

**NO FURTHER ACTION AGAINST GABBY**

Aston Villa have announced that they will take no further action against forward Gabriel Agbonlahor, who was dropped from the first team on Friday after British media published pictures of him apparently smoking a shisha pipe while on holiday in Dubai. Caretaker manager Eric Black left out the 29-year-old from the squad for Saturday's 4-0 Premier League defeat by Chelsea, but the player is now free to rejoin his team mates. "Aston Villa Football Club has completed its investigation into Gabby Agbonlahor's trip to Dubai over the international break," the Premier League's basement side said on Twitter on Tuesday. "The club will be taking no further action." - **REUTERS**



**Sk Russel scrape past Arambagh**

SPORTS REPORTER



Ethiopian hitman Fikru Zeida, a star player of the Indian Premier League, celebrated his debut in Bangladesh with a strike to guide Sheikh Russel KC to a hard-fought 2-1 win over Arambagh KS at the Bangabandhu National Stadium yesterday in both side's first match in the KFC Independence Cup.

Fikru showed his skill with his first touch to put a rejuvenated Sheikh Russel ahead in the second minute before Arambagh's Nigerian striker Kester Akon cancelled the lead two minutes later. A win for Sheikh Russel looked a distant prospect but Cameroonian midfielder Paul Emile dramatically struck the decider nine minutes from time to give the 2013 champions a winning start.

Since his second-minute strike, Fikru was mostly inactive, but that was due to a lack of service. However, the 30-year-old marksman looked better in the second half when Cameroonian midfielder Paul was paired with him upfront.

"As [it was] my first game, I felt uneasy because I am a new player playing in a new ground. But I am happy with the winning start. I scored one goal and missed one but we got the full three points and that is important to the team. We just need to keep working hard. We want to keep winning," said the six-foot tall striker after the match.

After Maruful Haque failed to impress with his erratic showings, promoted

Arambagh, under the guidance of Saiful Bari Titu, won hearts with the spirited performance which kept them in the hunt against big-budget Sheikh Russel.

Nigerian striker Kester, a familiar face in Bangladesh's domestic circuit, was a constant threat to Sheikh Russel throughout the game, while diminutive winger Abu Sufian impressed with his darting runs from the right flank, exposing the vulnerable Sheikh Russel defence on a few occasions.

Sheikh Russel were lucky to secure full points after goalkeeper Rasel Mahmud Liton was forced into making two brilliant saves from Kester and Sufian in the second half.

**CHITTAGONG ABAHANI START WITH A WIN**

In the second match under floodlights, big-budget Chittagong Abahani also got off to a winning start after inflicting a 2-0 defeat on Muktijoddha Sangsad KS.

With five 'disputed' players -- Mamumul Islam, Sohel Rana, Nasir Chowdhury, Raihan Hasan and Yeamin Ahmed Munna -- watching from the gallery, Chittagong Abahani faced a tough challenge from Muktijoddha Sangsad before two foreign recruits -- Moroccan midfielder Tareq El Janabi and Haitian striker Fabrice Noel -- rescued the port city side, striking in the 30th and 76th minutes respectively.

Tareq converted a spot kick after Shariful Islam was brought down by opposition goalkeeper Mamun Khan while, from a counter attack, Noel availed a defence-splitting pass from winger Zahid Hossain and sealed victory with a tap-in.



Sheikh Russel's Ethiopian striker Fikru Zeida (R) fights for the ball with Arambagh defender Abdul Hamid Bhasani during their KFC Independence Cup match at the Bangabandhu National Stadium yesterday.

PHOTO: STAR

**Sagor first in 200m race**

SPORTS REPORTER

Swimmer Mahfizur Rahman Sagor won a gold medal in the Al-Thailand Open Swimming Competition which was arranged for foreign and local swimmers who have been receiving training in Thailand as part of their preparation for August's Rio Olympic Games.

Sagor, who won seven bronze medals in the South Asian Games in Assam, took 1:54.05 minutes as he finished first in the 200m freestyle. He also took part in 50m and 100m free-style and finished fifth and fourth respectively.

Since last year Sagor, along with swimmers from different countries like China, India and Hong Kong, has been training in Thailand under the supervision of FINA, sponsored by the solidarity fund of International Olympic Council.

**Police probe Vardy baby Twitter abuse**

AFP, London

Police are looking into sexual threats made on Twitter against the one-year-old daughter of Leicester City and England striker Jamie Vardy.

