

TEN CRICKET
New Zealand v Pakistan
Third ODI (D/N)
Live from 5:00pm

STAR SPORTS 2
Indian Super League
Kolkata v Goa
Live from 7:30pm

Primera Liga
Atletico Madrid v Villarreal
Live from 12:00am (Monday)
Real Sociedad v Bilbao
Live from 2:00am (Monday)

STAR SPORTS 4
English Premiership
Man United v Liverpool
Live from 7:30pm

Swansea City v Tottenham
Live from 10:00pm

STAR SPORTS 1

DAY'S EVENT

Dhaka Premier League
Legends of Rupganj v Sk Jamal

Venue: SBNCS
Prime Doleshwar Partex

Venue: BKSP-3
Mohammedan v Kalabagan KC

Venue: KSOAS
Time: 9:00am

'Foreign coach as soon as possible'

SPORTS REPORTER

 Bangladesh Football Federation (BFF) president Kazi Salauhuddin is eager to see a foreign coach take charge of the national team ahead of the Bangabandhu Gold Cup in January. The BFF boss disclosed his desire to media after a discussion with the interim coach Saiful Bari Titu at his office.

"I personally believe that it's impossible for our local coaches to handle the national team," said the BFF president.

"Titu (Saiful Bari) also suggested that we should hire a foreign coach and we are looking to hire one as soon as possible, preferably before the Bangabandhu Gold Cup," said Salauhuddin, however he also said that they have not yet gotten into discussions with any foreign coaches.

The BFF officials had, earlier this month, held talks with Slovenian coach Ermin Siljaj about appointing him on a trial basis, but the BFF boss yesterday informed that the talks collapsed as the Slovenian's demanded salary was way beyond their anticipated amount.

When contacted, Titu said that there are certain issues which made him feel the need to suggest the appointment of a foreign coach as early as possible, even though the interim coach did not disclose his reasons for such a suggestion.

"It's not as if I am not capable for this job or I am running away from the responsibility, but there are certain issues I told the president which I'm not willing to share with the media," said Titu.

Titu was appointed as interim coach after the termination of Dutch coach Lodewijk De Kruif in the third week of October and has guided the national team in the two-match FIFA friendly series against Sri Lanka in October, where Bangladesh won one match and drew the other.

Titu was previously in charge of the national team twice -- from February to August 2010 and from September to December 2012 -- on an interim basis on both occasions.

Busan I'Park eager to play

SPORTS REPORTER

 South Korea's top-tier football club, Busan I'Park, have showed their interest to play a friendly match either against Bangladesh national team or a top club of Bangladesh, through a letter sent to the Bangladesh Football Federation (BFF) on December 8.

The letter, sent through the Korea Football Association, stated that the four-time K League champions and one-time champions of AFC Champions League, are interested to play a friendly match and asked for a reply from the BFF.

The BFF general secretary, Abu Nayeem Shohag, informed that this proposal came as a part of the relationship between the two football federations and that they would take a decision on the proposal after analysing the feasibility of whether to host or play an away match, be it the national team or a Premier League club.

SAFF secretariat moving to Dhaka

SPORTS REPORTER

The secretariat of South Asian Football Federation (SAFF) is set to move from New Delhi to Dhaka and former general secretary of Bangladesh Football Federation, Anwarul Haque Helal, is expected to take up the vacant post of general secretary of the regional football governing body.

BFF president Kazi Salauhuddin, who is also the president of SAFF, informed reporters yesterday that he is taking steps to bring the SAFF secretariat to Dhaka so that he can oversee its activities closely.

"The SAFF secretariat is moving to Dhaka within a very short time and I am taking consent of the seven member nations in this regard," said the BFF and SAFF president while talking to reporters at his BFF office yesterday.

Meanwhile, Salauhuddin has gained majority approval for appointing Helal as the new general secretary of SAFF, after the position became vacant due to the resignation of Alberto Colaco following his suspension by world football's governing body FIFA on November 27, on charges of taking bribes during a FIFA executive committee election in 2009.

