

DEFENDER GIVEN ABSURD FINE

Shanghai Shenhua have dished out a heavy sanction to midfielder Qin Sheng after his red card for deliberately stamping on Axel Witsel during a Chinese Super League fixture. The Belgium international tumbled to the ground after being on the receiving end of some rough treatment from his opponent as the pair clashed in the penalty box while waiting for a corner. And Shanghai have now announced that Sheng will be fined ¥300,000 (£35,000) and have his wages docked for the rest of the season. He will also be forced to train with the reserves and the club will block any transfer request should he decide he wants to leave before his contract runs out. Shanghai Shenhua are currently fourth in the CSL table after two matches having drawn 1-1 with Tianjin Quanjian in the game that saw Sheng dismissed, with Witsel scoring the late equaliser.



—AGENCIES

QUICK SINGLES

The following are a few samples of stories that did not make the print edition. However, if they pique your interest, you can always read them online on The Daily Star website by simply scanning the QR codes listed below:

Steve McClaren sacked for second time

Steve McClaren, the former England head coach, has been sacked as manager of Championship side Derby County for the second time in three years, the second-tier club announced.

PSG begin recovery from Barca defeat

Paris St Germain start their recovery from an embarrassing Champions League exit in Barcelona with a 2-1 win at bottom club Lorient to maintain their Ligue 1 title challenge.

Enrique blames Barca loss on European exploits

Coach Luis Enrique blames Barcelona's shock 2-1 La Liga defeat at lowly Deportivo La Coruna on the exertions of their sensational midweek 6-1 Champions League win over Paris St Germain.

Zidane defends under-fire goalkeeper Navas

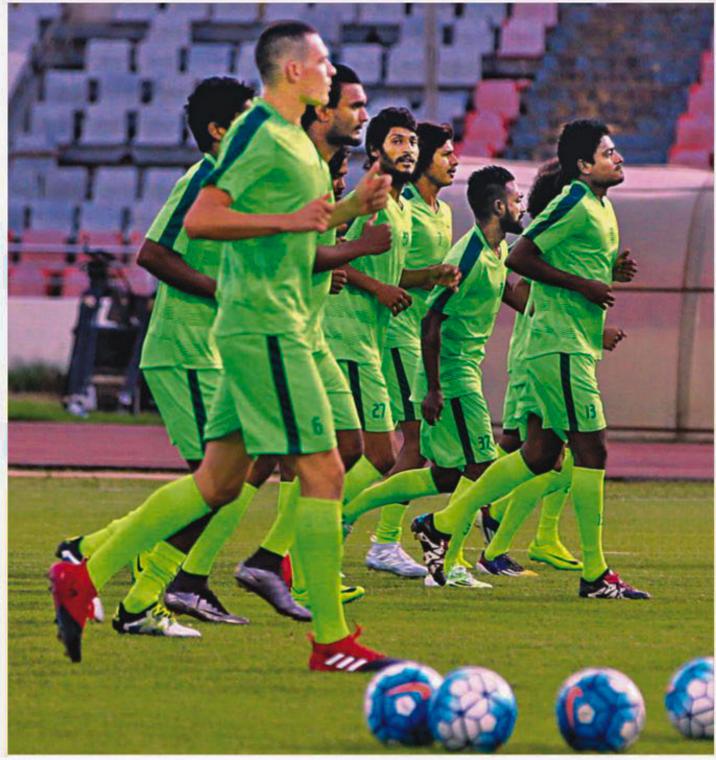
Real Madrid coach Zinedine Zidane hails goalkeeper Keylor Navas's contribution as the European champions leapfrog Barcelona into the top spot in La Liga despite the latest series of blunders this season from the Costa Rican.

Djokovic, Federer, Nadal advance

Novak Djokovic launches his bid for a sixth ATP Indian Wells Masters crown with a two-set triumph over Kyle Edmund as the stars shone in the California desert.

Hathurusingha dreams of making Tigers the Sri Lanka of 1996

Chandika Hathurusingha expresses his desire to guide Bangladesh to the position where Sri Lanka were in 1996 – a year that fuelled their ambitions and defined their cricket fortunes for years to come.



Players of the Maziya Sports & Recreation Club, the champions of Maldives Premier League, went through a drill on Monday at the Bangabandhu National Stadium, where they will take on hosts Abahani in their opening group match of the AFC Cup today.

PHOTO: STAR

Can Abahani end int'l disappointment?

