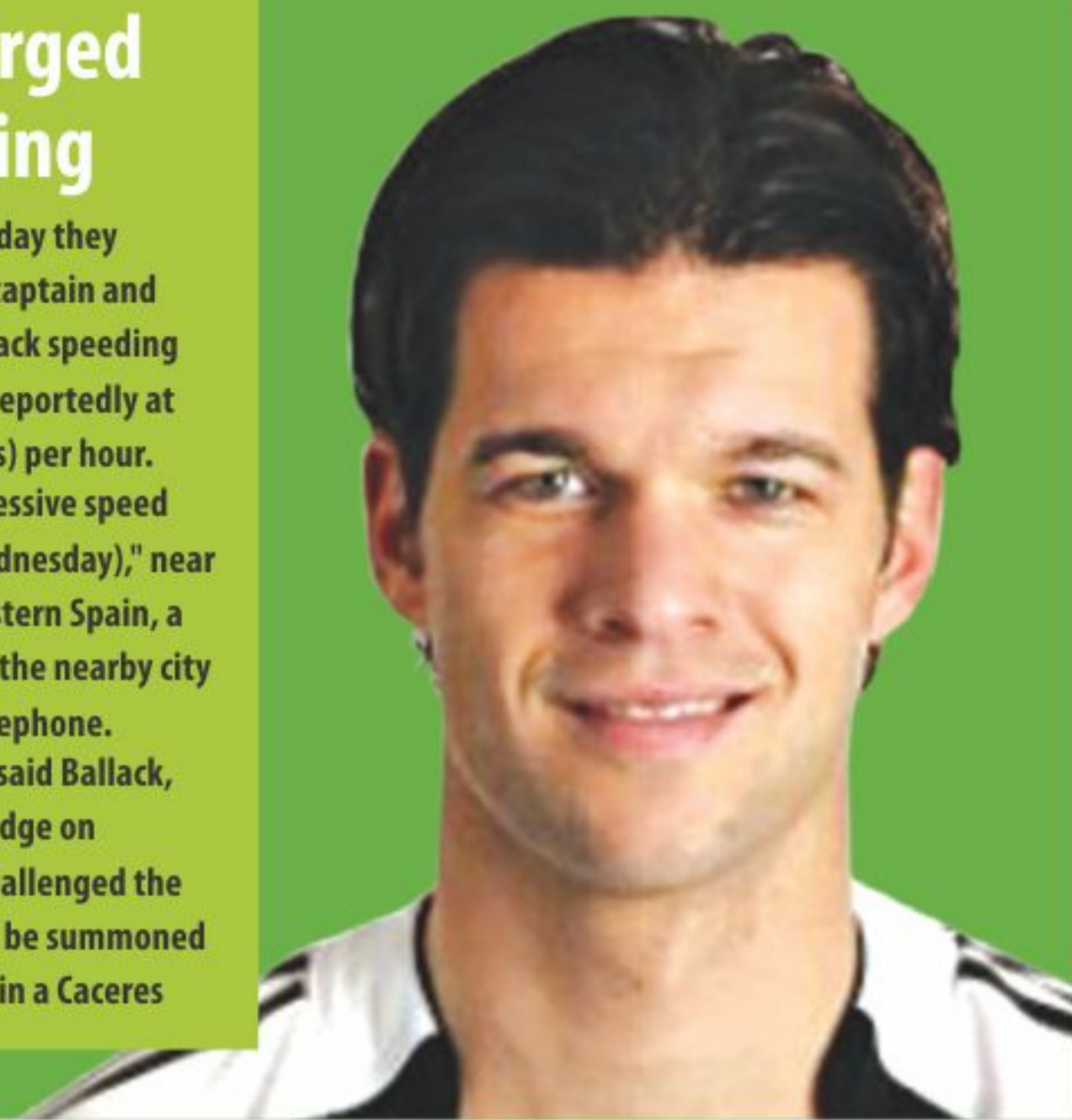


Star SPORT

DHAKA FRIDAY OCTOBER 19, 2012, E-MAIL: sports@thedailystar.net

Ballack charged with speeding

Spanish police said Thursday they caught former Germany captain and Chelsea star Michael Ballack speeding on a highway in Spain -- reportedly at 211 kilometres (131 miles) per hour. "He was detained for excessive speed yesterday afternoon (Wednesday)," near the town of Trujillo in eastern Spain, a civil guard spokesman in the nearby city of Caceres told AFP by telephone. A court official in Trujillo said Ballack, 36, went before a local judge on Thursday morning and challenged the charges, meaning he will be summoned to appear before a judge in a Caceres



