DAY'S EVENT

Live from 6:30pm **Bangladesh Premier League** Phase Four

Venue: Zahur Ahmed Chowdhury Stadium,

Phase Four

GTV & MAASRANGA

Live from 1:30pm

Bangladesh Premier League

Khulna Titans v Comilla Victorians

Dhaka Dynamites v Rangpur Riders

Khulna Titans v Comilla Victorians Time: 1:30pm Dhaka Dynamites v Rangpur Riders Time: 6:30pm

TEN 1

La Liga

STAR SPORTS 1

Australia v India

Live from 8:00am

Deportivo Alaves v Rayo Vallecano

Third ODI (D/N)

Bangladesh Premier League (Football) Sheikh Jamal v Rahmatganj MFS Time: 3:30pm Venue: Bangabandhu National Stadium, Dhaka

TEN 2

Serie A

Empoli v Genoa

Live from 2:00am (Tuesday)

Live from 1:30am (Tuesday)

Abahani v Muktijoddha Time: 6:30pm Venue: Bangabandhu National Stadium, Dhaka

'Best I've played

4min.

rout of Rafael Nadal Sunday.

"It's one of the best, if not the best, matches I've played in a Grand Slam final," the Serbian world number one said after winning his 15th major title in just 2hr

The demolition of second seed Nadal put Djokovic, 31, out on his own ahead of Roger Federer and Roy Emerson, who both won six Australian Open men's singles titles.

after vanquishing his greatest rival.

"It's quite unreal we are still playing at this level and still competing for the biggest titles in sport and it's just an amazing evening," he said, pausing frequently to hold back his emotions.

"Under the circumstances, maybe this is the best quality tennis I have played against Rafa in a final."

12 months. I had the surgery exactly 12 months ago," he added, referring to an elbow operation that saw him slump out of the world's top 20 before bouncing back to win Wimbledon and the US Open.

aging to win this title and three out of four Slams, this is amazing. I am speechless."

oped into a record-breaking 5hr 53min slugfest -- the longest in Grand Slam history.

an immediate advantage that he would never relinquish.

sity waiting for me on the other side," Djokovic said. The Spaniard had not lost a set and had not had his ser-

blocks.

row with just 1hr 16min on the clock.

Victory extended the Serb's win-loss record against Nadal to 28-25 and squared the Grand Slam final count between

Djokovic has now completed a hat-trick of Slams follow-

against Rafa' AFP, Melbourne

> Novak Djokovic said he played his "best final in a Grand Slam" to win a record magnificent seventh Australian Open with a 6-3, 6-2, 6-3

The top seed dropped to his knees and kissed the ground

"I'm just trying to contemplate on the journey in the last

"To be standing now here in front of you today and man-

The pair's only previous final in Australia, in 2012, devel-

A repeat of that epic never materialised with Nadal uncharacteristically nervous at the start and Djokovic taking

"(It was) exactly what I intended to do, to step out and bring on the intensity because I knew there would be inten-

vice broken since the third set of his first round match but that streak ended as the Serb came sprinting out of the

The pressure told in the fifth game of the second set and Djokovic broke again when Nadal hit a lob volley long. The on-song Serb was so fired up he broke Nadal again to go to 5-2 before serving out for a two-set lead with three aces in a

When Djokovic broke again in the third game of the third set it was just a matter of how quickly he would finish off Nadal.

the pair at 4-4.

ing his wins at Wimbledon and the US Open.



Roy Emerson

World number one Novak Djokovic also became numero uno in Australia as he thumped great rival Rafa Nadal in straight sets to win a record seventh Australian Open title in Melbourne yesterday.

Was unbelievable the way that he [Djokovic] played, no doubt about that. But at the same time it is true that probably physically I was not able. I needed something else. That something else probably today, I don't have it yet.

RAFAEL NADAL

You [Nadal] came back from an injury that took you out from the tour since September last year. You're showing to me and to all your other colleagues and many young tennis players around the world what is definition of the fighting spirit and resilience.

NOVAK DJOKOVIC

I don't have it yet: Nadal

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AFP, Melbourne

Ken Rosewall



Rafael Nadal said he took a lot of positives out of the Australian Open on his return from injury, despite being thrashed in the final Sunday by Novak Djokovic. The Spanish second seed had played an

outstanding level of tennis at the tournament without dropping a set until he met his arch-rival on Rod Laver Arena. And he had no answer to the world num-

ber one's booming groundstrokes and precision serve to limp out of Melbourne Park 6-3, 6-2, 6-2. Nadal said he still wasn't at his best after his injury-plagued 2018. "Was unbelievable the way that he played,

no doubt about that. But at the same time it is

true that probably physically I was not able (to compete at that level)," said Nadal.

"Five months without competing, having that big challenge in front of me, I needed something else. That something else probably today, I don't have it yet.

