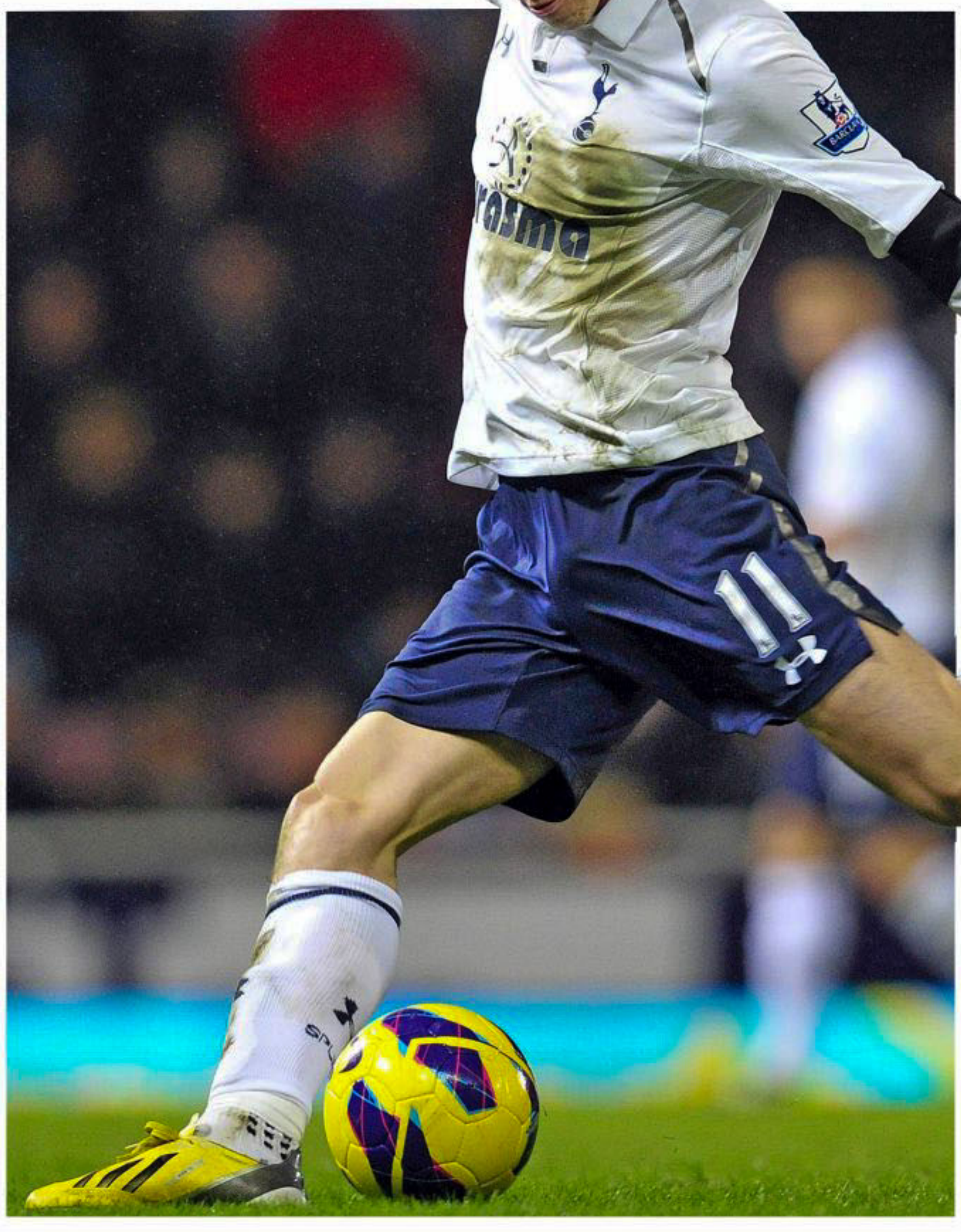


## Barca want Neymar

AFP, Madrid  
Barcelona vice-president Josep Maria Bartomeu has admitted that the Catalan club will be in the running to sign Brazilian striker Neymar if and when he decides to leave Santos. The Spanish league leaders have been following the 21-year-old Brazilian international for some time and could make a bid to land him this summer despite the fact that his contract with Santos expires in 2014. "He is a player that all managers would want," Bartomeu told Barcelona Televisio. Indeed a 10 million euro payment in Barca's annual accounts attributed to 'signed commitments' has been rumoured to have been a down payment to Santos. However, Bartomeu denied that any move for Neymar would inevitably result in David Villa leaving the club.