Mohammedan Sporting Club football players (L) limber up during practice while their opponents in today's Grameenphone Federation Cup semifinal Sheikh Russel (R) do some stretching of their own at the BUET Ground yesterday. PHOTOS: STAR

'Challenge not insurmountable'

Cricket

SPORTS REPORTER

In his first public utterance as Bangladesh Cricket Board (BCB) president, Nazmul Hassan Papon told the media yesterday that he was well aware of the magnitude of the challenges facing him as the head of the country's richest sports body. "It's a big challenge but not insurmountable. I felt a bit under pressure until I arrived here. But now, with so many cricket-knowing people around me, I feel relaxed," were his first words while talking to the media at the VIP lounge of the Hazrat Shahjalal International Airport. "But at the same time I can understand

how important this responsibility is from the way I have been received here," added a smiling Papon, who returned home yesterday from Kuwait. Apart from a few BCB directors and some other sports organisers, a number of political supporters and employees from business con-



NAZMUL HASSAN

glomerate Beximco Group thronged to the airport to receive the new BCB boss, who later left the airport in a long motorcade.

Papon, the ruling party parliament member and son of President Zillur Rahman, was however cool in his comments when responding to the various questions from the media, and said that he will emphasise on discipline in all activities of the board during his tenure.

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Joy pleads for lenience

SPORTS REPORTER

Arif Khan Joy, vice president of the Bangladesh Football Federation (BFF) and director of Bangladesh Jute Mills Corporation (BJMC), yesterday belatedly apologised for his 'mistakable activities'. The BFF though, have still referred the matter to the disciplinary committee. A decision is expected in 72 hours.

Joy was served a show-cause notice on Wednesday following his illegal entrance into the field with a fire-arm during a Federation Cup quarterfinal clash between his side Team BJMC and Mohammedan SC.

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Russel aim to break final jinx

SPORTS REPORTER



Star-studded Sheikh Russel KC are looking forward to making their maiden final of the Federation Cup when they square off against traditional powerhouses Mohammedan SC in the first semifinal at the Sangbandhu National Stadium today. The game gets underway at 5:00pm.

Sheikh Russel have never reached the final of the season's curtain-raising tournament since their appearance in the top-level football in 2003. The going is no easier this time, as they face a team aiming for their 15th final appearance in Mohammedan.

But the new Sheikh Russel is a strong team comprised of nine national players and three quality foreign players and if anyone can break this jinx, this team can, as evi-

denced by their four wins on the trot. The wins have also come in style, with Russel finding the back of the net 14 times.

Their compact-midfield comprising of Mamunul Islam, Moroccan Tarik El Janaby, Haitian Sony Norde and Zahid Hossain is the backbone behind Sheikh Russel's success and the team management will definitely be hoping for consistent performance from both forwards and midfielders in the crucial game.

Sheikh Russel may also take inspiration from their 2-0 win over Mohammedan in the group-stage match where they dominated in a deserved victory.

"It is a new game and new day so the players will have to prove themselves again," said Sheikh Russel coach Maruful Haque. "If the players can perform properly, we can hope to book the final seat."

On the other hand, Mohammedan

are also dreaming of the final berth for a record 15 times and for the first time in three seasons.

But the Black and Whites are happy to pass on the favourite tag, after surrendering to Russel in their group game and making it into this stage only after a pulsating shoot-out win against Team BJMC in the quarterfinal.

"We will go there as an underdog and play without pressure. We will try to avail every advantages," Mohammedan coach Saiful Bari Titu said. "But it is sure that we will take a cautious approach against them instead of adopting any attacking based game."

Titu, who last season guided Sheikh Jamal to win the Federation Cup, has also spotted weakness in the Sheikh Russel backline and wants to avail those gaps by utilizing the speedy Shohel Rana who will be back in the side after his one-match suspension.

