

# Atletico's party ended by Sevilla

AFP, Madrid



Steven N'Zonzi's winner 17 minutes from time ended Atletico Madrid's unbeaten start to the season and sent Sevilla top of La Liga with a 1-0 win at a soggy Sanchez Pizjuan on Sunday.

N'Zonzi made Sevilla's second-half dominance count when he slotted home from on-loan Atletico striker Luciano Vietto's through ball.

The visitors ended with 10 men as Koke was shown a second yellow card 13 minutes from time.

Sevilla move a point clear of Barcelona and two ahead of Atletico. However, Real Madrid can move back to the top with victory over Athletic Bilbao later on Sunday.

Atletico were the form side in Spain heading into the weekend after a run of eight wins in nine games, but paid for failing to take their chances in the first half as Sevilla extended their perfect league record at home this season.

A hero of Sevilla's three consecutive Europa League triumphs, Kevin Gameiro received a mixed reception on his return to Andalusia, but he should have put Atletico in front when he shot straight at Sergio Rico on 16 minutes.

Angel Correa had an even better opportunity

for Diego Simeone's men six minutes before the break when he scampered in behind the Sevilla defence but failed to even hit the target.

Sevilla started the second period strongly in unrelenting rain that played its part in an end-to-end encounter.

The in-form Samir Nasri smashed against the post before Jan Oblak made a remarkable save to prevent Vitolo opening the scoring on the volley from point-blank range.

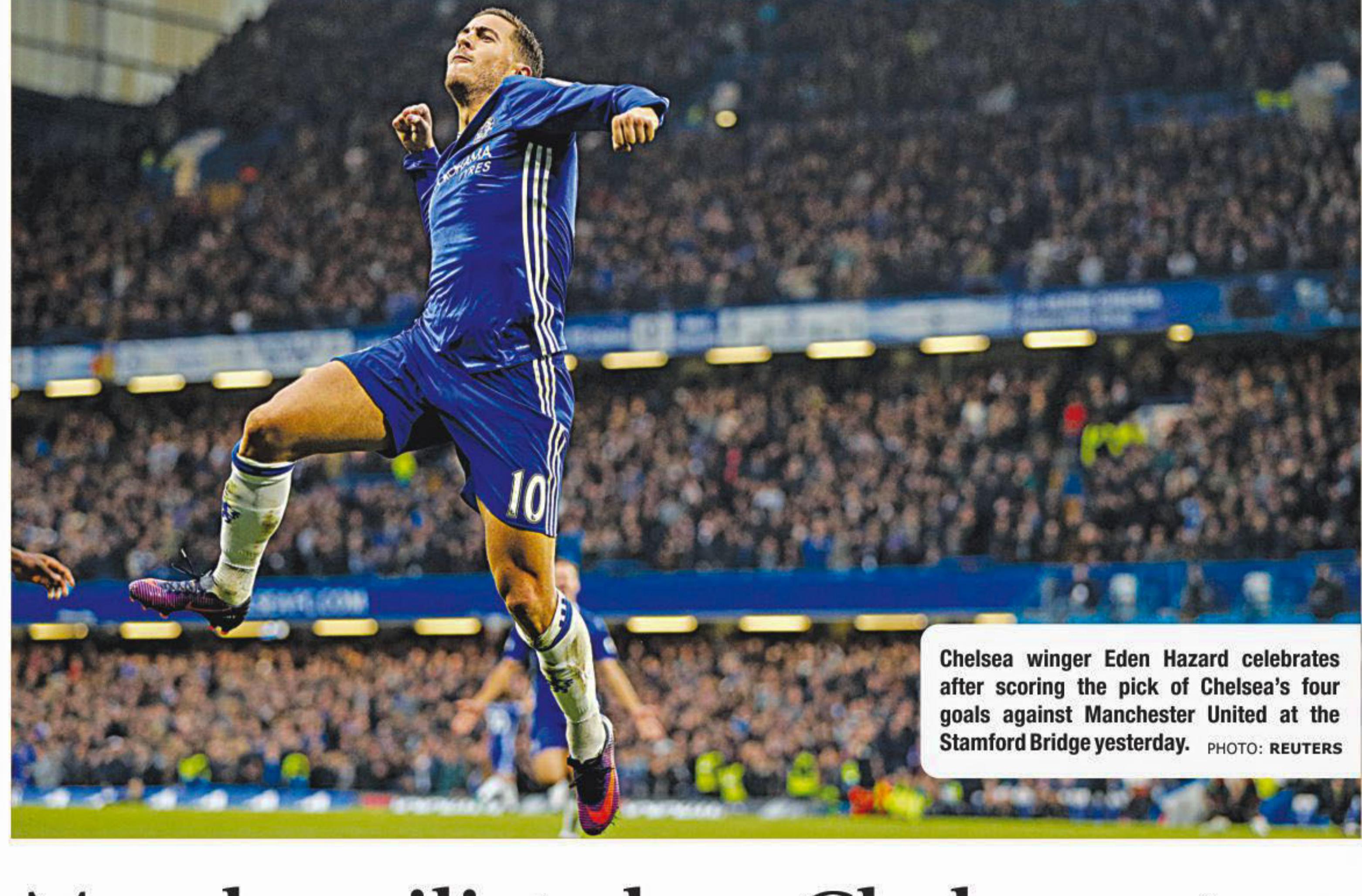
Vietto endured a woeful debut campaign at Atletico last season after a 20-million-euro (\$21.8 million) move from Villarreal and was used as a makeweight in the deal that brought Gameiro to Atletico in the summer.

