

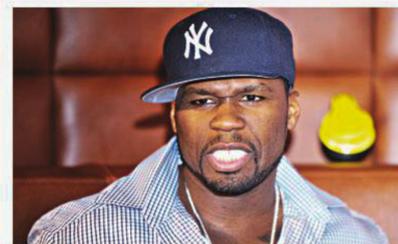
DHAKA PREMIER LEAGUE
Time: 9:00am
Kalabagan KC v Gazi Group
Venue: KSOAS
Mohammedan v Brothers Union
Venue: BKSP-3
Prime Bank v Sk Jamal

Venue: BKSP-4
FEDERATION CUP
Arambagh v Ctg Abahani
Time: 5:30pm
Venue: Bangabandhu National Stadium

MONACO GET 50 CENT REWARD

Monaco will get 50 Cent as reward for their "excellent" season, with the American rap star giving a concert to the club who could be crowned Ligue 1 champions on Wednesday. The free concert on Sunday is reserved for players and staff and Monaco residents, the club said on Wednesday. Monaco lead reigning champions Paris Saint Germain by three points and will wrap up the French championship if they win or draw against Saint Etienne. Monaco said 50 Cent had been booked "to celebrate the excellent results by (captain Radamel) Falcao's teammates".

—AFP



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:

Murray thumped by Fognini

Defending champion and world number one Andy Murray was swept aside by home favourite Fabio Fognini at the Italian Open on Tuesday, being completely outplayed in a 6-2 6-4 defeat.



India confirm WI tour after Champions Trophy

India will embark on a limited-overs tour of West Indies next month, soon after the Champions Trophy, their cricket boards have announced.



Fizz is the X-factor for Bangladesh

Former Australian cricketer Mike Hussey acknowledged Bangladesh's left-arm pacer Mustafizur Rahman as the x-factor for the Tigers during the upcoming Champions Trophy in England, which will begin from June 1.



Arsenal players keen on Sanchez stay

Arsenal players want Alexis Sanchez to stay at the club next season, defender Laurent Koscielny has said, as speculation continues to swirl about the Chilean international's future.



Zidane insists Madrid aren't taking La Liga triumph for granted

Zinedine Zidane insisted his Real Madrid stars don't feel like champions yet, as his side close in on a potential double of the La Liga and Champions League.



Dhaka Education Board players try to foil an attack from Bangladesh Army during their semifinal fixture of the National Hockey Championship at the Maulana Bhasani Hockey Stadium yesterday.

PHOTO: COLLECTED

Army, Navy into final

SPORTS REPORTER



Bangladesh Army and Bangladesh Navy set up a final clash in the 31st ATN Bangla National Hockey Championship after coming out on top in their respective semifinals at the Maulana Bhasani Hockey Stadium yesterday.

Army eased past Dhaka District 4-0 in the first semifinal, with Shafikul Islam scoring twice while Pushkor Khisha Mimo and Manoj Babu scored a goal apiece.

The second semifinal, however, proved to be a hum-dinger as Navy edged Dhaka Education Board (DEB), the surprise package of the competition, 4-3.

DEB took the lead in the eighth minute through a penalty corner from Promod Dewan before Shawon Sheikh doubled the margin 14 minutes later.

However, Navy hit back in the 25th minute through national team skipper Rasel Mahmud Jimmy. Moinul Islam Koushik scored the equaliser in the 46th minute before Jimmy got his second to give his side the lead two minutes later and Ripon Kumar made it 4-2 on the hour-mark.

Prince Lal Samanta reduced the margin in the 67th minute but DEB could not find the equaliser.

The final between Army and Navy will take place at 3:15pm today after the third place decider between the two losing semifinalists at 11:00am.

Pep eyeing third place

AFP, Manchester



Pep Guardiola said Manchester City's home form must improve next season if they are to challenge for honours after they beat West Bromwich Albion in their last home game.

Guardiola's first season in English football will end at Watford on Sunday with the Catalan failing to win silverware for the first time in his stellar managerial career.

But Tuesday's 3-1 victory over West Brom should be enough to guarantee a top-four finish -- and a place in next season's Champions League -- while a win at Watford will assure City of advancing directly to the competition proper.

"I will not say fourth position is done, but Arsenal have to win by five or six against Everton and my good friend Ronald Koeman," City manager Guardiola told reporters at the Etihad Stadium.

"We are there and we are going to travel to London to try and finish third and go direct to the Champions League. I'm happy it's in our hands to finish third.

"This club had not played in Europe for 30 years. Now we are there every year, but we have to try and be better next season."

However, City will need to improve their form at the Etihad, where despite ending the season with three straight victories, they have collected just 11 wins from 19 games.

"Our home season was not good," said Guardiola. "We finished the last three games with good performances,

but it was not good. "That was the reason we didn't fight (for the title) until the end of the season. We lost a lot of points, but this was a perfect night, especially for Pablo."

