## What to WATCH

**GTV & MAASRANGA**
*Bangladesh Premier League*
Phase Two
Rangpur Riders v Sylhet Sixers
Live from 1:30pm
Chittagong Vikings v Khulna Titans
Live from 6:30pm

**SONY ESPN**
South Africa v Pakistan
First ODI
Live from 5:00pm
**STAR SPORTS SELECT 1**
*English Premier League*
Wolves v Leicester
Live from 6:30pm
Manchester United v Brighton
Live from 9:00pm
Arsenal v Chelsea
Live from 11:30pm
**STAR SPORTS SELECT 2**
*English Premier League*
Liverpool v Crystal Palace
Live from 9:00pm
Bundesliga
Leipzig v Dortmund
Live from 11:30pm
**TEN 1**
Serie A
Roma v Torino
Live from 8:00pm
Udinese v Parma
Live from 11:00pm
**SONY SIX & TEN 2**
Australian Open
Round-3
Men's singles
Live from 7:30am

### DAY'S EVENT

**Bangladesh Premier League**
Phase Two
Venue: Sylhet International Cricket Stadium
Rangpur Riders v Sylhet Sixers
Time: 1:30pm
Chittagong Vikings v Khulna Titans
Time: 6:30pm

**Bangladesh Premier League (Football)**
Ctg Abahani v Muktijoddha
Time: 4:00pm
Venue: Bangabandhu National Stadium
Saif SC v Rahamatganj MFS
Time: 3:00pm
Venue: Rofiq Uddin Bhuiyan Stadium

Abahani forward Faisal Ahmed Shitol (C) celebrates his winning goal against NoFel SC in the opening match of the Bangladesh Premier League at the Bangabandhu National Stadium yesterday. PHOTO: PRABIR DAS

# Shitol gives Abahani winning start

SPORTS REPORTER

Young forward Faisal Ahmed Shitol came off the bench to rescue Abahani once again as the defending champions' bid for a hattrick of titles began with a 2-1 win over newcomers NoFel SC in the opening match of the 11th Bangladesh Premier League at the Bangabandhu National Stadium yesterday.

Shitol -- who also gave Abahani a winning start in the Independence Cup by coming off the bench and scoring a brace against Muktijoddha Sangsad -- was deployed up front with the match heading towards a 1-1 draw with eight minutes left.

And the 22-year-old repaid the faith, perfectly connecting with a Rubel Mia cross on the six-yard box, to seal victory three minutes from time. Although NoFel goalkeeper Appel Mahmud stopped the header with one hand, he did so from behind the goalline, prompting the referee to whistle for a goal.

Rubel had earlier put Abahani ahead in the eighth minute before Kamrul Islam evened things in stoppage time of the first half thanks to a lapse from Abahani's defenders.

"I'm really happy to repay the faith the coach placed on me," said former BKSP student Shitol, who seems habituated to scoring goals. He struck 14 goals in the 3rd Division Football League for BKSP before netting seven for Victoria SC in the Bangladesh Championship League. Before joining Abahani last season, Shitol played for now-relegated Feni Soccer and Uttar Baridhara Club.

**ABAHANI 2 - 1 NOFEL SC**
RUBEL 8', SHITOL 87' — KAMRUL ISLAM 45'+2'
**SK JAMAL 0 - 1 BASHUNDHARA**
MARCOS VINICIUS 69'

"Playing in the starting eleven is the team management's decision. Every player dreams of starting games and I am no exception. If I get a chance in the playing eleven, I'll try to do something better because I will get more time on the field to show my potential," said Shitol, who played just his third match for Abahani, all as a substitute, this season.

Abahani coach Mario Lemos lavished praise on Shitol after admitting that his charges were a bit rusty.

"It is a chance for a player and Shitol grabbed it for the second time. Honestly he has been better in practice sessions and that is the most important thing. He has a good sense of positioning in the box and he is really smart in the danger-zone. He got one change and scored the goal," said Lemos, adding that Abahani needed two or three more games to adjust to the pace.

In the day's second match, newcomers Bashudhara Kings also made a winning start by handing a 1-0 defeat to last season's runners-up Sheikh Jamal DC under lights.

