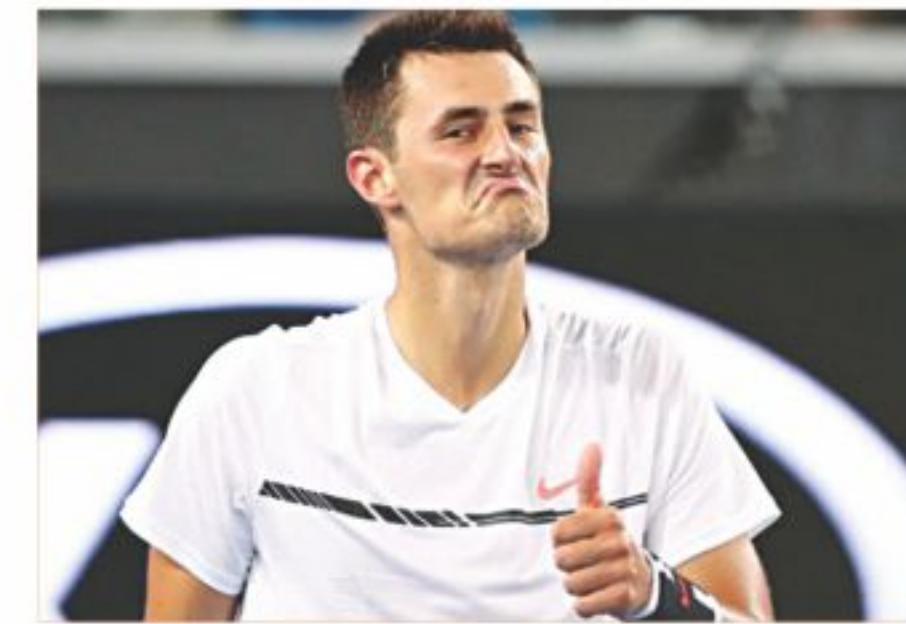


## TOMIC BOASTS OF 'NEVER REALLY TRYING'

Under-fire Australian tennis player Bernard Tomic has boasted of his "amazing" achievements in the sport and winning millions of dollars in prize money despite not really trying hard throughout his career. In a candid interview with Australian broadcaster The Seven Network, the 24-year-old also said he felt "trapped" in the sport. "Throughout my career I've given 100 percent. I've given also 30 percent," Tomic said in the television interview from Miami. "But if you balance it out, I think my career's been around 50 percent and I haven't really tried and I've achieved all this," Tomic said. "I never loved tennis. I am just going to go about it as a job. Wouldn't anyone want to take a job in a professional sport in one of the biggest sports in the world and only give 50, 60 percent and earn millions of dollars? I think everybody would take that," he opined.

-REUTERS



# Disappointed Ord urges youth development

SPORTS REPORTER

 Having completed the AFC U-23 Championship Qualifiers campaign with three defeats in as many matches, head coach Andrew Ord said Bangladesh are not anywhere near competitive level in international football and need to focus on youth development immediately.

The Australian coach made the statement after completing his first assignment in Palestine where the team conceded 13 goals and struck only once. Most of the goals Bangladesh conceded were due to mistakes of either the defenders or the goalkeeper.

"Unfortunately I would have to say at the moment Bangladesh is not anywhere near competitive at this level," Ord said in an interview by the Bangladesh Football Federation.

"The first match we were beaten mentally before we even kicked a ball due to previous results. Against Tajikistan it really showed giving 100% is not enough to get you over the line if you are not in professional physical condition.

"Lastly the improvements to the Palestine game were huge but two

goals were conceded from set pieces after we had dedicated a lot of training time to this area. Concentration and having the responsibility to do a job for the team are normal in international football but it's a demand that has never been placed on our players before," Ord said, summarising the disappointing campaign.

The 37-year-old coach was appar-



ently furious about the physical condition and the losing mentality of the players.

"It is not the federation's job to get the players fit. As a national team coach you need to prepare your team tactically in a short space of time not focus on players' ability to play 90 minutes. The way the players are training and the professionalism they are

exposed to is nowhere near acceptable and until we fix this, we will never be able to compete against strong opponents," Ord said.

"Even if we fix the physical and mental part of the game we can see from the games that under pressure technically bad habits get exposed and this can only truly be fixed by focusing properly in youth development which is a long term plan that needs to start immediately," opined the coach.

Ord also gave importance on having good number of footballers with basic skills.

"The pool of players is far too small. We need to put time, effort and resources into developing players properly which will not only improve the national team but make the clubs stronger then you get into a cycle that will benefit everyone.

