



# What to WATCH

**GTV & STARS SPORTS 1**  
 Asia Cup  
 Bangladesh v Pakistan  
 Live from 7:30pm  
**STARS SPORTS 1**

English Premiership  
 Liverpool v Man City  
 Live from 2:00am (Thursday)  
**STARS SPORTS 2**  
 English Premiership

Man United v Watford  
 Live from 2:00am (Thursday)  
**STAR SPORTS 4**  
 English Premiership  
 Arsenal v Swansea City

Live from 1:45am (Thursday)  
**SONY ESPN HD**  
 Primera Liga  
 Atletico Madrid v Real Sociedad  
 Live from 2:00am (Thursday)  
**SONY SIX**

Primera Liga  
 Celta Vigo v Villarreal  
 Live from 1:00am (Thursday)



**Asia Cup**  
 Venue: SBNS  
 Bangladesh v Pakistan

Time: 7:30pm

**Bangladesh Cricket League**  
 Four-day Match, Day 2  
 Time: 9:30am

South Zone v North Zone  
 Venue: SKICS Academy Ground

# Clinical India cruise to final

**SPORTS REPORTER**

It was another tough day for batsmen in the Asia Cup T20 as Virat Kohli once again displayed a high level of skill in leading India to a five-wicket victory on a green Mirpur pitch against Sri Lanka at the Sher-e-Bangla National Stadium yesterday. In the process, India became the first team to qualify for the March 6 final.

Kohli's 47-ball 56 was the backbone of India's innings as they chased down Sri Lanka's score of 138 for nine with four balls to spare. Although the match went down to the last over, India were firmly in control through cameos from Yuvraj Singh and a late flourish from skipper Mahendra Singh Dhoni.

As he had done in their previous match against Pakistan, Kohli's assured batting helped India recover from the early loss of both openers to an excellent Nuwan Kulasekara opening spell. Kohli's cool was supplemented by Yuvraj's powerful hitting. Coming in after Suresh Raina had played a good hand of a run-a-ball 25 in the 54-run third wicket partnership with Kohli, Yuvraj seemed back to his explosive best, belting the signature whipped sixes over mid-wicket in his 18-ball 35. He fell after taking India to within sight of a win, hooking a ball down fine leg's throat with the score on 121 in the 17th over.

India's chase was set back by a penetrating opening

spell from Kulasekara who utilised the helpful conditions to perfection. Shikhar Dhawan was caught leaden-footed as he edged an away-going delivery to the keeper in the second over. Rohit Sharma hit three delectable boundaries but fell trying to hit a fourth through cover in Kulasekara's next over, the seam movement beating the shot and taking a thin edge through to the keeper. But once again, India's batting depth ensured that they maintained their all-win record.

Earlier, Sri Lanka underwent their familiar batting woes after being asked to bat, finding themselves in trouble at 31 for three. Dinesh Chandimal inside-edged a slog to Dhoni off Ashish Nehra in the third over and Shehan Jayawardene followed suit in the next over off Jasprit Bumrah. Tillakaratne Dilshan raised hopes of a vintage display with an improvised sweep to fine-leg off the same bowler, but it was a false dawn as he fell for 18 off Pandya's first



ball in the seventh over. The middle order then came to the rescue. Chamara Kapugedera was the mainstay, building a 26-run fourth wicket stand with skipper Angelo Mathews and a 43-run fifth-wicket association with Milinda Siriwardana. Kapugedera became Bumrah's second victim with the score on 105 for seven in the 18th over, scoring a 32-ball 30. Thisara Perera then scored a 6-ball 17 before being controversially adjudged stumped by the square-leg umpire. His two fours and a six helped boost the score to 138 for nine.



For India's star batsman Virat Kohli it was yet another day out in the middle and yet another signature performance. Here, he works the ball on his way to an unbeaten 56 in his side's five-wicket win against Sri Lanka at the Sher-e-Bangla National Stadium yesterday. PHOTO: FIROZ AHMED

