

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:

Test bowler Tsotsobe charged with match fixing

Former South Africa bowler Lonwabo Tsotsobe has

been charged with match fixing and has been suspended immediately after a lengthy investigation, Cricket South Africa said.

Lara suggests scrapping draws for Test cricket

Legendary batsman Brian Lara believes

Test cricket should scrap draws in order to add to the excitement of the game's longest format.

Newcastle romp back to PL

Newcastle United sparked a noisy promotion party by beating 10-man Preston North End 4-1 at a packed St James' Park to ensure a return to the Premier League at the first attempt.

Griezmann agent confirms 'concrete' move from United

Manchester United have shown "concrete interest" in

signing Atletico Madrid forward Antoine Griezmann, who has an exit clause of £85 million (\$108.79 million), the Frenchman's agent Eric Olhats has said.

Roma condemn Pescara to Serie B

AS Roma's Mohamed Salah scored twice in a 4-1 win at Pescara on

Monday which kept alive their faint hopes of catching Serie A leaders Juventus and condemned their opponents to relegation.

Wood handed England recall

England have called up fit-again Mark Wood for the forthcoming Champions Trophy campaign, but his fellow pace bowler Steven Finn has been left out of the 15-man squad.

U-16 women beat Shaanxi

SPORTS REPORTER

Bangladesh U-16 women's team registered their second victory of the China tour as they handed an emphatic 3-0 defeat to Shaanxi Province U-15 team in their fourth match yesterday.

Bangladesh, who had earlier beaten the Shaanxi team 4-1, enjoyed the lion's share of possession throughout the match at the Xian Olympic Sports Village Football ground. Razia provided Bangladesh the lead after a rebound came her way in the ninth minute.

Striker Anuching Marma doubled the lead in the 26th minute after dodging the opposition goalkeeper before Sirat Jahan Swapna wrapped up the victory in the 76th minute.

The Bangladesh team will play their fifth and final match against China women's U-14 side, against whom they once lost 1-0 before playing out a goalless draw.



Didarul Alam (R), more popularly known as Didar Boli, emerged as the winner for the 11th and perhaps the final time in his storied career in the 108th edition of the Jabbarer Boli Khela held at the Laldighi Maidan in Chittagong yesterday.

PHOTO: ANURUP KANTI DAS

Didar wins 11th title

SHAHADAT HOSSAIN from Chittagong

Wrestling for what he said would be the final time, Didarul Alam exacted revenge by defeating last year's champion Mohammad Shamsu Alam to clinch his 11th title in Jabbarer Boli Khela at Chittagong's Laldighi Maidan yesterday.

On April 14, Didar had said that he would not be taking part in any further Boli competition as there was a 'conspiracy' against him. However, that did not seem to deter him in the least as he took under 17 minutes to slam Shamsu forcefully onto the ground.

Didar had been bested in the final by Shamsu in the 107th edition of the tournament last year, when the match had reached a stalemate with neither being able to slam down the other after nearly half an hour. The judges were then tasked with selecting a winner based on the participants' tactics, and they awarded Shamsu the title.

Whether that was the conspiracy or not, Didar walked away with a trophy and Tk 20,000 this year, while Shamsu received Tk 15,000.

The century-old annual event was started in 1909 by businessman Abdul Jabbar Sowdagor to inspire youths to join the anti-British movement through the display of their physical strength. It has become a regular fixture in the sporting calendar since, with scores of wrestlers and spectators flocking to the event.

Before the start of the competition, there is a three-day fair where traders from different parts of the country set up stalls and sell their wares.

NSC's TALENT HUNT PROGRAMME Federations losing fund

SPORTS REPORTER

The National Sports Council (NSC) is sending Tk 1.52 crore fund for the talent hunt programme at grassroots level back to the finance ministry after four national federations -- athletics, swimming, weightlifting and tennis -- failed to implement their programmes within the stipulated timeframe.

The finance ministry, in the last fiscal year, sanctioned Tk 15.10 crore for the training programme on the basis of demands of different sports federations. NSC later allocated the fund to 31 disciplines in four instalments but those four federations could not continue their programmes despite taking one or two instalments.

Bangladesh Athletics Federation failed to avail Tk 89.12 lakh out of Tk 1.11 crore as the then committee could only arrange the talent hunt programme in a few districts while failing to submit the expenditure of the first phase training, eventually losing its right to get the rest of the fund.

The swimming federation utilised Tk 31 lakh out of Tk 62.5 lakh in the ongoing talent hunt programme sponsored by the Bangladesh Navy but later the NSC disagreed to release the rest of money as the then general secretary Rafiz Uddin could not make the NSC official understand the concept of merging the two talent hunt

programmes.

