

# What to WATCH

SONY ESPN

FIFA WC Qualifiers  
Uruguay v Brazil  
Live from 5:00am (Friday)

SONY SIX

FIFA WC Qualifiers  
Colombia v Bolivia  
Live from 2:30am (Friday)  
Argentina v Chile  
Live from 5:30am (Friday)

## AN OUTFIT WITH A DIFFERENCE

Eugenie Bouchard donned an outfit with a difference at Citi's Taste of Tennis night in Florida on Monday. The Canadian world No 56 is gearing up to play in the Miami Open this week, but took a night out to relax at the W Hotel on South Beach. Having just purchased a luxury penthouse in the city, Bouchard looked at ease in her new surroundings, donning a £260 Moschino Fresh Couture T-shirt dress at the event. She posed for pictures on the red carpet wearing white high heels, before standing next to the swimming pool for an Instagram picture of her own. Later this week, Bouchard will turn her full attention to the Miami Open and getting through her first-round match.

—MAIL ONLINE



## QUICK SINGLES

The following are a few samples of stories that did not make the print edition. However, if they pique your interest, you can always read them online on The Daily Star website by simply scanning the QR codes listed below:

### Liverpool great Moran dies aged 83

Once revered member of Liverpool's famed "boot room" Ronnie Moran died on Wednesday, aged 83, the club said. The former captain, who made 379 appearances for the club, spent five decades at Anfield and was a key cog in the coaching department during Liverpool's most successful era.



### Hamilton looking for fast start to new season

Lewis Hamilton will look to put his stamp on the new Formula



One season at this week's Australian Grand Prix, as he seeks to regain the world title following the shock retirement of reigning champion Nico Rosberg.

### Runs will come: David Warner

David Warner has never suffered from a lack of confidence and his experience of battling through previous run droughts has the Australian opener convinced he will soon be getting big scores on the board again.



### Ferguson urges Man Utd to aim for Europa glory

Manchester United should focus on winning the Europa League this season, which would bring the club a trophy they have never won and secure qualification for next season's Champions League, former manager Alex Ferguson has said.



### US drone kills militant blamed for attack on Sri Lanka cricket team in Pakistan

A US drone air strike in Afghanistan has killed a Pakistani militant accused of involvement in a deadly attack on a bus carrying Sri Lanka's cricket team in 2009, Pakistani security sources and Islamist militants said.



## Gladiators vs Gregarious in final

SPORTS REPORTER

Dhaka Gladiators maintained their unbeaten run in the UniMed UniHealth Premier Division Basketball League after handing a 99-54 point defeat to Flame Boys in the penultimate round at the Dhanmondi Indoor Basketball Gymnasium yesterday.

Dhaka Gladiators will play the title-deciding final match against The Gregarious today.

Gladiators led the first half 43-26 to ensure their eighth straight victory as Shoaib top-scored with 34 points while Sajib followed with 19 points. Fahim and Jamil scored 17 and 8 points respectively for Flame Boys.

In the day's other matches, The Greggs Club defeated Eagles Club 87-47 while Rangers Club thrashed Bakshi Bazar Club 76-41.



Ace golfer Siddikur Rahman (C), Rizwan Bin Farouq (2nd from R), managing director of Riz Events and Mashrur Arefin, additional managing director & COO of City Bank unveil the title sponsors of the American Express Chittagong Open at a hotel in Dhaka yesterday.

PHOTO: COLLECTED

## Bhatiary waiting to enthral golfers

Chittagong Open to get underway on Mar 29

SPORTS REPORTER



The Bhatiary Golf & Country Club (BGCC) in Chittagong is all set to host its first-ever international golf tournament, the American Express Chittagong Open, from March 29 with participation of top golfers from India, Sri Lanka and hosts Bangladesh.

Some 126 golfers including Bangladesh's ace golfer Siddikur Rahman will be competing in the Tk 50 lakh event, co-sanctioned by the Professional Golf Tour of India (PGTI) and Bangladesh Professional Golfers' Association (BPGA).

