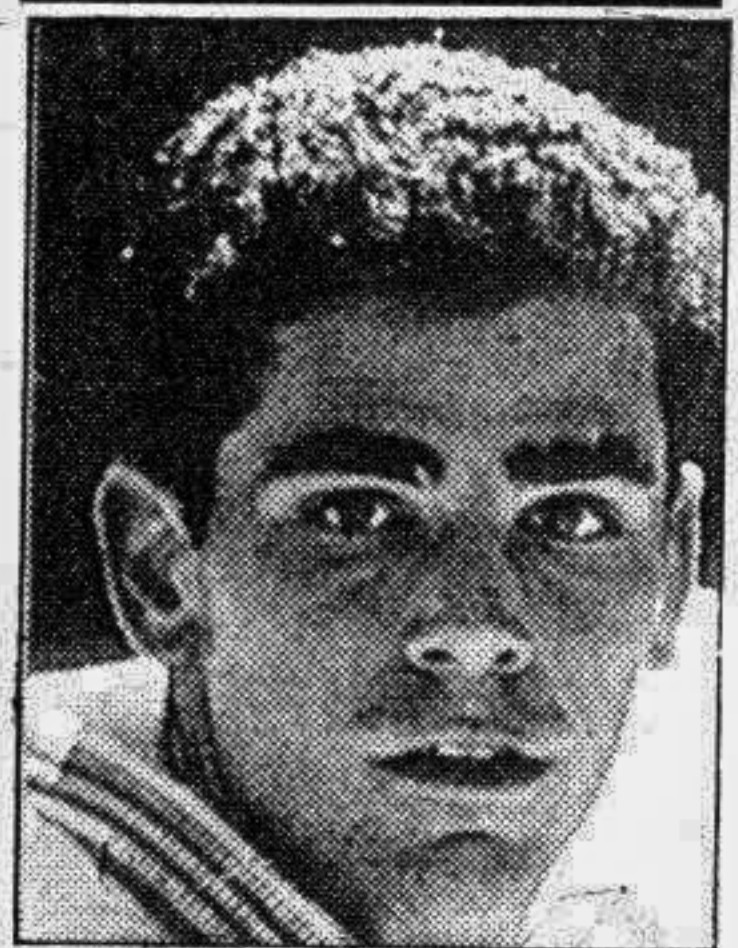


## Column One

### SPORTS TALK



**Pete Sampras**

(World No 1 tennis player)  
This is a very tough week to win since the field is as strong as a Grand Slam field.

After winning the ATP Championship.

## Boost sports WHIZZ KID

COMPETITION FOR SCHOOL CHILDREN

Competition-119

✓ Tick the Correct Answers

Post to The Daily Star

Win attractive prizes

Competition closes at 8 pm

Aug 27, 99 and draw

shortly afterwards

1 Who are the current FA Cup champions?

Man United Arsenal Liverpool

2 Who is Sri Lanka's cricket coach?

Whitmore Yardley Fernandez

3 Who won the Confederations' Cup title?

Brazil Mexico USA

4 Who is the Bangladesh cricket captain?

Minhazul Akram Aminul

5 Which stadium will host the final of 2002 World Cup?

Yokohama Suzuki Nagoya

Name .....

Class ..... Roll No. ....

School Address .....

Phone: (if any) .....

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## Abahani threaten boycott

# Premier League in jeopardy

Sports Reporter



A dark cloud looms large over the fate of the Keya Premier Football League after Abahani

Krira Chakra yesterday threatened of not taking the field in their remaining engagements.

The popular Dhanmondi outfit said that they would boycott the league if the authorities failed to take any action against what they termed "a fixed match between Mohammedan and Arambagh" and also if they did not withdraw the two-match ban against Abahani midfielder Iqbal.

Abahani, who are currently holding the third position behind league leaders Mohammedan Sporting Club and defending champions Mukti-joddha Sangsad, are scheduled to play a 'super four' match against Arambagh at the Bangabandhu National Stadium today.

We have received a letter from Abahani today (Tuesday). But as far as I'm concerned the Abahani-Arambagh match will be held on schedule", said the

DMFLC secretary Shawkat Ali Kahn Jahangir.

