

# What to WATCH

**BTV & CHANNEL 9**  
New Zealand v Bangladesh  
Second Test, Day-1  
Live from 4:00am (Friday)  
**STAR SPORTS 1**  
India v England  
Second ODI  
Live from 2:00pm

**STAR SPORTS 2**  
Australia v Pakistan  
Third ODI  
Live from 9:30am  
**SONY SIX**  
Australian Open  
Second Round  
Live from 6:00am

## YAYA REJECTED HUGE CHINA OFFERS

Manchester City midfielder Yaya Toure has rejected offers from Chinese Super League clubs that would have paid the Ivorian around £430,000 a week (\$533,000), reports said on Tuesday. Toure is out of contract at the end of the season and has been approached by clubs from China who have been splashing on a host of star signings in recent months. The 33-year-old is said to have been the subject of interest from China last year. He snubbed those offers and gave the same response when he was contacted again once the winter transfer window opened this month because he would prefer to continue playing in England, the BBC and other British media said. It remains unclear whether City, who signed Toure from Barcelona in 2010, will offer him a new deal. —AFP



## Valencia extends MU stay

AFP, London

Antonio Valencia will stay at Manchester United until 2018 after the Premier League club triggered a one-year extension clause in his contract.

Valencia has established himself as Jose Mourinho's first-choice right-back and has now been rewarded with an extended stay at United.

The 31-year-old is a key figure at Old Trafford, making 271 appearances, scoring 21 goals and winning six trophies since signing from Wigan in 2009.

A statement from the club read: "Manchester United have confirmed a clause has been triggered to extend Antonio Valencia's contract by one year."



Britain's Daniel Evans celebrates his stunning victory against Croatia's Marin Cilic during their men's singles second round match of the Australian Open in Melbourne yesterday.

PHOTO: AFP

## SHEIKH KAMAL INTERNATIONAL CLUB CUP Going beyond South Asia

SPORTS REPORTER



Sheikh Kamal International Club Cup tournament is gradually taking a continental shape as the second edition of the tournament is all set to go beyond South Asia by involving one team each from South Korea and Cambodia.

In the inaugural edition of the tournament in 2015, organisers Chittagong Abahani invited club sides only from Afghanistan, Pakistan, Sri Lanka and India, but this time they have confirmed two clubs from South Korea and Cambodia, one each from Afghanistan and Nepal. They are also waiting to include the last team from either Sri Lanka or Maldives. Though East Bengal and Kolkata Mohammedan of India took part in the inaugural edition, but this time no team from India is taking part due to their domestic engagements.

"We have started the countdown of the Sheikh Kamal International Club tournament from today [Wednesday] as we are going to hold the second edition from February 18 in Chittagong. During the inaugural edition, we had invited teams from South Asia but this time we are going beyond South Asia by inviting the teams from South Korea and Cambodia," Chittagong Abahani's secretary general Shamsul Haq Chowdhury said at a press conference in the capital yesterday. "We will also include new teams from other parts of

Asia from next edition."

Tarafder Mohammad Ruhul Amin, chairman of Chittagong Abahani football committee, informed that they have increased the prize money for champions and runners-up teams to 30,000 dollars and 25,000 dollars from 25,000 dollars and 15,000 dollars respectively. He also added that the organisers will provide air-tickets, accommodation, food and local transports to all participating teams.

Ruhul Amin also informed that they have invited country's two popular clubs -- Dhaka Abahani and Mohammedan SC -- like the previous edition as the appeal of country's two most popular club still prevails among the spectators of Chittagong.

The participating foreign teams are: three-time Afghanistan league champions Shaheen Asmayee, seven-time Nepal National League champions Manang Marshyangdi Club, Korea's Challengers League champions Pocheon Citizens FC while the names of Cambodian club and a club either from Sri Lanka or Maldives will be declared soon.

In a bid to defending the title, Chittagong Abahani have appointed Saiful Bari Titu as the head coach.

"Retaining the title depends on the standard of the opponents. If I can work with the boys with enough time, I can guide them smoothly. However, I am optimistic about producing good results in the tournament," said Titu, who had coached Arambagh KS in Bangladesh Premier League last season.

