

**Premier Hockey League**  
Sadharaan Bima v Victoria SC  
Time: 2:30pm  
Abahani v Mohammedan  
Time: 4:30pm  
Venue: Maulana Bhasani Hockey Stadium, Dhaka

## 'I NEVER FAIL; THE SYSTEM FAILS'

Even though he's a soccer superstar, the LA Galaxy's Zlatan Ibrahimovic still had to take his driver's test like everyone else does. It made for a comical photo and an even better video of reporters asking him about how he did. The next day, the Galaxy shared Zlatan talking about his test. He said that he passed it, but he had a hilariously classic response when asked if he missed any of the questions. "Zlatan never misses. Remember," he said confidently, though with a smile. "Impossible to miss. It's the system that failed me, not me failed the system." But honestly, admitting to missing a few questions on the written driver's test is not a big deal. Even two NASCAR drivers, William Byron and Daniel Suarez, 20 and 26-years-old respectively, struggled with the California test. —AGENCIES



## 'From kid to legend'

Torres scores twice on Atletico farewell

AFP, Madrid



**Laliga**

Fernando Torres scored twice on an emotional final outing for Atletico Madrid on Sunday but was denied a victorious farewell as Eibar snatched a 2-2 draw. Torres struck in each half much to the delight of his adoring fans at the Wanda Metropolitan but a Lucas Hernandez red card helped Eibar claim a point on the last day of the La Liga season. Atletico finish the campaign second in the table, Eibar sit 10th. Enrique Garcia had given the visitors a surprise early lead and Ruben Pena capitalised on the numerical advantage by equalising late on, but this match was always going to be about Torres. On his 404th appearance for Atletico, his goals were his 128th and 129th for the club, coming 17 years after his first, scored against Albacete in the Segunda Division in June 2001. Torres has yet to declare his next move but this display - speedy, sharp and clinical - will have caught the eye of many interested parties. In truth, the 34-year-old's fairytale ending had already arrived on Wednesday, when he lifted his first Atleti trophy after the triumphant Europa League final against Marseille. But this double added some extra sparkle in front of his own supporters, who stayed on after the final whistle to watch the team form

a guard of honour as the striker left the pitch. He had walked out the same way, with his three children, through a corridor formed by the Eibar players as Atletico's fans displayed the words, 'De Nino A Leyenda', meaning 'from a kid to a legend'. Outside the ground, fans had posed for photos next to Torres life-size cut-outs and peered at message boards, detailing the player's greatest moments. This, after all, was a boyhood Atletico fan, who first watched his team with his grandfather as a child, and who, when he returned to the club for a second spell in 2015, drew a crowd of more than 40,000 just for his presentation. Eibar threatened to spoil the party when Garcia gave them the lead in the 35th minute. Stefan Savic attempted to clear but connected only with the air and Garcia snuck in ahead of Juanfran to slide home. Atletico were enjoying the lion's share of possession, however, and Torres' moment came two minutes before the interval. Saul's clipped ball over the top caught Eibar napping and Angel Correa might have shot, with only the goalkeeper to beat. Instead he squared right for Torres, who celebrated by kissing the badge and applauding the fans. After his second, he ran into the fans behind the goal, for which he picked up a yellow card.



Fernando Torres bid farewell to his boyhood club Atletico Madrid on Sunday night with two goals in a 2-2 draw against Eibar in a La Liga match. PHOTO: REUTERS

## FIFA WORLD CUP 2018

AGENCIES, Undated

### OZIL, GUNDOGAN MEET GERMAN PRESIDENT AFTER ERDOGAN CONTROVERSY

Mesut Ozil and Ilkay Gundogan met Germany president Frank-Walter Steinmeier on Saturday in a series of clear air talks following their controversial photos alongside Turkish President Recep Tayyip Erdogan. "Ilkay Gundogan and Mesut Ozil expressed a desire to visit me," Steinmeier posted on Facebook alongside a picture of him with the Germany stars in Berlin. "It was important to both of them to clear up any misunderstandings that came up." Steinmeier said the players affirmed their loyalty to Germany during the meeting. "I grew up here and I'm faithful to my country," Ozil was quoted as saying, while Gundogan added, "Germany is clearly my country and my team". The duo found themselves at the centre of a political storm for meeting Erdogan last Sunday. The pair each presented Erdogan with a signed Arsenal and City jersey respectively, but were criticised by both German Chancellor Angela Merkel and the German FA (DFB) for their actions. WORLD CUP SNUB IRKS PAYET'S MOM France coach Didier Deschamps has faced criticism for not personally informing Marseille forward Dimitri Payet he would not be going to the World Cup - from the player's mother. Asked on TF1's Telefoot show if her son had been personally informed by Deschamps that he was not part of the plans for Russia 2018, she replied: "No. He found out watching on television like everyone else, with the family." Deschamps said the failure to call the forward, who had been prominent in the Euro 2016 campaign, had been a logistical one. "I had a list of 23 players to deliver and many things to do so with the limited time I had, unhappily for Dimitri Payet I didn't get round to it," the coach explained.