The abuse came after the fiancée of the Foxes forward posted pictures of the couple's child wearing a Leicester shirt ahead of the Premier League leaders' 1-0 win over Southampton on Sunday.

Leicestershire Police launched an investigation into the threats after a formal complaint was made on Monday.

Rebekah Nicholson tweeted shots of her daughter wearing a T-shirt with 'Daddy' emblazoned on the back, and this prompted rape threats on the social networking site.

Nicholson responded by saying: "There are no words for people like you! You need locking up."

Meanwhile Vardy posted a screenshot of the threats, with the words "shocking and vile".

"Leicestershire Police is investigating a report of malicious communication being sent via social media," the force said in a statement.

"A report was made (on Monday) of an abusive message being received (on Sunday evening) by a woman on Twitter. Inquiries remain ongoing and the force is liaising with Leicester City Football Club."

A Leicester spokesman called the abuse "shocking".

**The birth of the Olympics**

AGENCIES

The modern Olympic Games, held in Athens for the first time on this day 1886, are the leading international sporting event featuring more than 200 participating nations. They are held in intervals of four years, with both summer and winter iterations.

Originating in Ancient Greece as one of two central rituals, the Olympics were held between city-states in order to appease Zeus, with the first Olympic dating back to 776 BC. Even during times of war, an Olympic Truce was enacted so that athletes could travel from their countries to the games in safety.

In 1896, King George I of Greece welcomed a huge crowd outside the newly constructed Panathenean Stadium in Athens to what is now known as the 'modern-day Olympic summer games'.

The first Winter Olympic Games were held in Chamonix, France in 1924.

The games have come a long way from their pagan roots, captivating the world over with the finest performances from the finest performers in all sorts of competitions. All in all the it should be evident why the event appeals to athletes around the world, who want to cement their legacy in a storied tradition.

**PSG face City challenge**

AFP, Paris



Zlatan Ibrahimovic powered Paris Saint-Germain to a 4-1 win over Nice at the weekend and the French champions will again look to their Swedish star when they take on Manchester City at the Parc des Princes on Wednesday.

Paris reached the Champions League semifinals in 1994-95, but City, despite their indifferent Premier League displays, are through to the last eight for the first time.

Manuel Pellegrini's side rediscovered some form at the weekend though with a 4-0 demolition of Bournemouth, and PSG midfielder Thiago Motta said it would take a complete team effort to overcome City.

"It's not Ibra against City. It's Paris Saint-Germain against City. In my head, I've never thought about taking to the pitch and winning a game all alone. It's impossible," Motta told French daily L'Equipe.

"If we put pressure on him like that, and if he puts it on himself like that, we're not good. If we win, we'll win as a team."

Marco Verratti is sidelined for PSG and Javier Pastore is doubtful, while captain Vincent Kompany is missing for City who are also sweating over the fitness of Joe Hart and Yaya Toure.

Six straight wins have reignited Real's season but the Champions League represents their only realistic chance of silverware this term.

Zinedine Zidane's men travel to Germany on Wednesday for a first-ever meeting with Wolfsburg and head into the tie as heavy favourites against a side embarking on their best run in Europe's premier competition.

However, Wolfsburg have won just three of their last 15 Bundesliga games and were soundly beaten 3-0 at Bayer Leverkusen on Friday.

"Things don't look good for us right now. You can't say we deserve to be higher in the standings than we are right now," said Julian Draxler, with Wolfsburg languishing in eighth place in Germany.

The mood is far more upbeat in the Real camp having avenged November's 4-0 home drubbing at the hands of Barca, with Wales star Gareth Bale optimistic they can finish the season in style.

"We're feeling strong, confident now, and it's one final

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**FACTFILE**

**COACHES**  
 Paris Saint-Germain - Laurent Blanc (FRA) -- 50 yrs  
 Manchester City - Manuel Pellegrini (CHI) -- 62 yrs

**LEADING SCORERS IN ALL COMPETITIONS**  
 Paris Saint-Germain - Zlatan Ibrahimovic (38 goals)  
 Manchester City - Sergio Aguero (22 goals)

**ROAD TO THE QUARTERFINALS**  
 Paris Saint-Germain - Second in Group A behind Real Madrid, beat Chelsea 4-2 on aggregate in last 16  
 Manchester City - Winners of Group D ahead of Juventus, beat Dynamo Kiev 3-1 on aggregate in last 16

**CHAMPIONS LEAGUE BEST PERFORMANCES**  
 Paris Saint-Germain - semifinals 1995  
 Manchester City - quarterfinals 2016

**PREVIOUS MEETINGS**  
 Manchester City 0 Paris Saint-Germain 0 - 2008/09  
 UEFA Cup group stage

push until the end of the season," said Bale. "Saturday's win) really does put us mentally in a strong position, we can beat anyone on our day and we showed that. "Barcelona have been saying they're the best team and we beat them in their own backyard." "We are looking forward to the game, we have nothing to lose," said Wolfsburg's Germany midfielder Julian Draxler.