"Abahani have reasons to be feel hurt. But there is a way solving problems. We have discussed their claim of an arranged affair between Mohammedan and Arambagh. But the disciplinary committee of the DMFLC did not find any concrete evidence regarding that view", said Jahangir.

Besides, there is a very strong committee of the Bangladesh Football Federation (BFF) to take any action against arranged affairs in the league. But so far we did not get any recommendation from that powerful committee", claimed Jahangir.

Meanwhile, Abahani have expressed their shock at what they termed a 'step motherly' attitude by the organisers. "The authorities have taken no time

to ban our player Iqbal. But at the same instance, they are playing a dilly-dally regarding the arranged match between Mohammedan and Arambagh which was vividly exposed in different dailies", the club said in a letter to the DMFLC yesterday.

Iqbal got a two-match ban for manhandling Indian referee Udayan Halder during a crucial Abahani-Mohammedan 'Super Four' match at the Bangabandhu National Stadium on Saturday.

While Abahani were protesting the DMFLC action, their archrivals Mohammedan in a separate letter to the organisers, demanded a six-match ban against Iqbal.

As the tug of war between the two top most crowd-pullers of local football, which started after the troubled match on Saturday, goes unabated, the chances of the resumption of the league seems very uncertain.

Moreover, with the SAF Games only one and a half month away and Mukti-joddha Sangsad travelling to India to play their first leg Asian Championship match against Mohun Bagan on August 21, not forgetting the Bangabandhu Cup beginning in the last week of this month, there is little chance the league will restart before the SAF Games, which will begin in Nepal from September 25.

## Concerned Samir

Sports Reporter

National football coach Shamir Sakir is very concerned about his team's preparation for the forthcoming eighth SAF Games, to be held in Nepal from September 25.

The former Iraqi World Cupper expressed his concern to The Daily Star at the BFF office yesterday.

"I was supposed to get my team for the camp after the Bangabandhu Cup, which was scheduled to end on September 7. Now I'm hearing that the league will continue after the tournament. That means, I will have to wait until the second week of September and we can have a camp for maximum ten days. That is not enough to get prepared properly," said Shamir, who guided Bangladesh to the SAFF Championship final earlier this year.

When contacted, BFF joint-secretary Badal Roy said that Shamir would get his team immediately after the Bangabandhu Cup.

"If it is required the league will be held after the SAF Games," Badal remarked.

## NSC's no to BFF

Sports Reporter

The National Sports Council (NSC) poured cold water on the BFF's (Bangladesh Football Federation) idea of using the electronic scoreboard during the second Bangabandhu Cup on Monday.

The NSC, the ruling body of country's sports, has cited some technical difficulties in using the scoreboard as its reason behind the refusal. The electronic scoreboard, which was installed during the nine-nation mini World Cup cricket last year, is reported to be specially programmed for cricket.

But some officials of the BFF, which is at odds with the Bangladesh Cricket Control Board over the control of the national stadium for decades, claimed that the electronic board had not to be given to the football because of the negative attitude of the NSC.

Syed Ashraf Hui, the general secretary of BCB, however said that after having some changes done in the scoreboard software it could well be used for football.

## 'Navratilova is the best'

BERLIN, Aug 17: Retired German tennis legend Steffi Graf Tuesday nominated her former arch-rival Martina Navratilova as unquestionably the best player of the century on the women's circuit, reports AFP.

"For me she is the uncontested number one, she has left a mark on the sport like no one else," Graf told the German news agency DPA.

Graf said that Navratilova was the first to recognise the key role an athlete's body could play in the women's game.

She also spoke about Navratilova's kindness, recalling a letter she had sent to her when, aged 13, and suffering from a thumb injury, she was stuck in a hotel room in Australia.

Navratilova wrote: 'You still have lots of time. Your career is ahead of you. Don't worry, your time will come.'

"I never forgot that letter, it consoled me and left a great impression," Graf said.

Navratilova won 18 Grand Slams, including nine Wimbledon titles, before retiring in 1994 at the age of 38.

Graf, 30, who netted a total of 22 Grand Slams, four of those coming in one year, 1988, stunned the tennis world when announcing her retirement last Friday just two weeks before the US Open.

## Cairns, Allott in doubt

LONDON, Aug 17: New Zealand all-rounder Chris Cairns and left-arm paceman Geoff Allott are injury doubts for the fourth and final test against England starting at The Oval on Thursday, reports Reuters.

