

<b>What to WATCH</b> <b>DRY'S EVENT</b>	<b>CHANNEL 9 &amp; BTWORLD</b> Bangabandhu Gold Cup Malaysia v Sri Lanka <b>Live from 5:00pm</b> <b>SONY SIX</b> Australian Open	<b>Women's Singles Final</b> <b>Live from 2:30pm</b> <b>STAR SPORTS1</b> English Premiership Liverpool v West Ham <b>Live from 9:00pm</b>	<b>STAR SPORTS 4</b> Asia Cup Final Korea v Australia <b>Live from 3:00pm</b> English Premiership Hull City v Newcastle	<b>Live from 6:45pm</b> Man United v Leicester City <b>Live from 9:00pm</b> Chelsea v Man City <b>Live from 11:30pm</b>	<b>STAR SPORTS HD1</b> Primera Liga Real Madrid v Real Sociedad <b>Live from 9:00pm</b> <b>STAR SPORTS2</b> Primera Liga	<b>Eibar v Atletico Madrid</b> <b>Live from 11:00pm</b> Granada v Elche <b>Live from 1:00am (Sunday)</b> Celta de Vigo v Cordoba <b>Live from 3:00am (Sunday)</b>
	<b>Bangabandhu Gold Cup</b>	<b>Malaysia v Sri Lanka</b>				

# 'Forget everything and fight'

ATIQUA ANAM from Sylhet

When Malaysia U-23 take on Sri Lanka in the second match of Group A of the Bangabandhu Gold Cup at the Sylhet District Stadium today, the keenest observers of the match will probably be the Bangladesh team. The beleaguered hosts, who suffered a 0-1 defeat against Malaysia in the opening match on Thursday, were trying to pick themselves up and concentrate on the job ahead, which is the crucial match against Sri Lanka in Dhaka on Monday.

The Bangladesh players -- all tense and somber -- left Sylhet early in the afternoon and started training at the Sheikh Jamal Dhanmondi Club ground ahead of Monday's game. Before leaving the northeastern city, the Bangladesh players and coaching staff were trying to look for answers for their deflating defeat. Some felt it was a psychological pressure; some blamed the lack of scoring ability, while others tried to forget the past and looked forward to a good outing on Monday.

Zahid Hossain, arguably the best performer for Bangladesh on Thursday, believes they should not find faults with mentality or tactical approach. To him, it was a simple case of not everyone putting their hands up.

"There was nothing wrong with the coach's gameplan. It was a collective failure on the part of players, and specifically of some senior players. The midfield didn't function particularly well," Zahid said without naming anyone.

The nippy winger, who has been in terrific form since his return to the national fold in September last year, also believes that on strength alone they should be the favourites against Sri Lanka.

"I have confidence that we can beat Sri Lanka. If we can't beat them, we shouldn't be playing at all," opined Zahid.

Skipper Mamunul Islam was not as dismissive of the opponents as his teammate, but felt they have hardly any choice but to win the do-or-die battle, or else it could be the end.

"I had promised someone that we would reach the semi-finals. If we can't do that, I'll be the first to surrender and maybe even give up," opined Mamunul.

The ace midfielder was not at his best on Thursday and felt that they were at a relative disadvantage against the Malaysian team as far as the availability of information is concerned, a factor which should not come into play for the match against familiar foes Sri Lanka.

The two sides met most recently in a two-match FIFA Friendly series in Jessore and Rajshahi; the first one ended in a draw and the second one was narrowly snatched by the hosts. Even though the hosts dominated both matches, there was a constant threat from the Sri Lankan side in the form of set-pieces. Sri Lanka midfielder Nalaka Roshan showed his effectiveness from free-kicks from anywhere near the edge of the box. One of his free-kicks in Jessore ended up in the back of the Bangladesh net, while another hit the woodwork in Rajshahi.

While admitting that they have been instructed not to concede any silly fouls in or around the danger zone, Mamunul said their primary focus was to dust off the defeat and summon the confidence to fight: "After the defeat, I spoke to my teammates and told them one thing, 'let's forget everything and fight'."

