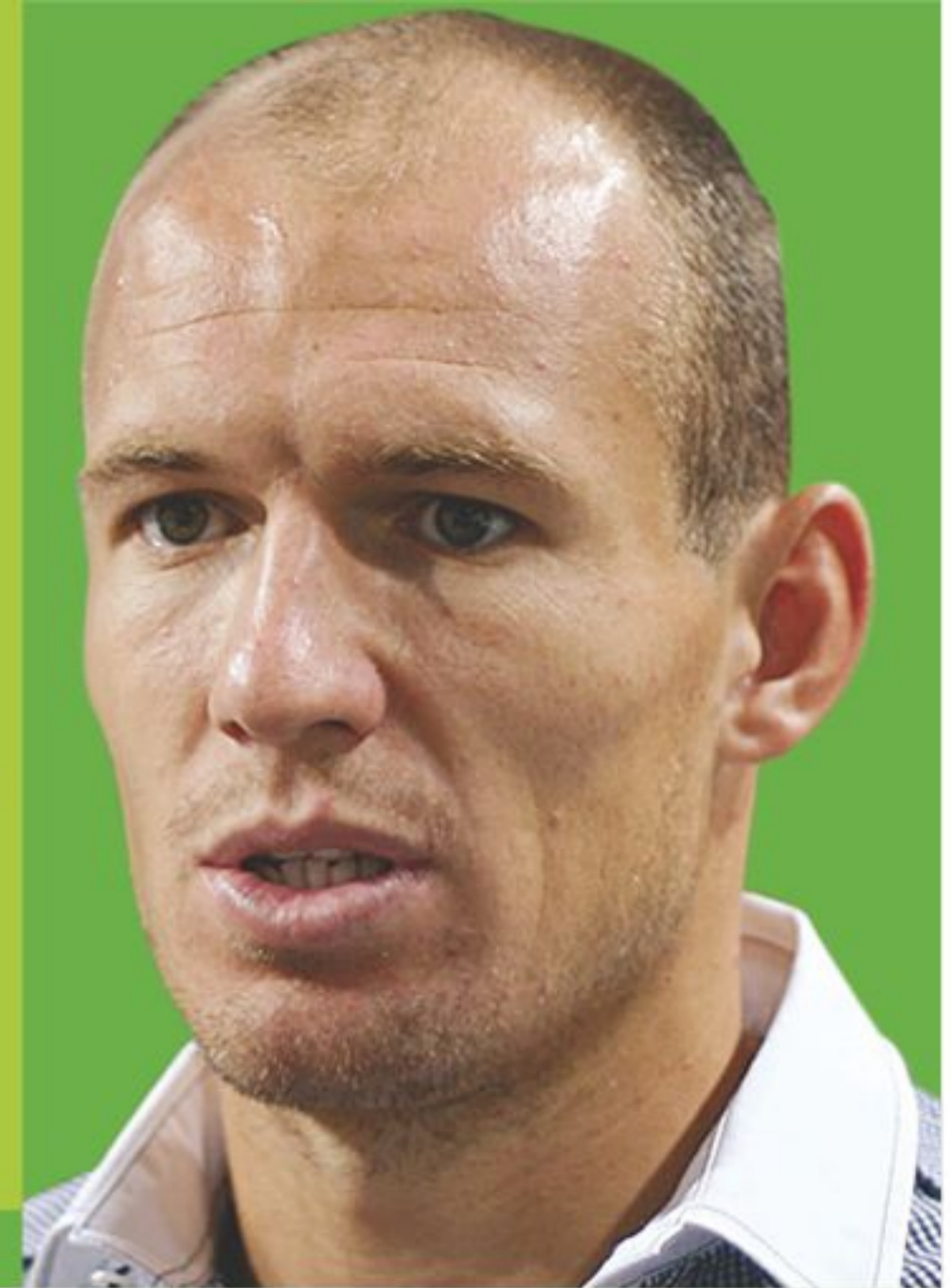


Robben thought about quitting

Bayern Munich attacker Arjen Robben has admitted that he has had moments where he considered hanging up his boots due to his ongoing injury problems. The Netherlands international has endured a number of serious injuries throughout his career, and the 28-year-old seriously thought about quitting the game just to put his physical issues behind him. "I have had so many injuries throughout my career. It occasionally makes me a bit sad," Robben was quoted as saying by NOS.



