What to WATCH

GAZI TV & STAR SPORTS1
Bangladesh v India
One-off Test, Day 3
Live from 10:00am

STAR SPORTS2
England v New Zealand
Second ODI (D/N)
Live from 6:00pm

TEN CRICKET
West Indies v Australia
Second Test, Day 2
Live from 8:45pm

DAY'S EVENT
Bangladesh v India
Venue: Fatullah Cricket Stadium
One-off Test, Day 3

C'RON MOST SALEABLE

Cristiano Ronaldo remains Europe's and the world's most marketable footballer known by more than 80% of people around the world, according to a study released Thursday. The 30-year-old Real Madrid scorer beats England's Wayne Rooney and Spain's Andres Iniesta on a new European top 10, according to the Repucom sports marketing firm. "In terms of overall marketability, globally, Ronaldo leaves the other European players in his wake," declared the firm which said 83% of people around the world -- 85% of all men and 80% of all women --

USA stun Germany

AFP, *Cologne*

Jurgen Klinsmann's USA shocked Germany with a 2-1 victory in Wednesday's friendly as the Stars and Stripes followed up their win over the Netherlands by beating the world champions.

Bobby Wood, who plays for Germany's third division side Erzgebirge Aue, scored the winner just before the final whistle to seal the Americans' deserved victory.

It capped a dream few days for the 22-year-old who also hit the winner when the USA fought back to stun the Netherlands 4-3 in Amsterdam last Friday.

Perfect ten for Brazil

AFP, *Porto Alegre*

Brazil permitted themselves the luxury of using Champions League winner Neymar as a second half substitute to make it ten wins in ten post-World Cup friendly outings Wednesday, edging Honduras 1-0 in a final Copa America tune-up.

The win in the southern city of Porto Alegre means coach Dunga, who replaced 2002 World Cup winner Luiz Felipe Scolari in the dugout after last year's World Cup semifinal thrashing by Germany, retains his perfect record.

There was precious little 'samba' football on offer as Roberto Firmino netted the only goal on the half hour.

PHOTO: STAR

Kyrgystan forward Anton Zemlyanuhin (C) celebrates one of his two goals against Bangladesh during their Joint Qualifiers for the 2018 World Cup and 2019 Asian Cup at the Bangabandhu National Stadium yesterday.

Same old mistakes

SPORTS REPORTER

The same old habit of committing unnecessary fouls in and around the danger zone and conceding from set-pieces came to haunt Bangladesh as the hosts suffered a 1-3 defeat against Kyrgyzstan in the first match of the Joint Qualifiers at the Bangabandhu National Stadium yesterday.

Out of the three goals that Bangladesh conceded, the first came from a brilliant free-kick from Kyrgyz forward Anton Zemlyanuhin. While the execution of the free-kick deserves all the praise, there was no need to concede it in the first place. Hemnanta Vincent Biswas went for a lunging tackle on a Kyrgyz forward just outside the box, despite ball moving in the opposite direction and given that tackles on soggy pitches need to be clean. The second goal also came from a spot-kick, which resulted from a cynical challenge by Yeamin Munna, who would have been better off trying to make a block or leave it for fellow defender Nasiurddin Chowdhury to cover.

Bangladesh assistant coach Saiful Bari Titu felt the players are not learning from their mistakes despite being pointed at repeatedly in training sessions.

"The national team is not a place to teach the players about their basics. Despite that we have been telling them time and again not to commit any stupid fouls around the danger zone. I think the players have a lack of concentration," said the coach.

However, Titu believes Kyrgyzstan were the better side as they cashed in on the congenial weather on the fast pitch where Bangladesh players struggled to control the midfield in the face of heavy pressing from the opposition.

Bangladesh had worked on Kyrgyzstan's 4-4-2 formation, but the visitors adopted a 4-3-3 formation with players changing their regular positions. That seemingly caught the Bangladesh players off-guard.

"Their (Kyrgyzstan) defence was solid which gave us no space to press. The two midfielders pressed on us and didn't allow us to build up the game from behind," said Titu. "I think there is lack of professional approach from our players and we were behind technically, physically and mentally."