Brazilian forward Marcos Vinicius separated the sides in the 69th minute by scoring from a cut-back from Costa Rican forward Daniel Colindres. It was a keenly contested affair where both teams created some good opportunities but in the end, it was Independence Cup champions Bashundhra who had the last laugh.

# Sharapova stuns Wozniacki

AFP, *Melbourne*

Maria Sharapova stunned defending champion Caroline Wozniacki to sweep into the Australian Open last 16 Friday and join ice men Rafael Nadal and Roger Federer, who clinically disposed of their opponents.

The Russian five-time Grand Slam winner, who has struggled since returning from a drugs ban in 2017, was at full throttle in ending the Dane's dream of a second major title.

Sharapova won 6-4, 4-6, 6-3 with the roof closed on Rod Laver Arena and will next play in-form local hope Ashleigh Barty, who bounced Greece's Maria Sakkari, for a berth in the quarter-finals.

"I thought the level was quite high. I knew it would be a tough match," said the 2008 champion, who has been in sizzling form at the tournament as she chases her first Slam title since Roland Garros in 2014.

"These types of matches are what I train for and it was really rewarding to win that last point," added the 30th seed.

Second seed Nadal called young Australian Alex de Minaur "one of the best in the world" ahead of their evening clash, then proceeded to hand him a tennis lesson, dismantling the teenager 6-1, 6-2, 6-4.

"I hit a good serve and played a solid game," said the 2009 champion who is searching for an 18th Grand Slam title.

He paid tribute to De Minaur, who saved six match points.

"He's a big fighter and super quick. Alex has an amazing future."

Nadal's reward is a meeting with Tomas Berdych, who rallied to beat Argentine 18th seed Diego Schwartzman 5-7, 6-3, 7-5, 6-4.

The Czech veteran reached the semi-finals in 2014 and 2015 but is unseeded this year as he returns from a back injury that almost forced his retirement last year.

Swiss great Federer was also on fire in taming big-serving American Taylor Fritz 6-2, 7-5, 6-2 to stay on track for a third successive title at Melbourne Park and a 21st Grand Slam crown.

On a rain-affected day that delayed play on outside courts, the 37-year-old showed no mercy to the 21-year-old in his 100th match on the centre court in Melbourne.

"I had a really good feeling out here today against someone who can be dangerous," said Federer after reaching the Melbourne fourth round for the 17th time -- more than anyone else ever.

"Taylor played really well. He is going to have many more years on tour playing at this level."

The double defending champion is gunning for a record seventh Australian title. If he goes on to win the tournament, he will become the first man ever to claim seven or more crowns at two Slams, having already won eight Wimbledons.

Next up for him is fiery Greek 14th seed Stefanos Tsitsipas, who beat Georgia's 19th seed Nikoloz Basilashvili 6-3, 3-6, 7-6 (9/7), 6-4.

The man who lost to Federer in the final last year, Marin Cilic, battled back from two sets down, surviving two match points to beat Spain's Fernando Verdasco in a 4hr 18min epic.

Germany's second seed Angelique Kerber, the 2016 title winner, steamrolled Australian youngster Kimberley Birrell 6-1, 6-0 as the Wimbledon champions continued her under-the-radar progress.

Meanwhile, unseeded American Amanda Anisimova continued her dream run, ousting 11th seed Aryna Sabalenka in straight sets. The 17-year-old will play eighth seed Petra Kvitova for a place in the quarter-finals.

Russia's Anastasia Pavlyuchenkova also advanced, crushing Aliaksandra Sasnovich for a showdown with fifth seed Sloane Stephens.

Maria Sharapova celebrates her victory against Caroline Wozniacki during their women's singles match of the Australian Open in Melbourne yesterday. PHOTO: AFP

## SHORT CORNER

PHOTO: COLLECTED

Bangladesh Ansar women's handball team pose with the 29th National women's handball competition trophy at the Shahid M. Mansur Ali National Stadium yesterday.