NSC saves BCB blushes

Cricket

AL AMIN

If you omit the desire of the National Sports Council (NSC) to have more representatives (from the Ministry of Youth and Sports) in the just approved BCB constitution, then the regulatory authority of the country's sports deserves kudos from cricket lovers of the country for keeping some vital components in the board's constitution intact.

The NSC, in its recommendation on the amended constitution that the collective brains of BCB unanimously passed in March this year, made some very interesting observations and asked the board to adopt those in the constitution 'before sending it back to the NSC'.

The NSC quite understandably rejected the BCB decision to offload cricketers as councillors, a move greeted by jeers from the country's cricket community.

The argument behind discarding former cricketers as councillors was that the 'cricketer' tag cannot be the sole criterion to be a member of the general council, which has been the exclusive domain for organisers of Dhaka-based clubs, divisional and district organisations.

But in the 2004 BCB constitution the councillorship of players was put in the third category which can be best described as a distant 'third world' with the provision of electing only one director from that category. That left the Dhaka Metropolitan

clubs (which fall in the second category and can elect 12 directors from midst) and Divisional and District Sports Associations (which fall in the first category and can elect 10 directors) to call all the shots because of their contribution and endless effort to the improvement of country's cricket (some may seriously argue about the contribution of divisional and district sports associations).

Former cricketers may not be considered in some other boards in the cricket world, but they were drafted into the BCB umbrella in an effort to ensure that the intellectual input for the betterment of the game comes from a wide section of the sports community.

The NSC also asked the BCB to reinstate CFO (chief finance officer) in the constitution. It was quite inexplicable why the board's constitution amendment committee recommended abolishing the vital post.

The NSC observation in this regard is very interesting. "The post of CFO must be kept to maintain financial discipline," read an NSC comment.

The board pays a monthly salary, honorarium and other benefits of more than Tk 2 crore to its staff and deals with an annual budget of Tk 115 crore. Many board directors privately said that they were not against a CFO but did not 'want it in the constitution'. Quite an argument!

The NSC also overruled the board's desire to have a COO (chief operating officer) in lieu of CEO

(chief executive office) with a harsh note that reads: "In the ICC and different cricket boards' constitutions there is a post called CEO. Besides, the change of the name does not bear any significant meaning. So, the post of CEO will remain."

Board directors and councillors termed the NSC interference in the BCB constitution 'unfortunate' while expressing their anguish over the last couple of days. But unfortunately it is the BCB that opened the door for the NSC to step in.

The BCB formed a constitution amendment committee with Dewan Shafiqul Arefin as its convenor two years ago, particularly to insert a clause defining an 'elected' BCB president. And the committee in an effort to make 'minor' adjustments in the constitution actually had done a 'major surgery', sparking uproar.

Many believe the committee could have done a world of good if it had focused on decentralisation of our cricket, like creating cricket zones instead of existing divisions which have now increased from six to seven and will surely increase in the future based on political decisions. It would be far more conducive to the betterment of cricket if the sport was not bracketed under divisions. Instead there should be exclusive cricket zones like east, west, north, south, central, etc. under which will fall the district cricket associations and Dhaka-based clubs. Experts believe that this will pave the way for

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Chittagong captain Tamim Iqbal was in imperious form in the first-round National Cricket League match against Dhaka Metro in which he struck a century in each innings, the second of which was a 104-ball 113 at the Shaheed Chandu Stadium in Bogra yesterday.

PHOTO: STAR FILE

Uncut India TV footage arrives

SPORTS REPORTER

The un-edited footages of the sting conducted by India TV, a private Indian Television channel, which alleged that Bangladeshi umpire Nadir Shah was willing to give doctored decisions in lieu of money, have been received by the BCB's investigative committee.

The uncut footages, according to the committee's convener, Sirajuddin Md. Alamgir, will be analysed after Eid-Al-Azha. The committee will have to provide a verdict regarding Shah's umpiring future early next month. "As of now we have asked the people seen in the footages to send in their statements. We'll talk to them after Eid and then evaluate the available evidence," said Alamgir.

