



# What to WATCH

**NEO SPORTS**  
French Open  
Women's Singles Final  
Live from 7:00pm

**TEN CRICKET**  
West Indies v Australia  
First Test, Day 4  
Live from 8:00pm

**TEN ACTION**  
UEFA Champions League  
FINAL  
Juventus v Barcelona  
Live from 12:45am  
(Sunday)

# Clash for the treble

## Juventus take on Barcelona in Berlin final tonight



Both Juventus and Barcelona are looking to cap fantastic seasons by completing rare trebles when they meet in the Champions League final at the Olympic Stadium in Berlin on Saturday.

Juventus are appearing in their first Champions League final in 12 years as they look to win the European Cup for the third time, but Barcelona, inspired by Lionel Messi, are the favourites to win a fifth European Cup and fourth in the last decade.

Juve coach Massimiliano Allegri and his Barcelona counterpart Luis Enrique have already enjoyed excellent debut seasons in charge of their respective clubs, both winning domestic league and cup doubles, and both are now within touching distance of making it a glorious treble.

For Barcelona, it would be a second

such treble following their fantastic first season under Pep Guardiola in 2008-09, but such an achievement is very rare indeed.

Only six other clubs have ever won a domestic league and cup double and the European Cup in the same season, with Celtic's Lisbon Lions of 1967 the first.

HEAD TO HEAD	
Matches played:	9
Juventus wins:	4
Barcelona wins:	3
Drawn matches:	2

Since then, Ajax (1972), PSV Eindhoven (1988), Manchester United (1999), Inter Milan (2010) and Bayern Munich (2013) have repeated the feat.

Barcelona can therefore become the first club to do it twice, and their current team contains several members of that 2009 vintage under Guardiola.

"We are still a young team. There

are still quite a few players from the Guardiola era," said Luis Enrique. "This could turn out to be an historic season for us."

Juventus, meanwhile, will either join that elite group of clubs or become the first club to have lost six European Cup finals.

The Italian champions' main task is to blunt Barcelona's razor-sharp attack of Messi, Neymar and Luis Suarez which has sliced through defences on the road to Berlin.

The South American trio have scored a stunning 120 goals between them this season, compared to the 103 managed by the entire Juventus team.

With 58 goals in all competitions, four-time world player of the year Messi is in the best form of his illustrious career, but Juventus can ill-afford to focus on containing his talents alone.

Messi destroyed Guardiola's Bayern Munich with two goals in the first leg of their semifinal before setting up Neymar for the third at the Camp Nou.

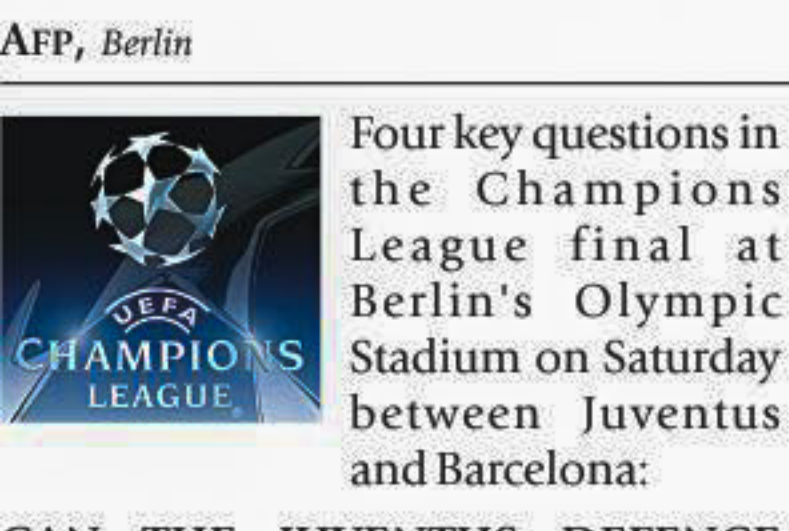


Barcelona superstar Lionel Messi (L) leads his teammates out of the plane in Berlin while Juventus' midfield maestro Andrea Pirlo already gets (R) down to business at the city's Olympic Stadium yesterday ahead of tonight's UEFA Champions League final.



PHOTOS: REUTERS/AFP

# Five key questions



**CAN THE JUVENTUS DEFENCE CONTAIN BARCELONA'S MSN STRIKE-FORCE?**

Barcelona's South American strike-force of Argentina superstar Lionel Messi, Brazil's Neymar and Uruguay's Luis Suarez have scored 120 goals between them already this season as Suarez has slotted seamlessly into Barca's attack and Messi has been in the form of his career.

But the Juventus back four managed to subdue Real Madrid's star-studded attack and soaked up all that Cristiano Ronaldo, Gareth Bale and Karim Benzema threw at them in the second leg of their semifinal tie. Now, without the injured Giorgio Chiellini, they must repeat that performance.

