

What to WATCH

STAR SPORTS 1
Champions Trophy
India v Pakistan
Live from 3:30pm
STAR SPORTS SELECT HD1
French Open
Round-4
Live from 3:00pm

AGASSI COACHING FOR FREE

Andre Agassi revealed on Friday he is happy to work unpaid as Novak Djokovic's coach and said he would be open to extending his relationship with the Serb at Wimbledon next month. Eight-time Grand Slam champion Agassi teamed up with Djokovic ahead of the French Open, where the Serb is attempting to defend his title. Agassi, who won Roland Garros in 1999, said he is not being paid to mentor Djokovic but simply wants to help him find his best form again. "For me, I do this on my own time and my own dime," said Agassi. "I don't want money, I want to help him. And it helps the game. Him at his best is good for the game and it's a way I can contribute." Agassi initially committed to just a "few matches" with the former world number one, but the American told Eurosport he was open to working with Djokovic at Wimbledon. "If he wants me there, yeah, I will come," said 1992 Wimbledon champion Agassi, speaking to Djokovic's former coach Boris Becker. —AFP



Festivities abound at the Cardiff Bay as the city geared up for the last night's Champions League final. (L) The coveted Champions League trophy sits on display, allowing onlookers to marvel at its glory, while (R) a large-scale doppelganger of the trophy greets passersby walking along the buzzing streets.

PHOTOS: AL-AMIN

Abahani in final again

SPORTS REPORTER



Emeka Darlington came off the bench and scored as defending champions Abahani moved into the final of the Walton Federation Cup with a 1-0 win over three-time champions Sheikh Jamal DC in the second semifinal at the Bangabandhu National Stadium yesterday.

The Nigerian forward, who scored scores of goals for Sheikh Jamal throughout the last three seasons, came off the bench in the second half to score the decisive goal against his former club. However, Emeka was enabled to score through a dreadful blunder from Sheikh Jamal goalkeeper Samiul Islam Masum, which paved the way for the only goal of the game.

Masum made heavy weather of a weak effort from Sohel Rana, failing to grasp the ball as Nabib Newaj Jibon tried to tuck it in. However, Jibon only succeeded in deflecting the ball towards Emeka after a tussle with a Sheikh Jamal defender, and the Nigerian gladly accepted the offer by blasting the ball into the open net.

Eight time champions Abahani, who beat Arambagh KC in last year's final, will meet their port city namesake,

ABAHANI 1 - 0 SHEIKH JAMAL
(EMEKA 66')

Chittagong Abahani, in this year's final on Tuesday.

The win also extends Abahani's unbeaten streak in the domestic circuit to 30 matches, stretching back to 10 June, 2016 when they last suffered defeat in the first match of last year's Federation Cup against Arambagh KC.

The first half of the match between the two heavyweights proved to be a lacklustre affair as neither side managed to breach their opposition's defence. Sheikh Jamal's Mamdouh Bah threatened down the left flank but found little support from his teammates at the attacking third while Abahani's best chance before the break, a chipped effort from Jibon, went across the face of goal with the goalkeeper beaten.

The second half proved to be livelier, with the Sky Blues dominating possession and creating scoring opportunities. Jibon failed to connect to a lovely cross from Waly Faisal in the 54th minute before Masum's howler and Emeka's presence broke the deadlock.

Sheikh Jamal defender Yasin Khan had a gilt-edged opportunity to restore parity in the 80th minute, but gave enough evidence as to why he is a centre-back and not a centre-forward. The national team defender found ample space inside the box on a clever through ball from Raphael Odovin, but haplessly blasted the ball wide of the target.

Jibon should have killed the game in the 83rd minute when he raced onto a through-ball, but instead of squaring it to a fellow forward, he went for the glory and poked the ball straight at the goalkeeper.

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:

Feels like Dhaka with so many Bangladeshis here: Tamim

Tamim Iqbal sits down with icc-cricket.com to talk about Bangladesh's chances, promising youngsters in the squad ranks and the joys of revisiting the city where his career first took flight.



West Indies Cricket rebrands with new name

West Indies Cricket board decide to change its name as part of a comprehensive re-branding program that sees all representative teams recognized as the WINDIES.