The accusation has caused a temporary shortage in the number of Bangladeshi umpires qualified enough to officiate in the One Day International matches against the West Indies in November. The ongoing investigation has also blocked Bangladeshi umpire, Sharfuddowla Ibne Shahid Saikat's, opportunity to take part in the series against the West Indies. Saikat, who's a member of the international panel, was shown in the sting. He was, however, shown to have declined the spot-fixing offers made by the undercover journalists.

Warne will never say 'never'

AFP, Sydney

Australian cricket legend Shane Warne Tuesday said he could not say when he would finally retire, as he prepares to captain a domestic Twenty20 team five years after leaving the international scene.

The 43-year-old leg-spinner announced his retirement in 2007, only to return as captain and coach of the Rajasthan Royals in the Indian Premier League (IPL) for four years, winning the inaugural tournament in 2008.

Warne appeared to bring down the curtain on his stellar, two-decade cricket career at the IPL in May 2011, but went on to join the Australian Twenty20 team Melbourne Stars for the Big Bash League's

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37 called for Thailand friendly

SPORTS REPORTER

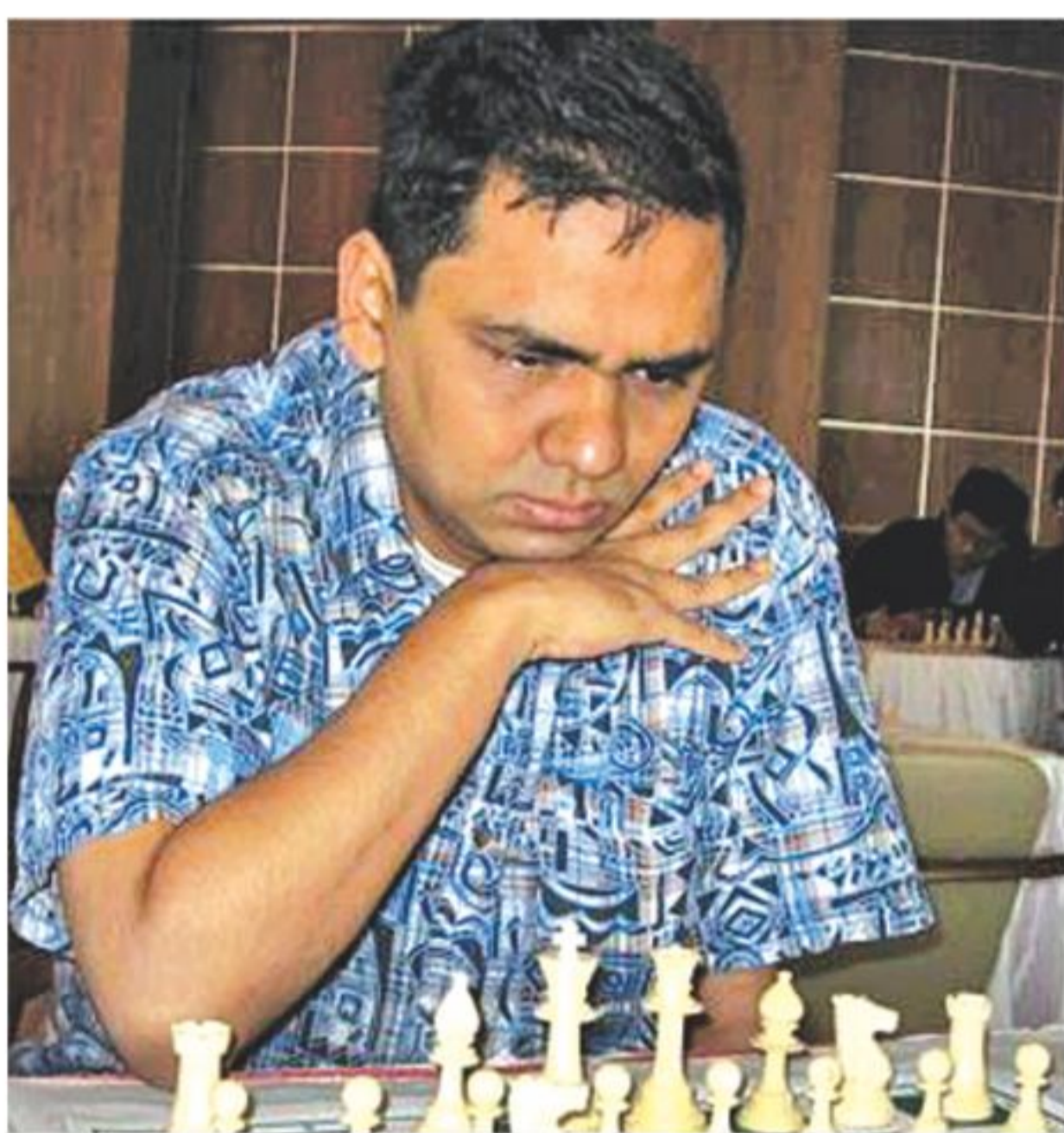
The Bangladesh Football Federation (BFF) yesterday called up 37 footballers for a seven-day camp ahead of the Bangladesh national team's exhibition match against Thailand on November 18. The only new face in the side is the young Takhish Ahmed of Team BJMC.