## SYLHETE

SPORTS REPORTER from Sylhet

The Bangladeshi sports journalists are already familiar with the good, the not-so-good and the ugly sides of Sri Lanka coach Nikola Kavazovic. The Serbian, who had stormed out of a post-match press conference after a 0-1 defeat against Bangladesh in Rajshahi in October last year, came up with his best at an official press conference yesterday. Waiting for Mamunul Islam to end his speech, the Serbian offered a warm hug to the Bangladesh skipper and enquired about the status of the knee-injury Mamunul had suffered during the Rajshahi match. Kavazovic had also enquired about Mamunul's troublesome knee after that match, only to storm out abruptly from the press conference a little later.

## TODAY'S GAME

MALAYASIA (154) **V** SRI LANKA (172)

**HEAD-TO-HEAD RECORD**  
**MATCHES: 7**

MALAYASIA WON: **6**  
 SRI LANKA WON: **1**

"If I didn't believe we could win against Malaysia, we would have stayed in the hotel. But I don't expect to win against Malaysia due to the current condition of the team. If we beat Malaysia tomorrow it will be some kind of a miracle"

---Nikola Kavazovic, Sri Lanka coach

"I don't have any idea about Sri Lanka; I have never seen them play. But I would take tomorrow's match against Sri Lanka very seriously"

## UAE finish 3rd

REUTERS, Newcastle

The United Arab Emirates overcame a 10-man Iraq 3-2 in an action-packed Asian Cup third-placed playoff on Friday to complete an impressive tournament for Mahdi Ali's side.

Ahmed Khalil netted twice before Ali Mabkhout converted a second-half penalty for his fifth of the tournament to take him top of the scorers' charts with only Saturday's final between hosts Australia and South Korea to come in Sydney.

UAE playmaker Omar Abdulrahman was again at the heart of his side's good play, with two brilliant assists for Khalil.

The opener came in the 16th minute when Abdulrahman controlled a long ball from deep and played a one-two with Mabkhout before sliding an inviting pass for Khalil to slot home under the onrushing Mohammed Hameed in the Iraq goal.



Bangladesh captain Mamunul Islam (R) leads the team out of the Roseview Hotel in Sylhet on their way to the airport. The team returned to Dhaka yesterday, where they trained ahead of Monday's Bangabandhu Gold Cup match against Sri Lanka.

PHOTO: STAR

# Thailand's great escape Blockbuster final

SPORTS REPORTER from Sylhet

The Thailand Under-23 team came into the Bangabandhu Gold Cup as one of the pre-tournament favourites. Seeded second as per the FIFA ranking of senior sides, the Thais finished fourth in the Asian Games last year and are the defending champions of SEA Games' football competition. On the other hand, the Singapore Under-23 team were eliminated from the group stages of Asian Games and were considered as the weakest side in Group B.

So when the two sides met in the opening fixture of Group B at the Sylhet District Stadium yesterday, Thailand were expected to cruise to a comfortable victory. They did look comfortable with a 2-0 lead in the first half, only to make heavy weather of the game by conceding two clumsy goals early in the second half. And it was an opportunistic left-footed strike from Thailand skipper Parnpak Pakorn in the 80th-minute strike which got the favourites out of jail and earned them full points.

Thailand coach Phomrat Choktavee breathed a sigh of relief at the post-match press conference as he felt that his team had made things hard for themselves.

"We were lucky to come out with a win. We played well in the first half as we took the two-goal lead. But I must give credit to the young Singapore team who pressed hard in the second half and put the pressure on our defenders," exclaimed the Thai coach.

The way the match started with the Thai

forwards penetrating the Singapore defence, almost at will, it seemed the match would end up with a cricket score. Striker Sensomaia Adisak gave the Thais the lead in the fifth minute as he found himself completely unmarked inside the box and headed in a swerving corner kick. The lead was doubled on the half-hour mark when skipper Pakorn darted in from the right wing, danced past a defender and skipped over the challenge of another, before squaring it off for striker Srinawong Chayawat, who stabbed the ball into the back of the net.

But the scenario changed completely within eight minutes of the second half as unheralded Singapore attackers forced two silly mistakes from the Thai defence. Substitute defender Saipanya Tanakon's miscued clearance gifted Singapore forward Iqram Rifqi a 48th minute goal before Taufik bin Suprano brought Singapore parity, thanks to some schoolboy defending from the Thais.

Just as it looked like Singapore would hold their illustrious neighbours to a famous draw, the skipper came to the rescue with a grounded shot from outside the box, evading the outstretched hands of the Singapore goalkeeper.