SPORTS REPORTER



Bangladesh Premier League champions Abahani will be hoping for a turn of fortune on the international circuit when they take on Maldives league champions Maziya SRC in their Group E opener of the AFC Cup at the Bangabandhu National Stadium today. After the failed attempt at Sheikh Kamal International Club Cup tournament in Chittagong, Abahani's Croatian coach Drago Mamic has been struggling to gel the new-look squad following the departure of five key players [Ariful Islam, Tapu Barman, Jewel Rana, Hemanta Vincent Biswas, Shakil Ahmed] and the 63-year-old coach has got little time to fine tune his fresh recruits --Sohel Rana, Rubel Mia, Raihan Hasan, Nasir Chowdhury, Yeamin Munna ahead of today's match against a strong Maldives side that includes eight national players and four foreign players from Kyrgyzstan, Serbia and Romania. The biggest challenge for Mamic

would actually be to select a perfect eleven from his new-look squad. He will also be hoping that his charges carry out his game plan accordingly to give Abahani a winning start in their maiden appearance in the AFC Cup, a tournament involving second-tier clubs from Asia. "You know we prepared for 10 days for Sheikh Kamal Club Cup tournament and this time we also got 10 days to prepare for tomorrow's match. I want to forget what happened in the past. I think the players are mentally ready --as we have collected some players at the last moment," said Mamic at the pre-match press conference at the BFF house yesterday. Abahani suffered from a goal drought in the Sheikh Kamal International Club Cup as they struck only twice in three games before being eliminated from the group stage but this time Mamic hopes that his forward lineup will not frustrate him. "Tomorrow's match is very important for us because we are representing Abahani as well as Bangladesh. We will give our best to achieve a good result and stay on track," said Mamic, hoping

that his marksmen are sharper this time around. Captain Mamun Mia is upbeat about changing Abahani's fortune at the international level by winning the match. "We will be trying to stage a comeback in the AFC Cup by winning the first match. We will be trying to carry on our Premier League performance to the AFC Cup," said defender Mamun Mia. While Abahani have been struggling to pick up the right combination, Maziya SRC are seemingly optimistic to secure a full three points as they have come here on the back of three successive wins in the domestic competitions. "We are fully prepared for tomorrow's match. We know about them as they have a group of foreign players and a foreign coach and lots of national players but we don't know about the players who have been included last moment. I believe in my players and their performance and they know how to play tomorrow," said Maziya's Macedonian coach Marjan Sekulovski.

Ramos strikes again as Real go top

AFP, Madrid



Real Madrid captain Sergio Ramos struck another late winner as the European champions usurped Barcelona at the top of La Liga with a hard-fought 2-1 win over Real Betis on Sunday.

Victory for Madrid moves Real two points clear of Barcelona and with a game in hand still to come. "I would be happier if we scored two or three goals at the start," said Real coach Zinedine Zidane. "But we remain calm because we know we can score at any moment."

However, Madrid's win was mired in controversy as goalkeeper Keylor Navas was extremely lucky to avoid an early red card before making a brilliant stoppage time save to deny Antonio Sanabria.

Navas clearly cleaned out Darko Brasanac on the edge of the Madrid area as he raced from his goal after just 20 minutes, but referee Antonio Mateu Lahoz inexplicably waived play on.

The hosts didn't benefit from Navas's presence just four minutes later, though, as he bundled Sarabia's shot into his own goal having appeared to have the effort under control.

"The most important thing for me is the support Keylor received from his teammates," added Zidane. "They know how important he is and in the end he made a great save to get us the three points."

Cristiano Ronaldo ensured Madrid went in level at the break as he rose unmarked to power home Marcelo's cross from close range for his 26th goal of the season.

The visitors' chances of escaping with a point were dealt a huge blow when Cristiano Piccini saw a second yellow card 12 minutes from time.

And just three minutes later, fresh from scoring two vital away goals at Napoli to ease Madrid into the Champions League quarter-finals on Tuesday, Ramos powered home another Toni Kroos header for the winner.

Betis could still have salvaged a point, but Navas made amends for his early mistakes with a brilliant stop from Sanabria's powerful header.

U-18 NAT'L FOOTBALL Satkhira clinch a thriller

SPORTS REPORTER

Satkhira notched up a thrilling 6-5 win over Khulna in the U-18 National Football Championship at the Gopalganj venue yesterday.

The match rolled into stoppage time, locked at 5-5, and Suman struck the winning goal two minutes into the stoppage time to provide Satkhira with an exciting victory. At the same venue, Narail and Magura played out a 2-2 draw.

