

What to WATCH

DAY'S EVENT

CHANNEL 9 & SONY SIX

Bangladesh Premier League T20

Rangpur Riders v Barisal Bulls

Live from 1:00pm

Chittagong Vikings v Rajshahi Kings

Live from 5:45pm

BOISHAKHI TV

Bangladesh Premier League

Arambagh v Ctg Abahani

Live from 3:00pm

STAR SPORTS SELECT HD 1

English Premiership

Man City v Chelsea

Live from 6:30pm

Tottenham v Swansea City

Live from 9:00pm

West Ham v Arsenal

Live from 11:30pm

STAR SPORTS SELECT HD 2

English Premiership

Sunderland v Leicester City

Live from 9:00pm

Bundesliga

Leipzig v Schalke

Live from 11:30pm

SONY ESPN

El Clasico

Barcelona v Real Madrid

Live from 9:15pm

Serie A

Juventus v Atalanta

Live from 2:00am (Sunday)

Bangladesh Premier League T20

Rangpur Riders v Barisal Bulls

Time: 1:00pm

Chittagong Vikings v Rajshahi Kings

Time: 5:45pm

Venue: Sher-e-Bangla National Stadium, Mirpur

Bangladesh Premier League

Arambagh v Ctg Abahani

Time: 3:00pm

Venue: Sk Fazlul Haque Moni Stadium, Gopalganj

FIFA AWARDS

Griezmann, Messi, CR7 gunning for top honour

AFP, Paris

FIFA on Friday said it had nominated Cristiano Ronaldo, Lionel Messi and Antoine Griezmann to battle it out for the accolade of world player of the year.

Real Madrid star Ronaldo is favourite for the crown after winning the Champions League and also Euro 2016 with Portugal, albeit he exited the final win over France with an early injury.

Perennial rival Messi of Barcelona and Argentina, the reigning player of the year, had a less stellar year by his exacting standards.

Griezmann meanwhile suffered double heartache with France and Atletico Madrid at Euro 2016 and in the Champions League.

German Olympic champion Melanie Behringer will go up against Brazilian veteran Marta and US star Carli Lloyd for the women's accolade.

In the team of the year category, Ronaldo and Griezmann both also appeared among the 55 nominees for the FIFPro 2016 World 11 released on Thursday.

It is the first time that Griezmann has made the cut, while England captain Wayne Rooney is absent for the first time in the competition's 12-year history.

That leaves Juventus goalkeeper Gianluigi Buffon and Ronaldo as the only ever-presents for an award based on votes from professional players from 75 countries.

The eight newcomers also include France's N'Golo Kanté and Dimitri Payet, Ivorian Serge Aurier, Spaniard Hector Bellerin, Italian Leonardo Bonucci, Belgian Kevin De Bruyne, Argentina's Paulo Dybala and England's Jamie Vardy.

Meanwhile, Mohd Faiz Subri, Johnath Marlone and women's footballer Daniuska Rodríguez were nominated for the Puskas award, which recognises the best goal in a calendar year.

The winners will be crowned at a ceremony in Zurich on January 9, 2017.



(L) Argentine sensation Lionel Messi and his teammates will be looking to turn Barcelona's flagging fortunes around when the defending champions host league leaders Real Madrid, spearheaded by Portuguese superstar Cristiano Ronaldo (R), for the first Clasico of the La Liga season at the Nou Camp tonight.

Barca seek El Clasico tonic

AFP, Madrid



Barcelona are the more desperate side as Real Madrid visit Catalonia on Saturday for the first El Clasico of the season boasting a six-point lead at the top of La Liga.

Madrid have won 15 more points in all in La Liga under the guidance of Zinedine Zidane since the sides last met in April and are riding a 31-game unbeaten run in all competitions.

"On Saturday we have more to play for than Madrid, they can lose, we can't," said Barcelona defender Gerard Pique.

Barca are off to their worst league start in nine seasons.

However, coach Luis Enrique believes much of the media criticism of his side has been overblown, citing the institutional crisis that Barca overcame in the January his debut season in 2015 to win the treble.

"We remain favourites for all the titles, but it is evident we have to improve," said Enrique.

"We lack consistency, but don't exaggerate. In my first season you (the media) exaggerated and we ended up winning the treble."

The biggest match in club football is expected to capture an audience of 650 million people worldwide, according to figures released by La Liga.

"I am not going to say it is just another game, it is a very important match, it has a

special meaning....a special taste," Real president Florentino Perez told AFP.

"No one hides that it has a worldwide impact, it is seen by millions of people across the world, like the World cup final."

