



Cristiano Ronaldo hit top gear, scoring three tremendous goals and grabbing an assist in Real Madrid's 5-1 win over Real Sociedad on Saturday, four days before a season-defining Champions League fixture against PSG. PHOTO: REUTERS

## Real peak at perfect time

### Thrash Sociedad 5-1 days before PSG clash

AFP, Madrid



Real Madrid's comprehensive 5-2 win over Real Sociedad on Saturday boosted confidence in the Spanish capital with the feeling that they have set themselves up nicely for the looming Champions League showdown with PSG.

Cristiano Ronaldo bagged a hat-trick for the first time this season after Lucas Vazquez had opened the scoring inside 49 seconds at the Santiago Bernabeu. Toni Kroos also found the net, with Real 4-0 up by the interval.

The victory might not do much to trouble La Liga leaders Barcelona, but it strengthens their place in the top four and confirms that Zinedine Zidane's side are on an upward trajectory ahead of their clash with PSG.

"It makes things easier for you when you score an early goal. We showed lots of desire and we can be satisfied. It was good preparation for Wednesday," said Zidane.

It was a result that went down well with the media, sports daily AS saying on their front cover on Sunday morning that Ronaldo had sent a "message to PSG".

Madrid have won three and drawn one of their last four league outings, scoring 18 goals in that time. Meanwhile, Ronaldo now has 11 La Liga goals for the season, with seven coming in those last four matches.

"The Artillery, Ready for PSG", was the headline on the front page of the other big Madrid sports daily, Marca, on Sunday.

"He always has that mindset, he lives for that, for scoring goals," said Zidane of Ronaldo, who last week turned 33. "He could have scored one or two more, and it augurs well for Wednesday."

**GETAFE HOLD BARCELONA**

A disallowed Luis Suarez goal summed up a frustrating afternoon for Barcelona as the leaders dropped points for the second week after a 0-0 stalemate with Getafe on Sunday.

After needing a late equaliser to grab a point in the Catalan derby at Espanyol last weekend, Barca could not break down a well-organised Getafe side, who showed why they have the third-best defensive record in the league. In irresistible form in front of goal in 2018, Suarez had the ball in the net just before half-time with a great finish from a Lionel Messi free-kick, but the home celebrations were cut short by the offside flag.

The Uruguayan striker then saw his header kept out by a brilliant Vicente Guaita save as the match moved into stoppage time, with Barca failing to score at home in La Liga for the first time since November 2016.

Ernesto Valverde's side remain unbeaten in La Liga after 23 games, extending their longest run without losing from the start of a campaign.

## 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:

### Guardiola hails 'legend'

Aguero Pep Guardiola hailed Sergio Aguero as an "authentic legend" of Manchester City after his four second-half goals continued the club's emphatic march towards the Premier League title with a 5-1 thrashing of Leicester.



### Chelsea slump not all my fault: Conte

Chelsea manager Antonio Conte believes blame should be shared for the dramatic slump that has the Italian fighting for his job as West Brom visit the English champions. Conte has repeatedly complained this season about his lack of input into the club's recruitment policy.



## History looms for Federer

AFP, Rotterdam

Roger Federer will target a return to the top of the rankings as the Rotterdam World Tennis tournament starts on Monday, with the Swiss aiming to become the oldest number one player in history.

The test begins at the Ahoy stadium when the 36-year-old returns to the Dutch top spot for the first time since 2013.

Top seed Federer starts in the first round against a qualifier in an event he has won twice before, lifting the trophy in 2005 and 2012. Should he reach the semi-finals, Federer would pass Rafael Nadal to take over the world's top ranking.

The Swiss would surpass Andre Agassi, who held the top spot in 2003 aged 33 years and 131 days.

## MU rocked; L'pool sail

AFP, London



Matt Ritchie condemned Manchester United to a shock 1-0 defeat at struggling Newcastle, while Liverpool cemented their top four place with a 2-0 win over Southampton on Sunday.