"That's my feeling, to compete at this super high level."

Despite the rout, Nadal said he was content with being able to reach the final given the injury problems that prevented him playing any matches after the US Open until he got to Melbourne.

"I have been going through tough moments in the last year. (I have played) only nine events and since the US Open I was not able to play until the first round here," he said.

"Even if tonight was not my night it's so time and more matches," he said of getting

important for me to be where I am coming back from injury. I really believe I played a great two weeks of tennis, there's a good energy and good inspiration for what is coming."

Nadal had not played a main tour event

since a knee problem forced him to retire during his US Open semi-final against Juan Martin del Potro in September. The 32-year-old had surgery on his ankle in

November to remove a loose intra-articular body and only resumed training in December. He played the opening round at an exhi-

bition event in Abu Dhabi to start his season, where he lost to South African Kevin Anderson, and withdraw from the warm-up Brisbane International.

"The only thing probably that I need is

to a sufficient level to challenge Djokovic at his imperious best.

PHOTO: REUTERS

"I need work, and I need more weeks like this one. That's really the only thing that I hope -- to have the chance to keep practising well and to have the chance to keep playing and stay healthy.

"I need matches, but I can't go crazy to play matches," he added. "I have my age. I have my calendar. I have my priorities. My priority now is come back home, have some rest."

He is targeting his next tournament at Acapulco at the end of February and then Indian Wells in early March.

"Then we see, depend how things go, I keep going or I take a rest before I play on clay," he said. "I'm going to keep fighting hard to be a better player."

Palace KO Tottenham



Tottenham Hotspur suffered their second defeat in English knockout football to a London rival in a matter of days, losing 2-0 to Crystal Palace in the fourth round of the FA Cup yesterday.

Connor Wickham gave the unfancied Eagles a ninth-minute lead before a penalty by former Tottenham winger Andros Townsend made it 2-0.

Spurs' Kieran Trippier missed a penalty before half-time as Tottenham suffered more spot-kick woe following Thursday's shootout defeat by Chelsea in a League Cup semi-final.

Tottenham pressed for a goal in the second half but Palace, just three points above the relegation zone, upset the form book to record a deserved win.

This reverse left Mauricio Pochettino still searching for his first trophy as Tottenham manager since the Argentinian joined from Southampton in 2014. Spurs were without injured England

stars Harry Kane and Dele Alli, while the in-form Son Heung-Min had still not returned from international duty with South Korea at the Asia Cup.

Pochettino, however, decided to omit

playmaker not even among Spurs' substi- handled a cross into the box. tutes at Selhurst Park.

It took Palace a mere nine minutes to open the scoring, Wickham following up after a Jeff Schlupp shot was blocked by Spurs goalkeeper Paulo Gazzaniga.

Palace then made the most of a bizarre keep Spurs at bay.

Christian Eriksen, with the influential incident when Spurs' Kyle Walker-Peters

It was a clear penalty and Townsend made no mistake from the spot, slamming the ball into the middle of the goal.

Tottenham laid siege to the Palace goal in the second half, with Speroni saving well from Fernando Llorente to



Andros Townsend (L) scored from the spot to help Crystal Palace notch a 2-0 win over Tottenham in a FA Cup encounter at Selhurst Park yesterday.

BPL 3rd round from today

SPORTS REPORTER

Holders Abahani will look to bounce back in the Bangladesh Premier League when they take on the visiting Mukitjoddha Sangsad in the third round of the tournament at the Bangabandhu National Stadium today.

Six-time champions Abahani had earlier suffered a 3-0 loss, their biggest margin of defeat, against newcomers Bashundhara Kings. Therefore, the Dhanmondi outfit may be desperate to return to winning ways but will have their work cut out for them against lowly Muktijoddha Sangsad, who must be upbeat after stunning threetime champions Sheikh Jamal DC 3-0 in their home match.

Ahead of the Abahani-Muktijoddha affair, Sheikh Jamal DC will face Rahmatganj MFS at the same venue with the threetime champions eager to taste their first win in the league.

SHORT CORNER

Low scores all around

All four of yesterday's fixtures of the ongoing Prime Bank Young Tigers National School Cricket Tournament were low scoring affairs.

Osmani High School registered a five-wicket win over Blue Bird School after being bundled out on just 91 runs. C.C High School clinched a seven-wicket win over Police Line School, who were all-out on 59 runs.

Senhati Secondary School won by five wickets by bundling out Bongobasi Secondary School for just 61 runs. Tangail SHS won by 61 runs against Mahmudul High School, despite posting a small 121-run total, by bundling out their opponents on 68. -- SPORTS REPORTER Holder takes Shakib's top spot

Jason Holder has become the first West Indian since

cricket great Garfield Sobers to be named as the world's leading all-rounder following his superb display against England in Barbados. West Indies captain Holder struck a commanding 202

not out and also took two useful first-innings wickets in Bridgetown, Barbados to help his side complete a crushing 381-run win over England in the first Test. Victory, secured with more than a day to spare, put

the West Indies 1-0 up in a three-Test series. Holder's man-of-the-match display saw him go ahead of Bangladesh's Shakib-al-Hasan and India's Ravindra Jadeja in the International Cricket Council's allrounder rankings.

