

What to WATCH

DAY'S EVENT

GTV & MAARANGA
Bangladesh Premier League
Rangpur Riders v Rajshahi Kings
Live from 1:00pm
Dhaka Dynamites v Sylhet Sixers
Live from 6:00pm

Bangladesh Premier League
Rangpur Riders v Rajshahi Kings
Live from 1:00pm

Dhaka Dynamites v Sylhet Sixers
Live from 6:00pm
Venue: SBNS, Dhaka

TEN 2
FIFA World Cup Qualifiers
Denmark v Republic of Ireland
Live from 1:45am (Sunday)

'SHOULD HAVE BEEN CALLED KELVIN-PRINCE'

Ghana midfielder Kevin-Prince Boateng has revealed that he dislikes his colourful first name because of a small mistake on the birth certificate which stopped him being called Kelvin-Prince. "I don't like my first name," the Eintracht Frankfurt midfielder said while explaining why he only has the name 'Prince' on his shirt. "I should have been called Kelvin, that would have been a top name: Kelvin-Prince. That was a mistake on the birth certificate - no one knows that. I wouldn't have had to play football then, because that name alone is already stellar, and then they wrote it wrong in the hospital. My mum had surgery right after the birth and couldn't intervene." The 30-year-old has played all 11 Bundesliga games for Eintracht since joining in August after a hurried departure for family reasons from Spanish club Las Palmas. Boateng has played for AC Milan, Portsmouth, Tottenham Hotspur, Hertha Berlin and Schalke in a colourful career.



—AFP

Hattrick for Mymensingh

Sports Reporter



Mymensingh clinched a hattrick of titles of the JFA U-14 Women's Football Championship with a 3-0 win over Thakurgaon at the Bangabandhu National Stadium yesterday.

Rozina Akter and Shamsunnar, who reached the capital from Mymensingh yesterday morning after sitting for their JSC exams on Thursday, shared three goals against first-time finalists Thakurgaon.

Even though the final was officially between two districts, it was virtually a battle among two remote villages where the girls from Kalsindur emerged victorious and added another feather to their brief yet glorious history in women's football. The girls from Rangatungi, however, did not disappoint the crowd with their performance despite the fact that they started playing football just three years ago.

The girls' game had once been a disorganised show due to lack of footballing sense and hardly drew any attention, but the standards have increased significantly and now the girls, who started playing football through the Bangamata Gold Cup Primary School tournament, possess all the skills necessary to enthral spectators.

The third goal of the match was exceptional. Mymensingh built up the attack from their own half before Yeasmin dissected two defenders with a pass to right-winger Amena Khatun, who raced into the

box before releasing a low cross for Shamsunnar to flick home.

Yesterday's final was also an entertaining affair considering the age of the players and both teams did their utmost to come out with a victory. Ultimately Mymensingh proved too strong for Thakurgaon, who did a commendable job of keeping a clean-sheet in the second half.

Mymensingh captain Yeasmin Akter predicted that the match would be a tough one at the pre-match press conference, but in reality it was a one-way affair as they were bolstered by the returns of goalkeeper Prunima Akater, Shamsunnar and top-scorer Rozina -- whose brace in the final took her tally to 14 goals -- who had failed to play the last two matches due to their exams.

National women's team head coach Golam Rabbani Choton selected a few players from among both teams for the ongoing training camp for the SAFF U-15 Championship with hopes of grooming the girls in training and honing their skills, similar to what he has done with players like Krishna Rani, Sanjida Akter, Israt Jahan Mousumi, Sirat Jahan Swapna, Masura Parvin and many others.

Mymensingh coach Salahuddin dedicated their title to former U-15 player Sabina Yeasmin, who died last September due to fever, while Thakurgaon coach Suga Murmu expressed his happiness with the way his inexperienced charges played throughout the final.

PHOTO: STAR



The Mymensingh players were over the moon after beating Thakurgaon 3-0 in the final to clinch a third consecutive title of the JFA U-14 Women's Football Championship at the Bangabandhu National Stadium yesterday.

All-Indian final in boys' singles

SPORTS REPORTER

Karan Srivastava and Rishabh Sharda set up an all-Indian final in boys' singles of the Islami Bank 31st International Junior Tennis Competition after winning their semifinal matches at the National Tennis Complex in Ramna yesterday.

Srivastava beat Malaysia's Daniel Ahmed Farid 6-3, 6-3 while Sharda beat Guntinn Sootinun of Thailand 6-0, 7-5. The final will take place today.