United's second defeat in their last three Premier League games leaves them 16 points behind leaders Manchester City.

Jose Mourinho's second placed side, beaten by Tottenham in their last away game, were rarely at their best at St James' Park and paid the price in the 65th minute.

United defender Chris Smalling was booked for needlessly diving inside his own half and from the resulting Jonjo Shelvey free-kick, Dwight Gayle latched onto a header and played a backheel towards Ritchie.

His run was completely untracked by United's sloppy defence and the Newcastle winger fired low past David De Gea.

Mourinho responded by pulling off Paul Pogba after another underwhelming display. And United should have equalised

soon after, but when Newcastle failed to clear a corner, Anthony Martial saw two shots blocked on the line by Gayle.

"Newcastle fought like animals, I hope they take that as a compliment. The gods of football were on their side," Mourinho said. "It wasn't going to happen for us today. Newcastle gave what they have, that's a beautiful thing in football."

"We made a defensive mistake and when they are in front they had only one thing in mind and gave their lives to keep a clean sheet."

At St Mary's, Liverpool moved above Tottenham into third place as goals from Roberto Firmino and Mohamed Salah killed off lowly Southampton.

Jürgen Klopp's side took a sixth minute lead when Brazil forward Firmino netted for the 20th time this season and doubled it Liverpool in the 42nd minute when Firmino turned provider for Salah with a fine flicked pass that the Egypt forward slotted home for his 29th club goal of a dream first season with the Reds.

Klopp's men are four points clear of fifth placed Chelsea, who face West Bromwich Albion on Monday, as the battle heats up to qualify for the Champions League.

## The Tiger departs

SPORTS REPORTER

Former national hockey player Sona Miah breathed his last yesterday morning at his residence in Lalbagh. He was 69. He left behind his wife, three daughters and two sons including current national team captain Rasel Mahmud Jimmy.

Affectionately called the Tiger of Bengal during his playing career, Sona Miah had been suffering from various ailments since having a brain haemorrhage in 2009 and was confined to his house.

He was recently taken to hospital following another haemorrhage before being returning home on January 26. He was rushed to the Dhaka Medical College Hospital in the early hours of yesterday, but doctors declared him dead in the morning.

He was one of the finest players the country has ever produced and was a regular of the then East Pakistan national team from 1967 to 1970. He was called up for a trial for the all Pakistan hockey team along with Abdus Sadeque, but was later selected for the Pakistan youth team in 1969.

Born in Dhaka in 1949, Sona Miah started his playing career

as a centre-forward for Mahuttuli, now known as Usha KC, in 1963 when he was a student. The following year he joined Azad SC and later played for Combined SC, Victory SC, PWD and Abahani, where he called time on his career in 1988 after playing for the Sky Blues for six successive years.

He also represented Bangladesh in a four-match series against Sri Lanka in 1978. He took on the role of coach of the junior national team in the World Cup Qualifying round in 1988 before guiding the national team in the 3rd Asia Cup. He also coached Usha KC and Dhaka Mariner Youngs Club.

"We had some great memories together. Bangladesh's hockey has lost a great contributor," recalled BHF general secretary Abdus Sadeque.

Sona Miah's body was taken to the Maulana Bhasani National Stadium for his first namaz-e-janaza where a host of people paid their respects. He was later laid to eternal rest at the Azimpur Graveyard after his second namaz-e-janaza was held at the Chawkbazar Shahi Mosque following Asr prayers.



SONA MIAH (1949-2018)

## Youth policy brings success for Arambagh

ANISUR RAHMAN

Arambagh KS, situated at the Club para of Motijheel, turned into a festive place yesterday for residents of the locality after the team made history on Saturday night by winning their first major trophy at top-flight football since the club's establishment in 1958.

The residents under different banners turned up at the decorated club tent with garlands to congratulate club officials and players for delivering the moment they were waiting for for a long time.

The group of residents gave away small amounts of incentives from their own pockets to the players as well.

