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## Div I T20 cricket

SPORTS REPORTER

Rubel Hawladar hit 72 as Bangladesh Boys posted a 30-run victory over Eskaton Sabuj Sangha in the First Division T20 tournament at the Fatullah Outer Stadium yesterday.

The opener smashed ten fours and one six during his 53-ball knock as Bangladesh Boys scored 174 for seven in 20 overs. Eskaton struggled to cope and were bundled out for 144 runs.

Young Pegasus (112-5) beat Dhaka Wanderers Club (111-8) by five wickets at BKSP, Agrani Bank (120-6) defeated Cricket Coaching (63-5) by 10 runs according to the D/L method at the City Club ground, BKSP (60-0) thrashed Talent Hunt (100-9) by ten wickets according to D/L method at Fatullah Outer Stadium, Rapid Foundation (92-5) beat Azad Sporting Club (79-5) in a rain-curtailed match at BKSP and Baridhara Dazzlers (106-2) registered an 8-wicket victory against Dhanmondi Progiti Sangha (102 all out) at the Dhanmondi Cricket Stadium.

**Afzadi remade T20 captain**

AFP, Lahore

Pakistan on Tuesday re-appointed Shahid Afridi as their Twenty20 captain until 2016, three years after he was removed following a fall out with coach Waqar Younis and the cricket board.

The 34-year-old all-rounder led Pakistan to the semi-finals of the World Twenty20 in 2010 and then to the same stage of the World Cup (50 overs) a year later.

But after the tour of the West Indies in May 2011 where Pakistan won the one-day series 3-2, he developed differences with Waqar and then Pakistan Cricket Board (PCB) chairman Ijaz Butt and was removed.



PHOTO: AFP

Chelsea striker Diego Costa (2nd from L) smiles during training at Stoke D'Abernon yesterday ahead of their Champions League encounter against Schalke.

**MSC win, Abahani held**

SPORTS REPORTER

Mohammedan SC got their first victory under their belt in the Airtel U-18 Football Tournament while Abahani shared points against Brothers Union in the two matches to take place yesterday.

Mohammedan, who were held to a goalless draw by Brothers Union in their opening match, beat Feni Soccer Club by 2-1 goals at the Bangabandhu National Stadium yesterday. Nizam gave Mohammedan a 22nd-minute lead, which was doubled by Sadek in the 70th minute. Jafor reduced the arrears for Feni in the 89th minute.

In the second match of the day, Abahani played out a 2-2 draw with Brothers Union. Shahriar Bappy and Sohanur Rahman scored for the All Oranges while Monzurul Islam and Nayeem Islam netted for the Sky Blues.

**Zidane eyes France role**

AFP, Marseille

Former France captain Zinedine Zidane, currently coach of the Real Madrid reserve side, admitted Tuesday he would consider a coaching job with his native France.

The former World Player of the Year worked as Carlo Ancelotti's assistant as Real won the Champions League and Copa del Rey last season and is following in the footsteps of Pep Guardiola by beginning his career in management in the Spanish third tier.

"I'm ambitious. Now I'm a coach I say to myself 'why not be national coach?'" Zidane, 42, said in an interview published Tuesday in the daily La Provence newspaper.

"I love the France team, I wore this jersey. That doesn't mean to say that I can be coach, but from the moment I went over to the other side of the fence it's obviously a possibility."

# English face German challenge

AFP, Paris



English heavyweights Chelsea and Manchester City get their Champions League campaigns off the mark on Wednesday against German rivals Schalke 04 and Bayern Munich, with Paris Saint German star Zlatan Ibrahimovic returning to his old club Ajax and Spanish giants Barcelona also in action.

### BAYERN MUNICH v MAN CITY

Five-time winners Bayern, who made a third consecutive European semifinal last season, face off against English Premier League winners Manchester City for the third time in four years in the group stage starting in Munich.

City came from two goals down to end Bundesliga champions Bayern's record ten-game run of Champions League wins last season. Both teams finished level on points with Bayern coming out on top after their 3-1 win at City.

Bayern eliminated Arsenal in the last 16 and City's neighbours Manchester United in the quarterfinals, before losing to eventual

champions Real Madrid 5-0 on aggregate in the semifinals.

### ROMA v CSKA MOSCOW

Roma coach Rudi Garcia is set to hand former Barcelona midfielder Seydou Keita his full debut when the Giallorossi end a four-year absence from the Champions League by hosting CSKA Moscow.

Malian international Keita, who has come off the bench in two league wins so far, is set to step in for the suspended Daniele De Rossi.

### BARCELONA v APOEL NICOSIA

New Barcelona coach Luis Enrique's European campaign debuts with La Liga runners-up hosting Cypriot outfit Apoel, competing in the group stage for the third time and quarterfinalists in 2011/12.

Last season the Catalans failed to reach at least the semifinals for the first time since 2007 being stopped in the quarterfinals by eventual runners-up Atletico Madrid.