### SOUTH KOREA SUFFER CHANG-HOON SETBACK

South Korea's World Cup hopes suffered a major blow on Saturday as star midfielder Kwon Chang-hoon sustained an Achilles injury that is set to rule the 23 year-old out of the tournament. With 14 minutes remaining in the final game of the French campaign, Kwon, Korea's most in-form player with 11 goals for Dijon FCO this season, limped off the pitch against Angers. The exact nature of the injury has yet to be determined but in a statement released by Dijon, the club said it is "probably a rupture of the Achilles tendon, even if it is necessary to wait for the results of the examination." "One thing is certain, he will miss the World Cup in Russia." It is the latest and most serious in a series of injury worries for coach Shin Tae-yong. Defender Kim Min-jae and midfielder Yeom Ki-hun were ruled out of the 28-man preliminary squad named on May 14.

## Mancini wants Italy's 'rebirth'

AGENCIES, Milan

Newly appointed Italy manager Roberto Mancini wants his Italy to represent 'rebirth' and insisted Calcio philosophy was in some ways more successful than Brazil. "I think Italy are still a football superpower, as we have 50 million coaches..." smiled Mancini during an event at Coverciano. "I am always very positive in general, even if people say Italy no longer has as much talent." "Our philosophy took us to win four World Cups and three losses in finals. Perhaps we've done better than Brazil as we played more finals." The 53-year-old added that disappointment of not qualifying for the 2018 World Cup could light the team's fire. "From great disappointment, we can see immense triumphs rise up. In difficult moments that is when Italy found their pride and these players must take us back to the top of the world, where we deserve to be. I want this to be the rebirth of Italy."

## Depay hattrick gives Lyon CL

AFP, Paris

Memphis Depay struck thrice as Lyon fought back to beat Nice 3-2 in a Ligue 1 match on Saturday to qualify for the Champions League at the expense of Marseille. Monaco saw off relegated Troyes 3-0 to wrap up second spot behind champions PSG while Lyon finished one point clear of Marseille in third after a dramatic final day. It capped a miserable week for beaten Europa League finalists Marseille, who will return to Europe's second-tier competition.



Alexander Zverev impressively battered Rafael Nadal for large stretches during their Italian Open final, but his efforts went in vain as the Spaniard's incredible third-set resurgence saw him claim a 56th clay title and regain the World No. 1 ranking. PHOTO: REUTERS

## Nadal stages incredible comeback

AFP, Rome



Rafael Nadal won the Rome Masters for the eighth time on Sunday when he defeated defending champion Alexander Zverev 6-1, 1-6, 6-3 after a stunning comeback. German second seed Zverev was 3-1 up in the decider before two rain stoppages halted his momentum. Top seed Nadal raced away with the last five games to secure a 32nd Masters title and ensure a return to the world number one spot. The 31-year-old also showed why he will once again be the runaway favourite when Roland Garros begins in a week where he'll be bidding for an 11th French Open title. Zverev, 21, came to the court riding a 13-match win streak which included last weekend's trophy in Madrid. However, by the end of Sunday's rain-hit final, his record against the Spaniard stood at five defeats in five meetings. Nadal was 3-1 down at the first rain break but cut the gap on the resumption. After a further half an hour off court during the second interruption, Nadal came back out firing, winning four straight games to

wrap up the win on his second match point. "The rain break was so important, I didn't think it would help me but it did. I was able to come back out with clear ideas, I'm very happy," said Nadal. "To win Rome eight times is amazing, it's hard to describe. To have the chance to win here again is so great. "As for Roland Garros, I'm going to enjoy this victory and think about Paris in a few days. "For Alexander it's amazing to have won that many matches in a row," Nadal said after winning in just over two hours. "Today this trophy is with me for a short time, but I'm sure you will get it again." He added: "This was a very difficult match played at one of the best events of the world. To win again after my first [Rome title] in 2005 is amazing, the 2005 final was one of the best memories of my career." Nadal remains the best clay-courtier of the Open Era with an astonishing 408-36 record. He will next seek an 11th French Open crown to match the 11 he owns from Monte Carlo and Barcelona. "You are an amazing champion and you proved that today," Zverev told the Spaniard at the presentation. "You are the greatest clay player of all time, we all saw that. I'm disappointed that my streak is over, but I did lose to Rafa, so maybe it's OK. "I was so close but I lost it at the end." With the sun shining, Nadal made light work of what looked like a disastrous start to the match as he dropped serve in the opening game. But the king of clay quickly mounted a fightback, breaking world number three Zverev to love and going on to deny the German a winning service game in the entire set. Nadal closed out the opener in 32 minutes on an overhead smash to leave his challenger scratching for answers after losing six straight games. Zverev finally held serve to start the second set and answered Nadal by breaking the top seed twice to reach 5-0 as the first dark clouds of the week gathered over the Foro Italic and the conditions slowed. Nadal temporarily stopped the rot as he won his first game of the set but Zverev levelled the match at a set each a game later. That set the stage for the rollercoaster third set decider.

