**GTV & MAASRANGA** Bangabandhu Bangladesh Premier League Rajshahi Royals v Khulna Tigers Live from 7:00 pm

**BTV & RTV** Bangabandhu Gold Cup Palestine v Sri Lanka Live from 5:00 pm **SONY ESPI** South Africa v England

Third Test, Day 2 Live from 2:00 pm **STAR SPORTS 1** India v Australia **Second ODI** Live from 2:00 pm

Bangabandhu Bangladesh **Premier League** 

**STAR SPORTS 3** 

ICC U-19s World Cup

South Africa U-19s v

Afghanistan U-19s

Live from 2:00 pm

Rajshahi Royals v Khulna Tigers Time: 7:00 pm Venue: Sher-E-Bangla National

Stadium, Dhaka Bangabandhu Gold Cup Palestine v Sri Lanka

Time: 5:00 pm Venue: Bangabandhu National Stadium, Dhaka







(Clockwise from top L) Juventus forward Paulo Dybala, who set up his fellow Argentine Gonzalo Higuain for their opener after exchanging a quick one-two, scored a brace as the Old Lady cruised to the Copa Italia quarterfinal following a 4-0 thrashing of Udinese at the Allianz Stadium on Wednesday. Meanwhile, at Old Trafford, a solitary goal from Juan Mata saw Manchester United edge past Wolves and progress to the fourth round of the FA Cup on Wednesday. In Ligue 1, Kylian Mbappe celebrated his return with a brace during PSG's 4-1 away rout of Monaco. PHOTO: AFP/COLLECTED

#### NZ call up Bennett for India T20Is

AFP, Wellington

New Zealand have called in Hamish Bennett to shore up their attack for the Twenty20 series against India this month, while Trent Boult and Lockie Ferguson remain on the injured list.

The 32-year-old Bennett was a regular in the New Zealand one-day international side in 2011 but has played only four ODIs.

**Squad:** Kane Williamson (capt), Hamish Bennett, Tom Bruce, Colin de Grandhomme, Martin Cuptill Scott Kuggeleiji Daryl Mitchell, Colin Munro, Ross Taylor, Blair Tickner, Mitchell Santner, Tim Seifert, Ish Sodhi, Tim Southee.

## Finch wary of India fightback

AFP, New Delhi

Australia are braced for an Indian backlash when they meet Friday in their second one-day international, captain Aaron Finch said.

The hosts suffered a crushing 10-wicket defeat Tuesday in the opening game of the three-match showdown after Finch and opening partner David Warner hit unbeaten centuries in Mumbai.

Finch, who smashed 110, believes the loss will sting India into action in Rajkot

"They will fight back, no doubt," Finch told the Cricket Australia website. "They are a great side, got some world-class

Left-handed Warner led the rout of the Indian bowlers with a destructive 128 off 112 deliveries in Australia's chase of 256.

The openers put on a record 258-run

stand -- the highest for any wicket in a 50-over game against India -- as Australia reached their target with almost 13 overs to

Finch said Warner is playing unbelievably

"I think it's so hard to bowl to him once

he gets in," he said. "His footwork is pretty good, his mental state is unbelievable when he is out in the middle. He is just so clear with his thoughts and his game. He is in top shape."

Australian bowlers also played their part, with pace pair Mitchell Starc and Pat Cummins sharing five wickets.

Finch lauded his lead bowlers, but hinted paceman Josh Hazlewood could still be involved in the series which ends in Bangalore on Sunday.

With back-to-back games... and a reasonably heavy Test load, I'm sure Josh will come in for one of them at some point," he said

# Ireland stun

Windies AFP, St. George's

Ireland rode a career-best 95 from opener Paul Stirling before keeping their nerve in a nail-biting final over to pull off a four-run win over world champions West Indies in the first of a 3-match T20 series on Wednesday.

The burly Stirling steered Ireland to 208-7 in their 20

However, the home side appeared comfortably on course for victory -- bringing up their hundred inside 10 overs with just two wickets down -- until the game was decided in the last over.

Needing 15 to win, all-rounder Josh Little (3-29) got rid of the dangerous Dwayne Bravo, one of two wickets to fall in the last over.

# Problems in both boxes: Rahmat



After Jamie Day was appointed as head coach about two years ago, the Bangladesh national football team's defensive structure improved significantly.

