

STAR SPORTS SELECT 1
 English Premier League
 Everton v Chelsea
 Live from 6:30pm
 Man City v Bournemouth
 Live from 9:00pm

Burnley v Tottenham
 Live from 11:30pm
 Leicester v Man United
 Live from 1:45am (Sunday)
STAR SPORTS SELECT 2
 English Premier League

Southampton v Huddersfield
 Live from 9:00pm
TEN 1 & 2
 La Liga
 Real Madrid v Barcelona
 Live from 6:00pm

TEN 2
 La Liga
 Valencia v Villarreal
 Live from 9:15pm
 Deportivo v Celta Vigo
 Live from 11:30pm

National Cricket League
 Four Day Match
 Day 3
 Time: 9:30am
 Kohli v Dhaka
 Venue: BKSF

Bairali v Rangpur
 Venue: SKS, Rajshahi
 Dhaka Metro v Rajshahi

Venue: ZACS, Chittagong
 Sylhet v Chittagong
 Venue: SIC5, Sylhet



Both camps were in good spirits ahead of tomorrow's El Clasico. Lionel Messi's Barcelona side are 11 points ahead of Real Madrid going into the encounter, which will be crucial for Los Blancos' hopes of retaining their La Liga title, while a win for Barca would see them well in the clear to grab their first league title after two barren seasons.

CR7 back for make-or-break Clasico

REUTERS, Madrid
 Real Madrid's Cristiano Ronaldo is ready to start Saturday's clash against Barcelona, where his side could either reignite their title defence or effectively be knocked out of the running.
 Ronaldo had been absent from training after hurting his calf against Gremio in the Club World Cup final last Saturday, in which he scored the only goal of Real's 1-0 win over the Brazilian side and completed the full 90 minutes.
 "He is feeling good and is 100 percent," coach Zinedine Zidane told a news conference on Friday.
 Ronaldo is having his worst domestic campaign in nine seasons

with Real, having scored only four league goals so far, although he goes into the 'Clasico' having scored five times in his last four games in all competitions.
 Real are fourth in the Liga standings, 11 points ahead of leaders Barca, who have played one game more.
 A win in Saturday's lunchtime kick off at the Santiago Bernabeu would offer the champions the chance to cut the gap with Barca to five points if they win their game in hand against Leganes.
 Defeat, however, would see them slip a remarkable 14 points behind.
 "We aren't feeling anxious, it doesn't matter how many points we have dropped this season, now we have to put in a great performance against a very good side," said Zidane.
 "It doesn't matter if Barca have

played well or not this season, they are top on their own merits and for a reason. We are behind them and we want to cut that gap down. If we play well we can cause any team problems."
 Barca coach Ernesto Valverde said the enormous gap in points between the two sides would have little bearing on the game.
 "I don't think we are favourites, the league table has no influence on games like this because of the tension there always," he said.
 "Madrid are such a powerful team that they can strike you down even when you're in your best moment of form. Also, they will be at home."
 Real outclassed Barca in the last 'Clasico' in the Spanish Super Cup last in August, winning 2-0 in the

second leg at the Bernabeu to complete a resounding 5-1 victory on aggregate.
 The two teams have had contrasting results in the league since, however, with Barca going unbeaten in 24 games in all competitions and taking a six-point lead at the top of La Liga over nearest challengers Atletico Madrid.
 "We are very excited about the game, we're keen to vindicate ourselves after the Super Cup and to measure ourselves up against them. Both sides go into the game in good form and I think we're ready, Valverde said.
 Zidane added: "It will be the most difficult game of the season, these are always exciting and hard games but that's how we like them. Players live for games like these."

Timer finally comes back to life

SPORTS REPORTER

 After a long time the country's athletes finally got an accurate impression of their timing as the NRB Commercial Bank 41st National Athletics Championships resumed use of the electronic timer, which was previously dysfunctional, when the tournament kicked off at the Bangabandhu National Stadium yesterday.
 The Bangladesh Athletics Federation (BAF) took the initiative to repair the electronic timer following a three-day visit by Asian Athletics Associations president

"I could not concentrate properly due to the repeated attempts but I am happy to finish first in the 200m sprint after skipping the same event in the previous three editions due to my studies," said Shirin, who beat Susmita Ghosh (26.19 seconds) for the top spot.
 It was the fourth gold medal in 200m sprint for Shirin, who will also be competing for her sixth gold medal in 100m sprint.
 In the men's 200m sprint, M Abdur Rouf of Bangladesh Navy overcame Shariful Islam to become the champion by clocking in at 21.90 seconds while Shariful of Bangladesh Army took 22.05 seconds to finish second.
 "I bagged a gold medal in my first



While Abdur Rouf (L) won the men's 200m sprint title for the first time, it was business as usual for Shirin Akter who won her fourth women's 200m sprint title, on the opening day of the 41st National Athletics Championships at the Bangabandhu National Stadium yesterday.

