

DAY'S EVENT	NATIONAL CRICKET LEAGUE Day 4 (Four-day Match) All Matches Start at 9:30am	Venue: Bogra Rajshahi v Sylhet	Venue: Chittagong Chittagong v Barisal	FIFA WC QUALIFIERS Venue: Spartak Stadium, Kyrgyzstan Kyrgyzstan v Bangladesh Time: 8:00pm
		Venue: Fatullah Dhaka v Dhaka Metro	Venue: Khulna Khulna v Rangpur	

Germany, Poland thru'

Russia through; Sweden seal play-off spot

AFP, Paris

World champions Germany secured their place at Euro 2016 despite labouring to a 2-1 win at home to Georgia on Sunday, while Poland also qualified for next summer's finals after beating the Republic of Ireland 2-1.

Germany needed just a point against Georgia in Leipzig to guarantee themselves a top-two finish in Group D but Max Kruse's 79th-minute winner ensured Joachim Loew's men progressed as group winners.

Thomas Mueller had given Germany the lead shortly after half-time, converting a penalty for his ninth goal in the qualifiers, before it was cancelled out almost immediately by Jaba Kankava.

RESULTS		
Germany (Mueller 50-pen, Kruse 79)	2 - 1	Georgia (Kankava 53)
Gibraltar	0 - 6	Scotland (Martin 25, Maloney 39, Fletcher 52, 56, 85, Naismith 90+1)
Poland (Krychowiak 13, Lewandowski 42)	2 - 1	Ireland (Walters 16-pen)
Faroe Islands	0 - 3	Romania (Budescu 4, 45+1, Maxim 83)
Finland (Arajuuri 87)	1 - 1	Northern Ireland (Cathcart 31)
Greece (Stafylidis 5, Tachtsidis 57, Mitroglou 79, Kone 86)	0 - 3	Albania (Hovhannisyan 9-og, Xhimshiti 23, Sadiku 76)
Armenia	0 - 3	Albania (Hovhannisyan 9-og, Xhimshiti 23, Sadiku 76)
Serbia (Tosic 65)	1 - 2	Portugal (Nani 5, Joao Moutinho 78)

chance. The penalty in the 37th minute just confirmed Russia's spot.

Meanwhile, goals from Zlatan Ibrahimovic and Erkan Zengin gave Sweden a 2-0 win over Moldova. Their celebrations though were muted since they finished third in Group G and will have to ace the play-offs in order to seal a spot in competition.

Earlier, Albania qualified for their first major international tournament as they beat Armenia 3-0, while Romania also booked their place at the finals after a 3-0 win in the Faroe Islands.

Defeat at home to Serbia on Thursday had left Albania needing three points in Yerevan to edge ahead of Denmark to claim second place in Group I and they made the most of their second chance.

Kamo Hovhannisyan turned into his own net to give Albania a ninth-minute lead before Berat Xhimshiti made it 2-0 midway through the first half.

Substitute Armando Sadiku then added a third 14 minutes from time as Gianni De Biasi's side secured their spot at next summer's tournament in France.

Portugal, already through as group winners, registered their seventh successive qualifying victory as they overcame nine-man Serbia 2-1 in Belgrade.

The visitors were without the rested Cristiano Ronaldo but took a fifth-minute lead through stand-in skipper Nani as the ex-Manchester United winger converted the rebound after Danny's shot was saved by Vladimir Stojkovic.

Serbia replied through Zoran Tosic on 65 minutes but Joao Moutinho's terrific curling strike handed Portugal all three points as the hosts saw both Aleksandar Mitrovic and Nemanja Matic sent off late on.

Romania nailed down the second qualifying spot in Group F after easing past the Faroe Islands in Torshavn.

Constantin Budescu scored twice with Alexandru Maxim also on target to ensure Romania went through as group runners-up behind European Championship debutants Northern Ireland, who rounded out their qualifying campaign with a 1-1 draw in Finland.

Craig Cathcart's 31st-minute goal in Helsinki put Michael O'Neill's side in front but Paulus Arajuuri's late equaliser earned Finland a share of the spoils.

