

What to WATCH

CHANNEL 9 & DSPORT

Nidahas Trophy

Sri Lanka v India

Live from 7:30pm

SONY SIX

South Africa v Australia

Second Test, Day Four

Live from 2:00pm

STAR SPORTS SELECT 2

ICC World Cup Qualifiers

West Indies v Netherlands

Live from 1:30pm

Werder Bremen v Koln

Live from 1:30am (Tuesday)

STAR SPORTS SELECT 1

English Premier League

Stoke City v Man City

Live from 2:00am (Tuesday)

DAY'S EVENT

Bangladesh Premier League

Time: 9:00am

Sheikh Jamal v Khelaghar SKS

Venue: SBNS

Legends of Rupganj v Kalabagan KC

Venue: BKSP-3

Brothers Union v Agrani Bank

Venue: KSOAS

Ariful, Summa shine on opening day

Barcelona ease past Malaga

SPORTS REPORTER



The Syed Nazrul Islam National Swimming Complex in Mirpur was not as crowded as is the case during age-group swimming championships, but there was certainly some enthusiasm among the 121 participating swimmers from eight divisions on the first day of the final phase of the inaugural Bangladesh Youth Games yesterday.

These games are believed to be the platform for talented athletes to be picked for future training and yesterday, the already-trained swimmers, who were unearthed through the 'search for the best swimmers' initiative, dominated the pool to share eight gold medals among them.

Approximately 20 swimmers from the long-term training under national coach Park Tae Gun are representing their respective divisions in 14 events -- seven for boys and seven for girls. There are also some BKSP students representing their respective divisions. However, the majority of the participants are raw and seemingly incapable of competing against the trained swimmers.

Ariful Islam of Kishorganj, a former BKSP student and national swimmer hogged the limelight on the first day by bagging three gold medals. Summa Akter of Jhenaidah, the younger sister of national swimmer Sonia Akter Tumpa, won two gold medals.



Jhenaidah's young swimmer Summa Akter bagged two gold medals on the opening day of the Bangladesh Youth Games at the Syed Nazrul Islam National Swimming Complex in Mirpur.

PHOTO: STAR

Both these swimmers are part of the long-term training camp, being run by the national swimming federation.

Also among the gold medals were Al Amin, Rupa Khaun and Khadiza Akter Bristy of Kushtia -- all of whom are part of the training camp.

Ariful, the national champion in 50m and 100m breaststroke events, is currently in training to take part in the upcoming Commonwealth Games in Australia. He easily outshone other participants in 50m breaststroke and 50m and 100m freestyle events. He has a great chance of adding two more gold medals today in the 200m freestyle and 100 breaststroke events.



Lionel Messi was away attending the birth of his son but Barcelona still had more than enough to beat 10-man Malaga 2-0 on Saturday and move 11 points clear at the top of La Liga.

Messi was watching the game on a television in hospital as Luis Suarez and Philippe Coutinho put his team two up inside half an hour at La Rosaleda, before Samuel Garcia was sent off in the 30th minute for a dangerous tackle on Jordi Alba.

Down a man and without a win in 12 matches, Malaga might have feared a rout but Barca settled for a straightforward victory, perhaps with one eye on Wednesday's Champions League last-16 clash against Chelsea.

On Messi's withdrawal, Barcelona coach Ernesto Valverde said: "I found out this [Saturday] morning, before leaving home, I had already been called by the delegate of the club and he had told me the circumstances surrounding Leo.

"We already more or less knew when it might happen. It wasn't very difficult to replace him because I had a clear idea of how the game would go."

Messi is expected back against Chelsea at the Camp Nou, where the score is 1-1 from the first leg, but Valverde will have been delighted with how his attackers filled the void, as Suarez, Coutinho and Ousmane Dembele all had excellent displays.

In particular, Dembele's brilliant turn and pass was bettered only by Coutinho's flicked finish for what was a superb second goal.

"He has that ability," Valverde said of Dembele. "Today I think had more success than at other times, but the good thing is that he always goes at the opponent, always challenges them, always tries to dribble, and we need people like that."

