



THE UNFOLDING OF HISTORY

Snapshots from Bangladesh's victory over Sri Lanka in last night's Asia Cup encounter at the Sher-e-Bangla National Stadium in Mirpur and the post-match celebrations. It all started with Mahela Jayawardene's dismissal (1) as paceman Nazmul Hossain (2) broke the backbone of the Sri Lankan innings. Tamim Iqbal (3) and Shakib Al Hasan (4) once again laid the foundation for the



run chase with their fearless yet sensible batting. There was no shortage of inspiration as Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina (5) cheered them on throughout their innings from the President's Box. The historic victory was followed by a lap of honour (6) by the Tigers as the euphoria spread out to the streets of the capital (7) and across the country.

PHOTO: ANIRAN HOSSAIN

PHOTOS: ANISUR RAHMAN

Barca snap up Neymar

AFP, Madrid
Barcelona have sealed a deal which would see talented young Brazilian striker Neymar join the Spanish club in 2014, Cadena SER radio reported.

The report claimed the Catalan giants have already paid 14.5 million euros (\$19 million) of the total 58-million-euro transfer fee to the 20-year-old's Brazilian club Santos.

"According to several reliable sources Barca have already paid a quarter of the 58 million euros to Santos to guarantee the transfer of the player," Cadena SER claimed, adding that the date for his transfer was after the World Cup in Brazil in 2014.

The report added that the decision to seal the deal was taken by the player and his father against the wishes of his agent Wagner Ribeiro.

Pep plays down hopes

REUTERS, Barcelona



said on Monday.

Real conceded a stoppage-time equaliser to draw 1-1 at home to Malaga on Sunday, ending an 11-match winning streak, and Barca's 2-0 win at Sevilla on Saturday left Real on 71 points to Barca's 63 with 11

matches left.

"I can't deny that it's better to be eight points behind than 10 and tomorrow we have to come out and compete again," Guardiola told a news conference ahead of the Spanish, European and world champions' home game against Granada on Tuesday.

"I still think that we won't win the league," added the former Barca and Spain midfielder.

"I am delighted that the fans and the players think we can do it. It's nice to have that hope.

"But it will be very hard to win all 11 games we have left and they (Real) will drop very few points.

FIXTURES

Wednesday

Real Sociedad v Levante (1900 GMT), Sporting Gijon v Mallorca (1900 GMT), Valencia v Zaragoza (1900 GMT), Atletico Madrid v Athletic Bilbao (1900 GMT), Villarreal v Real Madrid (2100 GMT)

Thursday

Racing v Sevilla (1900 GMT), Betis v Espanyol (1900 GMT), Malaga v Rayo Vallecano (2100 GMT)

It's heating up

AFP, London



Manchester City will have the chance to revive their faltering bid for the Premier League title as the whole of the English, and indeed global, game continues to wish Fabrice Muamba well.

There has been a sense of the sport being "on hold" in England since Bolton midfielder Muamba's frightening collapse with a cardiac arrest during last weekend's FA Cup quarterfinal away to Tottenham Hotspur at White Hart Lane.

But although the former England Under-21 international remains in an intensive care unit, increasingly encouraging medical bulletins regarding his recovery should lessen the understandably sombre mood in the Premier League. Victory for a City team beaten last time out at Swansea will see them close to within a point of champions and local rivals Manchester United at the top of the table.

Italian manager Mancini must now decide whether Wednesday is the right time to bring back temperamental, if talented, forward Carlos Tevez who went into a self-imposed three-month exile at home in Argentina after falling out with the City supremo in a Champions League clash back in September.

City defender Joleon Lescott insisted the squad would have no problems welcoming back Tevez into first team action.

"He's like a new signing. He's not been injured so he is not going to be struggling too much in terms of sharpness and fitness," Lescott said.

"All the boys are excited and can't wait for him to get playing again," the England international added.

Roberto di Matteo takes a fifth-placed Chelsea side to Eastlands in search of a fifth straight win since he succeeded the sacked Andre Villas-Boas.

