

### Darren Sammy is super excited about being back in Pakistan

**KARACHI:** Fan favourite Peshawar Zalmi captain Darren Sammy arrived in Pakistan and he cannot wait to meet up with the team. Man it is good to be back," the Windies all-rounder said in a video posted on Twitter. "Can't wait to see my guys." The 2017 Pakistan Super League (PSL) winning captain is in Pakistan to take part in the fifth edition of the tournament which gets under way on February 20. Sammy is one of the most famous foreign players playing the PSL. During his visit to the country last year, Sammy paid a visit to the Quaid's Mausoleum alongside the team owner Javed Afridi. Garbed in a traditional shalwar kameez, Sammy entered Quaid-e-Azam Mohammad Ali Jinnah's last resting place holding a flag of Pakistan and paid a tribute to the nation's founder. An avid biryani fan, Sammy has often been seen expressing his love for the local food. "I've been enjoying the culture from day one. I'm enjoying the experiences. I want to see the fans happy, that's why I play cricket," the West Indian cricketer had said, adding that he found shalwar kameez really nice to wear and liked biryani. —AFP

### Kobe Bryant and daughter Gianna buried last Friday

**LOS ANGELES:** Kobe Bryant and his daughter Gianna were buried last week near their family home in Newport Beach, California, in a private ceremony, according to death certificates. A death certificate for the basketball legend, who was killed in a helicopter crash outside Los Angeles on January 26 along with his daughter and seven others, states that he was buried last Friday at Pacific View Memorial Park in Corona del Mar, US media reported. A memorial service for Bryant and Gianna is planned February 24 at the Staples Center in downtown Los Angeles which can hold 20,000 people. The Center, also the home of the NHL's Los Angeles Kings and venue for concerts and events such as the recent Grammy Awards, has hosted memorials for recording artists Michael Jackson and Nipsey Hussle. Bryant's wife Vanessa on Monday took to Instagram to express her grief saying "my brain refuses to accept that both Kobe and Gigi are gone." "It's like I'm trying to process Kobe being gone but my body refuses to accept my Gigi will never come back to me," she added. "It feels wrong. Why should I be able to wake up another day when my baby girl isn't being able to have that opportunity?! I'm so mad. She had so much life to live. Then I realize I need to be strong and be here for my 3 daughters. Bryant had an iconic 20-year career playing with the Los Angeles Lakers. —Reuters

### Napoli beat Inter Milan to close in on Italian Cup final

**MILAN:** Fabian Ruiz scored the only goal as Napoli shocked Inter Milan 1-0 in their Italian Cup semi-final, first leg tie in the San Siro. The Spanish midfielder broke through after 57 minutes to get Gennaro Gattuso's side back to winning ways after their 3-2 league defeat at home to lowly Lecce last weekend. Ruiz picked up a Giovanni Di Lorenzo cross, beating three Inter defenders to curl in past a helpless Daniele Padelli. Antonio Conte's side looked sluggish days after their thrilling 4-2 derby win over AC Milan which put them top of the Serie A table. Both sides had their chances in the first half with Lautaro Martinez nodding wide with Padelli denying Piotr Zielinski just before the break in front of a crowd of nearly 60,000 in northern Italy. Conte sent on Cristian Eriksen after 65 minutes and the Dane threatened but David Ospina held firm in the Napoli goal. Napoli, who last won the trophy in 2014, now take a slim advantage into the second leg at their Stadio San Paolo on March 5. Record 18-time winners Juventus take on AC Milan in the other semi-final on Thursday, again in the San Siro. The match will be the first clash in Italy between Juventus star Cristiano Ronaldo and Sweden's Zlatan Ibrahimovic. The final will take place in the Stadio Olimpico in Rome on May 13. —Reuters

### Singapore Rugby Sevens postponed to Oct over COVID-19 fears

**SINGAPORE:** The HSBC Singapore Rugby Sevens has been postponed from April to October over COVID-19 fears. Sport Singapore said on that the event, originally scheduled to take place from Apr 11 - Apr 12, it has been moved to the weekend of Oct 10 - Oct 11. All tickets that fans have purchased for the event via official channels are valid for entry to the rescheduled event dates. No action is required to attend the October weekend, said SportSG. The sporting event was rescheduled after considering the well-being of fans, players, staff, volunteers and families with young children, said Sport Singapore. Fans unable to attend the October dates will be fully refunded. "This prudent decision has been taken in order to help protect the global rugby community and the wider public," read a statement on the World Rugby website. The HSBC Singapore Rugby Sevens 2019 saw an attendance of nearly 57,000 fans, according to the Singapore Sevens website. The Hong Kong Sevens, initially scheduled for Apr 3 - Apr 5, has also been postponed to Oct 16 - Oct 18. —AFP