Yet, the composed Zidane refused to accept that a first Liga title in five years would be Madrid's to lose should they bag victory at the Camp Nou.

"I am not thinking about the conse-

FIXTURES	
(all times GMT)	
Saturday	Granada v Sevilla (1200), Barcelona v Real Madrid (1515), Leganes v Villarreal (1730), Atletico Madrid v Espanyol (1945)
Sunday	Real Betis v Celta Vigo (1100), Athletic Bilbao v Eibar (1515), Alaves v Las Palmas, Sporting Gijon v Osasuna (1730), Valencia v Malaga (1945)
Monday	Deportivo la Coruna v Real Sociedad (1945)

quences," he said after giving a goalscoring debut to his son Enzo in Madrid's 6-1 Copa del Rey thrashing of Cultural Leonesa on Wednesday.

"We are thinking about preparing well for the game, and, whatever happens, it will not be decisive."

Both sides are blighted by injury concerns. Madrid will be without Gareth Bale with the Welshman now set to miss up to four

months after an ankle operation, whilst Toni Kroos is also sidelined by a broken foot.

Tough tackling midfielder Casemiro made his first appearance in two months in mid-week and could come into contention to partner the Croatian duo of Luka Modric and Mateo Kovacic.

Cristiano Ronaldo has shot to the top of La Liga's goalscoring charts once more with five in his last two league outings and looks set to be partnered by Karim Benzema and Lucas Vazquez in Bale's absence.

Barca are sweating on the fitness of Jordi Alba and Pique, who both struggled through the 90 minutes in a 1-1 draw at Real Sociedad described as a "miracle" by Enrique given the state of Barca's display.

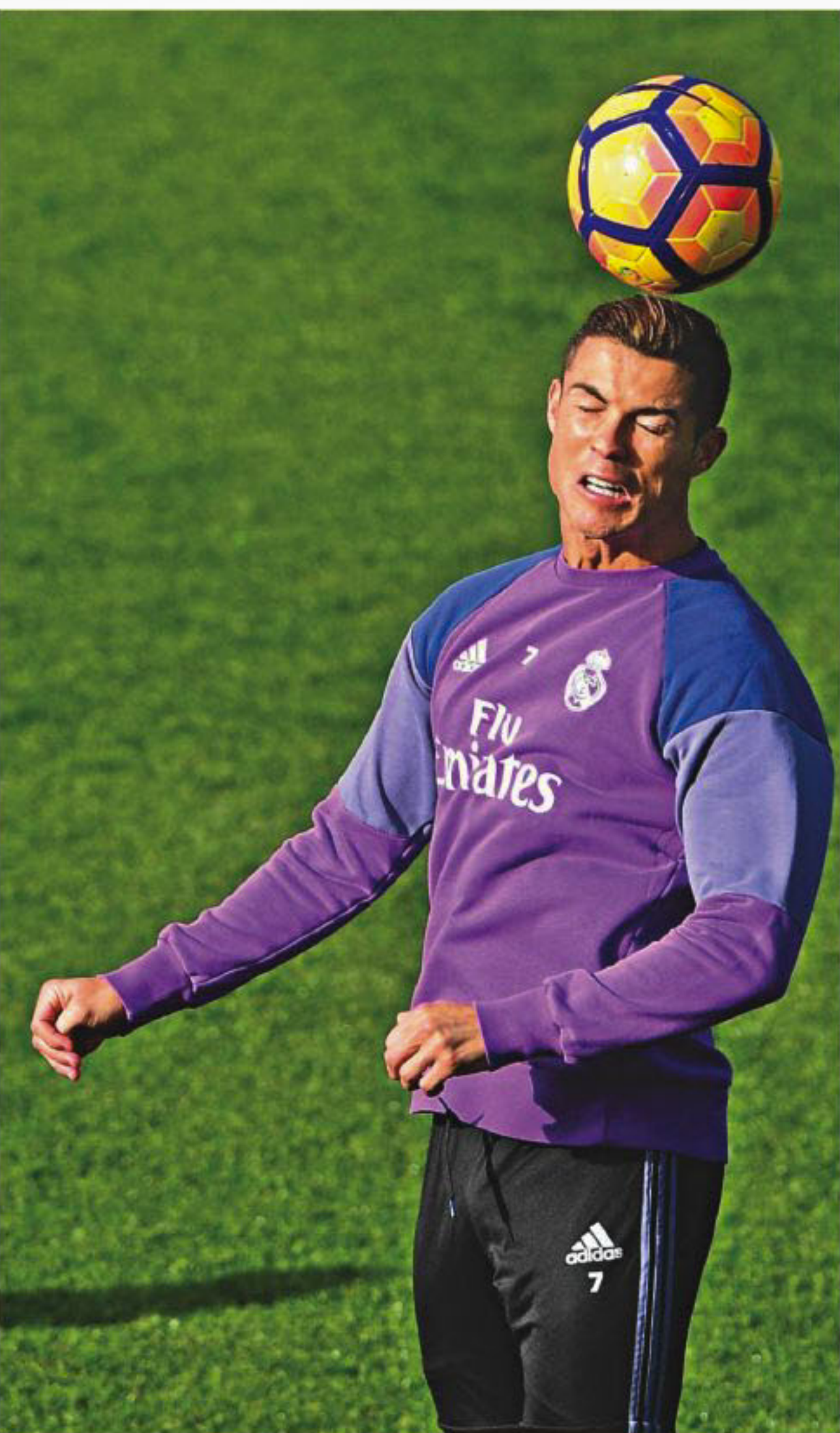
However, the champions will be hugely boosted by the return of captain Andres Iniesta, whilst the front three of Lionel Messi, Luis Suarez and Neymar are all fit to start.