Cairns has a knee injury and did not bat in the touring team's second innings as they lost by an innings and 40 runs to an understrength Essex side at Chelmsford yesterday.

Allott, who played in the first two tests but was omitted from the third, has back trouble.

New Zealand captain Stephen Fleming said: 'There has to be a big doubt about both players (for the Test).'

Fleming's side go to The Oval for the deciding match — the series is level 1-1 — after two poor batting performances in the four-day game against Essex.

New Zealand, 257 behind of first innings, were all out for 217 after starting the last day on 94 for four.

Roger Twose alone offered significant resistance by making 91 before falling to pace bowler Ricky Anderson, who did most of the damage by capturing four for 39.



Scene from the colourful opening ceremony of the ninth Pan Arab Games in Amman on August 15. — AFP photo

# Big bowl getting face-lift

Sports Reporter

terday to supervise the works of different sub-committees.

The BFF is planning to arrange colourful opening and closing ceremonies for the Bangabandhu Cup. An Opening and Closing ceremony sub-committee official revealed that Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina might attend both the occasions.

The opening ceremony would include-- the introduction with the players of 12 participating teams with the chief guest followed by a march past, a colourful performance by Bharateshwari Homes, BDR and Ansars during the closing ceremony.

The rate of tickets for the second Bangabandhu Cup will be announced in a day or two, a senior Bangladesh Football Federation (BFF) official said yesterday.

Talking to The Daily Star last night, BFF joint secretary Badal Roy revealed that the rate of two types of hospitality boxes— AC and non AC— might be fixed at Taka forty and thirty thousand respectively for the whole tournament.

Besides, the tickets of the western and eastern galleries may be fixed at Taka 30 and 25 (respectively) each.

Meanwhile, Japan and Uzbekistan have sent their players' list yesterday. Both Japan and Uzbekistan are sending combined league teams for

the 12-team meet.

Japan, which is reported to have picked players from the J-League, will arrive in the city on August 25 while Uzbekistan will arrive on the following day.

Teams  
Japan: Hiroki Mizuhara (GK), Katsunori Takekawa (Def), Hirokazu Iguchi (Def), Yoshinari Hyakutake (Def), Yoshio Koido (Def), Taku Watanabe (Def), Hiroki Yoda (Def), Yoshiyuki Yokose (MF), Takaaki Tokushige (MF), Takayoshi Amma (MF), Koji Kataoka (MF), Koji Homma (GK), Yuji Abe (MF), Nobuhisa Isono (MF), Shigeru Suzuki (FW), Takashi Takahashi (FW), Hideki Matsuki (FW) and Hitoshi Sasaki (GK).

Officials: Keizo Kato (manager) and Shinji Tanaka (coach).

Uzbekistan: Yuriy Sheykin, Aleksey Shtarev, Albert Bagatdinov, Pavel Gulmanov, Rustamjon Almatov, Vladimir Buntov, Ivan Gujva, Otabek Mansurov, Artyom Galkin, Davronbek Turabekov, Alexandr Starov, Igor Nesterov, Nikolai Goldenko, Otabek Ataev, Sergei Kazak, Artur Yusdashev, Abbas Akhmedkhodjaev Abbas, Jasur Abduraimov.

Officials: Mamirjan Rahimov, Aleksandr Ivankov, Gennadiy Denisov, Furkat Abdumamitov and Shokarim Shakadirov.



Renovation works all around the Bangabandhu National Stadium, which will host the second Bangabandhu Cup from August 27, is going on in full swing. Hundreds of workers have been working day and night to give a face-lift to the ageing big bowl. Officials are also very busy to orchestrate different sub-committees to make the meet a success.

The sub-committees are holding meetings everyday to monitor the progress of their works. At least four sub-committee meetings were held at the BFF office yesterday.

Apart from this, Home Minister Mohammad Nasim, the organising committee chairman, is also maintaining a close liaison with the federation. The minister spent more than two hours at the BFF yes-

# Johnson, Walker remain banned



SEVILLE, Spain, Aug 17: Ben Johnson, the subject of the biggest drugs scandal in the history of the Olympics, has lost his battle to return to competition before next year's Sydney Games, reports Reuters.

