

# What to WATCH

**STAR SPORTS SELECT 2**  
Bundesliga  
Bayern Munich v Mainz  
Live from 7:30pm  
West Indies v England

**1st T20**  
Live from 7:30pm  
**STAR SPORTS SELECT 1**  
English Premier League  
Watford v Man City

Live from 8:00pm  
**TEN 1**  
Serie A  
Roma v Verona  
Live from 12:45am (Sunday)

**TEN 2**  
La Liga  
Levante v Valencia  
Live from 5:00pm  
Getafe v Barcelona

Live from 8:15pm  
Real Betis v Deportivo  
Live from 10:30pm  
Atletico Madrid v Malaga  
Live from 12:45am (Sunday)

**DAY'S EVENT**

|   |   |  |
|---|---|--|
| <b>NATIONAL CRICKET LEAGUE</b><br>Four-Day Match, Day-2<br>Time: 9:30am<br>Khulna v Rangpur | Venue: SANS, Khulna<br>Dhaka v Barisal<br>Venue: SKICS Academy, Cox's Bazar<br>Dhaka Metro v Chittagong | Venue: ZACS, Chittagong<br>Rajshahi v Sylhet<br>Venue: SKS, Rajshahi |
|---|---|--|

# Confidence back in U-16s camp

ANISUR RAHMAN from Thailand

It seems the mood in the Bangladesh camp returned to normal having put up a brave performance against three-time champions Japan following their moral shattering 9-0 drubbing at the hands of holders North Korea in their opening fixture of the AFC U-16 Women's Championship.

The girls in red and green understandably lost sleep over the encounter with North Korea but finally found a sound night's rest and even looked cheerful after the match against Japan, who posted a 3-0 win over Bangladesh.

Goalkeeper Mahmuda Akter was at the centre of all the glee as the girl from Mymensingh proved brilliant under the post in the second fixture, thwarting a number of scoring opportunities to keep the score-sheet clean for the remaining 51 minutes after conceding the third goal.

Each and every one of her teammates hugged her while affectionately calling her 'Mamu' [Maternal uncle] after the match and hailed her valiant efforts with the gloves since she had returned to the position after being dropped.

"I had not performed well in the practice matches, which is why Ruksana [Begum] took my place, but I was given the opportunity in the latter part against North Korea and I played well. Then I was given another chance in the next match from the start. I wanted to give my best and I think I gave my best," explained Mahmuda, who was the first-choice keeper through the qualifying rounds where she conceded only two goals against the 26 that Bangladesh struck against five teams.

"My target was not to break down mentally if I conceded goals because Japan is a very strong side. Sirs [coaches] also told me not to lose concentration. I gradually grew confident after making some saves. I also never lost my concentration despite conceding three goals in the first half and that's the reason of playing well," said the 15-year-old goalkeeper, a former student of Kalsindur Govt. Primary School under Dhobaura Upazila.

Meanwhile, assistant coach Mahbubur Rahman Litu supported Mahmuda all the way



Goalkeeper Mahmuda Akter (L) and defender Shamsunnahar were in joyous mood yesterday, after playing key roles in their respectable defeat against Japan in their second match of the AFC U-16 Championship in Thailand on Thursday.

PHOTO: STAR

and helped her understand what is needed to regain her place as the starting keeper.

"We were upset with the defeat against North Korea but we came out of that shock. If we had dwelled on that defeat, then we would not have been able to put up a better performance against Japan. We forgot the 9-0 defeat and looked forward to the Japan match," Mahmuda added.

The five-player defence, too, proved noteworthy, especially in the second half where they stopped any further Japanese attacks.

Left-back Shamsunnahar believes that the performance they delivered against Japan was a show of their true skill as the defence adjusted to their job accordingly by learning from mistakes made in the previous match.

"We conceded goals against North Korea because of our mistakes but we rectified it in the practice session and did our best," said Shamsunnahar.

"If Japan gave 50, then we also gave 50 against

them. As Japan play with crisp passing and attack quickly, we blocked them in those areas. In the second half, one of our defenders stopped their attackers and one snatched the ball from behind, which was the strategy to stop the Japanese strikers," continued Shamsunnahar, who along with Akhi Khatun, Masura Parvin, Sheuli Azim and Sanjida Akter, played tremendously well to keep their opponents at bay.

"You saw our development against Japan. What we played against North Korea was not our real performance and like the countrymen, we were also disappointed with the result against North Korea and yesterday [Thursday] showed that we can also play football," concluded Shamsunnahar, who wants to display the same fighting spirit when they take on Australia on September 17.

However, Bangladesh and Australia have already been eliminated from the group stages and so this encounter is more for academic purposes.

# Arsenal turn it around

AFP, Paris



Alexis Sanchez scored a stunning goal as Arsenal came from behind to beat Cologne 3-1 in a Europa League clash on Thursday that was delayed for an hour due to crowd trouble.

Kick-off in the Group H opener at the Emirates Stadium was put back until 9:05pm local time in the interests of "crowd safety" after problems caused by thousands of ticketless Cologne supporters arriving at the ground.

