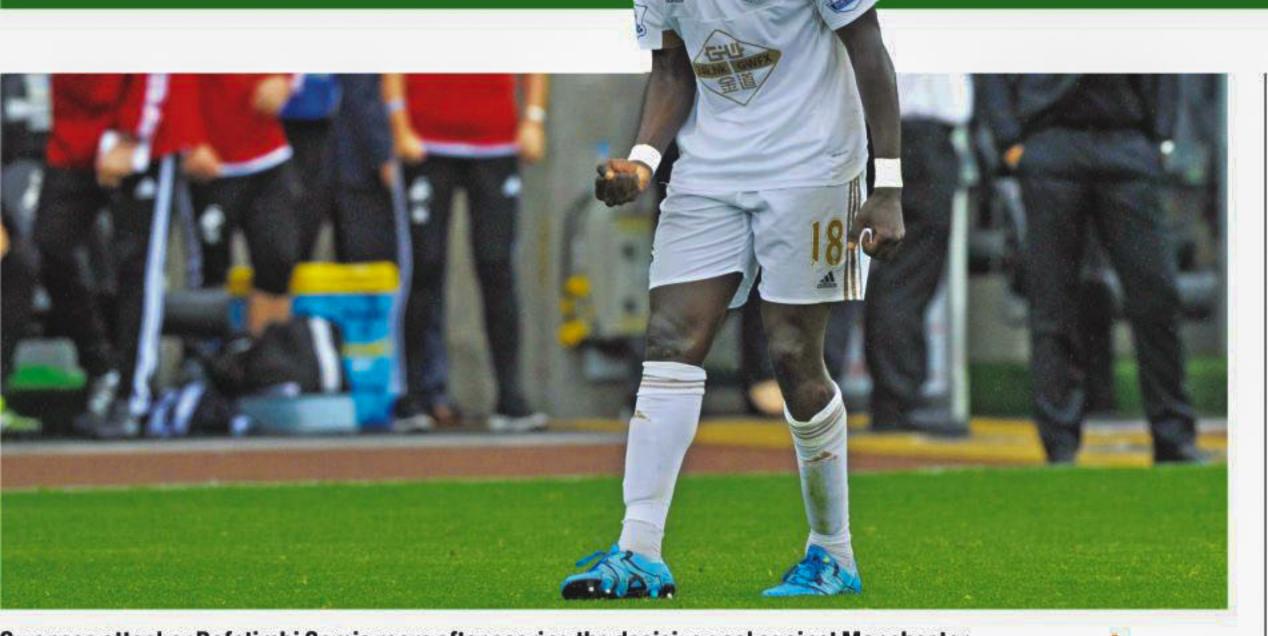
Sailor BFF U-15 National Football

Premier League leaders Manchester City announced the signing of Belgium playmaker Kevin De Bruyne from German side Wolfsburg on a six-year contract. City didn't disclose how much they had paid for the 24-year-old, but media reports said the fee was in the region of 54 million pounds. City confirmed the deal on their website, alongside a picture of De Bruyne holding the number 17 shirt. Afterwards, reports from Italy emerged claiming that Wolfsburg have completed the signing of Schalke's





Swansea attacker Bafetimbi Gomis roars after scoring the decisive goal against Manchester United during their Premier League encounter at the Liberty Stadium yesterday.

REUTERS

PHOTO:

### Titu defends tactics

SPORTS REPORTER

Semifinal 2

Dhaka v Feni



A dejected Bangladesh under-19 football team returned home from Nepal yesterday afternoon after finishing their campaign in the inaugural SAFF U-19 Championship where they

were eliminated from the semifinals, losing in tiebreaker against India.

The coaching staff, which came under heavy criticism in the media due to adopting a completely defensive approach in the semifinal after having played some attractive attacking football in the group stage matches, defended itself. Head coach Saiful Bari Titu believes his strategy in the semifinal was justified given the technical ability of his players.

"I was forced to go on the back foot due to the absence of midfielder Biplu Ahmed," said Titu. "There were other things involved for adopting a counterattacking strategy as our players are not technically as sound as the Indian players. Besides, they are not good in transition and I saw them suffer during the matches against Bhutan and Nepal," said Titu, who left for Perth last night to accompany the senior national team in Australia.

"We needed a result against India. Had we been able to bear them, we would have played our natural game in the final," opined Titu.

The former national footballer felt Bangladesh should start nursing play-

ers at the grassroots level like India and Nepal, who have built their under-19 team the last three years.

Captain Masuk Mia Jonny also backed his coach's decision and blamed their luck for not making it into the final.

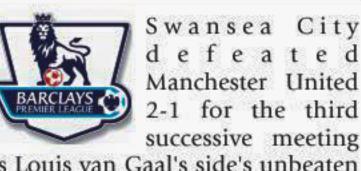
"We lost the match because luck didn't favour us,' said Jonny. "The referee's decision of re-taking a spotkick shattered our morale."

Forward Mannaf Rabbi, who was arguably the best player for Bangladesh in the tournament, said that they have earned vast experience from this campaign, which will help them play better in the upcoming AFC Under-19 Championship qualifiers in October on home ground.