The clash between the top two offers Sevilla and Atletico Madrid the chance to make up ground in the title race.

Sevilla sit behind Barca only on goal difference in third and can close on Real when they visit winless Granada on Saturday lunchtime.

Atletico have bounced back from their Madrid derby humbling at the hands of Real two weeks ago with three wins and 11 goals without conceding since.

However, they will need to end a seven-game unbeaten streak in the league by Espanyol to keep that run going at the Vicente Calderon.



PHOTOS: AFP

Muktis exact revenge

SPORTS REPORTER



Muktijoddha Sangsad exacted revenge for their first-leg defeat at the hands of Sheikh Jamal DC in the JB Bangladesh Premier League with a 1-0 win against the defending champions at the Sheikh Fazlul Haque Moni Stadium in Gopalganj yesterday.

Saikat Bhoumik separated the sides in the 25th minute with a drive from inside the box as Muktijoddha Sangad went up to fourth position of the 12-team table with 26 points from 18 outings, putting Rahmatganj MFS behind on goal difference. Sheikh Jamal remained in third position with 29 points from 18 matches.

The tie was important for both sides, especially for Sheikh Jamal to close the gap with leaders Abahani (who are now 10 points ahead), but the three-time champions had to suffer their fifth defeat, thanks to a weakened attack following the departure of Haitian goal-machine Wedson Anselme at the end of the first phase.

Though Sheikh Jamal enjoyed lion's share of possession, it was Muktijoddha Sangsad who came close to taking the lead in the fourth minute. However, Shah Alamgir Anik headed a cross from Simon Ezeodika wide of target while Sheikh Jamal's Emeka Darlington did the same thing at the other end three minutes later by heading Mohammad Linkon's cross wide.

Muktijoddha Sangsad eventually took the lead in the 25th minute against the run of play when Sohel Rana played a long ball to Saikat, who took the ball into the box with a soft header before shrugging off his marker and driving the ball past the goalie at the near post.

After resumption, Landing and Emeka found two good opportunities to level the margin but a dipping free-kick from Landing went inches over the crosspiece while Emeka floated a well-judged cross from Sarwar Zaman Nipu over the bar from inside the six-yard box.

Omar named Asia's best

AFP, Abu Dhabi



Omar Abdulrahman, arguably Asia's biggest star, was crowned AFC player of the year in a glittering ceremony in his home country of United Arab Emirates on Thursday.

The left-sided midfielder and winger is the second Emirati to win the trophy in consecutive years and his award was greeted with a huge cheer in the Emirates Palace Hotel in Abu Dhabi.

The victory was even sweeter as he was nominated last year but lost out to compatriot, Ahmed Khalil.

But he said the trophy would not make up for his Emirati league side Al Ain losing the Asian Champions League final last month to South Korea's Jeonbuk Hyundai Motors.

"My main ambition was to win the Champions League trophy," he said.

"The trophy is not only for me but it's for all my colleagues at Al Ain and the national team."

Abdulrahman, who once had a two week trial for English side Manchester City, also admitted he would like to play in Europe.

"Every player dreams of playing in Europe," he said. "If I get a good offer, I wouldn't mind with a good and big club."

The award caps a stellar 2016 for the 25-year-old.

Even though he was on the losing side in the Champions League final, he was named the tournament's best player.

Capped more than 50 times, he also carries the international hopes of the UAE, which has a real chance of qualifying for the 2018 World Cup finals.

Leicester City's Shinji Okazaki was crowned international player of the year, the

award given to those who play in a league outside the AFC.

