

**LEICESTER FANS CAUSE EARTHQUAKE!**

Leicester City's supporters celebrated a recent goal so jubilantly that a minor earthquake was detected in the city, a group of geology students said yesterday. The group from the University of Leicester recently placed earthquake-monitoring equipment at a school close to Leicester's King Power Stadium. When Leonardo Ulloa scored an 89th-minute winner in last month's win over Norwich City, fans' celebrations sparked a mini-quake with a magnitude of 0.3 on the Richter scale. "We installed the equipment at the school it showed us there was a strong correlation between the exact time Leicester scored at home and the occurrence of a large seismic signal," said first-year student



Ceres La Salle FC forward Adrian Gallardo (R) scored a brace against Sheikh Jamal as the Philippine side claimed a 2-0 win over their Bangladeshi opponents in their AFC Cup Group E encounter at the Bangabandhu National Stadium yesterday.

PHOTO: STAR

**KFC WOMEN'S FOOTBALL**  
**Mymensingh set up final with BJMC**

SPORTS REPORTER

Defending champions Mymensingh reached the final of the KFC Women's National Football Championship with a convincing 3-0 win over Bangladesh Ansar and VDP in the second semifinal at the Birshrestha Shaheed Mostafa Kamal Stadium in Kamalapur yesterday.

Mymensingh, who beat Ansar in last edition's final to become champions, dominated the match against Bangladesh Ansar and scored two goals in the first half thanks to a brace from Sanjida Akter, while Sheuli Akter completed the rout in the second half to take Mymensingh to the final for the second consecutive time.

In the first semifinal, Bangladesh Jute Mills Corporation (BJMC) routed Tangail 4-0, with Sabina Khatun scoring a pair while Lipi Akter and Ratna Khatun struck one goal apiece.

**Gallardo brace sinks Sheikh Jamal**

SPORTS REPORTER



AFC CUP

Philippine side, which was better in terms of running, passing, fitness and movement.

With the alleged lack of preparation and lack of effort from the players during the ongoing players' transfers, there was no cohesion in the three departments and something was missing in midfield.

The lethal attacking pair of Wedson Anselme and Emeke Darlington was virtually inactive throughout the game except for a couple of opportunities they got in the second half.

The way defenders panicked in face of the opponent attacks almost forced Sheikh Jamal to concede two goals within the first 15 minutes, but goalkeeper Shahidul Alam Sohel was lucky that a Kevin Ingreso shot went inches over the crosspiece in the fifth minute before he managed to grip a Stephan Schrock effort in the 15th minute.

But Sohel could not stop a low drive by Adrian Gallardo from inside the box ten minutes later and the defenders were mostly to blame for conceding the lead. The Spaniard then doubled the lead on the half-hour mark after Sohel Rana lost the ball on the left-flank.

With Sheikh Jamal not up to their usual high standards, luck was not

with the hosts either as Landing Darboe saw his 25-yard shot hit the post in the 39th minute before a close-range header from defender Yeasin Khan was unbelievably thwarted by Ceres goalkeeper Louie Michael Casas one minute before the break.

After resumption, Sheikh Jamal looked better with midfielder Enamul Haque coming in place of defender Munna and Wedson was incredibly denied by the opponent goalkeeper in the 74th minute from inside the box before the same striker rattled the woodwork in the 80th minute.

"It was disappointing to suffer a second consecutive defeat, but the boys tried till the last moment despite having lack of preparation. We conceded two bad goals but we also got a few chances to score," said coach Shaifiquel Islam Manik, reiterating that there was a 'lack of motivation and effort' from the players.

Manik also believes the scenario could have been different had the forwards availed their chances.

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**Maria row draws mixed reactions**

**Russian admits to failing dope test**

AFP, Los Angeles



Five-time Grand Slam tennis champion Maria Sharapova said Monday she failed a dope test at the Australian Open, and isn't sure what punishment she'll face for her "huge mistake."

The former world number one from Russia said a change in the World Anti-Doping Agency's banned list for 2016 led to an inadvertent violation, for which she will be "provisionally suspended" by the International Tennis Federation.

Sharapova tested positive for Meldonium, a drug she said she had been taking since 2006 but was only added to the banned list this year.

"I did fail the test and I take full responsibility," Sharapova said at a press conference at a Los Angeles hotel. "I made a huge mistake. I let my fans down. I let my sport down that I've been playing since the age of four that I love so deeply," she added, her voice wavering.

"I know that with this, I face consequences and I don't want to end my career this way -- and I really hope I will be given another chance to play this game."

The ITF confirmed in a statement that Sharapova had tested positive on January 26 and had accepted the finding when she was notified on March 2.

"Ms Sharapova will be provisionally suspended with effect from 12 March, pending determination of the case," the ITF said.

Sharapova said she was cooperating with the ITF and did not yet know the extent of the sanctions she would face.

Her attorney, John Haggerty, said the positive test could carry a ban of up to four years, but that mitigating circumstances could see a lesser penalty.

Shamil Tarpishchev, head of the Russian tennis federation, told the TASS news agency he believed Sharapova would still have a chance to play at the Rio Olympics in August.

"I am saddened to hear this news," WTA chief executive Steve Simon said in a statement. "Maria is a leader and I have always known her to be a woman of great integrity. Nevertheless, as Maria acknowledged, it is a player's respon-

sibility to know what they put in their body and if it is permissible."

Australian tennis officials also said they were surprised to learn that Sharapova tested positive in Melbourne.