# MU's Swansea nightmare on

AFP, London

AFP, New York



as Louis van Gaal's side's unbeaten start to the Premier League season ground to a halt yesterday.

United went ahead through Juan Mata early in the second half at the Liberty Stadium, but Andre Ayew equalised in the 61st minute and then set up Bafetimbi Gomis for the winner five minutes later.

Van Gaal had lost 2-1 at home to Swansea in his first game as United manager last season and having also seen his team go down

The US Open

begins today

in New York,

with all the

contenders

having reasons beyond the

obvious behind to fuel their

While there are many

battles to look forward to the

most delectable one as of

right now is Andy Murray's

against perennial bad-boy,

Murray, the world number

three, won in New York in

2012, ending Britain's 76-year

wait for a Grand Slam men's

singles champion and will be

The tournament will begin

looking to repeat that feat.

Australian Nick Kyrgios.

desire to win the title.

by the same scoreline in the return fixture, he was given more reason to curse Garry Monk's side on the occasion of his 50th game in

having started a top-flight campaign with four unbeaten games for the first time in their history.

motor down the United left and after his cross passed between Wayne Rooney and Neil Taylor at the near post, Mata ghosted in behind Swansea captain Ashley Williams to slam home.

Fabianski had to save from both his of-the-foot pass from wide on the

### RESULTS

Southampton 3 (Pelle 45+1, Tadic 64, 67)

as United looked to press home their advantage, but a tactical switch saw the hosts turn the game

Routledge and three minutes later Sigurdsson crossed from the right for Ayew to beat Sergio Romero

Five minutes later Ayew turned Swansea goalkeeper Lukasz provider with an exquisite, outside-

right, but Romero should have done better than allow Gomis's tame shot to trickle beneath him.

in the 88th minute, only for Williams

Tadic scored twice as Southampton won 3-0 at home to 10-man Norwich City to register a first win of the campaign at the fourth attempt.

Ki Sung-yueng replaced Wayne crossed for Graziano Pelle to sweep Southampton ahead in first-half stoppage time before teeing up the first of Tadic's two goals.

> later, following up after Pelle's header was parried by Norwich goalkeeper John Ruddy.

### in final

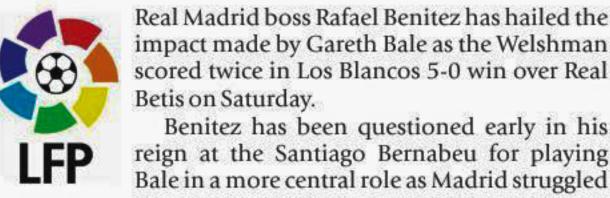
SPORTS REPORTER

Naryanganj moved into the final of the Sailor-BFF U-15 National Football Championship after a 5-4 tiebreaker win over Sylhet in the first semifinal at the Bangbandhu National Stadium yesterday.

Sylhet went ahead through a second-minute strike from Rasel Ahmed, but Mohammad Ibrahim equalised for Narayanganj with a dink over Sylhet goalkeeper in the 17th minute.

In the tiebreaker, Narayanganj converted all of their five attempts while Rasel missed for Sylhet.

## Narayanganj Bale inspires Betis rout



Real Madrid boss Rafael Benitez has hailed the impact made by Gareth Bale as the Welshman scored twice in Los Blancos 5-0 win over Real Betis on Saturday. Benitez has been questioned early in his

Bale in a more central role as Madrid struggled to score goals in pre-season and were held 0-0 away to newly promoted Sporting Gijon last weekend. However, there was no such problem in Benitez's first home

game in charge as Bale opened the scoring after just two minutes before sealing the rout with a sweet strike from distance late on. "I liked Bale's performance, but also that of James [Rodriguez], Cristiano [Ronaldo], who had most shots at goal and

Keylor [Navas]. "We had a lot of positive things and a few details to correct. That rewards the work and attitude shown by the players.

"The most positive thing can be summed up by the first five minutes: intensity, aggression, ambition and end product." Bale also set up Madrid's third goal for Karim Benzema, but it

was Rodriguez who stole the show with a wonderful free-kick into the top corner and an overhead kick either side of half time. The Colombian had been left on the bench by Benitez

last weekend, but he defended that decision due to Rodriguez's participation in the Copa America. "He didn't just arrive back a little later, but a lot later

because of the Copa America," added Benitez. "There is no debate. He is gaining rhythm and his quality

cannot be in doubt."

In the earlier game Thomas Vermaelen was the unlikely hero as Barcelona overcame stiff resistence from Malaga to maintain their perfect start to the La Liga season with a 1-0 win at the Camp Nou.

The Belgian defender endured a nightmare debut campaign with the Catalans last season as he was perennially sidelined by injury.

However, the former Arsenal captain succeeded where Lionel Messi, Luis Suarez and Neymar failed as he fired the only goal of the game past the excellent Carlos Kameni 18 minutes from time.

Suarez was the first to have the ball in the net after just four minutes, but his headed effort was ruled out for a foul beforehand by the Uruguayan.

