

POGBA UNLEASHES THE LEOPARD

Juventus midfielder Paul Pogba is usually in the news for his eye-catching performances on the pitch, but it's his new hair-do which has caught the attention this time. The France international's new hairstyle features a leopard-inspired design and is guaranteed to stand out on pitches across Italy. Pogba, 22, revealed his new look in a video on his Instagram account ahead of the Serie A game with Roma yesterday. Pogba is in good form, too, scoring three goals in his last five outings -- will he be able to get even better now he's got his new wild cat hairstyle? --
AGENCIES



Chelsea fend off 10-man Arsenal

AFP, London
 Arsenal missed out on the chance to regain top spot in the Premier League after losing 1-0 at home to London rivals Chelsea on Sunday.

Meanwhile Swansea gave new coach Francesco Guidolin victory in his first game in charge with a 2-1 win away to Everton as the Welsh club moved four points clear of the relegation zone.

At the Emirates, Arsenal were reduced to 10 men in the 19th minute when Per Mertesacker was sent off for a challenge on Chelsea striker Diego Costa, with referee Mark Clattenburg ruling the Gunners defender as the last man.

Four minutes later, Costa gave Chelsea the lead when he got on the end of a Branislav Ivanovic cross at the near post.

Arsenal's defeat left them in third spot, three points behind shock leaders Leicester City, while Chelsea moved up into 13th place.

A hard-fought victory at Goodison Park saw Italian boss Guidolin off to a winning start with the Swans.

Swansea went ahead though Gylfi Sigurdsson's 17th-minute penalty but Everton were level nine minutes later when

Gareth Barry's near-post flick was turned into his own net by the Swans' Jack Cork.

But Swansea regained the lead in the 34th minute. Left-back Neil Taylor burst clear and released Andre Ayew, whose shot deflected in off the sliding John Stones.

This was a notable win for Swansea as it meant they had recorded back-to-back league successes for the first time this season following last week's 1-0 defeat of Watford. It was also their first league victory over Everton.

"Six points in two matches is very important for us because the table was not good," said Guidolin. "I hope to have the possibility to go up in the table."

"In this moment I am very happy. This is the first match in the Premier League for me," Guidolin added: "I dreamed of working in the Premier League but I didn't dream of winning the first match."

"I must understand what happens in this day because I am surprised. It is new for me."

Everton manager Roberto Martinez had to make two substitutions in the first half, with the injured pair of Muhamed Besic and Kevin Mirallas now set to miss Wednesday's League Cup semi-final second leg against Manchester City.



Chelsea forward Diego Costa made the difference against Arsenal at the Emirates yesterday, scoring the only goal of the game to hand his side a win. PHOTO: AFP

Sevilla hold Atletico

AFP, Madrid

Atletico Madrid spurned the chance to move back top of La Liga as they failed to break down 10-man Sevilla in a 0-0 draw on Sunday.

Antoine Griezmann had the hosts' best effort when he headed against the post early in the second-half, but Atletico failed to take advantage when Vitolo saw a second yellow card just after the hour mark.

A point means Atletico and Barcelona are now level on points at the top of the table ahead of their meeting at the Camp Nou next weekend.

There had been just 17 goals in Atletico's previous nine matches at home in La Liga this season and clear-cut chances were again hard to come by for both sides.

Griezmann just couldn't stretch to turn Diego Godin's header across goal in at the far post early on. At the other end, Sevilla's best chance fell to Ever Banega but he hit over the bar.

Earlier, Athletic Bilbao gunned down high-flying Eibar 5-2 in a Basque derby at San Mames.

On-loan Atletico striker Borja Baston scored twice for the visitors to take his tally for the season to 15.

ULAB Cricket Cup begins

SPORTS REPORTER

The ninth ULAB Fair Play Cup Inter-Private University Cricket Tournament began yesterday at the university's campus ground in Ramchandrapur. BCB media committee chairman Jalal Yunus officially inaugurated the competition which is considered the biggest inter-private university cricket tournament in the country.

The hosts University of Liberal Arts Bangladesh beat East West University by 47 runs on the first day yesterday.

This year, 12 renowned private universities are taking part in the competition. A total of 20 T20 matches will be held in the tournament. This year, the champion team will receive BDT 40,000 and will earn the opportunity to participate in the Red Bull Campus Cricket World Final Tournament.



Novak Djokovic had one of his worst performances in recent memory, but despite 100 unforced errors, the Serbian World Number 1 still held on for a win against Frenchman Gilles Simon to secure a place in the quarterfinals of the Australian Open yesterday. PHOTO: REUTERS

**Djokovic scrapes into last 8
 Serena to meet Sharapova in quarterfinals**

AFP, Melbourne



Novak Djokovic dished up 100 unforced errors in a five-set struggle with Gilles Simon on Sunday as Roger Federer roared into the Australian Open quarter-finals with ruthless efficiency.

After the top seed's "match to forget", Federer looked in a hurry to brush off David Goffin when they came on court just before 11:00 pm - and he duly thrashed the Belgian 6-2, 6-1, 6-4 in 88 minutes.

There was a big contrast between defending champion Djokovic, who is going for a record-equalling sixth Australian Open title, and the 34-year-old Federer, who hasn't won in Melbourne since 2010.

While Simon patiently pushed and prodded Djokovic during his 6-3, 6-7 (1/7), 6-4, 4-6, 6-3 win, Goffin couldn't lay a glove on Federer as the clockwork Swiss purred through.

