

Rajshahi Kabadi

From Our Correspondent
RAJSHAHI, Nov 12: Mahabag Sporting Club and Abahani Krira Chakra won their respective matches of the Rajshahi First Division Kabadi League at the local gymnasium today.

In the first match of the day, Mahabag defeated Abahani 26-23 points.

Refreshing

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on the field today was the icing on his brilliant five-wicket haul.

Naimur plotting of the downfall of two batsmen stands out. When Rahul Dravid came in to bat, Naimur put six men on the off-side in catching and run-saving positions. He however made an initial error by not keeping a forward short leg.

It is natural for batsmen to try and work something on the leg-side once their options on the off-side is blocked. In doing so they tend to give catches at short leg. Dravid, when on two, scooped a Mohammad Rafique delivery to the same area but there were no fielders.

It didn't take long for Naimur to spot the incident and soon there was a short leg in place and Dravid eventually fell there.

Saurav Ganguly always backs himself up for going over the boundary even if there are fielders on the line. Still when on 84, very few Test batsmen would want to hit sixes preferring to edge toward a hundred.

Naimur could not have been blamed had he brought his field up thinking likewise but he persevered with a long off and Ganguly got trapped.

There was however one uncharacteristic blemish from the captain when he spoiled a simple chance to run out Sunil Joshi. Had he been behind the stumps at the non-striking end, he could have easily gathered the throw from mid-wicket to complete the run out as Joshi was stranded the half way down the pitch. Rather Naimur was caught off-guard and was never in a position to collect the return.

As the game moves into Day Four, it appears that Bangladesh have done enough to the amazement of everybody to ensure at least a draw. Things have gone "To plan" according to coach Sarwan Inan and he knows strategy as good as anybody. To those who have trained under the former BKS coach, it wasn't difficult to spot Inan's mark on the field placing and in some other finer points.

So far so good but the crumbling pitch still may have a decisive say and the Indian spinners are keeping their fingers crossed for that bit of encouragement.

Azhar ducks BCCI probe



NEW DELHI, Nov 12: The Board of Control for Cricket in India (BCCI) on Saturday launched an independent inquiry into charges of match-fixing levelled against five national players by a federal police agency, officials said, reports AFP.

Former skipper Mohammad Azharuddin, one of the five accused of match-fixing, skipped the maiden questioning round as the board's anti-corruption chief, K Madhavan, began cross-examining players in the southern city of Madras.

Madhavan appeared unhappy with Azharuddin's absence. "A haruddin will be given another opportunity to submit himself. Otherwise, I will be forced to go by his evidence, as reported by the Central Bureau of Investigation (CBI)," he said.

Only whistle-blower Manoj Prabhakar, who was called along with Azharuddin and batsman Ajay Sharma for the cross-examination, appeared before Madhavan for a closed-door session.

Sources said Prabhakar was "grilled" for five hours. Madhavan said Prabhakar, who had accused Indian cricket icon Kapil Dev of offering him a bribe to underplay in 1994, had "gone away in a happy frame of mind after being questioned."

Prabhakar, who has retired from Test cricket, was not available for comment.

Meanwhile, in the northern Indian city of Lucknow a local court on Saturday lodged a case of "treason" against the five tainted player, officials said.

District Judicial Magistrate

Navneet Kumar fixed November 17 as the date for the first hearing after an unnamed petitioner filed the case saying "match-fixing and betting was an act of treason and betrayal."

The petition also named former national physiotherapist Ali Irani, who has also been named by the CBI in the scandal.

A guilty verdict in a case of treason in India can lead to the death sentence.



AZHARUDDIN

In New Delhi, activists belonging to the Hindu right wing Shiv Sena party late Saturday attacked a beauty parlour owned by Manoj Prabhakar's wife in upscale Greater Kailash, throwing rocks and missiles at the building.

Several window panes in the parlour and a car parked outside was damaged in the attack, a police spokesman said, adding that five Sena activists were arrested from the site.

No one was hurt in the attack but the incident almost led

to a stampede, a witness said.

The Shiv Sena, which pelted Ajay Jadhava with rotten eggs last Saturday at a news conference, warned the group will step up such attacks against the tainted players.

"This is the beginning of our crusade against corruption. The corrupt are traitors and they should be hanged," Sena's New Delhi chief Jai Bhagwan Goyal told reporters.