### AJAX v PSG

Dutch champions Ajax, who won the last of their four European titles two decades ago, face a potentially tricky test at home against

last season's quarterfinalists Paris Saint-Germain.

The Amsterdam outfit will also have to contend with their former Swedish striker Zlatan Ibrahimovic, now an international star 13 years after he joined Ajax, as they bid to survive the group stage for the first time since 2006.

### CHELSEA v SCHALKE 04

In-form Premier League leaders Chelsea, with maximum points on the domestic front after four games, will be looking to repeat last season's display against Schalke 04 whom they beat 3-0 home and away.

Bolstered by new signings Diego Costa and Cesc Fabregas, Chelsea are favourites to advance past the group stages as they bid for second title after 2012.

Chelsea coach Jose Mourinho is also bidding to become the first coach to win the European title with three different clubs after Porto (2004) and Inter Milan (2010).

### MARIBOR v SPORTING LISBON

Resurgent Sporting Lisbon return to the Champions League group stage after a six-

year absence with Nani among a new-look side bolstered by 11 new signings who open against Slovenian champions NK Maribor, themselves back in Europe after 15 years.

### ATHLET BILBAO v SHAKHTAR DONETS

Athletic return to the Champions League group stage for just the second time and the first in 16 years after their 4-2 aggregate victory over Napoli in qualifying last month and are hopeful of making it out of a group which also includes Porto and BATE Borisov.

The Basque side have struggled in La Liga this season with just three points from three games, while Shakhtar have notched up six consecutive victories in their league despite playing their home games in the western Ukrainian city of Lviv because of unrest in the Ukraine.

### PORTO v BATE BORISOV

Portuguese side Porto will be looking to put their struggles at home last season behind them when host Belarus outfit BATE Borisov, who are in the group stage for the third time in four seasons.

# Four facts

AFP, Paris

### UEFA CASH SCORE UP

-- UEFA estimates that it will make gross commercial revenue of EUR1.34 billion (\$1.73 billion) from the 2014-15 Champions League and the European Super Cup. Up to EUR530 million from commercial and media contracts will go to competing clubs. The winner of the final in Berlin next May will get EUR37.4 million on top of their market pool share.

### BAD NEWS FOR REAL MADRID

-- In the Champions League era, no team has won the title two years running and that is bad news for Real Madrid who were European champions for the 10th time in May. AC Milan in the old European Cup in 1990 were the last team to win back-to-back titles. Since then AC Milan, Ajax, Juventus and Manchester United have all reached the final but lost the year after winning the trophy.

### MESSI AND RONALDO SET FOR GOAL RECORD

-- Lionel Messi of Barcelona and Cristiano Ronaldo of Real Madrid will be looking to become the all-time top scorer in the Champions League. Both are on 67 goals, four behind former Real Madrid star Raul who scored 71 goals between 1995 and 2011. Ronaldo scored a record 17 goals for a Champions League season last year.

### ABSENT FRIENDS

-- Manchester United will be absent from the Champions League for the first time since 1996-97 and the club estimates it will cost them £48 million (\$78 million). This year will see Real Madrid equal United's record of consecutive participations -- the Spanish side have been ever present since 1997-98.

# Jose hails Cesc

AFP, London



Jose Mourinho has hailed Cesc Fabregas as the driving force behind Chelsea striker Diego Costa's blistering start to the season.

Costa has adapted seamlessly to life in the Premier League following his £32 million (\$53.1 million) move from Atletico Madrid in the close-season and the Spain international took his goal tally to seven from just four matches with a hat-trick in Chelsea's 4-2 win over Swansea on Saturday.

Blues boss Mourinho is delighted with Costa's predatory finishing and combative style, but he believes the probing passes of Spain midfielder Fabregas have been just as instrumental in the Brazil-born star's success.

Mourinho's decision to bring Fabregas back to the Premier League in a £27 million switch following an underwhelming spell at Barcelona is also paying early dividends, with the former Arsenal playmaker providing assists for two of Costa's goals against Swansea.

Now the dynamic duo will take their promising partnership into Europe for the first time on Wednesday when the Blues host Schalke in their opening Champions League Group G fixture and Mourinho expects Costa to benefit from more Fabregas magic against the German club.

"To play with Fabregas is the dream of

every striker," Mourinho told Chelsea TV.

"The guy sees the movement, sees the pass, is not selfish, makes always the right choice."

Mourinho's praise must be music to Fabregas's ears but, publicly at least, he was keen to play down his own contribution when asked about his form and the link to Costa's flying start.

"Just trying to do my job. That's it," he said.

"We have a good team, strong, young, with a lot of courage. We showed it again against Swansea."

After bemoaning Chelsea's lack of cutting edge for much of last season, Mourinho has no complaints about the brilliant attacking play which has brought 15 goals in four games as the Blues raced to the top of the Premier League.

But, unusually for a team managed by the traditionally cautious Mourinho, they have conceded five times in the last two games and the former Real Madrid manager admits he is trying to identify the cause of Chelsea's defensive malaise.

