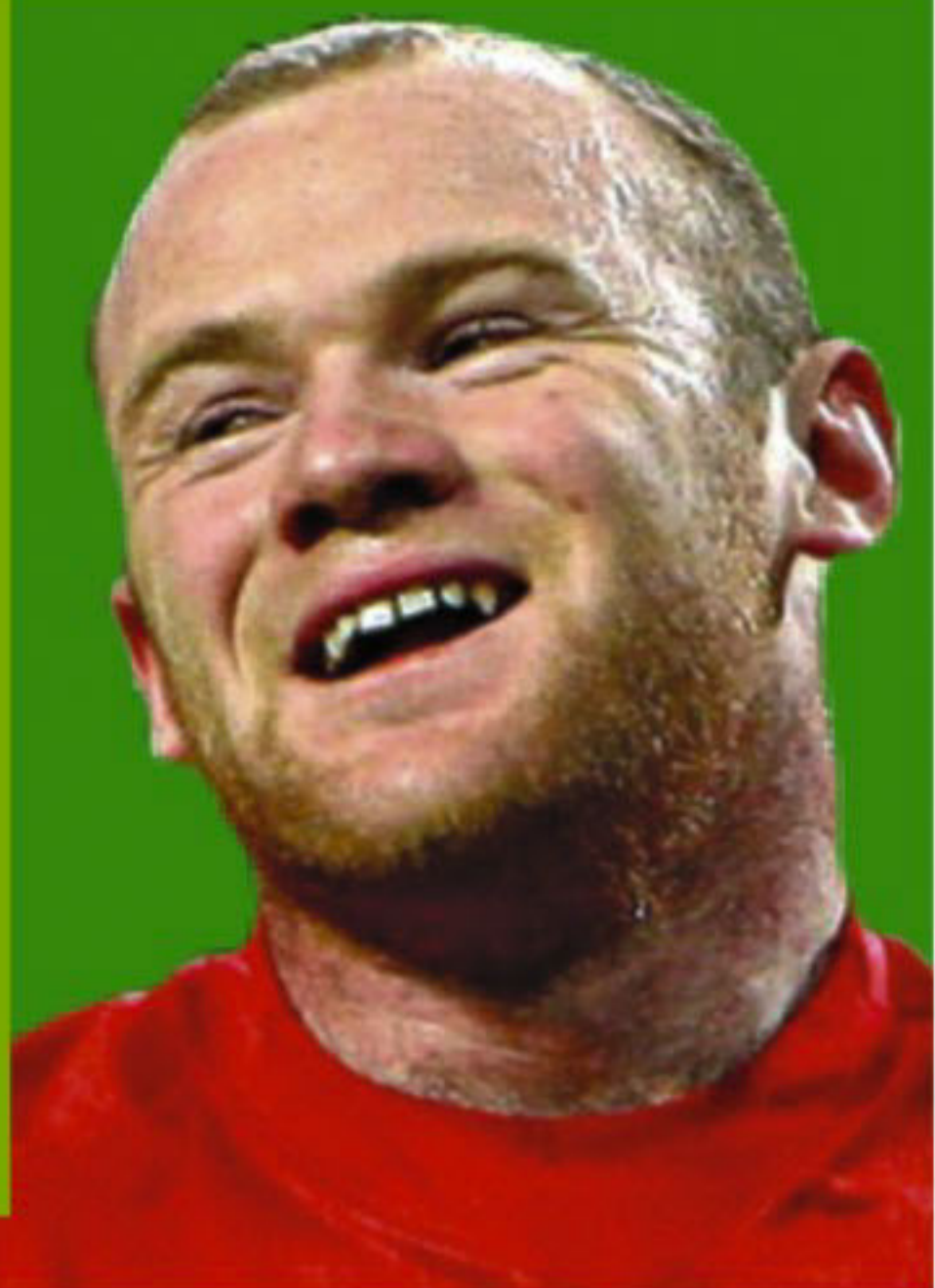


Star SPORT

DHAKA TUESDAY MAY 1, 2012, E-MAIL: sports@thedailystar.net

Rooney shirt best seller

When it comes to sporting the name of their favourite Premier League player on the back of a replica shirt, Manchester United striker Wayne Rooney is officially the most popular choice of fans around the world. Global sales data from Sporting ID, who determined the top five by the number of player names sold for official replica shirts, said it was a close race for the top three positions. Rooney edged out Liverpool's Steven Gerrard and Chelsea frontman Fernando Torres. Cristiano Ronaldo is the fourth most popular with Chelsea's Frank



NBR to go tough on BPL

SPORTS REPORTER

The National Board of Revenue (NBR) is going to take tough action to realise taxes from the parties involved in the Bangladesh Premier League (BPL) T20 tournament.