Singapore coach Richard Bok Kok Chuan was nevertheless satisfied with his team's effort, even though he felt it was a chance great opportunity missed.

"We were a bit sloppy in the first half, but put pressure on the opposition to score two goals in the second. Overall I am happy with my team's performance because Thailand are a very strong side," explained Singapore coach.

AFP, Sydney



Top-scorers Australia will try to unlock the Asian Cup's stingiest defence on Saturday when they meet South Korea in a blockbuster final between two of the region's heavyweights.

The Socceroos are desperate to win a first Asian title on home soil, but to do so they will have to find a way through a Korean rearguard which has not conceded all tournament.

It could be a case of who blinks first as Australia look to be crowned kings of Asia, after defecting from Oceania in 2006, and South Korea try to end a hoodoo stretching back a staggering 55 years.

Runners-up to Japan in 2011, Australia have hit 12 goals in five games and they will start as slight favourites, despite losing 1-0 to South Korea in the group phase.

Coach Ange Postecoglou opted to rest talisman Tim Cahill for that game in Brisbane and he was robbed of captain Mile Jedinak through injury, but he insisted the result would count for little with the stakes now so high.

"Previous records go out the window," he told reporters on Friday. "It will be the team able to deal with whatever may happen who wins, because finals never run to script."

Cahill has netted three times so far, including a venomous overhead kick in the quarter-final win over China, and is likely to be central to the plot in one of the biggest games in Australia's history.

"It just takes one second for someone to switch off," said the former Everton forward. "Hopefully I can be on point to make it count."

Both teams possess players capable of delivering a knockout blow, with South Korea hoping golden boy Son Heung-Min can weave his magic as they seek to win a first Asian Cup since 1960 having already defied the odds by reaching the final.

### HEAD-TO-HEAD

Matches played - **26**  
 Australia wins - **9**  
 South Korea wins - **7**

## Costa gets 3-game ban

AFP, London

Chelsea striker Diego Costa was banned for three matches with immediate effect after being found guilty of a violent conduct charge the Football Association announced Friday.

The Spain international was suspended after a regulatory commission ruled he had stamped on the ankle of Liverpool's Emre Can in the 12th minute of Tuesday's League Cup semi-final second leg at Stamford Bridge, which Chelsea won 1-0 to complete a 2-1 aggregate victory.

There is no right of appeal and Costa will now miss the Premier League leaders Chelsea's match at home to title rivals Manchester City on Saturday and subsequent games against Aston Villa and Everton.

## 2nd baby boy for Shakira and Pique

AFP, Barcelona

Colombian pop star Shakira has given birth to her second child with Barcelona footballer Gerard Pique in Spain, their family said on Friday.

Shakira, 37, gave birth to baby Sacha late Thursday in the Teknon clinic in Barcelona, a family source told AFP.

"He was born last night. Both mother and baby are well," the source said on Friday. "It seems the baby will be called Sacha."

Sacha, whose birth weight has not yet been announced, is a younger brother for the celebrity couple's first child Milan, who turned two a week ago.

The clinic had been surrounded by reporters for several days in anticipation of the birth, which Spanish media reported was by Caesarean section.

Spanish international defender Pique, 27, met Shakira while she was filming a video of her song "Waka Waka" for the South Africa World Cup in 2010.

Her other hits include "Whenever, Wherever" and "Hips Don't Lie" with rapper Wyclef Jean.

**Talk Show**  
 Watch every Saturday at 9.00pm **RMG Talk With Mehdi Mahub**

**At 0°C temperature water forms into ice but how safe is it to preserve food in freezer made for ice only?**

**-18°C temperature and more storage must be ensured in freezer part for Bangladeshi weather & food habit.**

**NANO Healthcare Technology in Walton Refrigerators**

- Preserved foods stay fresh for a longer period
- Protects food from harmful bacteria
- Silver Nano keeps interior of fridge fresh & healthy
- Prevents bad odour

**DECS Technology in Walton Refrigerators**

Ensures cooling for longer time. Keeps food fresh, healthy & food value intact.

Achieved by Walton HL

**ISO 9001 : 2008, ISO 14001 : 2004 & OHSAS 18001 : 2007 Certified Company**

waltonbd.com

**Helpline 16267**