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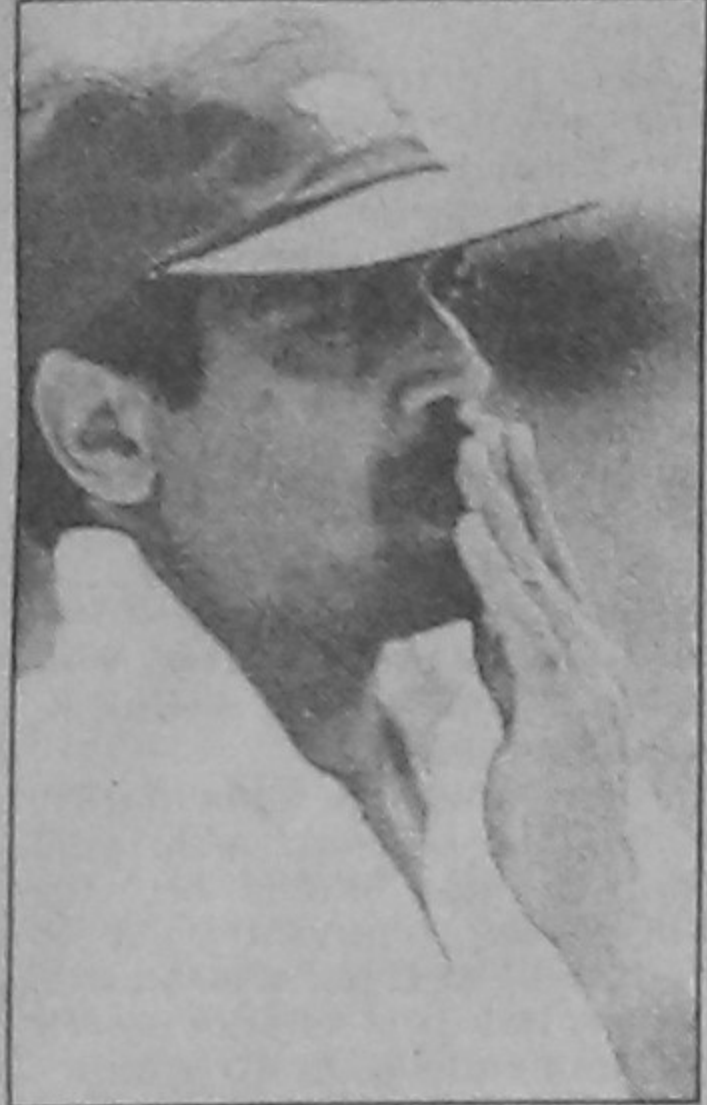
Star Sport

DHAKA, THURSDAY, DECEMBER 7, 2000 Email: dssports@bdonline.com

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SPORTS TALK



Kapil Dev
(Indian cricket legend)
"When I was accused of match-fixing, the papers splashed it on the front pages. But now that my name is cleared, it is buried somewhere at the back."

Sports WHIZZ KID

Competition 140
Tick the Correct Answers
Post to: *Star Daily*, Star
Win attractive prizes
Competition closes at 8 pm
Dec 15, 2000 and draw shortly afterwards

- Who is IAAF's female athlete-of-the-year?
Marion Jones / Marlene Ottey / Mary José Pérez
 - Who lifted Intercontinental Cup soccer title?
Boca Juniors / Real Madrid / Arsenal
 - Which country lifted the Fed Cup women's tennis title?
America / Russia / Spain
 - Who clinched ACC Trophy?
UAE / HK / Malaysia
 - Who became Premier Div football champions?
Mohammedan / Abahani / Mukhtodda
- Name:
Class: Roll No:
School Address:
Phone: (if any)

MSC probe body formed

Mohammedan Sporting Club formed a five-member probe body to investigate their disastrous performance in the "Super Four" phase of the Premier Division Football League. An MSC press release said here yesterday, reports BSS.

The committee has been advised to submit its report within one week.