AFP, Madrid

Tiger Club golfers to play in Thailand

SPORTS REPORTER

President of Tiger Golf Club Dhaka and the ambassador of the Socialist Republic of Vietnam in Bangladesh, Mr. Tran Van Khoa, hosted a reception on Saturday to announce the first ever international Friendship Golf Tournament, to be held at the Alpine Golf Resort in Bangkok from March 16 to 18.

In association with the Royal Thai Embassy and Tourism Authority of Thailand and supported by the Kurmitola Golf Club and Tourism Development Ministry of Bangladesh, the event would fly out about 30 members of the Tiger Golf Club including diplomats, expats, government high-officials and business community leaders, who will join local Thai players to celebrate the spirit of golf and friendship between the two countries, said a press release.

The reception was hosted at Spaghetti Jazz, Dhaka.

The sponsors for the tour are Novo Cargo LTD, DK Group and Lusaka Group, the press release added.

Spurs climb to third

Wenger eases pressure with Watford win

AFP, London



Son Heung-Min ensured Tottenham Hotspur didn't pay a heavy price for an ankle injury suffered by Harry Kane as he scored twice in a win 4-1 at Bournemouth on Sunday.

Spurs move above Liverpool into third in the Premier League, but it was a bittersweet victory with concerns over Kane's fitness for both club and country.

Elsewhere, Arsenal were also comfortable 3-0 winners over Watford at the Emirates Stadium to snap a run of three straight Premier League defeats.

Tottenham had endured a hugely disappointing Champions League exit at the hands of Juventus in midweek and still seemed to be reeling as they struggled in the opening 10 minutes.

Junior Stanislas had already hit the bar with a clear chance before he opened the scoring by firing low into the far corner just seven minutes in. Kane did have the ball in the net when he collided with Asmir Begovic just before the half-hour mark, but the off-side flag had already been raised.

And much worse was to come for the visitors when Kane failed to return as he limped away to protect the same right ankle that saw him spend two short spells on the sidelines last season.

Spurs didn't wallow for long, though, as just a minute after Erik Lamela replaced Kane, they levelled when Dele Alli steered home Serge Aurier's excellent cross.

The visitors always looked the likelier side

H'ball team thrash Nepal

SPORTS REPORTER

The Bangladesh U-20 hand-ball team notched up a second consecutive win in IHF South and Central Asia Youth and Junior Trophy when they handed a massive 43-21 defeat to Nepal in Faisalabad yesterday.

Bangladesh, who beat their Maldivian counterparts 44-9 in their first match, had a convincing first half lead of 25-10.

Bangladesh are scheduled to take on India today.

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:

Local hero Rashford out-shines Sanchez on rare start

Marcus Rashford showed Jose Mourinho just why he deserved his first Premier League start of the year by scoring both Manchester United's goals as they beat Liverpool 2-1 on Saturday. His double inside the first 25 minutes means Rashford has more goals from one game than Alexis Sanchez has managed for United since signing the most lucrative contract in Premier League history in January.

PSG ease pain of Madrid defeat against Metz

Paris Saint-Germain brushed aside bottom club Metz 5-0 in Ligue 1 on Saturday to ease some pain of their Champions League exit against Real Madrid in midweek.

Conte lauds Willian as Blues set sights on Barcelona

Chelsea manager Antonio Conte praised the all-round contribution of Willian after the in-form Brazilian helped halt a run of back-to-back league defeats ahead of next week's showdown with Barcelona in Europe.






This black and white image, taken from Lionel Messi's wife Antonella Rocuzzo's Instagram, shows the happy little family with its newest member, who was named **Ciro**.

PHOTO: COLLECTED

Hockey team reach semis

SPORTS REPORTER



The Bangladesh national hockey team came from a goal down to inflict a massive 5-1 defeat on Hong Kong in their second Pool A match of the Asian Games Qualifiers at the Sultan Qaboos Complex in the Omani capital of Muscat yesterday.