The International Amateur Athletic Federation (IAAF) rejected Johnson's appeal to run again at a meeting of its ruling council on Monday.

Canadian Johnson, 38 in December, was stripped of his 100 metres gold medal at the 1988 Seoul Olympics after testing positive for steroids.

Five years later he was banned for life after a second positive drugs test but the decision was overturned by the Canadian Court of Arbitration last April which ruled that the Canadian governing body had failed to follow both "IAAF procedures and its own."

IAAF general secretary Istvan Gyulai said: "The Canadian arbitrator has no jurisdiction under IAAF rules."

Furthermore, the grounds upon which he decided to reinstate partially Mr. Johnson do not, in our view, amount to sufficient justification for this. We believe sport-related questions should be decided within sport."

The decision was taken after hearings were held with Johnson and his representatives earlier this month in Monaco.

The world governing body

also decided not to accept a UK Athletics decision which had cleared European 200 metres champion Dougie Walker for competition despite a positive test for a banned substance.

The IAAF will refer the Walker case to its independent

arbitration panel. A date has yet to be set.

Last month, UK Athletics, the British governing body, cleared the Scot of wrongdoing after traces of the banned anabolic steroid nandrolone were found in an out-of-competition test last December.

Gyulai said: "The anti-doping commission (of the IAAF) unanimously believes that this is an erroneous decision. Our rules are very clear about say-

ing if a banned substance is found in the urine sample of an athlete then it is a doping offence."

"Even Dougie Walker accepts that and admits that. He just doesn't know how it got there. The IAAF doping commission doesn't say that Dougie Walker is not telling the truth... The criteria for a doping case is whether a substance is in the body or not. In the meantime he is still eligible to compete."

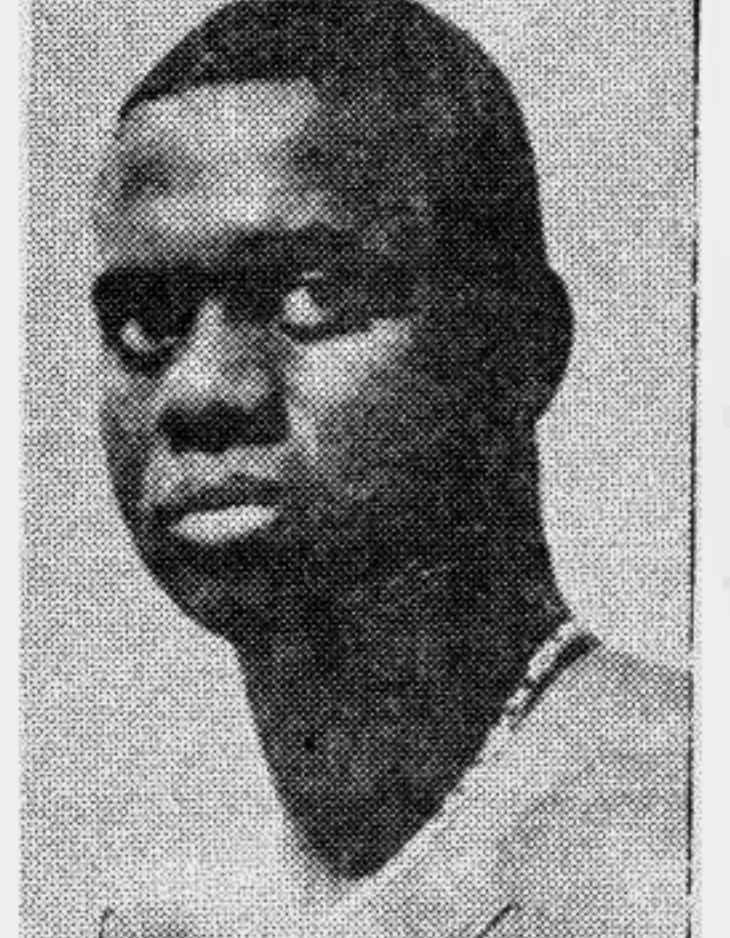
UK Athletics accepted Walker's plea that he had no idea how the substance had entered his body.

Britain's 1992 Olympic 100 metres champion Linford Christie has failed a drugs test for the same substance and UK Athletics are currently reviewing that case.

UK Athletics official Jayne Pearce said: "We are disappointed but we are committed to the decision of the disciplinary committee that cleared Dougie Walker."