With apparent internal dispute among the executive members at the time, Bangladesh Weightlifting Federation could utilise only one instalment and failed to avail the remaining fund of Tk 24.23 lakh while Bangladesh Tennis Federation failed to avail Tk 8.23 lakh.

While speaking about this issue, the new general secretaries of all four federations said that they were not in charge during that time but tried their best to release the rest of the fund after taking over.

"Tk 15.10 crore of the talent hunt programme was supposed to be spent by July last year but we were given six more months to complete it. Out of 31, four federations, athletics, swimming, weightlifting and tennis could not use their full allocation within the timeframe, so a portion of training budget is going back," Badal Roy, the chief coordinator of the talent hunt programme and also the treasurer of NSC, said yesterday.

Roy added that 25 federations have already completed their talent hunt programme while football and shooting have yet to complete their final phase of training. He also added that shooting is expected to complete the programme by April 30 but football is yet to begin the final phase despite selecting 65 footballers from grassroots level.

Kamran out; Umar recalled

AFP, Lahore.



Pakistan's selectors Tuesday dropped opener Kamran Akmal from the 15-man squad for the Champions Trophy to be held in England in June but recalled his younger brother Umar. 35-year-old Kamran was part of Pakistan's squad which won a three-match one-day series 2-1 in the West Indies earlier this month but managed scores of 47, 21 and nought.

The four-member selection committee headed by former captain Inzamamul Haq included Umar in the squad after being dropped for the West Indies series following failed fitness tests.

Former one-day captain Azhar Ali returned to the squad following his absence in the Caribbean limited over series.

Inzamam said the squad was selected keeping in mind English conditions.

"Ali is making a comeback in the team after looking at his good track record in English conditions, while Umar also returns after considerable improvement in his fitness," said Inzamam.

Sarfraz Ahmed will lead the squad after replacing Ali as captain for the West Indies tour.

Pakistan will play arch-rivals and defending champions India in their first Group B match at Birmingham on June 4 followed by matches against South Africa (June 7 in Birmingham) and Sri Lanka (June 12 in Cardiff).

Group A comprises of hosts England, Australia, New Zealand and Bangladesh.

The top two teams from each group will qualify for the semifinals.

SQUAD: Sarfraz Ahmed (captain), Azhar Ali, Ahmed Shehzad, Mohammad Hafeez, Babar Azam, Shoaib Malik, Umar Akmal, Fakhar Zaman, Imad Wasim, Hasan Ali, Fahim Ashraf, Wahab Riaz, Mohammad Amir, Junaid Khan, Shadab Khan.



UMAR AKMAL

INDEPENDENCE DAY KABADDI

Forces teams in semifinals

SPORTS REPORTER

Bangladesh Navy, Border Guard Bangladesh (BGB), Bangladesh Army and Bangladesh Police moved into the semifinals of the Bashundhara Presents Independence Day Kabaddi tournament at the Shaheed Suhrawardi Indoor Stadium yesterday.

Bangladesh Navy beat Barisal 49-24 to emerge group A champions while Bangladesh Army handed a massive 106-32 defeat to Dinajpur to finish Group B runners-up behind Bangladesh Police, who were declared winners after Bangladesh Air Force refused to play at one stage in protest of a referee's decision. Police were leading the match 9-7 at that time.

BGB finished as Group A runners-up despite finishing second along with Bangladesh Jail, who beat Fire Service 48-11. Both BGB and Bangladesh Jail earned five points each but the former had a better goal difference.

Bangladesh Navy will play against Bangladesh Army in one of the semifinals today while Bangladesh Police will take on BGB in the other semifinal.

'Spurs won't stop believing'

AFP, London



Hugo Lloris insists Tottenham still believe they can

win the Premier League despite the shattering blow of their FA Cup semi-final defeat against title rivals Chelsea.

Mauricio Pochettino's side left Wembley broken hearted on Saturday after dominating for long periods before conceding two late goals in a dramatic 4-2 loss.

The psychological damage inflicted on Tottenham's players can't be underestimated and they have little time to recover as the title race heats up this week.

Second placed Tottenham are four points behind Chelsea, but the leaders can extend the gap to seven if they beat Southampton at Stamford Bridge on Tuesday before Pochettino's men travel to in-form Crystal Palace on Wednesday.

While Lloris acknowledged Chelsea now have renewed confidence they can hold off Tottenham's challenge in the final six games of the season, the France goalkeeper is convinced his club won't surrender without a fight.

"We know Chelsea have an advantage but we need to believe until the end," Lloris said.

"We knew before that this game can have maybe an impact for the rest of the season.

"But in football you need to believe because everything is possible and we don't know what will happen in the next few weeks.

