

What to WATCH

GTV, STAR SPORTS 1 & SELECT 1
Asia Cup
Sri Lanka v Afghanistan
Live from 5:30pm
STAR SPORTS SELECT 2
English Premier League

Southampton v Brighton
Live from 1:00am (Tuesday)
TEN 2
Serie A
SPAL v Atalanta
Live from 12:30am (Tuesday)

AFC U-16 Women's C'chip qualifiers
Lebanon v UAE
Time: 11:30am
Bahrain v Bangladesh
Time: 3:30pm
Venue: BSMK, Dhaka

PLAYERS PUSH-START AMBULANCE

Players from Flamengo and Vasco da Gama came to the rescue of an ambulance on Saturday after the vehicle, which was transporting an injured player to hospital, refused to start. Vasco's Bruno Silva needed medical attention after being knocked out in the second half but after being loaded into the ambulance the vehicle was unable to leave the pitch. With both sets of fans in the 54,000 crowd at Brasilia's Mane Garrincha stadium howling in derision, players from both sides had to push-start the ambulance to bring it back to life. "That's a first," Flamengo defender Rever told Sportv. "What a lamentable scene. I thought the driver was kidding but he said he had turned the engine off and asked for our help. We managed to push it a little bit and it kick started."

-- AGENCIES



Hong Kong's top-scorer Aizaz Khan looks back at his uprooted stumps after failing to negotiate Pakistan pacer Usman Khan (unseen) during their Asia Cup fixture at the Dubai International Cricket Stadium yesterday.

Hosts look to set the tone

SPORTS REPORTER

Hosts Bangladesh are looking forward to setting the tone of their AFC U-16 Women's Championship Qualifiers campaign when they take on Bahrain in their tournament opener at the Bishreshtha Shaheed Mostafa Kamal Stadium in Kamalapur today.

The match will get underway at 3:30pm after Lebanon's match against United Arab Emirates, which begins at 11:30am at the same venue.

Although Bangladesh, who reached the final round of the AFC U-16 Women's Championship two years ago, were tipped as favourites in the five-team group, Lebanon and Vietnam appear to be strong contenders. Both teams got flying starts to their campaigns on Saturday as Vietnam outplayed UAE 4-0 while Lebanon imposed an 8-0 defeat on Bahrain.

Today's match against Bahrain may not be too much of a challenge for the home side, considering the way Bahrain played their first match, but Bangladesh coach Golam Rabbani Choton wants his charges start the tournament strongly.

"It is always important to start the first match of the tournament in a positive mood. We are prepared and the girls are ready to give their hundred per cent effort to win. We also want to set the tone of our performance and the girls will do everything they need to to win the match," said Choton yesterday.

Having watched both of the opening day's fixtures, Choton believes that these qualifiers are not going to be easy going for the home side.

"The girls have been asked to be confident, not over-confident, because two teams have already proved their worth in their first matches. We must take every match importantly and look forward. Tomorrow [Monday] is our first match, we have to show our own performance rather than thinking much of the opponents," said Choton, adding that they are, however, pondering about how to maximise their scoring margins.

However, the current under-16 squad is considered to be a more experienced and overall better side than the team that beat Chinese Taipei, Iran, UAE, Kyrgyzstan and Singapore the last time around as the current team recently participated in three international tournaments from last December to August this year, clinching two of the three titles and becoming runners-up in the other.

More than 12 of the players who participated in the 2016 AFC U-16 Women's Championship Qualifiers were picked for the current squad and are regular features in the playing eleven. Choton will likely use the same squad that played in August's SAFF U-15 Women's Championship against Bahrain today.

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ধুলো-ময়লা আর না

FREE CALL
08000-123456

Hong Kong pummeled by Pakistan

AFP, Dubai

Former champions Pakistan thrashed Hong Kong by eight wickets in a one-sided match to open their Asia Cup campaign on Sunday.

Pakistan's bowling attack was too hot to handle as Usman Shinwari finished with 3-19 and Hasan Ali took 2-19, while leg-spinner Shadab Khan managed 2-31 to bowl Hong Kong out for 116 in 37.1 overs.