"Shiv Sena supporters are upset over the manner in which these cricketers have fooled the entire nation," he added.

In Madras, Madhavan told reporters that if needed he would also quiz players such as Kapil Dev who have been absolved of match-fixing and betting allegations by the CBI.

The CBI named Azharuddin, Prabhakar, Sharma, Ajay Jadhava and Nayan Mongia as the main fixers of matches in a report it published earlier this month.

It also named nine overseas players, several bookmakers and said some Indian officials of the game were also involved in corruption.

The board, after banning the five players from playing in international and domestic matches, named Madhavan last week as the commissioner of its own inquiry.

But on Thursday it hit back at the CBI saying the agency had made "unjustified" comments against the authorities.

The CBI report had taken the board to task for its style of functioning, selection policies and alleged lack of accountability in selling television broadcasting rights for matches played in India.

It also charged some state cricket boards of nepotism.

England's perfect warm-up

PESHAWAR, Nov 12: England wrapped up their preparations for the first Test against Pakistan with an eight-wicket win in the four-day side game against a Governor's XI at Shahi Bagh Stadium Saturday, reports AFP.

The tourists achieved their second successive win soon after lunch on the final day by dismissing the home team for 170 and then capped the win by notching up the required 80 runs for two wickets.

Captain Nasser Hussain remained not out on 22 and Michael Vaughan unbeaten on 49. England met Pakistan in the first of the three Tests in Lahore from November 15. England had beaten Pakistan's XI by an innings and 27 runs last week.

On Saturday, England whipped off 35 in quick time before Kashif Raza struck twice in the ninth over.

Raza forced an edge from Marcus Trescothick to wicket-keeper Rashid Latif who leapt in the air and took a beautiful catch.

SCOREBOARD

Final scorecard of the four-day match between England and the Governor's XI at Shahi Bagh Stadium on Saturday:

GOVERNOR'S XI: First innings 224 (Mohammad Hussain 65, Yasir Hameed 57; Darren Gough 3-54)

ENGLAND: First innings 315 (Marcus Trescothick 93, Alec Stewart 59, Graham Thorpe 48; Kashif Raza 3-66, Kabir Khan 3-82)

GOVERNOR'S XI: Second

innings
Farhat c Stewart b Caddick 0
Umer b Gough 1
Hameed lbw b Gough 5
Naumanullah c Thorpe b Gough 50
Sarraz c Stewart b Caddick 53
Sajid c Stewart b White 18
M Hussain c Thorpe b White 7
Latif st Stewart b Salisbury 3
Kabir not out 22
Raza st Stewart b Salisbury 4
Wastl absent hurt 0
Extras (lb-4; nb-1) 7
Total (All out in 60.5 overs) 170

Fall of wickets: 1-1, 2-1, 3-13, 4-115, 5-115, 6-139, 7-142, 8-150, 9-170

Bowler O M R W
Gough 15 3 51 3
Caddick 17 8 24 2
White 10 1 27 2
Giles 9 2 32 0
Salisbury 9.5 2 30 2

ENGLAND: Second innings
Atherton c Umer b Raza 14
Trescothick c Latif b Raza 11
Hussain not out 23
Vaughan not out 19
Extras (lb-6; nb-7) 13
Total (For 2 wks in 17.2 overs) 80

Fall of wickets: 1-35, 2-37

Bowler O M R W
Raza 9 0 38 2
Sajid 8.2 0 36 0

Result: England won by eight wickets.



A blind cricketer plays a sweep shot during an exhibition game at the Bangabandhu National Stadium during the lunch break yesterday.

- Star photo

WA thrash Windies



PERTH, Nov 12: Veteran all-rounder Tom Moody forecast a long fruitless summer for the West Indians after Western Australia put the tourists out of their misery at the WACA Ground here Sunday, reports AFP.

Moody's medium pace wrecked the Windies' second innings, enabling the Australian Sheffield Shield team to stroll to a seven-wicket win shortly after lunch on the final day of the visitors' opening first-class match.

Skipper Moody took 4-14 off 12 overs as the tourists fell for 293, but WA had their own problems chasing the victory target of 68 against a West Indies team missing rested stars Brian Lara and Courtney Walsh.

The young West Indian pace attack outsmarted Test batsmen Adam Gilchrist (6) and Justin Langer (5) before opener Michael Hussey (11) went the same way to leave the score at 34 for three.

