



# What to WATCH

**BTV WORLD & BOISHAKHI TV**  
Bangladesh Premier League  
Uttar Baridhara v Feni Soccer  
Live from 4:30pm

Rahmatganj v Ctg Abahani  
Live from 7:30pm

**TEN 1**  
South Africa v New Zealand  
First Test, Day 1  
Live from 7:00pm

**TEN 1 HD**  
West Indies v India  
Fourth Test, Day 2  
Live from 8:00pm

**STAR SPORTS 2**  
Rio Olympic Games 2016  
Live from 5:30pm &  
12:30am (Saturday)

**STAR SPORTS4**  
English Premiership  
Man United v Southampton  
Live from 1:00am (Saturday)

## DAY'S EVENT

**Bangladesh Premier League**  
Uttar Baridhara v Feni Soccer  
Time: 4:30pm

**Rahmatganj v Ctg Abahani**  
Time: 7:30pm  
Venue: BNS



**USA ALL THE WAY:** Brianna Rollins (C), who wins the women's 100m hurdles gold, leads an all-American celebration with silver medallist Nia Ali (R) and bronze medallist Kristi Castlin at the Olympic Stadium on Wednesday.

PHOTO: REUTERS

# A Neymar show; then a no-show

ATIQUÉ ANAM from Rio de Janeiro

This was the moment everyone was waiting for. Neymar, the Brazil captain, would be walking into the mixed zone after leading his side to a 6-0 rout of Honduras in the semifinal of the Olympic Games football event on Wednesday. The Barcelona No. 11 scored the fastest goal in the history of the Games and then scored from the spot in the stoppage time to wrap up a consummate victory for the hosts at the Maracana. And the win set up the mouth-watering prospect of a final showdown for Friday against Germany, a side they were plundered by during the last FIFA World Cup in Brazil two years ago.

Even though Neymar could not play that fateful match, the scars of that defeat must have touched him like it did his colleagues who were on the pitch on that day in Belo Horizonte. So the script for revenge could not have been written any better. And then there remains the small matter of ending the unenviable record of never winning a football gold medal in the Olympics.

The excitement among the scores of journalists at the mixed zone was quite palpable as they waited to hear Neymar say something about the final. Some waited with their recorders in their hands while others were busy jotting down questions on their notebooks. Some were even getting their cell phone cameras ready to take a picture or two of the 24-year-old footballer, much to the annoyance of the volunteers.

One of the volunteers came and informed that the press conference will be held in five minutes and it will be attended only by the Brazil coach. No one seemed to care much though. Everyone was there for the Barcelona frontman.

As the Brazilian players started emerging from the tunnel one by one, the excitement started building. Neymar will be here any moment. First came midfielder Renato Augusto and left for the team bus after having met the queries of the journalists; then came Marquinhos, the PSG defender, followed by Santos forward Gabriel Barbosa, popularly known as Gabigol, and Palmeiras forward Gabriel Jesus. They all came and spent time and left for the bus. Still no sign of Neymar.

Almost an hour had passed before Neymar finally arrived and everyone took their positions and got ready to ask their question. But alas! The Brazil captain put on a cheeky smile and flashed a thumbs-up sign as he walked up towards the bus past the congregation of reporters. Everyone started shouting: Neymar, Neymar. Uno momento, One moment please, but to no avail. He was out of sight in a flash.

And so the storyline for the news changed in a matter of seconds. Instead of a preview of the final full of Neymar quotes, dominated by talks of revenge and redemption, a bland diary came up -- one of having watched the superstar from such close quarters yet not being close enough to get a sound bite or two.

# US swimmers fought with security guard

AFP, Rio de Janeiro

Reports emerged Thursday that the US Olympic swimmers claiming to have been mugged in Rio in fact got into a fight with an armed gas station security guard.

The unconfirmed reports on ABC News and Brazil's G1 news site said an altercation occurred when star swimmer Ryan Lochte and three other team members had been out partying and that the incident was caught on security camera footage.

G1 quoted Rio police saying that the athletes had stopped at the gas station in a taxi to use the bathroom. When they damaged the bathroom door, a security guard pulled out his weapon and made them stay until police arrived, prompting a confrontation, G1 reported.

