

Rajshahi Kings v Sylhet Sixers Live from 2:00pm Chittagong Vikings v Rangpur Riders Live from 7:00pm

Venue: Zahur Ahmed Chowdhury Stadium, Chattogram

Bangladesh Premier League

GTV & MAASRANGA

Phase Four

First Test, Day Two **Bangladesh Premier League** Time: 2:00pm Chittagong Vikings v Rangpur Riders Phase Four

Time: 7:00pm

SONY ESPN

Third ODI

SONY SIX

South Africa v Pakistan

Live from 5:00pm

Australia v Sri Lanka

Bangladesh Premier League (Football) Arambagh KS v Mohammedan Time: 3:00pm Venue: Rofiq Uddin Bhuiyan Stadium, Maymensingh

Live from 9:00am

West Indies v England

First Test, Day Three

Live from 8:00pm

SONY SIX & TEN 2

Australian Open

TEN 1

Live from 2:30pm TEN 2 FA Cup Arsenal v Man United Live from 1:55am (Saturday)

Brothers Union v Sheikh Russel Time: 7:00pm Venue: Bangabandhu National Stadium, Dhaka

Men's Semifinal

Bolshakov rescues Saif Sporting Club

RAHMATGANJ 1-1 CTG ABAHANI

MOMODOU BAH 56

DENIS BOLSHAKOV 37

Rajshahi Kings v Sylhet Sixers

Chittagong Abahani held

SPORTS REPORTER

Saif Sporting Club kept their unbeaten run against Team BJMC in the professional football league intact by handing the side a single goal defeat in their Bangladesh Premier League

SIYO ZUNAPIO 80

TEAM BJMC

encounter at the Shaheed Bulu Stadium in Noakhali yesterday. On the back of a 2-1 home win over Rahmatganj MFS, Saif SC notched their

second straight victory, courtesy of Russian marksman Denis Bolshakov's 37th minute strike.

Availing a forward pass from Korean playmaker

Park Seung, Bolshakov darted into the box and sent the ball over Team BJMC's advancing goalkeeper to separate the sides. After resumption, Saif SC could have

doubled the margin but Seung was denied by the woodwork. Saif SC had to finish the game with 10-men as defender Asaduzzaman Bablu was sent off for his second bookable offense five minutes from time.

Saif SC, who had one win and one draw against Team BJMC last season, also had

another reason to leave the ground smiling as they joined leaders Bashundhara Kings on the top with two successive wins.

At the Bangabandhu National Stadium, Rahmatganj MFS scored against the run of play to secure their first point in two matches with a 1-1 draw against Chittagong Abahani.

After taking the lead, a Chittagong Abahani player kicked the ball out of bounds after Awala Magalan was cruelly fouled by a Rahmatganj player but follow-

ing resumption with a throw-in, Rahmatganj equalized the margin without facing any difficulties.

Taking control of the throw-in,

Nigerian defender Monday Osagie played a long ball for compatriot Damine Chigozie, who entered the box to cut one back for Congolese Siyo Zunapio. Zunapio then scored from the six-yard box to cancel out the 56th-minute header from Gambian Momodou Bah.

This was the first draw for Chittagong Abahani, who came into the match on the back of a 1-0 win over Muktijoddha Sangsad.



AFP, London



TheFA A year on since moving from Arsenal to Manchester United, Alexis Sanchez has become little more than an afterthought in the Red Devils' revival since Ole Gunnar Solskjaer took caretaker charge.

Sanchez returns to the Emirates today in the FA Cup fourth round as Solskjaer targets an

eighth straight win since replacing Jose Mourinho. However, Sanchez has had little impact on United's upturn in recent weeks with Paul Pogba and Marcus Rashford the key players flourishing since Solskjaer released the shackles imposed by Mourinho's more conservative approach.

Sanchez has managed just four goals in 32 appearances over the past year for United.

However, Arsenal have also suffered the aftereffects of the

deal that took Sanchez to United. Like Sanchez, Mesut Ozil was entering the final six

months of his contract at the Emirates a year ago.

Desperate to not lose two of their marquee players on the cheap, Arsenal handed the German a new three-and-a-half year deal worth a reported £350,000 a week.

Yet, Ozil has also increasingly found himself on the bench or even dropped from Arsenal boss Unai Emery's squad in recent weeks with the Spaniard preferring the more energetic approach of Granit Xhaka, Lucas Torreira, Matteo Guendouzi and Aaron Ramsey in midfield.