**CAN JUVENTUS GET A GRIP ON**

**BARCELONA IN MIDFIELD?**

Led by the class of veteran Andrea Pirlo, and with Arturo Vidal, Claudio Marchisio and Paul Pogba in there too, there is enough quality in the Juventus midfield for them to take on the Barcelona trio of Sergio Busquets, Ivan Rakitic and Andres Iniesta.

Barcelona can also call on the veteran Xavi Hernandez, who will at some point during the game make his final appearance for the Catalans before joining Qatari side Al Sadd next season.

**CAN MORATA AND TEVEZ BREAK THEIR BARCELONA DUCK?**

With 14 and 29 goals respectively, Alvaro Morata and Carlos Tevez have forged an impressive partnership up front for Juventus, but both have an extra point to prove against Barcelona.

Morata never scored against Barca when he was on the books at Real Madrid, while Tevez was on the losing side for Manchester United against Barcelona in his last Champions League final appearance.

**CAN JUVENTUS BREAK BARCELONA'S RESOLVE AT SET-PIECES?**

Only once this season has Barcelona's defence been breached from a set-piece, when Bayern Munich defender Medhi Benatia headed past Ter Stegen from a corner early in the Champions League semi-final second leg.

But with their height and strength, Juventus will test the Catalans' defence in the air from dead-ball situations.

Morata's crucial equaliser following a Pirlo free-kick in the semi-final second leg against Madrid ultimately booked Juve's ticket to Berlin.

**CAN THE OLD MASTER GIANLUIGI BUFFON OUTSHINE BARCELONA 'KEEPER MARC-ANDRE TER STEGEN?**

As the only survivor from Juventus' last Champions League final appearance in 2003, Buffon is determined to win his first Champions League.

Buffon is relishing a return to the Olympic Stadium where he won the World Cup with Italy in 2006.

In the opposite goal, Ter Stegen, who is 14 years Buffon's junior, has got the nod in Europe this season. Now, in his first season playing in Europe's elite club competition, he is looking forward to facing one of his childhood heroes.

## ROAD TO FINAL

**BARCELONA**  
GROUP STAGE WINNER  
Barcelona 1-0 APOEL  
PSG 3-2 Barcelona  
Barcelona 3-1 Ajax  
Ajax 0-2 Barcelona  
APOEL 0-4 Barcelona  
Barcelona 3-1 PSG

**RD OF 16**  
Barcelona 3-1 Manchester City

**QUARTERFINAL**  
Barcelona 5-1 PSG

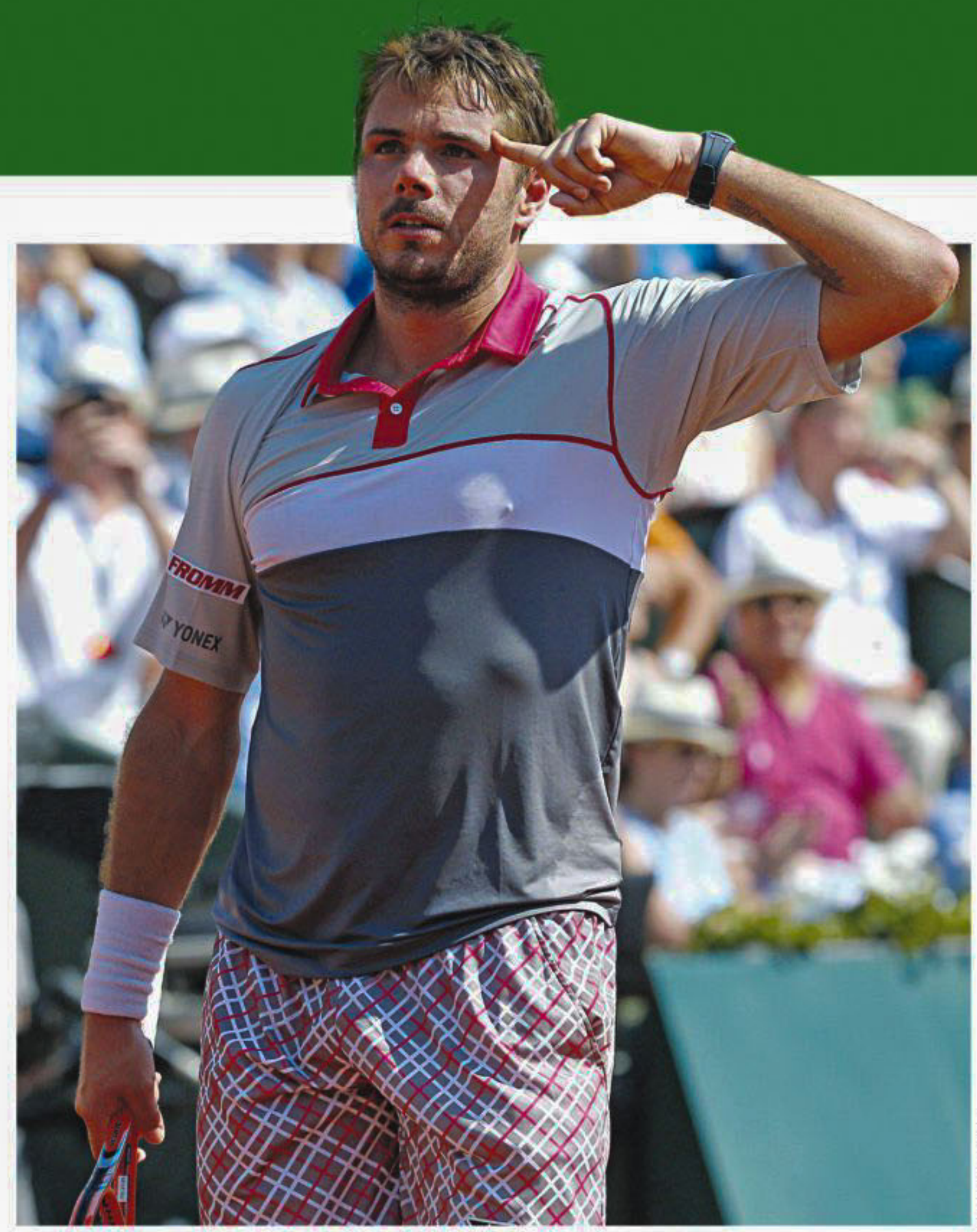
**SEMIFINAL**  
Barcelona 5-3 Bayern Munich