ABC quoted an unidentified Brazilian police source saying CCTV footage shows a swimmer "breaking down the door to the bathroom at the gas station and fighting with a security guard."

Lochte, Jack Conger, Gunnar Bentz and James Feigen have said they were robbed by someone claiming to be a policeman early on Sunday. The incident caused an uproar and forced Olympic authorities into an apology.

However, police have since raised doubts over the veracity of the report and the swimmers could face charges of filing a false claim.

Lochte is in the United States. Conger and Bentz were detained by Brazilian police late Wednesday just as they were about to take off from the international airport for home.

The whereabouts of Feigen remained unclear.

# Kristi dedicates medal to victims of gun violence

AFP, Rio de Janeiro

Kristi Castlin dedicated her 100m hurdles medal to victims of gun violence after helping the United States claim a historic podium sweep in the event on Wednesday.

The 28-year-old Los Angeles-based sprinter claimed bronze behind gold medallist Brianna Rollins and Nia Ali in silver as the US sealed a 1-2-3 in the event.

Castlin, whose father was shot dead in 2000 at the hotel he managed, later said she hoped to work to help victims of gun violence.

"Losing my father at the age of 12 to gun violence, I've overcome so much," she said.

"I want to connect more with young people that have been victims of gun violence. I feel, when I was young, I definitely had a lot of good guidance but sometimes I didn't have someone of my age that I really could talk too."

Castlin had earlier celebrated the unique US triumph with Ali and Rollins, close friends in what she described as a "black girl magic movement."

Ali shared the moment with her toddler son Titus, bringing him onto the track at the Olympic Stadium during a lap of honour.

"We actually came to this not as individuals but as a team and that's how we got the job done," Castlin said.

"The first US sweep in women's American history. So it definitely feels good to be history-makers and trend-setters."

"Mums, daughters, overcoming and doing a great job and representing our country well."

Rollins, the 2013 world champion, produced a silky smooth display over the barriers to win in 12.48sec ahead of compatriot Ali, who took silver in 12.61sec.

Castlin faced an agonising wait of a few seconds before her bronze medal was confirmed after she crossed in 12.61sec.

Ali admitted she had not expected to return to top flight competition so soon after giving birth to her son 15 months ago.

"I honestly didn't think that far ahead about the medals stand," she said. "I knew it was going to be a difficult road back. I'm happy I was able to come back and come back so quickly."

Castlin meanwhile said the trio had taken inspiration from the medal-winning exploits of other US Olympians in Rio.

"The whole Olympics had gone by and you'd seen Katie Ledecky doing great things and Simone Biles. So many amazing performances throughout all different sports - that kind of amped up our energy. We wanted to come out and get it done."

The victory reflected the USA's incredible strength in depth in the event this year. Seven different American women have clocked the seven top times this season.

They include Kendra Harrison, who set a new world record last month yet who missed out on a place on the team for Rio at the US Olympic trials.

# If it's happening, it's in Copacabana

ATIQUÉ ANAM from Rio de Janeiro

Copacabana is a happening place. It is probably one of the most happening places in the whole of South America.

It is not as if it is the most chic neighbourhood of Rio de Janeiro; in fact the beach in Copacabana has been facing stiff competition from its more uptown counterparts such as Ipanema and Leblon. But while those two beaches are more confined of the elite, Copacabana is the place where you will find people of all races, ethnicities and social classes. Hence the place welcomes revellers from around the world and different regions of this country to the shores of the Atlantic.

With hillocks marking the boundaries at either side, the beach is dotted by a stretch of small cafes which sell both authentic South American and Western food, even if the quality of the food often leaves a lot to be desired. But that does not stop people from coming to these cafes, which serve as a respite from the sun.

Night sets in languidly on these shores. The crowd thins out at the beach as people swarm the upscale restaurants and nightclubs, and the revelling continues unabated.

The Olympics have added a different vibe to this place. Being the birthplace of beach volleyball, Copacabana was chosen as the setting for the event at these Olympics. And that has brought with it swarms of people from the far reaches of the city.

The Beach Volleyball Arena is probably the earliest of risers and latest of sleepers among all the Olympic venues here in Rio de Janeiro. The emcee's loud rendition of running commentary and the accompanying rock music makes the presence of this arena felt from far corners of the Copacabana. The first session of games start early in the morning and the second session ends after midnight when thousands of people swarm out into the sidewalk and beaches, turning the Copacabana into a sea of humanity.