"I think the players have a good attitude and want to learn. I also saw that they will give their best if you ask them. That is a good starting point if we can get things correct," concluded Ord, who is likely to act as an adviser to the Bangladesh U-19 team for the upcoming SAFF U-19 Championship and the AFC U-19 Championship Qualifiers.

The team is scheduled to return today.

## Golf's greats salute Spieth

REUTERS, London

Golf's greatest names hailed Jordan Spieth's dramatic triumph at the British Open at Royal Birkdale on Sunday as the new champion savoured his victory by swigging from the Claret Jug trophy.

Tiger Woods, Jack Nicklaus and Gary Player, the three surviving members of the 'grand slam club' who have won all four majors, saluted the 23-year-old American who will join them if he comes out on top at next month's US PGA Championship.

"Jordan, we are all so happy watching you win the greatest trophy in golf," nine-times major winner Player said in a social media address to the new champion.

"The example you showed to the young pros who will follow in your footsteps is one they will never forget," he continued.

Nicklaus, the record 18-times major winner, paid tribute to Spieth's "guts and determination" while Woods, who's won 14 major titles, posted on Twitter: "What an incredible way to come back and win."

# Neymar stays?



Barcelona fullback Gerard Pique (R) seems obstinate that Neymar will remain at Camp Nou as he posted a picture of himself with the Brazilian on Twitter on Sunday night, with the caption reading: 'He stays'.

PHOTO: COLLECTED

## STAR SPORT DESK



As the summer transfer window, a period wrought with rumours, ebbs towards its conclusion, one would expect the case to be similar with Neymar's transfer saga. However, the tale is yet to see more twists and turns as it shows no signs of letting down. Just Sunday, it seemed that the Brazilian's move to French giants Paris Saint Germain was inevitable.

On Monday though, it seemed like another case entirely as different media outlets reported that the Barcelona squad have apparently managed to change his mind, with Gerard Pique in particular, putting his foot down on social media and adamantly stating that Neymar will stay.

The Catalan star posted a Twitter image of himself with teammate Neymar on Sunday night, along with the message "Se queda," which translates as "he stays."

On the other hand, a source close to Neymar, when asked about the motives behind Pique's post, told ESPNFC that he had "no idea" why the Spain international shared the image.

Similarly, Spanish outlet Sport reported that teammates Lionel Messi and Luis Suarez managed to convince Neymar to remain at Camp Nou.

Meanwhile the Daily Mail and Manchester Evening News, citing a Spanish media outlet, reported that Real Madrid forward Cristiano Ronaldo is believed to have urged his foot down on social media and adamantly stating that Neymar will stay.

Sources said on Saturday that Neymar had told PSG he wants to move to the Parc des Princes and agreed to terms of contract.

The source said Neymar and his father, Neymar Sr., who has been in discussions with PSG's Qatari owners and sporting director Antero Henrique for the past few days, have agreed to a massive contract of at least four years which would possibly see the Brazilian star paid £500,000 per week.

The terms of the deal would see the 25-year-old earn about £30m a year after taxes and would also be given a signing bonus in excess of his net annual sum.

The Neymar saga looks set to serve up plenty more surprises before the transfer window slams shut on August 31.

Spanish giants for Manchester United.

The Real Madrid icon has a close relationship with Neymar due to their shared commitments with sponsorship giants Nike, and the Portuguese star is believed to have sent a message to his counterpart advising him on the situation.

As stated on Diariogol, Ronaldo sent a series of WhatsApp messages warning the 25-year-old about swapping La Liga for Ligue 1 and instead told him to wait for a move to United.

The title reports that Ronaldo has told Neymar it would be a mistake to leave the Catalan club, particularly to make a downward step to a smaller European side.

Neymar's future came under speculation amid reports that Paris Saint-Germain had agreed to activate his release clause of almost €220 million.

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Katie Ledecky of USA competes in the women's 1500m freestyle heats at the FINA World Championships in Budapest yesterday. Ledecky is targeting the event for her record 12th gold.

PHOTO: AFP

# Ledecky eyeing record 12th gold

AFP, Budapest

 Gold-medal machine Katie Ledecky cruised into the women's 1500m freestyle final from Monday's heats at the world aquatic championships to stay on course for an historic 12th world gold.

Ledecky was the fastest qualifier at 15 minutes, 47.54 seconds -- nearly 18 seconds ahead of the field -- to maintain her iron grip on the event.

"I feel good. I just wanted to have a good controlled easy swim and get a good lane for the final," said Ledecky.