Morata passes medical

Spain striker Alvaro Morata said yesterday he has passed a medical with Atletico Madrid, with his loan move to the La Liga side from Chelsea expected to be confirmed imminently.

Morata is to sign an 18-month loan deal Spanish media reports said, with an option to sign him permanently at the end of the season. Morata joins an Atletico side who are second in La Liga and in the last 16 of the

Champions League.—-REUTERS

Judo C'ship concludes The Sport for Tomorrow Judo Championship, jointly organised by the Embassy of Japan and Bangladesh Judo Federation, concluded at the Shaheed Suhrawardi

Indoor Stadium in Mirpur on Saturday. A total of 109 female Judokas from 21 sports organisations, educational institutions and clubs from Dhaka, Barisal, Rajshahi, Chapainawabgang, Mymensingh, Sherpur, Brahmanbaria, Narayanganj and

Jashore participated in the tournament. Ahead of the 2020 Summer Olympic Games, hosts Japan have been promoting judo in over 100 countries under the Sport for Tomorrow Initiative, said a press release

-SPORTS REPORTER New Zealand cricketer retires at 68 New Zealand fast bowler Ewen Chatfield, also known as 'The Naenae Express', has decided to hang up his boots

at the ripe age of 68. Chatfield made this decision after he was 'slogged' all over the field when he turned out for Naenae Old Boys in Wellington on Saturday. Chatfield, who made his international debut for New

Zealand back in 1975, played for his country in 43 Tests and 114 One-Day Internationals (ODIs). He played alongside Sir Richard Hadlee and his last appearance for New Zealand came in 1989. - AGENCIES OIS annual sports held

The 2019 Oxford International School (OIS) annual sports competition was held on Friday at the Government Physical Education College field.

Major General AKM Abdur Rahman, Director General of Bangladesh Institute of International Strategic Studies, inaugurated the competition as chief guest.

The day long competition featured a parade show, rally, music and dance displays aside from popular sporting events. The event concluded through a prize distribution ceremony and lottery. -- SPORTS REPORTER



Vigarunnisa Noon School & College became unbeaten champions of the 5th Inter School & College Chess Festival, organised by the Notre Dame Chess Club and conducted by the Elegant Chess Academy, at the Father Martin Hall auditorium on Friday. GM Abdullah Al Rakib (3rd from R) and managing director of Elegant Chess Academy Mahmuda Moly (3rd from L) were present as chief guest and special guest respectively. PHOTO: STAR

Pandya set to return New Zealand-India third ODI today

PTI, Mount Maunganui



A well-deserved break

on the cards, India captain Virat Kohli will be aiming to seal the five-match series when his team square off against a confused New Zealand in the

third ODI here Monday. The Indian captain has been given a break as part of BCCI's workload management programme and he would ensure that he finishes his assignment Down Under on a high after the maiden Test and ODI victories in Australia.

An unassailable 3-0 lead would be a fitting revenge to India's abject 0-4 humiliation during the 2014 limited overs series.

cricket's latest enfant terrible Hardik Pandya, who is coming back from provisional suspension for his loose talk on a TV chat show. Pandya's presence lends solidity and

encounter could be inclusion of Indian

balance to the side and the skipper has time and again admitted it.

New Zealand, on the other hand, have looked clueless against India's wrist-spin duo of Kuldeep Yadav and Yuzvendra Chahal, who accounted for 12 of the 20 wickets in the last two ODIs. For Black Caps, captain Kane

Williamson, who had top-scored in the first ODI, looked good during his short stay in the second ODI, while all-rounder Doug Bracewell tried to take the game to the wires with a 46-ball 57 but none of the other One of the primary focus of Monday's batters could convert their starts.

Prep for BHF polls begins SPORTS REPORTER

The Bangladesh Hockey Federation (BHF) began the process to hold its much awaited polls as the executive committee yesterday decided to prepare the councillors' list within the first week of February.

"According to the decision of the meeting, the stakeholders have been requested to send the names of their councillors by February 7 as the National Sports Council (NSC) asked us to submit the list by February 10," said BHF joint secretary Mahbub Ehsan Rana yesterday.

Some 85 councillors will elect a 31-member executive committee aside from the president, who is nominated by the government. The NSC has already made a three-member election

committee to hold the BHF polls, which were last held in July, 2013. After the expiry of the previous elected committee, the NSC made an ad-hoc committee in January last year. Last December, the ad-hoc committee wrote to the NSC requesting the elections.