Police confirmed four arrests were made before kick-off while there were reports of scuffles inside the stadium.

However, when the match did get under way, those travelling fans who got in were treated to a stunning 40-yard strike by Jhon Cordoba that put Cologne ahead.

Arsenal improved in the second half and substitute Sead Kolasinac volleyed them level before a brilliant goal by Sanchez gave them a 67th-minute lead.

The Chilean cut in from the left flank

before curling a sublime effort into the far top corner, and the three points were secure when Hector Bellerin made it 3-1 late on after Theo Walcott's effort had been saved.

Arsene Wenger's side are next in European action in a fortnight in Belarus against BATE Borisov, who drew 1-1 at Red Star Belgrade.

Earlier, Everton's group-stage campaign got off to a disastrous start as Ronald Koeman's side were taken apart in Italy, losing 3-0 to Atalanta.

The Serie A club were forced to entertain their English visitors in Reggio Emilia, but that did not prove a hindrance to Gian Piero Gasperini's side, who completely overran Everton, scoring all their goals in the first half courtesy of Andrea Masiello, Alejandro Gomez and Bryan Cristante.

Meanwhile, AC Milan underlined their status as one of the teams to beat in the competition by romping to a 5-1 victory at Austria Vienna in Group D with Andre Silva scoring a hat-trick.

Mario Balotelli scored as Nice won 5-1 at Zulte-Waregem of Belgium in Group K, in which Lazio also won, 3-2 at Vitesse Arnhem.



Arsenal forward Alexis Sanchez (C) celebrates after scoring the second goal against Cologne during their Europa League encounter at the Emirates Stadium on Thursday.

PHOTO: REUTERS

## 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:

### Handscomb added to Australia ODI squad in India

Batsman Peter Handscomb has been added to Australia's one-day squad in India as cover for the injured Aaron Finch, Cricket Australia said.



### FIFA announces simplified format for World Cup draw

FIFA announced a new and simplified format for the 2018 World Cup draw with the teams to be grouped by their place in the world ranking rather than their continent.



### Bayern out to silence critics as Bundesliga returns

Carlo Ancelotti's Bayern Munich will be looking to silence their critics with victory over Mainz in the Bundesliga. A 3-0 victory over Anderlecht in the Champions League was overshadowed by reports of internal disharmony in Munich.



## SAFF U-18 CHAMPIONSHIP

# BD leaving with no specific targets

SPORTS REPORTER



The Bangladesh Under-18 football team will leave for Bhutan this morning to take part in the SAFF U-18 Championship, with no specific target to achieve.

Bangladesh will play against all the four other participants in the championship - India, Maldives, Nepal and Bhutan - as the tournament format was shifted to a round robin one after the late withdrawal of Sri Lanka.

The boys in red and green will face their biggest test in their opening match against favourites India on September 20, two days after the championship kicks off at the Changlimithang Stadium in Thimphu. It was India who had ended Bangladesh's campaign in the last edition with a win on penalties in the semifinal stage (U-19 Championship in 2015).

And the worrying part is that the team has not had the best of preparations for such an important tournament. They did not get to play any practice matches, and worse still, the whole squad was available to coach Mahbub Hossain Roxy for just

| SQUAD              |  |
|--------------------|--|
| <b>GOALKEEPERS</b> | Linkon, Pritom, Pappu  |
| <b>DEFENDERS</b>   | Atikuzzaman, Badsha, Monir, Kiron, Riyadul, Rahmat, Bishwanath     |
| <b>MIDFIELDERS</b> | Al-Amin, Jafar, Sohanur, Rahimuddin, Shadhin, Saikat, Faysal, Anik |
| <b>FORWARDS</b>    | Nipu, Sabbir, Sufil, Biplu, Osai                                   |



Coach Mahbub Hossain Roxy, flanked by BFF vice-president Kazi Nabil Ahmed (L) and Rahmat Mia, a defender of the team, speaks at a press conference at the BFF House yesterday ahead of the under-18 team's departure for Bhutan.

PHOTO: STAR

three days. Hence the coach was not making any promises during an official press conference at the BFF House yesterday, instead he said the target is to play well in every match.

"Although the whole training schedule took part in four stages, beginning with selection, I only got the players all together for three days due to the ongoing leagues. So I couldn't prepare the side the way I would have wanted to," Roxy said. "But the good thing is, unlike on previous occasions, all the players this time have been selected from either the BPL or the BCL. So they were involved in a way."

After playing against India, Bangladesh will take on Maldives on September 20 before facing defending champions Nepal on September 25. They will end their campaign with the game against hosts Bhutan on September 27.

"We are not set any specific target for this tournament. Our aim will be to play well in all four of

our matches. And since it will be played in round robin format, losing one match will not end our hopes," said the former national footballer, who will have national team head coach Andrew Ord as his advisor during the tournament.