Meanwhile Fernando Torres has finally found the net with the Spain striker scoring twice in the 5-2 FA Cup quarterfinal win over Leicester on Sunday to end a goal drought of five months.

The battle for third and fourth, and the Champions League places they bring, is almost as intriguing as the title race.

Arsenal, whose position at one stage this season left many observers pondering on whether manager Arsene Wenger had been too long at the Gunners are now just a point behind third-placed Tottenham and three clear of Chelsea.

They have won their last four games in all competitions and will travel to Everton on Wednesday in confident mood.

Tottenham, who were the team of the season early on, have had a slump of late with three straight league defeats preceding last weekend's Cup tie, abandoned out of respect to Muamba's condition.

Spurs players have all since had heart checks but it is their nerve that will be tested mainly when, in their first match since Muamba took ill, they face Stoke at White Hart Lane on Wednesday.

Meanwhile League Cup winners Liverpool, fresh from booking a second appearance at Wembley this season with an FA Cup quarterfinal win over Stoke, travel to relegation-threatened QPR.

FIXTURES

(2000GMT unless stated)

Wednesday

Everton v Arsenal, Man City v Chelsea, QPR v Liverpool, Tottenham v Stoke (1945GMT)

Oswaldo fires Roma

AFP, Rome



Roma gave their outside hopes of a top-three finish in Serie A a shot in the arm on Monday night with a 1-0 win against Genoa thanks to an early strike from Pablo Daniel Oswaldo.

The Argentine -- returning to the side after a two-match ban -- scored what proved to be the only goal of the game in the third minute to take Roma clear in sixth place with 44 points.

Luis Enrique's side are now four points behind city rivals Lazio, who lie third, and three adrift of both Napoli and Udinese.

Genoa, meanwhile, are 14th with 33 points, seven clear of the relegation zone,

after what was their seventh match without a win.

Roma got off to the perfect start as they sought to build on last weekend's victory at Palermo, with Oswaldo turning away from Marco Rossi and firing past Sebastien Frey into the far corner of the net for his ninth goal of the season.

They dominated the game after that, but were unable to add to their lead, with substitute Bojan Krkic in particular guilty of a glaring miss late on.

But Genoa squandered the two outstanding chances that came their way, Fernando Belluschi being denied by Maarten Stekelenburg from close range in the first half and Rodrigo Palacio hitting the bar from just six yards out after the break.

Indian trio don't stay for finish

SPORTS REPORTER

While Mahmudullah Riyad and Nasir Hossain were steering Bangladesh from a slightly precarious position to the cusp of victory, the eyes of the whole nation were fixated on the Sher-e-Bangla National Stadium.

But tucked away at a restaurant in a corner of the sprawling Pan Pacific Sonargaon, three Indian players were busy following the game which would also determine the fortunes of the current world champions.