Kyrgyzstan coach Alexander Krestinin was happy to secure full points and dedicated the win to the people of Kyrgyzstan. "We deserved this win. Bangladesh were also good in several aspects like free-kicks, corner kicks and throw-ins, but not that good in their overall game," said the Russian native, who was leading the side for the first time in a full FIFA international match.

A Kyrgyz lesson

SPORTS REPORTER

Home advantage, higher positions in FIFA rankings and the opposition's lack of international matches in recent times were the things expected to give Bangladesh the upper hand against Kyrgyzstan in their opening fixture of the Joint Qualifiers for the 2018 World Cup and 2019 Asian Cup at the Bangabandhu National Stadium yesterday. But once the game started, those expectations were quickly put to bed by the visitors, who proved to be quite a few leagues above the hosts both physically and technically.

The result -- a comprehensive 1-3 defeat for the hosts – in the end was no surprise to the football pundits and some 8000 spectators, who had gathered at the big bowl expecting some entertaining football, and more importantly, were rooting for a win for the men in red and green.

BANGLADESH 1 - 3 KYRGYZSTAN

The spectators didn't get the result they were hoping for but as far as entertainment is concerned, they got full value for their money. The Kyrgyz booters played some scintillating football to fashion a 3-1 lead by the end of the first half and had the luxury to take their foot off the gas in the second half, perhaps to preserve legs for a far bigger challenge which awaits them in the shape of Australia on June 16.

The visitors, visibly enjoying the cool weather after the heavy downpour in the morning, got into their groove right from the get go. They played constant pressing football, forcing the hosts into numerous mistakes as they tried to release the ball quickly. One such mistake, nay a cardinal sin, from Bangladesh midfielder Hemanta Vincent Biswas, opened the door for the first goal in the eight minute of the match. The Bangladesh No. 10 made a lunging tackle on a Kyrgyz forward just five yards outside the box despite the ball going away from the goal. Anton Zemlyanuhin, the Radnicki Nis forward, stepped up and curled in a left-footed free-kick which brushed the right-hand post before creeping into the net.

Bangladesh survived a few more scares before another defensive mistake in the 28th minute gifted a second goal for the visitors. This time left-back Yeamin Munna brought down opposition forward Viktor Maier, who had raced into the box on a superb through-pass. The referee had no option but to point to the spot. Edgar Bernhardt drilled the ball down the middle and despite Rasel Mahmud Liton getting a hand to the ball, it ended at the back of the net.

Going two goals down, Bangladesh immediately found a bit of spark when Munna initiated a sublime move with one-two with skipper Mamunul Islam, before curling in a cross which was cleared for a corner. Mamun's corner kick in the 29th minute was cleared again for another corner and the resulting corner was inadvertently headed in by Kyrgyzstan defender Valeri Kichin.

The goal seemed to give Bangladesh a boost and they stepped up the ante, but their spirit was stuffed out when a moment a magic from Zemlyanuhin – a neat cut back, a lightning quick turn and an inch perfect strike – restored the two-goal cushion. Goalkeeeper Liton, who made a string of brilliant saves right through the match, had nothing to do on this occasion.

The visitors, despite sitting back in a bit in the second half, came close to increasing the lead a couple of times, while the beleaguered hosts rode on the sedated approach of the opposition to mount a few attacks, none of which bore fruition. The hosts, however, could have had brought some respectability to the score had Topu Barman's back-header on a Raihan Hasan throw-in deep into the stoppage time had not crept inches wide of the target.

Bangladesh will need to cut out their defensive mistakes and convert the half chances if they are to improve on their standing when they host another former Soviet State, Tajikistan, at the same venue on June 16.

ঢাকা অঞ্চল
তেজগাঁও: ০১৭৫৫৫৭০৯৫০ শান্তিনগর: ০১৭৫৫৫৭০৯৪৫
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যশোর অঞ্চল
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বগুড়া অঞ্চল
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