"I have already discussed the matter with the presidents of the football federations of Sri Lanka, Pakistan and Bhutan, and they have all given their consent to appointing Helal as the new general secretary of SAFF. I am expecting to complete the appointment procedure within December," said Salauhuddin.



Real Madrid superstar Cristiano Ronaldo celebrates one of his two goals against Almeria during their Primera Liga encounter at the Juegos Mediterraneos Stadium on Friday.

PHOTO:
AFP

LA LIGA Barca fire blanks

REUTERS, Madrid

Barcelona lost ground on Real Madrid when they were held to a 0-0 draw at rain-lashed Getafe on Saturday and slipped four points behind the La Liga leaders.

Barca forward Lionel Messi was unable to convert the few chances that came his way and add to his 13 La Liga goals this season although he came closest for the visitors when he curled a 52nd-minute free kick against the crossbar.

Barca goalkeeper Claudio Bravo had little to do apart from leaping superbly to his left to palm a shot from Getafe forward Angel Lafita around the post in the 33rd minute.

Real's perfect twenty

AFP, Madrid



Two late Cristiano Ronaldo goals helped Real Madrid make it 20 consecutive victories as they saw off Almeria 4-1 at the Estadio de los Juegos Mediterraneos on Friday.

In their final La Liga game of 2014, Los Blancos stretched their lead over Barcelona, who travel to Getafe on Saturday, at the top of the table to five points.

First-half goals from Isco and Gareth Bale either side of Verza's stunning equaliser sent the visitors in ahead at half-time, but they needed a big save from captain Iker Casillas when he parried Verza's penalty on the hour mark.

Ronaldo then sealed the win when he turned home crosses from Karim Benzema and Dani Carvajal to take his La Liga tally to 25 goals this season.

The hosts, with caretaker coach Miguel Rivera in charge following Francisco Rodriguez's dismissal earlier this week, came out of the blocks quickly,

and almost made the perfect start.

First Pepe and then Dani Carvajal blocked goalbound close-range efforts from Fernando Soriano and Sebastian Dubarbier within the first three minutes.

After gaining a foothold in the game, Madrid then saw a Toni Kroos volley from outside the area deflected onto the bar by Fran Velez, before Bale failed to find an unmarked Benzema in the six-yard box after breaking down the Andalusian side's left on the quarter-hour mark.

With the hosts defending resolutely, Madrid's frustrations began to show, with Bale guilty of a silly challenge that brought a yellow card from referee Alfonso Alvarez Izquierdo.

As ever with Madrid, the calibre of player they possess means they can conjure a goal out of nothing, and that is exactly what happened as they took the lead on 33 minutes.

Benzema's cross was too long for Ronaldo, but Isco was able to control the ball on his chest before curling an effort beyond the outstretched Ruben Martinez in the Almeria goal from the edge of the box.

This brought a reaction from the home side, who pushed on aggressively and were rewarded for their pressure seven minutes from the break as Raphael Varane's headed clearance fell to Verza, who fired a first-time effort into the bottom corner 25 metres from goal to spark elation in the stands.

The joy was short-lived, however, as less than three minutes later the league leaders retook the lead through a Bale header to go in at half-time in front.

Eight minutes after the restart, Bale had a chance to double the visitors' advantage as he produced a trademark burst through the heart of the Almeria defence, only for his right-footed effort to fly past Ruben's right-hand post.

Moments later Ruben then produced a full-length stop from a Ronaldo effort as the European champions sought to put the game to bed.

While they only trailed by one goal, the hosts always remained in the game, and they had the opportunity to draw level 15 minutes into the second period as Marcelo brought down Edgar Mendez in the area, but Casillas guessed correctly and parried Verza's spot-kick to safety.

CHAMPIONS TROPHY Pakistan meet Germany in final

AFP, Bhubaneswar

Pakistan edged out hosts India 4-3 in a thrilling semi-final on Saturday to set up a Champions Trophy field hockey title clash against Olympic gold medallists Germany in Bhubaneswar.

Arslan Qadir was Pakistan's hero, scoring his team's first goal and also netting the winner 90 seconds from the end to silence a partisan 7,000-strong Indian crowd at the Kalinga stadium.