## Evans stuns Cilic

AFP, Melbourne

Britain's Dan Evans claimed the highest-ranked scalp of his career when he stunned world number seven Marin Cilic at the Australian Open on Wednesday.

Evans, 26, came from behind to beat the Croatian former US Open champion 3-6, 7-5, 6-3, 6-3 and reach the third round, equalling his best Grand Slam performance.

It was only Evans' second win against top-10 opposition, after he defeated eighth-ranked Dominic Thiem this month in Sydney en route to his first tour-level final.

Evans, whose first-round victory over Facundo Bagnis was his maiden win at the Australian Open, will next play either Australia's Bernard Tomic or Victor Estrella Burgos.

Top seed Andy Murray sped into the Australian Open third round but bad boy Nick Kyrgios was booed and accused of not trying as he crashed to a stormy defeat.

Roger Federer progressed despite unexpected resistance and women's world number one Angelique Kerber celebrated her 29th birthday with a hard-fought win.

Murray painfully rolled an ankle and needed treatment in the third set against Russian qualifier Andrej Rublev, but he shook off the problem to win 6-3, 6-0, 6-2.

While the world number one cruised, Kyrgios stood accused of tanking, or giving up, during his 1-6, 6-7 (1/7), 6-4, 6-2, 10-8 loss to Andreas Seppi.

Kyrgios, who is returning from a ban for "lack of best efforts" in a match in Shanghai, played lethargically and casually, especially in the fifth set.

"Obviously it's not the greatest thing to hear," he said of the booing. "I didn't have the best preparation coming into the Australian Open. Pretty banged up, my body."

"I don't even know what the score was in the end. Was it 10-8? 10-8 in the fifth, getting booed off, definitely not the best feeling."

Tennis legend John McEnroe said Kyrgios's lack of effort was a "black eye for the sport". Kyrgios explained that "my body was sore. I was hurting."

"I mean, John McEnroe. Good on him. Great career. Good on him."

Asked how he could have been better prepared, Kyrgios, who hurt his knee

playing basketball, said: "I don't know, maybe just not play as much basketball. Actually take my pre-season seriously."

Earlier Federer was made to work by 200th-ranked Noah Rubin for a 7-5, 6-3, 7-6 (7/3) win that set up a third-round assignment against his old rival Tomas Berdych.

"I know what he's got. I don't need to tell you where he's beaten me," Federer said of Berdych. "Then again I've played him here, played him on many occasions, as well, when it went my way."

Federer wasn't the only leading player challenged in the second round as Kerber, the women's defending champion, dropped a set against world number 89 Carina Witthoef.

Kerber won 6-2, 6-7 (3/7), 6-2 before being treated to a rendition of "Happy Birthday" by the Rod Laver Arena crowd.

"I was doing I think a lot of mistakes in the important moments. But at the end, I'm happy that I won the match," said the world number one.

In the men's draw, Japanese fifth seed Kei Nishikori marched into the third round alongside former finalist Jo-Wilfried Tsonga, with both winning in straight sets.

Nishikori was extended to five sets in his first-round win over Andrey Kuznetsov, but he found the going a little easier in his 6-3, 6-4, 6-3 victory against Jeremy Chardy.

Nishikori, who believes he is due a first major win this year, next plays Lukas Lacko, with Berdych or Federer waiting in the fourth round.

France's Tsonga, who is seeded 12th and was runner-up to Novak Djokovic in 2008, beat Serbia's Dusan Lajovic 6-2, 6-2, 6-3 to go through.

Stan Wawrinka, the 2014 winner, recovered from his tetchy five-setter with Martin Klizan to beat Steve Johnson 6-3, 6-4, 6-4.

In the women's draw, 36-year-old Venus Williams continued her smooth progress when she beat qualifier Stefanie Voegelé 6-3, 6-2 to set up a meeting with China's Duan Yingying.

Williams, the oldest player in the women's draw, pulled out of the doubles competition with her sister Serena as a precaution to rest a sore elbow.

