

**25** Rohit Sharma's ton helps India set South Africa 395 to win

**26** England first into World Cup quarter finals as Japan extend dream run

**27** Eden Hazard off mark but Real Madrid make hard work of Granada



LIVERPOOL: Liverpool's Croatian defender Dejan Lovren (C) rises for the ball during the English Premier League football match between Liverpool and Leicester City at Anfield in Liverpool, north west England yesterday. —AFP

## Milner sends Liverpool eight points clear

### Brighton pile pain on miserable Tottenham

LONDON: James Milner scored a stoppage-time winner as Liverpool moved eight points clear at the top of the Premier League with a thrilling 2-1 victory over Leicester, while Mauricio Pochettino's problems mounted after Tottenham's 3-0 loss at Brighton yesterday.

Liverpool won for the 17th consecutive league game thanks to Milner's dramatic contribution to a thrilling clash at Anfield. Jurgen Klopp's side ruined Leicester manager Brendan Rodgers' first return to Liverpool since being replaced by the German in 2015.

By extending their remarkable winning streak, Liverpool have piled pressure on second-placed Manchester City ahead of their home game against Wolves today. "It was a super game. We upped the tempo. The football we played was so important," Klopp said.

"Without luck we cannot win the amount of games we have won, but over the 90 minutes we deserved it. James Milner held his nerve and that was superb." Liverpool took the lead in the 40th minute when Milner's long ball was misjudged by Leicester defender

Jonny Evans and Sadio Mane clinically slotted in his eighth goal of the season.

Mane has scored exactly 50 goals in 100 Premier League games for Liverpool, making the Senegal winger the 10th player to reach that milestone for the Reds. James Maddison snatched third-placed Leicester's equaliser in the 80th minute when he collected Ayoze Perez's pass and drove his shot under Adrian's weak attempted save.

But five minutes into stoppage time, Marc Albrighton took the ball away from his own goalkeeper Kasper Schmeichel and then clipped Mane, with Milner converting the penalty after a VAR review. At the Amex Stadium, Tottenham's crisis deepened as they turned in a desperate performance, while Hugo Lloris suffered a serious arm injury after another howler. Tottenham keeper Lloris dropped the ball on the goal line and hurt himself in the process in only the third minute, allowing Neal Maupay to open the scoring.

It only got worse after that as Aaron Connolly's double gave the impressive Seagulls a deserved three

points. It ranked as one of the worst performances of Pochettino's reign and, following on from Tuesday's 7-2 Champions League humiliation to Bayern Munich, the dark clouds are mounting over the club.

Pochettino was forced to emphasise his commitment to Tottenham this week amid speculation he has grown distant from a squad distracted by several players who have been linked with moves.

"We have to keep going. I have to say thank you for the fans. I feel sorry for them," Pochettino said. "Now you cannot find any words to console them and our players because I think we are living a tough moment."

Last season's Champions League finalists have won just three of their opening 11 games of the campaign and five of their last 19 dating back to when these sides last met in April. An 11th defeat in 2019 left Tottenham without an away league win in 10 games dating back to January.

Everton manager Marco Silva is also under increasing pressure following a 1-0 defeat at Burnley that left his team fourth from bottom. Jeff Hendrick got Burnley's

72nd-minute winner after Everton had right-back Seamus Coleman sent off early in the second half for a crude lunge on Dwight McNeil.

Aston Villa's 5-1 demolition of Norwich was given a royal seal of approval with Villa fan Prince William in attendance with wife Kate and his young family at Carrow Road.

Dean Smith's side took a 14th-minute lead through Wesley and the Brazilian forward struck again for his fourth goal of the season in the 30th minute. Wesley wasted a chance to complete his hat-trick when his penalty was saved by Michael McGovern.

It didn't prove a problem for Villa as Jack Grealish got their third goal in the 49th minute and Conor Hourihane made it four. Douglas Luiz's 83rd-minute goal completed Villa's biggest away Premier League win for 11 years despite Josip Drmic's reply for Norwich. "I will put a call in to see if we can get them on the coach next game," Smith joked of the royal visitors. Watford remain bottom after a goalless draw with Sheffield United. — AFP

### Barshim delivers royal command performance for Qatar's Amir

DOHA: Qatar's Mutaz Essa Barshim received the personal congratulations of the country's Amir after he sent the crowd wild on Friday by retaining his high jump title at the World Athletics Championships.

The 28-year-old, who had got himself out of trouble by succeeding on his third and final attempt at 2.33 metres, took gold with a jump of 2.37m in front of a raucous and packed Khalifa Stadium.

Barshim revealed he had chatted with the country's ruler, Sheikh Tamim bin Hamad Al-Thani after his triumph. "I felt that (support) a lot from the crowd, from the emir himself to everyone who came out tonight," said Barshim.

"I was with him (the Amir) just now. I can't tell you (what he said) — it's top secret." When pressed, he did give some insight into his conversation with the ruler of the energy-rich state. "He (the Amir) was very excited and very happy. He said well done, he is really happy and proud because I delivered on what he wanted."

For Barshim, it confirmed his return to the top after a serious ankle injury in July last year when he tore a ligament when attempting to break the world record. "My injury last year could have been career ending," said Barshim, who only returned to training in April this year.

"You start posing questions like am I ever going to jump again and you start having questions about yourself. "Now I am just thinking about the future and I am really happy where I am." Barshim made light of the botched medals ceremony which saw him and his fellow medallists appear into an empty stadium before they were hurriedly ushered off again and told to return.

"It is always great standing on a world championship podium," he said grinning. "But yes it is better to do it again." Barshim, who will bid to make it a full house of Olympic medals next year having won silver and bronze, said he had revelled in the pressure of per-

forming in front of his compatriots.

"Of course there was a lot of pressure, but I need pressure to jump," he said. "I love competing on a high ground with a strong field so that was my thing to push myself to the maximum."

"It means everything to me I'm really happy to do it here at home. "To everybody who came out here to support and believed in me I just wanted to do this for them." Barshim said the packed stadium — the early part of the championships was marked by largely empty spaces — was great but he added it provided hope for the future of the sport in Qatar.

"I did not ask them to come tonight," he said. "I could see it in their eyes how enthusiastic they were and how much enjoyment they were getting from it." Barshim said the elusive Olympics gold was on his mind but he had other priorities in the immediate future.

"Tokyo is the target of course," he said. "However, first I need to be fat, to eat as much as I can and to have a vacation!" The minor medals went to two athletes competing under the Authorised Neutral Athlete banner. Mikhail Akimenko took silver on countback with 2.35m and Ilya Ivanyuk won the bronze with 2.35m. — AFP



DOHA: Gold medalist Qatar's Mutaz Essa Barshim poses on the podium during the medal ceremony for the Men's High Jump at the 2019 IAAF Athletics World Championships at the Khalifa International stadium in Doha yesterday. — AFP