The members are: Alhaj Zahurul Huq (convenor), Anwarul Haq Helal, Fazlur Rahman Babul, Iftekharul Islam Titon and Zahurul Huq Chowdhury.

Rajshahi sports

From Our Correspondent
RAJSHAHI, Dec 6: Lords Cricket Club and Eleven Friends won their respective matches of the Shaheed Bir Shrestha Captain Mohiuddin Jahangir Smriti Cricket tournament today at Railway ground.

Lords collected 109 for eight in stipulated 25 overs.

In reply, Lufor Smriti were shot out for 96 in 23 overs.

In the other match Eleven Friends batted first and made 117 for all in allotted 25 overs.

In reply Aktar Smriti were bowled out for 86 in 21 overs.

Soccer
Pabna defeated Sirajganj 4-3 in the Rajshahi Inter-district Football tournament played at Shaheed A H M Kamruzzaman Stadium. Pabna moved into semi-final from Kha group.

Abul, Mister, Taleb and Sohel scored one goal each for the winners.

Rubel, Liton and Babu made one goal each for Sirajganj. Jaipurhat DSA will take on Rajshahi DSA in tomorrow's semifinal.

V-Day hockey

Bangladesh Navy, came from behind, beat Bangladesh Army Red 2-1 in the Shaheed Salamullah Cup Victory Day tournament at the Moulana Bhasani Hockey Stadium yesterday, reports UNB.

The winners led the first half by a solitary goal.

Humayun Kabir put the Army ahead in the 13th minute converting a penalty corner while Lokman Bhuiyan of Navy restored the parity in the 37th minute by a field goal.

Rafiqul Islam scored the match-winner in the 66th minute.

Soccer starving for talents

30 called up for selection camp

Sports Reporter

A serious lack of young bloods in the domestic football was once again exposed ominously when the Bangladesh Football Federation (BFF) failed to call up no more than four new faces in the selection camp for the World Cup 2002 qualifiers.

In its list of 30, which was announced yesterday, majority of them came as no surprise to observers. The newcomers are - Sujon, Bijon Barua, Titu and Khokon.

Among the fresh quartet Mukhtodda central defender Sujon was the find of the season. Bijon Barua also played commendably under the bar in absence of injured Mukhtodda and national custodian Aminul for most part of the League.

Although Badda's young goalkeeper Titu has been slotted for the customary fourth custodian's slot, Arambagh's Khokon forces his way in to the list with his performance.

The nimble attacker with a matured head on his young shoulder not only played the stellar role for his side this year but also scored five goals.

Maksudul Amin Rana is the other notable inclusion in the list of probables. The talented forward who developed a habit of getting injured before every national selection, has the abil-

ity to form an exciting attack along with prolific striker Alfaz Ahmed if he gets rid of his unfortunate injury spell.

There is however a few other players in the just concluded Premier League who might consider themselves a bit unlucky. Abahani's midfield playmaker Arman Miah and Mukhtodda's Masud Rana are two of them.

Although Masud Rana has retired prematurely, but many felt BFF should talk the most exciting left-wing back the country has ever produced into the international football again.

The highest 11 players have been selected from Mukhtodda, who lifted the coveted League title, followed by five from Abahani, four each from Mohammedan Sporting Club and Badda Jagorani Sangsad, two from Brothers Union and one from Rahmatganj.

The selected booters have been asked to report to the newly appointed Hungarian coach George Cottan at the BFF office on December 9 at 3pm.

In his first assignment, Cottan will be out with the most demanding task of leading a nation struggling for recognition at the Asian level and reviving the image of the game that at the moment faces serious credential crisis.

Before the qualifiers start,

Cottan however gets a chance of warming up with the Rovers Cup, an invitational tournament in India.

The qualifying fixture is also going to be a tough one for Bangladesh where they will be up against Asian giants Saudi Arabia and two unknown opponents in Vietnam and Mongolia.

Placed in Group 2, Bangladesh will play their first match against Vietnam on February 8 next year. They will take on hosts Saudi Arabia, almost a sure shot for the next round, on February 10.

