

What to WATCH

GTV & MAASRANGA
BBPL
Sylhet v Cumilla
Live from 1:30pm
Chattogram v Rajshahi
Live from 6:30pm

STAR SPORTS SELECT 1
India v Sri Lanka
Second T20I
Live from 7:30pm

SONY SIX
South Africa v England
Second Test, Day Five
Live from 2:30pm

DAY'S EVENT

Bangabandhu Bangladesh Premier League
Venue: Sher-e-Bangla National Stadium, Dhaka
Sylhet v Cumilla

Time: 1:30pm
Chattogram v Rajshahi
Time: 6:30pm

SOCIAL MEDIA BAN AIDS LINGARD

Manchester United manager Ole Gunnar Solskjaer says Jesse Lingard is starting to regain his form after toning down his social media activity. The 27-year-old England international, who had been a prolific user of social media, was criticised after he posted a crude video on Snapchat last June, for which he was disciplined by the club. "Jesse has had his ups and downs as I've spoken about before. But say the games against (Manchester) City and Tottenham (last month), they are examples of how important he can be for us," Solskjaer said. "He is a lively, bubbly character, (but) I don't think you see as much on social media as you used to do with Jesse. He's got his head down, working hard. I've known him a few years and he is getting back to the Jesse I knew."



'I would keep Tests to five days'

Holder of many batting records, former South African opener Hashim Amla had an illustrious international career and was rated as one of the finest batsmen in world cricket. The ever-so-humble Amla, who is playing for Khulna Tigers in the ongoing Bangabandhu Bangladesh Premier League, spoke to *The Daily Star's* Mazhar Uddin about topics ranging from Test cricket, his own batting to Bangladesh cricket. The following are the excerpts of the interview.



The Daily Star (TDS): Was it a tough call to retire from international cricket?

Hashim Amla (HA): After the [2019] World Cup I gave it some thought and I have no regrets after serving 15 years in international cricket. I could have never imagined how things went, but Alhamdulillah, it did. It wasn't a tough decision but I thought it the right time. I have always tried to play cricket the best way, giving my absolute all in the field and practice. I am very grateful for whatever I have.

TDS: From 2,000 to 7,000 ODI runs, you were the fastest to reach each landmark and were also the fastest to 27 ODI hundreds. You are also the only South African to score

a Test triple hundred. Did you feel like you were in a race against time?

HA: No, not at all (smiles). You know when these types of milestones came up, I had no knowledge of them as you get told of such things later. Playing cricket was never about that for me as it can start to work on my mind. There was no race against time... I enjoyed playing international cricket and scoring runs at the top level.

TDS: There has been talk of shortening Test cricket from five days to four. What's your take?

HA: I would keep it to five days if it's up to me. I haven't given it a lot of thought as a lot more goes on behind closed doors with

the brains trust of the ICC. As a player who has played, I wouldn't change it.

TDS: You have your own unique technique as a batsman. Was the belief in your technique there from the start or did you adapt to it when you started playing international cricket?

HA: Everyone's technique evolves the more they play international cricket. Certainly, at the start, when you are playing domestic cricket, you certainly have such analyses of your batting. So, you play and you do well and play for South Africa in international cricket, then other things are made to work for you so you do better and work on a few things. The analysis

that happens in international cricket is always a way to improve. So that's a natural evolution of a batsman who plays international cricket.

TDS: What is your message to someone, say a Bangladeshi cricketer who has played a couple of international seasons but cannot quite reach the next level, be it to get success at the top level?

HA: There are many passages to improve. There is dealing with the distractions coming into success and failures. Both have their downfalls. When you have success, it's easy to get complacent and you might feel relaxed at times. When you fail you lose courage to improve those types of things, it is tough to manage and most international players find ways to manage. It's not about scoring or not scoring runs; it's the constant striving to improve and the process that are important, and preparing accordingly. If you have a good coach educating on such things, it helps your career, which worked well for me. It's not that you have to bat only according to the basics as there should be an individualism of every batter to do well with their own styles.

TDS: What is discipline for Hashim Amla?