The unstoppable 20-year-old already picked up two golds on Sunday night, winning the 400m title for the third championships in a row, then helping the United States win the 4x100m relay.

That left her level with Missy Franklin on a record 11 gold medals at world championships.

Ledecky is on course to win her third title -- of a possible six here -- in Tuesday's 1500m final which would make her the first woman to win 12 world championship golds.

Fresh from his 400m freestyle gold medal on Sunday, Sun Yang was the fastest through the men's 200m freestyle heats into Monday's semis, but admitted feeling jaded.

"I was a little tired, I didn't do my best in the heat, but I didn't have to," said the 25-year-old Chinese superstar.

Despite his fatigue, Sun clocked one minutes, 45.78 seconds with Britain's James Guy, the defending world champion, just 0.44secs back.

Guy is determined to make amends for a disappointing sixth in the 400m final.

"It's parked and we've done," he insisted.

"The 200m race felt so much better this morning, there was so much more control, just feel more relaxed."

Mack Horton, who Sun defeated in the 400m final, finished 11th and 1.19secs adrift.

"Obviously that was tough after yesterday, but with an evening and a bit more rest there should be a bit more," said Horton.

"It was always going to be tough backing up and trying to get into that semi, but I should be ok."

Katinka Hosszu, the Olympic champion, was the second fastest into the evening's 100m backstroke semifinals, just 0.18 seconds behind Canada's Kylie Masse.

Hosszu refused to speak to reporters after her heat.

Hungarian media reports claim she has pulled out of the semis to focus on the 200m individual medley final -- her strongest event -- which comes later on Monday night.

Australia's Emily Seebohm, who won the world title two years ago in Kazan, was third fastest at 0.33secs behind Masse.

In the men's 100m backstroke heats, both the Olympic champion, Ryan Murphy of the US, and Australia's Mitch Larkin, the defending world champion made it through to the evening's semis.

The strength of the women's 100m breaststroke field shone through in the heats with Olympic champion Lilly King of the USA the fastest in 1:05.20 mins.

But both the defending world champion Yuliya Efimova of Russia, the Olympic silver medallist in Rio, and 2012 Olympic champion Ruta Meilutyte were within a second of King.

Olympic bronze medallist Katie Meili of the US and Taylor McKeown, the 200m Commonwealth champion, were also in the top five.

Jewel took 1:03.55 minutes to finish his swim and became 45th among 46 participants. Jewel, whose best timing in 100m backstroke is 1:02.41 seconds, will compete in his second event -- the 50m backstroke -- on Saturday.

There is bad blood between King and Efimova, who served a 16-month doping ban until February 2015, then won the world title just five months later in Kazan.

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## Fornals pays own release clause

REUTERS, Madrid

Talented attacking midfielder Pablo Fornals paid a 12 million euros release clause himself to leave Malaga and join Villarreal on a five-year deal yesterday.

"Pablo Fornals has executed the payment of the clause of termination that linked him to the club," Malaga said on their website.

Malaga coach Michel Gonzalez was not happy about the transfer.

"Pablo leaves us, another one," he wrote on Twitter. "He said goodbye with his honesty and usual humanity: crying from sadness and not happiness. There must be a reason."

Jewel flops in Hungary

SPORTS REPORTER

Swimmer Jewel Ahmed finished second from bottom in the 100m backstroke event of FINA World Championships in Budapest, Hungary yesterday.

Jewel took 1:03.55 minutes to finish his swim and became 45th among 46 participants. Jewel, whose best timing in 100m backstroke is 1:02.41 seconds, will compete in his second event -- the 50m backstroke -- on Saturday.

# Phelps's epic fight with Great White

AGENCIES, Cape Town

"Exhilarating" -- that's how Michael Phelps described the experience of racing sharks for Discovery's Shark Week.

It was an event fans around the world were very excited to see: the legendary US swimmer taking on the most feared ocean predator.

Phelps, who has 23 Olympic gold medals to his name, was racing off the coast of Cape Town in South Africa, assisted by a 15-strong group of divers who swam underneath him to provide protection.

Viewers tuned in to the Discovery Channel on Sunday night to see Phelps pitted against three computer generated sharks -- a hammerhead, a reef shark and a great white.