In the girls' singles semifinals, Wei Ning Fang beat Riddi Ramesh Sharma of India 6-7, 6-3, 6-1 while Wanyi Zhang of China beat Ling Hsuan Wei of Chinese Taipei 6-7, 6-3, 6-1.

Croatia destroy Greece

N Ireland fume over penalty

AFP, Paris



Northern Ireland coach Michael O'Neill said he was "staggered and bewildered" by a controversial penalty decision which gave Switzerland a 1-0 win in their World Cup play-off first leg on Thursday.

Vladimir Petkovic's Switzerland dominated the match at a rain-swept Belfast but squandered a succession of chances.

The key moment came with just over half an hour to go, when Xherdan Shaqiri's volley was blocked by Corry Evans in the box and the referee pointed to the spot, even though he appeared to have been hit on the shoulder as he took evasive action.

Ricardo Rodriguez made no mistake from the penalty spot, sending goalkeeper Michael McGovern the wrong way as the visitors finally made their superiority count to put them in

the driving seat in the two-legged tie.

"The referee has no-one in his line of sight," fumed O'Neill who must now rally his team for Sunday's second leg in Basel. "Corry's arm isn't in an unnatural position, it's by his side. The ball hits him on the back more than anything. I thought the referee had blown for a foul or an offside. Nobody had claimed for it."

"I'm staggered by the decision, staggered by the yellow card but there's nothing we can do about it now. There's anger in the dressing room in there. They feel very aggrieved about what's happened."

In Zagreb, Croatia cruised to a 4-1 victory over Greece to move to the brink of a spot at next year's finals in Russia.

Real Madrid midfielder Luka Modric opened the scoring from the penalty spot in the 13th minute, after Greek goalkeeper Orestis Karnezis brought down striker Nikola Kalinic.

Croatia doubled their lead six minutes later when an unmarked Kalinic flicked in a low cross from Ivan Strinic.

The visitors pulled one back on the half-hour mark when captain Sokratis Papastathopoulos scored a header from a corner. But just three minutes later, a quick Croatian attack down the right flank ended with Inter Milan winger Ivan Perisic powering home a close-range header at the back post.

Andrej Kramaric tapped in to increase Croatia's lead four minutes after half-time and leave Greece with it all to do in the return fixture on Sunday in Piraeus.

"It was a great match ... But this is only the first half, we should not relax. Nothing is over," Croatia coach Zlatko Dalic told television channel HRT.

"We played a great match. But we have only done half of the job, we should have a good rest and play a good match there (Greece) on Sunday," Modric added. "We could have scored more goals, but 4-1 is a great result."



Andrej Kramaric put the icing on Croatia's cake, scoring their fourth and final goal against Greece in their 2018 World Cup play-off match at the Stadion Maksimir in Zagreb on Thursday.

PHOTO: REUTERS

Brazil outclass Japan

AFP, Lille



Neymar scored a penalty and missed another as Brazil signalled their intent ahead of next year's World Cup by outclassing Japan 3-1 in Friday's international friendly in Lille.

The Paris Saint-Germain star rolled in a 10th-minute spot-kick following consultation with the video assistant referee, although Neymar saw a second penalty saved shortly after by Eiji Kawashima.

Marcelo rifled in a magnificent second as Brazil doubled their lead on 17 minutes, with Manchester City's Gabriel Jesus rounding off a clinical counter-attack before half-time to make it 3-0.

Tomoaki Makino nodded in a consolation from a corner on 62 minutes but Japan remain winless against Brazil after losing for the 10th time in 12 meetings.

Neymar was joined by PSG teammate Thiago Silva in the Brazil line-up as coach Tite picked a strong side despite playing in front of a sparsely-filled Stade Pierre-Mauroy in northern France.

Japan boss Vahid Halilhodzic, who served a four-year spell as Lille coach over a decade ago, called up 12 Europe-based players for the double-header with Brazil and Belgium, but experienced attacking trio Shinji Kagawa, Shinji Okazaki and Keisuke Honda were all overlooked for selection.

Japan were thrashed 4-0 by a Neymar-inspired Brazil in their last encounter in 2014 and again quickly found themselves under threat from the world's most expensive player.

He slipped Giuliano through down the right-hand side after carving open



Talisman Neymar (L) scored a penalty and missed another while Gabriel Jesus (R) continued his purple patch with a strike in Brazil's 3-1 win over Japan in yesterday's friendly in Lille.