One of the four teams from Asia in the 1998 France World Cup, Saudi Arabia will host all the six group matches.

PROBABLES
Goalkeepers: Aminul Islam, Biplob Bhattacharya, Bijon Barua and Titu.
Defenders: Rajani Kanta Barman, Prodig Kumar Poddar, Nazrul, Faisal, Papul Mahmud, Saurav Raju, Hasna-Al-Mamun, Mottur Munna, Firoz Mahmud Titu and Sujon.
Midfielders: Iqbal Hossain, Abdul Kayum Sentu, Liton, Selim, Tushar, Parvez Babu, Monwar and Asad.
Forwards: Alfaz Ahmed, Maksudul Amin Rana, Kanhan, Julfikar Mahmud Mintu, Khokon, Mojibur Rahman Ritu and Tanvir.

Changes in Nat'l cricket fixtures

Sports Reporter
The fifth round Group A encounter of Green Delta National Cricket League between Chittagong and Dhaka will be held at the Bangabandhu National Stadium in Dhaka instead of Comilla Stadium on December 14, 15, 16 and 17, according to a Bangladesh Cricket Board (BCB) press release yesterday.

Although the reason behind shifting the venue of the match was not explained, it was learnt that the district administration of Comilla will use the Comilla Stadium on those days in connection with their Victory Day celebrations.

The BCB has also deferred for a day the start of the sixth round clash between Khulna and Dhaka Metropolis, to be held at the Jessore Stadium, instead of earlier scheduled December 20 kick off, the clash will commence on December 21.

Besides, the fifth round engagement between Sylhet and Khulna to be held on December 14, 15, 16 and 17 will have a day of break on December 16 and will end on December 18.

Sharma may go to court

MADRAS, Dec 6: Former Indian Test player Ajay Sharma described the life ban imposed on him on Tuesday following allegations of match-fixing as "arbitrary and discriminatory" and said he would seek legal opinion about it, reports Reuters.

Ajay Jadeja told Star News television that the five-year suspension he received from the Board of Control for Cricket in India (BCCI) translated into a life ban for him as he would have no career left when the sentence ends.

"Fortunately they have said I have another appeal. I am going to go back and say what I have to about the whole thing," said Jadeja, who has in the past maintained his innocence.

Ex-Test player Manoj Prabhakar said his five-year sentence was "meaningless" as he had already retired from competitive cricket.

Prabhakar said that he had come into contact with bookmakers while he was personally investigating the scandal, long after he had left the game.

Wicketkeeper Nayan Mongia, one of the five players named in the damning Central Bureau of Investigation report then exonerated, said that he had always maintained he was innocent and that he would now attempt a comeback in domestic tournaments.

Final Test from today

Hussain hopes for 'something special'

KARACHI, Dec 6: England captain Nasser Hussain said his team aspired to do "something incredibly special" in the final Test against Pakistan starting at the National Stadium in Karachi on Thursday, reports AFP.

"We want to do something incredibly special in this final Test and after playing some good cricket I am confident we can end the tour on a special note," he said on Wednesday.

After two draws, the tourists will be battling against history in the series decider as no English side has won a Test in Pakistan since Ted Dexter's

our lives and here we will have to work very hard to achieve such a memorable result," Hussain said.

England entered the series as underdogs but surprised the hosts with a morale-boosting draw in Lahore and then fought hard to save the second Test in Faisalabad.

"I am enjoying captaining this side because of seeing people realise they can play under different conditions and perform," Hussain said.

"We are here to play good cricket and if we win it would be a big bonus. We will do everything in the next five days and won't let this chance slip."

England are likely to include paceman Matthew Hoggard after leg-spinner Ian Salisbury failed to impress in the first two Tests.

Veteran batsman Graeme Hick may survive after scores of 16, 18 and 0 as his replacement Michael Vaughan has not recovered fully from a calf muscle injury.