The meeting, just a few days before the start of the world championships here, also discussed the drugs case of Cuban high-jumper Javier Sotomayor, who has tested positive for cocaine.

The IAAF said it regarded the case as a doping case. "The IAAF doping commission believes it is a case and the standard letter has already been sent to the Cuban federation to do the necessary disciplinary proceedings."



BEN JOHNSON

## Bhutia awarded

GANGTOK, Aug 17: Star footballer Baichung Bhutia, the first Indian to play as a professional with a European club, has been awarded the 'Sikkim state award' for his contribution to sports, reports PTI.

The nimble-footed Bhutia, who hailed from Sikkim, was given a citation and cash prize of one lakh rupees by Chief Minister Pawan Chamling on the Independence Day.

Bhutia was set to sign a three-year contract with English Second Division club Bury based in greater Manchester.

## World Chess

# Draws order of the day

LAS VEGAS, Aug 17: All four players in the semifinals of the World Chess Championship at Caesars Palace made quiet draws in the second game of these four-game mini-matches, reports AP.

Fifth-seeded Michael Adams of England drew with Armenia's Vladimir Akopian in only 16 moves Monday. Liviu Nisipanu and Alexander Khalifman agreed to a draw after 28 moves.

## Kuwait's act of unity

AMMAN, Aug 17: Even though Kuwait did not send athletes to the Arab Games, it participated in the opening ceremony to maintain "the unity of the Arab family," a government minister said, reports AP.

Kuwait is boycotting the games to protest the presence of the Iraqi team. Trade and Commerce Minister Abdul Wahab al-Wazan was quoted as saying by the Jordan Times on Monday.

Yet Al-Wazan and two senior sports officials attended the opening ceremony on Sunday at the Amman International Stadium.

Kuwait's flag was carried by a sole flag bearer from Jordan while teams from 20 other Arab countries and the Palestinian Territories marched behind their own flags.

The 21-day Games features about 4,500 athletes in 28 events, plus track and field competitions. The track and field events began four days before Sunday's formal opening to allow athletes to finish in times for the World Athletics Championships in Seville, Spain.



Action from the Pan-Arab Games football match between hosts Jordan and Qatar on August 16. Jordan won 3-0. — AFP photo

# Gaekwad being optimistic



CHENNAI, Aug 17: Indian cricket manager Anshuman Gaekwad yesterday said the morale of the team was high and that they could win the coming tours in Sri Lanka and Singapore provided they played to their full potential, reports PTI.

Talking to reporters after the first day of the five-day camp for the team, which is leaving for Sri Lanka on August 20, he came down on press reports harping on Azharuddin's absence when the player himself had stated that he had not yet recovered from the shoulder injury and the surgery.

Gaekwad was evasive when asked about more powers being given to Sachin Tendulkar as captain in selecting the team and the playing eleven. The selectors had chosen the squad only after consultations with the manager and captain, who were also part and parcel of the selection process, he said.

Dwelling at length on the subject, Gaekwad said "There were instances in the past when we did not have Srinath and Sachin, besides few others on tours. But the team had played well and also won tournaments."

The present side had been bolstered by inclusion of two players Vinod Kamble and M S K Prasad. "Vinod was in the team to Sharjah, where he could not play due to illness and at that time, no one raised his finger on his inclusion."

On Sachin opening the batting, he said "the situation is not alarming enough to bring in changes in the batting order. Sachin is a world-class batsman and can play whichever order he wants to."

To a question on whether the team required the services of trainer Andrew Kokinos (whose contract ended with the World Cup), he said "It remains to be seen if we require a trainer. Now that we do not have a trainer for the coming twin tour, we would assess the necessity and if needed, would report to the board." Dr Ravinder Chadda (Physio) was also there as trainer, he said.

Asked about the presence of left-handed medium-pacers, including Ashish Nehra and off-spinner Harbhajan Singh in the nets, he said "These were done for variety in bowling and also to assess what kind of opposition we would face in the coming tours."

The selectors were the best judges and they had kept their faith in the player," he added.

Gaekwad reiterated that the team had not performed badly in the World Cup and had defeated the best combinations. "The favourites could not make it to the final. Does that mean they had done badly," he asked.

