

What to WATCH

SONY SIX
India v Australia
First ODI
Live from 2:00pm

TEN 2
FA Cup
Tottenham v Rochdale
Live from 1:45am (Wednesday)

TRAORE TOUGHER THAN RONALDO?

Wolves winger Adama Traore is tougher to mark than five-time Ballon d'Or winner Cristiano Ronaldo, claims Newcastle defender Jetro Willems. Willems tackled Ronaldo when lining up against Portugal for the Netherlands at Euro 2012. His most recent Premier League outing saw him face the considerable threat of Traore, with Newcastle taking in a 1-1 draw. Molineux. The 25-year-old wing-back fared admirably in that challenge, as Steve Bruce's side took a point from a 1-1 draw. Willems admits to having had a tough afternoon, though, with chasing the jet-heeled Traore considered to be a trickier task than trying to contain Ronaldo – despite the Juventus forward having bagged a brace for his nation in a 2-1 win for Portugal back in 2012. "I have played against some very good players in my career, but no one quite as fast as Traore," Willems said in the Northern Echo. "I have played against Ronaldo, who is fast, but not that fast. Of course, he is so skilful but sometimes that is easier than being up against someone with such incredible pace."



Defending champions Palestine were the first team to arrive in Dhaka yesterday following a 24-hour journey ahead of the Bangabandhu Gold Cup, which kicks off tomorrow. PHOTO: BFF

Booters gear up as defending champions arrive

SPORTS REPORTER

Defending champions Palestine and first-time participants Mauritius arrived in Dhaka yesterday to take part in the Bangabandhu Gold Cup international football tournament, which will kick off at the Bangabandhu National Stadium tomorrow.

The defending champions, who arrived here following a 24-hour journey, will take on hosts Bangladesh in the opening fixture at 5:00pm tomorrow. The Middle Eastern nation have not brought their full-strength national team, rather a combination of young and experienced players, yet they are confident enough to take home the title.

Jaber Jaarin, the manager of the team, informed that they are taking this tournament as preparation for the World Cup qualifying fixture against Singapore in March.

"We are happy to be back here for the second time. We want to win the title this time too," Jaarin said after the team arrived at the Pan

Pacific Sonargaon Hotel where all the six teams will be based.

"There are eight Olympic team players and eight players who played in the last World Cup qualifying match. This team is a blend of youth and experience. We have a World Cup qualifying fixture in Singapore in March, so this tournament will be a good preparation for that," Jaarin added. Palestine had beaten Bangladesh 2-0 in the semifinals of the last edition in 2018 when they eventually won the title, beating Tajikistan on penalties in the final.

The Palestine team captain Taher Jabour also voiced his confidence about winning the title. "We have come here to defend the title. Many players of this team have played in the last Bangabandhu Gold Cup, so we have a fairly good idea about the tournament," said the 27-year-old centre-back.

The Palestinians will take on Sri Lanka in their second and last group-stage match on Friday while Bangladesh will square off against the islanders two days later.

While Bangladesh will be

earmarking a win against Sri Lanka for a place in the semifinals, they are willing to give their best against Palestine, the highest-ranked (106) team of the six-nation tournament.

Following a day's rest, the Bangladesh team's training session yesterday focused mostly on Palestine's attacking style and how to defend and safeguard the goal against them.

Conceding late goals has become a cause for concern for the men in red and green, who conceded four goals in the second half of their World Cup qualifier against Oman in November last year, the same number of goals they had conceded in their three previous qualifying fixtures.

Things did not improve much in December's South Asian Games where the Bangladesh team, masquerading as under-23s, managed only one clean sheet in four matches. The team's goalkeeping coach Robert Mims is aware of the situation and wants the keepers and defenders to keep their concentration right till the end.

"Conceding late goals is a team issue, issue of concentration and is about being organised in certain situations. It is also about awareness of opposition's tactics," the coach said after the training session.

"(We are working on) making them aware of Palestine's strength; how Palestine put you under pressure and where their dangers come from," the goalkeeping coach said.

The team's Number 1 goalkeeper Ashraf Islam Rana knows the defending champions will be a big challenge first up, but he feels the team can learn from mistakes of the past.

