

What to WATCH	TEN ACTION Sri Lanka v West Indies First Test, Day 4 Live from 10:15am	TEN CRICKET Pakistan v England First Test, Day 5 Live from 12:00pm	TEN SPORTS Shanghai Masters Semifinals Live from 2:30pm	STAR SPORTS 1 English Premiership Tottenham v Liverpool Live from 5:45pm	Everton v Man United Live from 8:00pm Wartfort v Arsenal Live from 10:30pm	STAR SPORTS 4 English Premiership Chelsea v Aston Villa Live from 8:00pm	STAR SPORTS 2 Bundesliga Eintracht v Borussia M'bach Live from 10:30pm	SONY KIX Primera Liga Real Madrid v Levante Live from 8:00pm Serie A Roma v Empoli Live from 10:00pm
	DAY'S EVENT NATIONAL CRICKET LEAGUE Day 1 (Four-day Match) All Matches Start at 9:30am					Venue: Bogra Sylhet v Barisal	Venue: Fatullah Khulna v Dhaka	Venue: Chittagong Chittagong v Rajshahi

Klopp set for Liverpool bow

AFP, London

Jürgen Klopp has challenged Liverpool's under-performing stars to rediscover their swagger when the new Reds boss gets his first taste of the Premier League against Tottenham on Saturday.

All eyes will be on Klopp's eagerly anticipated debut at White Hart Lane following the highly-regarded German's recent appointment as successor to the sacked Brendan Rodgers.

The charismatic 48-year-old's impressive track record at Borussia Dortmund has established him as one of Europe's top coaches and his arrival has rekindled enthusiasm among Liverpool fans who had grown disillusioned with Rodgers' trophyless reign.

But, with Liverpool slumping to 10th place after just one win in their last nine matches in all competitions, Klopp is well aware he faces a major rebuilding job before he can dream of emulating legendary Anfield managers like Bill Shankly, Bob

Paisley and Kenny Dalglish.

"I have met two kinds of people in the last week: most of them say 'We'll win the league' and the other guys look at me like 'What have you done? Why are you here?'," Klopp said.

While Klopp is cautious about revealing his own ambitions, he has already identified one key problem that needs to be solved if Liverpool are to get back on track quickly.

He believes the players were hamstrung by a fear of failure as the pressure mounted on Rodgers and he wants them to forget about past mistakes.

FIXTURES	
(1400GMT unless stated)	
Saturday	Chelsea v Aston Villa, Crystal Palace v West Ham, Everton v Manchester United, Manchester City v Bournemouth, Southampton v Leicester, Tottenham v Liverpool (1145GMT), Watford v Arsenal (1630GMT), West Brom v Sunderland
Sunday	Newcastle v Norwich (1500GMT)
Monday	Swansea v Stoke (2000GMT)



Rafael Nadal of Spain celebrates his victory against Stanislas Wawrinka of Switzerland in their Shanghai Masters quarterfinal yesterday.

PHOTO: AFP

Siddikur slips to 30th

SPORTS REPORTER

Siddikur Rahman dropped to 30th position as Chinese Taipei's Hung Chien-yao took the clubhouse lead in the Venetian Macao Open, with defending champion Anirban Lahiri hot on his heels, at the end of the second round on Friday.

The two-time Asian Tour winner, who started the day at second position after a six-under in the opening round, traded two bogeys for five birdies at the Macau Golf and Country Club yesterday after having enjoyed a bogey-free day in the previous round.

That effort left the 30-year-old golfer at three-under-par (13), seven strokes behind Chien-yao, who fired a scintillating seven-under-par (64) yesterday.

The unheralded 23-year-old enjoyed a flawless round with seven birdies while Indian star Lahiri, who featured in the Presidents Cup last week, was tied for second place following a 67.

Real, Barca eye summit

AFP, Madrid

Real Madrid will have to overcome an injury to leading scorer Karim Benzema as the spluttering capital club return to domestic duty on Saturday when they host struggling Levante.

Rafael Benitez's side have slipped to second, one point behind surprise leaders Villarreal, following successive draws against Malaga and city rivals Atletico.

Real remain one of two unbeaten sides, alongside Celta Vigo, but the international break came at a cost for Madrid with Benzema, scorer of six goals in La Liga this term, sustaining a hamstring injury in France's 4-0 rout of Armenia, last week, while Luka Modric picked up a thigh strain while helping Croatia qualify for Euro 2016.

Benitez will also be without right-back Dani Carvajal who was forced out of Spain's final two qualifiers with an ankle problem while there are doubts over the fitness of Sergio Ramos and Pepe as well.