## Bale brilliance

AFP, London  
Gareth Bale fired Tottenham into third place in the Premier League as his sublime last minute goal capped a majestic performance in a 3-2 win over West Ham at Upton Park on Monday. Bale has been in the form of his life in recent weeks and the Wales winger added another chapter to his growing legend with a brilliant brace that would surely have been appreciated by Hammers legend Bobby Moore, whose death 20 years ago was marked by a moving pre-match tribute. Moore, regarded as one of the best defenders in the history of the game, famously captained England to World Cup glory in 1966 and also led West Ham to FA Cup and Cup Winners' Cup triumphs. But even Moore might have been hard pressed to subdue Bale in this mood. Bale had given Spurs a first half lead but an Andy Carroll penalty and Joe Cole's strike put West Ham ahead by the hour mark. Gylfi Sigurdsson came off the bench to equalise and Bale produced a simply remarkable long-range winner to move Tottenham, unbeaten in their last 11 league games, two points clear of Chelsea and four ahead of fifth placed Arsenal, who visit White Hart Lane on Sunday. Moore's grandchildren led the teams out and placed the ball on the spot for kick-off, which followed an emotional minutes' applause. Fueled by the sense of occasion, West Ham started brightly and Matt Jarvis cut into the penalty area after a flowing move and fired in a low strike that Hugo Lloris saved well. Just as West Ham appeared to seizing control of the match, Bale underlined his claims as the best player in the Premier League with yet another moment of magic

to put Spurs ahead in the 13th minute. Bale was surrounded by West Ham defenders on the edge of the penalty area, but, drifting away from James Collins, he cleverly worked space for a shot and as West Ham's back-four hesitated the Welsh winger drove a low strike past Jussi Jaaskelainen. That was Bale's 22nd goal for club and country this season, as well as his eighth in his last seven games. But West Ham responded well to that setback and grabbed an equaliser in the 25th minute. Kevin Nolan laid the ball off to Carroll in a dangerous position in the penalty area and former West Ham midfielder Scott Parker, lunging in to block, made clear contact on Carroll, forcing referee Howard Webb to give the spot-kick. England forward Carroll, on loan from Liverpool, stepped up to smash the penalty past Lloris for his third goal of the season. Jan Vertonghen almost restored Tottenham's lead in the opening moments of the second half when his cross deflected off Guy Demel and forced Jaaskelainen into a scrambling save. Jaaskelainen, called into action again from the resulting corner to push away Steven Caulker's towering header, was keeping Spurs at bay almost single-handedly. He turned Sigurdsson's long-range shot onto a post and when the rebound fell to Emmanuel Adebayor, the Hammers goalkeeper leapt to his feet to block the Togo striker's follow-up. After those escapes, West Ham moved ahead in the 58th minute when Cole collected Joey O'Brien's lofted pass with a fine first touch and turned to bury his shot beyond Lloris. Tottenham kept pressing and, after Matt Taylor missed a golden chance to extend West Ham's lead, the visitors levelled when Sigurdsson prodded home at the far post from Bale's free-kick. That set the stage for a pulsating finish and after more heroics from Jaaskelainen, Bale took charge, producing a truly stunning strike from 30 yards to seal the points.

## Corinthians fan turns himself in

AFP, Sao Paulo  
A Corinthians teenage fan who confessed to causing the flare death of a 14-year-old during the Sao Paulo side's Libertadores Cup game in Bolivia last week surrendered to authorities in suburban Sao Paulo Monday. The 17-year-old, accompanied by his lawyer, appeared before a juvenile court in Guarulhos, where he testified for more than two hours about what he has described as an accident. In an interview aired on Brazil's Globo TV late Sunday, the teenager took responsibility for the death of 14-year-old Kevin Espada during Wednesday's 1-1 draw between Corinthians and San Jose in the Bolivian city of Oruro. In the wake of the incident, Bolivian police detained 12 other traveling Corinthians fans. "We were celebrating the (Corinthians) goal. I took the flare from my bag, pulled on the cord, didn't quite know how to use it. It took off in the direction of the Bolivian fans," said the adolescent, who had his face hidden and was accompanied by his mother. Conmebol, the South American football's governing body, has meanwhile ordered Corinthians to play their home Libertadores Cup matches behind closed door until further notice. Fans of the Sao Paulo club will also be prevented from buying tickets for away matches.