Bangladesh, who came into the match on the back of a 5-0 demolition of Thailand, were stunned 15 minutes into the game when IU Felix Chi Him converted a penalty corner for Hong Kong, a team Bangladesh had defeated 4-2 in the Hockey World League Round-1 in 2016.

The men in red and green were then made to toil hard as they aimed to circumvent the sturdy defense of Hong Kong - who themselves came into the match after a jaw-dropping 19-1 win against Afghanistan -- in the second quarter before finally leveling the margin in the third quarter through a penalty stroke which was converted by specialist Ashraful Islam in the 33rd minute.

Two minutes later, Ashraful was on the mark again, giving Bangladesh the lead by converting a penalty corner under floodlights.

Bangladesh continued to press after taking the lead and Roman Sarker made it 3-1 in the 47th minute, converting another penalty corner. Captain Rasel Mahmud Jimmy extended the lead to 4-1 in the 58th minute before Milon Hossain wrapped up the win by scoring in the final minute.

A second win from as many matches means Bangladesh confirmed their berth in the semifinal ahead of their match against lightweight Afghanistan in their third and final pool match tomorrow.

Door is open for Neymar, says Rakitic

REUTERS, Madrid

Barcelona midfielder Ivan Rakitic would welcome back Neymar to the Nou Camp with open arms as rumours continue to swirl that the Brazilian forward regrets his record transfer to Paris Saint-Germain.

Neymar is recovering from foot surgery in Brazil and missed PSG's 2-1 defeat by Real Madrid which dumped the French side out of the Champions League on Tuesday, after which Spanish media reported the forward was unsettled in Paris and has told former team mates he wants to return to Barca.

"He hasn't said anything to me, but if it were up to me, I'd open the door up to him right now," Rakitic told reporters on Saturday after Barca's 2-0 win at Malaga. "It's not just because I have a good relationship with him, but because of the type of player he is. I would always pick Neymar in my team."

Neymar scored 28 goals for PSG before injuring his metatarsal against Marseille on February 26.

Eternal captain immortalised

AFP, Florence



Fiorentina returned to action a week after the sudden death of captain Davide Astori in a home game on Sunday played in a poignant atmosphere.

Last Sunday's Serie A fixtures were postponed after Astori's body was found in his hotel room ahead of an away game against Udinese.

After emotional scenes on Friday as Roma, one of Astori's former clubs, beat Torino, and a commemoration on Saturday at the Verona derby, Fiorentina kicked off Sunday's action at their stadium against Benevento.

For the warmup, all the Fiorentina players and coach Stefano Pioli wore shirts bearing the number "13" and the name "Astori".

The ground was packed. One banner in the crowd read "Ciao captain", another "Our captain forever" and purple smoke from flares to match the colour of Fiorentina's shirts filled the sky.

The screens played a video homage to the club's late skipper. The flags above the curved stands at either end of the long, narrow stadium flew at half-mast.

The stadium announcer included "Number 13, forever our captain, Davide Astori" in the line-up. The



In the 13th minute of the Serie A match between Fiorentina and Benevento yesterday, the ball was kicked out of play as everyone at the Artemio Franchi stadium in Florence paid tribute to late Fiorentina captain Davide Astori.

PHOTO: AFP

pre-match ceremony began with the two sides lining up as Italian star Jovanotti sung "Terra Degli Omini". Players, from both teams, wept.

The Fiorentina players held a long, home-made, banner saying "Ciao Davide". Both teams had the same phrase sewn on their left shirt shoulders. The words were repeated on many of the banners in the crowd.

Before kick off, fans main stand released a cloud of purple and white balloons that floated heavenwards.

After 13 minutes, Astori's shirt number, the action stopped, the

CORPORATE BOOKING

Fantasy Kingdom will be reserved on 13<sup>th</sup> March, 2018 (Tuesday) for Corporate Booking.

From 14<sup>th</sup> March 2018 (Wednesday) Fantasy Kingdom will remain open for all.

Contact: 01937402947, 01939912533