HA: I think discipline goes in hand with manners. It's about doing what's important at a given time. If you have a match tomorrow you would want to sleep early or if you don't have a game you can stay up late to spend time with your family. In the game, it's remaining as focused as you can be on the task at hand and try not to be caught up by the many distractions of wanting to do things that you haven't practiced, as it does enter a batsman's mind.

Mamic vows to turn Saif's fortune

SPORTS REPORTER

Newly appointed Croatian coach Drago Mamic vowed to keep Saif SC in the title race of Bangladesh Premier League till the last moment as the former Abahani coach wash given charge of the club following the sacking of Maldivian coach Mohammad Nizam.



"Saif SC formed a champion team and we will try our best to deliver the league title till the last moment," Mamic told reporters yesterday as the club introduced him at a press conference at the club headquarters in Mohakhali.

"My first job is to change the motto of the game, not the system. It is very important to change the motto of thinking about the championship," said the coach.

The 65-year-old had earlier guided Abahani to the professional league title in the 2017-18 season in his second spell after having parted ways with the club in the latter part of previous season.

"I know that Saif have six or seven national team players. Abahani, too, had the same number of national team players when I worked with them. Maybe this club is not in good condition but we have to improve step by step," said Mamic, who believes some teams are playing better football than two years ago.

"It was a big surprise for me as I was following Bangladesh football regularly. I was monitoring the results of last league. I saw that many teams are playing better football than two years ago. This is a good sign for football in this area," added the UEFA Pro-licence holder.

Tapu returns to national team

SPORTS REPORTER



Centre-back Tapu Barman returned to the national team after 10 months as head coach Jamie Day kept the trustworthy defender in his 23-member final squad for six-nation Bangabandhu Gold Cup, which is scheduled to take place in Dhaka from January 15 to 25.

Day also recalled defender Sushanta Tripura of Bashundhara Kings while calling up Manik Hossain Mollah of Chattogram Abahani to the squad for the first time. The English coach, however, dropped forward Tawhidul Alam Sabuz, right-back Yeasin Arafat and injured midfielder Biplu Ahmed from the squad which played against Oman in the World Cup Qualifiers.

Tapu sustained knee injury during a practice session with Abahani in March last year and underwent a surgery the following month. He returned to action with his new club Bashundhara Kings in the Federation Cup where he played in the quarterfinals as a substitute and was in the starting eleven of both the semifinal and the final.

Tapu's last outing for Bangladesh was against Cambodia in March last year, since which he missed all matches for the national team and former club Abahani.



"Before sustaining the injury, Tapu was excellent and best defender in terms of performance. I think he has big influence in this group. So we are delighted he is back and his inclusion will increase the competition in defence. He is now fit and got three matches of Federation Cup and performed well. I think he will be an important player in the upcoming competition," Bangladesh team's assistant coach Stuart Watkiss told reporters during the disclosure of the 23-member squad at the BFF house yesterday.

Tapu was happy with the comeback. "I promised to come back within seven months and

I'm really happy to get the call from the national team," Tapu said. "I'm confident of securing my place in the starting eleven if I get only three to four days of training under the coach."

Watkiss was also optimistic about midfielder Manik Hossain Mollah.

"His (Manik) inclusion gives balance to his position as we wanted an alternate for each position. We feel Manik's performance is good enough and he deserved a place in the squad," said Watkiss, who was also hopeful of getting the team into the knockout stages of the Bangabandhu Gold Cup.

"We are always optimistic, but we have to be realistic too. In our group, Palestine have good FIFA ranking and they are a good team both technically and tactically, but we still believe of gaining something (against them). If we want to qualify for the semifinals, we have to beat Sri Lanka which will be the key match. Playing in Bangladesh, we believe we can beat Sri Lanka," Watkiss said in absence of head coach Day, who is scheduled to join the squad on Wednesday after flying back from London.

Except for nine Bashundhara Kings players, all the players have been asked to report to team manager tonight as training will get underway on Wednesday. The Bashundhara Kings players will start training the following day, informed manager Satyajit Das Rupu.



