

**CHANNEL 9**  
**Bangabandhu Gold Cup**  
 Nepal v Sri Lanka  
 Live from 3:00pm  
 Bangladesh v Malaysia  
 Live from 6:30pm

**STAR SPORTS1**  
**English Premiership**  
 Liverpool v Arsenal  
 Live from 2:00am (Thursday)  
**STAR SPORTS2**  
**English Premiership**

**Chelsea v West Brom**  
 Live from 1:45am (Thursday)  
**STAR SPORTS4**  
**English Premiership**  
 Man City v Everton  
 Live from 1:45am (Thursday)

**DAY'S EVENT**  
**Bangabandhu Gold Cup**  
 Venue: BNS  
 Nepal v Sri Lanka  
 Time: 3:00pm  
 Bangladesh v Malaysia  
 Time: 6:30pm

**Bangladesh Cricket League**  
 Four-day Match, Day 2  
 Time: 9:30am  
 Venue: Bogra  
 East Zone v Central Zone

## Italy boycott Ballon d'Or

AFP, Rome  
 Italy coach Antonio Conte and captain Gianluigi Buffon did not participate in the Ballon d'Or vote at the request of their federation in protest at Buffon's absence from the list of candidates, Italian media reported on Tuesday.  
 The veteran Juventus goalkeeper did not make the preliminary list released in October with five goalkeepers chosen ahead of him -- Manuel Neuer, Iker Casillas, Thibaut Courtois, Claudio Bravo and David Ospina.  
 And in the voting list released by FIFA on Monday night after Argentina and Barcelona star Lionel Messi won a record fifth award for the world's best player, the results for the Italian coach and captain were missing, although the Italian journalist voted.



Reproductions of stamps are seen during a press visit to the new museum dedicated to FIFA in Zurich yesterday. PHOTO: AFP

## FIFA museum to open on Feb 28

AFP, Zurich  
 The multi-million dollar FIFA museum, the project of fallen world football chief Sepp Blatter, will open its doors on February 28 in Zurich, two days after the election of his successor, FIFA announced on Tuesday.  
 Over 140 million Swiss francs (\$140 million/128 million euro) has been invested over the past three years in the museum dedicated to the world's most popular sport.  
 "We couldn't ignore the turbulences, it was not easy. But we had to focus on our mission, to build a museum and a team," said managing director Stefan Jost of the work which continued against the backdrop of the current scandal engulfing the sport's governing body.  
 Blatter along with UEFA chief Michel Platini have both been suspended from all football activity for eight years by a FIFA tribunal.  
 "It's not a museum about personalities, it's about what football gives to people around the world," added Jost of the project which was the brainchild of Blatter, who has headed FIFA since 1998.  
 "We don't know if the new president will participate in the inauguration," said Jost, adding that the interim secretary general Markus Kattner would be present.  
 In the centre of Zurich, and covering 3000 m2 on three levels, the museum will exhibit objects retracing the history of football, with a library including 5000 works.  
 It is hoped that the museum will attract 250,000 visitors per year, comparable with the Olympic museum in Lausanne, which drew 300,000 in 2015.

## Arsenal face stern test

AFP, Liverpool  
  
 Arsene Wenger says Arsenal will face a stern test of their Premier League title credentials when they take on Liverpool on Wednesday.  
 Wenger's side head to Anfield two points clear at the head of the table and having won five of their last six league games.  
 The weekend FA Cup third round victory over Sunderland extended their winning run and Wenger acknowledges his side's recent success has strengthened the belief they can push on during the second half of the season.  
 The Gunners manager, though, knows any meeting with Liverpool carries an extra edge that was demonstrated when the sides met on Merseyside last season, with the home side clinching a point thanks to Martin Skrtel's stoppage-time equaliser.  
 "The momentum creates confidence and confidence is vital at that level," Wenger said.  
 "In December and now in January we have been consistent and we go into a very important part of the season because we play many games.  
 "Every time we go to Anfield, we face a team who is up for it. It's always a ferocious battle, no matter who the manager is.  
 "They had a very strong manager before, they have a very strong one now and Jurgen Klopp has the personality to do well there."  
 Wenger hopes to add Basel midfielder Mohamed Elneny to his squad this week.  
 "I expect Mohamed yes, we are positive that this week it can happen," he said.  
 And his options will shortly be strengthened by the return to fitness of Alexis Sanchez, although the Chile striker will not make the trip to Liverpool.  
 "We think he will be short for Wednesday," said Wenger.  
 "He has a chance to be available for Sunday against Stoke. He is always keen to play."  
 Liverpool manager Jurgen Klopp is looking forward rather than back as he prepares to take on Wenger in English football for the first time.