### Football: Ajax's Ziyech to join Chelsea in 40m-euro deal

**THE HAGUE:** Hakim Ziyech will join Chelsea from Dutch champions Ajax this summer in a 40 million-euro (\$43.4 million) deal, the two clubs confirmed. The announcement ends days of speculation over the future of the 26-year-old attacking midfielder, a Moroccan international. "Ajax and Chelsea have reached an agreement for the transfer of Hakim Ziyech. The player will join the Premier League club on July 1st 2020 and will finish the season in Amsterdam," the Eredivisie champions said in a statement. "The clubs have agreed a deal of 40 million euros. This sum could potentially increase to a maximum of 44 million, with variable factors." Chelsea confirmed the deal, praising Dutch-born Ziyech as a "prolific scorer throughout his career." "Ziyech is a left-footed attacker who is comfortable playing off the right flank and coming inside, as he has often done in recent years to such devastating effect for Ajax, or on the left to attack with width and deliver. —AFP

# Cricket: Bangladesh U-19 world champions return to a hero's welcome

**DHAKA:** Thousands of ecstatic fans celebrated on the streets and a stadium crowd screamed "we are the champions" as Bangladesh returned home to a hero's welcome after winning the ICC Under-19 Cricket World Cup. They stunned four-time winners India in the final late on Sunday in South Africa's Potchefstroom to record a three-wicket victory over the favourites. A flight carrying the victors landed at Dhaka's main airport at 4:55pm (1055 GMT) local time where they were greeted by officials and thousands of jersey wearing and flag waving fans. The country's sports minister Zahid Ahsan and the Bangladesh Cricket Board's (BCB) president Nazmul Hassan received the players and support staff with flower garlands at the airport as fans roared "Bangladesh, Bangladesh. We are the World Champions."



The players boarded a specially designed bus painted in national colours and had 'World Champions' written in front as they travelled to Dhaka's main cricket stadium. Hundreds of people stood on both sides of the streets to cheer the victorious team. A procession of motor bikes with many waving national flags followed the team. "We are champions. These boys really made us proud," said an ecstatic fan Ariful Islam. Islam was one of an estimated 5,000 fans, according to police, who welcomed the junior Tigers at the Mirpur Sher-e-Bangla National Stadium, also known as the home of Bangladeshi cricket. Fans waiting outside quickly filled up parts of the stands as the BCB rolled out a red carpet for the players. Victorious captain Akbar Ali cut a huge cake before the festivities ended with 19 fireworks. Ali said they were surprised by the reception. "We knew something would happen, but we did not expect it would be this big. It is unbelievable. I cannot express in words how I am feeling now," Ali told a crowded press conference at the stadium. Ali, who scored an unbeaten 43 in the tense final to become player of the match, hoped the win would help the sport in the country move forward. "Everything needs a start. I hope our win will work as a stepping stone to take our cricket forward," Ali said. BCB chief Hassan hailed the triumph as Bangladesh's biggest ever sporting success. "We have had many achievements in the past, but nothing can be comparable to what this team has achieved. A World Cup is a World Cup. They won it. It was our dream," Hassan said. "We will create an Under-21 unit (with this team) and give specialised training to upgrade their skill. During this period each player will receive Tk 100,000 (\$1,175 approximately) every month. This is our reward for them," she added. —AFP

## Amar Cables Ashiq Hussain Qureshi T-20 Cup Ch Sports Beat Bostan Seniors by 103 Runs

**LAHORE:** Amar Cables Ashiq Hussain Qureshi T-20 Cup Match. Ch. Sports V/S Bostan Seniors played at Shah Faisal Cricket Ground. Ch. Sports Beat Bostan Seniors by 103 Runs. Ch. Sports batting first 182/6 after 20 overs. Sheraz Butt played well 86 runs not out. Abid Sheikh 26 and Zulfiqar Ali 27 Runs Not Out. Bostan Seniors bowling Muhammad Mobeen 3/36, Aftab Aslam 2/25 and Ejaz Abbas 1/27 Wickets.



In Reply Bostan Seniors 79 Runs all out after 14.4 overs. Asher Rasheed 28 Runs. Ch. Sports bowling Muhammad Khan bowling well 5/11, Muhammad Saleem 2/24, Javaid Hafeez 1/14 and Taj Din 1/14 Wickets. Waleed Yaqoob, Irfan Dilshad Umpire and Muhammad Kazim was the scorer. End of the match Chief Guest CEO Ch. Sports Ch. Shafiq Hussain giveaway man of the match award to Muhammad Khan.