"I don't like (conceding), but we were analysing the goals against Everton and trying to identify the mistakes and we'll do the same thing with these two goals (against Swansea)," said Mourinho, who may be without Didier Drogba on Wednesday after the Ivory Coast striker suffered an ankle injury.

# Pique backs attackers

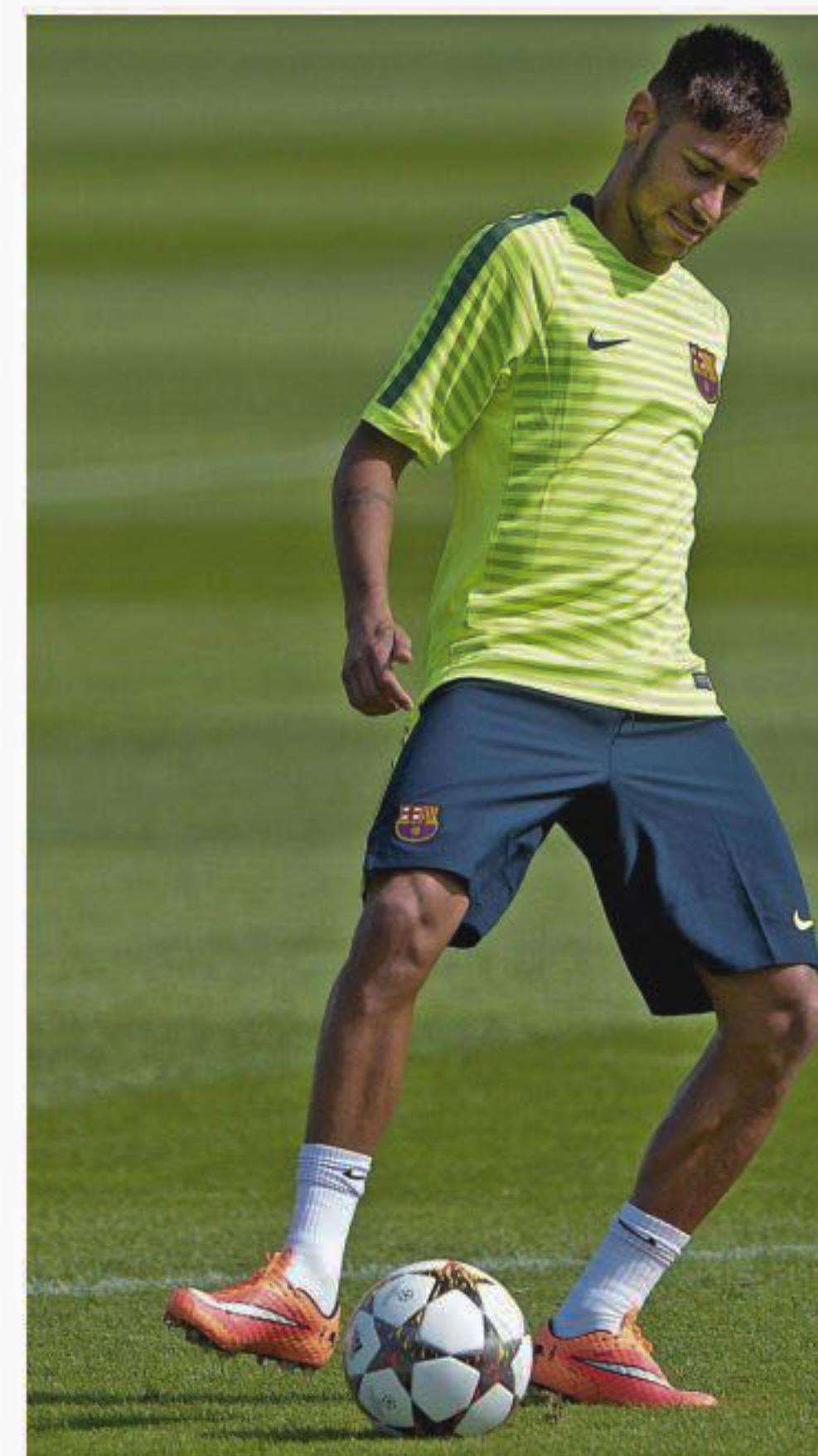
GOAL.COM

Barcelona defender Gerard Pique believes Lionel Messi and Neymar have been in superb form in the opening weeks of the 2014-15 campaign and is delighted to be playing in the same team as both attackers.

The Brazil international netted two goals in his side's 2-0 win over Athletic Bilbao at the weekend, with Messi providing the assist for both strikes, and Pique has hailed the duo's displays so far this term.

"Messi and Neymar are as good as ever. They both have a lot of quality and when they connect it's amazing. They are two of the best in the world and they play together," the Spain defender said at a press conference.

Barcelona has collected nine points from their opening three games in La Liga and already hold a six-point advantage over arch-rivals Real Madrid.



Barcelona star Neymar takes part in a training session in Sant Joan Despi yesterday on the eve of their Champions League match against Apoel.



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