Can Arsenal down Kvitova, Osaka set up showdown

a buoyant United? Nadal steamrolls Tsitsipas

AFP, Melbourne



Rafael Nadal handed rising star Stefanos Tsitsipas a tennis lesson as he drubbed him 6-2, 6-4, 6-0 in the Australian Open semi-final yesterday, while on the women's side of

the draw Japanese star Naomi Osaka stormed into the Australian Open final to set up a battle with Czech comeback queen Petra Kvitova for the Melbourne Park crown and world number one ranking. Nadal has not dropped his serve for an aston-

ishing 63 straight games and has not lost a set on his way to the final, where he will face either Novak Djokovic or Lucas Pouille.

Seeded eight, Kvitova defeated Collins, who had a dream tournament debut to reach the final four, 7-6 (7/2), 6-0 after the closure of the centre court roof gave her a boost.

Collins was matching Kvitova until play was interrupted late in the first set to shut the roof and the Czech said she was struggling until then to find her best form.

Kvitova calls her "second career", after she final. returned following a terrifying attack in her home in the Czech Republic in late 2016. A burglar



RAFAEL NADAL

slashed her racquet hand, sidelining her for almost six months and causing permanent nerve new Greek god of tennis after beating Federer, but

Two-time Wimbledon champion Kvitova, 28, also has a wealth of experience to draw on and it proved telling as she raced past unheralded Reaching the final is the highlight of what American Danielle Collins in the other semi-

believed that I could do that again, to stand on

the court and play tennis and kind of play on this level," she said. In the other semifinal, Osaka outgunned

seventh seed Karolina Pliskova 6-2, 4-6, 6-4 to reach her second successive Grand Slam decider after a breakthrough triumph over Serena Williams at last year's US Open. Osaka took the first set then held off a

barnstorming comeback by Pliskova, who survived four set points to eliminate Williams on Wednesday but could not manage another miracle turnaround less than 24 hours later.

In the men's semifinal, Greek 14th seed Tsitsipas had enjoyed a fairytale run to his first Grand Slam last four, including a win over Roger Federer, but found Nadal in ruthless form as he won in 1hr 46min.

The 20-year-old Tsitsipas had been hailed as a his ascent to the summit of his personal Olympus was comprehensively halted by the colossus called Nadal.

Nadal's win put him into his fifth Australian Open final and keeps him on course to become the first man to win all four Grand Slams twice in "To be honest, I think not very many people the Open era if he can add to his sole Melbourne Park crown in 2009.

PM awards SAFF champs

UNB

Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina yesterday awarded 10 players and one official of the Bangladesh Under-18 Women Football Team for their triumph in the SAFF championship last year.

In October 2018, Bangladesh secured the SAFF Under-18 Women's Championship title in Bhutan.

The Prime Minister handed over cheques for financial assistance to the 10 footballers- Ruksana, Masura Parveen, Sheuly Azim, Israt Jahan Ratna, Marzia, Sanzida Akter, Israt Jahan Swapna, Krishna Rani Sarkar and Razia Khatun -- and the official, Khalid Mahmud, at her office in the capital.

Each player was given Tk 10 lakh while the official received Tk five lakh for their accomplishment.

Earlier on October 11, 19 players and officials of the 30member team received awards from the Prime Minister.

BOGURA'S SPORT: RICH PRODUCT FROM A POOR FACTORY

MOSTAFA SHABUJ

Mushfigur Rahim is now a household name for sports lovers as the cricket craze has reached every nook and corner of the country. Nabib Newaj Jibon is also not an unfamiliar name in the sports fraternity, especially in football circles as he is serving the national football team. Another well-known name is Khadija Tul Kubra as women's cricket gradually gains popularity, especially after the national team's Women's T20 Asia Cup success last year. Bangladesh Under-19 captain Towhid Hridoy is considered a good young prospect for the country's cricket. Ask each of the aforementioned athletes and they will proudly tell you that they all hail from Bogura. There are other athletes like Tima in kabaddi and Mariom Khatun in swimming who represent the district in the national level competitions. The district can feel proud of having produced a lot of quality athletes in the past.

Bogura's rich tradition of presenting the nation with gifted athletes may lead outsiders to draw a positive impression about sporting activities in the major business hub of Rajshahi Division. Unfortunately, however, the other side of Bogura's coin is a sordid one as local sports have gradually been dying there due to a lack of facilities and initiative from the concerned authorities.

