

PLAYERS BANNED FOR BITING

Henry Romero received a six-game ban and Darwin Ceren for three on Saturday for "anti-sporting" behavior in a CONCACAF Gold Cup match in which they bit US players. Los Cuscatlecos defender Romero bit Jozy Altidore on the back in El Salvador's 2-0 Gold Cup quarterfinal loss to the United States and also grabbed the US forward's nipple and twisted it. Midfielder Ceren, who plays for Major League Soccer's San Jose Earthquakes, bit Omar Gonzalez during the contest. CONCACAF's disciplinary committee announced the sanctions shortly before the United States' semifinal clash against Costa Rica kicked off on Saturday in Dallas. CONCACAF, which did not specify the biting incidents in their announcement, said the suspensions would affect only "official matches. El Salvador have already been eliminated from 2018 World Cup qualifying.

-AFP



FATULLAH SET TO MISS AUS GAME



(CLOCKWISE FROM L) Four of the five entrances to the Khan Shaheb Osman Ali Stadium in Fatullah are inaccessible due to water-logging, while the outer ground and areas around the main ground remain inundated whenever it rains. The employees there have made bamboo pathways to get into the ground.

SANAD SAHA from Narayanganj

An inspection team from Australia will be arriving in Dhaka tonight to work out the small details of its cricket team's tour to Bangladesh next month. The Aussies are scheduled to land in Dhaka on August 17 to play two Tests. They will also play a two-day practice game, which is at the moment scheduled to be held at the Khan Shaheb Osman Ali Stadium in Fatullah before the opening Test. But despite being a cricket ground of international standards, the 25,000-capacity venue that has played host to two Tests, 10 ODIs and four T20Is, is presently submerged. It is water-logged at the slightest hint of rain and with the monsoon in full swing there is little chance for the venue to host the Australia practice game. And as an alternative arrangement, the Bangladesh Cricket Board (BCB) is contemplating whether to shift the fixture from Fatullah to the BKSP in Savar. "Work is going on to pump out the water from the facility. I think by the time

Australia will be arriving here the water-logging issue will be solved. But we have also selected the BKSP as an alternate venue," BCB CEO Nizamuddin Chowdhury told The Daily Star last night. He however admitted that the water-logging issue was something which could not be solved immediately. "A team from BUET is working along with an NSC team for a long-term solution for an improved drainage system not only of the facility but also for surrounding areas," he said. A recent visit to the venue, which is about 17 kilometres from Dhaka, depicted a sorry state. Workers used as many as five pumps to remove water from different points of the facility, but the moment those pump stopped, water coming through the sewage system submerged the area, including the entrances to the venue. At the moment they could only remove the water from the pitch and part of the lush green main ground. Often the water-logging becomes so severe that employees have to use bamboo sticks to make walkways in order to move about the venue. The



The support staff have managed to protect most of the outer surface and the pitch in the main ground from water-logging.

PHOTO: STAR

rainwater also mixes with sewage and waste from nearby dying factories which results in black-coloured water, which gives off a pungent smell. "We live in the stadium's quarters. I have to take my children to school through this dirty water. Even the area

in front of the quarters is flooded. I have been seeing the water-logging in the field outside the stadium for the past few years, but it is worse here this time around," said Jahida Akhter, a resident of the quarter. "This time the water here is knee-deep.

Because of the water-logging in the DND dam, the water from manholes and sewers is seeping into the ground. And that water is contaminated," she added. Except for the main entrance to the venue -- which has also got an open playing surface, now looks like a big pond -- the other four entry points were inaccessible due to water-logging. "There are dying mills and garments factories half-a-kilometer away. The dirty water from these, combined with sewage from the Ramarbagh area and Lampara area, seep into the field from one side," said Shahid Ahmed, a local from the neighbouring Lampara area. "These drains are not very effective. If it rains for a few hours than the area becomes completely flooded, because of which the water-logging in the stadium occurs," he continued. "It is possible that the water-logging may decrease if new drains are installed or if the existing drains are cleaned quickly. The drainage system inside the stadium can also be changed so that the scope of the problem is lessened," observed Shahid. Saiful Alam, an employee of the

stadium, informed that they used five pumps simultaneously till June 21 to alleviate the problem. However, that did not resolve the issue. "Now only one of the pumps is working and it is getting inundated whenever it rains. There is no water on the main ground, but the outer ground is still flooded. I hope that will go away soon," he said with a hint of uncertainty. Experts however feel that the problem will persist unless the drainage system is improved in that area. When the stadium was built at the turn of the century, the surrounding area was mostly low-lying. But after more than a decade the areas surrounding the venue have seen an unplanned development that contributed to a flawed drainage system. "The ground in the surrounding areas have been elevated and that's why water from every conceivable channel enters the facility. It's not possible for a massive earth-filling, but if the drainage system is rearranged it can solve the water-logging of the stadium," said an expert from BUET preferring not to be named.