**JUVENTUS**  
GROUP STAGE RUNNER UP  
Juventus 2-0 Malmo FF  
Atletico Madrid 1-0 Juventus  
Olympiacos 1-0 Juventus  
Juventus 3-2 Olympiacos  
Malmo FF 0-2 Juventus  
Juventus 0-0 Atletico Madrid

**RD OF 16**  
Juventus 5-1 Borussia Dortmund

**QUARTERFINAL**  
Juventus 1-0 Monaco

**SEMIFINAL**  
Juventus 3-2 Real Madrid



Switzerland's Stanislas Wawrinka celebrates his victory over France's Jo-Wilfried Tsonga at the end of their French Open men's semifinal in Paris yesterday.

# Wawrinka in final

Stan Wawrinka shattered French hopes of a first men's singles champion in 32 years on Friday when he outlasted Jo-Wilfried Tsonga 6-3, 6-7 (1/7), 7-6 (7/3) 6-4 in the first of the semifinals.

The French Open semi-final between Novak Djokovic and Andy Murray was suspended Friday as a severe storm approached Roland Garros.

World number one Djokovic was leading 6-3, 6-3, 5-7, 3-3 when play was halted at 1833GMT and is unlikely to continue with the weather worsening.

It was a consummate performance from the Wawrinka and he will harbour high hopes of taking a second Grand Slam title on Sunday when he goes up against either top seed Novak Djokovic or third seed Andy Murray.

The 2014 Australian Open winner reached the final in Paris for the first time having lost just two sets along the way.

For Tsonga, the dream of emulating Yannick Noah, the last Frenchman to win at Roland Garros in 1983, was over for another year. The last Frenchman to reach the final was Henri Leconte in 1988.

"It was a huge battle, very difficult

physically, a lot of intensity on both sides and it could have gone either way," Wawrinka said.

"He had chances to break me in the third set, but he had a great tournament and deserves just as much as me to be in the final."

The semifinalists, both aged 30, had met twice before at Roland Garros, each winning in five sets, but their most recent encounter was a superb four sets Davis Cup final win for Wawrinka in November.

That sent Tsonga's form into a tailspin made all the worse by a bad wrist injury that sidelined him until March.

But Roland Garros saw him back to near his best, defeating fourth seed Tomas Berdych and fifth seed Kei Nishikori to reach the semis for the second time.

Wawrinka, a straight-sets winner over countryman Roger Federer in the quarter-finals, struck first, clawing his way back from 0-40 down to break Tsonga's serve for a first time in the fourth game.

That was enough to give him the first set on a baking hot day which saw the temperature nudging above 30 degrees.

The Swiss eighth seed was clearly on top and he broke again to start the second set.

Wawrinka's first serve was regularly in the 210-215 kph range and that left Tsonga struggling to cope.

## Nat'l h'ball

**SPORTS REPORTER**

Dhaka Mariner Youngs Club and Mohammedan SC won their matches of the Cute Women's Handball League at the Shaheed (Capt) M Mansoor Ali National Handball Stadium yesterday.

Dhaka Mariner outplayed RN Sports Home by 49-18 goals.

