

DAY'S EVENT

National Cricket League
(Four-Day Match, Day-4)
Rajshahi v Rangpur
Venue: BKSP 3
Chittagong v Barisal
Venue: BKSP 2
Sylhet v Dhaka Metro
Venue: SBNSC

Dhaka v Khulna
Venue: KSOAS
Time: 10:00am
Federation Cup
Sk Russel v Ctg Abahani
Third Quarterfinal
Time: 5:15pm
Venue: BNS

KAKA TO LEAD ORLANDO

Brazilian playmaker Kaka has been appointed captain of Orlando City when the new club makes its Major League Soccer debut next week. The team announced Tuesday that Kaka will take on the role when Orlando plays host to fellow MLS expansion newcomer New York City FC on March 8 at the Citrus Bowl. "Kaka has demonstrated great leadership both on the field and in the locker room since the start, and the other players have naturally looked to his guidance throughout pre-season, so he was the natural pick to skipper the club," Orlando coach Adrian Heath said.



2021 Confed Cup moved from Qatar

AFP, Doha
The 2021 Confederations Cup will not be held in Qatar, FIFA announced on Wednesday.

Jerome Valcke, FIFA secretary general, said the tournament will be played "in an Asian country", but Qatar had been ruled out because of its climate.

The tournament, which pits the following year's World Cup hosts and the World Cup holders with the champions of the six FIFA confederations, is traditionally held in the country that will stage the next year's World Cup.

Valcke added that the country that will host the tournament has not yet been decided.

Mash confident

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seems to be a benchmark for this match and it's something that Mashrafe, despite Bangladesh's brittle batting, is confident of reaching. One of the crucial aspects of the ground, as Mashrafe put it, would be to pierce the field and run hard.

Also on the day, Mashrafe visited his Melbourne-based orthopaedic surgeon Dr David Young, who has performed multiple surgeries on the player's knees. It was a must for the player to meet the doctor who he practically owes his career to.

Young has been witness to a number of Mashrafe's comebacks; the question that remains though is whether he will be witnessing one today as well.

Suarez on the double

AFP, Paris



Luis Suarez scored a double on his return to England for the first time since a big money move last summer as Barcelona secured a 2-1 win over Manchester City in their Champions League last 16 first leg clash on Tuesday.

The Uruguayan -- who moved to Barcelona from Liverpool -- struck twice in the first-half to give his side the upper hand heading towards the second leg at the Nou Camp next month.

Sergio Aguero grabbed a goal for City -- though the hosts were soon afterwards reduced to 10 men when Gael Clichy was sent off -- and Joe Hart kept City in it with a last minute penalty save from Lionel Messi.

It leaves City with a glimmer of hope of becoming the first side since Liverpool in 2007 of preventing Barcelona from reaching the last eight.

Suarez, who took his tally to nine goals for Barcelona in 23 appearances in all competitions, admitted he kept Hart's save had the tie alive.

"I think that is a positive thing for them," said Suarez, whose career at Barcelona started belatedly as he served a suspension for biting Italian defender Giorgio Chiellini in last year's World Cup.

"If it had gone in it would have been a different scenario.

"But at 2-1 there's a chance for them."

The other tie of the night saw Juventus beat Borussia Dortmund 2-1 in Turin, in the first meeting between the two sides since the German outfit beat them in the 1997 Champions League final.

Chiellini was at fault for Dortmund's equaliser -- after Carlos Tevez had opened the scoring for the hosts -- as he slipped when in possession and Marco Reus needed no second invitation to score.

The players responded accordingly as impressive Spaniard Alvaro Morata restored Juve's advantage shortly before the half-time break.

RESULTS

Manchester City (ENG) 1 (Aguero 69) **Barcelona (ESP) 2** (Suarez 16, 30)
Juventus (ITA) 2 (Tevez 13, Morata 42) Borussia Dortmund (GER) 1 (Reus 18)



Mohammedan captain Towhidul Alam Sabuj skips past a challenge from Feni Soccer defender Manjur Rahman Manik during their Federation Cup quarterfinal clash at the Bangabandhu National Stadium yesterday.

PHOTO: STAR

MSC in semis

MOHAMMEDAN 2 - 1 FENI SOCCER

SPORTS REPORTER



Mohammedan SC booked a semifinal berth in the Federation Cup, after a gap of one year, as they handed a 2-1 defeat on Feni Soccer Club in the second quarterfinal at the Bangabandhu National Stadium yesterday.