# Some solace for Isinbayeva

AFP, Rio de Janeiro

Two-time Olympic pole vault champion Yelena Isinbayeva was Thursday elected onto the International Olympic Committee's athletes' commission despite being excluded with the Russian team from taking part in the Rio Games.

Isinbayeva, 34, was unable to defend her title after the Russian squad was hit with a blanket ban over a doping scandal which rocked track and field.

She was one of four new members on the commission elected by fellow athletes.

The others were Britta Heidemann from Germany (fencing), South Korea's Ryu Seung-min (table tennis) and Daniel Gyurta from Hungary (swimming).

# Enrique hails Barca

AFP, Barcelona

Luis Enrique wanted his players to take the plaudits as Barcelona crushed Sevilla 3-0 to win their 12th Spanish Super Cup on Wednesday, 5-0 on aggregate.

Arda Turan and Lionel Messi blew away the Andalusians at the Camp Nou, with victory meaning the coach has won eight of the 10 competitions he has contested while in charge of Barcelona.

With the hosts already leading by two goals from the first leg, Sevilla -- bar an early flurry of chances -- were on the receiving end of a Barcelona football master class.

Turan put in his best display yet for the Catalans after a disappointing debut season, scoring once in each half.

But it was Messi who masterminded a relentless slew of assaults on Sevilla's goal.

"I am very fortunate to have a group of unique players, who don't stop surprising me," Enrique said in his post-match press conference.

"They are different and the good thing is that the new players have a lot of enthusiasm and will try and copy what those who have been here for years have been doing. It's a true honour and a pleasure."

# Russian boxer out due to injuries

AFP, Rio de Janeiro

A Russian boxer controversially adjudged to have beaten world champion Michael Conlan at the Rio Olympics is out of the Games because of injuries he suffered at the hands of the Irishman, a top Russian official said.

Vladimir Nikitin's withdrawal from his semi-final on Thursday will ramp up the pressure on amateur boxing's world governing body, the AIBA, which has faced criticism from boxers and coaches in Rio after at least two deeply contentious judging decisions.

One of those was the unanimous points verdict given to the bantamweight Nikitin on Tuesday, sparking a furious, expletive-filled rant from Conlan, who in the eyes of most boxing experts had appeared to have been a clear winner.

And now it transpires that the injuries to the Russian will mean he cannot face American hot prospect Shakur Stevenson.

# Clement powers to 400m hurdles gold

AFP, Rio de Janeiro

Kerron Clement of the United States stormed to victory in the men's 400m hurdles on Thursday, holding off a furious late challenge from Kenya's Boniface Tumuti to take gold.

Clement powered over in a world leading time of 47.73sec, just ahead of Tumuti in 47.78.

Turkey's Cuban-born Yasmani Copello claimed bronze in 47.92sec.

Ireland's Thomas Barr narrowly missed out on a podium finish, just behind Copello in 47.97sec.

The win comes eight years after the Trinidad-born Clement won a silver medal in the 2008 Beijing Games and a gold medal in the 4x400 relay.

Injuries disrupted his career in the intervening period and he finished outside the medals at the London Olympics four years ago as he struggled to regain his peak.

However he had signalled his readiness to take advantage of a wide open field in Rio, qualifying for the final with the fastest semi-final time on Tuesday.

On Thursday Clement set off at a quick pace and built up a healthy lead heading into the home straight, digging deep to hold off the fast-approaching Tumuti over the closing metres before being congratulated by US decathlon star Ashton Eaton as he crossed the line.

Clement said he had been determined to make the podium in Rio, targeting 2016 as a redemption year after his problems in 2012.

"I had one goal in mind and my mindset was to come here and get a medal," Clement told reporters.

"In 2008 I fell short and got a silver. In 2012 I was battling injuries and surgeries. I was just happy to make the finals in 2012," added Clement, who underwent hernia and adductor muscle operations before the London Games.

"Coming out here in 2016 for me was a redemption year. I'm just honored to get a gold medal."



**USA's Kerron Clement (R)** leaves the chasing pack in his wake to win the men's 400m hurdles gold at the Olympic Stadium in Rio de Janeiro yesterday.

PHOTO: REUTERS