Guardiola was referring to Argentinian defender Pablo Zabaleta, who played his last home game for the club prior to leaving as a free agent.

"It was an emotional night, for his family, for the people in the crowd," said Guardiola.

"I saw many people crying and they are realising the impact Pablo had on the club.

"He helped build something special and he deserved absolutely everything and the performance was good, but it was a resume of our season.

"I don't know how many chances we had and we didn't score many goals.

They had one chance and scored." Supported by his wife, Christel, and son, Asier, Zabaleta was given an emotional farewell by teammates and City supporters after the game, with all keen to show their appreciation for his nine eventful years as a City player.

"As a football player and as a football fan it was a dream to come to the Premier League," Zabaleta said in an on-pitch address to fans.

"I said to my girlfriend, now my wife, 'Let me go to Manchester. I will enjoy it. It will be only for three or four years.' So I'll have to say sorry -- it's been nine years!"

First-half goals from Gabriel Jesus and Kevin De Bruyne put City in control before Yaya Toure added a third and Hal Robson-Kanu claimed Albion's late consolation.



Manchester City defender Pablo Zabaleta is thrown in the air by his teammates as they pay him tribute for his final appearance at the Etihad Stadium at the end of their Premier League match against West Bromwich Albion on Tuesday.

PHOTO: AFP

Rahmatganj, Brothers in quarterfinals

SPORTS REPORTER

Brothers Union joined Rahmatganj Muslim Friends Society in the last eight of the Walton Federation Cup after the two sides played out a 0-0 draw in the lone fixture of Group D at the Bangabandhu National Stadium yesterday.

With Rahmatganj already through to the quarterfinals following their 3-0 victory against Team BJMC in their first match, and Brothers Union having drawn their first match against Team BJMC, the fate of the other qualifier from this group hinged on this match.

And a draw seemingly suited both sides as Rahmatganj finished top of the group and Brothers became runners-up.

The match, as expected, proved to be a cagey affair with neither team really going for the jugular and settling for a point apiece in the end.

ITF ASIAN U-12 TENNIS BD teams in semis

SPORTS REPORTER

Both Bangladesh boys' and girls' teams moved into the semifinals of the ITF Asian Under-12 Tennis Team Competition in Nepal yesterday, said a press release from Bangladesh Tennis Federation.

The Bangladesh boys' team beat Nepal, Sri Lanka and Pakistan to emerge as group champions and set a semifinal bout against Bhutan, to be played today.

The Bangladesh girls' team, meanwhile, set up a semifinal clash against India after winning against Bhutan and losing against India in the group stages.

Persepolis to play in empty stadium

AFP, Kuala Lumpur

Iran's Persepolis will play Qatar's Lekhwiya in an empty stadium owing to a repeat of fan misconduct, the Asian football's governing body said Wednesday.

The Asian Football Confederation (AFC) said the Champions League match will be played on May 23 at Azadi Stadium in Tehran.

The AFC punished Persepolis after fans lit a flare during a match against United Arab Emirates's Al Wahda on May 8.



Sharapova vows to rise again

AFP, Paris



Maria Sharapova vowed to "rise up again" on Wednesday after she was refused a wildcard for the French Open following her 15-month ban for doping.

The Russian former world number one also earned the backing of the head of women's tennis, a day after the French tennis federation's announcement that it would not grant her a wildcard for the event she won in 2012 and 2014.

"If this is what it takes to rise up again, then I am in it all the way, everyday," Sharapova wrote on Twitter, in her first remarks on her snub.

"No words, games, or actions will ever stop me from reaching my own dreams. And I have many."

The five-time Grand Slam champion, 30, was banned for two years for using meldonium, with the penalty later reduced by the Court of Arbitration for Sport (CAS), which ruled she was not an intentional doper.

After the ban expired on April 26 she returned to competition at the Stuttgart Open, reaching the semifinals.

Abahani's slim hopes end

SPORTS REPORTER



Abahani's slim hopes of an unlikely passage to the final round of the AFC Cup were extinguished after a 2-0 defeat at the hands of Maziya Sports and Recreation Club in Male yesterday.

The 2-0 defeat, an identical margin of defeat of their home leg fixture against the Maldivian giants, means Abahani collected only three points from five matches and remain firmly on the bottom of the group.

Having lost the first three matches in their continental campaign, Abahani rekindled hopes of staying in the race with a 2-0 win over table-toppers Bengaluru FC in Dhaka last month. But yesterday's defeat means Drago Mamic's charges are left with the academic formality of hosting Mohun Bagan in the group's last fixture on May 31.

The Bangladesh Premier League champions kept the hosts at bay in the first half at the Male National Stadium, but conceded the opening goal in the 59th minute when midfielder Mohamed Umair found the top corner of the net to the goalkeeper's right from a free-kick.

The hosts kept the charge on the visitors and wrapped up the victory, with Alexander Rakic finding the back of the net with a left-footed shot from inside the box.