Guatemalan pleads guilty in FIFA scandal

A 63-year-old former official in Guatemala's Football Federation broke down in tears as he pleads guilty in New York to wire fraud and conspiracy in the massive corruption scandal that has rocked world soccer.



Record-setting Dufner opens big lead at Memorial

Jason Dufner holed out from the fairway for an eagle en route to a second straight 65 that gave him a five-shot lead with a record-setting 36-hole total at the Memorial.



Festive vibe at Cardiff Bay

AL-AMIN from Cardiff



The final of a sporting event is not just about the game itself but also the festivities revolving around it. And the festivities ahead of the Champions League final between Real Madrid and Juventus, the biggest sporting event in 2017, at Cardiff Bay for the last couple of days is something overwhelming for someone who has never been a part of it before.

Arriving at Cardiff Central on Friday evening and after a few minute's walk we asked a Welshman how far it was to the Principality Stadium. He was a bit surprised before pointing his finger right

across the road to a huge metallic structure. Since all gates of the venue were closed and heavily guarded by uniformed police, we decided to head to Cardiff Bay, where all the activities to showcase the final were going on. It took a five-minute drive -- and the gentleman who drove us was a Bangladeshi expat with a strong Sylheti accent. He was wearing a Panjabi and happily spoke in his mother tongue the moment he realised we were from Bangladesh.

It was a festival open for all but by the time we reached one of the two entry points, it was briefly closed. Security personnel were not allowing anybody in and an aggrieved lady was involved in an animated debate with one of the guards when she was advised to try the other entrance from which she had just been refused. A

boy, sporting a Real Madrid shirt, was crying after not being allowed to go inside. However, after half-an-hour, an increasingly agitated crowd was asked to enter through the other entrance.

There was another incident that struck us most. Although flaunting the law is common in our country with fans jumping over the wall or snaking through temporary fencing, a small demo of such an incident took place not far away from the entrance. About 50-odd grown men and women snuck through a very small gap between a wall and wired fencing, which was hidden by a small structure. Police however stepped in quickly to stop further intruders. And they were of course not Bangladeshis.

Once we finally entered the fan

zone, a big Champions League trophy invited us. There were a lot of activities inside: Nissan, one of the sponsors of the biggest club competition, arranged something that would allow you to test your shooting skill. The trophy, which will be presented to the winners, was not only on display but you could also have a photograph taken with the glittering piece of glory. A concert was going on next to the trophy and a football match involving former greats was being played on the edge of the bay.

There will about a lucky 74,000 who get to watch the final from inside the Principality Stadium. But the fan zone in Cardiff bay could be the best alternative to watching the game for those who did not get a hold of that elusive ticket.

Murray ousts Del Potro

AFP, Paris



Andy Murray downed long-time rival Juan Martin del Potro to reach the Roland Garros last 16 Saturday while French hopes were overshadowed by a bitter feud between two of their top stars.

World number one Murray triumphed 7-6 (10/8), 7-5, 6-0 for his seventh win in 10 meetings with Del Potro whose challenge fizzled out after squandering four set points in the 87-minute opener.

Murray, the runner-up to Novak Djokovic in 2016, will next face either John Isner of the United States or Russia's Karen Khachanov.

In a titanic first set, Del Potro wasted four set points then saved two before Murray pounced for the opener when the Argentine star narrowly miscued.

The 28-year-old slumped over the net and stayed bent over during most of the changeover to catch his breath.

Del Potro, playing in Paris for the first time in five years after a series of wrist injuries, was quickly a break down in the second set.

He retrieved it when Murray served for the set in the 10th game before handing the advantage straight back.

Murray seized his lifeline, a fourth ace

giving him a two-set lead.

Weary Del Potro, who had already summoned the doctor early in the second set, knew his challenge was over and he managed just 11 points in the third set.

Former US Open champion Marin Cilic continued his smooth progress seeing off Feliciano Lopez, who was limited by a neck injury, 6-1, 6-3, 6-3.

Croatian seventh seed Cilic will next meet South Africa's Kevin Anderson who matched his best run at Roland Garros with a five-set win over Britain's Kyle Edmund.

Anderson twice recovered from a set down to advance 6-7 (6/8), 7-6 (7/4), 5-7, 6-1, 6-4 in just under four hours in a duel between two players born in Johannesburg.