Yesterday, April 30, was the last day to settle payments but NBR got only a nominal amount from those concerned.

"We will take drastic action to realise taxes. We will set our next course of action in a meeting which will take place within this week," said Kanon Kumar Roy, director general of Directorate of Inspection (Taxes), Dhaka yesterday.

"Many of them requested us to extend the date for paying the dues, but we are not considering their appeals," he added.

According to NBR officials, the tax authorities got only one crore taka but they have projected to get nearly Tk 20 crore from the BPL parties which includes event management firm Game On Sports, the six franchises, players' salaries as well as the BPL governing council itself.

NBR had formed a team headed by Kanon Kumar Roy to monitor all financial transactions in a bid to ensure that all taxes are going to the state coffers.

Meanwhile, the Bangladesh Cricket Board (BCB) held a meeting yesterday with the owners of all participating teams of the inaugural edition of BPL to discuss issues related to player payment.

In a statement, the board informed that the franchise owners gave their commitment to the board that all outstanding payment of overseas players will be cleared by May 9.

BCB also received firm assurance that the dues of the local cricketers will be settled by May 31. The Twenty20 tournament ended on February 29.

Cook calls for supremacy of Test cricket

ANI, London

England one-day cricket captain Alastair Cook has called on the game's administrators to ensure that Test cricket remains the pinnacle of the sport.

He admitted the world needs to act now to ensure Twenty20 cricket does not prevent international cricket being the best versus the best.

"Quite clearly I believe that Test cricket is the pinnacle. I still think most players believe that too. Twenty20 has done wonderful things -- the numbers of kids playing has gone up, the number coming to watch game has gone up. So it's been an important thing for the game. But we need to manage things well to protect Test cricket," The Sun quoted him, assaying.

Cook will turn out Essex against Glamorgan and says he is ready to readjust his technique in preparation for the first Test against the West Indies on May 17.

Cook is also determined to ensure that England remains at the top of the world rankings. If we play to our potential we'd expect to win

SEE PAGE 17 COL 4



Bangladesh Football Federation president Kazi Salahuddin (C) makes a point while talking to reporters at the BFF House yesterday. Salahuddin was elected unopposed for a second term in the BFF polls yesterday. PHOTO: STAR

Young blood at BFF

Football

SPORTS REPORTER

Abdus Salam Murshedy retained his senior vice-president's post while two out of the four incumbent vice-presidents also retained their posts in the Bangladesh Football Federation (BFF) elections yesterday.

Murshedy got 60 votes out of the 121 cast to be re-elected while his nearest competitor former footballer Golam Rabbani Helal got 28. Sheikh Russel KC president Nurul Alam Chowdhury got 23 votes, Ashrafuddin Ahmed Chunnun got 6 and Mostakur Rahman got 3 votes.

In his instant reaction, Murshedy said, "This was the toughest election I have ever won. Now my target would be to take the game to the district and upazila levels and I would seek everyone's assistance to get the job done."

Although the president and senior vice-president remained the same, there were expected changes in the vice-presidents' posts as two incumbents were forced to make way for new faces.

Abahani director Kazi Nabil Ahmed was re-elected after getting highest 76 votes while Badal Roy also made it with 61 votes. The other two incumbents, Shawkat Ali Khan Jahangir and Manjur Hossain Malu, lost as they got only 54 and 46 votes respectively.

