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Star Sport

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- Who will be the match referee in the Bangladesh's inaugural Test against India next month?
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- Who lifted the Princess Cup tennis title?
Serena Hings Dolke
- Who is the new managing director of United Cricket Board of South Africa?
Peter Pollock Gerald Majola Duncan Fletcher
- Who won the Shaheed Major Nazmul Haq International rating chess title?
Refaat Rakib Rajeeb
- Who is new cricket coach of Zimbabwe?
Houghton Rackemann Pycroft

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SPORTS TALK



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"My ultimate goal is to be mentioned among the greats, to be mentioned in the same sentence as Michael Jordan, Muhammad Ali or Pele."

Nat'l Bank football

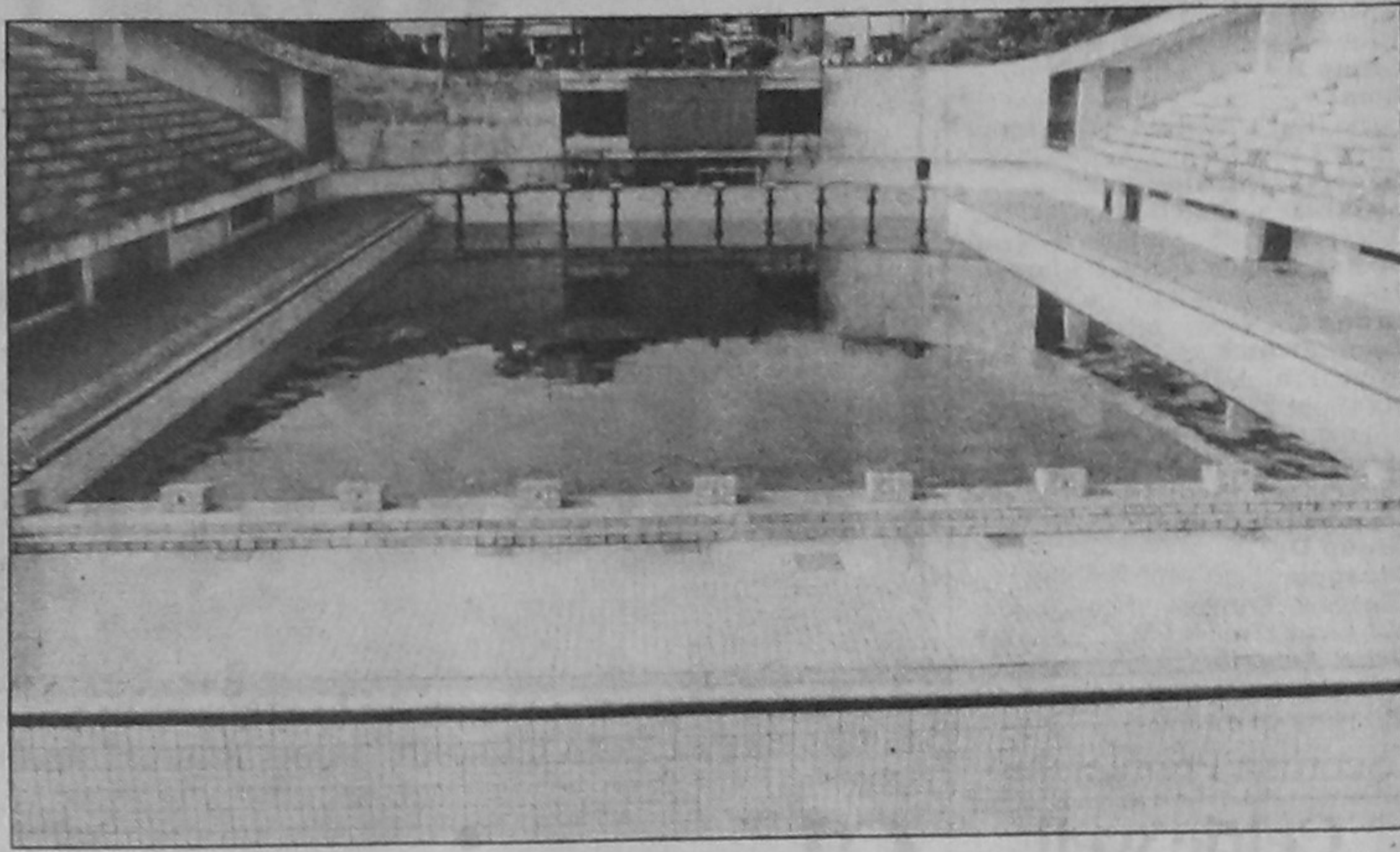
Sports Reporter
BRTC stunned leaders Agran Bank 3-0 in a crucial Super Four match of the National Bank First Division Football League at the Sher-e-Bangla National Stadium in Mirpur yesterday.
In a surprisingly top-sided affair, BRTC led the first half 1-0.
Siraj scored as early in the fourth minute into the match while Alamgir and Tajul struck twice within a space of 17 minutes during the second session.
With this win BRTC improved their points tally to 32 from 13 games. The Bankers on the other hand remained glued to their previous collection of 27 points, three more than second-placed Fakirpool Youngmen's Club, who played one match less.