"They are human and that's the case for us. The only thing that we can do is keep working hard, keep believing and playing the same way that we play in the last few weeks."

Losing at Wembley capped a miserable few days for Tottenham after the club was rocked by the sudden death of their Under-23 coach Ugo Ehiogu earlier in the week.

Harry Kane, who scored Tottenham's first equaliser on Saturday, revealed his team have dedicated their title chase to former England defender Ehiogu.

"Of course the last couple of days have been tough," Kane said.

"Ugo was a great character around the training ground, it was just shocking news to be honest.

"Of course we'll do everything we can to win the league for him."

To have a chance of honouring Ehiogu with the club's first title since 1961, Tottenham need to extend their current seven-game winning streak in the league.

Kane knows the pressure is on and

there was a hint of frustration in his voice as he tried to deliver a call to arms ahead of the trip to Selhurst Park.

"It's hard to say what effect it will have. Of course we wanted to win and keep our momentum going but it didn't happen," Kane said.

"There's nothing we can do now. We can't control what Chelsea do, if it gives them more momentum, it gives them more momentum. We've just got to concentrate on our game.

"We've got six very difficult games home and away so we'll do everything we can to get as high up the league as we can."

Deep in relegation trouble when Sam Allardyce took charge in December, Palace have climbed seven points clear of the bottom three thanks to a series of shock wins.

After beating Chelsea and Arsenal, Sunday's 2-1 win at Liverpool was Palace's latest scalp, but Eagles boss Allardyce wants his team to keep their foot on the gas against Tottenham because he doesn't believe they are safe yet.

"Thirty eight points has been the target to be safe for a long time but we're not mathematically safe yet," he said.

"Five games to go, we need to pick up as many points as we can.

"Then when we are safe we will have a little celebration."

U-18 NAT'L FOOTBALL

BKSP outplay Dhaka

SPORTS REPORTER

BKSP registered a 4-2 goal win over Dhaka in the U-18 National Football Championship at the Bangabandhu National Stadium yesterday.

Meraj Hossain struck a brace while Rashedul Islam and Aminul Haque netted one goal apiece for the country's lone sports institute while Saif Shahriar and Emon Mollah scored one apiece for Dhaka.

In the day's other match, Rajshahi came from behind to beat Rangpur 2-1, with Sarker Mahmud and Samabuddin striking one goal each in the second half after Shohag Babu had put Rangpur ahead in the first half.

Bale sidelined

AFP, Madrid

Gareth Bale could miss the rest of Real Madrid's season after suffering the latest in a series of calf injuries since he joined the Spanish giants four years ago.

Bale hobbled off just 38 minutes into Madrid's 3-2 El Clasico defeat to Barcelona on Sunday on his return.

"After the tests carried out today to our player Gareth Bale... he has been diagnosed with a grade two injury in the calf of his left leg," Madrid said.



ILIE NASTASE

held in Cluj, Romania at the weekend.

Various press reported her as having said Nastase "says things that he doesn't really mean", adding that "everybody in Romania loves Ilie because he is Ilie".

Despite being kicked out of the Fed Cup tie, Nastase had blatantly ignored the ban on Sunday and walked into the VIP area at the venue in Constanta, before being asked to leave by the Romanian Tennis Federation president.

His bizarre behaviour did not stop there, though, as Keothavong revealed he had sent her flowers on Sunday in a peace-making gesture.

AFP, Bucharest



Pregnant star Serena Williams and gymnastics great Nadia Comaneci blasted tennis legend Ilie Nastase for making "racist", "sexist" and "offensive" comments during the Fed Cup tie between Romania and Britain at the weekend.

Romanian Fed Cup captain Nastase has been suspended by the International Tennis Federation (ITF) over his foul-mouthed and abusive behaviour during the tie, from which he was ejected.

On Friday, he had made a controversial racial slur over Williams's unborn baby while also reportedly propositioning the married and pregnant British captain Anne Keothavong.

"It disappoints me to know we live in a society where people like Ilie Nastase can make such racist comments towards myself and unborn child, and sexist comments against my peers," said the 23-time Grand Slam winner.

Nastase was overheard by a journalist commenting on Williams's unborn child -- who will be mixed race as her fiancé is white -- on Friday, saying: "Let's see what colour it has. Chocolate with milk?"

On Saturday, the 70-year-old former world number one and two-time Grand Slam winner was kicked out of the tie after swearing at the umpire, Keothavong and British number one player Johanna Konta -- calling the latter two "fucking bitches".

"You may shoot me with your words... you may try to kill me with your hatefulness, but still like air, I rise," continued the 35-year-old Williams, a four-time Olympic gold medalist.