

What to WATCH

BTV World & Boishakhi TV
 Bangladesh Premier League
 Uttara Baridhara v Arambagh
 Live from 4:30pm
 Brothers Union v Muktiyoddha
 Live from 7:30pm

STAR SPORTS 1
 England v Pakistan
 Third Test, Day 1

TEN 3
 West Indies v India
 Second Test, Day 5

DAY'S EVENT

Bangladesh Premier League
 Uttara Baridhara v Arambagh
 Time: 4:30pm

Brothers Union v Muktiyoddha
 Time: 7:30pm
 Venue: M A Aziz Stadium, Chittagong

MIKEL/MICHAEL MIX-UP

Did you ever see that episode of Friends where Chandler Bing's work colleague calls him Toby because it's been far too long to correct him now? Of course you did, it's Friends. Well, John Obi Mikel is living Friends in real life. But while that sounds fantastic, it's really not as it turns out John Obi Mikel is actually called 'Michael', but the Nigeria Football Federation incorrectly spelt his name ahead of the Under-17 World Cup in 2003. It was not all bad though as Mikel/Michael preferred his new moniker and stuck with it before joining Chelsea in 2006. Now Michael, born John Michael Ncheckwube Obinna, has officially changed his name to 'Mikel John Obi', according to the Standard.



Yunus to carry flame in Rio

MD FAZLUR RAHMAN

Nobel Peace Laureate Professor Muhammad Yunus will bear the torch of the Rio Olympic Games which is starting in the Brazilian city on August 5.

He was chosen by Thomas Bach, president of the International Olympic Committee (IOC), to join the mission of spreading the spirit of the Rio 2016 Olympic Games throughout the world.

The Rio Olympic Torch relay began with the traditional Olympic flame lighting ceremony in the Greek city of Olympia, birthplace of the ancient Games, on April 21, 2016.

In Brazil, the Rio 2016 Olympic Torch Relay started in the country's capital Brasilia on May 3. After traversing more than three hundred cities throughout the country – with 12,000 athletes carrying the torch over 12,500 miles – the torch relay will end on August 5 during the opening ceremony at the Maracana Stadium.

Professor Yunus will bear the Olympic torch on the final leg of the relay in Rio on August 4, 2016, a statement from Yunus Centre in Dhaka informed yesterday.

The founder of Grameen Bank will also address the IOC, attended by representatives of the national Olympic committees from around the world, in Rio on the same day.

He will speak on 'Athletics, Social Business and SDGs [Sustainable Development Goals] – the New Vision of the World'.

According to the statement, Professor Yunus will be jointly working with the IOC to develop a social dimension to the athletics and the sports world, from the grassroots level to the global level. This will include all IOC events, venues and organisations to participate and create social businesses to address human problems around them.

The Rio Olympic is the 31st edition of the modern day Olympic Games, where 39 different sports will be played.



Professor Muhammad Yunus (L) shares a light moment with International Olympic Committee President Thomas Bach at the IOC headquarters in Lausanne yesterday. The Bangladesh Nobel Peace Laureate will carry the torch of the Rio Olympic Games on August 4.

PHOTO: YUNUS CENTRE

Wawrinka out of Rio

AFP, Rio de Janeiro

World number four Stan Wawrinka withdrew from the Rio Olympics with a back injury on Tuesday, dealing another body blow to the tennis tournament which has been hit by a series of high-profile pull-outs.

The 31-year-old is the third Swiss player to withdraw after Roger Federer and Belinda Bencic who also scratched from the event through injury.

"I am very sad," said Wawrinka, the former French and Australian Open champion.

"Going to Rio was close to my heart. After Beijing (2008) and London (2012), I wanted to live these Games in Brazil."

"Sadly, it's not possible. I wish good luck to all the Swiss athletes who will go to Rio and I will support them from distance."

Britain taking no chances

AFP, Rio de Janeiro

Record-seeking Britain have pulled out all the stops for their Rio Olympics campaign – to the extent of employing their own plumber for the leaky athletes' village.

Water leaks and even a small fire have been among the problems reported at the newly-built tower blocks, along with blocked toilets, exposed wiring and unlit stairwells.

Australia had to delay moving in because of concerns over the accommodation, and the Brits are taking no chances as they eye their biggest ever medal tally at an Olympics away from home.

Two Russian swimmers cleared

AFP, Moscow

Russian swimmers Vladimir Morozov and Nikita Lobintsev have been cleared to compete at the Rio Olympics, their representatives said Tuesday, though there was no official confirmation.