The victory enabled coach Shahnaz Sheikh's men to avenge the loss to their arch-rivals in the Asian Games final in South Korea in October that denied them a direct entry to the 2016 Olympics.

The final on Sunday will be Pakistan's first bid for a major world title since losing to the Netherlands in the Champions Trophy final in Lahore in 1998.

Germany quashed Australia's bid to win a sixth successive title by ousting the world champions 3-2 in Saturday's first semifinal.

BUNDESLIGA Bayern thrash Augsburg

AFP, Berlin

Bayern Munich underlined their status as Bundesliga champions-in-waiting as Saturday's 4-0 thrashing of Augsburg moved them 10 points clear.

With second-placed Wolfsburg playing Paderborn on Sunday, Bayern seized the chance to extend their lead and remain on course for a third straight title.

After a goalless first-half, Bayern burst into life after the interval as Arjen Robben netted twice while Medhi Benatia and Robert Lewandowski were also on target.

Despite the drubbing, Bayern's Bavarian neighbours Augsburg remain third in the table.

Chelsea, Man City hold course

AFP, London



Leaders Chelsea and nearest rivals Manchester City preserved the status quo at the top of the Premier League table with a pair of unspectacular victories on Saturday.

Eden Hazard and Diego Costa scored as Chelsea won 2-0 at home to Hull City, who had Tom Huddlestone sent off, while champions City beat Leicester City 1-0 despite losing Edin Dzeko and Vincent Kompany to injury.

Chelsea remain three points clear of City, who opened up an eight-point lead over Manchester United ahead of Louis van Gaal's side's home game with Liverpool on Sunday.

West Ham United squandered an opportunity to claim third place after being held to a 1-1 draw at Sunderland, while fifth-place Southampton's downturn in form

continued as they fell to a fourth straight loss at Burnley.

Arsenal, who began the weekend in sixth place, can move level on points with Southampton if they win at home to Newcastle United later on Saturday.

A minor injury to Thibaut Courtois meant that Petr Cech made his first league start of the season in goal for Chelsea, who were bidding to bounce back from last weekend's 2-1 defeat at Newcastle.

Chelsea's cross was too long for Ronaldo, but Isco was able to control the ball on his chest before curling an effort beyond the outstretched Ruben Martinez in the Almeria goal from the edge of the box.

Hull lost Michael Dawson to injury shortly after, with Alex Bruce coming on, and saw Huddlestone given his marching orders on the hour for a sly stamp on Filipe Luis.

Costa made it 2-0 eight minutes later, gathering a pass from the influential Hazard

RESULTS

Burnley 1 (Barnes 73) Southampton 0
Chelsea 2 (Hazard 7, Costa 68) Hull 0

Crystal Palace 1 (McArthur 11) Stoke 1 (Crouch 13)

Leicester 0 Manchester City 1 (Lampard 40)

Sunderland 1 (Gomez 22-pen) West Ham 1 (Downing 29)

and drilling a shot past Allan McGregor to claim his 12th goal of the campaign.

Manchester City registered a seventh successive win in all competitions, but victory at the King Power Stadium came at the cost of injuries to striker Dzeko and captain Kompany.

Having previously lost top scorer Sergio Aguero to a knee injury that will keep him out until next year, City saw Dzeko withdraw from the starting XI after hurting himself in the warm-up.

It meant that 18-year-old Spaniard Jose Pozo started up front on his own, but after a laboured start, the champions went ahead in the 40th minute when Frank Lampard tucked away a pass from Samir Nasri.

It was the former Chelsea midfielder's 175th league goal, taking him level with Arsenal great Thierry Henry in fourth place in the all-time Premier League scoring chart.

But the afternoon ended on a sour note for Manuel Pellegrini's side when Kompany, who was making his return from a hamstring injury, had to go off after apparently aggravating the problem in the latter stages.

West Ham remain fourth after their draw at Sunderland. Stewart Downing equalised for the visitors with a low, deflected shot shortly after Jordi Gomez had put the hosts ahead from the penalty spot in the 22nd minute.

Burnley climbed out of the relegation zone by beating Southampton 1-0 at Turf Moor.

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