Sharapova said she originally began taking Meldonium for a variety of symptoms, including a tendency to become ill often, an irregular EKG heart test and a family history of diabetes.

A string of sports figures have tested positive for it this year, including Russian ice dancer Ekaterina Bobrova.

**SPONSORS SEVERTIES**

Nike, Tag Heuer and Porsche have suspended their relationship with Maria Sharapova after the five-time Grand Slam tennis champion's revelation.

Since she was eleven years old, Sharapova has been related to Nike, who said it was "saddened and surprised".

**WHAT IS MELDONIUM?**

Meldonium, also known as mildronate, is manufactured in Latvia and distributed in Baltic countries and Russia. It is not approved for use in the United States and is not authorised in the rest of Europe.

It is used in cases of angina or heart failure, in order to promote a better blood flow in the body.

It increases exercise capacity in athletes by heightening their endurance.

WADA found "evidence of its use by athletes with the intention of enhancing performance" by virtue of carrying more oxygen to muscle tissue.

A global study found 2.2% of athletes had it in their system, while a 2015 study found that 17% of Russian athletes had it in their system.

Meanwhile, Swiss watchmaker TAG Heuer, which has been working with Sharapova for 12 years, said it would not renew its marketing contract with Maria Sharapova.

German car manufacturers Porsche were the third big-name sponsor to distance themselves from Sharapova yesterday.



**Women cricketers step out to prove themselves**

SPORTS REPORTER



ICC WORLD TWENTY20 INDIA 2016

Led by the young Jahanara Alam, the women's national cricket team left for Bangalore yesterday morning without having garnered much attention. With a large chunk of journalists already in India, in order to cover the men's journey, the women's side didn't receive much of a reception.

However, that does not in any way, discard the immense amount of potential that the women in green have. Let's for a moment, forget the fact that these girls have been pitted against the three best T20I sides in the world -- India, West Indies and England-- in the group stages and focus on the way this team has developed.

The most obvious sign of progress is that the board has made way for a new captain. To be able to replace Salma Khatun, who could very well be considered as a bit of a legend in Bangladesh's women's cricket, is a thought that previously couldn't not even be imagined.

However, the influx of players and the yearning for the new has gone on to bring this transformation. And this is just the start, there's plenty more on the cards.

Take for example a look at the best performers in the side from the recent games. The youngsters have done a lot

better than the veterans in the side.

Take for example the case of the 18-year-old wicketkeeper-opener Nigar Sultana. She scored a defiant 41 in the last game against Ireland and also posted an unbeaten 30 against Pakistan in the ODI before that.

There's no doubt that the likes of Salma and Jahanara will carry a majority of the pressure going into the ICC World Twenty20. However, as a result of the

recent change, there are other players, such as a Fargana Haque or a Rumana Ahmed, who can be looked up to.

With the team on the right track, a bit more perseverance can do wonders for them in the coming years. But in order to do that, they need to play more international matches. And that can only happen if they can make a statement, which is precisely what they aim to do in India.



Bangladesh national women's cricket team take a group selfie at the Sher-e-Bangla National Stadium prior to their departure for Bangalore where they will be playing their first two World Cup fixtures.

PHOTO: FIROZ AHMED

**Chelsea meet PSG with tie finely poised**

AFP, Paris



UEFA CHAMPIONS LEAGUE

Chelsea and Paris Saint-Germain meet at Stamford Bridge today with both sides' seasons riding on the outcome of their Champions League last 16, second leg showdown.

PSG head to London with a 2-1 lead from the first leg in Paris last month thanks to a late Edinson Cavani winner, but the tie is finely poised, with John Obi Mikel's away goal giving Chelsea plenty of reason to believe they can progress.

Away goals have decided the meetings of the sides in each of the last two seasons, with a 2-2 draw at Stamford Bridge taking PSG through at the same stage last season after Chelsea had come out on top in the 2014 quarter-finals.

The stakes are extremely high for this latest clash of the clubs, with Chelsea looking to Europe for joy while they continue to struggle in the Premier League.

They are 23 points clear of Monaco at the top of Ligue 1 and could secure another French title as early as next weekend, so they risk having a rather anti-climactic finish to the season if they are eliminated from Europe.

That means there is huge pressure on Laurent Blanc's team, as Brazilian defender Maxwell admitted.

"Chelsea is on the minds of everyone. It is a very important match. Everyone is waiting for it -- the media, the club, the players too," he told French media after Saturday's match.

PSG have doubts over the fitness of influential midfielder duo Blaise Matuidi and Marco Verratti but hope at least one of the two will make the game.

"At this time of the season it is difficult to have everyone fully fit. We all have little knocks here and there. We hope to have a full squad," added Maxwell.

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**Independence Cup starts today**

SPORTS REPORTER

The Independence Cup hockey tournament gets underway at the Maulana Bhasani Hockey Stadium today with the participation of six teams.

The teams, split into two groups, will play round-robin matches from where the top two from each group will advance to the semifinals.


Defending champions Bangladesh Army will take on Ajax SC while Bangladesh Navy will play against Bangladesh Police today.

**Sanga now a selector**

AFP, Colombo

Sri Lanka's sports minister Dayasiri Jayasekera sacked the country's cricket selectors Tuesday and appointed a new panel headed by former player Aravinda de Silva, just days before they begin their World Twenty20 campaign.

The new panel headed by de Silva includes Kumar Sangakkara, Romesh Kaluwitharana, Lalith Kaluperuma and Ranjith Madurasinghe.

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