

DAY'S EVENT

DHAKA PREMIER SUPER LEAGUE
 Time: 9:00am
 Gazi Group v Abahani
 Venue: BKSP-3

Prime Bank v Sheikh Jamal
 Venue: BKSP-4
 Prime Doleshwar v Mohammedan
 Venue: KSOAS

RELEGATION LEAGUE
 Victoria SC v Partex SC
 Time: 9:00am
 Venue: KSOAS

FEDERATION CUP
 Semifinal
 Chittagong Abahani v Rahmatganj
 Time: 7:15pm

Venue: Bangabandhu National Stadium



Spain's Nicolas Almagro (L) is consoled by Argentina's Juan Martin Del Potro after he retired due to an injury during their French Open second round match at the Roland Garros in Paris yesterday.

Del Potro shows sporting spirit

AFP, Paris



Juan Martin del Potro set up a potential French Open blockbuster against Andy Murray on Thursday after a heartfelt display of compassion towards a stricken rival.

The giant Argentine, no stranger to injury after a career-long battle with wrist problems, made the third round after Spanish opponent Nicolas Almagro quit in tears during the third set of their tie with a left knee injury.

In a moving conclusion on Court Two, Del Potro sat next to the stricken, sobbing Almagro, offering him water while patting the head of the inconsolable 31-year-old.

Del Potro had also gone to the Spaniard's aid when he had collapsed at the back of the court, weeping, just moments earlier.

Del Potro, 28, had taken the first set of the second round clash 6-3 before Almagro claimed the next by the same score.

They were locked at 1-1 in the third when Almagro quit.

The former US Open champion goes on

to face either world number one Murray or Martin Klizan for a place in the last 16.

Murray, the 2016 runner-up to Novak Djokovic, tackles fiery Slovak Klizan for a place in the third round.

Japanese eighth seed Kei Nishikori routed France's Jeremy Chardy 6-3, 6-0, 7-6 (7/5).

The world number nine will face South Korean Hyeon Chung for a place in the last 16.

Former US Open champion Marin Cilic, the seventh seed, made the third round for the seventh time thanks to a comfortable 6-3, 6-2, 6-2 win over 32-year-old Konstantin Kravchuk, the Russian world number 129 making his Paris debut.

Unseeded 21-year-old Karen Khachanov of Russia continued his impressive debut, beating Czech 13th seed Tomas Berdych, a semi-finalist seven years ago, 7-5, 6-4, 6-4.

Big-serving John Isner of the United States fired 21 aces to defeat Italy's Paolo Lorenzi 6-3, 7-6 (7/3), 7-6 (7/2).

Isner and Lorenzi were two of the 30 men in the second round aged over 30 -- an Open era record at any Slam.

PHOTO: AFP

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:

Kohli, Kumble rift shakes India

Signs of a rift between India's skipper Virat Kohli and coach



Anil Kumble have shaken the country ahead of the team's campaign to win a second straight Champions Trophy.

Deceased Brazilian legend Garrincha's remains 'missing'

Mane Garrincha, the Brazilian football genius renowned for leaving defenders in confusion, is now baffling his many fans from beyond the grave with the ultimate mystery: where are his bones?



Afghanistan cancels Pakistan games after Kabul attack

Afghanistan has cancelled proposed home and away cricket fixtures with Pakistan after a deadly bomb attack blamed by the country's intelligence agency on militants allegedly backed by Islamabad.



Atletico slam transfer ban

REUTERS, Barcelona



Atletico Madrid complained of discriminatory treatment and a lack of respect by the Court of Arbitration for Sport (CAS) after their appeal against a transfer ban for signing minors was rejected yesterday.

The La Liga club said in a statement that CAS had reduced their January 2016 FIFA-imposed fine of 900,000 Swiss Francs to 550,000 but had upheld a two-window transfer ban, prohibiting them from registering players bought this summer.

Real Madrid were also banned from signing players for two transfer windows at the same time and given a smaller fine of 360,000 Swiss Francs, although the length of their ban was reduced last December to one window.

"We believe the decision to maintain the prohibition of registering players in the summer of 2017 shows preferential and discriminatory treatment to our club as recently in a similar case the sanction was partially lifted," the statement said.

"This ruling is unfair and causes an irreparable damage to our club... This shows a lack of respect for our institution.

"We want to reiterate that we have been penalised despite strictly complying with Spanish legislation, as we have always processed all our licenses with Madrid's Football Federation, as the Sports Law indicates."

Atletico finished third in La Liga last season, 15 points adrift of Real Madrid, and risk falling further behind the champions and Barcelona next season as Spain's two biggest clubs are expected to spend big on renovating their squads.

The decision could also affect the future of striker Antoine Griezmann, the subject of frequent speculation linking him with a move to Manchester United, who could snap up the France international by triggering his 100 million euro release clause.