Partex tennis

Sports Reporter
Officers Club of Dhaka, Balisera Valley Club of Sylhet and hosts Gulshan Club moved into the Partex Inter-Club tennis tournament semifinals after winning their respective quarterfinals at the Gulshan Club tennis court yesterday.
In the day's first match, Officers Club recorded a 2-1 win over American Club while Balisera Valley Club beat Uttara Club of Dhaka by an identical margin. Gulshan Club won the last match 2-0 against Narayanganj Club.
In tomorrow's semifinal, Officers Club will meet the winners of today's match between Agrabad Club of Chittagong and Dhaka University Teachers Club while Gulshan Club will take on Balisera Valley Club.
The final will be held on October 22.

JU soccer

Government and Politics Department defeated Philosophy 6-1 in the second semifinal of the inter-department football competition of Jahangirnagar University (JU) yesterday, reports UNB.
Babu, Ching, Millat and Nannu netted 3, 1, 1 and 1 goals respectively for the winners at the central playground of the university.
They will face Archeology in the final on October 21.
Vice Chancellor Abdul Bayes will attend the concluding function as chief guest.



THE PICTURE SAYS IT ALL: The condition of the pool at the National Swimming Complex in Mirpur is below par. Instead of fresh water, the pool is infested with algae and weed. — Star photo by Amran Hossain

NSC couldn't care less

Hasan Masood
Swimmer Dolly Akhter became a national embarrassment when she was disqualified for false start in the heats at the Sydney Olympic Games last month. But once you look at the facilities where Dolly trained, you would feel nothing but sorry for the poor girl.
The National Swimming Complex at Mirpur, where Dolly and other aspiring swimmers prepare themselves for international events, is in a state of shambles due to horrible maintenance by its custodian — the National Sports Council (NSC). The state of the adjacent Sher-e-Bangla National Stadium is however a little better.
The synthetic track at the Sher-e-Bangla stadium has been damaged in many places while the swimming pool is now infested with weed, algae and is a safe haven for hundreds of frogs.
"Costly electronic timing devices installed at the Sher-e-Bangla Stadium and the swimming complex seven years ago for the sixth SAF Games, have been remained out of order for the last four years.
The electronic scoreboard at the nearby Suhrawardy National Indoor Stadium has been recently repaired after staying disfunctional for nearly two years.
Those sophisticated instruments were supposed to be kept under the temperature of 14 degrees Celsius. But they are now left carelessly inside the cramped gymnasium of the Sher-e-Bangla Stadium.
The photo-finish device of the synthetic track was last used during the Sixth Bangladesh Games held in December 1996. But timings of the last four national and age-group athletics championships were monitored by manual devices which prevented top athletes of the country from knowing their actual positions.
The electronic timing mechanism at the National Swimming Complex is partially out of order.
Many believe that inadequate knowledge of NSC experts about handling of the equipment have led those machines to become defective in the process.
Manufactured in Japan, those machines were installed by a German company with the assistance of Rabban Sports, a local firm. Interestingly, there was no response from the German company when NSC contacted it last year through fax asking for a repairing.
The matter was kept in the fridge until when Bangladesh Olympic Association (BOA) in its emergency meeting on Tuesday raised the issue that they would need the electronic timing device during the forthcoming 7th Bangladesh Games. The Games was originally scheduled to start from November 18, but due to the current flood condition in the country it has been suspended for an indefinite period.
The BOA president and Bangladesh Army Chief Lt Gen Mustafizur Rahman personally asked the NSC secretary Mahmudul Karim to fix up the device with in shortest possible time. BOA plans to start the Games in January after the Ramadan, sources said.
The NSC secretary confirmed that he had a talk with BOA president about it. And he has already instructed persons concerned in the NSC to take necessary steps to get the equipment fixed.
"There is a company here named Silicon Valley who can repair the equipment. But they See page 15

