

Cristiano Ronaldo has become a father, Portuguese media reported on Sunday, quoting sources close to his agent and an "official" Facebook and Twitter post.

The post says that the 25-year-old has "recently become a father" while Correio da Manha newspaper reported "Gestifute," the company which is run by the player's agent, as having confirmed the news.

According to the paper, "the baby's mother is from North America and she had her child, a son, in early June."

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**SPORT**

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PHOTO: AFP

**I CAN NOW SEE THE WORLD CUP PEACEFULLY:** Spaniard Rafael Nadal roars for joy after he beat Tomas Berdych of Czech Republic in the Wimbledon final to reclaim the title at the All England Tennis Club in London yesterday.

**Euphoria gone in two days**

SYED SHAFQUAT HUQ

The mere mention of 'football World Cup' brings up a tumult of emotions that has more to do with the sport itself. Yes it brings to mind the images of superstars toying with the ball as if it was part of their feet, and it gives birth to glorious moments of joy and tears. But for the people of Bangladesh, it is a grand occasion and if you were lucky enough to live through the past month or so, you'd know what an occasion it has been.

People in this country may not be quite familiar with pubs but every home turned into a vibrant pub with family members and friends creating an atmosphere that can be at times as noisy as a vuvuzela.

Teenagers are the most prominent football spectators, with them came a new crowd of people just for this World Cup. A new crowd who hardly used to show any interest in sports or football showed their appreciation for this World Cup by taking a side of their own. However, the craze for the World Cup does not end at this point as fans from all age groups gave their time for this once-in-four-years event.

Politicians, businessmen and other workaholics kept that precious 90 minutes free by working through out the day just to watch at home or enjoy it with friends. Aging generations who are not even a bit worried about what Cristiano Ronaldo, Lionel Messi or Kaka come alive during this time.

It swept up everyone in its mighty rage. And like every occasion, two South American rivals -- Brazil and Argentina -- dictate the fan following.

It starts with groups of friends or cousins or even colleagues organizing get-togethers to watch the matches of their favourite teams. Some of them probably never watch a game of football, but when it comes to this tournament, everyone joins the party.

"I never watch football but my friends forced me to watch the game between Argentina and South Korea. I can say that I am a football fan now seeing my friends shout and celebrate during after the match was a great thing," said Shabab, an A-levels student.

"I am glad I stayed and watched with all my friends. It's fun to watch in a crowd full of friends."

Choruses of 'woots', 'oh yeahs' and 'aww no' could be heard in every household over popcorn and mugs of coffee till late every night. Fast-food shops probably wait for this month because of the levels of sales they make on pizzas and what not!

Peer outside and the excitement doesn't stop. Ever since the emergence of large-screen projections in various areas of the country in 2006, it has given birth to a new culture of watching World Cup matches. The same groups of friends who'd gather at someone's house would now gather at a place like TSC. This time around, the number of large-screen TVs have gone up around Dhaka as well as in divisional headquarters.

But with a large number of people watching these matches, there runs the risk of innocent arguments about disallowed goals, red cards and off-sides being turned into fights and altercations.

With the constant nuisance of power failures during the matches in every neighbourhood, the large-screens actually offer a better option as generators are put up in case of load-shedding.

Curses that could be heard in houses when the power cuts rudely interrupt the matches are not so usual outside.

Places like Nando's and the Bench became high in demand for this reason. Big screens were set up in these cafes with generator facilities for uninterrupted matches.

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**Nadal retakes crown in style**

AFP, London



Rafael Nadal reclaimed the Wimbledon men's singles title on Sunday, putting in a dominating performance to beat Tomas Berdych 6-3, 7-5, 6-4 in the final.

The Spanish world number one was too good for the Czech 12th seed on Centre Court and was rarely troubled as he won his second championship at the All England Club.

In securing his eighth Grand Slam, Nadal went level with Andre Agassi, Jimmy Connors, Ivan Lendl, Fred Perry and Ken Rosewall.