Wicketkeeper batsman Alec Stewart has a sore elbow but it is not serious and he is expected to play.

"The pitch looks similar to the one in Lahore but due to bright sunshine here it may deteriorate," Hussain said.

Pakistan are facing a dilemma between pace and their much vaunted spin attack and have yet to decide on their combination.

"The pitch looks a sharp turner and I hope our bowlers will make up for the unimpressive show of the first two Tests," captain Moin Khan said.

Leading paceman Wasim Akram is under tremendous pressure to perform after taking just two wickets in the series so far.

"Akram is a great bowler and he can hit form any time but others too will have to perform if we want to win," Khan said.

Pakistan Cricket Board chairman Lieutenant General Tauqir Zia has warned Akram he must produce the goods or get the axe.

"I have my options open whether to play with three spinners or three seamers - we will decide on Thursday morning," Moin said.

If Pakistan play with three seamers, Waqar Younis may squeeze in after being left out of the first two Tests.

Pakistan included all-rounder Shahid Afridi to raise the squad to 16 after dropping him from the 15 last Sunday.

"This pitch looks conducive to our spinners. It has bite and bounce and it's up to the bowlers to exploit this," Moin said.

Batsman Naumanullah, who hit a half century in the four match against England at Peshawar, is expected to make his debut.

SQUADS

PAKISTAN (from): Moin Khan (captain), Inzamam-ul-Haq (vice-captain), Saadul Anwar, Imran Nazir, Shahid Afridi, Salim Elahi, Younis Youhana, Faisal Iqbal, Qaiser Abbas, Wasim Akram, Abdur Razzak, Waqar Younis, Saqlain Mushtaq, Arshad Khan, Naumanullah and Danish Kaneria.

ENGLAND (from): Nasser Hussain (captain), Alec Stewart, Michael Atherton, Marcus Trescothick, Graham Thorpe, Graeme Hick, Craig White, Andrew Flintoff, Ian Salisbury, Ashley Giles, Andrew Caddick, Darren Gough and Matthew Hoggard.

Umpires: Steve Bucknor (West Indies) and Mohammad Nazir Imnor (Pakistan).

Flower blooms, Lara wilts

LONDON, Dec 6 (Internet report): After his sensational scoring feats in the recent Test series against India, Andy Flower of Zimbabwe has moved up the Pricewaterhouse Coopers ratings, while Brian Lara drops out of the top 10.

Flower, whose Test average is just over 50 after 47 Tests, moves in at No 2, behind Sachin Tendulkar, nudging Steve Waugh down to No 3.

It is remarkable for a wicket-keeper to be that high in the ratings, with the demands of the job behind the stumps normally being considered detrimental to a player's batting.

Brian Lara's recent slump has seen him drop from being the "Bradman of the Nineties" to occupying the 12th spot in the ratings.

Another batsman whose scores have plummeted is Graeme Hick, rated at a lowly No 51. He has scored 110 first-class centuries, but there is surely nobody whose Test achievements have ever been so far below his commanding presence in other first-class cricket.

He has been dropped eight times from England's Test team, and a ninth time is considered likely as the decisive Test against Pakistan looms for England.

On the bowling side of the ratings, the top three are Glenn McGrath, Shaun Pollock and Allan Donald, in that order.

McGrath recently achieved the extraordinary feat of taking a Test hat-trick in the process of reaching 300 Test wickets. His 300th scalp was Brian Lara in last weekend's second Test.

He knows the end has come

NEW DELHI, Dec 6: Banned Indian cricketer Ajay Jadeja said on Wednesday his international career was over after he and four others were handed severe penalties arising from a match-fixing scandal, reports AFP.

"There is nothing for me to look forward to in cricket," Jadeja, 29, said a day after being slapped with a five-year ban by the Board of Control for Cricket in India (BCCI) for hobnobbing with bookmakers.

"I am affected the most by the ban. I have given my youth to the Board, but now they don't want to play me. I don't want to play for them either," he said.

