

MOYES CHARGED OVER 'SLAP' COMMENT

Sunderland manager David Moyes has been charged after suggesting to a female reporter she might "get a slap", England's Football Association announced on Wednesday. Moyes, 54, made the remark, for which he has apologised, to BBC reporter Vicki Sparks following Sunderland's 0-0 draw with Burnley in the Premier League on March 18. "David Moyes has been charged in relation to comments made after the game against Burnley on 18 March 2017," the FA said in a statement. "It is alleged the Sunderland manager's remarks were improper and/or threatening and/or brought the game into disrepute." Moyes, the former Manchester United manager, has until Wednesday next week to respond to the charge. Should he admit the charge or be found guilty, he is likely to be fined and could be asked to attend an education course.



—AFP

Tigers en route to Sussex

SPORTS REPORTER



The Bangladesh national cricket team departed for Sussex late last night to begin their preparatory camp for the Champions Trophy. They left at around 1:00am yesterday from the Hazrat Shahjalal International Airport on an Emirates flight.

After spending a couple of weeks in Sussex, the Tigers will then go to Ireland to take part in a tri-nation series including New Zealand. They will play four matches there. The tri-nation competition does not have a final and the team with the most number of wins will end up winning the league.

After the Ireland series, they will travel to England to take part in the Champions Trophy. Prior to the start of the competition, they are scheduled to play warm-up games against India and Pakistan. The Tigers have been placed in a difficult group alongside Australia, New Zealand and hosts England. They will be part of the tournament opener with a game against the hosts on June 1.

An 18-member squad that left for the tour last night will take part in the camp and then go to Ireland for the tri-nation series. However, 15 players have been selected for the Champions Trophy. The three players who are in the squad for the Ireland series but not the Champions Trophy squad are Nasir Hossain, Nurul Hasan and Subashis Roy. While Nasir and Subashis will return from the United Kingdom after the Ireland series, Nurul will stay with the 15-member squad as a back-up wicketkeeper. He will be taken into the squad in case Mushfiqur Rahim gets injured.



Bangladesh Test skipper Mushfiqur Rahim arrived at the airport with the rest of the Tigers ahead of their departure for Sussex yesterday night. (INSET) Bangladesh ODI skipper Mashrafe Bin Mortaza arrived almost half-an-hour after the rest of the team, but he was still greeted by throngs of fans and the media.

PHOTOS: STAR

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:

Harbhajan slams 'racist' pilot

Former India off-spinner Harbhajan Singh brings to attention an incident of alleged racism from a Jet Airways pilot which took place on April 3, reports India Today.



Federations ask BOA for long-term training

Bangladesh's sports federations urged the Bangladesh Olympic Association (BOA) to arrange long-term training for athletes to take the country's sports forward at a view-exchange meeting yesterday.



Neymar undergoes 'cupping therapy'

A picture posted on his Instagram shows Barcelona star Neymar undergoing the mythical 'cupping therapy'.



Conte lauds Chelsea after Southampton win

Chelsea manager Antonio Conte said his side had taken "a big psychological step" after they defeated Southampton to move seven points clear at the top of the English Premier League circuit.



Sharapova to know French Open wildcard fate on May 16

Maria Sharapova will know on May 16 if she will be granted a wild card invitation for the French Open, the organisers of the May 28-June 11 grand slam tournament said on Wednesday.



Amsterdam Arena to be named after Cruyff

Amsterdam Arena is to be renamed after late Dutch great Johan Cruyff, according to a statement on the stadium's official website.



Make-or-break derby Jose and Pep resume hostilities today

AFP, London



Manchester United manager Jose Mourinho has an opportunity to score a seismic victory over his old foe Pep Guardiola when his side visit misfiring Manchester City on Thursday. Guardiola oversaw a one-sided 2-1 win when he and Mourinho resumed hostilities in September -- each at the helm of a new club -- and was generally felt to have made a bigger impact than the Portuguese in the season's early months.

But having been condemned to a trophy-free first season at City by Sunday's FA Cup semifinal loss to Arsenal, Guardiola will lose his hold on a top-four place if United prevail at the Etihad Stadium.

"It is going to be the game of the season," predicted United's Spanish midfielder Ander Herrera.

"We are one point behind them. If we win we have the chance to finish in the top four. If they win, it is going to be very difficult.

"Is it make-or-break? Probably. Both teams are in a good moment so if one of us wins the game we are not going to lose a lot of games or make mistakes after that. Us or them. It is going to be key."

Mourinho, Guardiola's bete noire during their time in Spain, has played down Herrera's remarks, telling Sky Sports: "He says that because I always say that about the next match."

But the United manager will know that victory would give United the edge over City in the quest for Champions League qualification. United have struggled for fluency this

season, drawing no fewer than 12 games, and spent four months grimly locked in sixth place in the table.

As the days grow longer, however, the prospects of a successful end to the season appear to be getting brighter.

United have already won the League Cup, face Celta Vigo in the semi-finals of the Europa League and showed in their stunning 2-0 ambush of league leaders Chelsea that they are a match for anyone.

Avoid defeat on Thursday and they will equal the club's record for the longest unbeaten run in a top-flight season -- a 24-game sequence enjoyed in 2010-11 by a United team who finished as champions.

Fatigue aside, the only other dark cloud on United's horizon is injuries.

Marcos Rojo and top scorer Zlatan Ibrahimovic have both been ruled out for the rest of the season with knee ligament damage, while Paul Pogba was forced off during Sunday's 2-0 win at Burnley.

Despite Mourinho's entreaties for them to play through the pain barrier, centre-backs Chris Smalling and Phil Jones are both expected to miss out again, along with Juan Mata.