With Benzema sidelined, Real, who face Paris Saint-Germain in the Champions League next Wednesday before travelling to high-flying Celta Vigo, will be counting on Cristiano Ronaldo to rediscover his top form that saw him plunder an incredible 48 league goals last season.

Lionel Messi's absence has been keenly felt by Barcelona since the Argentine went down with knee ligament damage at the end of September.

With Messi out until mid-November, Luis Suarez and Neymar have the arduous task of trying to help Barca overcome the loss of the four-time Ballon d'Or winner but it hasn't been plain sailing for the Catalans, who are aiming to bounce back from a 2-1 defeat at Sevilla when they take on Rayo Vallecano at home on Saturday.

FIXTURES	
Saturday	Real Madrid v Levante (1400), Eibar v Sevilla (1615), Barcelona v Rayo Vallecano (1830), Valencia v Malaga (2000), Real Betis v Espanyol (2005)
Sunday	Villarreal v Celta Vigo (1000), Real Sociedad v Atletico Madrid (1400), Getafe v Las Palmas (1615), Deportivo La Coruna v Athletic Bilbao (1830)
Monday	Sporting Gijon v Granada (1830)

FA suspends support for Platini

AFP, London

The English Football Association on Friday suspended support for Michel Platini's FIFA presidential bid because of new information on his legal battle.

The new blow to the leader of European football's ambitions came less than 24 hours after UEFA had given support to its president.

The FA said it had been told of more information "relating to the issues at the centre of this case from Mr Platini's lawyers" at a UEFA meeting on Thursday.

"As a result of learning this information, the FA Board has on Friday morning concluded that it must suspend its support for Mr Platini's candidature for the FIFA presidency until the legal process has been concluded and the position is clear," said a statement.

The French leader of UEFA and former football golden boy had been favourite to take over as FIFA president from Sepp Blatter until he was named in a criminal investigation Blatter faces in Switzerland.

Swiss prosecutors are looking into a \$2 million (1.8 million euro) payment that the 60-year-old Platini received from FIFA in 2011 for work carried out a decade earlier.

Nadal rips off Wawrinka

AFP, Shanghai

Novak Djokovic beat Bernard Tomic and Andy Murray overcame heated rival Tomas Berdych as the world number one and two set up a Shanghai Masters semifinal to savour on Friday.

Djokovic had to work in a tough first set before he blew Tomic away, winning 7-6 (8/6), 6-1, and Murray saw off Berdych 6-1, 6-3 to make it three straight victories over the Czech this year.

Earlier Rafael Nadal's resurgence moved ahead with a 6-2, 6-1 win over Stan Wawrinka, setting up a clash with Jo-Wilfried Tsonga who was taken to three sets by Kevin Anderson.

Top-ranked Djokovic was pushed all the way by Tomic in a thrilling opening set but after he edged the tiebreak 8/6, it was plain sailing as the Australian capitulated.

Murray and Berdych, who is trained by the Briton's former coach, played a combustible four-set match at this year's Australian Open but their 13th career meeting turned out to be one-sided.

Murray owned the Czech in the first set and it wasn't much different in the second as he moved quickly into a semi-final against Djokovic, a fellow two-time winner in Shanghai.

"Andy has... been on the top of the men's game for so many years, a Grand Slam winner, Olympic gold medallist, somebody that understands how to play on a big occasion," Djokovic said.

Elsewhere Nadal easily beat fourth-ranked Wawrinka to bring up his first win over a top-five player in more than a year and extend a hot streak after he also reached last week's China Open final.

Spain's Nadal was on court for just 64 minutes against the Swiss, who was also feeling the effects of his marathon three-setter against Marin Cilic late the previous night.

The French Open champion, who won last week in Tokyo, made 34 unforced errors and was on target with just 45 percent of his first serves as he folded meekly.

"Today I was just struggling a little bit. It's that simple. Against Nadal you cannot do anything if you're not 100 percent," Wawrinka said.

For Nadal, hours of extra work on the practice court look to be paying off as after a tough year, he fights to recapture the form that brought him 14 Grand Slam titles.

"Being in the semifinals is a great result for me. I didn't play any semi-finals on hard court this year, now I am playing (them) two weeks in a row," he said.

Benitez slams Spanish press

AFP, Madrid

Real Madrid coach Rafael Benitez blasted the Spanish press on Friday, accusing them of trying to "destabilise" the club.

The former Liverpool and Chelsea boss also hit out at "invented" scandals, alluding to a supposed dispute between star forwards Cristiano Ronaldo and Gareth Bale.