With time, Bangladesh's backline started to be considered as one of the strongest aspects of the team.

However, Bangladesh's shaky defending against Palestine in their Bangabandhu Gold Cup opener was what allowed the side to concede twice and subsequently lose the match.

It was expected that the return of centreback Tapu Barman would strengthen the backline but the four-man defence, comprised of Tapu, Yeasin Khan, Raihan Hasan and Rahmat Mia, was repeatedly exposed by Palestine, who duly punished the hosts by cashing in on their mistakes. With Palestine fielding a second-string side, snatching a point from title holders should not have been a tough task.

Left-back Rahmat Mia and goalkeeper Ashraful Islam Rana admitted that defensive errors was the main culprit behind their letdown against Palestine but they are now looking forward to their must-win final group match against Sri Lanka on Sunday rather than dwelling on the past.

"Actually, if you make mistakes against

a good side, they will take advantage and we made two mistakes to concede two goals. That is the difference between big and small sides and our mistakes basically made the difference," said Rahmat at the team hotel yesterday.

"Our backline is a lot better than before but we are human and can make mistakes and that happened yesterday [Wednesday]," continued Rahmat, who believes they gave away both goals.

Goalkeeper Rana was also quick to blame the backline.

"Actually our defensive organization was not good. Besides, the players were not as quick as they should be in in transition which is also a point to be noted," said

Rahmat also said laid some of the blame on their forwards who, according to him, did not perform their duties well while the absence of the fever-hit Nabib Newaj Jibon was also felt.

"To be honest, we had problems in both boxes. First the defenders made mistakes, then the forwards could not capitalize the opportunities," Rahmat said. "We felt the absence of Jibon bhai, who can hold the ball in the attacking third and can release ball for others. If he had been on the ground, then he or others could have taken the chances we created."



forward slotted the first hattrick of Bangabandhu Gold Cup to help Burundi come from behind for an emphatic 4-1 defeat of Mauritius in the Group B opener at the Bangabandhu National Stadium yesterday. Mauritius stunned the 151st ranked Burundi in the third minute but they were helpless against the pace and goal-scoring ability of Jospin. PHOTO: FIROZ AHMED

### Comfotable starts for Rafa, Serena



World number one Rafael Nadal will take on Bolivian Hugo Dellien in the Australian Open first round next week while Serena Williams faces Anastasia Potapova in her quest for a 24th Grand Slam title.

The Spaniard is attempting to match Roger Federer's record 20 Grand Slam singles titles on his least favourite surface, having won in Melbourne just once, back in

Australian Nick Kyrgios could be waiting for him in

the fourth round, the draw revealed Thursday. Defending champion Novak Djokovic will start his bid to lift a record eighth Australian Open title against

Jan-Lennard Struff. The Serb had a fine 2019, winning five titles including at Melbourne Park and Wimbledon on the way to ending the year as number two, behind only Nadal.

Fresh from helping his country win the ATP Cup, he will start his drive to extend his incredible Melbourne run -- he holds a 68-8 record -- against a German who crashed at the first hurdle last year.

Djokovic could meet Greek young gun Stefanos Tsitsipas in the last eight.

The ageless Federer, 38, is up against American Steve Johnson in the third quarter of the men's draw as he targets a seventh Australian Open title, winning his last in 2018.

Williams, who is seeking to match Australian Margaret Court's record 24 major singles titles, gets underway against 90th ranked Russian Potapova with a potential quarter-final against defending champion Naomi Osaka.

Seeded eight, she heads into the tournament on the back of ending a three-year title drought by winning the Auckland Classic. She is gunning for an eighth Australian crown and her first Slam title since Melbourne in 2017.

Her sister Venus has a blockbuster first round clash against exciting young American Coco Gauff, with the winner potentially facing Osaka in the third round. Third seed Osaka starts her title defence against Marie

Bouzkova World number one Ashleigh Barty opens against Ukraine's Lesia Tsurenko, with the French Open

champion on a collision course with last year's finalist Petra Kvitova in the last eight. Fourth seed Simona Halep has a tough opening task against Jennifer Brady, who beat Barty and Maria

Sharapova at the Brisbane International. Second seed Karolina Pliskova takes on Kristina

Mladenovic.