Pakistan then completed the chase comfortably for the loss of opener Fakhar Zaman (24) and Babar Azam (33), while Imam-ul-Haq finished on 50 not out after just 23.4 overs.

"I proved another cake-walk for Pakistan, like their two previous victories against Hong Kong, by 173 runs in the 2004 Asia Cup in Colombo and by 155 in Karachi four years later.

This was a perfect warm-up for Pakistan ahead of their high-profile showdown with arch rivals India, also in Dubai on Wednesday.

Hong Kong struggled after captain Anshuman Rath won the toss and chose to bat in the Group A opener.

SCORES IN BRIEF
HONG KONG: 116 all out in 37 overs (Rath 19, Shah 26, Aizaz 27; Usman 3-19, Hasan 2-31, Faheem 1-10)
PAKISTAN: 120 for 2 in 23.4 overs (Imam 50 not out, Babar 33, Fakhar 24; Ehsan 2-34)
Result: Pakistan won by eight wickets.
Player-of-the-match: Usman Khan.

CR7 hits first and second

AFP, Milan

Cristiano Ronaldo scored his first competitive goals for Juventus on Sunday, with a second-half double by the Portuguese star giving the Italian champions a 2-1 Serie A win over Sassuolo to make it four victories from as many games.

The 33-year-old tapped in from barely a yard out after a goalmouth scramble on 50 minutes, and added a second 15 minutes later following a counter-attack as the defending seven-time champions moved three points clear of Napoli.

"I'm happy. I worked hard and I knew that the goals would come," said Ronaldo. "I thank my teammates who really helped me and allowed me to adapt to Italian football."

Ronaldo showed his frustration, however, kicking the post as he missed two more chances.

"This is football. The important thing is that the team wins. I was a little tense with all the talk after my move from Real Madrid and not scoring, so there were a lot of expectations, but I thank my teammates for supporting me throughout."

Senegalese striker Koumba Babacar pulled a goal back for Sassuolo in injury-time as the side from Modena fell to their first defeat of the season.

Juventus are the only unbeaten side this term after Napoli inflicted a first loss on Fiorentina on Saturday with a 1-0 win. Sassuolo are now third with seven points.

Juventus winger Douglas Costa was sent off late on after being caught on camera spitting at Sassuolo's Federico Di Francesco, and could face a lengthy ban.

Five-time Ballon d'Or winner Ronaldo was the star signing of the summer transfer period, arriving amid great pomp and ceremony following a 100-million-euro deal from Real Madrid.

Bolstered by five-time winner Ronaldo, Juventus begin their quest for a first Champions League title since 1996 at Valencia on Wednesday.

"The Champions League is my favourite tournament," said Ronaldo. "It's a very difficult group, we know that we can do well and Juve must focus on being the best."

Earlier, Roma threw away a two-goal lead as bottom club Chievo snatched a 2-2 draw at the Stadio Olimpico to dent morale before a daunting midweek trip to Champions League holders Real Madrid.

Roma coach Eusebio Di Francesco coach lamented: "We'll be going out to challenge Real Madrid on Wednesday. We mustn't lose our heads, even if these results destabilise us."

Roma are now eighth with five points from four games -- already seven points behind Juventus.



Portuguese superstar Cristiano Ronaldo finally broke his duck for Juventus, scoring twice against Sassuolo in a Serie A encounter at the Allianz Stadium yesterday.

ZLATAN'S PHENOMENAL 500TH

PHOTO: COLLECTED

LA Galaxy striker Zlatan Ibrahimovic became the third active player after Cristiano Ronaldo and Lionel Messi to reach 500 career goals, delivering a perfectly-timed roundhouse kick to fool a helpless Toronto FC goalkeeper on Saturday.

Kings unveil Colindres

SPORTS REPORTER

Costa Rica striker Daniel Colindres officially signed a one-year contract with Bashundhara Kings for the Bangladesh Premier League season, which begins on October 22, yesterday.

The 33-year-old hopes that the experience he gathered abroad, including the 2018 Russia World Cup, can benefit Bangladesh football.