They will be replaced by football organiser Tabith M Awaal and former national captain Arif Khan Joy, both of whom contested from the Save Football Panel, who got 74 and 70 votes respectively. Another strong candidate, Brothers Union general secretary Mohiuddin Ahmed Mohi



Newly elected BFF vice-presidents Tabith M Awaal (L) and Arif Khan Joy (R) flash the victory sign after the elections at the BFF House yesterday. PHOTO: STAR

NEW EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

President: Kazi Salahuddin
Senior vice-president: Abdus Salam Murshedy
Vice-presidents: Kazi Nabil Ahmed, Badal Roy, Tabith M Awaal, Arif Khan Joy.
Members: Amirul Islam Babu, Harunur Rashid, Shamsul Haq Chowdhury MP, Sheikh Mohammad Aslam, Iliyas Hossain, Sheikh Maruf Hasan, Fazlur Rahman Babul, Iqbal Hossain, Bijon Barua, Serajul Islam Bacchu, Satyajit Das Rupu, Alamgir Khan Alo.

*Three of the remaining seats for membership will

lost by two votes as he received 59. Former footballers Rumman Bin Wali Shabbir and Khurshid Alam Babul got 22 votes each.

After victory Joy said he would stick to the promises his panel made before the election.

"My commitment is to start football at the grassroots level. I will start district level football first then take it to the divisional level," said Joy after being declared the vice-president elect.

The hardest fight took place for the 15 posts of members, where Amirul Islam Babu got highest 93 votes, followed by Harunur Rashid's 85. Six members were elected for the first time. They are -- Iliyas Hossain, Sheikh Maruf Hasan, Iqbal Hossain, Bijon Barua and Alamgir Khan Alo. After the first 12 memberships were won outright, four of the candidates -- Arif Hossain Moon, Towfiqul Islam Tofa, Anwarul Haq Helal, Ajmal Ahmed Tapan -- were tied at 56 votes each. The four will have to go for another bout of election during the EGM, informed chief election commissioner Mesbah Uddin.

According to many observers the wealthier candidates found their way too easy in the elections while those who could not splash the cash, found themselves in the cold. There are allegations that a huge amount of money has been spent by the candidates, including even on the morning of the election.

Salahuddin for 4 more years

Football

SPORTS REPORTER

Kazi Salahuddin vowed to complete the promised tasks in the next four years after he got the mandate to run the country's football in a festive Bangladesh Football Federation (BFF) elections where he was elected the president for the second term unopposed.

The legendary footballer said he would like to work with all concerned to materialise his election manifesto and take the country's football forward.

"I have always kept my commitment and will do so in the next four years. I believe the commitments I've made are very realistic ones," said Salahuddin while talking to the media at the BFF House last night, after his re-election.

Salahuddin reiterated his three commitments to start football at the district level, start the proposed football academy soon and make the national team a strong one.

"The hardest challenge for me would be to take the game to a next level. However, I will accept anyone who wants to extend his support in order to achieve my goals," said Salahuddin.

Earlier, Salahuddin won the presidency unopposed before the start of the polls. Chief election commissioner Mesbah Uddin declared him president after getting the written statement from the BFF congress

after rival candidate Abdur Rahim withdrew and urged the congress to elect Salahuddin unopposed.

After getting the written statement of the congress through FIFA representative Manilal Fernando, the chief election commissioner discussed the matter with the delegates before officially naming Salahuddin as the winner.

It was a matter of time for Salahuddin to be retained after Rahim had earlier pulled out of the election process two days after the deadline for candidature withdrawal.

Later Rahim informed the election commission about his withdrawal in black and white and also wrote to the FIFA and AFC. Fernando, who came here as an observer, raised the matter to the highest forum of the BFF where it was approved.

However, the congress neither approved the four-year financial audit report nor the proposed budget for the year running and asked to fix a date for an extra-ordinary general meeting (EGM) in the first meeting of the newly-elected executive committee.

"Many questions were raised at the meeting as the AGM took place for the first time in four years. Besides, the meeting did not approve the audit report of the previous committee, that's why the congress asked the meeting to approve the previous audit report first through the internal committee and then through an external audit

SEE PAGE 17 COL 1

NCL ends in a whimper

MOHAMMAD ISAM



The thirteenth edition of the National Cricket League ended in exactly the same way the last three editions ended, and in a broader sense the last twelve. Regrettably, the absolute apathy by the organisers towards first-class cricket leaves many questions hanging with very few answers in response.