In the women's event, France have three women in the last 16 for the first time in 23 years.

However, that success is overshadowed by a bitter feud between compatriots Alize Cornet and Caroline Garcia who will clash for a place in the quarterfinals.

Cornet reached the last 16 for just the second time with a 6-2, 6-1 win over Polish ninth seed Agnieszka Radwanska who lost all her seven service games.

Garcia, seeded 28, made the fourth round of a Slam for the first time with a 6-4, 4-6, 9-7 win over Taiwan's Hsieh Su-Wei.



Abahani striker Emeka Darlington celebrates his all-important goal against Sheikh Jamal during their Federation Cup semifinal at the Bangabandhu National Stadium yesterday.

PHOTO: FIROZ AHMED

BANGLADESH PREMIER LEAGUE Participation money, venues reduced

SPORTS REPORTER



The Bangladesh Football Federation decided to considerably decrease the participation money of the upcoming Bangladesh Premier League, to start from June 12, while reducing the number of venues as well.

The promised participation money last year for the 12 clubs was Tk 40 lakh each, with matches held across five venues. However, having reducing the number of venues to just two - Dhaka and Chittagong - the Professional Football League Committee (PFLC) decided that the participation money would be Tk 10 lakh each this time.

"This year we have decided to hold the league in only two venues, namely Dhaka and Chittagong," PFLC chairman Abdus Salam Murshedy said after a meeting of the committee yesterday. "So the travel-

ling and accommodation expenses will also be reduced considerably which is why we have reduced the participation money to Tk 10 lakh each."

Murshedy also said that due to the reduction of the number of venues, the sponsorship money from chief sponsors Saif Powertec will be reduced considerably from its previously announced Tk 4 crore annually.

However, the local game's governing body gave in to one of the demands of the clubs by raising the prize money of the league - this time, the champion team will get Tk 2,000,000 while the runners-up team will receive Tk 1,000,000 - a 100% raise for the two teams from the last year.

The meeting also decided to defer the final of the ongoing Walton Federation Cup by a day and so, it will now be held at 7:30pm on June 6.

The PFLC also promised to pay the clubs the remainder of the grants due from the last year.

'I will be on the other side'

AGENCIES, London

Per Mertesacker has revealed he intends to retire and is in talks with Arsenal over remaining at the club in a non-playing role.

The towering centre-back struggled with a knee injury during the 2016-17 season, and made his first start in more than a year as Arsenal beat Chelsea 2-1 to win the FA Cup last weekend.

And that looks set to be the final game of Mertesacker's career, with the World Cup-winning former Germany international admitting he cannot handle the rigours of the modern game.

"I was extremely lucky with my career and I want to finish on a high," Mertesacker told Sport1.

"I am motivated, but I cannot play every three days any more. I don't want to stretch my luck."

Grand reception of Tigers in London by BCC UK

ANSAR AHMED ULLAH



Bangladesh Cricket Team, who are currently in the UK playing in the ICC Champions Trophy, were given a grand reception on Friday at the Royal Regency in East London organised by the Bangladesh Cricket Council UK.

The reception was chaired by Bangladesh Cricket Council UK's president Noim Uddin Riaz and conducted by its secretary Mustak Babul.

National team's captain Mashrafe Bin Mortaza, Bangladesh's High Commissioner Quanine, UK Awami League's president Sultan Shariff & Jamal Khan spoke amongst others.

A brochure published by the Bangladesh Cricket Council UK was unveiled by former team captain & current team manager Akram Khan.

The reception was attended by thousands of Bengali cricket fans from all over the UK to get a glimpse of their favourite players.

The reception was attended by all the



players, coaches, managers and senior officials of Bangladesh Cricket Board including its president Nazmul Hassan MP, Rushanara Ali MP, Stephen Timms MP, Tower Hamlets Mayor John Biggs amongst others. Mashrafe Bin Mortaza, the team captain in his short address thanked all for the Reception & Iftar, and requested blessings from all to do well in the ICC champion-

ship. Bangladesh will be playing top teams Australia on Monday at the Oval in London and New Zealand on Friday in Cardiff Stadium, Wales.

Bangladesh team believe though it will be difficult but no one is unbeatable. With so many Bengalis in the UK, the team also feels at home.