Test league could be reality

NAIROBI, Oct 18 (Internet report): The first steps to an official world Test championship have been made by the ICC after it announced that a co-ordinated programme of international fixtures will be introduced from next year.
A ten-year forward programme of international fixtures will be introduced from May 1, 2001, asking Test countries to play each other on a home and away basis on a five year cycle. The ICC has conceded, however, that some major tours, such as the Ashes series, will remain on a four-year cycle.
Full details will be released by November 30 once all countries have considered the proposed dates of tours to and by Bangladesh, but the move should see minor Test nations receiving recognition they have yet to be accorded.
Bangladesh, who were admitted to the Test arena in June, will play their inaugural Test, against India, on November 10th. They have yet to schedule any further five-dayers and were downed by 82 runs by lowly South African provincial side Griqualand West in their only first class match since their admission.
Zimbabwe have yet to play a Test in Australia, and have only faced the Baggy Greens once at home, having been admitted to the Test arena in 1992. Sri Lanka have so far only played one-off Tests in England, since their inaugural Test in 1982.
There are fears, however, that the move may lead to a devaluing of Test cricket. Australia have already mooted plans to play minor nations in Northern Australia during the Southern Hemisphere winter.
"This move will allow countries to plan and market their international fixtures in a co-ordinated fashion," a statement by the ICC said on Wednesday. "The next ICC Board meeting in Melbourne, Australia on 10th and 12th February 2001 will consider the formal introduction of a world Test Championship."
Until now, cricket fans worldwide have relied on the Wisden World Championship, which began in 1996 as a means of ranking the nine Test teams. The unofficial system counts the most recent series, both home and away, between each pair of countries. Teams receive two points for winning a series and one for drawing. A one-off Test counts as a series.
Current Wisden rankings: Australia, South Africa, West Indies, Sri Lanka, Pakistan, England, New Zealand, India, Zimbabwe.
"I can't afford to have someone of his experience missing when we reach the decisive stages of the tournament. So I may well rest him," he said.
Milutinovic, who if he guides China to the 2002 World Cup will become the first coach to field five different teams at the finals, will hope Fan's much-coveted central defensive partner Zhang Enhua recovers from a knock he sustained in the Indonesia match.
The Serb has changed his tune since the beginning of the tournament when he wrote off his side's chances of winning the trophy for the first time.
"I say bring on Japan (scorer of 12 goals in their two matches) as I think we can beat them as we have shown a lot of improvement so far and they have not had a difficult match unlike us," added Milutinovic, referring to the fortunate 2-2 draw with South Korea.
On Thursday Milutinovic will discover how far this renaissance has come as two goal hungry strikers try to get back on the scoring trail.

Uhrin hopes to stun Milutinovic

TRIPOLI, Lebanon, Oct 18: While China coach Bora Milutinovic is already looking ahead and wanting to take on rampant Japan, his Kuwaiti counterpart Dusan Uhrin is planning a nasty surprise for the Group B leaders here on Thursday, reports AFP.
China, permanent under-achievers branded the chokers of Asian football, lead the group on goal difference from Kuwait but Uhrin believes his side can actually take the group.
He bases his belief on the return to form of Kuwaiti striking icon Jassim Al-Houaidi, who struck a sweet winner against a disappointing South Korea on Monday.
"It is imperative for the team that Jassim is back to his best as he is the natural leader, both the soul and the goalscorer of the team," he said.
"He is a very talented player who could have played abroad with some success," he added.
Al-Houaidi, the top-scorer in international football in 1998 with 20 goals, looked a lot sharper than in the first match against Indonesia - a 0-0 draw - and is looking forward to taking on a pretty solid Chinese defence.