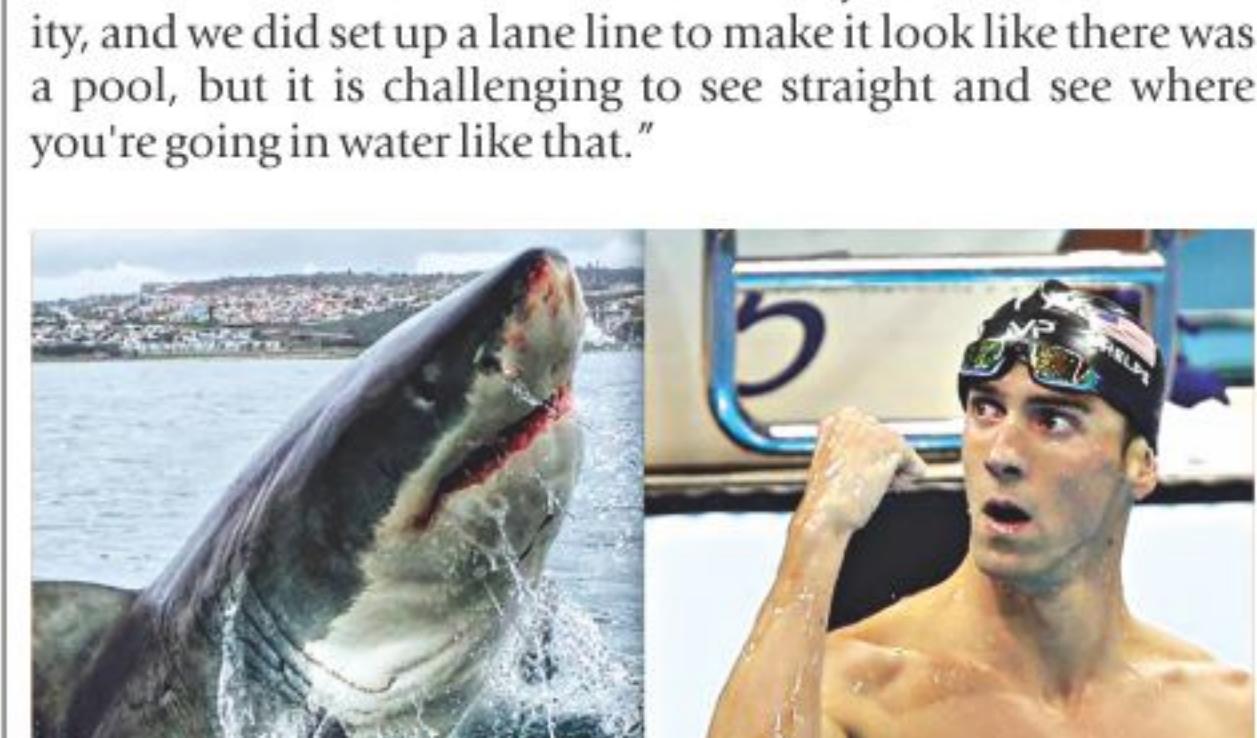
Given a specially-designed wetsuit as well as a fin to give him a fighting chance, Phelps reached a remarkable 12mph -- and did beat one of the sharks.

Phelps was beaten by the hammerhead shark and, perhaps not surprisingly given its average speed of 16mph, by the great white shark, which was two seconds faster over the 100m. However, he did beat the reef shark by .2 of a second.

The 32-year-old, who swam the stretch of open ocean in South Africa in 38.1 seconds to the great white shark's 36.1, jokingly tweeted that he wanted a rematch in different conditions.

"It was so exhilarating; this is a bucket list item. I was trying to prepare myself for the cold water because 55 degrees and 80 degrees are so different -- it is so much colder. And I'm somebody that really doesn't like cold water!"

"We raced 100 metres. It's hard when you have low visibility, and we did set up a lane line to make it look like there was a pool, but it is challenging to see straight and see where you're going in water like that."



## CONCACAF Gold Cup Jamaica stun Mexico, book final with USA

AFP, Los Angeles

Kemar Lawrence scored in the 88th minute to give Jamaica a shocking 1-0 upset of defending champion Mexico on Sunday in a CONCACAF Gold Cup semifinal match.

The 24-year-old fullback for Major League Soccer's New York Red Bulls expertly curled a left-footed free kick around the Mexico wall and just under the crossbar to deliver Jamaica a stunner at the Rose Bowl.

"The best way I could put it is the Biblical story -- David slew Goliath," Jamaica coach Theodore Whitmore said.

The Reggae Boyz advanced to face the host United States in Wednesday's championship match at Santa Clara, California. The US squad beat Costa Rica 2-0 in a Saturday semifinal.

Despite sending most of their best players to Russia for the Confederations Cup, the Mexicans saw the dismal result as a reason for soul searching and self-examination, acting manager Luis Pompilio Paez said.

"The football of Mexico has to rise from this fall," he said. "There will be an individual and collective analysis as well as self-criticism."