Like the last three seasons, Rajshahi are once again the champions on the back of team spirit and giving due significance towards first-class cricket in their preparation, planning and execution. Like in the previous years, there were several outstanding performers among which the younger lot gave assurance that the talent pool is not so dry after all.

The likes of batsmen Anamul Haque and Asif Ahmed and seamers Al-Amin Hossain and Abu Zayed took a liking to the format and made merry after they got the hang of it. The all-round performance of Farhad Hossain became a shining example of how a middle-of-the-road performer made a difference after Rajshahi lost so many top players to Rangpur. Enamul Haque Jr's return to form with 59 wickets is encouraging, as is the

fact that two young batsmen (Anamul and Mohammad Mithun) struck three centuries each in the competition.

But below the glossy surface of Rajshahi's dominance and the breakthrough performances, the NCL is still the byword for an ordinary domestic competition. Consider the scheduling of the NCL this season and a clear picture of what the decision-makers at the Bangladesh Cricket Board really think about the tournament. It started in October last year as the first major domestic competition, with two new teams, Rangpur and Dhaka Metropolis. The league was going on smoothly until after the Pakistan tour, the NCL was abruptly suspended with a round left to play in the second phase and the final. It was unnecessary but the BCB have very few people in their headquarters who can think of anything outside Dhaka's club cricket and hence, the Premier League dates were announced. First-class cricket was soon forgotten after the Bangladesh Premier League T20s which grabbed the attention of the organisers and players like a sticky, sweet dish does after a bland meal.

Everyone in BCB remembered the first-class competition again after the big Premier

SEE PAGE 17 COL 5

Maria upbeat on clay

Tennis

AFP, Stuttgart

Maria Sharapova said she was happy to open her clay-court season by winning Stuttgart's WTA tournament as part of her French Open preparations and to break her losing streak in finals.

With the Madrid and Rome clay-court tournaments still to come before Roland Garros begins on May 27, the world number two said she still has plenty of work ahead of her as she bids to win the one Grand Slam which eludes her.

Having once described herself playing on clay as like 'a cow on ice', Sharapova was in impressive form here as she saw off US Open winner Samantha Stosur and Wimbledon champion Petra Kvitova en route to the final.

She blasted her way past subdued world number one Victoria Azarenka, who had problems with her right wrist all week, for a 6-1, 6-4 victory in Sunday's final.

It was her first title of the year having lost her three previous finals in 2012.

She also gained revenge for her Australian Open final defeat to Azarenka to claim her 25th title of her career, but having reached the French Open semifinals last year, the goal is to lift the trophy in Paris.

"It's a big win for me, it was my first time here and I am happy to have got a title," said world number two Sharapova.

"I have had some tough matches and have had to play well, it has been a good start to the clay court season for me.

SEE PAGE 17 COL 4



Russian tennis world No 2 Maria Sharapova poses for photographers in the winner's prize, a Porsche 911 Carrera, after defeating Belarus's Victoria Azarenka in the final of the WTA Grand Prix in Stuttgart on Sunday. PHOTO: AFP

Barisal win low-scorer

SPORTS REPORTER

Salman claimed five wickets for five runs as Barisal posted a four-wicket victory over Moulvibazar in the 32nd Inter District Championship at the Sheikh Abu Naser Stadium in Khulna yesterday.

Moulvibazar were bundled out for 69 runs in 25.3 overs. Shanaj was the top scorer with 18 runs.

Mohiuddin was the other notable bowler, taking three wickets for 16 runs.

In reply, Barisal reached the target of 70 for the loss of six wickets in 15.5 overs. Tariqul made 21 runs.

Izaz captured three wickets, conceding seven runs.

SCORES IN BRIEF

MOULVIBAZAR: 69 all out in 25.3 overs (Shanaj 18, Ruhul 13, Rasel 13, extras 8; Mohiuddin 3-16, Salman 5-5)
BARISAL: 70-6 in 15.5 overs (Tariqul 21, Mayedul 12, Masud 17, extras 7; Izaz 3-7)
Result: Barisal won by four wickets.