Stating that the players were match winners, he referred to Srinath and Anil Kumble amongst bowlers and Saurav Ganguly, Rahul Dravid, Sachin Tendulkar and Ajay Jadeja in batting.

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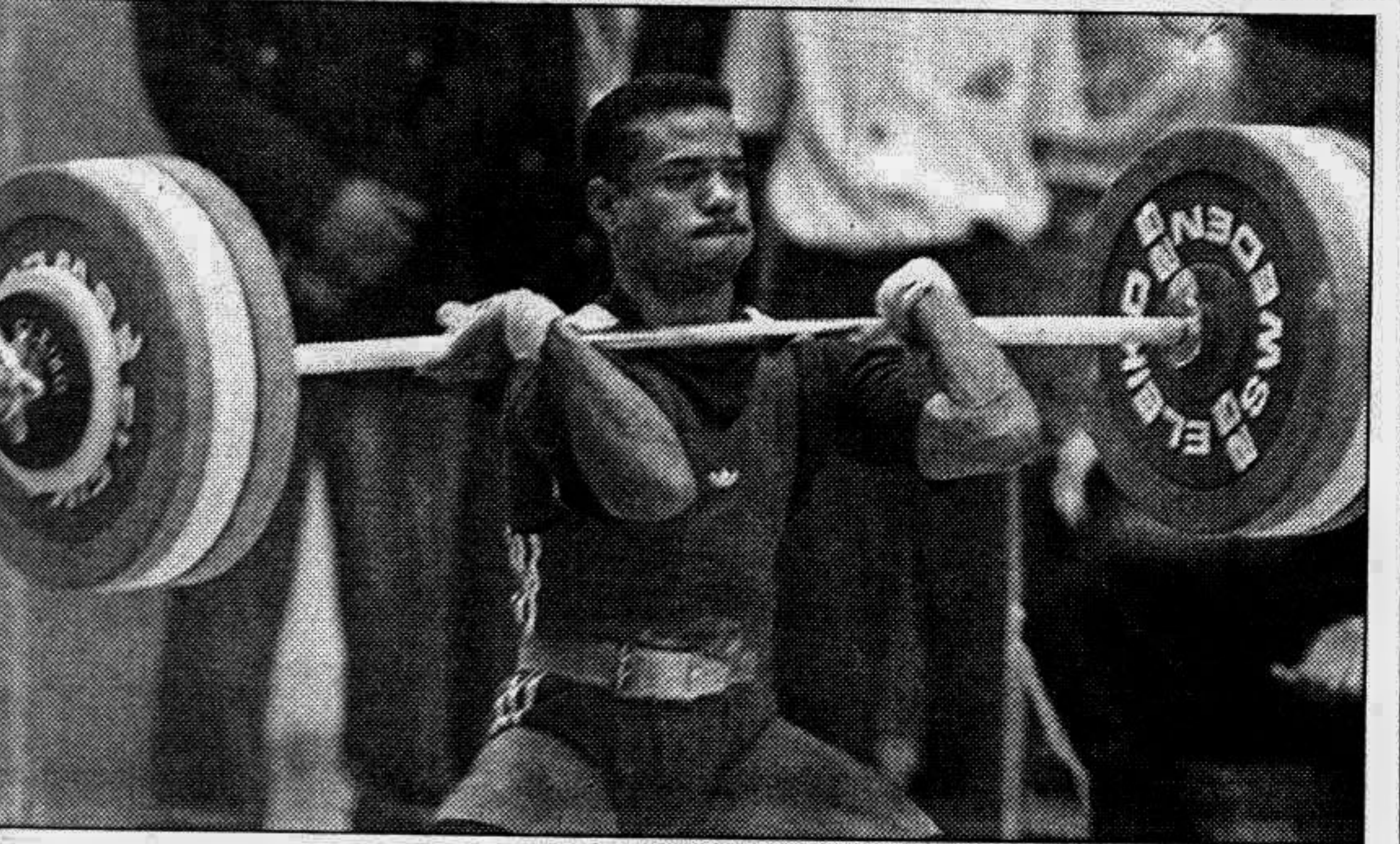
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Egyptian Ali Mohamad Hamid lifts 140 kilograms to set a new Arab record at the ninth Pan Arab Games in Amman on August 17. Hamid has already grabbed three gold medals. — AFP photo