The BCCI on Tuesday imposed a life ban on former captain Mohammad Azharuddin and ex-Test player Ajay Sharma for indulging in match-fixing, and suspended Jadeja, Manoj Prabhakar and former team physiotherapist Ali Iran for five years for their connections with bookmakers.

Wicketkeeper Nayan Mongia, who was exonerated by the Central Bureau of Investigation (CBI) and the BCCI's own internal inquiry, was allowed to pursue his career.

Jadeja, one of India's leading limited-overs cricketers, is the only punished player who had a realistic chance of playing at international level again.

Azharuddin, who was stranded on 99 Test appearances, has not been considered for selection since the South African series in February-March.

Prabhakar retired from the game in 1996, while Sharma last played for India in 1993.

"The ban has hit me the most," said Jadeja, who was four matches away from completing 200 one-day appearances although his Test career lasted only 15 matches.

"Azharuddin was 38 and I don't know how many years more he would have carried on international duty."

"But I have been prevented from doing what I loved most - playing for India," Jadeja said, hinting he may take recourse to legal action to clear his name.

"I will explore all avenues to restore my credibility. I will knock at the doors of the BCCI and, if need be, go further."

Jadeja denied high-level political pressure had been applied on his behalf to soften the BCCI verdict against him.

"There was no need for me to approach anyone because I have maintained all along that I did not indulge in betting or match-fixing," he said.

"I told the CBI and the BCCI

BOA to go democratic

Sports Reporter
Surprisingly BOA's present ad-hoc committee will not be dissolved before the election.

"No where is it written in our constitution and in the Olympic charter that the outgoing committee will resign before the election and that is why we are not going to resign," said the ad-hoc Secretary General of BOA Zafar Imam who is also a potential candidate for the Secretary General post in the election while talking to a group of reporters.

According to the new constitution, each of the 20 Olympic sports federations will have two votes each while three non-Olympic sports federations (nominated by the BOA president) will have one vote apiece.

Six Divisional Sports Associations will have two votes each, Bangladesh Army, Navy, Air Force, Rifles, Police and Aisars each will have one vote while Women Sports Federation has two votes, Special Olympic Association, National Sports Council and Ministry of Sports will also have a vote apiece.

Apart from these, four celebrated sports personalities nominated by Sports Minister, four distinguished sports personalities nominated by BOA president and two present or past Olympians nominated by BOA president will also be included in the electorate council.

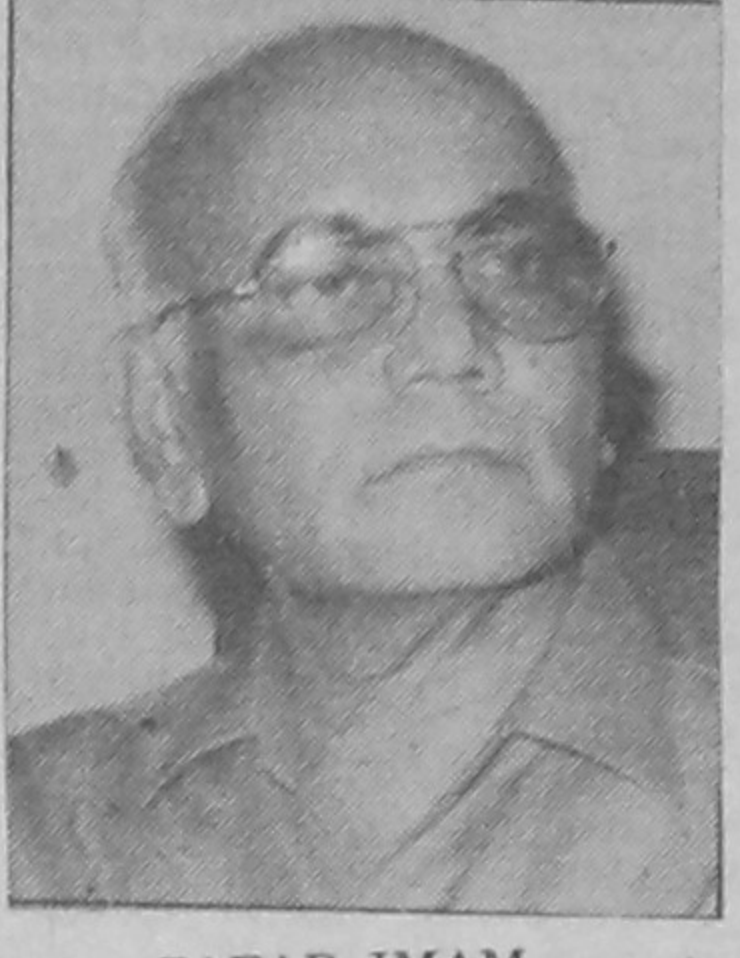
The outgoing president and secretary general are the remaining two of the 78 councillors.