QUICK SINGLES

The following are a few samples of stories that did not make the print edition.
 However, if they please you, you can always read them online on The Daily Star website by simply scanning the QR codes listed below:
'Could have had Mbappe, Jesus for £5m'
 Ryan Gags says he advised Manchester United to sign Gabriel Jesus and Kylian Mbappe.
Mourinho escapes FA sanctions
 The English Football Association said that Jose Mourinho will face no sanctions following an investigation.
Special cameras to track Messi, Ronaldo
 Cristiano Ronaldo and Lionel Messi are to be tracked by dedicated player camera during their Clasico showdown.

Al-Hamad promises assistance

SPORTS REPORTER

 Asian Athletics Association (AAA) president Dahlan Al-Hamad has promised to work with Bangladesh Athletics Federation (BAF) closely by sending instructors and master coaches to educate local coaches, athletes, judges, referees and officials.
 Al-Hamad announced his ideas during the inauguration of National Athletics Championships at the Bangabandhu National Stadium yesterday. He is scheduled to leave this morning.
 "As the president of AAA and VP of IAAF, it is an honour for me to see one of our members really trying to stand up and fight against the odds," Al-Hamad said at a brief press meet. "My ambition and objective is to see Bangladeshis become champions in Asia and world competitions. This is not a difficult job because I know how dedicated Bangladeshis people are. I know that the new committee will deliver something."
 "We know that build-up of an athlete takes a lot of effort locally and internationally. At world and Asian



Asian Athletics Association president Dahlan Al-Hamad meets athletes after inaugurating the 41st National Athletics Championships at the Bangabandhu National Stadium yesterday.

level, I commit myself that I will set up my people with the BAF to work out plans to develop athletics in Bangladesh. We know when everything is in right place, athletes will come out," said Al-Hamad.
 He also suggested the BAF to put on right plans to make the newly-

formed Sheikh Kamal Athletics Academy functional. He also suggested exchanging programmes with other athletics federations and involving school students in athletics. The AAA president also hinted that he would try to allocate an athletics track in Bangladesh.

Dahlan Al-Hamad, who declared the championships open as chief guest on Friday.
 This decision by the BAF clearly pleased athletes as they can now see their real time in the tournament for the first time since the timing device broke down halfway through the 2010 South Asian Games. After that, officials relied on hand-timing to adjudicate events in competitions.
 "It is really pleasing that I have completed my running in a domestic competition under the digital machine after a log gap," said Bangladesh Navy's Shirin Akter, who became the women's 200m sprint champion with a timing of 25.56 seconds.
 "Running under the electronic timer is always a positive thing for an athlete. He/she can know the real timing and can improve according to it because hand-timing is always confusing for athletes," continued the last edition's fastest woman.
 Shirin did have a complaint though as it seems the electronic device did not work properly. Before the 200m sprint began, Shirin attempted to settle into the starting block four times before the sensors finally reacted on the fifth attempt.

appearance in the 200m sprint event though I became runner-up in 100m sprint in the last edition," said Rouf, adding that he will be running in the 100m sprint with a target of breaking the dominance of Mezbah Ahmed, the six-time fastest man of Bangladesh.
 In another event of the day, Azharul Islam set a new discus throw record by clearing 44.37 metres to win his overall 32nd gold medal.
 He eclipsed his own record, set in 2006, of 44.06 metres. However, the 47-year-old athlete from Bangladesh Navy had his best performance in the 2010 South Asian Games where he cleared 44.98 metres to win bronze.
 Through the 41st edition of the NAC began in presence of AAA president Dahlan Al-Hamad, the turnout of participants is poor. Only 40 teams, which includes just 17 district sports associations, took part in the march-past while some of the other districts had no athletes present during the rally. Approximately 500 participants were expected to turn up but it seems the true number of athletes present at the competition is hardly half of that.

