

BTV & CHANNEL 9
New Zealand v Bangladesh
First Test, Day-3
Live from 3:30am (Saturday)
TEN 3
South Africa v Sri Lanka
Third Test, Day-2
Live from 2:00pm

STAR SPORTS 2
Australia v Pakistan
First ODI
Live from 9:30am
SONY SIX
Primera Liga
Malaga v Real Sociedad
Live from 1:45am (Saturday)

MIURA TO PLAY ON INTO HIS 50s

Former Japan striker Kazuyoshi Miura, who turns 50 next month, has renewed his contract with Yokohama FC, stretching his record as the oldest Japanese to play professional football. The forward, dubbed "King Kazu" by Japanese media and fans, will take his career into a remarkable 32nd season after agreeing a one-year deal, the J-League second-tier club said. "I was able to renew my contract for the 2017 season," Miura said in a statement. "I am determined to continue fighting with all of my strength together with people who have supported me -- club staff, team mates, and fans." The former Genoa and Dinamo Zagreb player, who will turn 50 on February 26, attracts immense public admiration and broke his own mark as the J-league's oldest goalscorer after netting at the age of 49 in June last year.



— AFP

SAFF WOMEN'S CHAMPIONSHIP 2017



Bangladesh women's under-16 team pose with their 32-inch Walton LED TVs during a prize giving ceremony at the NSC Tower Auditorium yesterday.

Families rewarded by U-16s' successes

SPORTS REPORTER



The members of their family used to travel to neighbouring houses or villages to watch live telecasts of their beloved daughters, sisters and nieces playing football, but now they will get the opportunity to watch them on television in the comfort of their homes.

Players like Sanjida Khatun, Sara Ban Tahura, Maria Manda, Marzia, Taslima, Anuching Mogini and Sirat Jahan Swapna did not have television sets at their homes, forcing their family members to roam to different places to watch them live during the AFC U-16 Championship Qualifiers last year.

However, Walton, sponsors of the national women's football team during the SAFF Women's Championship, ended those problems by distributing 32-inch LED TVs to all the members of the national women's team, who recently became runners-up in SAFF Women's Championship.

This is just one instance of how these girls, who hail from poor families in remote villages, help their family by providing different home appliances which they are given on the back of their brilliant performances at the international level.

These girls also helped their families by providing them with the money they received after winning the AFC Women's Qualifiers. So far, each member of that team has received Tk 1,75,000 from the federation, sponsors and different corporate houses. Each of the members of the U-16 women's team also receive

scholarships of Tk 10,000 per month.

"We didn't have televisions, but now we do. I will send this prize (television set) home immediately and my family members don't need to go to our neighbouring villages to watch our football matches," beamed Sirat Jahan Swapna, the striker of both the national and U-16 women's team who had struck five goals in the recently concluded SAFF Women's Championship.

"I am really happy to be helping my parents by playing football. Our family is not well-off and I am providing some money to help them run the family smoothly. My father bought some land using the money I was awarded with by the federation and different corporate houses after the AFC U-16 Championship Qualifiers," continued the Rangpur native, whose father is a farmer.

Anuching Mogini, another striker of the national and U-16 women's team, is equally happy with the TV, which has been sent to her family.

"I had earlier told you that we need financial assistance in order to continue playing football. As we have been playing better football, we have received that assistance which is helping our families. My parents also bought some land," said Anuching. "I want to keep helping my family by playing football."

Assistant coach Mahbubur Rahman informed that most of the U-16 team's players bought pieces of land using the money they had earned following their success in the AFC U-16 Championship.

Captain Sabina Khatun added that such gifts would inspire the girls to play better in the future.

Amla, Duminy put SA on top

AFP, Johannesburg

Hashim Amla made a century in his 100th Test match as he and JP Duminy put South Africa in command on the first day of the third and final Test against Sri Lanka on Thursday.

South Africa reached 338 for three at the close of play, with Amla unbeaten on 124 at the Wanderers Stadium.

Duminy made 155 before he was caught at second slip off Lahiru Kumara in the penultimate over of the day, ending a third

wicket partnership of 192.

Amla became the eighth player and second South African after former captain Graeme Smith to mark 100 Tests with a hundred. After a lean run of form, Amla struggled early in his innings.

The left-handed Duminy was the dominant partner as he shepherded Amla, who was dropped by Dhananjaya de Silva at gully off Suranga Lakmal when he had five.