PHOTO: REUTERS

space, with captain Yuto Nagatomo forced to produce a vital sliding block.

Brazil were soon in front as referee Benoit Bastien belatedly awarded a penalty after the video official spotted Maya Yoshida tugging the jersey of Fernandinho at a corner.

Neymar calmly converted for his 53rd international goal -- eight of which have come against Japan -- and the 25-year-old should have added to his tally five minutes later after Gabriel Jesus was barged over by Hotaru Yamaguchi.

But this time Kawashima dived low to his right to deny Neymar, although Brazil surged further ahead from the resulting corner through a thunderbolt from Marcelo.

Yosuke Ideguchi's poor clearance trickled invitingly into the path of the Real Madrid left-back who hammered a right-footed strike into the top corner from 20 yards.

Yoshida nearly atoned for his early blunder on the half-hour as he crashed a free-kick against the crossbar, but Japan were ruthlessly dissected as Brazil further flexed their muscles on 36 minutes.

Neymar triggered a swift break after a Japanese attack broke down, with Willian releasing the overlapping Danilo whose driven low cross was tapped in by Manchester City teammate Jesus at the far post.

Brazil substitute goalkeeper Cassio, who replaced Alisson for the second half, clawed away a fizzing shot from Takuma Asano, while Neymar was booked for a tangle with Marseille defender Hiroki Sakai after the incident was reviewed by the VAR.

Japan trimmed the deficit on 62 minutes when centre-back Makino headed in from a corner before a raft of substitutes in the final quarter disrupted the flow of the contest.

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:

Gayle seeks to cash in on Aus court win

West Indies cricket superstar Chris Gayle is seeking to cash in on a court case win against an Australian media group, promising a tell-all interview -- but only if the price is right.

Madrid door open for Neymar: Ramos

Real Madrid captain Sergio Ramos is interested in Brazilian sensation Neymar and hinted that it would be easier for Neymar to become a Real Madrid Player after taking a PSG detour.

Roger, Rafa urge caution over rule changes

Roger Federer and Rafael Nadal said they welcome innovation in tennis but warned the game's administrators on Friday not to tamper too much with the current format.

MID-SEASON TRANSFERS

Foreign players reshuffled

SPORTS REPORTER



Title contenders Chittagong Abahani and defending champions Abahani signed back their former stars Lionel Saint Preux of Haiti and Sunday Chizoba of Nigeria respectively as the mid-term transfer window came to a close yesterday.

Chittagong Abahani, who are on top of the Bangladesh Premier League table with 26 points, released Nigerian forward Afeez Olawale Oladipo to sign up Preux, who was one of their key players last season as the port city outfit became runners-up.

HOLDERS and third-placed Abahani signed back Sunday, who scored 19 goals last season to guide Abahani to their fifth professional league title. However, the Sky Blues are yet to decide who to release among

Emeka Darlington, Landing Darboe and Samad Yussif as only three players are allowed to register for each club.

Apart from these two clubs, fourth-placed Saif SC signed up Haiti's Wedson Anselme along with Charles Sheringham, son of former England forward Teddy Sheringham.

Struggling Mohammedan SC, who are in fifth position with 17 points from 11 matches, roped in Brothers Union's Haitian striker Augustin Walson while Rahmatganj MFS signed up Dauda Ceesay and Afeez Oladipo to strengthen their attacking options.

A total of 25 players were signed up for different clubs till yesterday afternoon and official formalities to sign up more players were going on till this report was filed.

The second leg of the league will start on Monday.

Shake-up in works

AGENCIES, London



The Wimbledon Championships and the other three grand-slam tournaments' bodies will meet in London next week to discuss reforms to the game. Taking a cue from T20 cricket and having trialled them in the ongoing ATP NextGen Finals, here are some of the changes aimed at making the game faster paced and more attractive for younger viewers:

- Introduction of a shot clock
- In-match coaching which will be broadcast
- A reduction in the number of seeds from 32 to 16
- Shortening sets to the first to four
- Getting rid of line judges

Evra banned, leaves Marseille

AFP, Marseille

Patrice Evra ended his career with Marseille on Friday after his infamous karate kick on one of his own fans, the French giants announced.

Marseille said they and the 36-year-old had both agreed that he would leave by "mutual consent".

Evra was also banned by UEFA from all European tournaments until June 30, 2018 and fined 10,000 euros. The assault on a Marseille spectator took place during the pre-match warm-up of a Europa League tie at Portuguese side Vitoria Guimaraes last week.