A decade ago, a lot of events were held in the district around the year and competitions of different disciplines like badminton, volleyball, the traditional nauka baich (boat race), swimming were regularly organised by different clubs. However, those traditional clubs like UFC Club, Sabuj Sangha, Town Club, Muktijoddha Sangsad, Motor Sramiksangha, Acquire State Club, Agradut Club, Karatoa Badminton Club, Shahid Tareq Sangha have dwindled in stature to the point of near extinction. Any sport that is taking

place there now is organised by the District Sports Association (DSA).

Local writer Bazlur Karim Bahar became nostalgic when he recalled the district's rich sporting culture, which has now all but

vanished. "In the 1960s and 70s, we saw Nauka Baich on Karatoa River, saw swimming competitions in the municipal park pond, big football tournaments at the Altafunnesa sports ground where players from Mohun Bagan, Mohammedan and Karachi took part. Those days are gone. There is no interest in sports among the guardians and there is no enthusiasm for sporting activities," he said.

The lack of true sport lovers in an organisational capacity and lack of sports facilities in the district is considered the main factor behind the trend of decline.

There is no district stadium like other parts of the country and the only stadium here is the Shaheed Chandu Stadium, which



is used exclusively for cricket, even though it was the district stadium before 2004.

As the Bangladesh Cricket Board (BCB) is the custodian of this venue, the game's governing body stages only their own events like the longer-version Bangladesh Cricket League (BCL) and the National Cricket League (NCL) and unfortunately this venue did not

host any international matches since 2007. Altafunnesa sports ground is the only place where any big sports event can take place but the condition of the venue is in dire straits and hardly fit for any quality



The Bogura District Swimming Pool has not been operational for the last two years.

sports event. There was an initiative from incumbent member of parliament Abdul Mannan from Bogura-1 to make a district stadium in 2008 but it is yet to get the government nod, but Mannan informed that he is trying to build the stadium so that all kinds of sports can be held.

On the other hand, the lone swimming pool, the Bogura District Swimming Pool, in the district has not been used for the last two years and it has not hosted any competitions since an age-group event in 2003.

"There is no pool filter, and without it the water has to be completely changed over two days, which consumes a huge amount of electricity. A few days ago a pending electricity bill of Tk 7 lakh had to be paid. Due to the unavailability of the pool filter the monthly cost comes to Tk 27,000 to Tk 30,000 and it's not possible for the DSA to bear the expenses. That was the reason that

the functioning of this pool was stopped," said Suvashis Poddar Liton, senior vicepresident of the DSA and also the president of the district Jubo League.

He also said that the popular Bangabandhu Gold Cup Tournament, for which the players were hired from India, Nigeria and Brazil has been suspended for the last two years, but promised to restart it soon.

Former footballer Nurul Bashar Chandan, who played for Dhanmondi Club in 1991, said: "Even a decade ago there were tournaments like Sher-e-Bangla Cup and Shahid Suhrawardy Cup as well as many other football tournaments but all are now history. Bogura produced many famous players like Boro Kalu, Choto Kalu, Altabuddin Gela, Shimul, Bulbul but no one are showing interest to play football as everybody are focusing only on cricket."

Gopal Tiwary, a former badminton player

who participated in a lot of international events between 1989 and 1997, said: "There was huge interest in badminton among boys and girls in this district earlier and local clubs also arranged various badminton tournaments, but once cricket became the centre of all attraction all those things

became a thing of the past." Former volleyball player Nurul Alam Tutul was also saddened by the decline of sports activities in the district. "The 90s was a golden era for volleyball in Bogura. Mamtaj Hossain Murad was captain of the Bangladesh volleyball team for a long time but, painfully, the

game has lost all its lustre here." Maksudul Alam Bulbul, who had represented the Bangladesh national football team from 1994 to 2003 and played for Dhakabased clubs like Abahani, Brothers Union and Sheikh Russel Krira Chakra, opined that since the formation of the DFA (District Football Association), the school-level competitions have declined and the lack of funding for the DFA is also hindering progress of

the once most popular game in the country. "In the last 12 years, only three first division football leagues were arranged here. We must stage the first division league regularly if we want to reprise past enthusiasm."

Upon condition of anonymity, many related to the Bogura sporting scene opined that the politicisation of sport is also a reason for the decline in sporting activity as most of the posts at the DSA are held by leaders of the ruling party.

But Suvashis Poddar Liton denied this allegation. "We are organising all kinds of sports here. We arrange the Bangabandhu Gold Cup, the biggest football tournament, with our own funds. Besides, the DSA has been arranging club-based kabaddi, table tennis, badminton and T20 competitions at school and college levels."