TODAY'S MATCHES
China v Kuwait (8 pm BST)
South Korea v Indonesia (9.50 pm BST)
The matches will be shown live on Channel 1.

Uhrin, who took over from compatriot Milan MacLaurin in 1999 just as he did the Czech job in 1993, is more concerned over the form of Al-Houaidi's strike partner Bashir Abdullah, whose touch has been superb but who has not scored in four matches.
"He is getting increasingly depressed about the situation but I keep telling 'Bashir' that the goal will come and he should relax and stop trying to win penalties by diving all the time," the former Sparta Prague coach said.
The strike duo's job might well be made easier if Milutinovic decides to rest Crystal Palace centre-half Fan Zhiyi. Fan has already picked up a yellow card and Milutinovic is wary of him receiving another.
"I can't afford to have someone of his experience missing when we reach the decisive stages of the tournament. So I may well rest him," he said.
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Pakistan XI in command

Sports Reporter
Saleem Elahi hit a flowing century to help Pakistan XI score an imposing 270 for 3 in a limited-over exhibition match against Asia XI at the National Stadium, Karachi today.
The right-handed opener smacked 11 fours to score a run-a-ball 104. Two Bangladesh players- Khaled Mahmud and Mehrab Hossain Opee- are also playing for Asia XI in the day-night match, organised to celebrate the anniversary of Pakistani cricket magazine Akbar-e-Wattan.

SCOREBOARD

Scoreboard of Pakistan XI in their match against Asia XI:

PAKISTAN XI				
Nazir c R Mahmud b Safar	26			
Elahi c Solanki b Alleyne	104			
Azhar c Salim b Afridi	31			
Inzamam not out	71			
Yousuf not out	23			
Extras (b-1, lb-1, w-7, nb-6)	15			
Total (43 wickets in 45 overs)	270			
DNB: Moin Khan, Abdur Razaq, Faisal Iqbal, Shoaib Malik, Mushtaq Ahmed, Waqar Younis				
Fall of wicket: 1-35; 2-132; 3-209				

Bowler	O	M	R	W
Wasim	5	0	15	0
Safar	5	0	33	1
Mahmud	5	0	46	0
Alleyne	8	0	49	1
Afridi	7	0	40	1
Salman	1	0	8	0
Nadeem	7	0	36	0
Abdul Qadir	7	0	41	0

Umpires: Islam Khan and Afzaal Ahmed

TV Umpire: Gunaid Ghagor

'ICC can't ban Pak players'

KARACHI, Oct 18: The Pakistan Cricket Board said today that the International Cricket Council did not have the power to force it to suspend any of its players linked to a match-fixing scandal, reports Reuters.
PCB chairman Tahir Zia told a news conference that the game's governing body might not agree with the findings of a Pakistan government probe, headed by Justice Malik Qayyum, but argued it could not overrule its findings.
"The ICC will remain the recommending authority but not the implementing authority. The job of implementing the recommendations of the judge remains the prerogative of the PCB," Zia said.
Former Pakistan captain Salim Malik and paceman Ataur Rehman were banned for life in May, while six others, including Wasim Akram, were censured and fined on the recommendations of Qayyum, whose inquiry lasted nearly two years.
Zia added: "The ICC is nobody to tell the PCB that these (six) boys cannot play. My stand is very clear that our boys are under our control."
"I am not denying or confronting the ICC. I am saying whatever they are saying is wrong."
Zia said there was not enough evidence to prove the charges against Akram. "The fact of the matter is that no concrete evidence was submitted to prove his involvement in match-fixing," he said.
Zia also said that the PCB been prompt in calling for an inquiry into allegations of match-fixing in last year's World Cup matches against Bangladesh and India.
"I want to be very sure in my mind that this (allegation of match-fixing) has finished. It was an unfinished agenda which I think has to conclude," he said.