"The first match is always important in any tournament. Palestine are physically, tactically and technically far ahead of us," Rana said. "However, we are confident from our position since we are playing at home. We are mindful of the defeat against Palestine in the last edition. The key for us is to concentrate till the last moment. The goalkeepers and defenders will have to take extra challenge."

Real Madrid clinch 11th Super Cup

AFP, Jeddah

Thibaut Courtois proved the hero on Sunday as Real Madrid beat city rivals Atletico Madrid in a penalty shoot-out in Saudi Arabia to win their 11th Spanish Super Cup.

Courtois and Jan Oblak were both imperious during a goalless final in Jeddah but the Belgian came up trumps, saving Thomas Partey's penalty after Saul Niguez had already hit the post.

Sergio Ramos tucked away the winning spot-kick to ensure Real Madrid clinched their first trophy of the season, with La Liga and the Champions League next in their sights.

"I went through their takers on the bench,"

I told him that anyone would have done the same in his position."

Victory maintains Zinedine Zidane's spotless record as a coach in finals.

He has now led Madrid to success three times in the Champions League, and two each in the Club World Cup, UEFA Super Cup and now Spanish Super Cup.

"I have won many things as a player and now as a coach," said Zidane. "But I congratulate the players. You can achieve anything if you work hard enough."

The focus before the tournament was more on the decision of the Spanish Football Federation (RFEF) to move this year's Super Cup -- a four-team competition rather than a straight final -- away from Spain and to Saudi Arabia, despite the country's long-criticised treatment of women and record



Real Madrid players celebrate with the Spanish Super Cup trophy after defeating Atletico Madrid in the final in Jeddah on Sunday. After regulation time ended in a 0-0 draw, Los Blancos clinched a 4-1 win on penalties. PHOTO: AFP

said Courtois. "Saul's surprised me but Thomas' I read, and he's got a very hard shot."

Atletico might have won it in extra-time when Alvaro Morata went through one-on-one but Real's Federico Valverde took a red card in exchange for cynically fouling the striker from behind.

"It was something you shouldn't do and I apologised to Alvaro but it was the only option I had left," said Valverde.

"It was the most important moment of the match," added Atletico coach Diego Simeone. "If he had gone through it was a goal but

on human rights.

For all the controversy off the pitch, on the pitch, the tournament has delivered.

Real Madrid played brilliantly to beat Valencia on Wednesday while a pulsating 3-2 win for Atletico on Thursday has put Barcelona coach Ernesto Valverde on the brink of the sack.

And although the final lacked goals and quality finishing, there was drama until the end and joy on the faces of Real Madrid's players as Ramos hoisted another trophy under the fireworks.

Premier V'ball from tomorrow

SPORTS REPORTER

The Bangabandhu Popular Life Premier Volleyball League will get underway at the Shaheed Nur Hossain National Volleyball Stadium tomorrow, with 10 teams taking part.

A press conference in this regard was organised at the Bangabandhu National Stadium conference room yesterday, where Bangladesh Volleyball Federation general secretary Ashikur Rahman Miku disclosed the details.

Although the event is called a league, it will be held in tournament format, with the teams split into two groups. The final will be held on January 28.

Lewis leads WI to series sweep

AFP, St. George's

Evin Lewis smashed a dazzling century as West Indies defeated Ireland by five wickets on Sunday to complete a 3-0 sweep of the one-day international series.

Lewis hit his third one-day ton off 96 balls with six boundaries and five huge sixes at the National Stadium in Grenada as West Indies reached their rain-revised target of 197 with 64 balls to spare.

For Ireland, captain Andy Balbirnie top-scored with 71 in a total of 203 all out. West Indies leg-spinner Hayden Walsh took 4-36.

BRIEF SCORES
IRELAND: 203 all out in 49.1 overs (Balbirnie 71; Walsh 4-36) **WEST INDIES:** 199 for 5 (Lewis 102, Pooran 43 not out)

Result: WI won by 5 wkts (D/L).



Although PSG forward Neymar (C) scored a brace, Monaco twice battled back from behind to secure a 3-3 draw in a scintillating Ligue 1 encounter at the Parc des Princes in Paris on Sunday. PHOTO: AFP

Neymar brace goes in vain

AFP, Paris

Neymar scored twice and created another goal but leaders Paris Saint-Germain were held to an entertaining 3-3 draw at home on Sunday by a Monaco side playing their first Ligue 1 game under new coach Robert Moreno.