## Udinese stall Napoli

AFP, Milan  
Udinese stalled Napoli's Serie A title challenge with a scoreless draw on Monday as Lazio reclaimed third place from AC Milan with a 2-0 win over Pescara thanks to a pair of sublime long-range goals. Napoli had hoped to capitalise on the extra day's rest after their Europa League exit at the hands of Czech side Viktoria Plzen last Thursday to close the gap on leaders Juventus to four points. However Walter Mazzarri's title challengers were left lamenting several missed chances during a performance which left them six points off the pace. Opportunity knocked, and in Monday's late match Lazio eased past struggling Pescara to a 14th league win which moved the Biancocelesti one place up to fourth. Vladimir Petkovic's side were initially caught on the hop as Pescara showed glimpses of attacking promise, Emmanuel Cascione seeing a solid effort saved by Federico Marchetti. But Lazio soon moved up a gear and broke the deadlock in the 29th minute when Romanian defender Stefan Radu first-timed Senad Lulic's cut-back to

smash the ball past Ivan Pelizzoli and into the top corner off the crossbar. Barely six minutes later Pescara's defence gave Lulic time and space to advance and he repaid them by sending another sublime strike inside the beaten Pelizzoli's right hand post. Pescara had little to offer and Lazio should have made it three when Sergio Floccari wasted Radu's delivery by shooting wide of Pelizzoli just after the hour. Napoli, meanwhile, underlined their intentions by starting with the attack-minded front trio of striker Edinson Cavani, Lorenzo Insigne and Marek Hamsik. But the visitors were left frustrated after a first half in which Udinese seemed happy to sit back and defend and wait to counter-attack. Early on Cavani failed to make contact despite a sly run towards goal when Giandomenico Mesto aimed in a cross. Udinese did hit Napoli on the counter, but both Antonio Di Natale and Giovanni Pasquale sent their efforts high and wide respectively. Napoli, however, had the momentum and after Gokhan Inler sent a long range effort over from long-range Hamsik missed the best chance of the half when he headed a long cross from the left straight at 'keeper Daniele Padelli.

**RESULTS**  
Udinese 0 Napoli 0  
Lazio 2 (Radu 29, Lulic 35)

## Beckham set to start

AFP, Paris  
Paris Saint-Germain's new star recruit, English veteran David Beckham, will start in the French Cup round of 16 encounter against rivals Marseille, coach Carlo Ancelotti said on Tuesday. "Yes, Beckham will start in the position of (suspended midfielder) Marco Verratti," Ancelotti told reporters before Wednesday's game. "It's an important position," added Ancelotti. "Beckham must help make the play and defensively have a good tactical position on the pitch - he will have the same things to do as Verratti," said Ancelotti, who believes the 37-year-old still has plenty to offer. "Can he still take corners and freekicks? He has the quality to do so," said the Italian. "Beckham can play a whole match, he has the quality to play in the middle of the park."



Argentina legend Diego Maradona (C) arrives in Naples on Monday. PHOTO: AFP

## Maradona seeks justice

AFP, Naples  
Football legend Diego Maradona on Tuesday asked for "justice" in his dispute with Italian tax authorities on an emotional trip to Naples -- the scene of some of his greatest career successes. "I haven't killed anyone, I've just come to ask for justice," Maradona said at a press conference, saying he had been a "victim" of swindlers and revealing that he wanted to meet Italian President Giorgio Napolitano to discuss his tax difficulties. "I can explain everything to him," the former attacking midfielder said. World Cup winner Maradona, who helped Napoli to their only Italian championship wins in 1987 and 1990, was convicted of tax evasion in 2005 and ordered to pay 37.2 million euros including 23.5 million euros in interest on late tax payments. Maradona arrived in Italy on Monday from Dubai, where he is an ambassador for sport, and watched a Serie A match between his former club and Udinese, which ended 0-0, in his hotel. Fans massed outside the hotel where Maradona was speaking, chanting in his honour and blocking one of the main streets in the southern Italian city.

**What to WATCH**  
**TEN Action**  
Copa Del Rey  
Sevilla v Atletico Madrid  
Live from 1:30am (Thursday)  
**ESPN**  
FA Cup  
Middlesbrough v Chelsea  
Live from 1:45am (Thursday)  
**TEN Sports**  
German Cup  
Bayern Munich v Dortmund

খেলা LIVE দেখুন 24  
সকাল ৯.০০ টা - রাত ৮.০০ টা

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প্রোগ্রামে অংশগ্রহণ করতে কুপন বুথ থেকে একটি ক্লেমন কিনে কুপন সংগ্রহ করুন

শর্ত প্রযোজ্য

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