SL-IND SCOREBOARD				
SRI LANKA	R/B	A/G		
Chandimal c Dhoni b Nehra	4/11	1/0		
Dilshan c Ashwin b Pandya	18/16	2/0		
Jayasuriya c Dhoni b Bumrah	3/5	0/0		
Kapugedera c Pandya b Bumrah	30/32	3/0		
Mathews b Pandya	18/19	3/0		
Siriwardana c Raina b Ashwin	22/17	1/1		
Shanaka run out	1/4	0/0		
Perera st Dhoni b Ashwin	17/6	2/1		
Kulasekara run out	13/9	2/0		
Chameera not out	2/2	0/0		
Extras: (lb-5, w-4, nb-1)		10		
Total: (For 9 wks in 20 overs)		138		
Fall of wickets: 1-6, 2-15, 3-31, 4-57, 5-100, 6-104, 7-105, 8-125.				
Bowler	O	M	R	W
Nehra	4	0	23	1
Bumrah	4	0	27	2
Pandya	4	0	26	2
Yuvraj	1	0	3	0
Jadeja	2	0	19	0
Ashwin	4	0	26	2
Raina	1	0	9	0
INDIA				
Bowler	O	M	R	W
Dhawan c Chandimal b Kulasekara	1/3	0/0		
Sharma c Kapugedera b Kulasekara	15/14	3/0		
Kohli not out	56/47	7/0		
Raina c Kulasekara b Shanaka	25/26	2/0		
Yuvraj c Kulasekara b Perera	35/18	3/3		
Pandya b Herath	2/4	0/0		
Dhoni not out	7/4	0/1		
Extras: (w-1)		1		
Total: (For 5 wks in 19.2 overs)		142		
Fall of wickets: 1-11, 2-16, 3-70, 4-121, 5-125.				
Mathews	3	0	16	0
Kulasekara	3	0	21	2
Perera	4	0	32	1
Chameera	4	0	27	0
Herath	3.2	0	26	1
Shanaka	1	0	7	1

## BHF keen on Asian Champs Trophy

**SPORTS REPORTER**

The hosting of next year's World Hockey League (Round-2) in Bangladesh was confirmed long ago but the Bangladesh Hockey Federation (BHF) is in a dicey situation regarding its bid for the Asian Champions Trophy.

Though Bangladesh hosted a lot of international hockey tournaments, mostly age-level and qualifying tournaments for the Asia Cup and the Asian Games, winning the bid of World Hockey League (Round-2) is a new thing for the BHF, which is now trying to bring the Asian Champions Trophy to Bangladesh and play in that tournament for the first time.

"Though there was a pre-condition of having floodlights at the stadium in order to bid for the World Hockey League (Round-2), somehow we convinced the AHF (Asian Hockey Confederation) to win the second round to be held in February, 2017 where Bangladesh will play directly," said BHF vice president Khaza Rahmatullah.

"But we are in a difficult position for the Asian Champions Trophy because we don't have floodlights," said Rahmatullah. "A

## Infantino 'bought' votes

**AFP, Milan**

Outspoken Palermo president Maurizio Zamparini has courted controversy by claiming Gianni Infantino "bought" votes on his way to being elected president of FIFA.

Infantino was voted world football's new chief on Friday.

Although Infantino has pledged to restore the battered image of FIFA, and despite his victory being widely applauded by key figures in the game, Zamparini cast doubt on whether the election process was fully transparent.

"The system doesn't change and the new president of FIFA, the chief of bureaucrats, was part of it all before," Zamparini is quoted as saying in a video clip on www.mediagol.it.

"If he got elected, it's only because he bought more votes than the sheikh (Sheikh Salman bin Ibrahim Al Khalifa)."

## KFC NATIONAL WOMEN'S FOOTBALL Final round from today

**SPORTS REPORTER**

The final round of the KFC National Women's Football Championship gets underway today at the Birshrestha Shaheed Mostafa Kamal Stadium in Kamalapur, with eight teams vying for the coveted title.

A total of 39 districts teams took part in the preliminary round in November and six venue champions and the best runners-up team qualified for the eight-team finals where holders Mymensingh were given direct entry. Mymensingh will take on Rajbari while BJMC will face Rangpur at the same venue in the opening day today.

"Despite the completion of the preliminary round in November, we were forced to defer the finals because of the national women's team's preparation for South Asian Games, which ended two weeks ago," said Mahfuza Akter Kiron, deputy chairman of BFF women's committee, at a press conference yesterday.

Now the eight finalists will play in two groups and the top two teams from each group will advance to the semifinals, billed for March 8. The final will take place on March 10.

The champions and the runners-up teams will be awarded Tk 50,000 and Tk 25,000 while participating teams will receive Tk 30,000 as participation money.



Organisers and sponsors speak at a press conference at the Bangladesh Football Federation House on the eve of the final round of the KFC National Women's Football Championship yesterday. PHOTO: COURTESY

## Wind-assisted Gatlin clocks 9.45 seconds

**AGENCIES, Tokyo**

Sprint star Justin Gatlin has 'broken' Usain Bolt's formidable 100 metres world record on a Japanese game show yesterday, but only thanks to the assistance of a series of massive wind turbines.

