

Easy win for women cricketers

SPORTS REPORTER

The Bangladesh women's cricket team pulled off a convincing 7-wicket win over Saurashtra at the RCA Cricket Stadium yesterday. Bangladesh are touring India and Sri Lanka as part of their preparation for the World Cup qualifiers due to start at home in mid-November.

Saurashtra won the toss and elected to bat, but were soon in trouble as they lost three wickets for 20 runs inside ten overs. Only Deepa Patel showed some resistance for the home side, scoring 39 off 115 balls with a solitary boundary. The rest of the side succumbed without much fight, with only No.10 batsman Chovatiya reaching double figures with an unbeaten 10 as Saurashtra crashed to 98 all out in 47.2 overs.

Saurashtra contributed to their own downfall, with four of the ten wickets falling to runouts. For Bangladesh Panna Ghose and Suktara Rahman took two wickets apiece, while Shathira Jakir and Champa Chakma snafled one each.

Chasing a paltry 99 to win, Bangladesh wrapped it up in only 25 overs with opener Jakir top-scoring with 36, studded with five boundaries. The opening partnership between Jakir and Rehman accounted for 52 runs, and although Ayesha Akter went for a duck a run later, a 41-run partnership between Jakir and Tahin Tahera brought Bangladesh within touching distance. Jakir fell with the score on 94, but captain Salma Khatun joined Tahera, who remained 19 not out, to take the team home.

Neymar

FROM PAGE 16 debut for Brazil playing at right back but left the field 10 minutes after the break due to an injury and was replaced by Alves.

Brazil play at Mexico on Tuesday.

Nat'l youth

FROM PAGE 17 Zahid Ahsan Russel will inaugurate the even in the afternoon.

It may be mentioned here that the event makes a return to the hockey scene after a gap of three years with defending champions BKSP not fielding a side this time. The reason for BKSP's absence was explained by tournament committee secretary Hasan Uddin Ahmed Shimul, "The district requested us not to invite teams with players from the premier league. Since most of the players of BKSP participate in the premier league, they are much better in performance compared to the district sides, which demoralises those sides, said Shimul. "However, BKSP could have taken part if they fielded a side without premier league players, but they did not respond," he added.

Other members of the hockey federation and representatives of the sponsors were present at the press conference.

Fiery Malinga takes Mumbai to final

STAR SPORT DESK



Lasith Malinga produced plenty of fire and brimstone to take the Mumbai Indians to the final of the Champions League T20, taking 4-20 to deliver victory by 10 runs in the semifinal against Somerset in Chepauk yesterday

Chasing a gettable 161, Somerset got off to a torrid start as opener Peter Trego had his stumps rattled by a searing Malinga yorker off the second ball of the innings. Roelof van der Merwe, coming in at number three, suffered a similar fate in the Sri Lankan firebrand's next over, this time a low full toss inflicting the damage.

The duo of Craig Kieswetter and James Hildreth then came together to wrest control of the game away from Mumbai, adding 83 runs in 10.3 overs, before Hildreth was bowled by captain Harbhajan Singh for 39.

The match took another turn in the 17th over bowled by Abu Nchim, with Kieswetter creaming a 6 and two 4s to collect 16, bringing the equation down to 29 from the last three overs.

In the penultimate over bowled by James Franklin, Jos Butler was bowled immediately after having a sure boundary denied by the ball crashing into non-striker Kieswetter's ribs. Franklin then made it a double whammy by getting danger man Kieswetter caught at long on for 62, before Nick Compton reverse-swept the last ball for four, leaving Somerset needing

15 off the last over.

It was never a likely scenario with the red-hot Malinga bowling, and Compton duly had his stumps splayed off the second ball trying to scoop a yorker. The next ball was another toe-crusher, with the victim being Murali Kartik. Somerset only managed to score 3 runs off the remaining 3 balls.

Earlier, Mumbai hammered 52 runs off the last five overs to reach 160 for 5. Harbhajan won the toss and chose to bat, and his decision was vindicated as Aiden Blizard and No.3 batsman Ambati Rayudu carried the score to 62 in 7.5, before Rayudu was caught behind off medium-pacer Adam Dibble. Franklin then joined the in-form opener, but both went in quick succession as Franklin was trapped in front by van der Merwe with the score on 86 and Blizard was bowled by Murali Kartik six runs later for a well-made 54 off 39 balls.

With the score on 4-92 in the 13th over Kieron Pollard came in and hit two 6s in an 18-ball 24. His dismissal at 117 brought Suryakumar Yadav and Rajagopal Sathish together. Yadav scored 23 off 19 and Sathish was particularly explosive with a 12-ball 25 to provide the final flourish.

Mumbai will play Royal Challengers Bangalore in the final tonight.