The first ever election of Bangladesh Olympic Association (BOA) will be held in the first week of January during its maiden Annual General Meeting (AGM).

This decision was taken following BOA's executive committee meeting yesterday afternoon which was chaired by BOA president and Chief of Army Staff Lt Gen Mustafizur Rahman BB. General Mustafiz was to name an election commissioner within the next couple of days.

The meeting also decided to finalise the list of BOA's 78 electorate councillors by the 20th of this month.

There are as many as 37 posts in the new BOA constitution which the International Olympic Council (IOC) has approved on November 9 this year. Out of the 37, the president will be nominated by the Government while one member will be designated by IOC. The rest-five Vice-presidents, Secretary General, three Deputy Secretary Generals, one treasurer and 25 members - will be elected through the AGM.



ZAFAR IMAM

From glory to gutter

NEW DELHI, Dec 6 (AFP): Mohammad Azharuddin, who swayed by fate throughout his life, in the end had only his own greed to blame for destroying his career and reputation as one of India's greatest cricketers.

The former Test captain was handed a life ban Tuesday by the Indian cricket authorities, after he admitted to fixing three one-day international matches.

The wristy batsman was referred to as God's gift to Indian cricket when he burst onto the world stage in 1984 with centuries in his first three Tests against David Gower's Englishmen.

He was, however, destined for even bigger deeds and became India's longest-serving and most successful captain with 14 Test wins to his credit.

Azharuddin will now go to the record books as the only cricketer in the world to be stranded on 99 Test appearances. He has also played more one-dayers (323) than any other player in the world.

Each stage of his career was marked by strange twists and turns, which Azhar attributed to destiny and God's will.

His adoring grandfather, Mohammad Vajehuddin, whose only desire was to see Azhar play for India, died a few days before he made his Test debut in November 1984.

The captaincy was thrust on him in 1990 when the Indian board, faced with a players' revolt over match fees, wanted a non-controversial man at the helm.

Azharuddin was not even captain of his home state of Hyderabad when chairman of

selectors Raj Singh Dungarpur offered him the job.

Two disastrous tours of Australia and South Africa in 1991 and 1992 not only threatened his captaincy but his place in the team as well.