Mohammedan overwhelmed neighbouring Arambagh KS by 39-14 goals.

## Gatlin betters Bolt's record

**AFP, Rome**

American Justin Gatlin snatched the track record held by sprint rival Usain Bolt as he cruised to victory in the men's 100 metres at the Rome Diamond League meet on Thursday.

Gatlin stopped the clock at 9.75sec to match the seventh-fastest time.

# NATIONAL SHOOTING CHAMPIONSHIP

## Ratna's double

**SPORTS REPORTER**

Sharmin Akter Ratna claimed the gold medal in the 50m rifle (three position) event of the 27th National Shooting Championship at the National Shooting Complex in Gulshan yesterday.

The gold medalist in the Commonwealth Shooting Championship and SA Games scored 566 points to win the top prize, finishing with 16 points more than silver medalist Sharmin Shilpa while Umme Zakiya Sultana finished third with a score of 537 points.

It was the second gold medal of the championship for Ratna, who had won the 10m air rifle event on Tuesday. She also finished second in the 50m rifle prone event on Thursday despite finishing on the top. The eventual gold medalist Suraiya Akter was adjudged to finish first by the

judges after one of shooters expressed her dissatisfaction over the scores.

Cynthia Naznin Tumpa also claimed a second gold by winning the 10m air pistol event after a close battle against Armin Asha, who scored 0.5 points less than Tumpa's 189.6. Antora Islam won the bronze medal by scoring 164 points. Tumpa had won the 25m Sports pistol gold on Thursday.

In the day's other events, Iqbal Hossain won the 50m free pistol event with a score of 524 points while Mahendra Kumar Singha finished second with a score of 523 points.

Alamina Akter won the 10m air pistol (junior) event scoring 335 points while Sanzida Ahmed (334) and Raisa Ahmed (333) grabbed silver and bronze medals respectively.

## Elche pay the penalty

**AFP, Madrid**

Mid-table finishing Spanish La Liga outfit Elche are to be relegated to the second division for unpaid tax, a Spanish football league judge decided on Friday.

"AS of today Elche's debts are still outstanding and no guarantee has been offered," a La Liga statement explained.

As a result Basque outfit Eibar, who finished third from bottom, will now be handed a reprieve and see Elche, who ended 13th on 41 points, go down a division instead of them.

Elche were also hit with a 180,303 euros (\$202,000 dollars) fine.

# Ireland got \$5m from FIFA

**AFP, London**

FIFA have confirmed they made a \$5 million payment to the Football Association of Ireland after Thierry Henry's handball stopped Ireland qualifying for the 2010 World Cup.

Details of the deal first emerged in an interview FAI chief executive John Delaney gave to RTE Radio 1 on Thursday.

"We felt we had a legal case against FIFA because of how the World Cup play-off hadn't worked out for us with the Henry handball," Delaney said.

"We came to an agreement. That was a Thursday and on Monday, the agreement was all signed and all done. It was a payment to the association to not proceed with a legal case."

FIFA later issued a statement explaining: "While the referee's decision is final, and the Football Association of Ireland (FAI) ultimately accepted it as such, in January 2010

FIFA entered into an agreement with FAI in order to put an end to any claims against FIFA.

"FIFA granted FAI a loan of USD 5 million for the construction of a stadium in Ireland. At the same time, UEFA also granted the FAI funds for the same stadium.

"The terms agreed between FIFA and the FAI were that the loan would be reimbursed if Ireland qualified for the 2014 FIFA World Cup.

"Ireland did not so qualify. Because of this, and in view of the FAI's financial situation, FIFA decided to write off the loan as per 31 December 2014."

France qualified for the 2010 World Cup at Ireland's expense after Henry blatantly handled the ball as he set up William Gallas for the decisive goal in a play-off match in Paris in November 2009.

Delaney's claim comes amid a corruption scandal engulfing FIFA that has seen FIFA executives arrested, president Sepp Blatter announce his resignation and former executive committee member Chuck Blazer admit to paying bribes.

# BD to host U-16 c'ship qualifiers

**SPORTS REPORTER**

Bangladesh will host the Qualifiers of AFC Under-16 Championship in September where they will play against Saudi Arabia, UAE and Pakistan in Group D.

The draw for 45 teams took place at the AFC Headquarters in Kuala Lumpur yesterday where these five teams were kept apart from the seeding due to these teams' refusal to take part in the last edition.

A total of 45 teams, split into 11 groups, will be taking part in the qualifiers. 11 group champions and four best runners-up will join hosts India in the final round next year.

Meanwhile, Bangladesh under-19 team have been placed in Group A along with Uzbekistan, Pakistan, Bhutan and hosts Sri Lanka. The qualifiers will get underway in Colombo on September 28. Ten group champions, five best runners-up and hosts Bahrain will play in the 16-team final round next year.

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