SCORES IN BRIEF

MUMBAI INDIANS: 160 for 5 (Blizzard 54, Sathish 25 not out; Dibble 1-20, Kartik 1-30) **SOMERSET:** 150 for 7 (Kieswetter 62, Hildreth 39; Malinga 4-20) **Result:** Mumbai Indians won by 10 runs.

Higuain

FROM PAGE 18

in which Peru finished third, scored in the 47th and 73rd minutes as he combined with fellow striker Claudio Pizarro, back in the side after missing the tournament in Argentina through injury.

With Ecuador winger Antonio Valencia inspirational, strikers Jaime Ayovi and Cristian Benitez scored in the opening half hour at the Atahualpa, nearly 3,000 metres above sea level against Venezuela.

Barath

FROM PAGE 16

"This series is an important affair for us. It's always a challenge to play Bangladesh on their home soil. But it is good for us that we came here early to prepare ourselves properly and get accustomed to the conditions. It's a bit warm but we are very familiar with this sort of condition. Everyone in the side is very optimistic and looking forward to the series," observed Barath, who so far played seven Tests and nine ODIs.

There has already been talk about a fragile West Indian batting line-up and many believe that the Bangladesh slow bowlers can really be a concern for them, but Barath said that they have done their homework, and are prepared for the challenge.

"All of the Bangladeshi bowlers are a concern. The likes of Shakib (Al Hasan) and the experience that these guys have has definitely made us look out for the bowlers. Our batsmen are analysing and doing the homework and hope we really come forward. Our overall preparation is also good," said a confident Barath.

NCL icons

FROM PAGE 16

Ashraf Hossain, chairman of the tournament committee.

The National Cricket League, the lone first-class competition in the country, is expected to start from October 17.

Another addition to this year's competition is the permission to field one foreign player, each division being allowed registration of up to three (current first-class players).

The selected icon players are: Shahriar Nafees (Barisal), Kamrul Islam Rabbi (Barisal), Tamim Iqbal (Chittagong), Rubel Hossain (Chittagong), Nazimuddin (Chittagong), Mohammad Ashraful (Dhaka), Shuvogata Hom (Dhaka), Rokibul Hassan

(Dhaka), Mahmudullah Riyad (Dhaka), Elias Sunny (Dhaka), Shahadat Hossain (Dhaka), Shamsur Rahman (Dhaka), Nadif Chowdhury (Dhaka), Mehrob Hossain Jr. (Dhaka), Nur Hossain (Dhaka), Nasiruddin Faruque (Dhaka), Imrul Kayes (Khulna), Sahagir Hossain (Khulna), Shakib Al Hasan (Khulna), Abdur Razzak (Khulna), Robiul Islam (Khulna), Syed Rassel (Khulna), Junaed Siddiqui (Rajshahi), Mushfiqur Rahim (Rajshahi), Shaiful Islam (Rajshahi), Saqlain Sajib (Rajshahi), Jahurul Islam (Rajshahi), Sohrwardi Shuvo (Rangpur), Nasir Hossain (Rangpur), Naeem Islam (Rangpur), Alok Kapali (Sylhet) and Nazmul Hossain

'WI pace not a big threat'

FROM PAGE 16

prove it in the middle. I'm very much optimistic about the series because we always play good cricket in our own conditions," said Akram.

BCB XI's skipper Shahriar Nafees also echoed the sentiments of the chief selector as he believed that the West Indies pace bowlers will not be a big threat in the series, saying that Bangladesh can win matches if they put up 230 to 240 runs on the board in the one-day matches.

"Their (West Indies) bowling is much better than their batting and I firmly believe that we can win every match if we can put 230 to 240 runs on the board. I'm sure they will not be able to chase down this score with their current batting

strength," observed Nafees. "There has been talk of their raw pace but I don't think it will be a big threat for the Bangladesh team in the series and I also found no reason to be worried about promising spinner Devendra Bishoo. Traditionally we are good against spin while the West Indies fast bowlers can hardly make any impact in our home condition," he added.

BCB XI: Shahriar Nafees (captain), Junaed Siddiqui, Rokibul Hassan, Shuvogata Hom, Robiul Islam, Alauddin Babu, Kamrul Islam Rabbi, Shohag Gazi, Mominul Hoque, Mohammad Mithun (wicketkeeper), Jahurul Islam, Kamrul Islam, Farhad Reza and Nadif Chowdhury.



Rafael Nadal of Spain hits a forehand against Mardy Fish of USA during his semifinal victory at the Japan Open in Tokyo yesterday.

PHOTO: AFP

Nadal-Murray finale

Tennis

AP, Tokyo

Top-seeded Rafael Nadal will take on Andy Murray in the final of the Japan Open after both recorded straight-sets victories in Saturday's semifinals.

Nadal powered past Mardy Fish in the second set to beat the American 7-5, 6-1 while Murray was a 6-2, 6-3 winner over David Ferrer.