CORPORATE BOOKING
FANTASY KINGDOM COMPLEX will be reserved on 18th May, 2017 (Thursday) for HOP LUN's Corporate Booking.
From 19th May, 2017 (Friday) FANTASY KINGDOM COMPLEX will remain open for all.
FANTASY KINGDOM CONCORD WATER KINGDOM CONCORD
Contact: 01914602965, 01913531381

China probes Hulk incident

AFP, Shanghai



China's football authority said Wednesday it is investigating Brazilian star Hulk's alleged altercation with a rival club's staffer, but it saw "no malicious intent" in a separate racially-charged row involving Argentina's Ezequiel Lavezzi.

Both South American players, who are among the growing crop of highly paid foreign stars in China's cash-rich Super League, have been embroiled in race-related incidents in recent weeks.

The Chinese Football Association said its disciplinary committee held a hearing last Friday with Hulk, who plays for Shanghai SIPG, and the assistant coach of Guizhou Zhicheng.

The hearing came after Guizhou Zhicheng's then head coach Li Bing accused the muscular Brazilian of punching his assistant, Yu Ming, at half-time during SIPG's 3-0 victory earlier this month.

Li had suggested Hulk had a racial motive for the alleged attack, saying that the Brazilian star "cannot be here and despise Chinese people," though he later appeared to back off those comments.

Hulk and the Shanghai club have rejected the accusations.

CFA spokeswoman Huang Shiwei said in a statement that the association "has zero tolerance towards any behaviour that is not (in line with) sport ethics in the pitch, no matter who that person is. There is no exception."

News of the investigation comes a week after a CFA official, Li Peng, said there was "no evidence" that Hulk had violated any regulations.

But Li Bing, who remains Guizhou's general manager, said in his official Weibo microblog account that he would keep pursuing the charges even though his club said both sides "has reached agreement" in how to handle the incident.

Loew picks 7 debutants

AFP, Berlin



Germany's head coach Joachim Loew on Wednesday named seven uncapped players for next month's Confederations Cup in Russia as the injury-hit world champions unveiled an experimental squad.

Injury and illness had already sidelined World Cup-winners Mario Goetze, captain Manuel Neuer and Benedikt Hoewedes for the June 17-July 2 competition.

Midfielder Julian Weigl, 21, of Borussia Dortmund, was also ruled out after fracturing his ankle last Saturday.

As expected, Loew has reacted by naming an inexperienced 23-man squad -- none of whom are over 30 -- which he aims to blood a year before Germany launch their defence of the World Cup.

Only three of the squad - Matthias Ginter, Julian Draxler and Shkodran Mustafi -- won the 2014 World Cup and none of them played in the final.

Ajax winger Amin Younes, 23, is amongst the debutants, along with Hoffenheim's striker Sandro Wagner and midfielder Kerem Demirbay, 23, plus Hertha Berlin's deadball expert, defender Marvin Plattenhardt, 25.

At 29, burly forward Wagner is the oldest member of the youthful squad.

Premier League midfielders Liverpool's Emre Can, 23, and Manchester City's Leroy Sane, 21, have the chance to add to their handful of caps.

First-choice players like Thomas Mueller, Mats Hummels, Jerome Boateng (all Bayern

Munich), plus Real Madrid's Toni Kroos and Arsenal's Mesut Ozil are all left out to rest.

"The aim is to bring a few players up to world-class level, so that they can help us in crucial games. Then I'd be happy," explained Loew.

"I see the strain on players like Mesut Ozil, Toni Kroos and Mats Hummels, they play almost every three days in crucial weeks.

"That is emotionally extremely exhausting, not just physically."

There is no place for veteran striker Mario Gomez, who has scored 30 goals in 70 internationals, as he battles German league relegation with Wolfsburg.

SQUAD
GOALKEEPER
Bern Leno (Bayer Leverkusen), Marc-Andre Ter Stegen (Barcelona), Kevin Trapp (Paris St-Germain/FRA)
DEFENDERS
Matthias Ginter (Borussia Dortmund), Jonas Hector (Cologne), Benjamin Henrichs (Bayer Leverkusen), Joshua Kimmich (Bayern Munich), Shkodran Mustafi (Arsenal/ENG), Marvin Plattenhardt (Hertha Berlin), Antonio Ruediger (AS Roma/ITA), Niklas Sulele (Hoffenheim)
MIDFIELDERS
Julian Brandt (Bayer Leverkusen), Emre Can (Liverpool/ENG), Kerem Demirbay (Hoffenheim), Diego Demme (RB Leipzig), Julian Draxler (Paris St-Germain/FRA), Leon Goretzka (Schalke), Sebastian Rudy (Hoffenheim), Leroy Sane (Manchester City/ENG), Lars Stindl (Borussia Moenchengladbach), Amin Younes (Ajax/NED)
STRIKERS
Sandro Wagner (Hoffenheim), Timo Werner (RB Leipzig)