World swimming's governing body FINA, the Russian swimming federation and the Court of Arbitration for Sport (CAS) have not confirmed that Lobintsev and Morozov will in fact be competing in Rio. A ruling by CAS was expected later in the day.

Bach slams contemptuous doping

AFP, Rio de Janeiro



Russian appeals against Olympic bans were piling up Tuesday as IOC president Thomas Bach slammed what he called the "contemptuous" doping system blamed on the Moscow government.

Bach said the Russia scandal along with Brazil's political and economic crises had made the runup to the first Olympics in South America "challenging".

An investigation by Canadian lawyer Richard McLaren which revealed state-organised doping in Russia, has overshadowed the buildup to the Rio Games which start Friday.

Eighteen canoeists and rowers made late appeals on Monday adding to challenges from three swimmers, a wrestler and the Russian weightlifting federation already in a queue at the Court of Arbitration for Sport (CAS).

But speaking at the opening session of an International Olympic Committee meeting, Bach said: "The findings in the McLaren report are very serious, in particular with regards to a system of doping allegedly orchestrated by the Russian ministry of sport."

"If proven true, such a contemptuous system of doping is an unprecedented attack on the integrity of sport and on the Olympic Games."

The IOC has been criticised for not ordering a blanket ban against Russia. But the German leader of the Olympic movement said there had to be "justice" for athletes who are clean.

"You cannot punish a human being for the failures of his or her government if he or she is not implicated," he said. Russia has denied any government backing for doping but its sports minister Vitaly Mutko has been barred from attending the Rio Games.

The IOC has ordered individual federations which organise the sports contest at the Olympics to filter out Russian athletes who should be banned over the doping.

This has led to the wave of cases at the CAS which has organised special hearings in Rio to deal with the appeals.

About 30 Russians have now appealed, directly or indirectly, against bans from the Rio Olympics ordered by international federations. More could follow.

CAS said in a statement that canoeist Andrey Kravtsov and 17 Russian rowers led by Daniil

Andrienko had also made appeals to the tribunal.

The first hearing for the rowers was scheduled for Tuesday when the tribunal would also decide whether more evidence would be needed in the case of Olympic medal winning swimmers Vladimir Morozov and Nikita Lobintsev.

Another appeal by swimmer Yulia Efimova was adjourned until Tuesday and the case of wrestler Viktor Lebedev

If proven true, such a contemptuous system of doping is an unprecedented attack on the integrity of sport and on the Olympic Games.

would follow, it added.

The Russian weightlifting federation has challenged its suspension by the International Weightlifting Federation over the doping scandal. It has said that if this is successful it will start a new case on behalf of eight lifters excluded from the Olympics.

The IOC chief has become

involved in a political battle with the World Anti-Doping Agency (WADA) over who is to blame for the chaos coming so close to the Rio opening.

Bach has said the IOC is not responsible as it did not decide on the release of the McLaren report nor control the anti-doping laboratories that Russian authorities have been accused of manipulating.

WADA hit back by saying it acted as quickly as possible over the doping revelations.

"While it is destabilising in the lead-up to the Games, it is obvious, given the seriousness of the revelations that (McLaren) uncovered, that they had to be published and acted upon without delay," WADA president Craig Reedie said.

Meanwhile Vitaly Stepanov, the Russian anti-doping whistleblower, maintained that the Rio Olympics would not be drug-free and that the IOC was against those who had revealed the extent of drug problems, like himself.

Stepanov, whose wife, the runner Yulia Stepanova, has been excluded from the Games over drugs, told the French sports newspaper L'Equipe that the IOC "does not want whistleblowers... does not want people who tell the truth."

New coach Bauza plans to woo Messi back

REUTERS, Buenos Aires

Argentina's new coach Edgardo Bauza has set his mind to wooing Lionel Messi back from international retirement as he ponders his squad for next month's South American 2018 World Cup qualifiers.

Bauza was named on Monday to replace Gerardo Martino, who resigned a month ago after steering Messi's side to two successive Copa America finals which ended in penalty shootout defeats to Chile.

The more recent of those results in the Copa America Centenario in the United States in June led to Messi deciding to quit the team. It was his fourth defeat in a major final with Argentina.

"I'm optimistic about Messi," Bauza said. "I hope the chat with him will help for him to carry on in the national team."