And with Switzerland's Roger Federer showing signs of weakness, Nadal could easily go on to eclipse their efforts.

Furthermore, the "King of Clay" underlined

his mastery on all surfaces by completing his second French Open-Wimbledon back-to-back double, winning both finals in three sets.

Former Wimbledon champions Bjorn Borg, Ashley Cooper, Neale Fraser, Jan Kodes -- the only Czech man to win the title -- and Budge Patty were in the Royal Box on Centre Court to see Nadal reclaim his crown.

Nadal went into the match with a 7-3 head-to-head lead, having won their last six clashes, all in straight sets.

Undeclared at Wimbledon since the 2007 final, Nadal won the 2008 title by beating Federer in an epic five-set tussle, but could not defend it last year, due to the chronic knee problems that he is still not rid of.

But this was a much more straightforward victory than his extraordinary battle with Federer here two years ago.

Nadal was tested in the early rounds of the tournament, but upped his game from the fourth round onwards, always having too much for every opponent thrown his way.

The Spaniard came back from two sets to one down in the second and third rounds, but despite losing the first set to Robin Soderling in the quarter-finals, looked unshakable since then, especially in downing Andy Murray in straight sets in the semis.

Berdych, though, had pulled off the shock of the tournament in beating six-time Wimbledon champion Federer in the quarters, then defeated third seed Novak Djokovic in straight sets to earn his first Grand Slam final appearance.

But he could not reproduce those performances this time, being defeated in two hours and 13 minutes.

Nadal walked away with one million pounds (1.5 million dollars, 1.2 million euros), while Berdych collected 500,000 pounds.

Berdych laid down a statement of intent by serving the first game to love, but his service percentages soon waned, allowing Nadal to get into the points and eventually forge an opportunity to break.

In the seventh game, with the fluffy balls taking the edge off the Czech's serve, Nadal earned himself three break points with a superb passing shot, and won the game when Berdych shot wide.

Nadal took the next game to love, piling the pressure on the Czech as he served for the set.

The Spaniard had two set points, and though Berdych boomed down an ace, he hit a return into the net to give Nadal the set.

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**TODAY'S POLL**  
Should Maradona continue as Argentina coach?  
Visit the sports page of [www.thedailystar.net](http://www.thedailystar.net) to cast your vote

**WORLD CUP POLL**  
What is to blame for Brazil's early exit?  
Felipe Melo 62.9%  
Dunga's selection 17.1%  
Dutch dominance 11.4%  
Bad luck 6.7%

**TOTAL VOTES: 203**

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Spain midfielder Xavi (L) vies with Paraguay's midfielder Enrique Vera in the quarterfinal at the Ellis Park stadium in Johannesburg on Saturday.

PHOTO: AFP

**German Attack, Spanish Dreams, Goodbye Argentina**

The Germans have demolished Argentina.

It was one of the most breathtaking displays of attacking football. A score line which reads 4-0 is emphatic by any standards. And that too against a team like Argentina. The player of the match was certainly Phillip Lahm, who gave the German forward line the reassurance to go for the kill. Klose is one goal away from equalling Ronaldo's 15 and another will give him a new place in history. Well celebrations on one side, it was a nightmare for the Argentines. Utter despair for Diego Maradona. Messi cried. The world may have seen the last of the football legend in national colors. A dismaying defeat but it is true that Diego Maradona had inspired Argentina from ruins in the qualifying rounds to the quarterfinals of the World Cup with spirit and innovative football.

In the second group finals of the night, Spain wasn't at their usual best, their short pass football being intercepted by the Paraguayans and Alonso missing a penalty. It was yet again the man with the midas touch, David Villa who netted the winner. Paraguay showed guts to keep the Spanish at bay and even surprised them with swift South American style football. But big match experience let them down.

Now the team list has narrowed down to 4 with Germany against Spain, while the lone South American survival Uruguay will come across Netherlands. The final countdown has begun.