

**GTV & MARSANGA**  
Bangladesh Premier League  
Phase Four  
Khulna Titans v Sylhet Sixers  
Live from 1:30pm  
Chittagong Vikings v Rajshahi Kings  
Live from 6:30pm

**STAR SPORTS 1**  
New Zealand v India  
Second ODI  
Live from 8:00am  
**SONY SIX**  
Australia v Sri Lanka

First Test, Day Three  
Live from 9:00am  
**Serie A**  
AC Milan v Napoli  
Live from 1:30pm  
**TEN 1**  
West Indies v England

First Test, Day Four  
Live from 8:00pm  
**TEN 2**  
**FA Cup**  
Man City v Burnley  
Live from 9:00pm  
La Liga

**Valencia v Villarreal**  
Live from 1:45am  
(Sunday)  
**SONY SIX & Ten 2**  
**Australian Open**  
Women's Singles Final  
Live from 2:30pm

**STAR SPORTS SELECT 1**  
Bundesliga  
Dortmund v Hannover  
Live from 8:30pm  
**STAR SPORTS SELECT 2**  
Bundesliga

**Monchengladbach v**  
Augsburg  
Live from 8:30pm  
Werder v Eintracht  
Live from 11:30pm

Bangladesh Premier League  
Phase Four  
Venue: Zahur Ahmed Chowdhury Stadium  
Khulna Titans v Sylhet Sixers

Time: 1:30pm  
Chittagong Vikings v Rajshahi Kings  
Time: 6:30pm

# Djokovic finds 'the zone'

## Sets up Nadal blockbuster final

AFP, Melbourne



Novak Djokovic said he was "in the zone" and played a "perfect match" Friday to line up a blockbuster Australian Open final against his great rival Rafael Nadal.

"Today was a perfect match for me from the first to the last point," said the Serbian after destroying 28th seed Lucas Pouille 6-0, 6-2, 6-2 in just 83 minutes on Rod Laver Arena.

"I executed everything that I intended to and even more than I have expected," said the world number one after a flawless display put him into a first Melbourne decider since 2016.

"It is definitely one of the best matches I've ever had on this court, definitely," added Djokovic, who hit 24 winners and had just five unforced errors.

"Every professional athlete wants to be in the zone, where everything flows so effortlessly and you are executing automatically everything you are intending to execute," Djokovic said, explaining a sublime performance where he conceded no break point.

"You don't need to think too much. I guess you're driven by some force that takes over you and you feel divine, you feel like in a different dimension. It's quite an awesome feeling that we all try to



Novak Djokovic celebrates his victory against Lucas Pouille in their Australian Open men's singles semifinal in Melbourne yesterday.

PHOTO: AFP

reach and stay in."

Pouille was left powerless on the other side of the net.

"I was trying to find a solution, but couldn't find any," lamented the Frenchman.

Djokovic will face second seed Nadal, who he described as his "biggest rival," in a 53rd career meeting and eighth in the final of a Slam.

In 2012 the pair contested the longest Grand Slam final in terms of time at the Australian Open when Djokovic edged an epic battle 7-5 in the fifth set after 5hr 53min.

The Serb ran Pouille ragged so effectively that he dished out a dreaded 6-0 "bagel" in a first set that lasted just 21 minutes.

Pouille held his first service game of the second set to a huge ovation from the centre court fans, but it was an all-too-brief respite.

Djokovic lost in the fourth round last year, followed by elbow surgery and poor form until he won Wimbledon and turned his season around.

"It was highly unlikely 12

months ago that I would be where I am today, a year later," said the Serbian top seed.

"But I've said it before, and I always have plenty of belief in myself, and I think the self-belief is something that always prevails."

On Thursday Nadal had allowed his young Greek opponent Stefanos Tsitsipas to win just six games on the way to the final in an hour and 46 minutes.

Djokovic made that look pedestrian, allowing Pouille only four games and taking 23 minutes less to set up a repeat of the pair's epic 2012 showdown.

"He's my biggest rival in my career. I've played so many matches against him, epic matches on this court," said Djokovic of Nadal.

"Of course, the one that stands out was the final of six hours almost in 2012. Hopefully we don't go that long this time."

Nadal holds a 4-3 win-loss record against Djokovic in Grand Slam finals, including all three meetings since their Melbourne Park marathon seven years ago, and both players are chasing milestones on Sunday.