But both are safely into the quarter-finals, with Djokovic facing Kei Nishikori in his 27th consecu-

tive Grand Slam last-eight clash and Federer up against Tomas Berdych.

Berdych also had to come through a marathon five-setter as he outlasted Spain's Roberto Bautista Agut 4-6, 6-4, 6-3, 1-6, 6-3 to reach the last eight for the sixth year in a row.

By comparison, Nishikori's win was a stroll as he crushed Jo-Wilfried Tsonga in straight sets, and he may fancy his chances against Djokovic after the Serb's flustered performance against Simon.

"It gives me great joy to know that I can't get worse than that, than what I played today," Djokovic said.

"I was obviously pleased to win the match, but in terms of the performance itself, I haven't done well at all... It's a match to forget for me."

He was at a loss to explain his tactic of continually trying drop shots, which either found the net or were returned with interest by the fast-moving Simon.

"Sometimes you have a brain freeze, if I can call it that way," the 10-time Grand Slam champion said.

Federer was in no mood to hang around in the evening's final match,

watched by Australian great Rod Laver in the arena that bears his name.

"It was a good challenge and I'm happy I came out and played as well as I did... it was a good surprise out here tonight for me," Federer said.

Meanwhile, in the women's round, Serena Williams served up a glamour Australian Open quarter-final against arch-rival Maria Sharapova on Sunday as she looks to extend her iron grip over the Russian star.

The world number one and defending champion smacked Margarita Gasparyan 6-2, 6-1 in just 55 minutes on Rod Laver Arena to ensure the mouth-watering showdown.

Sharapova holds the dismal record of never beating her nemesis in 17 contests dating back 12 years. The last time she managed a win was at the WTA Tour Championships in 2004.

She now has another chance to finally get the monkey off her back after coming through a 7-5, 7-5 thriller against fast-rising Swiss teen Belinda Bencic.

The Russian world number five, who lost to Williams in the Melbourne Park final last year, said

she was always looking to improve and used the losses against the mighty American to examine what she could do better.

"Absolutely. It's not like I think about what I can do worse!" she said.

"You're always trying to -- always trying to improve. I got myself into the quarter-final of a Grand Slam."

"There's no reason I shouldn't be looking to improve and getting my game in a better position than any previous round. It's only going to be tougher, especially against Serena."

A nonchalant Williams, who rarely looks beyond her next opponent in the draw, claimed she didn't know Sharapova was now in the way of her bid to win a 22nd Grand Slam and equally Steffi Graf's Open-era record.

"I'll be ready, she had a really good match -- I had no idea I was playing her [Sharapova] next," she told the court-side interviewer after taming Gasparyan.

"That will be a good match, I have nothing to lose. We are both doing the best we can. It'll be fun."

SOUTH ASIAN GAMES 2016

16-year-old holds key for archery

SPORTS REPORTER

It hasn't been very long that Bangladesh entered the realm of archery, but they have produced some quality archers who have claimed gold in international competitions so far. However, when it comes to events such as the Olympics, Asian Games and South Asian Games, they have failed to shine.

After grabbing gold in the individual recurve bow event in the Youth Olympic Qualification in Indonesia, Emdadul Haque Milon failed to shine in either the 2010 SA Games in Dhaka or the 2012

Olympics in London. Roman Sana, who was champion in 70m recurve bow in the first Asian Grand Prix in 2014, followed his teammate and was eliminated from the early stages of the 2014 Asian Games in South Korea.

Ahead of the 12th Asian Games, scheduled to begin on February 5 in India, the focus has shifted to young Tamimul Islam. While Emdadul is soul-searching at the international level and Roman has been ruled out with a muscle injury, Bangladesh hopes lie with the 16-year-old who won gold in recurve bow in the 5th Youth Commonwealth Games last September.

"I know everyone has high expectations of me and I am hopeful I can produce something good if I can translate my performances in training into the national stage," said the BKSP student, while reminding that he had only competed in the 60m recurve bow last year, while he will have to compete in the 70m version this time.

Only time will tell whether Tamimul can outdo his predecessors by bringing the first gold from archery in the SA Games, an event in which Bangladesh have won two silver and four bronze over the past two editions.

However, the experienced Emdadul is more positive as the focus will finally be off him and he expects the lighter burden to help him shine, seven years on from his gold in Indonesia.

"I had to perform with a lot of pressure in big tournaments, but this time I hope to make my dream come true," said Emdadul, who last won a silver medal at the Islamic Solidarity Games in Indonesia in 2013.

The archery outfit comprises 16 archers -- eight men and eight women -- who have been training since May last year under the guidance of Korean coach Kim Hang Yongs, Indian coach Nishith Das and local coach Sajjad Hossain. They will compete in all 10 events of both recurve bow and compound events.

"This time, we are not pressuring the archers. Instead we are encouraging them to play their natural game. If they do that, success will follow," said gold medalist archer-turned-coach Sajjad.

However, Nishith is a bit of worried about the cold climate and freezing winds in Shillong, where the archery event will take place.

"We have two formidable opponents -- the top-class Indian archers and the conditions in Shillong. Plus we are not getting any practice sessions in Shillong unlike Sri Lanka and Nepal, so I am not satisfied with the preparations," said the 12-year veteran of Bangladesh archery.



Tamimul Islam, the 16-year-old archer who won gold in the 5th Youth Commonwealth Games, is being touted as Bangladesh's best hope for gold in the upcoming SA Games. PHOTO: COLLECTED