Substitute Biplu Ahmed put the Black and Whites ahead in the 21st minute, ten minutes after coming off the bench, before Guinean forward Ismael Bangoura doubled the lead in the 39th minute to give the Black and Whites complete control over the encounter. Feni Soccer, though, pulled one back through Sohel Mia in the 90th minute, but that goal proved to nothing more than a consolation for last season's Independence Cup runners-up.

After the pulsating first quarterfinal between Sheikh Jamal DC and Brothers Union on Tuesday, many had expected another exciting affair at the big bowl yesterday. But ten-time Federation Cup champions Mohammedan hardly gave their opponents any space to cause an upset.

The Black and Whites, who came into the semifinal on the back of a 2-1 win over Rahmatganj MFS and a 1-1 draw against Brothers Union, kept Feni Soccer defenders busy from the outset and opened up the defence quite a few times through the right wing.

The first goal came when skipper Towhidul Alam Sabuj played in Abu Syed Jewel on the right side and the winger darted into the box to provide a cut-back for unmarked Biplu, who found the back of the net with a low angular drive.

Mohammedan kept pressing and it took them only 18 more minutes to double the lead as Bangoura headed home a rebounder from a free-kick by Habibur Rahman Shohag.

Mohammedan seemingly concentrated on holding their two-goal lead with a defensive strategy in face of all-out attack from Feni Soccer, who struck in the dying minutes when Dawda Ceesay raced into the box from the left to set up Sohel Mia for a simple tap-in.

The third quarterfinal today will feature former champions Sheikh Russel KC and Chittagong Abahani.



Barcelona striker Luis Suarez (R) shoots to score the opening goal against Manchester City during their Champions League round of 16 match at the Etihad Stadium on Tuesday.

PHOTO: AFP

A new lease of life

REUTERS, Turin



Italian football has become something of a refuge for players who have fallen out of favour in other European leagues or are reaching the twilight of their careers.

Players such as Kaka, Mario Balotelli, Patrice Evra, Ashley Cole, Nemanja Vidic, Fernando Torres, Rafael Marquez and Javier Saviola have all moved to Serie A in the last two years, to either revive their careers or squeeze a few more years out of them.

Many, such as Balotelli and Torres, struggle and quickly move on, but there has been

one outstanding success story.

Argentina forward Carlos Tevez, who led Juventus to a 2-1 win over Borussia Dortmund in Tuesday's Champions League tie, has breathed new life into his career since joining the Serie A champions from Manchester City in June 2013.

Worn out after four eventful seasons at City, Tevez was also shunned by then Argentina coach Alejandro Sabella amid speculation that he was considered too much of a disruptive influence.

But it has all gone right at Juventus where the 31-year-old has not looked back since being given a rapturous reception by the supporters and handed the number 10 shirt.

We haven't

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the recent past. It's a World Cup game. It's going to be a pressure game for all of us. So, I mean, as I keep saying, we can't take any team lightly. We've got to set our standards and set our goals high and play every single game as a final or semifinal," said Mathews.

"If we click as a group, I think we can do wonders. It's just that we need to click as a group and try to win games. What's past is past. I think we've got to move on. We've got to take one game at a time," he added.

A case for the

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teams of progressing from the group stages. India and Pakistan, two of the most followed teams in the world -- did not prove to be competitive enough on an odd day or two and were eliminated from the group stages and that reportedly cost the ICC a big fortune. That experience made the game's governing body to shelf the idea of four groups of four teams each, and planning a wield of the axe on the associates.

But should cricket's showpiece event be designed to give indemnity to particular teams just because it would be financially more lucrative? If that is the case, then the idea of fair competition is ruled out in the first place.

Matic ban reduced

AFP, London



Chelsea's Serbian midfielder Nemanja Matic had his ban reduced from three games to two on Tuesday which means he will still miss Sunday's League Cup final against Tottenham at Wembley.

The 26-year-old was shown a straight red card, for pushing Burnley striker Ashley Barnes to the ground, after a violent challenge that Chelsea manager Jose Mourinho said "could have ended his career".

The English Football Association (FA) and their independent regulatory commission reduced the ban although Chelsea's appeal had requested that a suspension be completely overturned.

The club said in a statement that they were "extremely disappointed and frustrated" that one of their key players must still serve a ban.

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