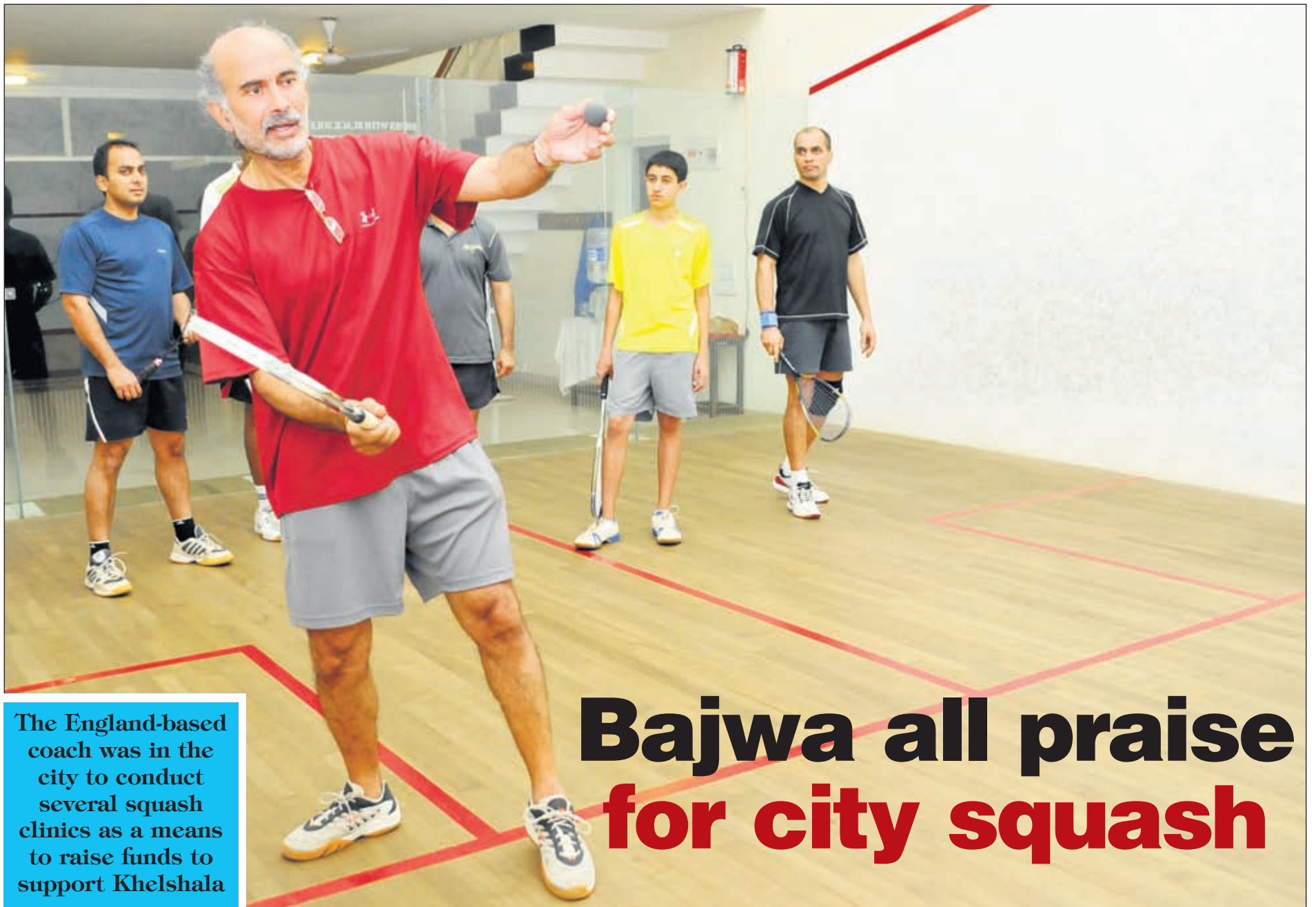


sport

TRIVIA:

Olympic badminton rules say that the shuttle has to have exactly fourteen feathers.



The England-based coach was in the city to conduct several squash clinics as a means to raise funds to support Khelshala

Bajwa all praise for city squash

Harvard University squash coach Satinder Bajwa shares a few pointers at the Bowring Institute courts in Bengaluru on Wednesday.

— PHOTOGRAPHS BY OMPRAKASH

MANUJA VEERAPPA

DECCAN CHRONICLE

It took just an e-mail from a 16-year-old to convince renowned squash coach Satinder Bajwa to make his maiden visit to Bengaluru.

The Harvard University head squash coach was in the city to conduct a five-day clinic to raise funds for charity.

Shaurya Saluja, a class 12 student from Indus International, thought up the idea for the clinic to support the cause of Khelshala, a holistic development program started by Bajwa in his hometown of Chandigarh, last year.

Bajwa, who has mentored eight-time world champion Jansher Khan conducted clinics in three centres in the city.

Speaking about his journey to the city, the England-based coach said, "When we set out to do good and we are faced by obstacles, good things happen to us. I briefly met Shaurya in March this year at our

academy in Chandigarh where he worked as a volunteer and soon forgot about him. And last month he shot out a mail asking if we could conduct clinics here to raise funds for Khelshala. That is how I ended up here."

While the number of children at the clinic were few, the squash community came together to support the cause. "I'm very impressed by the squash fraternity in the city.

"They have been very warm and I'm touched by their concern for charity," said Bajwa. Shaurya has raised about Rs 1.5 lakh for Khelshala which helps children and empowers them through squash. Apart from squash they are also taught music, languages and yoga at the academy, which according to Bajwa, is a small tribute to his motherland.

Speaking about the squash talent in the country, Bajwa, who has been coaching for over two decades now said, "Indian squash has grown over the years and it is



progressing well. Saurav Ghosal is a great talent, I've watched him play and he has a lot to give to the sport and the country.

"Another talent which will come

to the forefront if he overcomes injuries is Siddharth Suchde. I've seen him play in England and he has it in him to make it big," said Bajwa.

Shaurya's effort pays off

At a time when most of his peers are thinking about SAT scores and applying to foreign universities for their under-graduate courses, Shaurya Saluja has been busy doing his bit for the society.

Shaurya is no social activist nor has he given up his academic ambitions. It's just that he has found time to lend support to a cause amidst his busy schedule. Shaurya, who was instrumental in roping in Satinder Bajwa to conduct a clinic in the city, shared his experience on how he managed to rope in a coach of repute.

"I had heard about Khelshala from my father and volunteered there in March this year where apart from helping out at the academy I also did a little bit of coaching since I have been playing the sport for a few years. During my last few days at the academy, Mr. Bajwa arrived and we interacted briefly.

Back home I told my friends here about his clinics and asked if we could call him over and raise funds for Khelshala. Most of them agreed and Mr. Bajwa too was willing to come. A couple of days before his arrival most of the boys dropped out and I nearly called him to cancel his tickets. Meanwhile, I spread the word through posters in supermarkets and at clubs and by the time he arrived we had the numbers."

As his first visit to the city came to an end, Bajwa left with the promise that he would return to propagate the cause of squash enthusiasts.