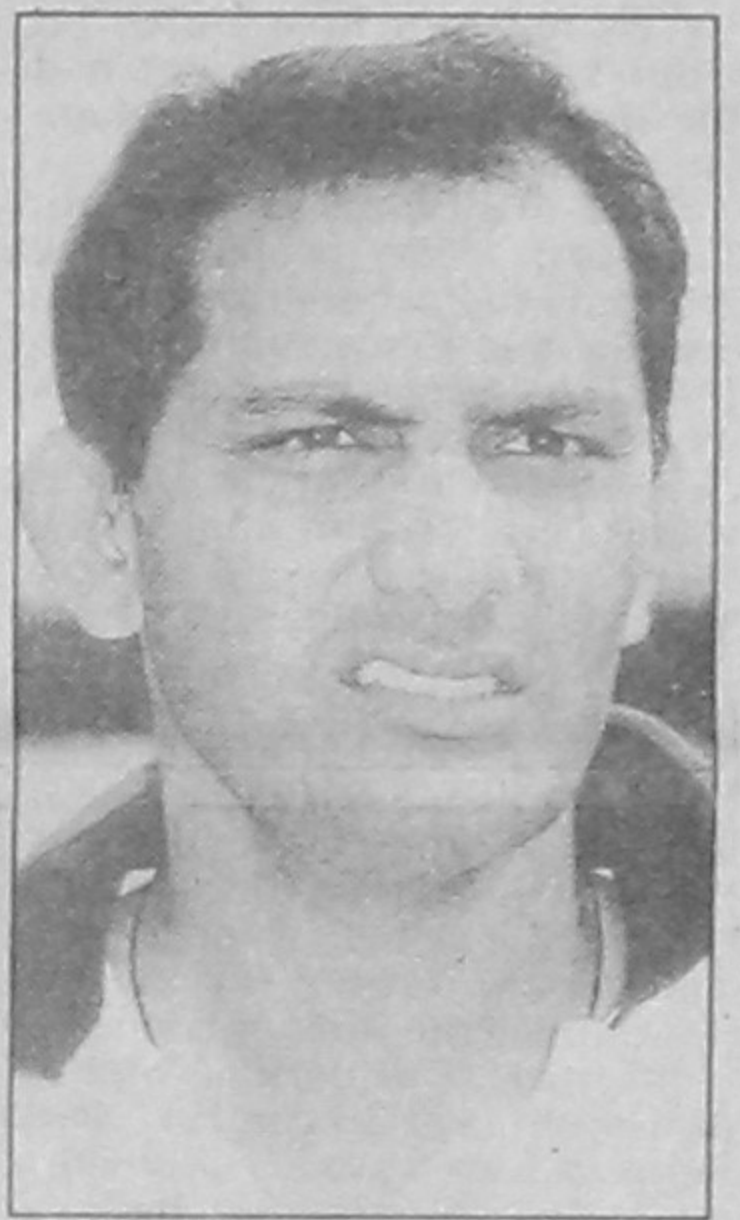
Coach Ajit Wadekar, however, replaced by Sachin Tendulkar.

Azharuddin's career as a player appeared to be finished in December 1997 when critics, including Sunil Gavaskar, called for his head after a lean streak at a Sharjah tournament.

Instead, the selectors sacked Tendulkar and made Azharuddin captain again for the Independence Cup in Bangladesh in January 1998, which India won with a last-over win over arch-rivals Pakistan.

He was sacked again after last year's World Cup in England and omitted from the side that toured Australia, at the behest of captain Tendulkar and coach Kapil Dev.

Alvida (Farewell) Azhar ran the front page headline in the Times of India Tuesday, following the life ban imposed by the national cricket board.



MD AZHARUDDIN

LONDON, Dec 6: Following is a factfile on former Indian cricket captain Mohammed Azharuddin who was banned for life on Tuesday:

1963: Born on February 8 in Hyderabad, India.

1985: Makes Test debut for India in third Test against England at Calcutta, scoring 110 in first innings. Follows up with centuries in Madras and Kanpur.

1986: Scores highest Test score 199, and 1,000 Test run, against Sri Lanka.

1989: Named captain of India for Test series against New Zealand in New Zealand. Is still India's most successful Test skipper with 14 Test victories.

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FACTFILE

inquiry that my contact with alleged bookmakers was because they visited the same health club.

"There was nothing more to it, but no one believed me. I cannot stop anyone from saying anything. Even the media did not believe my innocence."

Azharuddin refused to comment on the life ban, continuing his silence since the CBI accused him of match-fixing in its report made public last month.

But Prabhakar, who blew the lid on the scandal three years ago only to find himself accused of having close contacts with bookmakers, was more forthcoming.

"I launched the crusade to cleanse the game and I have succeeded in doing it," the former all-rounder said.

"But I feel sad that the BCCI did not even have the courtesy to note the contribution I made to clear the dirt. It instead equated me with other players."