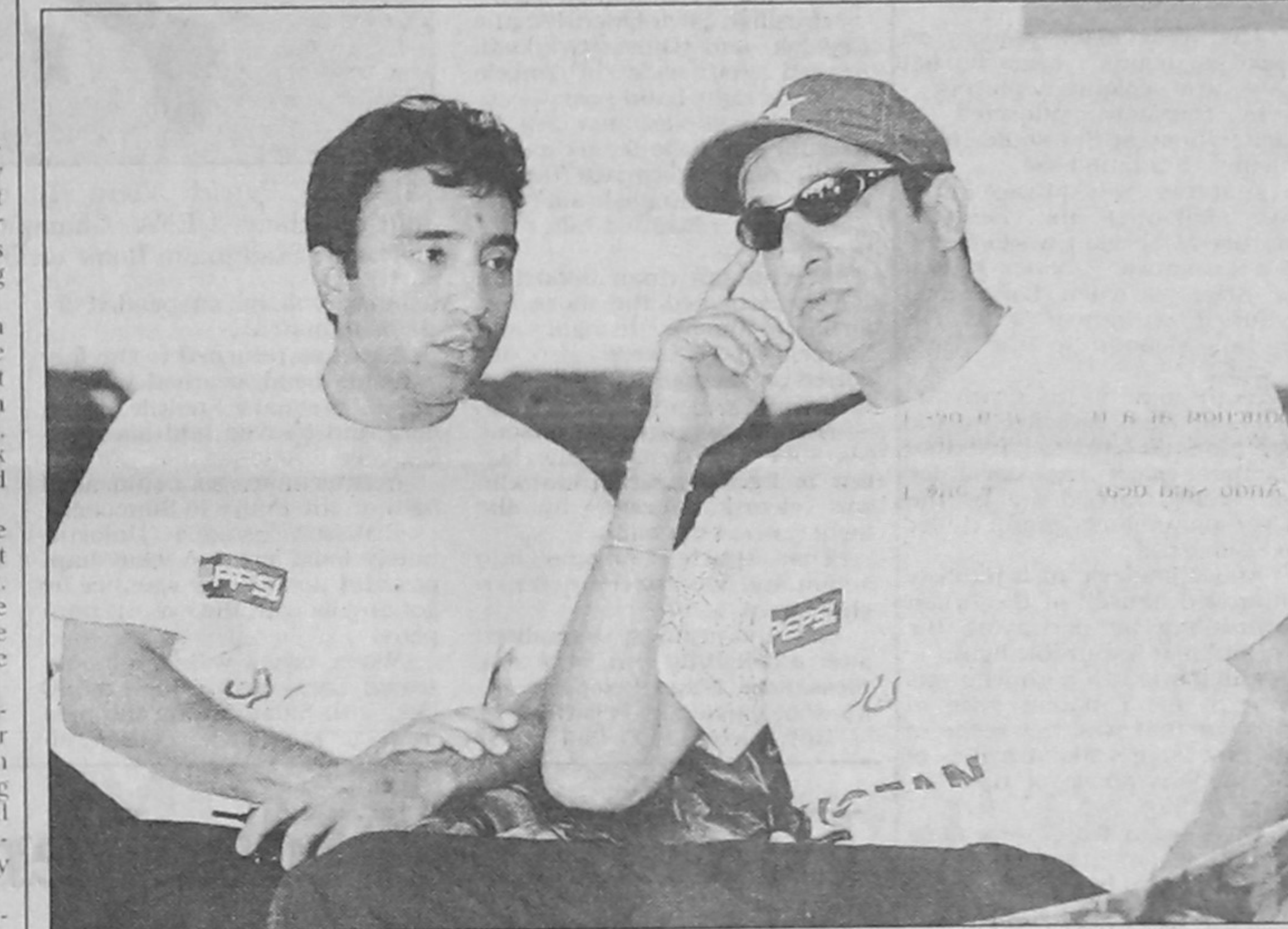
MacLaurin takes back his horns

LONDON, Oct 18: English cricket chief Lord MacLaurin has moved to play down any offence he might have caused to hosts Pakistan over differences of opinion about corruption, reports AFP.
MacLaurin, the England and Wales Cricket Board chairman, in Kenya for the two-day International Cricket Council meeting, said: "I am very pleased that England are back in Pakistan and there is no question of anyone being ineligible to play against us."
Lord Griffiths, head of the ICC's Code of Conduct Commission, has been asked to make further recommendations on whether five Pakistan Test players - Wasim Akram, Mushtaq Ahmed, Inzamam-ul-Haq, Saeed Anwar and Waqar Younis - should face stronger punishments than suggested by the Justice Malik Mohammad Qayyum report.
All are currently available for the three one-day internationals and three-match Test series.
"I said in advance of the meeting that anyone whose honesty in the past had been doubted or who did not co-operate fully with the judicial inquiry in Pakistan should be suspended until their innocence was proved or otherwise, but we are only one voice in 10 and we had a very fair discussion of the whole issue," MacLaurin told The Times newspaper.

Zia stands by Miandad

Pak players' revolt over prize money

KARACHI, Oct 18: Pakistan's cricket chief came out in support of embattled coach Javed Miandad Wednesday after seven top players threatened to walk out of the side unless he is replaced, reports AFP.
In the latest crisis to beset Pakistani cricket, Pakistan Cricket Board (PCB) chairman General Tahir Zia held an emergency meeting Wednesday with six of the players including captain Moin Khan.
They have complained that Miandad pocketed too much of the 150,000 dollars prize money won at a recent ICC Knockout Trophy in Kenya.
Pakistan, favoured to win the International Cricket Council (ICC) event in Nairobi, lost to New Zealand in the semifinal last week.
Zia said after the meeting that Miandad had the board's full support and urged the players to focus on the current high-stakes tour by England, the first in 13 years.
"If the players want to revolt they should revolt against the board and not against Miandad because it would be the decision of the board to distribute the prize money," Zia said.