The details of the event was revealed at a press conference at a hotel in Dhaka yesterday where City Bank was unveiled as the title sponsors while BSRM, Elite Paint and Pedrollo were named co-sponsors.

"We are happy to be associated with golf again as City Bank got itself first involved in amateur golf in 2010 and continued it for the following two years successfully. We hope Chittagong Open will be a great event," said Mashrur Arefin, additional managing director and chief communications officer of City Bank.

BGCC executive member and media committee chief Major (Rtd) Emdadul Islam believes participating golfers will enjoy every moment at the BGCC which is situated in a scenic area of small hills and valleys.

"It is a beautiful golf course. The golfers can have a view of the Bay of Bengal from the 14th hole of the course, which has unique and different shape at each of its 18 holes," Islam said.

Two-time Asian tour winner Siddikur is also excited to participate in the Chittagong Open as he is going to play at the BGCC for the first time in 14 years, the first time since turning professional in 2007.

"I'm very excited because of good training. I am looking forward to the next week," Siddikur said.

"I don't have any particular expectation for this event because I am going through some changes in my game in terms of technique, strategy and stamina which will continue till July. However, if I can play my normal game, I can go ahead of others by 10 strokes. I think if I can play according to my potential, I can easily win the event," said Siddikur, who missed cut in the last two Asian Tour events in India and Australia.

## Verratti looking for 'top club'

AFP, Milan



Midfielder Marco Verratti could be set for a summer move to a "top European club" after his agent rated his chances of remaining with Paris Saint Germain next season as "very complicated".

"It's a very complicated situation, in spite of his contract with the club until 2021," Verratti's agent Donato Di Campli told La Gazzetta dello Sport on Wednesday.

"He wants to win trophies, and PSG, as they are now, can't win."

"He's been with Paris for five years and now he's starting to wonder whether it's better earning a lot (of money) and not winning anything, or to start winning trophies."

Verratti has won four consecutive league titles with the Ligue 1 giants since joining the club from Pescara, in the process forging a reputation as one of the best creative midfielders in the world.

But PSG's failure to make an impact in Europe, in spite of huge investment by the club's Qatari owners, has left the 24-year-old midfielder disillusioned.

Poised to cruise into the last eight of the Champions League following a sensational 4-0 rout of Barcelona in the first leg of their last 16 clash, PSG were dramatically overhauled 6-1 in the second leg less than a fortnight ago.

It was hailed as one of the most remarkable comebacks in sport, but left Verratti with doubts over his commitment to Unai Emery's side.

Reports in Italy claim Verratti, who has never played in Serie A, could join Juventus. On their way to a record sixth consecutive Serie A title, the Turin giants will also meet Barcelona in the Champions League quarter-finals.

But Di Campli added: "There are a few interested (clubs) in Italy, but I have doubts that will be his final destination."

"It's not about money: whichever club takes Verratti will pay him well. Because, I can tell you this for certain: if he leaves PSG it will be for a top European club."

Asked if Verratti would head to Spain, England or Germany, his agent said: "A top European club."



## ASIA CUP ARCHERY Nazmul, Milon in 2nd round

SPORTS REPORTER

Archers Nazmul Huda and Milon Mollah moved into the second round of Men's Individual Compound event in the Asia Cup World Ranking tournament in Bangkok, Thailand yesterday.

Nazmul, who finished 56th among 67 archers in qualification round, notched a hard-fought 136-134 point win over Mahinagodage Weerasinghe of Guyana while Milon, who became 58th in qualification, beat Joseph Bernier Bague of Philippines 140-133 to move into the second round.

However, Ram Krishna Saha lost by 133-131 points to Darwish Albishri of UAE.

## Double delight for Soma

SPORTS REPORTER

It was double delight for Sonom Sultana Soma as the experienced player of Abahani clinched the women's singles title of Federation Cup Table Tennis tournament at Shaheed Tajuddin Ahmed Indoor Stadium yesterday.

Soma, who won women's doubles title pairing with Sadia Rahman Mou on Tuesday, handed a 4-1 set defeat to Rahima Akter of Bangladesh Army in the women's singles final yesterday.