A point was still enough for Northern Ireland to finish top of the group, though, becoming the first ever fifth seed to do so.

Greece, the 2004 European champions, belatedly recorded their first victory with Panagiotis Kone's 86th-minute strike leading them past Hungary 4-3.

Germany, Poland, Albania and Romania joined already qualified Wales, Belgium, Italy, Austria, the Czech Republic, England, hosts France, Iceland, Northern Ireland, Portugal, Spain and Switzerland in the 24-team finals.



Poland superstar Robert Lewandowski celebrates his winning goal against Republic of Ireland during their Euro 2016 qualifier in Warsaw on Sunday.

Lewandowski equals goals record

AFP, Paris

Robert Lewandowski scored his 13th goal of the Euro 2016 qualifiers as Poland beat the Republic of Ireland 2-1 on Sunday to equal Northern Ireland striker David Healy's record for most goals in a qualifying campaign.

Most goals scored in a European championship qualifying competition:

- 13**
Robert Lewandowski, Poland (Euro 2016); David Healy, Northern Ireland (Euro 2008)
- 12**
Klaas-Jan Huntelaar, Netherlands (Euro 2012); Davor Suker, Croatia (Euro 1996)
- 11**
Raul, Spain (Euro 2000); Toni Polster, Austria (Euro 1996); Ole Madsen, Denmark (Euro 1964)
- 10**
Eduardo, Croatia (Euro 2008); Hristo Stoichkov, Bulgaria (Euro 1996); Darko Pancev, Macedonia (Euro 1992)

'Agents ruining stars'

AFP, Kolkata

Brazil still produces the world's best footballers but the growing influence of agents on leading players has created a mountain of woes for the national side, Pele said Monday.

The legendary Brazilian, the only player to feature in three World Cup-winning teams, said the passion for football was as strong as ever but acknowledged the "Selecao" were struggling with a host of problems.

"We have not lost passion for football," Pele said in the eastern city of Kolkata at the start of a visit to India.

"Individually we have the best players but as a team we've a lot of problems.

"In my time the players belonged to clubs but today players are managed by their agents," Pele was quoted as saying by the Press Trust of India news agency.

Nearly all of Brazil's leading stars play abroad and there are regular complaints that players are too often exploited by agents who are only interested in making money.

The agents have often been at loggerheads with the football authorities. Star striker Neymar's representative Wagner Ribeiro called the then-coach Luiz Felipe Scolari "arrogant, repulsive (and) conceited" after Brazil's 2014 World Cup flop.

Pele did not comment on the recent controversies dogging FIFA but added that he had "no intention to contest for the post of president".

FIFA president Sepp Blatter and UEFA chief Michel Platini were both handed 90-day suspensions this month amid an ongoing corruption probe.

Pele was given a warm welcome in football-mad Kolkata, where he had played an exhibition match way back in 1977.

Klopp against poaching D'mund stars

AFP, Berlin

Liverpool's new manager Jurgen Klopp has said he had no intention of poaching players from his former club Borussia Dortmund for the Reds.

"That is in no way my approach," he told newspaper Bild in an interview published Monday.

The 48-year-old has a contract to manage the Merseyside giants until June 2018 and will take charge of his first Premier League game against Tottenham Hotspur on Saturday.

Asked if he had already secured commitments in funding for the winter transfer window, Klopp said that was a subject "that does not interest me at all".

"We are now in October and I still don't know how many games there are until winter. But there are a few, and we will first look at our own people," said Klopp, who started his first training with his new club Monday.

Giroud sinks Denmark

AFP, Copenhagen

Arsenal striker Olivier Giroud scored twice in the first six minutes as Euro 2016 hosts France defeated Denmark 2-1 in a friendly international on Sunday.

The win was a fourth in succession for Didier Deschamps' side.

France made eight changes from the team which defeated Armenia 4-0 on Friday, but there appeared little disruption early on as they raced into a 2-0 lead inside six minutes.

Danish goalkeeper Kasper Schmeichel was at fault for Giroud's opener in the fourth minute and could have done better to prevent the second just two minutes later.

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