Two of the players of the 23-member squad ply their trade in the BCL, the second-tier professional league, while the rest play in the top-tier league, the BPL. However, according to the coach, four out of the 21 BPL players have managed to get regular starts for their outfits while seven others came as substitutes in different matches. The remainder have mostly warmed benches.

The press conference was attended, among others, by BFF's vice-president Kazi Nabil Ahmed, team leader Amirul Islam Babu, BFF's general secretary Abu Nayeem Shohag and team's defender Rahmat Mia.

## BKSP clinch Subrata Cup

SPORTS REPORTER

The BKSP U-17 women's team emerged unbeaten champions in the Subrata Mukherjee Cup after handing India's NSC Mizoram a 1-0 defeat in the final at the Ambedkar Stadium in New Delhi yesterday, read a press release from BKSP.

Rehana's strike in the 11th minute proved to be the decider and handed BKSP their maiden win in just their second appearance at the tournament, after being eliminated from the quarterfinals in last year's edition.

## Piplu suspended, Fakirerpool fined

SPORTS REPORTER



The Bangladesh Football Federation yesterday fined Youngmen's Fakirerpool Club Taka 2 lakh while also suspending its former assistant manager MH Piplu for one year from all football related activities for an assault on a referee last week.

The decision came during a meeting of the disciplinary committee, which found the allegations of the attack to be proven beyond doubt.

The incident had taken place last Tuesday as Piplu and eight or nine assailants assaulted referee Golam Morshed Chowdhury Nayan, who was returning to his hotel after officiating a Bangladesh Championship League match between Youngmen's Fakirerpool and Uttar Baridhara.

The decisions will be effective from September 14 while the club will have to deposit the amount of fine within the next 30 days.

## Man City eye summit

AFP, London



Big-spending Manchester City having a chance to go top of the Premier League on Saturday is no surprise, but the possibility their opponents Watford will climb to the summit of English football if they win at Vicarage Road certainly is.

Table-toppers Manchester United and

Manchester City, currently second on goal difference, both have 10 points from their opening four Premier League games.

But with United not playing until Sunday, City have a chance to leapfrog their local rivals.

City spent more than £200 million on new players during the recent transfer window, with the club desperate to make an impact on the Champions League in particular after bowing out in the last 16 last term.

Nevertheless it was an established City player in England centre-back John Stones who scored twice for Pep Guardiola's extensively-assembled side as they won 4-0 away to Dutch champions Feyenoord in an impressive start to their Champions League campaign on Wednesday.

Spanish manager Guardiola was delighted by his side's positive approach, saying: "We did not play back. We were aggressive."

## Atletico begin new era

AFP, Madrid



Atletico Madrid begin a fresh era on Saturday when their new 310 million-euro home opens with the visit of Malaga to the Wanda Metropolitano.

Diego Simeone's side have been forced to play their first four games of the season away as the finishing touches were made to the 68,000-capacity venue, nearly 20 kilometres from their old Vicente Calderon stadium.

"The people at the club are worried that the atmosphere is good and that everything goes perfectly, but perfection doesn't exist," said Simeone, after showing his commitment to Atletico's future by extending his contract to 2020.

"It will take months for everything to take shape. When you build a house, there are problems with the bathroom, or the air conditioning, or the heating, you need a plumber or you have an argument with the architect.

"In a stadium of this size, of course we'll have those issues, but above all outside the ground.

"The stadium, the stands, the seats, it is all marvellous, added Simeone. "Imagining the Atletico fans here and knowing them well, this will be a pressure cooker because the fans are glued to the pitch.

"It generates hope and enthusiasm and when there is hope and enthusiasm, good things always happen."



Atletico have held up well under the strain of playing away as they remain unbeaten this season.

Antoine Griezmann returns from his two-game domestic suspension, whilst Atletico couldn't have hoped for a more amenable guest as Malaga travel to the Spanish capital without a point from their opening three games.

Like Atletico, Real Madrid have taken just five points from their first three games, but in very different circumstances after disappointing home draws against Valencia and Levante.

Cristiano Ronaldo serves the final game of his five-match domestic ban, while Karim Benzema is out with an injury.

Zidane lamented Real's failure to replace Alvaro Morata in the transfer market this week, particularly in the absence of Ronaldo, who showed what Real have been missing by scoring twice in a 3-0 win over APOEL Nicosia on Wednesday.

Elsewhere, Barcelona will be expected to keep their fine run of form rolling with a fifth consecutive win when the visit newly-promoted Getafe on Saturday.

| FIXTURES         |  |
|------------------|--|
| (all times GMT)  |  |
| <b>Saturday:</b> | Levante v Valencia (1100), Getafe v Barcelona (1415), Real Betis v Deportivo la Coruna (1630), Atletico Madrid v Malaga (1845) |
| <b>Sunday:</b>   | Alaves v Villarreal (1000), Girona v Sevilla (1415), Las Palmas v Athletic Bilbao (1630), Real Sociedad v Real Madrid (1845)   |
| <b>Monday:</b>   | Espanyol v Celta Vigo (1900)   |