### Ansar register 19th title

Bangladesh Ansar retained the National Women's Handball Championship title by notching a hard-fought 29-28 point win over BJMC in the final of the Exim Bank sponsored tournament at the Shaheed Captain M Mansur Ali Handball Stadium in Paltan yesterday.

Ansar initially managed a slim 14-13 point lead over BJMC which they held on to till the final whistle to raise their tally to 19 titles. Ismat Ara Nishi top scored for Ansar with 11 while Rupu netted six goals for BJMC.

Earlier, Ansar beat Jamalpur DSA by 31-9 points and BJMC beat Bangladesh Police by 31-15 points to move into the final. --SPORTS REPORTER

### Alve gets second place

Mahadi Hasan Alve had to once again content himself with a runner-up finish in the ITF Asian U/14 Development Championship 2019: Division-II after falling to Jordanian Mohammad Alkotop in the boy's singles event final in Bangkok, Thailand yesterday.

Alve, who lost by 1-6 and 0-6 to the same opponent in the final of the same tournament on January 12, failed to provide any resistance this time either as he suffered a 0-6 and 3-6 defeat to Alkotop.

Meanwhile, the pair of Bangladesh's Roman Hossain and Pakistan's Hamid Irar Gul succumbed to a 3-6 and 0-6 defeat against the Alkotop and Kasri Mahmani pair in the boy's doubles event final. --SPORTS REPORTER

### Ronaldo likely in Madrid for tax fraud trial

Juventus forward Cristiano Ronaldo is expected back in Madrid on Tuesday to attend a trial for tax evasion in which Spanish prosecutors are asking for a 23-month prison sentence and a fine.

The Portuguese striker, who left Real Madrid for Juventus last July, is expected to plead guilty after he agreed a settlement worth 18.8 million euros with Spanish tax authorities last summer.

However, he is unlikely to serve any time in prison as Spanish law states a sentence of under two years for a first offence can be served on probation.

The prosecutor's office said it was seeking a fine of 5.7 million euros ($6.5 million), which it said Ronaldo had already paid, as well as interest of about one million euros. -- REUTERS

### Barca win but could yet be disqualified

Barcelona overturned a first leg defeat to beat Levante in the Copa del Rey on Thursday but could yet be thrown out of the competition after being accused of fielding an ineligible player.

Barca won 3-0 at the Camp Nou, with Lionel Messi setting up two Ousmane Dembele goals and then scoring himself to seal a 4-2 victory on aggregate.

Their place in the quarter-finals, however, is under threat after Levante president Francisco Javier Catalan confirmed shortly before kick-off that the club would lodge a complaint to the Spanish Football Federation on Friday.

Levante claim Barcelona defender Juan Brandariz 'Chumi' played illegally in the first leg as he should have been serving a suspension. --AFP

### Gattuso banned for Super Cup ref protest

AC Milan coach Gennaro Gattuso was on Thursday handed a one-game touchline ban for angrily confronting the referee after his side's Italian Super Cup final defeat to Juventus in Saudi Arabia midweek.

Gattuso, 41, angrily confronted officials for not awarding a penalty for a foul by Juventus's German midfielder Emre Can on Andrea Conti late in his side's 1-0 defeat in Jeddah.

Gattuso was punished for "shouting at the referee in a threatening manner and challenging his decisions, as well as having subsequently, while waiting for the prize-giving ceremony, addressed further offensive words and insinuations towards the referee". --AFP

# Chahal, Dhoni clinch series

AFP, *Melbourne*

Master finisher Mahendra Singh Dhoni eased India to a seven-wicket victory to clinch their one-day international series against Australia in Melbourne on Friday.

The unflappable veteran wicketkeeper hit his third half-century of the three-game series to again prove the difference after his match-winning knock in the second game in Adelaide.

The 37-year-old wicketkeeper-batsman kept his usual cool during an unbeaten 87 off 114 balls as India chased down Australia's 230 with four balls to spare at the Melbourne Cricket Ground.

It consummated a hugely-successful tour of Australia where Virat Kohli's team also claimed an historic first-ever 2-1 Test series win Down Under.

"It's been an amazing tour for us. We drew the T20 series, won the Test and the ODI series," Kohli said.

