

## Berlusconi slams Milan tactics

AC Milan owner Silvio Berlusconi has reportedly criticised coach Massimiliano Allegri's choice of tactics during a 2-2 draw away to Palermo in Italy's Serie A on Tuesday. Berlusconi has so far allowed Allegri to get on with the job and the coach has consistently been given the backing of Milan CEO Adriano Galliani. However according to Gazzetta dello Sport newspaper Berlusconi "phoned Galliani" after the game to express his frustration with Allegri's decision to



## BCB chasing its own tail

Cricket

BISHWAJIT ROY

The Bangladesh Cricket Board (BCB) has finally fallen back to their well-worn method of forming a committee to resolve the problem regarding the Bangladesh Premier League (BPL).

When all and sundry were looking forward to a bold decision from newly appointed BCB president Nazmul Hassan Papon regarding the long-pending issue, all they got was a declaration that a three-member committee headed by senior vice-president Mahbulul Anam has been formed to look after the matter during the board meeting yesterday at the game's headquarters in Mirpur. Vice-president Ahmed Sajjadul Alam and director Ahmed Iqbal Hasan are the other members of the committee who have been asked to submit their report regarding the financial issues of the BPL within the next seven days.

The manner in which they have handled the three major issues facing cricket in the last leg of former board president

AHM Mustafa Kamal's three-year tenure - the BPL, appointment of head coach Richard Pybus and the introduction of a franchise-based longer-version competition -- have once again brought BCB's lack of professionalism to the fore.

The board had launched a money-spinning tournament like the BPL without any legal framework, engendering chaos and tarnishing the country's cricketing image on the international stage through the nonpayment of players and officials. On another front, the way the board negotiated with Pybus not only put a premature end to the Englishman's stint with the Bangladesh national team but also darkened the question mark over BCB's professionalism.

And lastly, if proof be needed that nothing can be achieved in the professional world through whimsical decisions, Kamal's ambitious but unrealistic intentions regarding the introduction of franchise-based first-class cricket and its eventual abandonment certainly provided it. Kamal's intention was good but he wanted to start a venture without

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Members of the Bangladesh women's cricket team enjoy a light moment on their arrival at the Hazrat Shahjalal International Airport yesterday after participating in the ACC Women's Twenty20 Asia Cup in Guangzhou, China.

PHOTO: STAR

## 20 selected for Pokhara Cup

SPORTS REPORTER

A total of 20 players have been selected for the Safal Pokhara Cup Football Tournament in Nepal. Only three players have been cut, one of whom was called-up the day before being axed.

Bangladesh will leave here for Nepal tomorrow as the visiting side will play the semifinal of the ongoing Safal Pokhara Cup directly.

Winger Shariful Islam, Sultan Ahmed Shakil, striker Aminur Rahman Sajib were called up on Wednesday after a couple of clubs refused to release their players but striker Sajib, who struck a treble in the season's curtain-raising tournament Federation Cup, failed to find a place in the squad.

"Striker Taklish [Ahmed] looked better than Sajib in the training session held in morning.

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## NSC meeting by next Monday

Cricket

SPORTS REPORTER

Bangladesh Cricket Board (BCB) president Nazmul Hassan Papon will discuss issues regarding the BCB constitution and board elections with the high-ups of the National Sports Council (NSC) by next Monday.

"Our president (Nazmul Hassan Papon) will first talk with the legal adviser because there are some issues and confusion about some clauses in the recommendation and then he will meet with the NSC officials by next Monday," informed BCB's media committee chairman Jalal Yunus after the board meeting at Mirpur yesterday. The NSC, the country's sports regulatory authority, in its recommendation on the amended constitution made some very interesting observations and asked the board to adopt those in the constitution 'before sending it back to the NSC'.

Regarding the Pakistan tour, Yunus said that the BCB's new president will talk with the concerned authorities before taking any decision about the tour.