SCORES IN BRIEF

SOUTH AFRICA: First innings 338 for 3 (Elgar 27, Amla 125 not out, Duminy 155; Kumara 2-79)



South Africa batsman Hashim Amla entered a select club of greats who scored a century in their 100th Test as he ended the first day of the third Test against Sri Lanka on an unbeaten 125 in Johannesburg yesterday.

PHOTO: AFP

CENTURIES SCORED IN 100TH TEST

PLAYER	SCORE	OPP	YEAR
Hashim Amla	125*	SL	2017
Graeme Smith	131	Eng	2012
Ricky Ponting	103 & 116	SA	2006
Inzamamul Haque	184	Ind	2005
Alec Stewart	105	WI	2000
Gordon Greenidge	149	Eng	1990
Javed Miandad	145	Ind	1989
Colin Cowdrey	104	Aus	1968

Payet wants to leave

AFP, London



West Ham United playmaker Dimitri Payet has informed the club of his desire to leave and no longer wishes to play for them, manager Slaven Bilic revealed on Thursday.

Payet, 29, joined West Ham from Marseille in a reported £10.7 million (\$13.1 million, 12.3 million euros) deal in 2015 and had a sensational first season, scoring 12 goals and supplying 12 assists.

But with West Ham lying 13th in the Premier League table and amid speculation linking him with a return to Marseille, the France international has decided he wants out.

"We have said we don't want to sell our best players, but Dimitri Payet does not want to play for us," Bilic told a press conference.

But he added: "We are not going to sell him."

Bilic has asked Payet to stay away from training and said he would not feature in Saturday's home game with Crystal Palace.

Payet signed a new five-and-a-half-year contract last February and Bilic seemed annoyed by the player's stance.

"We have said hundreds of times we don't want to sell our best players. He's definitely our best player," he said.

"That's why we gave him a long contract and then a new contract four months later. I phoned him with that and he refused to play for us. I have a team to manage.

"He's probably been tapped up by some clubs or whatever. That is usual at this time of year.

"But until he changes his attitude he is out of the team and he's not going to train with us. But we are not going to sell him."

Payet is reported to be the top January transfer target for Marseille coach Rudi Garcia, who previously worked with him at Lille between 2011 and 2013.

Despite the stand-off between player and club, Bilic remains hopeful that Payet has not played his last game for West Ham.

"I expect him to come back and show commitment and determination to the team, like the team has shown to him," said the Croatian.

"I have spoken to the club, the chairman and the vice-chairman. It's not a money issue. We want to keep him. That's it."

U-16s to play in Japan

SPORTS REPORTER

The Bangladesh Under-16 women's team will play four matches in Japan this month as part of their preparations for the final round of the AFC U-16 Women's Championship, which is scheduled to be held in September in Thailand.

Although their opponents in the invitational JFA J-Green Sakai Tournament are yet to be confirmed, the girls will fly for Japan on January 24 to take part in the tournament which is scheduled to run from January 26-29, informed Bangladesh Football Federation women's committee chairman Mahfuza Akter Kiron yesterday.

"We are supposed to play at least four matches in this tournament which I think will help us see the progress of the girls," said head coach Golam Rabbani Choton. "Although our training is going the players, who were the part of SAFF Women's squad, will join the camp on Saturday in order to prepare for the tournament."

Japan will be one of eight participating nations in the AFC U-16 Championship, which will also act as the qualifiers for the Under-17 Women's World Cup.

Messi magic lifts Barca

AFP, Barcelona



Lionel Messi's third goal from a free-kick in as many games this year secured Barcelona's

place in the quarter-finals of the Copa del Rey as the holders beat Athletic Bilbao 3-1 to edge through 4-3 on aggregate on Wednesday.

Luis Suarez's 100th Barca goal and Neymar's penalty cancelled out Athletic's 2-1 first leg lead, but Enric Sabarot's header six minutes into the second-half had the tie headed for extra time.

However, just as in the first leg and in a 1-1 draw at Villarreal on Sunday, Messi rode to Barca's rescue with another exquisite free-kick that clipped the inside of the post on its way past Gorka Iraizoz.

"There is a reason why Messi is the best in the world," Suarez told Barca TV. "He surprises you with something beautiful in every game."

Barca were under huge pressure to deliver their first win of the year as the slip-up at Villarreal left them five points adrift of Real Madrid at the top

of La Liga, who also have a game in hand.

"It is important for our confidence. We wanted and needed a result like that," added Suarez. "We are calm, working hard and know that the results will come."