The camp will get underway from October 30 and end on Nov 5, five days before the start of the professional football league.

All 23 players, who had been in the national squad during Bangladesh's FIFA international friendly against Nepal in September, have retained their places while 14 more players have been included following the national U-23 team's engagement in the six-nation invitational tournament in December next in Sri Lanka.

"Takhish has been awarded a place in the preliminary squad following his performance in the recently concluded Federation Cup. He looked better up front and can both run and shoot,"

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Grand Master Ziaur Rahman is deep in concentration as he mulls over his next move on way to becoming the champion of the NIT Grandmasters Chess Tournament in Nagpur yesterday.

PHOTO: STAR FILE

Zia NIT champ

Chess

SPORTS REPORTER

Grandmaster Ziaur Rahman was crowned the unbeaten champion of the NIT Nagpur Grandmasters Chess Tournament through the tiebreak system at the close of the eleventh and final round held in Nagpur, India yesterday.

Zia and Aleksandrov secured nine points each and the title was decided through a tiebreak with Zia getting 77 Buchholz scores, more than his opponent could manage.

However, the results of other Bangladeshi Grandmasters were not as bright as Zia's as GM Abdullah Al Rakib and GM Enamul Hossain Razib finished 14th and 16th respectively with 7.5 points each.

IM Minhazuddin Ahmed Sagar finished in 26th place

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Tamim show goes on

SPORTS REPORTER



The first round of the National Cricket League (NCL), which drew to a close in different parts of the country yesterday, produced two draws and two results. The game at the Sheikh Abu Naser Stadium in Khulna took a dramatic turn as Barisal, who were set a target of 257 by Khulna, were bowled out for 205 after lunch. Khulna became the second team to win a match on the fourth and last day of the first round, after Dhaka had comprehensively beaten Rajshahi at the Sher-e-Bangla National Stadium in Mirpur on the

Johnson still has hopes

REUTERS, Melbourne

Mitchell Johnson still has a future in Test cricket and the 30-year-old could be in line for a recall, Australia's new fast-bowling coach has said.

Allister de Winter said Johnson's recent form could spell an end to a frustrating period in the wilderness for the left-arm quick, local media reported on Tuesday.

"He's probably still in the mix," de Winter told

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Russel enjoy the morning after

SPORTS REPORTER



Despite hitting the heights by claiming their first top-flight trophy in history, Sheikh Russel KC yesterday showed that they had kept their foot firmly on the ground by turning up for a training session. Just a day after a long-awaited Federation Cup triumph and a late-night celebration to mark the occasion, the players were back to the daily routine.

However, the players have been given a six-day Eid-ul-Azha vacation starting from

SCORES IN BRIEF

CHITTAGONG: First innings 411; Second innings 163 for 1 in 38 overs (Tamim 113; Sunny 1-39)
DHAKA METRO: First innings 632 for 7 in 186 overs (M Ayub 209 not out, Tasamul 135 no; Kamrul-78, Nur-2-161)
Result: Match drawn
Man of the match: Tamim Iqbal
RANGPUR: First innings 295; Second innings 258

third day.

The game at the Shaheed Chandu Stadium in Bogra between Chittagong and Dhaka Metro, expectedly, ended in a draw. The last day of the game, however, witnessed another fine innings by Tamim Iqbal, who smashed an unbeaten century

off just 89 balls.

The Cricket Garden in Rangpur was the stage for another stalemate with the home team playing out the entire day against Sylhet. Rangpur's Nasir Hossain stroked his way to an impressive 87.

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