"The issue of the Pakistan tour was also discussed in the board meeting. Before he (Papon) was appointed president, a letter was sent to the Pakistan board which stated that Bangladesh will tour Pakistan. Our new president is keen to keep the commitment but he will talk with the concerned authorities before taking any decision regarding the issue because security is a major issue,"

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## Shocking start by Siddikur

SPORTS REPORTER

Ace Bangladesh golfer Siddikur Rahman's torrid time on the course continued as he finished the first round of the WGC-HSBC Champions in joint 66th position after carding a woeful five-over-par 77 at the Mission Hills Golf Club's Olazabal course at Dongguan in Guangdong yesterday.

His horrible start is further highlighted by the pleasant time those at the top of the leaderboard enjoyed. Louis Oosthuizen of South Africa and American Adam Scott shared the lead with superb rounds of seven-under-par 65, while Thailand's Prom Meesawat led the Asian charge in joint seventh position with five-under-par 67.

It was the worst start by

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## Last chance to impress

NCL 2nd round begins today

SPORTS REPORTER

The all-important second round of the National Cricket League (NCL) begins today after a short break for eid. The round will be the last chance for certain players to make an impression on the national selectors. Chief selector Akram Khan has already said that Bangladesh's long hiatus from Test cricket has put him and his team in a spot of bother.

In the second round matches, Dhaka take on Dhaka Metro at the Sher-e-Bangla National Cricket Stadium in Mirpur while Sylhet meet Chittagong at the BKSP.

Khulna face off with Rangpur at the Sheikh Abu Naser Stadium in Khulna and holders Rajshahi play against Barisal at the Sheikh Kamruzzaman Stadium in Rajshahi.

The national players will look to improve on their individual performances as apart from Tamim Iqbal's dashing centuries, none of the other players managed to adjust themselves to the longer format of the game in the first round of matches. With the first Test match just a little more than a week away, this is the one area that

## 'Batting has to improve'

SPORTS REPORTER

The Bangladesh women's cricket team returned yesterday after participating in the ACC Women's Twenty20 Asia Cup in Guangzhou, China.

Captain Salma Khatun expressed her satisfaction over her team's performance in the tournament, although she believed that it could have been much better if they put in a satisfactory batting performance during the tournament.

Bangladesh beat Nepal, hosts China and Sri Lanka to qualify for the semifinal but failed to make it to the final, losing to Pakistan by six wickets at the semifinal stage.

"Our performance was not bad in the tournament and I'm happy with the outcome. The most important thing is that we are improving day by day. Our bowling and fielding was really good but we have to improve our batting," said Salma.

"I think we were a better side than Pakistan but we lost in the

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## BFF ACADEMY'S TALENT HUNT FIFA director likely for final selection

Football

SPORTS REPORTER

FIFA technical director Jean Michel Benzet is likely to conduct the final selection of the booters for the Bangladesh Football Federation Academy in December as the divisional phase of the talent hunt has almost been completed last month.

Some 120 booters -- Under-14 and U-18 -- from six divisions have already been picked for the final selection while the rest of the 20 to 30 booters from the Dhaka division are still to be finalised. 60 youth footballers from the final list of 150 booters will be picked for the BFF Academy in Sylhet but unfortunately, the renovation and furniture installment at Sylhet still depends on the approval of the finance ministry.

"We told FIFA that we are ready for the final selection and requested them to send their team in the first week of December but they can't send their team due to busy schedule of FIFA technical director. However, they have assured us that they would complete the selection process by December," said BFF acting general secretary Abu Nayeem Shohag, hinting that the FIFA technical

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## Talent hunt for special athletes on

SPORTS REPORTER

The regional talent hunt for intellectually-challenged athletes, organised by the Special Olympics Bangladesh in financial assistance with Grameenphone, began at the Chittagong BKSP yesterday.

Chittagong City Corporation mayor Monjur Alam declared the two-day talent hunt open as some 300 athletes and officials from Chittagong and Sylhet Divisions are taking part in the program featuring eight disciplines - athletics, swimming, table tennis, badminton, bocce, football, cricket and floor hockey.



National footballers stretch during a practice session at the Birshreshtha Mostafa Kamal Stadium in Kamalapur yesterday. They will fly to Nepal tomorrow to take part in the ongoing Safal Pokhara Cup from the semifinal stages.

PHOTO: STAR