

BFF unfazed by demands

SPORTS REPORTER

The Bangladesh Football Federation (BFF) is seemingly intent on engaging in talks with Sheikh Jamal DC and Mohammedan SC through regarding the crisis over premier league's transfer window, but the game's governing body wants to strictly stick to rules and regulations in doing so.

This was the impression that came out yesterday after an 'informal meeting' of the members of BFF executive committee was held outside the BFF headquarters in presence of a few representatives from the Bangladesh Premier League clubs.

"Today [Tuesday] we sat for an informal meeting to discuss different issues of football. The bottom-line of the discussion was to keep football above everything else and let it roll in its own way," said BFF vice president Badal Roy.

"The clubs may have their demands, appeals and the grievances, and those could be solved through discussion," Roy said. "We hope we can solve the ongoing crisis soon and go forward with all stakeholders."

The BFF vice-president, however, warned that they would not bow to anyone and would not do anything outside the rules and regulations of the game's governing body.

Without naming any names, Roy said: "A club, which is a beloved one of mine, was on the focus of our discussion. An official of that club has involved himself in every turmoil in sports. If he thinks that they can put football into turmoil like they did in hockey, chess and table tennis; he will be making a big mistake."

"These days footballers don't take to the street in demand of league because we have regularised top-flight football. We will not let it go wrong," said the former national midfielder, indicating to Mohammedan's director-in-charge Lokman Hossain Bhuiyan.

PREMIER DIV CHESS Navy held by Sk Russel

SPORTS REPORTER

Defending champions Bangladesh Navy were held to a 2-2 draw Sheikh Russel Memorial SC in the in the Walton Premier Division Chess League yesterday.

Sheikh Russel lead the table with five points from three matches while Navy are in joint third position with three points.

Bangladesh Navy, however, played only two matches.



Chelsea coach Jose Mourinho (2nd from R) conducts a training session in Cobham yesterday on the eve of their Champions League encounter against Porto.

PHOTO: AFP

Crunch time for Mourinho

AFP, London

Jose Mourinho faces a decisive moment in his fight to save his job as the beleaguered Chelsea manager bids to avoid a catastrophic exit from the Champions League against Porto on Wednesday.

Mourinho is on the brink of being sacked by Blues owner Roman Abramovich after Saturday's stunning 1-0 home defeat against lowly Bournemouth left the crisis-torn Premier League champions languishing just two points above the relegation zone.

Mourinho was given a public vote of confidence by Chelsea at the start of October, but Abramovich's patience is wearing thin as the club's worst start to a season in his 12-year ownership shows no signs of improving.

Brought to you by

Call 10678

FIXTURES

Bayer Leverkusen	v	Barcelona
Roma	v	BATE Borisov
Dinamo Zagreb	v	Bayern Munich
Olympiakos	v	Arsenal
Dynamo Kiev	v	Maccabi Tel-Aviv
Chelsea	v	Porto
Valencia	v	Lyon
Gent	v	Zenit Saint Petersburg

Although Mourinho has continued to insist he retains the support of his players amid rumours of a dressing room mutiny against his hard-line style, the limp manner of their surrender against Bournemouth suggested otherwise.

Abramovich held talks with his closest Chelsea aides, Marina Granovskaia and Michael Emenalo, over the weekend and it is reported the Russian told Mourinho he must lead the team into the last 16 of the Champions League to avoid the axe.

Chelsea need only a draw at Stamford Bridge in their final Group G fixture to be certain of a place in the knockout stages.

Once virtually unbeatable at the Bridge under Mourinho, Chelsea have lost four times on home turf this season and Porto, who need a win to be sure of progressing, are unlikely to prove a push-over after beating the west Londoners in Portugal earlier this season.

Lukaku denies Palace

AFP, Liverpool

Romelu Lukaku extended his red-hot streak as the Everton striker's late equaliser rescued a 1-1 draw against Crystal Palace on Monday.

Lukaku has been in superb form over the last month and Palace were unable to subdue the Belgium international, who poked home from close-range with nine minutes remaining at Goodison Park.

The former Chelsea star now has 50 goals in 100 appearances for Everton since first joining them on loan in 2013 before making what now looks a bargain £28 million (\$42 million, 38 million euros) permanent move a year later.

He has 14 goals in all competitions this season, with seven of that total coming in his last six matches.

Lukaku's latest crucial intervention was well-timed, coming just five minutes after Palace defender Scott Dann had headed the

visitors into the lead.

Everton moved up to ninth place in the Premier League in extending their unbeaten run to seven matches in all competitions, while Palace climbed to the lofty heights of sixth.

"I am proud but I'm a team performer, so I'm happy with the record but disappointed we didn't get the three points," Lukaku said of his goal milestone.

"After their goal we reacted well, it shows we have great character in the team."

Everton had scored 10 in their last two home league matches, but if the watching Wayne Rooney was expecting another goal spree from his former club, the Manchester United captain was destined to leave disappointed.

Instead he had to make do with appreciating the talents of the powerful Lukaku and his Everton teammate Ross Barkley.

In a low-key first half, Lukaku was unlucky not to open the scoring when his shot beat Palace goalkeeper Wayne Hennessey but rebounded off the inside of the far post and flew across the face of goal.