POGBA OUT OF MATCH Mourinho confirmed the news that many United fans feared, saying that Pogba would miss out on the derby due to the injury he picked up against Burnley.

"We go with what we have, we fight with what we have," Mourinho said when asked about the injuries in his squad at the pre-match press conference. "I trust the boys and we go with everything we have and we go until the last second of the season. The boys are fighters and we go."

Video refs to be used: Infantino

AFP, Santiago



FIFA president Gianni Infantino confirmed Wednesday that video assistant referees will be used at next year's World Cup in Russia for the first time.

"We will use video refereeing at the 2018 World Cup because we've had nothing but positive results so far," he said at a congress of the South American Football Confederation in Santiago, Chile.

"In 2017, when everyone in the stadium or at home can see within seconds if the referee made a mistake, we can't have a situation where the only one who can't see it is the referee."

Video assistance was introduced to support referees with "game-changing" decisions for the first time in a FIFA competition at the Club World Cup in Japan in December.

The four areas covered by the video replay official were goals, penalties, red cards and cases of mistaken identity.

Infantino had already said he wanted video refereeing for the next World Cup, but that "little hiccups" would have to be worked out first. That included slow decision-making by video assistant referees, he said at a meeting of the International Football Association Board in March. But that is only a matter of training, he said at the time.

"The referees... will be able to take decisions much faster when they use it more often," he said.

CONMEBOL said Wednesday it was considering ways of boosting attendance at the 2019 Copa America, which will take place that year in Brazil. Proposals include raising the number of competing countries to 16, CONMEBOL's vice-president Arturo Salah said. It has also been suggested that European countries be invited to take part.

"The Copa America with European teams would be like a World Cup. That is a discussion for another time," Infantino said.

INDEPENDENCE DAY KABADDI Navy, BGB into final

SPORTS REPORTER

Bangladesh Navy and Border Guard Bangladesh (BGB) moved into the final of Bashundhara Presents Independence Cup Kabaddi at the Suhrawardi Indoor Stadium in Mirpur yesterday.

Bangladesh Navy defeated Bangladesh Army 36-26, while BGB thrashed Bangladesh Police 29-15.

The final will take place today at the same venue at 6:00pm.

U-18 NAT'L FOOTBALL Ctg beat Satkhira

SPORTS REPORTER

Chittagong notched up a 3-1 win over Satkhira in the Walton U-18 National Football Championship at the Bangabandhu National Stadium yesterday.

Atiqur Rahman struck a brace, scoring in the 41st and 56th minutes, after Jamir Uddin had put the port city outfit ahead in the 31st minute.

Barca hit Osasuna for 7

AFP, Barcelona



Lionel Messi rewarded a homage by Barcelona fans with two more goals as they thrashed Osasuna 7-1 to move three points clear of Real Madrid at the top of La Liga.

The much-criticised Andre Gomes and Paco Alcacer also bagged doubles, whilst Javier Mascherano scored his first Barca goal in seven years with the club from the penalty spot.

Madrid have two games in hand and can move back level on points with victory at Deportivo la Coruna later on Wednesday.

Osasuna remain rock-bottom and will be relegated if Leganes beat Las Palmas on Wednesday.

Messi's brilliance against Madrid at the weekend El Clasico kept Barca in the title race as he netted his 500th Barca goal with the last kick of the game to hand the Catalans a 3-2 win.

A huge "Thanks Leo" banner was raised before kick-off at the Camp Nou, whilst many fans imitated Messi's goal celebration by raising Barca shirts with Messi's name on the back in the 10th minute.

The five-time World Player of the Year responded by opening the scoring two minutes later as he pounced on an error in the Osasuna defence to stroll through on goal and lift the ball over the advancing Salvatore Sirigu.

Gomes has been the scapegoat for many of Barca's most disappointing defeats this season.

But the Portuguese had arguably his best night in a Barca shirt as he drilled home Ivan Rakitic's cross to make it 2-0 on the half hour.

Marc-Andre ter Stegen was Barca's other hero from the weekend with a string of stunning saves.

However, the German international was caught out by Roberto Torres's free-kick which brought Osasuna back into the game three minutes into the second half.

Barca, though, simply went through the gears with a four-goal burst in 10

devastating minutes. Firstly, Gomes slotted home his second of the night after Gerard Pique's initial effort came back off the post.

Messi then curled in his 49th goal in 47 appearances this season from the edge of the area.

And the Argentine instantly made way for 19-year-old Carles Aleña to keep him fresh for Saturday's Catalan derby at Espanyol.

Alcacer then finished on the stretch for Barca's fifth.

And when Denis Suarez was felled in the area seconds later the cry went round the Camp Nou for Mascherano to take the spot-kick.

Rakitic obliged by stepping aside to let the Argentine take it and he smashed the ball into the roof of the net for his first goal in 319 Barca appearances.

Alcacer rounded off the scoring four minutes from time when he latched onto Suarez's fine through ball to round Sirigu and slot into an empty net.



Barcelona star Lionel Messi initiated the carnage against Osasuna at the Nou Camp yesterday, scoring the opening goal before adding a second, as Barca kept the pressure on Real Madrid.

PHOTO: REUTERS

U-16 women trounce China

SPORTS REPORTER



The Bangladesh Under-16 women's team wrapped up their tour of China with a comfortable 3-1 win over the China Under-14 women's team in their fifth and final match yesterday.

The win means that Bangladesh have posted three victories in their five practice matches. They won their two matches against Shaanxi Province Under-15 and one against China U-14, who had beaten Bangladesh 1-0 in the visitors' first match before playing out a draw in the third match of Bangladesh's tour.

Sirat Jahan Swapna scored the opener before doubling the visitors' lead in the 23rd minute. Monica Chakma ensured their third win by scoring three minutes from time.

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