Putting behind big-spenders like Abahani, Sheikh Jamal and Chittagong Abahani was not an easy job for Arambagh, which was made up of young players looking to build their career. The club management went back to its philosophy of focusing on youth to form a spirited team and they became successful just one season after being promoted back to the top-tier. They had also reached the final of the Federation Cup in 2016.

Arambagh were once a breeding ground for many national players such as Nurul Haque Manik, Jabir Hossain Apu, Ahmedur, Mahub Hossain Roxy, Firoz Mahmud Titu, Rokonzaman Kanchan, Alfaz Ahmed, Ajmol Hossain Biddut, Syed Golam Jilani, Asad, goalkeepers Tony, Dhonu, Shimul and many others under the guidance of coach Mir Mohammad Faruque, but the club had lost its heritage in recent times.

The club came into limelight in 1985 when they beat national-players-studded Mohammedan 2-1 in a super league match. They carried their giant-killers form till 1990 with youthful sides by scouting players from Bashabo, Shahjahanpur, Khilgaon, Arambagh and Fakirerpool.

They used to be a top-five finisher prior to 1990, but failed to continue their form later and even got relegated from the top-tier in 2014 before returning to the top again in 2016.

However, after being appointed as the club president in 2015, AKM Mominul Haque Sayeed made a link-up with Dilkusha and Arambagh Football Academy to collect footballers from grassroots for his club, and those players are now delivering results. Even some of the players are being selected for the national team.

Last season, the club management spent big behind coaching staff and roped in one of the top coaches, Saiful Bari Titu. This time they signed up UEFA A licensed coach Maruful Haque, who was reportedly paid almost one third of the total expenditure that has been spent behind the footballers.

"We know well how a good coach can educate the players and deliver results, so we are still stuck with retaining Maruful Haque, who worked here with full freedom and there was no interference from the team management," Mominul Haque said, adding that they met almost all of Maruful's requirements like permanent practice ground, introduction of GPS system, food chart, discipline etc.

Haque promised that they would again form a youthful talented squad by retaining the services of the current squad and that they will not run after big names to form a so called 'champion squad'.

selected for the national team and recently, Abu Sufian Sufil, Mahfuzur Rahman Pritom and Abu Jahid have been called up to the preliminary squad for FIFA friendly against Laos.

It is also mentionable that seven players from the current Arambagh squad represented Bangladesh under-19 team in SAFF U-18 Championship and AFC U-19 Championship Qualifiers last year and those players were the architects of this success. Hence it seems the club is returning to its old tradition of producing players for the national team.

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**মার্কেটাইল ব্যাংক আব্দুল জলিল শিক্ষাবৃত্তি ২০১৭**

সামাজিক দায়বদ্ধতার অংশ হিসেবে মার্কেটাইল ব্যাংক লিমিটেড বিগত বছরগুলোর ন্যায্য এবছরও দেশব্যাপী "শিক্ষাবৃত্তি প্রোগ্রাম ২০১৭" শুরু করতে যাচ্ছে। এর আওতায় ২০১৭ সালের জে.এস.সি/এস.এস.সি/এইচ.এস.সি এবং সমমান পরীক্ষায় উত্তীর্ণ ছাত্র-ছাত্রীদের নিকট থেকে আবেদনপত্র আহ্বান করা হচ্ছে।

**বৃত্তির মেয়াদ : ১ বছর (এককালীন প্রদেয়)**

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জে.এস.সি/সমমান	ট ১,০০০/-	ট ১২,০০০/-
এস.এস.সি/সমমান	ট ১,২৫০/-	ট ১৫,০০০/-
এইচ.এস.সি/সমমান	ট ১,৭৫০/-	ট ২১,০০০/-

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০১। আবেদনকারী/শিক্ষার্থীর পরিবারের বাৎসরিক আয় ৭০,০০০ (সত্তর হাজার) টাকার নিচে হতে হবে।  
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