Colindres, who played as a substitute in two of Costa Rica's 2018 World Cup fixtures, was introduced to the media after the signing ceremony in the Bashundhara Residential Area yesterday. Bashundhara Kings' Spanish coach Oscar Bruzon and club president Imrul Hasan were present at the occasion.

"I want to thank the club president and head coach for giving me the opportunity to play for this club. I came here with lots of expectations and dreams to fulfil,"

Hazard 'maybe best in Europe'

AGENCIES, London

Chelsea boss Maurizio Sarri believes Eden Hazard is capable of scoring 40 goals this season after revising his opinion of "maybe" the finest player in Europe.

The 27-year-old scored three times in a come-from-behind 4-1 win over an outclassed Cardiff City and boosted his tally to five goals in as many Premier League appearances.

"I thought Hazard was one of the best players in Europe, but now I am changing my mind -- maybe he is the best," Sarri told reporters. "I have spoken to him in the last two days, yesterday I told him for me he can score 40 goals."

"But [to do that he has to] spend less energy far from the goal and play in the last 25 metres." Sarri's mood after the convincing victory was further improved with the news Mateo Kovacic's muscle problem, which forced him off early in the second half, had been deemed not to be serious.

Why keep waiting?

SPORTS REPORTER from Dubai

It has become common knowledge that even though he played a delivery one-handed after coming in at number 11 to allow Bangladesh's innings to continue in Saturday's Asia Cup opener against Sri Lanka, a fractured wrist has effectively ruled Tamim Iqbal out of the rest of the event.

News has been doing the rounds that he will be out for six weeks, but there has not been any official confirmation from anyone within the BCB or team management. After Saturday's match, which Bangladesh won by 137 runs, captain Mashrafe Bin Mortaza said that they were not yet sure what would happen and that there would be another scan in two days. He will visit a specialist in Dubai tomorrow, who will decide whether he needs surgery.

"We have to have him checked by a specialist before saying anything official," said team manager Khaled Mahmud. "He is definitely out of the next match, we don't know about the rest. I don't know where the six-week figure came from; I have not heard a doctor say that."

If the dillydallying is to keep the other teams guessing about Bangladesh's most feared batsman, that can hardly be effective given that -- except India -- all the other teams are staying at the same hotel and can see Tamim's left arm in a sling. There seems to be very little sense in the ambiguity.

SL face Afg today

AGENCIES, Abu Dhabi

Sri Lanka will face Afghanistan in the third match of the Asia Cup on Monday.

As Sri Lanka faced an ignominious defeat of 137 runs in the opener of the tournament against Bangladesh on Saturday, it would be a do or die situation for them. Thus, the Island nation will like to tick the right boxes to stay alive in the competition.

On the other hand, Afghanistan has grown in confidence in the last five years. The Afghan team has shown an upward swing in their improvement graph. Afghan skipper Asghar Afghan has made it clear that his team is not here just to participate, but are looking to put up a solid performance in the tournament.

The 30-year-old added that they are hopeful of doing well against the island nation. "We are not here just to play but to perform. Sri Lanka are experienced but we are confident that we can perform well against them."

INFO-ZONE

SRI LANKA V AFGHANISTAN
HEAD TO HEAD IN ASIA CUP

| M | W | L | M | W | L |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 1 | 1 | 0 | 1 | 0 | 1 |

IN ALL ODIS

| M | W | L | M | W | L |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 2 | 2 | 0 | 2 | 0 | 2 |

Last meeting in ODIs: Dunedin, 22 February, 2015, where Sri Lanka won by four wickets

KEY PLAYERS

Lasith Malinga

| | |
|------------------|-------|
| Bowling | 305 |
| Wickets | 199 |
| Innings | 28.61 |
| Average | 5.29 |
| Economy | 7 |
| Five wicket haul | 6/38 |

Rashid Khan

| | |
|------------------|-------|
| Bowling | 108 |
| Wickets | 45 |
| Average | 14.22 |
| Economy | 3.92 |
| Five wicket haul | 4 |
| Best Bowling | 7/18 |