Gatlin's time of 9.45 seconds will of course not stand as an official mark due to the outrageous tailwind of 20 miles per hour, with Bolt's 9.58, set in 2009, to remain safe for now.

Appearing on the show 'Kasupe!' for a fee of 2 million yen (\$25,000), the 34-year-old American, considered Bolt's greatest rival at present, stormed out of the blocks with the help of a giant fan placed behind the starting position.

If that was not enough of a leg up for him, there were four smaller fans placed alongside his lane to further push him on his way to the inglorious feat.

Not surprising, then, that Gatlin was able to smash his personal best of 9.74 seconds.



Napoli star Gonzalo Higuain celebrates his equalising goal against Fiorentina during their Serie A encounter at the Artemio Franchi Stadium on Monday. PHOTO: REUTERS

## Napoli maintain title push

**AFP, Milan**

Gonzalo Higuain claimed his 25th Serie A goal of the season as Napoli maintained their title push with a thrilling 1-1 draw at Fiorentina on Monday.

Napoli were under the cosh after champions Juventus stretched their lead at the top of the table to four points with a 2-0 win over hapless Inter Milan on Sunday.

But despite pushing La Viola hard in a thrilling encounter at the Artemio Franchi, a share of the spoils against a Fiorentina side that looks worthy of a top three finish to qualify for next season's Champions League left Napoli with no complaints.

Napoli remained in second place, three points behind Juventus, with Roma and Fiorentina both five points further adrift in third and fourth places respectively.

Napoli coach Maurizio Sarri said it had been a "great game" but admitted to Mediaset Premium: "They had the chance to win the game in the final minutes of the first half, as we did in the final minutes of the second."

"It was a fair result, neither side deserved to lose. I'm really happy with my lads, and tip my hat to Fiorentina."

Fiorentina coach Paolo Sousa did not agree, but was buoyed by another performance that underlined Fiorentina's Champions League credentials.

"Unfortunately we just lacked a little bit of luck to take what was a deserved win," said the Portuguese coach.

"But we're right on track for the goals we have set ourselves. With a little bit of ambition and belief, we want to compete with the big sides."

"I'm proud of the lads, because they always want to improve. Tonight we deserved something more from this match."

After just six minutes Sousa's men got in front when Marcos Alonso rose above the Napoli defence at a corner to send a glancing header past Pepe Reina.

But Alonso went from hero to zero in a matter of seconds.

From the subsequent kick-off that had all the hallmarks of a set-piece, Kalidou Koulibaly promptly fired a high punt into the Fiorentina area that forced 'keeper Ciprian Tatarusanu out of his net.

When Alonso's fluffed clearance fell to Higuain, he little trouble guiding the ball into the back of the net from 30 yards.

Having failed to score for three weeks, including two league games and two Europa League games, and come under criticism from club president Aurelio De Laurentiis for being "overweight", the Argentinian's exuberant celebrations were perhaps understandable.

Yet Fiorentina twice came close to silencing Napoli in spectacular fashion before the interval, Nikola Kalinic outpacing Senegal defender Koulibaly to rocket a shot off the crossbar and then Cristian Tello hitting post and crossbar with a superb curling effort.

Fiorentina resumed where they had left off, the Viola's pacy passing and movement leaving Napoli ball-watching during the early exchanges of the second half.

## Kishoreganj rout Rangpur

**SPORTS REPORTER**

Kishoreganj registered a 9-0 win over Rangpur in the 3rd Women's National Hockey Competition at the Maulana Bhasani Hockey Stadium yesterday.

Tanha Tarannum, Sumi Akter, Bina Akter and Fardia Akter struck two goals each while Tarin Akter netted one goal in the one-sided affair.

In the day's other matches, Jhenaidah defeated Patuakhali 2-0, with Sharmin Khatun scoring both goals while the match between Rajshahi and Thakurgaon ended in a goalless draw.

## Niang suffers car accident

**AFP, Rome**

AC Milan striker M'baye Niang was involved in a car accident on Saturday night, but claimed Monday it was a minor incident in which he had been merely a passenger.

Earlier that evening he had helped Milan beat Torino 1-0 at home in lashing and relentless rain.

"My driver and I are both in good health. The car was aquaplaning, there was more fear than harm. Ready for the rest of the season with Milan, Forza Milan," the Frenchman wrote on Twitter.