**Pep can handle treble pressure**

AFP, Munich



Pep Guardiola says he can handle the pressure to deliver the triple of Champions League, Bundesliga and German Cup titles in his swansong season as Bayern Munich's head coach.

"Everyone at Bayern Munich wants to win the triple, but it is just the same at Barcelona and Real Madrid," said Guardiola ahead of Bayern's home Champions League quarterfinal against Benfica on Tuesday at Munich's Allianz Arena.

"If we don't win the triple, I won't have fulfilled my task. I accept the pressure."

Under Guardiola's reign, Bayern have exited the semifinals of the Champions League for the last two seasons at the hands of Real Madrid (2014) and Barcelona (2015).

But his comments contradict Bayern's director of sport Matthias Sammer, who has publicly insisted the Bavarian giants are not targeting a repeat of their 2013 treble.

Sammer was furious after ex-president Uli Hoeness suggested last month that Guardiola wants to sign off his three years in Munich with triple titles before taking over at Manchester City next season.

Guardiola won the Champions League in 2009 and 2011 during his four years as Barcelona coach which yielded 14 titles and he has so far added five more to his tally in Munich.

Bayern are five points clear in the German league with six games left and face Werder Bremen in the semifinals of the German Cup in a fortnight.

But for now Guardiola is focused on reaching the semifinals and rates the Benfica back four as "one of the best in Europe" while strikers Jonas and Konstantinos Mitroglou have scored 48 goals between them in the Portuguese league.



PHOTO: COURTESY

The KSRM Golf Tournament prize distribution ceremony was held last Saturday at the Chittagong Bhatiyari Golf & Country Club. Lt. Col. Imrul Kais won the tournament while Rakibul Rahman Tutul became 1st runner-up.

**BD return to winning ways**

SPORTS REPORTER

The Bangladesh chess team returned to winning ways in the Asian Nations Cup Chess when they defeated Jordan 3.5-0.5 in the 8th round held in Abu Dhabi on Monday.

Bangladesh, who lost to Kazakhstan and India in the two previous rounds, are in the fourth position with 10 points from eight matches.

In the eighth round, IM Mohammad Minhaz Uddin beat Alattar Rakan, GM Al Rakib beat Abo Hazeem Mohammed and GM Enamul Hossain beat Alattar Ghayda, while GM Niaz Mursheed drew with Aboudi Marwan.

Bangladesh were playing against Iran in the ninth and final round when this report was filed.

**Conte punished**

AFP, Rome



An Italian court on Tuesday called for new Chelsea manager Antonio Conte to receive a six-month suspended prison sentence over match-fixing allegations.

The current Italy manager, who will take over Chelsea after Euro 2016, is accused of sporting fraud.

The 'Calcioscommesse' (football-betting) probe maintains that the 46-year-old former Juventus boss failed to expose an alleged rigged second-division match in May 2011.

The game involved Siena, whom Conte managed at that time.

Conte, who denies any wrongdoing, was also ordered to pay an 8,000 euros (\$9000) fine, by Cremona court public prosecutor Roberto Di Martino.

The May 29, 2011 game suspected of being fixed for betting purposes ended with a 1-0 away win for Conte's side at AlbinoLeffe.

Siena gained promotion to Serie A that season, with that success earning Conte the

job at Juventus, the club he graced as a player for 13 years.

In 2012, when he was in charge of Juventus, Conte was hit with a 10-month ban by the Italian football federation over the affair, reduced to four months on appeal.

The new man at Stamford Bridge is due to hear his fate on whether he is hit with a criminal sentence in mid-May.

Conte's lawyers elected for a fast-track trial in order to get it wrapped up before the European championships begin in France on June 10.

Tuesday's development came less than 24 hours after Conte was appointed on a three-year deal to take charge of Chelsea.

He will succeed Guus Hiddink, appointed interim manager after Jose Mourinho's sacking in December.

Conte took over the Italian national team in August 2014 and secured their Euro 2016 qualification.

He guided Juventus to three straight Serie A titles from 2012-14 before taking charge of Italy.

Around 100 people are still awaiting trial accused with various roles in the vast corruption scandal.