## All Blacks fan Lindberg tickled by tee-time with Barrett

**MELBOURNE:** Major-winning Swedish golfer Pernilla Lindberg is looking forward to the "incredible challenge" of competing as the lone woman at the New Zealand Open where she will tee off with two-time World Rugby Player of the Year Beauden Barrett. The 33-year-old Lindberg will be the first woman to play in the event, with the 101st edition to be staged at the Millbrook Resort and The Hills in Queenstown from Feb. 27 to March 1. "It's going to be an incredible challenge," she told reporters at the Australian

Open in Adelaide on Thursday. "I'm not going to set any kind of goals for myself, but I'm really going to soak it's the New Zealand Open, it's not the men's Open" ... So he said if we wanted to play, sure you can do it," she said. Lindberg's pairing with All Blacks fullback Barrett is certain to be of major interest in rugby-mad New Zealand. "I might have mentioned to (organisers) that I really like the All Blacks, the rugby team," said Florida-based Lindberg, who won the 2018 ANA Inspiration, her sole major triumph. "(Barrett) sent me a message last night and said he's excited to play with me and I might have been very, very excited when I got that message." Only a handful of women have played in men's



MELBOURNE: Cricket - Ashes 2019 - Fifth Test - England v Australia - Kia Oval, London, Britain - September 15, 2019 Australia's David Warner hits a four Action.

## Smith, Warner must 'ride the storm' in SA, says Hazlewood

**MELBOURNE:** Steve Smith and David Warner will be ready for whatever South African crowds throw at them when the Australia batsmen return to the nation two years after the ball-tampering scandal, paceman Josh Hazlewood has said. The pair will fly out with the Australia squad on Friday for a limited overs tour in the duo's first visit to the country since serving 12-month bans for their parts in the tampering plot during the Cape Town test. The pair were jeered relentlessly by English crowds during last year's one-day World Cup and the following Ashes series, and Hazlewood said they would be unfazed by more hostility. "Steve and Dave have ticked off pretty much every box since coming back," Hazlewood told reporters in Sydney on Thursday. "It's just another one of those and I don't think it'll faze them one bit. "They probably play better when it's like this. "It's nothing we haven't experienced before ... we'll be fine." Both Smith and Warner have thrived since returning to the national fold after their bans expired last March. Smith played a leading role in Australia's retention of the Ashes while Warner was awarded the Allan Border Medal for the third time on Monday as the country's top cricketer in 2019. Local media have reported that the head of the national players' union will tour with the side in South Africa to offer extra support for the players. Hazlewood said Smith and Warner would not need to be shielded. "They'll probably try to take as much heat as they can actually, try to keep the young guys out of the spotlight," added the paceman. Hazlewood said engaging positively with fans was the best way to defuse them. "Join in and try to have a good time with them. Often when you do that, they end up being on your side after a couple of overs," he said. —AFP

## Tokyo Olympics boss blasts 'irresponsible rumours' over coronavirus shutdown

**TOKYO:** Tokyo Olympic organisers stressed they are not considering scrapping the Games due to the coronavirus and blasted "irresponsible rumours" to the contrary. With only 162 days to go until the opening ceremony, concerns have been raised about Japan's hosting of the Games with the virus spreading throughout Asia. But Tokyo 2020 CEO Yoshiro Mori slapped down such concerns at a meeting with top International Olympic Committee officials. "With regards to the coronavirus ... there are many irresponsible rumours but I would like to make it clear again that we are not considering postponing or cancelling the Games," he said. "We would like to coordinate with the national government and act in a calm manner," he stressed. The virus has already forced the rescheduling of a swathe of sporting events in Asia, including Olympic qualification competitions for boxing and basketball - both in China. Formula One's Shanghai Grand Prix has been postponed from mid-April, with the inaugural Vietnamese Grand Prix also under

threat as well as the Hong Kong Sevens. Tokyo governor Yuriko Koike has promised to implement "thorough measures" to protect people from the coronavirus in the run-up to the Olympics. Japan has not seen any deaths from COVID-19 but has 28 cases on its soil, with four in serious condition in hospital. Another 174 people, including a quarantine officer, have been infected on a cruise ship floating off the Japanese coast - the outbreak's largest single cluster. Prime Minister Shinzo Abe's government has come under fire for its handling of the infection, especially quarantine measures seen as too lax in the early stages of the epidemic. "These struggles in turn have sparked concerns about the forthcoming Tokyo Olympics, as Japan prepares for the arrival of millions of international visitors over the summer," said Tobias Harris from Teneo Consultancy. The mayor of the Olympic Village, Saburo Kawabuchi, told the meeting there was "still no clue as to when the virus will be resolved" and appeared to pin hopes on increased humidity to kill off the