Juventus superstar Cristiano Ronaldo (R) celebrates with teammate Leonardo Bonucci after scoring during yesterday's Serie A encounter with Cagliari at the Allianz Stadium in Turin. The prolific Portuguese forward slotted a hat-trick while Gonzalo Higuain added the other as The Old Lady walked away 4-0 winners.



Bangladesh national football team's captain Jamal Bhuiyan tied the knot in a private ceremony in Copenhagen in Denmark on Sunday. Even though the 29-year-old did not himself post any pictures of the event on his social media accounts, his club Saif SC posted a few on their verified Facebook page, wishing the couple a happy journey.

PHOTO: COLLECTED

PSG thrash Montlhery

AFP, Paris



Paris Saint-Germain rested superstars Neymar and Kylian Mbappe before defeating sixth-tier Linas-Montlhery 6-0 in the French Cup on Sunday as the amateur side, and self-confessed fans of their monied rivals, were left to rue a missed penalty when trailing just 1-0.

The part-timers, whose budget is 2,000-times smaller than the Qatari-backed Parisian giants, fell behind to a goal on the half-hour by teenager Adil Aouchiche.

However, they were then awarded a penalty after Colin Dagba brought down Issa Cisse.

Up stepped Idrissa Kanoute but his tame spot kick was well-saved by Sergio

Rico in the PSG goal.

Less than a minute later, Uruguayan star Edinson Cavani, named captain for the night, tucked away PSG's second and the game was up.

Cavani, starting for the first time in two months, added his second just on the hour mark before Pablo Sarabia (63rd and 70th minutes) and Eric Maxim Choupo-Moting (87th) completed the rout.

"We played seriously and with humility," PSG coach Thomas Tuchel said. "We deserved to win, it was a good match for the team and the club and a good start to 2020."

They are such big fans of PSG that coach Stephane Cabrelli is a season-ticket holder who has been watching their games for the best part of 50 years.



PSG midfielder Adil Aouchiche (L) celebrates after scoring one of his side's six goals in a French Cup match against Linas-Montlhery in Bondoufle on Sunday.



PHOTO: AFP

Novak Djokovic won both his singles and doubles matches to help Serbia edge France 2-1 and subsequently reach the quarterfinals of the ATP Cup in Brisbane yesterday.

Djokovic helps Serbia to 2-1 win

AFP, Brisbane



A near-perfect Novak Djokovic won both his singles and doubles rubbers as Serbia beat France 2-1 to reach the quarter-finals of the inaugural ATP Cup teams event in Brisbane yesterday.

After Benoit Paire beat Dusan Lajovic to give France a 1-0 lead, Djokovic overpowered Gael Monfils in straight sets then teamed with Viktor Troicki to beat Nicolas Mahut and Edouard Roger-Vasselin 6-3, 6-6 (5/7), 10-3 in a spirited and emotional doubles clash.

The win, combined with South Africa's earlier defeat of Chile, means Serbia are assured of topping Group A with one round remaining.

Djokovic was in superb touch to level the tie following Lajovic's three-set loss to Paire in the opening rubber. He had beaten Monfils in all 15 previous meetings and that perfect record never looked in danger as he dominated the Frenchman from the outset.

Djokovic, one of the best returners in men's tennis, put relentless pressure on Monfils' serve throughout, breaking him three times.

Bashundhara, Rahmatganj show-caused

SPORTS REPORTER

Bangladesh Football Federation (BFF) yesterday served separate show-cause notices to Federation Cup champions Bashundhara Kings and runners-up Rahmatganj MFS on different grounds, asking them why action will not be taken against them.

After a 3-0 win over Bangladesh Police in semifinal, Bashundhara's Spanish coach Oscar Bruzon criticised the tight scheduling of Federation Cup which saw Rahmatganj get one more day's rest ahead of the final. Bashundhara Kings president Imrul Hossain allegedly made negative comments about a referee on his social-media account.

Meanwhile, some unaccredited personnel were seen in the dressing room of Rahmatganj before Sunday's final. A source inside the game's local governing body, seeking anonymity, said that both clubs were asked to reply to the show-cause notices by January 9 and the disciplinary committee will take its final decision in this regard after their reply.