But Moody is convinced the Windies will struggle against the record-breaking Australians when the five-match Test series begins in Brisbane on November 23.

"That's the competition we want," captain Jimmy Adams

said. "This will give us a true mirror image of what needs doing before the tour starts."

Windies coach Roger Harper lamented his team's sloppy fielding and his players' inability to make big scores after Adams spent three hours for 44 runs and Shivnarine Chanderpaul batted two hours for 43.

Both batsmen played a supporting role to vice-captain Sherwin Campbell, whose seven-hour century was an invaluable lead-up to the Test series.

The Windies have their final first-class hitout against Victoria at the Melbourne Cricket Ground starting on Friday after a visit to Alice Springs for a one-day match against a Northern Territory Invitation XI on Tuesday.

The Windies selectors have yet to decide whether Walsh will play in the one-day comeback match.

SCOREBOARD

Scorecard on the final day of the four-day match between Western Australia and the West Indies at WACA Ground on Sunday:

WEST INDIES: First innings 132 (R Sarwan 22, S Chanderpaul 21, C Browne 20; G Swan 3-31, M Nicholson 3-32; B Julian 2-34)

WESTERN AUSTRALIA: First innings 358 (S Katich 73, M Nicholson 54, J Langer 45; M

Black 4/100, C Stuart 3/84)

WEST INDIES: Second innings
Campbell lbw Moody 119
Ganga c Gilchrist b Julian 8
Black c Martyn b Nicholson 8
Hinds c Gilchrist b Nikitaras 27
Chanderpaul c Katich b Swan 43
Adams c Martyn b Moody 44
Dillon c Langer b Moody 3
Sarwan lbw b Moody 12
Browne not out 1
Stuart c Katich b Julian 6
Jeremy did not bat (injured) 0
Extras (lb-1; lb-12; w-5; nb-9) 27
Total (All out in 118 overs) 293

Fall of wickets: 1-27, 2-42, 3-84, 4-170, 5-254, 6-266, 7-282, 8-285, 9-293

Bowler O M R W
Nicholson 21 6 43 1
Swan 24 9 58 1
Julian 22 5 57 2
Nikitaras 21 4 66 1
Hogg 14 6 28 0
Hussey 1 0 6 0
Martyn 3 0 8 0
Moody 12 7 14 4

WESTERN AUSTRALIA: Second innings
Gilchrist c Hinds b Dillon 6
Hussey c Browne b Dillon 11
Langer c Browne b Black 5
Martyn not out 25
Katich not out 18
Extras (lb-1; lb-1; w-1; nb-2) 5
Total (For 3 wks in 19.3 overs) 70

Fall of wickets: 1-6, 2-13, 3-34

Bowler O M R W
Dillon 10 1 37 2
Black 6 3 17 1
Smart 3.3 0 14 0

Result: Western Australia won by 7 wickets.

Javed foresees tough Tests



LAHORE, Pakistan Nov 12: Pakistan cricket coach Javed Miandad said England may pose a tough fight against Pakistan in the forthcoming Test series and the contest will not be one-sided, reports AFP.

"England has a good team and their recent results show they are on the ascent and have high confidence," Miandad told reporters at Gaddafi Stadium where England on Wednesday start their first Test on Pakistan soil for 13 years.

"England has a balanced team and their fast bowlers are good," Miandad said.

Miandad, however, agrees English batsmen's vulnerability

against spinners can be exploited.

"What we observed in the one-dayers is that their batsmen are weak against spinners and we will exploit that."

Pakistan beat England 2-1 in the three match one-day series preceding the Test series.

"It's still hard to say who will win the series but we have edge and we will do our best to win," Miandad said.

Miandad led Pakistan to an innings and 87-run win over England in the first Test in Lahore 13 years ago, on a tour marked by an on-field row between then England captain Mike Gatting and Pakistani umpire Shakoor Rana.

Leg-spinner Abdul Qadir returned with figures of 9-56

and 4-45 to crush England to defeat.