However, he came back to haunt his parent club as he clipped a fine ball over an uncharacteristically static Atletico defence for N'Zonzi to run through and slot coolly past Oblak.

Atletico's already difficult task was made even tougher when Koke dived in rashly four minutes later to receive his marching orders.

Diego Godin could still have rescued a point for the Champions League finalists, but his late header was stopped low to his left by Rico as Jorge Sampaoli got one over his Argentine compatriot Simeone to continue his fine start as Sevilla coach.

Earlier, former Liverpool striker Iago Aspas struck twice as Celta Vigo smashed Deportivo La Coruna 4-1 in the Galician derby to move into the top half of the table.



Chelsea winger Eden Hazard celebrates after scoring the pick of Chelsea's four goals against Manchester United at the Stamford Bridge yesterday. PHOTO: REUTERS

## Valencia director blasts referee

AGENCIES, Madrid

Valencia's sporting director Jesus Garcia Pitarch was scathing in his criticism of referee Undiano Mallenco following Barcelona's 3-2 win at the Mestalla on Saturday.

Pitarch pointed to three controversial incidents which went the way of Valencia's opponents and, the director feels, affected the result of the game.

"There were three clear incidents within half an hour: Messi's first goal with Suarez offside, the second yellow offence of Busquets and Rodrigo's [unawarded] penalty. Undiano has to take a look at himself.

Spanish football can't have such a disgraceful referee.

"He'll will be embarrassed when he looks back at this game," fumed Pitarch after the match.

## Kohli steers India

AFP, Mohali



Virat Kohli struck a magnificent hundred as he joined forces with skipper Mahendra Singh Dhoni to power India to a seven-wicket win over New Zealand in the third one-day international in Mohali on Sunday.

Kohli and Dhoni put together a 151-run third-wicket stand to help India reach their 286-run target and take a 2-1 lead in the five-match series.

Earlier Tom Latham and James Neesham struck fighting half-centuries and a late-order flourish helped New Zealand put a competitive 285.

The visitors suffered a batting slump after Latham fell for 61 but Neesham struck a 47-ball 51 to frustrate India.

Umesh Yadav and Kedar Jadhav took three wickets each to reduce New Zealand to 199 for eight, but Neesham put on 84 for the ninth wicket with Matt Henry before the visitors were bowled out with two balls to go.

**SCORES IN BRIEF**

**NEW ZEALAND:** 285 all out in 49.4 overs (Latham 61, Taylor 44, Neesham 57; Yadav 3-75, Jadhav 3-29)

**INDIA:** 289 for 3 in 48.2 overs (Kohli 154 not out, Dhoni 80, Pandey 28 not out; Henry 2-56)

**Result:** India won by 7 wickets and lead 5-match series 2-1.

**Player-of-the-match:** Virat Kohli.

## Pakistan in control

AFP, Abu Dhabi

Openers Azhar Ali and Sami Aslam hit fifties to help Pakistan strengthen their grip on the third day of the second Test against West Indies in Abu Dhabi on Sunday.

Ali was unbeaten on 52 and Asad Shafiq five not out as Pakistan reached 114-1 at stumps, increasing their lead to 342 after dismissing West Indies for 224 in their first innings.

That had given Pakistan a first innings lead of 228 and left them firmly in control as they look to claim an unassailable 2-0 lead in the three-match series.

Pakistan won the first Test by 56 runs to take a 1-0 advantage.

But despite the West Indies falling 29 runs short of avoiding the follow-on, Pakistan skipper Misbahul Haq decided not to enforce it and batted again.

Both Ali and Aslam survived leg-before decisions through referrals after on-field umpire Michael Gough had raised his finger on both occasions.