NCL from tomorrow

SPORTS REPORTER

All eight divisions finally submitted their squads for the National Cricket League (NCL), which will kick off tomorrow across the country.

"We have received all the squads. We had to bend our rules a little for Khulna to accommodate pacer Robiul Islam. Shiplu (Robiul Islam) is originally a Khulna Division player but played for Sylhet last season. This time he was not included in the Sylhet Division team and that's why we gave him to Khulna as their national pacer. Rubel Hossain is uncertain" said Hafiz Joarder, member-secretary of the BCB's tournament committee.

He also informed that they met with umpires and match referees yesterday to talk about the bylaws and playing conditions.

"There was one major change in the playing condition -- a pacer can bowl a maximum of fifteen overs in a day. We took the decision as per national physio's advice and you know it is also followed in Ranji Trophy," informed Hafiz.

This season will see a single round of play and the tournament committee

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Unemployment hits Guinness record-holder Halim hard

HOSSAIN SERAI, Magura

It was only in January this year when Abdul Halim made the country, as well as the nation, proud by engraving his name in the Guinness World Records by balancing a football on his head for the farthest distance, 15.2 kilometres.

But the Guinness hero, stricken hard by poverty, has now been forced to play the role of a crowd-pleaser to earn a living as he has yet to be provided with a job opportunity.

"At the moment I have no other option but to display my abilities with the football and play the role of a crowd-pleaser as I have no fixed source of income. It's getting harder each day for me to meet the daily expenses of my four-member family," sighed Halim, after displaying some skills before the crowd at the RSKH School of Mohammadpur upazila headquarters in Magura recently.

Halim was called in by the school authority to display his skills only for recreation of the students. After his shows during a two-hour break in between morning and day shifts, he was 'honoured' with an amount of Tk. 1,000, collected from the viewers.

Earlier, Halim was seen showing his skills at the Magura Government Girls' High School premises in the district town on September 20. And he doesn't know when the next invite will come his way through which he will be able to earn a small amount.

Halim's Guinness feat of walking 9.44 miles in two hours and five minutes was achieved on October 22, 2011 at the Bangabandhu National Stadium in Dhaka. He earned the authorities' recognition on January 24 this year.

"After etching my country's name in the Guinness book, I wanted

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Bangladesh's second Guinness world record-holder Abdul Halim shows off his football balancing skills for students of the RSKH School in Magura yesterday. INSET He has to perform a similar balancing feat to support his wife and two sons, one of whom is suffering from osteoporosis, on his meagre income.

LOCAL snippets

SPORTS REPORTER

Shantinagar SC and PWD won their respective matches in the Super Four of the Green Delta Insurance Second Division Hockey League at the Maulana Bhasani Hockey Stadium yesterday.

Shantinagar defeated Dilkusha SC 1-0 with Nasir striking the decider while PWD handed a 2-1 defeat to Tejgaon Agragami Club with Imran Parvez scoring both goals.

Exhibition Football Match

Bangladesh National Football Team will play an exhibition match against Thailand on November 18, informed a Bangladesh Football Federation (BFF) official yesterday.

Bangladesh last month played an international friendly against Nepal. Bangladesh were supposed to play an exhibition match against Belarusian club Dinamo Minsk, in Dhaka on November 12 during Belarus president's four-day tour of Bangladesh, but it has been cancelled and the BFF arranged the exhibition match against Thailand, said BFF member Satyajit Das Rupu yesterday.

Women's Handball

Holders Narinda Progati Boys' Club registered a massive 57-8 win over Victoria SC in the Cute Premier Division Handball League at the Shaheed Captain M Mansur Ali National Handball Stadium yesterday.

In the day's other matches, Menzis KC thrashed Shurjodoy KC 37-18 while Old Ideals beat Bhratryita Samaj Kalyan Sangha 23-14.

Women's Chess

As many as ten players shared the lead in the Prime Bank 7th International Rating Women's Chess Tournament after the first round which was held on Wednesday at the Bangladesh Chess Federation hall room.

WIM Rani Hamid inaugurated the Swiss-league

PHOTOS: STAR