The Nadal-Fish match was on serve until the 11th game in the opening set, when the Spaniard broke and then served out at love at Ariake Colosseum.

The first set was marked by several long rallies, but as the match progressed Nadal took control and imposed his will with a combination of crisp ground strokes and a strong serve.

Nadal, the defending champion, won 85 per cent of his second-serve points in the match which lasted 1 hour, 35 minutes. He broke Fish in the

first and third games of the second set and held serve throughout. He concluded the match with another break which included a scintillating shot.

Nadal ran down a crosscourt shot from Fish and then whipped a winner down the line that curled just inside the paint to reach match point. The contest ended on the next point on an unforced error by Fish, who hit a smash into the net.

Murray broke Ferrer in the third and fifth games of the first set and never looked back in advancing to his fifth final of the season. The Scot was never broken and closed out the match in 1:21.

Murray, who had the trainer retape his right foot after the third game of the first set, overpowered Ferrer with strong play from the baseline.

One of the highlights for Murray was his quick, reflexive return near the net of a powerful shot from Ferrer to go up 15-0 in the fifth game of the first set.

The fourth-ranked player in the world has won three titles this season, at Queen's Club, Cincinnati and Bang-

kok, and lost in the final of the Australian Open to Novak Djokovic.

Nadal holds a 13-4 advantage over Murray in 17 career meetings, including victories in the last five matches. Murray's last victory over Nadal came last year in the semifinals in Toronto.

Nadal said he played closer to the baseline against Fish and sought to press home his advantage after taking a hard-fought opening set.

"Anytime you lose the first set 7-5, it's painful," he stated. "At the beginning of the second set I was solid and he made some mistakes. I played better and he played worse."

Nadal has a chance of being the first man to defend the Japan Open title since Pete Sampras in 1994.

"Rafa played very well today and the first set was pretty high quality," Fish said. "It could have gone either way a far as the end of the [first] set, but he picked up his game and broke me at 5-5 and the second set got away from me really quickly."

Radwanska, Petkovic in final

Tennis

AP, Beijing

Agneszka Radwanska will seek her second title in two weeks after reaching the final of the China Open, where she will take on Andrea Petkovic of Germany.

In the men's draw, Marin Cilic of Croatia advanced to Sunday's final with a 6-4, 6-3 win over Ivan Ljubicic. Cilic will face the winner of Saturday's remaining semifinal between top-seeded Jo-Wilfried Tsonga of France and third-seeded Tomas Berdych of the Czech Republic.

Radwanska, the winner of last week's Pan Pacific Open in Tokyo, beat Italian Flavia Pennetta 6-2, 6-4, to improve her career record against the Italian to 3-1.

"I knew she'd been playing well the last couple of weeks so I was really focusing on my game from the beginning," Radwanska said. "I was just happy to close this game in two sets."

The Polish player has won her four previous meetings with Petkovic, including twice this year, but Radwanska said she wasn't expecting an easy time on Sunday.

"It's always very tough and very tight against Andrea," the 11th-seeded Radwanska said. "She's playing very well, very consistent. I think I'll have to play even better than today to beat her tomorrow."

Earlier in the day, ninth-seeded Petkovic downed Monica Niculescu 6-2, 6-0.

Petkovic said she drew confidence from her increasingly steady performances, having reached the quarterfinals at each of this year's

Australian, French and US Opens. Saturday's win marked her first victory in three meetings with the Romanian.

"I was really satisfied with the intensity and the focus I managed to have with each and every point and I think that made the difference today," Petkovic said.

Cilic continued his recent run of good form in a match between the big-hitting Croats that featured a combined 22 aces.

"Today was a really tough match, especially that first set," Cilic said. "You could feel the tension in the air."

Winning against the player who beat him in the first round at Wimbledon was a further confidence boost, he said.

"That means a lot, that I can beat those guys and my tennis is at a good level and on a level that's high enough to play against those guys and beat them," Cilic said.

CROSSWORD By Eugene Sheffer

ACROSS

1 Nitwit
5 Scatter seed
8 At the peak of
12 Grand tale
13 Literary collection
14 Actor LaBeouf
15 Options list
16 Mainlander's memento
17 Sword handle
18 Spotted cat
20 Raids
22 Branch
23 Easter tree

DOWN

1 Show-room sample
2 Oil acronym
3 Eat in style
4 Eyepiece
5 Place of drudgery
6 Inseparable
7 Homeless child
8 Religious retreat
9 Vitamin B1
10 Unctuous

38 Variety of Indian ox
39 Swiss canton
40 Past
42 Mourn
45 Doctors
49 Eye part
50 Singer DiFranco
52 Slanted lettering (Abbr.)
53 "A — home is ..."
54 Barbie's companion
55 Farm fraction
56 Act the robot