**SCORES IN BRIEF**

**PAKISTAN:** First innings

452

**WEST INDIES:** First innings 224 (Bravo 43, Holder 31 not out; Rahat 45, Shah 4-8)

**PAKISTAN:** Second innings

114 for 1 (Aslam 50; Azhar 52 not out; Gabriel 1-21)

# Committees fail to meet deadline

SPORTS REPORTER

A month has passed since the Executive Committee of the Bangladesh Football Federation (BFF) requested two subcommittees -- the Professional Football League Committee (PFLC) and the Dhaka Metropolis Football League Committee (DMFLC) -- to prepare separate frameworks in a bid to strengthen the professional league and the Dhaka city based leagues. However, those two committees are yet to even discuss the issues, with the deadline for submitting the frameworks having passed yesterday.

It was a rare occasion where the executive committee had discussed on how to develop football, fixing a calendar for the next three years and how to synchronize all the domestic competitions. In that meeting the PFLC and DMFLC were instructed to prepare a framework on how to make the Professional Football League as well as the DMFLC-organised leagues, which are irregular, more attractive and productive.

PFLC chairman and BFF's senior vice-president Abdus Salam Murshed admitted that the committee is yet to hold discussions but added that he personally has been working round the clock to make the leagues enthralling.

"I work on it every day but I don't know whether the DMFLC discussed it yet. I think if the Dhaka-based clubs can be tagged with the district, then those clubs can pull a lot of spectators and the league will be attractive," Murshed explained.

"As I have been preoccupied with family engagements, I instructed co-chairman [Saleh Jaman] Selim to prepare an outline but I doubt he did so because I would have been informed if he had done," said DMFLC chairman Harun-Ur-Rashid while saying committee could not call a meeting as the DMFLC committee has not yet been approved by the game's governing body.

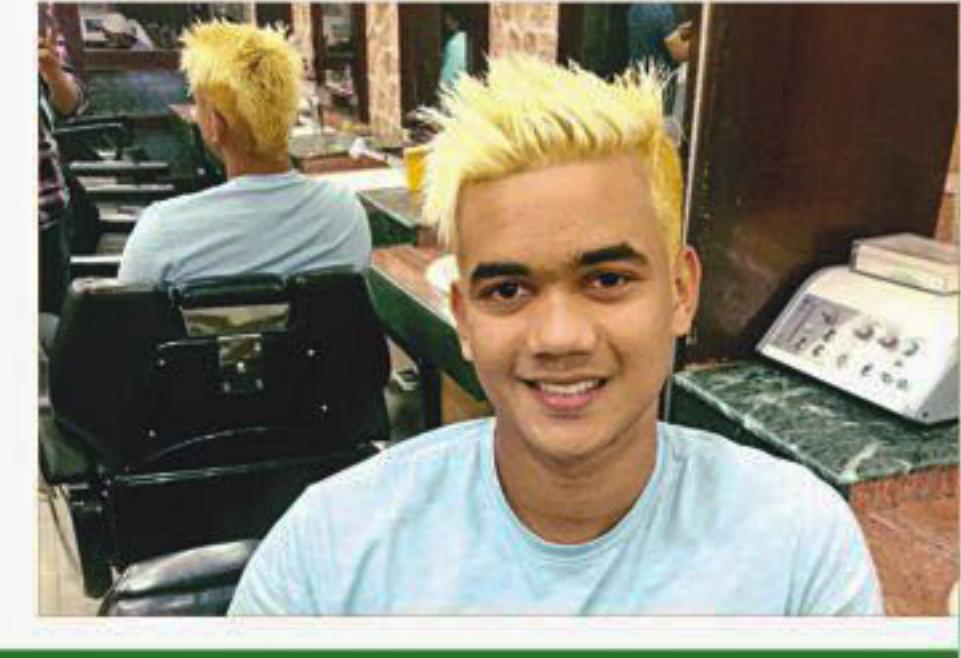
However, Harun said that the thought of merging all four leagues - First, Second, Third and Pioneer - to devise a new format in which there will be two or three leagues under the DMFLC, is one they were mulling over.

Since 2005, the First and Third Division Football Leagues were held five times, Second Division leagues four times and the pioneer league has been held eight times.

## FIRST BLONDE TIGER

After the conclusion of the ODI series against England, Bangladesh pacer Taskin Ahmed has had a lot of time to kill. While most would retreat to their homes and spend time with their family, the 21-year-old from Mohammadpur has perhaps spent that time contemplating a new haircut, before finally unveiling his new look yesterday. The dapper youngster, following in the footsteps of stars such as Lionel Messi and Paul Pogba, dyed his hair blonde while sticking to his traditional spikes. It is a bold look and, judging by the comments on his Facebook page, not to everyone's liking, but one that the trendsetter will hopefully embrace.

- STAR SPORT DESK



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