## Tuchel excited to work with 'artist' Neymar

AFP, Paris

New Paris Saint-Germain coach Thomas Tuchel insisted that Neymar is "an artist" and admitted that the Brazilian would need "special treatment" as he looked forward to starting his new role. Tuchel was unveiled to the media at the Parc des Princes on Sunday, after his appointment on a two-year deal was confirmed last week. He will officially begin his new job in time for the start of pre-season training in July as he replaces Unai Emery, but the German has already met with Neymar. "I met him last Sunday and it was a very good meeting. He's an artist, an exceptional player, one of the best in the world," said Tuchel, who was previously in charge at Borussia Dortmund but left a year ago and had been a free agent since. "Artists are special players, they need special treatment, it's common sense." Neymar joined PSG last August from Barcelona for a world-record fee of 222 million euros. He won the French player of the year prize despite a foot injury meaning he has not featured for his club since the end of February. Tuchel added: "I met a very friendly, very open guy for the first time. We started talking about football and I saw a smile on his face and that is what I want to see. "If we find a way to build a structure around him, so he can show all his talent on the pitch, I think we have a key player to win our games."



After finishing as DFB-Pokal runners-up last season, Eintracht Frankfurt ended a 30-year trophy drought in coach Niko Kovac's (C) final game. Kovac's reign ended in joy after Frankfurt defeated his soon-to-be employers Bayern Munich 3-1 in the final on Saturday. PHOTO: AFP

## We're not 'bad losers': Jupp

AFP, Berlin



**DFB-POKAL**

Jupp Heynckes was forced to deny Bayern Munich are bad losers after their shock 3-1 defeat to Eintracht Frankfurt in the German Cup final ruined his final game as manager. Croatia striker Ante Rebic scored either side of a Robert Lewandowski equaliser before substitute Mijat Gacinovic tapped into an empty net just before the whistle to delight Frankfurt fans and break Bayern's hearts. Eintracht coach Niko Kovac claimed his first trophy as coach in his last match at the club. He is leaving Frankfurt to succeed Heynckes next season. However, several Bayern stars left a bad impression by storming off the playing area after receiving their runners-up medals at the Olympiastadion in Berlin. They broke protocol by not waiting to see Frankfurt lift the trophy

and Heynckes was forced to deny the "bad losers" accusations. "That was really a misunderstanding," insisted Heynckes. "I would have expected that a person in charge of FC Bayern or the German FA would have told us to wait until the trophy was presented. At that moment, I did not even think about it, otherwise I would have asked my team to stay." Only a few Bayern players lingered for the trophy presentation alongside Bayern's sports director Hasan Salihamidzic. Nevertheless, the night belonged to Kovac and Frankfurt. In a dramatic finish, Rebic sealed the win by scoring his second goal on 82 minutes after floating his shot over Bayern goalkeeper Sven Ulreich. The goal stood despite an intervention by the video assistant referee. Both Kovac and Heynckes later said Bayern should have been awarded a late penalty when Javi Martinez was fouled in the dying minutes. "It was a penalty, but we shouldn't start criticising," added Heynckes, while Kovac admitted: "I have to say - it was a penalty." However, Gacinovic got the party started for the Frankfurt fans by sprinting the length of the field to tap into an open goal from a Bayern corner for the third goal just before the whistle. "I'm proud, my boys gave their all - and I mean all. Now Eintracht can celebrate their first trophy for 30 years," beamed Kovac after Frankfurt's first cup final win since 1988. The former Bayern midfielder shed tears of joy as he signed off with silverware after two years at Eintracht, who lost last year's final to Dortmund. "Anyone who knows me knows that I am an emotional person and I let the tears flow. They were tears of relief after two years fighting to be successful again," he said. "We have continually improved from near relegation to cup final to cup final winners."