"There are scandals that are invented, all the time. I'm surprised by the quantity of things that come out of Real Madrid that aren't true," fumed Benitez at the pre-match press conference ahead of Saturday's Bernabeu clash with Levante.

"There are people who think this is the type of fashionable journalism at the moment and that they have to keep doing it to sell (papers)."

"There's a lot of media, web pages, blogs, newspapers, radio... They have to keep blowing up scandals because it's easier to sell that way."

"There are people, I don't know why, who have no interest in things going well for Real Madrid, and who want to destabilise us a little bit."

Benitez denied rumours of a rift between Ronaldo and Bale, saying: "The atmosphere in the camp is very good, the players get on well."

Unbeaten Real currently sit second in La Liga, a point behind surprise early pacesetters Villarreal and above Celta Vigo and Barcelona on goal difference.

A 'gentleman's agreement'

AFP, Lausanne

Suspended FIFA president Sepp Blatter claimed on Friday that the two million dollar (1.8 million euros) payment he made to UEFA president Michel Platini was a "gentleman's agreement."

"It was a contract I had with Platini, a gentleman's agreement," said the 79-year-old in an interview with Swiss media RROTV.

"It was implemented. I can't give any more details, the issue is being discussed in two investigations."

Asked directly if the contract had been made within the rules, Blatter added: "Yes, certainly, it was within the rules."

USA to host Centennial Copa America

AFP, New York

The United States will host a Centennial Copa America next year with regional football officials and the US Soccer Federation in final talks despite corruption concerns that threatened the event, ESPN reported Thursday.

Officials from North American regional governing body CONCACAF and its South American counterpart, CONMEBOL, were working with the US as host and organizer of the one-off, 16-team event to mark the 100th anniversary of the South American championship tournament.

The 10 South American teams -- including Brazil and Argentina -- would be joined by the US squad, Mexico and four other North American regional teams.

The US Justice Department indictment of several top officials from FIFA and the regional governing bodies as well as promoters cast doubt upon whether or not the Copa Centennial would be staged, saying more than \$110 million in bribes helped secure rights to the special Copa America.

The Copa America debuted in 1916 and has never been staged outside South America. Host Chile won this year's Copa America.



The Abhani players have their preparation in full swing for the Sheikh Kamal International Club Cup. The Sky Blues will kick off the eight-club tournament against Karachi Electric FC of Pakistan at the MA Aziz Stadium in Chittagong on Tuesday.

PHOTO: STAR

Jose blasts FA

AFP, London

Chelsea boss Jose Mourinho launched a scathing attack on the Football Association after he was fined and given a one-match suspended stadium ban, claiming he was just happy he wasn't forced to wear "an electronic tag."

Mourinho was fined £50,000 (\$77,000, 68,000 euros) on Wednesday after accepting a misconduct charge from the English FA for comments he made about the officials in the wake of a 3-1 loss to Southampton in the Premier League on October 3.

The 52-year-old was unhappy that referee Robert Madley had refused to award Chelsea a penalty for Southampton goalkeeper Maarten Stekelenburg's challenge on Radamel Falcao.

Following the news of the FA's decision, Mourinho made it clear he is furious he has been punished, while Arsenal manager Arsene Wenger has escaped any discipline for his own recent comments about officials.

"Every word I say is a big risk for me. I am happy that I don't have an electronic tag. I think it's not far from that," said Mourinho, who was speaking at an event in London to promote his book MOURINHO on Thursday.

"I also think that £50,000 in the world where we live today is an absolute disgrace."

"And I also think that the possibility of getting a stadium ban is also something absolutely astonishing."

Mourinho is aggrieved his old rival Wenger went unpunished for calling referee Mike Dean "weak" and "naive" following Arsenal's defeat to Chelsea last month.

Wenger also escaped censure for pushing Mourinho in the Stamford Bridge technical area in October 2014, something which still grates with the Chelsea boss.

Asian chief poised for FIFA bid

AFP, Kuala Lumpur

The head of Asian football is poised to announce a bid for the FIFA presidency, a source told AFP on Friday, in an opportunistic move which would dramatically reshape the election race.

Shaikh Salman bin Ebrahim al Khalifa could make a formal announcement as early as Friday and would be a serious challenger as the leader of FIFA's second-largest confederation.

A bid by the Bahraini royal would be another major blow to the already suspended Michel Platini, who he formerly backed, and Shaikh Salman's Asian rival Prince Ali bin al-Hussein of Jordan.

Shaikh Salman won a landslide election in 2013 to succeed the disgraced Mohamed bin Hammam.