The build-up to the game had been dominated by talk of controversial refereeing calls in the first leg as Athletic ended the game with nine men, whilst Barca had a stonewall penalty claim waived away.

And there was more controversy on 26 minutes when Neymar was wrongly flagged offside as he set up Suarez for a tap in.

However, the same combination wasn't to be denied 10 minutes before half-time when Neymar's cross was hammered into the far corner by Suarez to bring up his Barca century.

"The important thing is it contributed to us going through, which is what we wanted," said Suarez.

The former Liverpool man's strike was also the 300th goal scored by Barca's fearsome "MSN" forward line since he joined the club in 2014 with Messi netting 124 and Neymar 76.

It was 301 just three minutes into

the second-half when Neymar was chopped down by Eneko Boveda.

Messi handed Neymar responsibility from the spot and the Brazilian ended a 1,023-minute drought for Barca as he sent Iraizoz the wrong way to register his first goal since October 19.

Barca's joy was short-lived, though, as with their first serious attack Athletic got the away goal they needed when Sabarot's downward header at the back post beat both Jasper Cillessen and Samuel Umtiti on the line.

However, Messi proved the match winner 11 minutes from time as he outfoxed Iraizoz. A week after beating the Athletic 'keeper to his right, the five-time World Player of the Year pulled his free-kick in off Iraizoz's left-hand post for his 26th goal in 23 games this season.

An incredible individual run by Neymar nearly sealed the tie as he hit the outside of the post moments later, but Barca held on to maintain their record of not being eliminated by anyone other than Real Madrid since 2008.

"I am very satisfied," said Barca boss Luis Enrique. "We controlled the game at every moment."



Barcelona superstar Lionel Messi scores the winning goal from a free-kick during their Copa del Rey round of 16 second leg clash against Athletic Bilbao at the Nou Camp on Wednesday.

PHOTO: AFP

Southampton edge Liverpool

AFP, Southampton



Southampton edged one step closer to the League Cup final as Nathan Redmond's cool finish secured a 1-0 win over Liverpool in the semi-final first leg on Wednesday.

Claude Puel's side went in front through Redmond's first half strike at St Mary's and only a strong display from Liverpool goalkeeper Loris Karius

prevented Southampton from winning by more.

Southampton haven't reached the League Cup final since 1979 when they were beaten by Nottingham Forest.

But by ending a run of four games without a win in all competitions they are now within touching distance of facing Manchester United or Hull at Wembley.

"We are deserving this result with all the many chances we had. It was important to win with the clean sheet," Puel said.

"Liverpool had just the one chance. We were unlucky at the end because we know

the second leg will be very difficult."

With United having won the first leg against Hull 2-0, Liverpool would love to face their old rivals at Wembley, especially after losing to Manchester City on penalties in last season's final.

But Jurgen Klopp's team, without a win in their last three games, will need to improve significantly to overturn the deficit at Anfield in the second leg on January 25.

"After the goal we conceded our reaction was not good. We were not compact enough," Klopp said.

Booters hit record low

SPORTS REPORTER

After ending 2016 at their lowest-ever position on the FIFA rankings, the Bangladesh men's football began the new year by falling even further. The booters have dropped five further places and now find themselves in 190th place, 19 places above the lowest-ranked team.

Like their demotion in the last rankings, Bangladesh played no part this time either. They had not played a single game during the period of consideration, but the teams below them simply moved above them.

Seychelles, Bermuda, Solomon Islands, Liechtenstein and Brunei Darussalam all moved ahead of Bangladesh in the latest rankings.

The men in red and green are now the sixth-worst of the AFC sides, with Timor Leste (191), Sri Lanka (196), Pakistan (197) and Mongolia (198) below them.

Meanwhile, Bhutan -- who defeated Bangladesh for the first time ever in the AFC Cup Qualifiers last year -- moved up one place to 176th, while Nepal leapfrogged six places to 175th. India also moved up six places and are now sitting at 129th.

Boateng sued for unpaid deposit

AFP, Berlin

Jerome Boateng has been taken to court over an unpaid deposit of 250,000 euros (\$265,590) as the Bayern Munich star battles to fit for their Champions League clash against Arsenal.

A lawyer representing the Germany defender was in Munich's district court on Wednesday over the unpaid bill of a quarter of a million euros, plus tax - a deposit on a villa in the Bavarian capital.

The estate agent, who took Boateng to court, offered to reduce the sum to 220,000 euros, which Boateng's lawyer rejected, while the judge has suggested the matter be settled for 185,000.

Now both parties have three weeks to accept the compromise.

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