Ancelotti eyes United job

AFP, London

Former Real Madrid and Chelsea boss Carlo Ancelotti on Monday admitted he would be interested in taking over at Manchester United if the job becomes available.

United's current manager Louis van Gaal has suggested he will retire when his deal with the Premier League club expires at the end of the 2016-17 season.

"Of course, for every manager, they would all think of managing Manchester United," Ancelotti was quoted as saying.

"I will continue to wait. If I don't find a club with a good project, I can wait."

PISTORIUS granted bail

AFP, Pretoria

Former Paralympic champion Oscar Pistorius was released on bail yesterday, as he vowed to appeal against his murder conviction for shooting dead his girlfriend Reeva Steenkamp in 2013.

South African judges last week found him guilty of murder and overturned his earlier conviction on the lesser charge of culpable homicide for killing Steenkamp, a model and law graduate.

Pistorius, 29, wearing a dark suit, white shirt and black tie, appeared relaxed at the bail hearing in the Pretoria High Court, chatting with his legal team before standing in the dock to hear the judge's ruling.

He was released from jail in October to live under house arrest at his uncle's house in Pretoria after serving one year of his five-year prison sentence for culpable homicide - the equivalent of manslaughter.

Under the new conviction for murder, he faces a minimum 15-year jail term that may be reduced due to time already spent in jail and as he is a first-time offender.

"The applicant is released on bail of 10,000 rand [\$690]," Judge Aubrey Ledwaba said, adding Pistorius would remain under house arrest.

Ledwaba said Pistorius would be electronically monitored to track his location, but would be allowed to leave the house at set times with official permission.

The court will meet again on April 18 to seek an update on whether Pistorius's appeal to the Constitutional Court, South Africa's highest court, has been accepted.

Pistorius's bail application yesterday outlined the basis of his bid to go to the Constitutional Court after the murder conviction by the Supreme Court of Appeal last week.

"[It] impermissibly reconsidered the factual finding made by the trial Court that I genuinely and honestly believed that my life and that of the deceased were in danger when I discharged the shots," he argued.

Pistorius spoke in court only to calmly say "I do" when asked whether he made his bail application voluntarily.

However, no date was announced for his re-sentencing.

A lawyer for Steenkamp's family told AFP that they "understand it is his constitutional right to (appeal), but believe it is a delaying tactic as they do believe that he is guilty of murder."

Martin Hood, a criminal lawyer based in Johannesburg, told AFP that Pistorius was now "clutching at straws" by trying to appeal to the Constitutional Court.

"The Supreme Court of Appeal's judgment was clear, simple, lucid," Hood said.

The Paralympic gold medalist's lawyers had earlier said that he could not afford further legal battles after being left penniless by huge bills.

On the streets outside the court, South Africans voiced their displeasure with Pistorius, saying he was not prepared to take responsibility for his actions.

"He's supposed to get 15 years in jail, he deserves it," said Thomas Mdlule, a 30-year-old selling newspapers on a corner close to the court.

"He must be inside jail, not under house arrest."

Pistorius killed Steenkamp in the early hours of Valentine's Day two years ago, saying he mistook her for an intruder when he shot four times through the locked door of his bedroom toilet with a pistol he kept under his bed.

During his dramatic trial, he denied killing her in a rage, sobbing and occasionally vomiting in the dock as details of his lover's death were examined in excruciating detail.

The murder conviction ruling last week said that it was "inconceivable that a rational person could have believed he was entitled to fire at this person with a high calibre firearm".

The double-amputee sprinter, known as the "Blade Runner" because of the prosthetic legs he used on the track, made his first appearance in public last month since leaving jail when he reported for community service at a Pretoria police station.

He killed Steenkamp at the peak of his fame, and he has since lost his glittering sports career, lucrative contracts and status as a global role model for the disabled.



Former Paralympic champion Oscar Pistorius (C) smiles as he leaves the North Gauteng High Court in Pretoria after securing bail yesterday.

PHOTO: AFP

SCALING THE SUMMIT IS NO EASY TASK!

FIND OUT WHO ARE WINNING TONIGHT!

Mariam Feni Girls' Cadet College, Feni	Md. Shazid Al Islam Rosedale International English School & College, Khulna	Antara Labiba European Standard School, Dhaka	Nahian Islam Nafi Mirzapur Cadet College, Tangail	Fahmid Falyaj Chowdhury Scholarshome, Sylhet	Dipto Provas The Aga Khan School, Dhaka
--	---	---	---	--	---

Spelling Bee Season 4

চলছে প্রিলিমিনারি রাউন্ড

২২০০+ কুলের ৩,১১,৪০২ জন প্রতিযোগী থেকে উঠে এসেছে ৯৬ জন স্পেলার। এখন থেকে প্রতি পর্বে ৬ জন করে স্পেলার লড়বে এবং সেরা ২ জন চলে যাবে কোয়ার্টার ফাইনাল রাউন্ডে।

The School of Excellence - এ ক্লাস করতে বসে পড়ুন - এর সামনে আজ বুধবার সন্ধ্যা ৭:৫০ মিনিটে

The Sponsor: The Daily Star | Telecast Partner: Summit | Associate Partner: Champs21