57 Ram's mate
58 Masticate

11 Butter squares
19 Alternately
21 "So that's your game, eh?"
24 Moment
25 Earl Grey, e.g.
26 Light up
28 Zero
29 Poison ivy aid
30 Gist
31 Wildebeest
36 Stylish
37 Triumph
38 Astrologer's chart
41 Big name in appliances
42 Prom-goers' ride
43 Bedouin
44 Snatch
46 Target for 29-Down
47 Concern
48 Passel
51 Just out

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CRYPTOQUIP

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Yesterday's Cryptoquip: IF YOU GO OUT, BUT FORGET TO APPLY ANY DEODORANT, COULD YOU BE CAUGHT OFF RIGHT GUARD?
Today's Cryptoquip Clue: C equals O

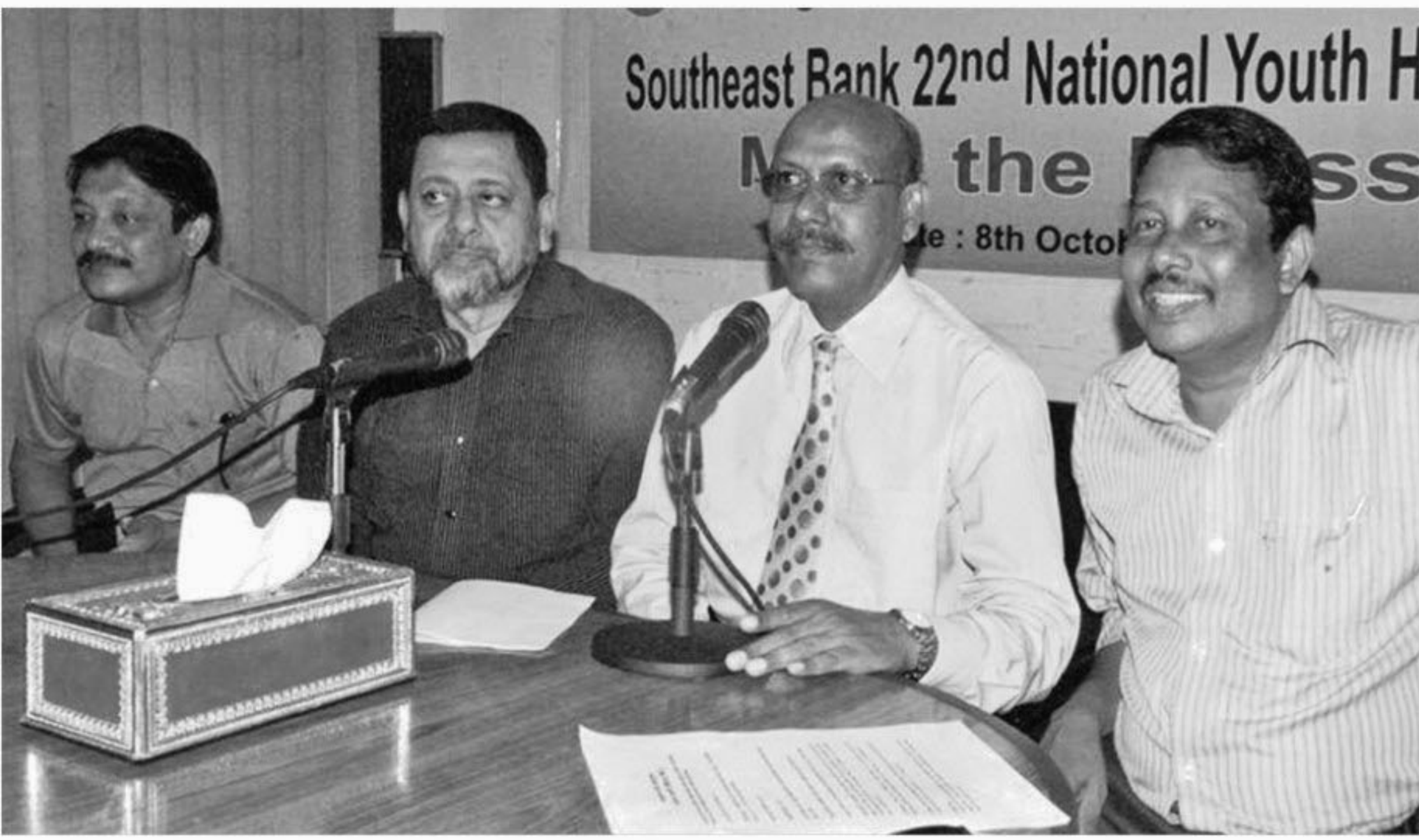


PHOTO: BANGLAR CHOKH

Speakers at a press conference at the Bangladesh Hockey Federation yesterday disclose the details of the South East Bank 22nd National Youth Hockey Competition that begins today at the Maulana Bhasani Hockey Stadium.