"I support players in most of the matters but I have appointed Miandad and will back him. His words will be final in the team's coaching."
Khan, Wasim Akram, Waqar Younis, Saeed Anwar, Mushtaq Ahmed and Inzamam-ul-Haq attended the closed-door meeting but were tight-lipped as they left.
"All the matters have been solved but I will not comment any more," Khan said.
Off-spinner Saqlain Mush-taq, said to be the seventh player involved in the dispute, was not in Karachi.
Sources close to the team said the matter had not been resolved and the players remained unsatisfied.
"We had not included Miandad in the prize money for the Kenya event but it is a rule for all other teams that the coach has a share," Zia said.
Miandad, 43, had to resign a fortnight before last year's World Cup after he fell out with senior players, but he was recalled for a second stint when Pakistan lost two home Tests against Sri Lanka in March.
He said the problem had been resolved and urged the team to concentrate on the task at hand, with the first one-day match against England due on October 24.
"I have signed a contract with PCB and I am bound to that. I don't see any problems like a share in the prize money," Miandad said.
"If the players had any problems with me they should have told me. Remember we are to play a tough series and such reports can affect morale."
The players' revolt joins a string of embarrassing scandals in Pakistani cricket, including the firing of six players earlier this year over match-fixing allegations.
The PCB last week asked for another inquiry into match-fixing, this time relating to allegations over two of Pakistan's World Cup outings last year.
In August, three Pakistani players were fined and suspended in a sex scandal after they invited women to their hotel room in Lahore.
Zia said he had assured the players at the meeting that the request for another corruption inquiry was not made at the behest of foreign cricket bodies such as the International Cricket Council.
"I have told them that we have requested the World Cup inquiry for our own satisfaction and not on anybody's instructions," he said.
England's tour includes three limited-overs internationals, three Tests and as many side games.
England's last tour in 1987 was nearly cancelled when a day's play was lost in the Faisalabad Test after then England captain Mike Gatting and Pakistani umpire Shakoor Rana had an on-field shouting match.