FIFA, who also banned Barcelona from registering players for two transfer windows in 2014 for a similar misdemeanour, welcomed the upholding of the transfer ban.

"With this decision, FIFA considers that CAS has shown once again clear and strong support for FIFA's efforts to protect underage players," a statement from world soccer's governing body said.

"The protection of minors is one of the key pillars of FIFA... one of the objectives of FIFA is to improve the game of football constantly and promote it globally in the light of its unifying, educational, cultural and humanitarian values, particularly through youth and development programmes.

"As a result, FIFA has put in place a clear regulatory framework that enables it to ensure the protection of minors.

City snap up Ederson

REUTERS, Lisbon

Brazilian goalkeeper Ederson Moraes is joining Manchester City from Benfica for 40 million euros, the Portuguese champions said in a statement yesterday.

The fee is close to the world record for a goalkeeper, with Juventus paying 40.2 million euros when they signed Gianluigi Buffon from Serie A rivals Parma in 2001.

There was no immediate confirmation from City, who finished third in the Premier League this season under Spanish manager Pep Guardiola.

Ibra to hold MU talks

REUTERS, Manchester

Manchester United striker Zlatan Ibrahimovic will hold talks to extend his stay at the Premier League club despite receiving offers from other clubs, the 35-year-old's agent Mino Raiola has said.

Ibrahimovic joined United on a year-long contract before the 2016-17 campaign and was vital to their League Cup and Europa League triumphs, scoring 28 goals in 46 appearances before sustaining a season-ending knee injury in April.

"He wants to stay in England, he wants to stay at the top and if he sees that he can be a valuable asset for Manchester United, then why not Manchester United?" Raiola told British radio broadcaster TalkSPORT on Wednesday.

History beckons Rahmatganj, Chittagong Abahani

SPORTS REPORTER



Chittagong Abahani and Rahmatganj MFS will both look forward to securing a maiden berth in the final of the Walton Federation Cup when they square off in the first semifinal at the Bangabandhu National Stadium today.

Since the introduction of the Federation Cup as the season's curtain-raising tournament in 1980, a total of nine clubs have advanced to the final. One of Chittagong Abahani or Rahmatganj will be eagerly hoping that they become the tenth side to do so.

Finals between Abahani and Mohammedan had been the norm before clubs such as Brothers Union, Muktiyoddha Sangsad and Sheikh Jamal broke the stranglehold of the country's two most popular outfits.

It was rare that rank outsiders would make it to the final, although Arambagh KS, Dhaka Wanderers Club and Team BJMC stunned established powerhouses

on occasion to reach the final. Such a scenario has unfolded this time around, with lightweights Rahmatganj reaching the last-four battle from out of the blue.

Rahmatganj's 3-0 win over Team BJMC in the group stage was seen as a fluke performance, but everyone was mystified when the Old Dhaka outfit repeated the same scoreline in their quarterfinal against Muktiyoddha Sangsad, a team who have reached the Federation Cup final eight times, and Rahmatganj are now seen as genuine contenders to make the final.

"We said before that we want to be on top and we are going forward to achieve our target," Rahmatganj coach Kamal Babu said. "Chittagong Abahani are a big opponent but we aren't going to roll over without putting up a fight."

"The main strength of our side is team spirit as the unheralded boys are really eager to do something and are willing to give everything till their last breath. I am not banking on any one player because everyone, from the forwards to defenders, has been scoring," added Kamal, who

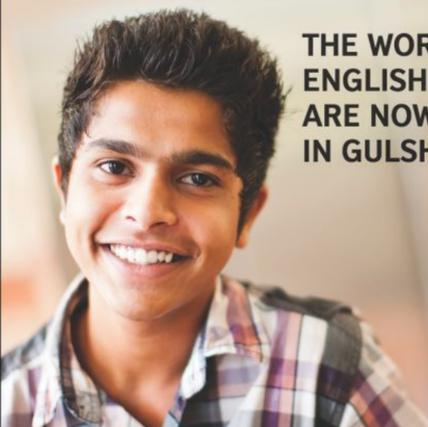
once guided minnows Farshganj SC to the Independence Cup final.

Although Kamal will miss four of his first-team regulars due to fever and injuries, he believes he has the right replacements for them.

On the other hand, Chittagong Abahani booked their semifinal seat after entering as one of the pre-tournament favourites and will be keen to continue performing against Rahmatganj.

"There is no reason to take the opponents lightly as Rahmatganj have scored more goals than any other team so far. That means they are a good side and we will go all out to win the match," said Chittagong Abahani coach Saiful Bari Titu, who coached minnows Arambagh KS to the Federation Cup final last season.

Titu's charges had carved out a lot of opportunities in their last three matches, but were wasteful in front of goal and failed to cash in. This time around they will be banking on winger Zahid Hossain and Nigerian forward Afeez Olawale Oladipo as they bid for a maiden appearance in the final.



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