The Brazilian gave PSG the lead after just two minutes at the Parc des Princes but Monaco scored two quick goals through Gelson Martins and Wissam Ben Yedder to move 2-1 ahead inside quarter of an hour.

A Fode Ballo-Toure own goal brought PSG level and Neymar restored their advantage from the penalty spot before half-time after a foul on Kylian Mbappe.

But Monaco earned a point when Islam Slimani's goal was controversially awarded after it was initially ruled out for offside.

It was just the second time PSG have dropped points at home this season -- after a shock 2-0 defeat by Reims in September.

PSG had started the new year in rampant form by scoring six both times in a pair of domestic cup wins and looked on track for a 10th win in a row over Monaco after Neymar controlled a terrific Marco Verratti pass to smash home the opener.

Thomas Tuchel's side came in riding an eight-match winning streak -- across which they had scored 34 goals -- but concerns remained over the deployment of a prolific four-man attack against stronger opposition.

Monaco hit back almost immediately as Cesc Fabregas threaded a neat ball through for Ben Yedder and although he was chopped down by Keylor Navas, the rebound rolled into the path of Martins who tapped into an empty net.

Juventus take top spot

AFP, Milan

Cristiano Ronaldo stretched his goal-scoring streak to six consecutive league games as Juventus took top spot in Serie A on Sunday with a 2-1 win at Roma, whose defeat was made worse by the cruciate ligament injury of rising star Nicolò Zaniolo.

Juventus move two points ahead of Inter Milan after going two goals up in just 10 minutes in Rome.

Turkish defender Merih Demiral found a way through after three minutes when he connected with a Paulo Dybala free-kick.

Minutes later Argentine Dybala was hauled down in the box, and Ronaldo stepped up to convert from the spot to make it nine goals in six league games.

Both sides had casualties in the first half with Demiral limping off with a knee injury not long after scoring his first Juventus goal.

And Zaniolo was stretched off in tears eight minutes before the break after falling victim to what Roma later confirmed was a ruptured anterior cruciate ligament in his right knee.

Zaniolo, who is considered one of Italy's most exciting young talents and was a rare bright point for Roma in a torrid first half, underwent surgery yesterday.

"I swear to you ... I'll be stronger than before," the 20-year-old later wrote on Instagram.

Roma had their chances with Edin Dzeko hitting the post and Wojciech Szczesny denying Cengiz Under from point-blank range.

Diego Perotti pulled a goal back for the hosts from the penalty spot on 68 minutes after an Alex Sandro handball.



Juventus talisman Cristiano Ronaldo (L) celebrates after scoring a penalty during a Serie A match against Roma in Rome on Sunday. PHOTO: REUTERS

আপনি কি উচ্চ রক্তচাপ, হৃদরোগ, ডায়াবেটিস ও স্ট্রোক প্রতিরোধ করতে চান?
ওষুধ খাওয়ার পরও কি উচ্চ রক্তচাপ বা ডায়াবেটিস নিয়ন্ত্রণ হচ্ছে না?
রিং লাগানো বা বাইপাস করার পরও কি অসুবিধা হচ্ছে?
কোনোভাবেই কি ওজন কমাতে পারছেন না?

অপারেশন বা রিং পরানো ছাড়াই হৃদরোগ নিরাময় করতে এবং উচ্চ রক্তচাপ, ডায়াবেটিস, স্ট্রোক ও স্থূলতা প্রতিরোধ ও নিরাময়ের রহস্য জানতে অংশ নিন

২ দিনের বিশেষ ওরিয়েন্টেশনে

কোয়ান্টাম হার্ট ক্লাব

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ফোন : ৮৩৯৬৮১৫, ০১৭৪০-৬৩০৮৫৬ | quantummethod.org.bd

পরিচিতি সভা
১৬ জানুয়ারি (বৃহস্পতিবার)
স্থান : কয়েমিএমপিএ ভবন, কাকরাইল
সময় : সন্ধ্যা ৬:৩৫ - রাত ৮:৩৫

১৩২ তম ব্যাচ :
৩১ জানুয়ারি ও ১ ফেব্রুয়ারি ২০২০
স্থান : বনশ্রী সেন্টার
সময় : সকাল ৯:০০ - রাত ৮:০০