"There is a lot of difference between me and them. I was fighting against the system of which they (cricketers) were a part."

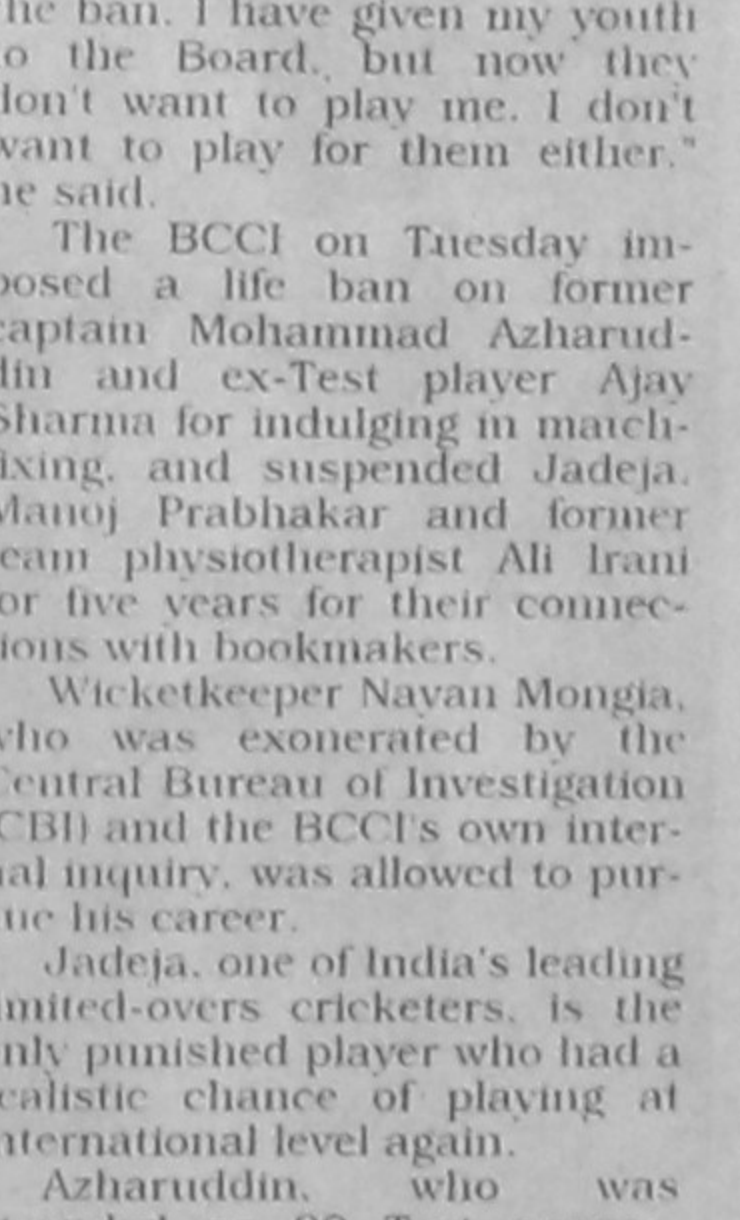
In the first indication that the punished players will not remain silent, Prabhakar said it was an unnamed BCCI official who had introduced him to betting.

"I won't name the official, but the BCCI knows who the person is," Prabhakar said.

BCCI president AC Muthiah immediately denied the charge, saying he expected a backlash from the players.

"I did not expect them to confess to their guilt, but the inquiries have shown these players were involved in wrongdoing," Muthiah said.

"The punishment is a lesson for all. I hope it will serve as a deterrent in future."



AJAY JADEJA

Jadeja denied high-level political pressure had been applied on his behalf to soften the BCCI verdict against him.

"There was no need for me to approach anyone because I have maintained all along that I did not indulge in betting or match-fixing," he said.

"I told the CBI and the BCCI

England coach Duncan Fletcher (L) teaching his charges batting during a practice session at Karachi yesterday. England and Pakistan start the third and final Test here today. -AFP photo