Barca tempted by Griezmann

Sanchez on Man City's radar as transfer window looms

AFP, Paris
 Barcelona are making moves to bring Real Madrid star Antoine Griezmann to the Catalan capital while Manchester City are eyeing Alexis Sanchez as clubs around Europe prepare for the January transfer window.
 The winter window opens at one minute past midnight on January 1, but Barca are looking for a belated Christmas present in the France international.
 Both players will likely move in the summer but deals could be struck in January, with Sanchez holding out for a £400,000-per-week deal from the runaway Premier League leaders when his contract runs out at the end of the season.
 Mundo Deportivo claimed Barca president Josep Maria Bartomeu has had dinner with Griezmann's parents and sister, who manages the player's affairs, and was looking to tie him down to a deal that would see him move in the summer.
 Even Arsenal's complaint to FIFA about Barca's public pursuit is likely to stop the move from happening with Barca director Guillermo Amor as good as admitting the meeting took place.
 Barca still have full coffers after receiving £22 million euros from the world record-busting sale of Neymar to Paris Saint-Germain and Griezmann's 100

million euros buyout clause means the club only need to agree personal terms, avoiding the problems they encountered when they failed to sign Philippe Coutinho from Liverpool in August.
 Barcelona are however still keeping tabs on Coutinho and could make a lower bid than the 100 million euros they

international has revealed that he has no plans to leave after finding a role in the team.
 The Qatari-based Parisians were rumoured to be interested in AC Milan's rising star goalkeeper Gianluigi Donnarumma, but after reports of the stopper complaining about being



ON THE MOVE?
 were prepared to pay in the summer.
 After the Neymar signing Paris Saint-Germain have got to sell players to comply with Financial Fair Play (FFP) rules.
 Inter Milan are among those looking at PSG midfielder Javier Pastore, who admitted last month he was "disappointed" at his lack of first-team action.
 Liverpool and Arsenal are keen on PSG's Lionel Draxler, but the German coerced into signing his summer six million-euro contract extension, the club and player - and crucially his powerful agent Mino Raiola - have made moves towards a reconciliation.
 Meanwhile, Chelsea are pondering an £80 million bid for Monaco star Thomas Lemar, with Blues striker Michy Batshuayi a potential make-weight in the deal.

Protect hapless tailenders

REUTERS, Melbourne

 Umpires should invoke cricket's laws and protect England's tailenders from Australia's relentless 'bodyline' bowling in the ongoing Ashes series, former England captain Michael Atherton has said.
 England's number 10 batsman Jake Ball was subjected to a bouncer barrage from Mitchell Starc, Josh Hazlewood and Pat Cummins in the Brisbane opener and number 11 James Anderson suffered a scorching blow to the side of his helmet in the third Test at Perth.
 Atherton conceded Australia were clearly the better team and that any side with such ammunition would have attacked the tailenders for practical and psychological reasons.
 "That said, I did wonder aloud at the time why the umpires were so reluctant to act to protect Ball," Atherton wrote in The Times.
 The law states that short pitched bowling is dangerous if the umpire considers it likely to inflict physical injury.
 "Test cricket or not, the law and the playing conditions are there to protect batsmen capable of protecting themselves," he added.
 "Cricket is an old game in that it has three distinct disciplines and, within that, you have the unusual situation where someone who is totally useless in one area can face a world-class performer in another - with potentially harmful consequences."
 Australia captain Steve Smith found Atherton's claims "a bit over the top".
 "No doubt, if they had the kind of pace that

our bowlers can generate, they'd do the same thing," Smith said at Melbourne Park where he had a hit with tennis player Milos Raonic.
 Smith returned a few of Raonic's serves but struggled with one aimed at his body.
 "Now I know how Jimmy Anderson feels," joked Smith.
 England tailender James Anderson wears one on the helmet during a hostile spell of fast bowling by Australia's Pat Cummins on the fifth day of the third Ashes Test in Perth on December 18.

TOUHIDA, RIYA SHINE IN JHENAIDAH

SPORTS REPORTER

 Two female athletes of Jhenaidah lit up the fifth day of the Bangladesh Youth Games yesterday. Touhida Akter bagged two gold medals while Riya Ferdous bagged two gold and a silver medal.
 Both athletes are from the sadarupazilla of the district.
 Touhida won girls' 100m and 200m sprint titles while Riya won gold in discus throw and shot put while settling for silver in javelin throw. Nadia Akter won the 400m sprint title while Sumaiya Sultana won the high jump event.
 Meanwhile, Mita became the best female athlete in Meherpur, winning three golds in the 50m sprint, discus throw and shot put.
 Elsewhere, Al Amin of Betagi thana won two gold and a silver in Barguna district. He won gold in shot put and discus throw while bagging a silver in 400m sprint.
 In a 4x100m relay, 41 Nilphamari, Mohammad Abu Taher and Dipangkar Roy won two gold medals each.