Mohammad Javed Ahmed beat 4-2 Masud Rana Parag to win men's singles title while Bangladesh Army became champions in men's team event beating Bangladesh Biman.

## Inter-University badminton from today

SPORTS REPORTER

Inter-University Badminton tournament gets underway today at the Shahid Tajuddin Ahmed Indoor Stadium with some 34 private and public universities taking part.

Some 125 shuttlers are expected to vie in two events -- men's singles and doubles -- in the three-day tournament as Bangladesh Badminton Federation mulls including women's events in the next edition. Pran-RFL Group is sponsoring the tournament.

## Make or break for Argentina

AFP, Montevideo



The unthinkable prospect of a World Cup without Argentina or Lionel Messi could move a step closer to becoming reality on Thursday as the South American giants prepare to face arch-rivals Chile in a crucial battle on the road to Russia 2018.

Argentina, who last failed to qualify for the World Cup in 1970, saw their progress towards next year's finals go awry in 2016 when back-to-back draws with Venezuela and Peru were followed by defeats against Paraguay and Brazil.

Although they bounced back to beat Colombia 3-0 in a home qualifier last November, they remain outside the automatic qualifying places in fifth place, with 19 points from 12 games.

A defeat against fourth-placed Chile on Thursday in Buenos Aires would leave Argentina further adrift of the automatic qualifying spots.

And if Colombia beat lowly Bolivia in their home game, as expected, Argentina could even finish the day further down the pecking order, outside of the fifth-place playoff berth they currently occupy.

With a trip to face Bolivia in the thin air of La Paz awaiting them next Tuesday -- where Argentina have rarely performed well -- it means the two-time World Cup-winners can ill afford to slip up against the Chileans.

Argentina defeated Chile in Santiago earlier in the qualifiers, winning 2-1 in March last year.

However since then Chile inflicted another soul-destroying defeat on the Argentines in a major final, winning the Copa America Centenario final on penalties last June, a year after an identical outcome in the 2015 tournament.



Argentina superstar Lionel Messi (C) passes the ball during a training session in Ezeiza yesterday ahead of their 2018 World Cup qualifier against Chile at 5:30am (BST) on Friday.

PHOTO: AFP

The Copa America Centenario defeat prompted the departure of Gerardo "Tata" Martino as Argentina coach in July, triggering the slump in form which has left their World Cup qualifying campaign in the balance.

The only consolation for new Argentina coach Edgardo Bauza is that opponents Chile are grappling with their own set of problems, notably the suspension of Arturo Vidal and a fitness concern surrounding Arsenal star Alexis Sanchez.

Sanchez trained with the team in Santiago this week despite suffering an ankle injury while on Arsenal duty last

weekend. Thursday's other showpiece game in South America sees Brazil take on Uruguay in Montevideo.

Brazil have transformed their qualifying campaign with six straight victories since new coach Tite took over last year following the Copa America Centenario debacle, where the five-time World Cup winners were eliminated in the group stage.

The Brazilians are now motoring towards qualification for Russia, four points clear at the top of the standings from second-placed Uruguay.

A seventh straight victory on Thursday will all but guarantee Brazil's place at the finals in Russia.

Tite's biggest headache will be attempting to find an adequate backup to Manchester City starlet Gabriel Jesus, who is injured. Jesus proved to be the catalyst for Brazil's resurgence last year, scoring five goals in six games.

## FIXTURES

Colombia v Bolivia  
Paraguay v Ecuador  
Uruguay v Brazil  
Argentina v Chile  
Venezuela v Peru



This Friday, the Star Weekend celebrates Independence Day. Our cover story this week focuses on the representation of the 1971 Liberation War in the US television media. There is a personal account of the son of Madhushudhan Dey (of Madhu'r canteen), on the horrific night of Operation Searchlight. We also have an untold story of a 17-year-old tracing officer of the Red Cross, Monowara Sarker. Don't forget to grab your copy of the Star Weekend, tomorrow, Friday!