"We are feeling confident and balanced as a side with the World Cup in mind."

Dhoni was given tremendous support from Kedar Jadhav with a belligerent unbeaten 61 from 57 balls in a match-winning 121-run stand.

"I am happy to bat at any number," said man-of-the-series Dhoni. "The important thing is where the team needs me. I can't say I can't bat at No.6 after playing 14 years."

India wrapped up the ODI series after losing the opening match in Sydney by 34 runs before levelling with a six-wicket win in Adelaide to set up the decider in Melbourne.

Kohli looked set for another big score before he was caught behind off Jhye Richardson for 46 off 62 balls in the 30th over leaving his side at 113 for three.

Dhoni and Jadhav took up where Kohli left off, guiding their team to a convincing victory.

India leg-spinner Yuzvendra Chahal earlier captured the best figures by any bowler in one-day cricket in Australia to restrict the home side to just 230.

Chahal, playing in his first match in the series after coming in for Test wrist-spinner Kuldeep Yadav, mesmerised the Australians with his six for 42.

"I enjoyed bowling for the first time in Australia (internationals). The ball was spinning a little bit, so I planned to bowl slow and vary my pace," said Chahal, named man-of-the-match.

Chahal shares the record with fellow Indian Ajit Agarkar, who claimed the same figures against Australia at the Melbourne Cricket Ground in 2004.

Only Peter Handscomb showed any appreciable fight for Australia with his 58 off 63 balls before he became one of Chahal's victims.

It was an underwhelming batting performance by the Australians, who managed just 17 boundaries before they were bowled out with eight balls left.

"We took it down to the wire. When you give some great players a couple of chances, it always hurts," Australia captain Aaron Finch said.

Australia's openers again failed to get a start and Alex Carey was out in the third over when he got a nick off Bhuvneshwar Kumar and was taken by Kohli at second slip for five. His partner Finch followed six overs later again to Kumar trapped leg before wicket for 14.

Shaun Marsh and Usman Khawaja steadied the innings before Adelaide centurion Marsh was smartly stumped by Dhoni off a wide down the leg-side from Chahal for 39.

Khawaja followed three balls later when he got a thick leading edge and offered Chahal a return catch for 34.

Marcus Stoinis lasted 20 balls before he became Chahal's third victim, caught at slip by Rohit Sharma for 10, leaving Australia rocking at 123 for five in the 30th over.

**SCORES IN BRIEF**

**AUSTRALIA:** 230 all out in 48.4 overs (Khawaja 24, Marsh 29, Handscomb 58; Chahal 6-42)
**INDIA:** 234 for 3 in 49.2 overs (Kohli 46, Dhoni 87 not out, Jadhav 61 not out)
**Result:** India won by 7 wickets
**Player-of-the-match:** Chahal
**Player-of-the-series:** MS Dhoni

Yuzvendra Chahal took a career best six for 42 to spin India to a 2-1 series win against Australia during the third ODI in Melbourne yesterday. PHOTO: AFP

# Girls to come under salary structure

SPORTS REPORTER

The Bangladesh Football Federation (BFF) is set to bring 36 female footballers under a salary structure starting this month after the game's governing body yesterday sat with the footballers' parents to reach an agreement at the BFF House.

51 footballers from the U-15 to U-18 category and one senior player have been undergoing long-term training under the BFF's supervision and 36 are expected to put pen to paper on one-year contracts until December 2019. Dhaka Bank Ltd last year signed an agreement with the BFF to sponsor all the women's national teams.

"Today [Friday] we discussed the matter with the girls' parents. We are going to bring 36 players under a salary structure for one year. We will provide details about the salary range once we finalise the agreement with the players," said BFF women's committee chairman Mahfuza Akter Kiron.

She informed that the players would be paid in three categories on the basis of their performance and that wages may be revised based on a player's performance during renewal.

"We made the parents understand that not all players will get equal salary as they are being given contracts based on performance," said Kiran.

BFF president Kazi Salahuddin thanked the parents for providing support to their daughters as well as the game's governing body and sought the continuation of such support in the future.