Russia's Svetlana Kuznetsova thrashed Australian wildcard Jaimee Fourlis 6-2, 6-1 to set up a third-round clash with 31-year-old Serb Jelena Jankovic.

## Kurtz finally roped in

SPORTS REPORTER



The Bangladesh Hockey Federation (BHF) finally appointed Oliver Kurtz as head coach of the national hockey team, with the German penning a contract which will run until October.

Kurtz is expected to go to BKSP today to take charge of the national team, which he guided to glory in the AHF Cup last November. The camp has been running on at the BKSP for the past week, but Kurtz was left sitting idle in the capital as the agreement could not be reached earlier.



"We have signed a contract involving three parties -- the BHF, Oliver Kurtz and sponsors Index Group. The agreement will be effective from January 1 to October 31 till Bangladesh's Asia Cup engagement," said BHF general secretary Abdus Sadeque.

Sadeque informed that the national team would be touring South Africa in February to play some practice matches as part of their preparations for the Hockey World League, which is scheduled to be held in Dhaka from March 4 to 12.

"If we can't play a few practice matches then it will be tough for us to produce good results in the Hockey World League, where there teams like Canada and China will play. Our sponsors, Index Group, are supposed to bear all the expenditures of the South Africa tour," said the legendary hockey player.

It has been learnt that Index Group will provide the German coach with food, accommodation, transport and three round-trip air-tickets to Germany in the 10-month period, alongside a monthly salary of 5,000 dollars under the agreement.

## Xabi set to retire in June

AFP, Berlin



Spanish World Cup winner and double European champion Xabi Alonso is set to retire at the end of the season when his Bayern Munich contract expires, a report in Germany said.

Leaders Bayern kick off the second half of the Bundesliga season at Freiburg on Friday in their bid for a fifth straight German league title with the 35-year-old Alonso poised to end his playing career in June.

It would mean the German giants could lose significant experience for next season with club captain and ex-Germany skipper Philipp Lahm also reportedly considering retiring in June to take over as Bayern's team manager.

According to Sport Bild, Alonso has already told club bosses he does not want to

sign a contract extension.

Having joined Bayern for the 2014/15 season, Alonso is bidding to finish with a third straight German league title with Munich currently three points clear in the table.

Alonso has won 16 titles for clubs and country, including the 2010 World Cup and the 2008 and 2012 European championships with Spain, making 114 international appearances.

He retired from international duty in August 2014.

He has won the Champions league twice with two different clubs.

He started out at Real Sociedad and joined Liverpool in 2004 after being named Spanish player of the year in 2003.

He was part of the Liverpool side which famously won the 2005 Champions League title in a penalty shoot-out, coming back from 3-0 down against AC Milan in Istanbul.

# STAR WEEKEND

in other news...

**This week's spotlight talks about the age-old Rocket Steamers that have always been a popular mode of water transport in our country. We also have an interview with Ornithologist Enam Ul Haque, who discusses migratory birds and the reasons behind the alarming rate of decrease in their numbers. Don't forget to grab your copy of the Star Weekend, tomorrow, Friday!**

**ROCKET STEAMERS**  
ANCIENT SHIPS IN A MODERN WORLD

RIJLA JAHAN  
PHOTO: PRAJAN DAS

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A special interview with Enam Ul Haque, the ornithologist who has spent the last 10 years of his life studying migratory birds.

## Van Gaal 'not retiring'

AFP, Madrid

Louis van Gaal says he is not definitely done with football just yet, after appearing to suggest earlier this week that he was retiring from the game at 65.

The Dutchman, who was sacked by Manchester United last year after an uninspiring stint at Old Trafford, had told popular daily tabloid De Telegraaf: "I don't believe I'll return to work."

But less than a day later van Gaal rowed back on that, telling Spanish radio that nothing was final and his future "depends on offers" at the end of what he has called a sabbatical.

"I am not retiring," van Gaal, whose decorated coaching career included two spells at Barcelona and with the Dutch national side, told Cadena Ser radio.

"I took a sabbatical year and then maybe I will decide whether or not to retire."

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