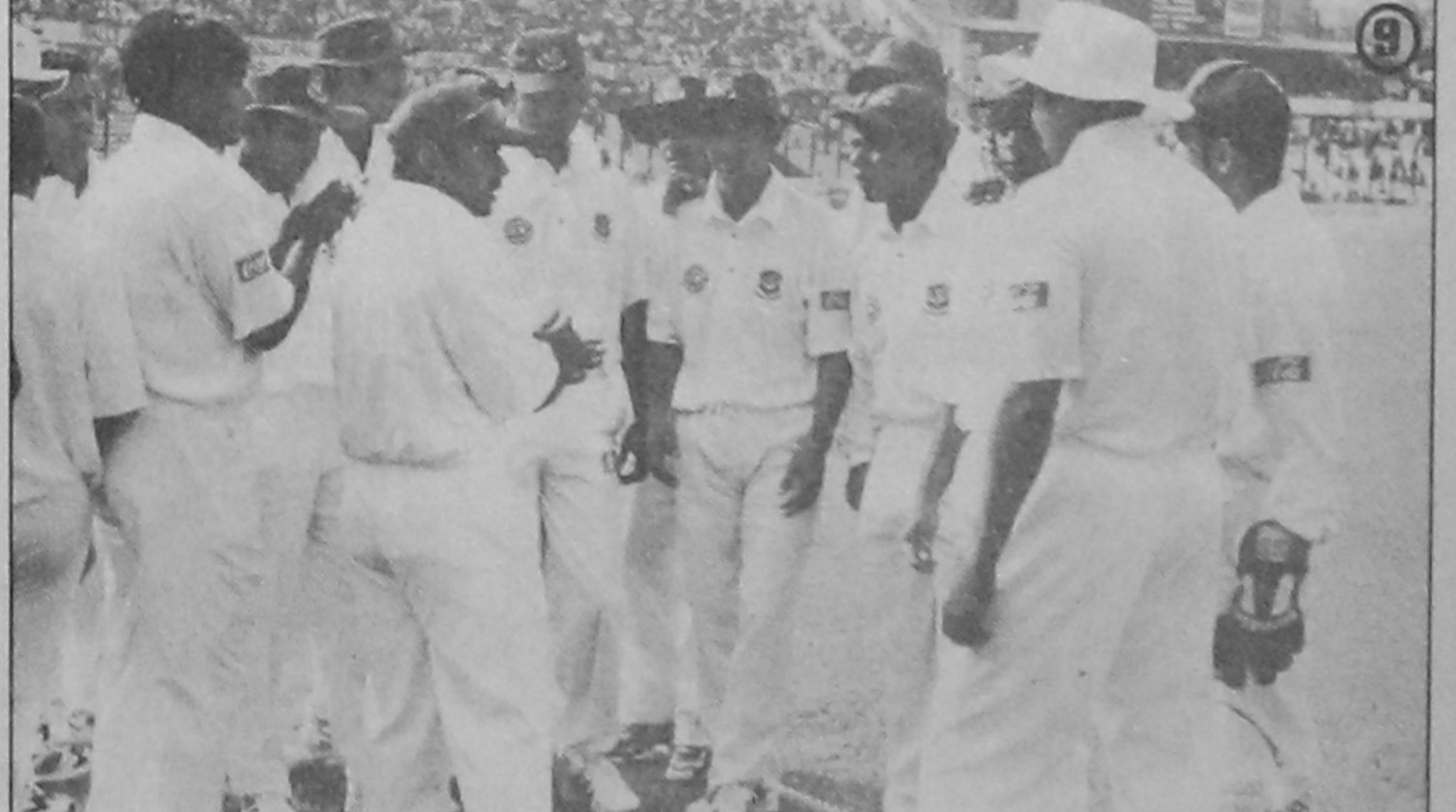
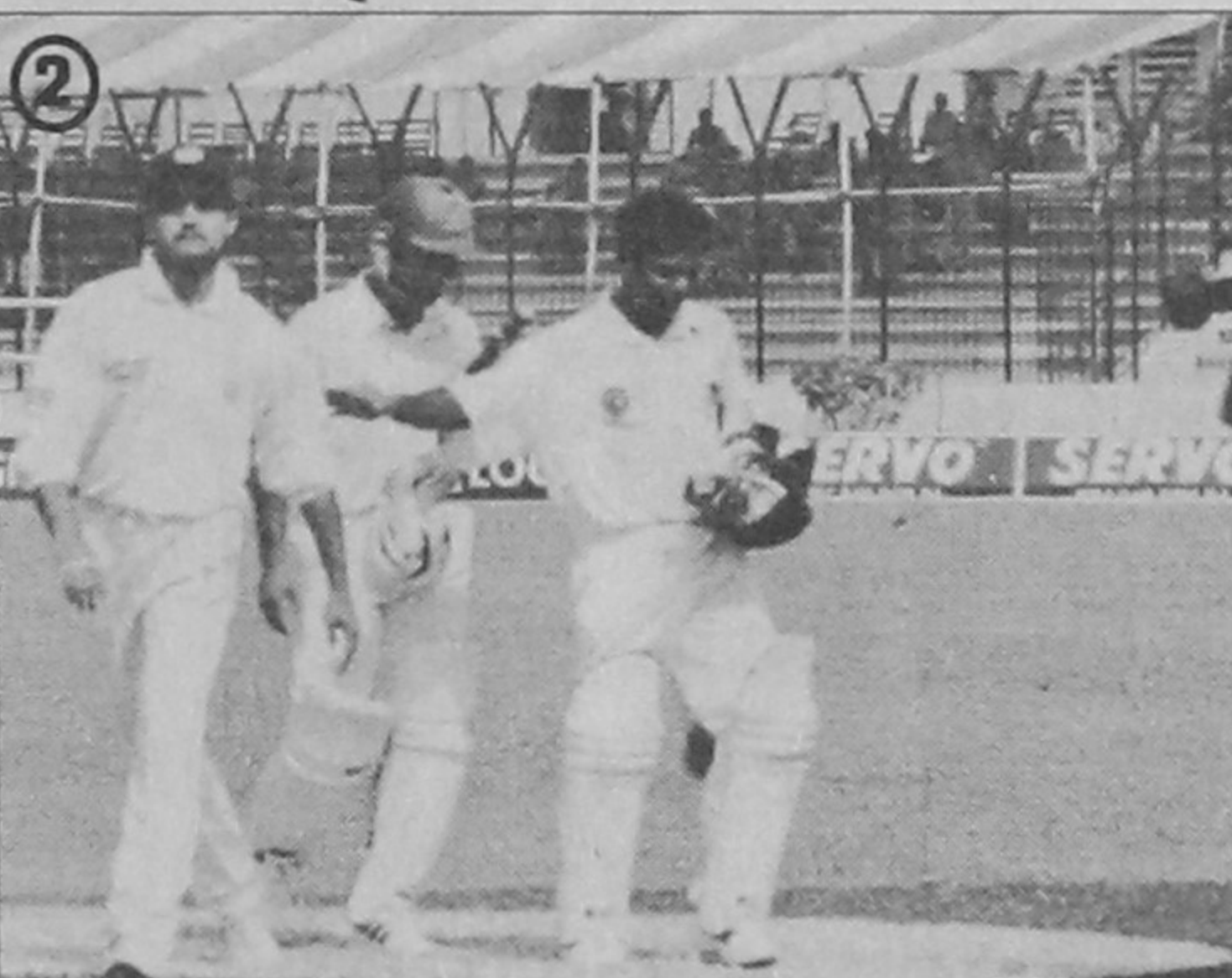
"It's premature to say that we would make a spin track but yes our attack may include two or three spinners if we go for a spin pitch," the Pakistani coach said.

Pakistan's probable squad of 18 for the first Test includes four regular spinners and two spinning all-rounders.

Pakistani players practised here on Sunday while the tourists had a day off after beating the Governor's XI in a four-day game in Peshawar on Saturday.

"England had weak opposition in the two side games, just like we used to get when we play their county teams on tour," Miandad said.

INAUGURAL TEST (DAY 2 & 3) IN PICTURES



(1) Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina talking to ICC chief executive David Richards on Saturday. (2) Aminul Islam replies to Saurav Ganguly's congratulatory pat after his historic hundred on Friday. (3) Murali Kartik attempts a sweep-shot yesterday. (4) Saurav Ganguly works the ball on the on-side yesterday. (5) Mohammad Rafique (R) and Al-Shahriar celebrate the dismissal of Rahul Dravid yesterday. (6) Bikash Ranjan Das swings and misses a Sachin Tendulkar delivery on Saturday. (7) A teammate helping Mehrab Hossain in doing some stretching at the end of yesterday's play. (8) Sunil Joshi plays a cut-shot against Mohammad Rafique and (9) Bangladesh team members discussing their game plan before taking to the field on Friday afternoon.

-Star photo