"I want to explain to Messi what my [tactical] idea is. The least of my worries is his position on the pitch," Bauza was quoted as saying in the Argentine daily La Nacion on Tuesday.

"There's no need to convince Messi of anything, the plan is to talk about football," said Bauza, speaking in Brazil where he has coached Sao Paulo for eight months.

Bauza, who quit his job with Sao Paulo to accept the Argentina vacancy and will sign his

contract in Buenos Aires on Friday, has only a couple of weeks to decide on his squad for qualifiers at home to Uruguay and away to Venezuela in the first week of September.

"There isn't much time. My first squad won't have many changes but I want to talk with five or six of the leading players," Bauza said, no doubt referring to the likes of Javier Mascherano, Angel Di Maria and Gonzalo Higuain.

He also opened the door for Carlos Tevez, overlopped by Martino since a World Cup qualifier against Paraguay in Asuncion last October where he won his 76th cap.

"I'm thinking of Tevez as I am about other players ... Tevez is a player good enough for the national team," Bauza said.

Bauza, a former central defender, rejected a tag as a defensive coach, saying: "I'm one of those who think that all [the team] have to defend. Football today is like that."

"You can defend in your opponents' half if the pressure is high [up the field] but it's easier when you have players of the quality of the Argentina team. The options they offer you are many."

Argentina are third in the 10-nation South American World Cup qualifying group with 11 points from six matches, two points behind leading pair Uruguay and Ecuador.



EDGARDO BAUZA

Cibulkova hobbles out of Rio

AFP, Rio de Janeiro

World number 11 and former Australian Open runner-up Dominika Cibulkova joined the Olympic Games tennis tournament's growing list of absentees on Monday when she pulled out with a left calf injury.

The 27-year-old has been told to rest for between seven and 10 days after picking up the injury at the Montreal WTA tournament last week where she lost in the second round to Eugenie Bouchard.

Cibulkova is the latest high-profile player to withdraw from the Games which get underway on Friday.

The women's singles has already been stripped of Simona Halep, Victoria Azarenka, who is pregnant, Belinda Bencic and Karolina Pliskova.

Maria Sharapova, the silver medalist behind Serena Williams at the 2012 London Olympics, is also missing as she serves a two-year doping ban.

Cibulkova's spot in the draw will be taken by Estonia's world number 94, Anett Kontaveit.

Rafa may trim down programme

AFP, Rio de Janeiro



Spanish star Rafael Nadal will decide Tuesday whether or not to play all three tennis events at the Olympic Games as he continues his comeback from a two-month injury absence.

The 14-time Grand Slam title winner, who practiced for the first time in Rio on Monday, is scheduled to play singles, doubles with Marc Lopez and mixed with French Open champion Garbine Muguruza.

But his uncle and coach Toni admitted that his nephew may have to rethink his schedule -- even possibly sitting out the singles.

"I don't know because that depends on who would be better for the team," Toni Nadal said when asked if his nephew will prioritise the singles.

"We are waiting until tomorrow to take a decision to play all the things or not -- singles, doubles and mixed doubles."

"Tomorrow we have to talk with (Spain coach) Conchita Martinez and with Rafa and what we think is better for the team, and then we play. Sure, sure, we play something."

Nadal, 30, was forced to quit the French Open before the third round after damaging tendons in his left wrist and hasn't played since, missing Wimbledon in the process.

"His wrist is so much better. We tried to practise normally. We played with a good level, a good intensity," said Toni after Monday's practice.



Rafael Nadal of Spain hits a backhand during a practice session at the Olympic park in Rio de Janeiro on Monday.

PHOTO: AFP

"After Roland Garros we were waiting for five weeks and then we started to play a little bit, to work with the wrist."

Nadal admitted himself on arriving in Brazil that he was still struggling for fitness.

"I will not be in the best in any category," Nadal told Spanish media.

"I have not competed for two months and I have not trained much. I will train a few days to see what I can do and then decide what is best, the most positive thing for me and for the team."

Nadal was the gold medalist at the

2008 Beijing Olympics but missed the 2012 London Games because of a knee injury.

He is due to carry Spain's flag at the opening ceremony in Rio on Friday.

The men's tennis event has already lost a host of stars either through injury, scheduling problems or worries over the Zika virus.

Roger Federer has called time on his season to rest a knee injury.

Fellow top 20 players Milos Raonic, Tomas Berdych, Dominic Thiem, Richard Gasquet, John Isner, Feliciano Lopez and Nick Kyrgios are also out.