A win for Nadal will see him become the first player in the Open era to win all four Grand Slam titles twice, while victory for Djokovic will take him clear of six-time Melbourne winners Roger Federer and Roy Emerson.

# First MSC scalp for Arambagh

SPORTS REPORTER

Arambagh KS posted their maiden win over Mohammedan SC in the Bangladesh Premier League (BPL) by handing the Black and Whites a massive 4-1 defeat at the Rafique Uddin Bhuiyan Stadium in Mymensingh yesterday.

National discard winger Zahid Hossain struck a hattrick to provide Arambagh with reason to celebrate as the side had never before beaten their neighbouring giants in any of their previous 16 meetings since the introduction of the professional football league in 2008. Zahid is the second player to score a hattrick in the ongoing league after Muktijoddha Sangsads Ballo Fomousa of Ivory Coast.

Following poor performances in the Federation Cup and Independence Cup, Mohammedan began their campaign in this edition of the BPL with a hard-fought 2-1 win over Team BJMC. However, they succumbed to defeat again in their second fixture of the tournament against a spirited Arambagh, who came into the match on the back of a 1-0 defeat to Sheikh Russel KC.

Zahid, who last played for the national team in the 2016 Bangabandhu Gold Cup, opened Arambagh's account in the 12th minute by tapping in a square pass from Paul Emil. Mohammedan bounced back strong after resumption with a powerful strike from Kaiser Al Rabbi in the 58th minute.

The equaliser could have helped Mohammedan get hold of the match but it was again Zahid who helped Marufi Haque's side restore their lead with a feeble free-kick which embraced the back of the near post after a single bounce in the 66th minute. Chinedu Mathew then made it 3-1 in the 76th

**ARAMBAGH 4-1 MOHAMMEDAN**

ZAHID-12, 66, 86

CHINEDU MATHEW-76

**BROTHERS 2-3 SK RUSSEL**

LIMA LEONARDO-11, 37

Raphael Odoyin-12, 20

Ashraful Karim-77 (OG)

minute with a nice left-footed drive from inside the box.

30-year-old Zahid then wrapped up the victory as he completed his hattrick on a counter attack. Captain Rabiu Hasan released a well-judged chip which Zahid collected and drove past Mohammedan's goalkeeper four minutes from time.

Later yesterday, at the Bangabandhu National Stadium, defender Ashraful Karim headed into own net to help Sheikh Russel KC notch a come-from-behind 3-2 victory over Brothers Union. This was the first time in two seasons that Sheikh Russel have beaten the side.

Brothers got off to a fine start in their opening match, getting their noses in front by the 11th minute with Brazilian Lima Leonardo converting from spot. However, the lead lasted only one minute with Nigerian hitman Raphael Odoyin levelling the margin with a close-range header.

Sheikh Russel got ahead again with an angular shot from Raphael in the 20th minute but Brothers hit back to draw level in 37th minute through a placed shot from Leonardo. As the match was heading towards a draw, Brothers defender Ashraful headed into his own net while attempting to clear a free-kick from Brazilian Alex Rafael Antonio in the 77th minute.



**Chief guest lieutenant general Md. Shamsul Haque, quartermaster general of Bangladesh Army Azam J Chowdhury, chairman of East coast group and managing director of MJL Bangladesh Limited and major general Enayet Ullah, vice-president of Kurmitola Golf Club inaugurated the 13th Mobil Cup Golf Tournament at the Kurmitola Golf Club yesterday.**

PHOTO: COLLECTED

## SHORT CORNER

### Messi makes plea for Sala search to resume

Lionel Messi urged investigators Friday to resume the search for missing striker Emiliano Sala after police called off rescue operations and admitted the chances of finding him were "extremely remote".

Police from Guernsey abandoned the search on Thursday after the light aircraft taking the 28-year-old Argentinian to Wales following his signing with Cardiff City from Ligue 1 side Nantes disappeared from radar near the British island on Monday.

"While there is the possibility, a shred of hope, we ask that you please #NoDejenDeBuscar (don't stop searching) for Emiliano. All my strength to your family and friends," said the Barcelona attacker on Instagram, with the hashtag "#PRAYFORSALA".