At other venues across the country, Barisal beat Madaripur 2-1, Jhalakathi defeated Bogra 2-0, Netrokona blanked Sherpur 3-0, Dhaka outplayed Mymensingh 4-0, Sunamganj beat Comilla 3-2, Lalmonirhat beat Kurigram 1-0, Nilfamari beat Panchagarh 1-0, Chittagong outplayed Bandarban 3-0, Cox's Bazar thrashed Noakhali 3-1, Rajshahi crushed Naogaon 4-0, Natore beat Kushtia 2-0, Sirajganj beat Chuadanga 2-1, Narsingdi drew goalless with Brahmanbaria and BKSP handed a 5-0 defeat to Munshiganj riding on a hat-trick from Shahed.

Sevilla fear resurgent Leicester City

REUTERS, London



Remember Claudio Ranieri? The man who penned the most romantic story in soccer's annals by making Leicester City English champions and who walked away from Sevilla's stadium last month believing he could write another in the Champions League. Well, if a week is a long time in football, three weeks between last-16 legs in Europe's elite competition is a positive eternity with Ranieri already fondly consigned to history. It is to the chagrin of many in Leicester that their Italian folk hero has gone, denied the opportunity to try to guide them into the quarter-finals at the King Power Stadium on Tuesday.

Instead, in his old assistant Craig Shakespeare, who on Sunday was handed the manager's job until the end of the season, a city -- and an impatient club board -- now trusts.

At 2-1 down and with Jamie Vardy's away goal offering a raft to cling to on a night when Leicester were outplayed, Ranieri had not unreasonably felt the result might be the turning point in a woeful season. Alas for the Italian he was right. The next day Leicester's Thai owners ditched Ranieri and from that moment the entire complexion of this knockout tie was transformed.

After the 'Shakespearean' age dawned, Leicester managed to find fresh belief to chisel out two crucial Premier League wins that have eased them away from the relegation zone.



Leicester City star Jamie Vardy (R) takes part in a team training session at the club's training ground yesterday on the eve of their Champions League round of 16 second leg match against Sevilla.

PHOTO: AFP

Depay scores from halfway line

AFP, Paris

Former Manchester United outcast Memphis Depay rejoiced in his contender for goal of the season as the Dutchman scored twice to seal Lyon's 4-0 thrashing of Toulouse in Ligue 1.

Christophe Jallet and Maxwell Cornet put Lyon in control at Parc OL on Sunday before Depay stole the show with a second-half brace, the latter of those coming from just inside the Toulouse half.

Depay picked up the ball in the centre circle and spun round a defender before lofting the ball over the head of Toulouse goalkeeper Alban Lafont for his fourth goal in three matches.

"It's incredible for me to have scored a goal like that. I had tried one like that a few years ago and it hit the bar," said Depay.

The 23-year-old, who joined Lyon from United in January after rarely featuring under Jose Mourinho, admitted picking up on Lafont's tendency to drift from his goal earlier in the game.

"I saw the goalkeeper was playing off his line in the first half and I kept that in the back of my mind," Depay told Canal+.

"Then I had the ball and I turned around and shot. I didn't even see the ball go in, but I just heard everyone go crazy."

WALTON
আমাদের পণ্য

ভিত্তিহীন তথ্য সম্বলিত বিজ্ঞাপন দ্বারা প্রভাবিত হয়ে উচ্চদামে নিম্নমানের পণ্য কিনে প্রতারিত হবেন না

শুধুমাত্র Inverter প্রযুক্তিই বিদ্যুৎ সাশ্রয়ে বিশ্বে নির্ভরযোগ্য ও স্বীকৃত প্রযুক্তি যা মাদারবোর্ডের মাধ্যমে কম্প্রেশরের গতিবেগ নিয়ন্ত্রণ করে প্রয়োজন অনুসারে ব্যবহার করতে পারে। ফলে ব্যাপক বিদ্যুৎ সাশ্রয় হয়। ওয়ালটনের রয়েছে প্রকৃত বিদ্যুৎ সাশ্রয়ী Inverter প্রযুক্তির কম্প্রেশর যাতে R600a গ্যাস ব্যবহৃত হয়েছে। সুতরাং ওয়ালটনই দিতে পারে পুরোপুরি বিদ্যুৎ সাশ্রয়ী পণ্য উৎপাদনের গ্যারান্টি।

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