PHOTOS: SANAD SAHA

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:

**Messi, Suarez convince Neymar**  
Neymar Junior's transfer situation has taken the limelight during Barcelona's tour of the USA. Speculations are ripe and media reports claim that Neymar is rethinking the whole situation.  
**Ronaldo will stay for 2-3 years: Zidane**  
Cristiano Ronaldo will remain a Real Madrid player for "the next 2-3 years", coach Zinedine Zidane said Saturday, ending talk the Bernabeu superstar might depart for Manchester United.  
**De Gea guaranteed to stay: Jose**  
Jose Mourinho has given a "guarantee" that David De Gea will stay at Manchester United this season, despite the long-running saga over a potential move to Real Madrid.



Britain's Chris Froome triumphed in the Tour de France yet again and is one win away from the current record of five titles. PHOTO: AFP

Froome wins 4th title

AFP, Paris

Briton Chris Froome secured his fourth Tour de France title at the end of the 21st and final stage won by Dylan Groenewegen on Sunday and said it was a huge honour to be amongst the greats. Sky's Froome had previously won the 2013, 2015 and 2016 editions and sits fifth overall in the all-time list of Tour victors behind five-time winners Eddy Merckx, Jacques Anquetil, Bernard Hinault and Miguel Indurain. "It's a huge honour to be talked about in the same sentence as those guys with their place in the history of the Tour de France," 32-year-old Froome, who will aim to match them next year, told ITV4. "It is just a privilege to even be in the position to be going for that kind of record. Each time I've won the Tour it's so unique and so

different and it is such a different battle to get to this moment. "So they're all special in their own ways and this year I think will be remembered for being the closest and most hard-fought battle between the GC rivals." At the end of three weeks, 21 stages and more than 3,500km, Froome rolled over the line on the Champs Elysees in Paris with a broad grin alongside his Sky teammates, who wore a special kit for the occasion with their usual blue stripe replaced by a yellow one. It was Froome's closest Tour struggle yet as his final winning margin was less than a minute for the first time, Colombia's Rigoberto Uran finishing second at 54sec with Romain Bardet of France, the runner-up last year, third at 2min 20sec. The 103km final stage began with a nod to history in Montgeron, where the very first stage of the inaugural Tour in 1903 also began, at a leisurely pace.

Badal Roy returns home

SPORTS REPORTER

Legendary footballer Badal Roy, who suffered a brain haemorrhage last month, returned home last night following two successful operations at the Gleneagles Hospital and Medical Centre in Singapore. Roy's suffered the brain haemorrhage on June 5 and was taken to Singapore on June 7 with Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina instructing all arrangements to ensure the best treatment for Roy, who is also a vice president of Bangladesh Football Federation and also of Bangladesh Olympic Association. Prominent Neurosurgeon Timothy Lee conducted two operations on Roy on June 9 and 30 to remove blood clot from his brain. After his arrival in Dhaka last night, Roy was taken to his residence at Wari. "We are really happy to get back him in good physical condition," said Harunur Rashid, director of Abahani Ltd and the youth and sports secretary of Bangladesh Awami League. "His condition is improving even though he still needs time to return to normal life."

Minhaz wins rating chess title

SPORTS REPORTER

IM Minhaz Uddin Ahmed became unbeaten champion in the Category 'A' of the Saif Powertec 2nd International Rating Chess Tournament, which concluded yesterday. Minhaz earned seven points from nine games. GM Ziaur Rahman, who also secured seven points, had to be content with a runner-up finish due to having lost against Minhaz in their head-to-head tie. IM Abu Sufian Shakil became third while FM Taibur Rahman became fourth with 6.5 points each. GM Enamul Hossain Razib became fifth and FM Mohammad Fahad Rahman became sixth with six points each.

Neymar dazzles as Barca beat Juve

AFP, East Rutherford



Neymar gave Barcelona fans a dazzling reminder of what they could be about to lose on Saturday, scoring twice as the Spanish giants defeated Juventus 2-1 in a pre-season friendly. The 25-year-old Brazilian superstar is at the centre of frenzied speculation linking him to a world record 222-million-euro transfer to Paris Saint-Germain. However there was little to suggest that the charismatic striker is overwhelmed by the transfer saga as he produced a bewitching performance in front of a sell-out crowd at the MetLife Stadium in New Jersey. Mario Mandzukic might have given Juve the lead on 14 minutes but his header from a Stefano Sturaro cross went wide and the Italians were made to rue the miss

a minute later when Neymar fired the Catalans into the lead, playing a clever one-two with Paco Alcacer and drilling his finish past Gianluigi Buffon. Nine minutes later Neymar grabbed his second, picking his way through Juventus' defence before burying a shot beyond Buffon. Barcelona subdued off nine players at half-time, including Neymar and Messi. After the game, Barcelona coach Ernesto Valverde could only repeat his desire to keep the Brazilian. "We want Neymar to be with us," Valverde said. "We know his value on the pitch and what he brings to the locker room." Reports in Spain suggest that Barcelona's players have been doing everything they can to change the Brazilian's mind and have got him thinking about his future, something which over the past three days had seemingly looked to be in Paris.



Barcelona superstar Neymar shut out all the noise about his rumoured transfer to PSG as he put in a magical performance against Juventus in New Jersey on Saturday. PHOTO: COLLECTIVE