The Japanese star edged out South Korea's Son-Heung-min, a fellow English Premier League star, who plays for Spurs.

Women's player of the year was Caitlin Ford, a former AFC young player of the year. She is the first woman to win both awards.

Ford, who represented the Australian women's team, the Matildas, at the Rio



OMAR ABDULRAHMAN

Olympics, said she was honoured to win - but was surprised.

"I wasn't really expecting this to be honest," she said.

"My winning this trophy reflects on an amazing year for us Matildas and I have taken this for all of them."

Australia reached the quarterfinals stage, going out to hosts Brazil on penalties.

Choi Kang-hee of the Jeonbuk Hyundai Motors was awarded top male coach of the year.

The women's award was won by Chan Yuen-ting of Hong Kong.

Salah out for three weeks

AFP, Milan

Roma forward Mohamed Salah has been ruled out for at least three weeks after suffering an injury to ligaments in his right ankle, the Serie A club announced.

Egypt midfielder Salah, who hit his first league hat-trick for Roma last month, suffered the setback in a training ground clash with teammate Thomas Vermaelen on Thursday.

It means Salah will miss this Sunday's derby clash with Lazio at the Stadio Olimpico, as well as pre-Christmas league fixtures at home to AC Milan, away to Juventus and at home to Chievo.

A statement issued by Roma on Friday said: "On Friday morning, Mohamed Salah underwent further tests which confirmed the original diagnosis.

"Salah will continue working on his recovery plan and should be out for three weeks."

A statement issued earlier said Salah "underwent tests on Thursday that revealed damage to the exterior ligaments on his right ankle, also affecting the front and lateral muscles and tendons."

Badal Roy wants more age-level tournaments

SPORTS REPORTER



With only a week left to the unveiling of football's master plan, the Development Committee of Bangladesh Football Federation wants four age-group tournaments to be included in the three-year calendar for the sake of maintenance of a healthy pipeline for the national team.

The proposed nation-wide tournaments are for the under-12, under-14, under-16 and under-18 level.

"The development committee has always wanted to emphasise on the importance of annual calendar which would be developed under a certain policy and planning, but we could not do it before. But this time a high profile person [technical and strategic director Paul Smalley] has been appointed to make the calendar which is now being prepared, but we still don't know the details of development programme to be considered. We are waiting to see his presentation on grassroots and youth development," Badal Roy, chairman of the Development Committee said.

"He [Smalley] must convince us about the development programme because we know what is possible and what is not considering our socio-economic perspective. As we don't know the details of the programme, we want four age-group tournaments for under-12, under-14, under-16 and under-18 level to be included in the calendar," Roy added.

The master plan thus far features two youth tournaments - the national school championship (considered to be an under-16 tournament) and the Suhrawardi Cup for the under-19 footballers.

Roy explained that three tournaments need to be included afresh in the calendar as government-run Bangabandhu Gold Cup for primary schools with participation of 60,000 schools is considered a tournament for the under-12 footballers.

"We want to be involved with Bangabandhu Gold Cup by providing technical assistance. We want to pick some 100 to 200 footballers from the tournament and select 30 to 40 of them finally and provide them with round-the-year training," Roy said. "Like the Bangabandhu Gold Cup, we also want to hold under-14, under-16 and under-18 tournaments with participation of all district football associations and select 25 to 30 players in each age-group and provide them with training round the year."

Explaining the importance of holding age-group tournaments, Roy said: "If you hold nation-wide tournaments, you can easily judge the standard of the players and pick the right players for future teams. So if you want to pick the right players for training, there is no alternative to holding such tournaments."

Roy also said that he has requested the BFF president to allocate some 4.5 crore taka to run development programme round the year and that they would collect money from sponsors if additional money is required.

Blatter set to learn fate of appeal

AFP, Zurich

Former FIFA president Sepp Blatter will learn Monday whether his appeal against a six-year ban from football has been successful, the Court of Arbitration for Sport (CAS) said on Friday.

Once the most powerful man in football, Blatter is serving a ban over ethics violations relating to a suspected \$2 million payment he authorised in 2011 to former UEFA boss Michel Platini.

The 80-year-old Swiss served as FIFA chief from 1998 to 2015.

Both Blatter and Platini were originally banned for eight years by the sport's world governing body, but that was reduced to six years by a FIFA appeals panel in February. Platini had his ban cut by a further two years by CAS in May.

A CAS statement confirmed: "The Court of Arbitration for Sport (CAS) will issue its decision in the arbitration procedure between Joseph S Blatter and the Federation Internationale de Football Association (FIFA) at 3.00pm (Swiss time) on Monday, December 5, 2016."