Yet, for all his good work, Kameni was partly at fault for the goal as he could only parry Suarez's cross from the left and the ball fell invitingly for Vermaelen to fire home from close range.

The visitors nearly exploited Dani Alves and Gerard Piques absence in stoppage time as Charles just couldn't

stretch to knock in the equaliser. The hosts held on, though, to record their second consecutive 1-0 win and go top of the table.

### RESULTS

Real Sociedad 0 Sporting Gijon 0 Barcelona 1 (Vermaelen 73) Malaga 0 Celta Vigo 3 (Nolito 11-pen, 50, Fontas 88)

#### English football. Swansea 2 (Ayew 61, Gomis 66) Manchester 2-1 for the third Swansea climbed to fourth place United 1 (Mata 48) successive meeting in the table, a point above United and four below leaders Manchester City, own team-mate Williams and Mata

Luke Shaw was given space to around in just five minutes.

with a downward header.

Rooney looked poised to equalise

to produce a crucial last-ditch tackle. In the day's early game, Dusan

Man of the match Sadio Mane

Tadic struck again three minutes

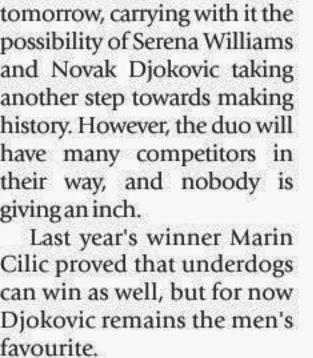
#### Flushing Meadows Is Calling Roma stun **Iuventus** REUTERS, Milan

AS Roma handed champions Juventus their second successive Serie A defeat when second-half goals by Miralem Pjanic and Edin Dzeko earned a welldeserved 2-1 victory in the capital on Sunday.

Juve, beaten at home by Udinese in their opening game last week, were on the back foot throughout and it was no surprise when Pjanic, who had earlier struck a post, curled home an excellent free kick to put Roma ahead just after the hour mark.

Juventus then had defender Patrice Evra sent off for a second booking before newly-arrived striker Dzeko, on a season-long loan from Manceshter City, rose well to head Roma's second.

Paulo Dybala pulled one back three minutes from time to set up a frantic finale but Juve, who lost three league games in the whole of last season, could not find the equaliser and remain without a point while Roma move on to four from two games.





46 years in the making

Not since Australian ! World number one Serena ! Roger Federer likes his ! Maria Sharapova says the legend Rod Laver in 1969 ; Williams feels the pressure ; chances of winning the US ; domination of Serena has a man completed a ; of chasing history at the US; Open after a resurgent run; Williams should not dimincalendar year Grand Slam, ! Open, but she accepts the ! to the Wimbledon final and ! ish the efforts of other but top-ranked Novak intensity as the price for aggressive play that pro- women's players, but adds Djokovic believes he could i dominating a generation of i duced a tuneup title last i they must step up and be the next man to do it.

Brazil's Joao Souza.

one match shy of coming to ; career major title. the Flushing Meadows fort- ! year Slam sweep.

that," Djokovic said.

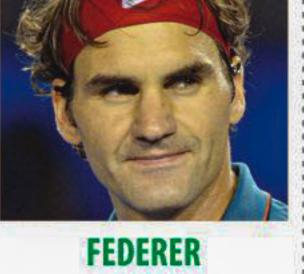


**SERENA** chasing history

women's tennis.

The 28-year-old Serbian The 33-year-old top seed will launch his US . American is a huge favorite i star, winner of a record 17 i the world number one in Open campaign against as she tries to complete the Grand Slam singles titles the semi-finals of the US first calendar-year Grand but none since Wimbledon Open. Djokovic, seeking his ! Slam since Steffi Graf in ! in 2012, isn't looking past ! 10th career Slam title, is only ! 1988 by winning her 22nd ! his first opponent at the ! an incredible level,"

night with the same chance ; have that pressure than the ; chance but I really can't think ; thing away from other as Williams at a calendar- ; pressure of not winning," ; further than my opponent ; players. We have to step up, ! Williams said. "Not every- ! right now," Federer said. believe that I can achieve would rather be in this of late. I came close but previously completed a career position than another one." close is not good enough."



unwavering

week at Cincinnati.

But the 34-year-old Swiss Flushing Meadows.

"I decided I prefer to : "I feel like I have a good :

"I have been close and ! one can handle that pres-! "I haven't been in the ! have to perform better." that gives me reason to sure, but I'm OK with it. I finals in this tournament as



#### MARIA up to challenge

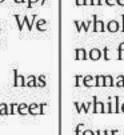
answer the challenge.

Sharapova could meet "She has been playing on

Sharapova said. "That doesn't take any-

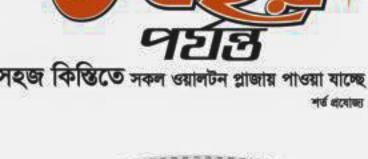
me and other players. We However, Sharapova has

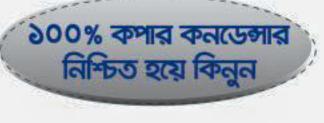
Grand Slam of her own.











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NANO

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