Former Pakistan captains Saeed Anwar (L) and Wasim Akram having a discussion after their meeting with the PCB chairman General Tahir Zia at the National Stadium in Karachi yesterday. — AFP photo

India's moment of truth

SHARJAH, United Arab Emirates, Oct 18 (AFP): Cricketers and officials alike in India are bracing themselves for a decisive fortnight on and off the field.
As Saurav Ganguly's men geared up for the Sharjah tri-series starting here on Friday, at home the Central Bureau of Investigation (CBI) was putting the finishing touches to its match-fixing report.
The CBI is expected to submit its findings, reportedly naming several Test stars as guilty, to the Indian sports ministry before the tri-series against Sri Lanka and Zimbabwe ends on October 29.
By the end of the month, India will also have its first foreign coach in place.
The cricket board will announce its choice midway through the Sharjah tournament after meeting the main contenders, former New Zealand opener John Wright and Greg Chappell of Australia, in Madras.
"This is a decisive time for Indian cricket," said former Indian star and television commentator Ravi Shastri. "No one is sure what will happen next."
Disual performances by the national team earlier this year, combined with the match-fixing scandal, left millions of fans in cricket-crazy India disenchanted with the game they worshipped.
Ganguly's men won back some support with a remarkable resurgence at the recent ICC tournament in Nairobi where they knocked out world champions Australia and South Africa on their way to the final.
Beaten to the title by New Zealand, the Indians will be looking to win the tri-series here to convince fans Nairobi was not a flash in the pan.
"The boys were determined to restore the credibility of Indian cricket, and I think they did that at Nairobi," stop-gap coach Anshuman Gaekwad said ahead of Friday's opener against Sri Lanka.
"One-day cricket is a very open and unpredictable game, but a win in Sharjah will hold us in good stead for the rest of the season."
Ganguly's back-to-back centuries at Nairobi, Sachin Tendulkar's emergence as one-day cricket's leading scorer and the promise shown by newcomers Yuvraj Singh and Zaheer Khan gives India hope for the future.
Indian cricket is also anxious for an end to scandal: it is widely hoped the long-awaited CBI report both nails the guilty and allows the innocent to clear See page 15

Kenya apply for Test status

NAIROBI, Oct 18 (Internet report): Kenya have applied for Test status at the executive board meeting of the International Cricket Council in Nairobi.
Their case was proposed by the West Indies and seconded by Zimbabwe. They must now meet ICC criteria and pass inspections before being admitted as full members.
Jimmy Ravani, chairman of the Kenyan Cricket Association, does not expect Kenya to be promoted immediately. "They will probably ask us to play more games and do more development work," he said. "Bangladesh applied in 1997, and it took them three years to become a Test nation. But I think at the moment our team is as good as theirs, if not better."

Kenya gained official one-day international status in 1997, but since then they have won only one match against an established nation, beating India in Gwalior in 1997-98. According to Asif Karim, their captain at last year's World Cup, they are still too reliant on the small Asian population.
"There are 10 clubs in the first division, and most are 50 to 60 per cent Asian, if not 100 per cent," said Karim. "It gives an artificial surface to the game. We have to show that cricket can be a way of life for everyone."
There is a strong rivalry between Kenya's racial groups. It was evident during Sunday's ICC Knockout Trophy final in Nairobi, when New Zealand's win over India left the Asian majority looking glum. Black spectators, however, were jubilant.
With ticket prices up to 20 pound sterling, the ground was less than half full for many of the games. "In hindsight, we could have done things differently," Karim said. "We were trying to make up our expenditure, which was 480,000 pounds sterling. We will come up short of that figure, but the ICC may be able to help."
Despite the financial shortfall, the ICC Trophy has left a positive legacy in Nairobi. The Gynkhana Club ground is now an international-class venue, with some of the finest pitches in world cricket.
And the organisation of the tournament was largely hitch-free, despite the weaknesses of Kenya's infrastructure. If Test status does not come first, the next big step will probably be a World Cup match in 2003, when South Africa are to be the principal hosts.