### PSG sweat over Neymar

Paris Saint-Germain are hoping Neymar's prayers are answered after the runaway Ligue 1 leaders' talisman suffered a fresh metatarsal injury just weeks from their huge Champions clash with Manchester United.

Neymar invoked divine intervention after being forced to leave the field in tears during their 2-0 French Cup win over Strasbourg in midweek with the same injury that curtailed the Brazilian's campaign last season.

"Your will be done, my God" he wrote in an Instagram post.

Although fans in Paris are concerned about the danger of Neymar missing the two games against a rejuvenated United, his absence should not have much impact on PSG's title defence.

### China hunts for Lippi successor

Wounded Chinese football was searching for a new national coach on Friday after an angry Marcello Lippi ended his reign with a humiliating exit at the Asian Cup.

The 70-year-old Italian World Cup winner confirmed after Thursday's 3-0 quarter-final defeat to Iran in Abu Dhabi that he would not extend his contract.

Lippi made no effort to hide his displeasure at the nature of the defeat, which came from some calamitous Chinese defending.

"You cannot afford to gift a team like Iran three goals," an exasperated Lippi, fondly known in China as "Silver Fox" on account of his hair, said.

### Portugal mulls revoking Ronaldo's honours

Portugal is considering pulling Cristiano Ronaldo's public honours after he was fined millions by Spain for committing tax fraud while at Real Madrid, the country's president said on Thursday.

Five-time Ballon d'Or winner Ronaldo was awarded the Grand Cross of the Portuguese Order of Merit in 2016, when the national team won the European Championship.

"The law is very simple: it is up to the chancellors of the national orders to see if anything has happened that could lead to the loss of an honour," President Marcelo Rebelo de Sousa told reporters.

This means it would be the current chancellor of Portugal's civil Order of Merit, one of several branches of the country's honours system, to decide whether the 33-year-old's conviction is enough to strip him of his honour.

-AFP

Chile's Nigeria star Victor Moses has joined Fenerbahce on a one-and-a-half-year loan deal.

Moses agreed to make the switch to the Turkish club after falling out of favour under Chelsea manager Maurizio Sarri.

The 28-year-old has not featured for Chelsea since October, after making six appearances in all competitions and starting just once.

Moses will stay with Fenerbahce until the end of the 2019-20 season.

"Victor Moses has today joined Fenerbahce on loan until the end of the 2019-20 season," a Chelsea statement said.

Moses moved to Chelsea from Wigan in August 2012, but had loan spells at Liverpool, Stoke and West Ham before finally establishing himself in the team.

Real Madrid captain Sergio Ramos (R) scored twice in their 4-2 win against Girona in the Copa del Rey quarterfinal first leg at the Bernabeu on Thursday.

PHOTO: AFP

# Brazil given kind draw

## Argentina land Colombia

AFP, Rio de Janeiro

**COPA AMERICA**  
Hosts Brazil were handed a favourable group at the 2019 Copa America draw in Rio de Janeiro on Thursday but arch-rivals Argentina landed a tough appointment with Colombia.

Eight-time winners Brazil, the top seeds in Group A, were given a pool with minnows Bolivia, Venezuela and Peru.

They will kick-off the tournament on June 14 against Bolivia in Sao Paulo.

World Cup hosts Qatar, making their debut in the South American tournament as guests, were not treated kindly by the draw, landing Argentina and Colombia in Group B, as well as Paraguay.

Fellow Asians Japan, making their second appearance after a disappointing debut in 1999, also face a tough task to make it through Group C as they drew record 15-time champions Uruguay, holders Chile and Ecuador.

Brazil, led by coach Tite, come into the tournament looking to make amends on home soil for their World Cup 2014 humiliation when Germany thrashed them 7-1 in the semi-finals.

The hosts, who will have observed with concern a foot injury suffered by star player Neymar for his club Paris Saint-Germain on Wednesday, haven't won the Copa America since 2007 and

### GROUPS

**A**  
Brazil  
Bolivia  
Venezuela  
Peru

**B**

**C**

**D**

**E**

**F**

**G**

**H**

**I**

**J**

**K**

**L**

**M**

**N**

**O**

**P**

**Q**

**R**

**S**

**T**

**U**

**V**

**W**

**X**

**Y**

**Z**

**AA**

**BB**

**CC**