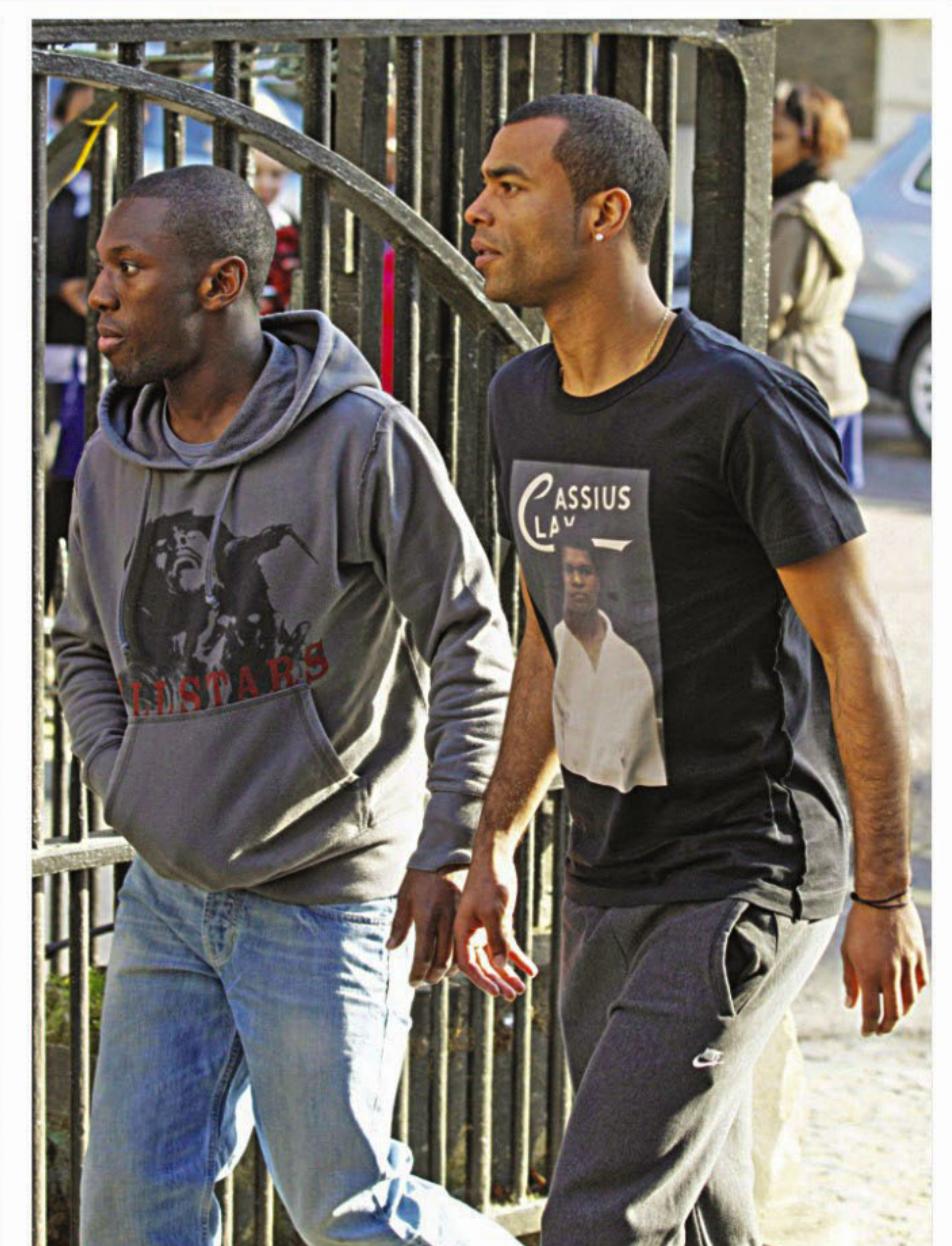
Team India opener Gautam Gambhir and brothers Yusuf and Irfan Pathan along with their family were in attendance at the packed restaurant and watching impassively for the most part as the Tigers drew closer and closer to victory, and in the process eliminate India for the tournament.

The Daily Star's own Elita Karim was at the venue performing a sound-check for an event today and was also among the crowd along with some other notable names in the music industry.

The Indian trio reportedly stuck through gamely, occasionally exchanging pleasantries but with only ten runs required and a victory imminent, it seemed that they had finally seen enough.

Despite a cheeky offer from Cryptic Fate drummer Farshed Mahmud to 'stay and watch the finish' with the locals the Indians predictably declined and uttered a few 'well played' and 'best of luck' to the small but partisan crowd before making their way to their rooms.

It seems that they would need the extra time to literally pack their bags for home.



Chelsea defender Ashley Cole (R) and Queens Park Rangers winger Shaun-Phillips arrive at the London Chest Hospital, where Bolton player Fabrice Muamba is being treated, on Monday.

PHOTO: AFP

SPORTS POLL
WEEKLY QUESTION
Do you think Sachin Tendulkar should retire now?
Visit the sports page of www.thedailystar.net to cast vote
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What to WATCH

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Live from 2:00am (Thursday)
STAR Sports
English Premiership
Tottenham v Stoke City
Live from 1:45am (Thursday)
TEN Action
La Liga
Atletico Madrid v Bilbao
Live from 1:00am (Thursday)
Villarreal v Real Madrid
Live from 3:00am (Thursday)