The pair have previously met at Champions League level with honours almost even, Wenger enjoying three wins to Klopp's two and a draw from his time in charge at Bundesliga side Borussia Dortmund.  
 Klopp took over at Liverpool after the sides had drawn 0-0 at the Emirates Stadium in the Premier League in August.  
 And the German admits watching Wenger's work at closer quarters has impressed him even more as the Liverpool boss prepares for huge back-to-back home games against the Gunners and Manchester United.  
 "We shouldn't talk too much about my experiences of playing against Arsenal. We will find a current plan for this game," Klopp said.  
 "It's always a big challenge to play against clubs like Arsenal or Manchester United.  
 "It's a good challenge, not easy, but really interesting. We have to make good decisions in the right moment. We are looking forward to these games.  
 "My respect for Arsene Wenger grows day by day. It's really intensive to work in the Premier League and he's done a brilliant job."  
 Klopp's remarks regarding Wenger, looking to lead Arsenal to a fourth league title but first since 2004, reflect his initial impressions of managing in England.  
 Klopp, who took over at Anfield in October, said that the number of fixtures has been the biggest difference to managing on the continent, with Liverpool facing the possibility of playing nine games in January.  
 That workload is stretching a squad that has been badly hit by injuries, although Klopp hopes to have a number of key players back for the game on Wednesday when the eighth-placed Reds will be looking for a third win in four league games.  
 After having no senior central defenders available for last Friday's 0-0 FA Cup draw at Exeter, ex-Arsenal defender Kolo Toure and Mamadou Sakho are both expected to be fit.  
 Captain Jordan Henderson is also set to return in midfield and winger Jordan Ibe is fit after hamstring trouble.

## Ballon d'Or hosts mock ceremony

GOAL.COM  
 FIFA'S Ballon d'Or ceremony was described as "chaos" by its own hosts, James Nesbitt and Kate Abdo, in a microphone gaffe as the closing credits rolled on Monday.  
 The two Brits were overheard by listeners to FIFA's online video stream criticising script changes and organisation following Lionel Messi's presentation as the Ballon d'Or 2015 winner.  
 "Why did they change that? I don't understand why the changed the script?" Abdo was heard saying to Northern Irish actor Nesbitt after the ceremony.  
 "Where are the winners?" Nesbitt responded, presumably referring to his sign off at the end of the ceremony, when he only referred to Messi and not the players and coaches who had won other awards.  
 "Have you seen they just tried to stop [Cristiano] Ronaldo? Chaos. It's chaos," Abdo added, although both were off camera so it was unclear where the Real Madrid player was trying to go.  
 Meanwhile, several journalists were denied entry into the auditorium, despite having full accreditation, because some tickets were issued only 30 minutes before the start.

## Xavi can't get enough of Leo

AGENCIES, Barcelona  
  
 Five-time Ballon d'Or winner Lionel Messi is the best player in history and was always different, his former team-mate has written.  
 Former Barcelona captain Xavi has paid a warm tribute to Lionel Messi, who he believes is the finest footballer of all time.  
 Messi scooped the fifth Ballon d'Or of his stellar career in Zurich on Monday, taking back the game's most coveted individual prize from his great rival Cristiano Ronaldo.  
 Xavi played alongside Messi from the Argentina star's introduction into the Camp Nou first-team squad until the midfielder brought down the curtain on his own celebrated Barcelona career at the end of last season.  
 Writing an editorial for Spanish newspaper El Pais, Xavi remembered being transfixed by the sublime talents of a teenage Messi on the training field and impressed by his humility off it.  
 "You could tell he was different," he said. "Leo, above all, had a talent that is the hardest to achieve: he understood the game.  
 He could pass well and he could dribble around anyone you put in front of him: he used to leave the best defender we had on the ground.  
 "A while after he came to the first team we shared a trip and I discovered an educated boy, who was respectful, humble and not conceited at all.  
 "And that makes him exemplary, because being what he is now, being the best, he hasn't lost those values, he hasn't lost a bit of that humility and he respects his team-mates. I think Leo never wanted to be different from the others."  
 Despite these initial glowing impressions, Xavi did not foresee Messi's development into an all-time footballing superstar and believes the longevity of the 28-year-old's excellence sets him apart.  
 "He was different, but he was only 16 years old, so I thought he'd be good, but I knew that football is very complicated, that a lot of things interfere, I never imagined



## Even LVG is bored

AFP, London  
 Louis van Gaal admits there have been times this season when even he has been left feeling bored and angry by Manchester United's lacklustre displays.  
 United ended an eight-match winless run by defeating Swansea nine days ago and then followed that victory up with a narrow success in the FA Cup against third tier Sheffield United.  
 But neither result was enough to ease the pressure on United boss Van Gaal because of the dull and uninspiring performances of his team.  
 Paul Scholes branded United's style of play boring earlier this season and following Saturday's 1-0 victory in the FA Cup, the former Old Trafford great claimed both Van Gaal and his players even looked bored during the third round tie.  
 "There are matches that I have enjoyed," Van Gaal told reporters on Monday.  
 "And there are also matches where I'm very bored or angry because we are not disorganising our opponent's defence, but that is football."  
 Despite that admission, the Dutchman still slammed suggestions that his primary aim is to stifle the opposition rather than attack.  
 "Do you know that," he snapped at reporters. "I am not concerned (about defending more than

# শিখর ছোঁয়ার অপেক্ষায়

সেরা ৩২ স্পেলার



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Sunbeams, Dhaka



**Md. Muntasir Islam**  
Dhaka Residential Model College, Dhaka



**Fardin Hussain**  
Sir John Wilson School, Dhaka



**Faiyaz Uddin Ayeshik**  
Barisal Cadet College, Barisal



**Season 4**

**চলছে কোয়ার্টার ফাইনাল রাউন্ড**  
 ৩২ জন স্পেলার থেকে প্রতি পর্বে অংশ নেবে ৪ জন, বেছে নেওয়া হবে ২ জন। ৮ পর্ব শেষে জয়ী ১৬ জন স্পেলার পৌঁছে যাবে পরের রাউন্ডে।

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