

SONY ESPN
South Africa v Sri Lanka
Second Test, Day Three
Live from 2:00pm

STAR SPORTS SELECT 1
English Premier League
Burnley v Tottenham
Live from 6:30pm

Newcastle v Huddersfield
Live from 9:00pm
Leicester v Crystal Palace
Live from 11:30pm

STAR SPORTS SELECT 2
Bundesliga
Bayern Munich v Hertha Berlin
Live from 8:30pm

Fortuna v Nurnberg
Live from 11:30pm

TEN 1
Serie A
Torino v Atalanta
Live from 8:00pm

TEN 2
La Liga

Sevilla v Barcelona
Live from 9:15pm

Serie A
Frosinone v Roma
Live from 1:30am (Saturday)

Bangladesh Premier League (Football)
Saif SC v Chittagong Abahani
Time: 3:00pm

Venue: Rafique Uddin Bhuiyan Stadium, Mymensingh
Time: 3:00pm
Venue: Shaheed Bulu Stadium, Noakhali
NoFel v Brothers Union

BFF academy from March!

SPORTS REPORTER

Bangladesh Football Federation (BFF) yesterday announced that its football academy will start operation in March following the completion of a talent-hunt programme across the country.

The game's local governing body selected 70 footballers - 35 each for under-15 and under-18 level - from some 275 budding footballers, who were initially selected from 16,000 hopefuls at district level.

"The players have been selected through a month-long talent-hunt programme. Now the selected ones will undergo medical tests before being selected finally. Before taking them to the academy in March, we will also talk to their parents," said BFF president Kazi Salahuddin at a press conference yesterday.

The BFF had earlier run a FIFA-funded academy for only nine months in 2015. It had also announced to bring the winning team of 2018 SAFF U-16 Championship into a three-year contract and sent them to Sylhet BKSP in November last year, but it has not materialised in the last three months.

There is a whisper in football fraternity that the BFF has taken this recent initiative ahead of next year's BFF polls after Bangladesh District and Divisional Football Associations (BDDFA), a platform opposing incumbent president Kazi Salahuddin, took a similar initiative of talent hunt at under-20 level in the latter part of last year.

"I am not conducting this programme for the elections rather we have a good opportunity to produce good results at international level if we can groom them properly at academy. I don't have any problem if I do not stay at the federation," defended Salahuddin.

Klopp backs Ole for MU manager

AFP, London

Premier League

Liverpool boss Jurgen Klopp said he believes Ole Gunnar Solskjaer will be the next permanent manager of Manchester United. The clubs meet on Sunday in a showdown of Premier League giants.

Ahead of Liverpool's trip to Old Trafford, Klopp said he had been impressed with the job the Norwegian is doing at Old Trafford.

"Now he's in charge and there is no doubt that he will be the manager next year as well, that's clear."



Chelsea midfielder Callum Hudson-Odoi (C) celebrates after scoring the third goal with teammates during their Europa League Round of 32 second leg match against Malmo at Stamford Bridge on Thursday.

Sheikh Jamal forward Solomon King (R) sees his shot past Mohammedan goalkeeper Sarwar Jahan during their Bangladesh Premier League match at the Bangabandhu National Stadium yesterday. PHOTO: FIROZ AHMED

Abahani fall to Sk Russel

SPORTS REPORTER

Holders Abahani tasted their second defeat in the Bangladesh Premier League when they lost 2-0 against title contenders Sheikh Russel KC at the Sylhet District Stadium last night.

Nigerian marksman Raphael Odoyin opened the account in the 24th minute before Brazilian Alex Rafael Antonio wrapped up the victory in the 85th minute after availing a defensive fumble to shoot Sheikh Russel to second position with 17 points from seven matches. This was Abahani's second defeat of the campaign following five consecutive wins. They had lost against Bashundhara Kings in Nilphamari in their second match. Despite the defeat, Abahani are still on top with 18 points from eight matches while Bashundhara Kings have 16 points from six matches.

STRUGGLING MSC SECURE SECOND DRAW

Meanwhile, a struggling Mohammedan Sporting Club

MOHAMMEDAN 1-1 **SK JAMAL**
MONIR (OG 24') SOLOMON (62')

SK RUSSEL 2-0 **ABAHANI**
ODOYIN (24'), RAFAEL (85')

secured their second successive draw in the Bangladesh Premier League as they held Sheikh Jamal DC 1-1 at the Bangabandhu National Stadium yesterday.

Sheikh Jamal defender Monir Hossain scored an own goal to give Mohammedan the lead in the 24th minute before Gambian forward Solomon King levelled the margin in the 62nd minute with a dipping shot.

The draw helped Sheikh Jamal raise their tally to 12 points from eight matches while Mohammedan leapfrogged to ninth position of the 13-team table with five points from seven outings.



Sheikh Jamal, who only conceded one defeat against Mohammedan in the history of professional league, got off to a fine start by creating two scoring chances within the first 10 minutes. But Kyrgyz forward David Tetteh's feeble header in the third minute went straight to the hands of Mohammedan goalkeeper Sarwar Jahan while Shakhat Hossain Rony's glancing header in the seventh minute went wide after kissing the farpost.

Mohammedan looked a bit better compared to their previous matches as they chased the ball from the outset before Habibur Rahman Shohag tried from distance in the 19th minute, with Sheikh Jamal goalkeeper Mohammad Nayeem parrying it away for a corner.

The Motijheel-based outfit took

the lead against the run of play when Monir headed the ball into his own net while attempting to clear a long ball from Mohammedan midfielder Anik Ghosh.

Sheikh Jamal came close to equalising in the 37th minute but Gambian striker Sainey Bojang incredibly drove wide of open net despite beating goalkeeper Sarwar.

After resumption, both sides fought equally and created a few chances but Sheikh Jamal succeeded in the 62nd minute when Solomon mustered a dipping shot from 25 yards to find the back of the net.

In the latter part, Mohammedan put some pressure on Sheikh Jamal and created two penalty situations, but those were not deemed bookable offence by referee Bhupan Mohan Tarafder. Mohammedan manager Amirul Islam Babu signalled his players to come off the pitch while senior players like Zahid Hasan Emily and Mithun Chowdhury threw water bottles inside the pitch from the dugout.

The ban does not prevent players being released by the club and it does not apply to Chelsea's women's and futsal teams.

"Chelsea FC categorically refutes the findings of the FIFA disciplinary committee and will therefore be appealing the decision," said a statement on the club's website.

FIFA hands Chelsea transfer ban

AFP, London

Premier League club Chelsea have been banned from signing new players in the next two transfer windows as punishment for breaking rules on registering under-age players, FIFA said on Friday.

It means the club -- who immediately said they would appeal the decision -- will be unable to make signings until the end of January next year.

"The disciplinary committee sanctioned Chelsea with a ban on registering new players at both national and international level for the next two complete and consecutive registration periods," FIFA said in a statement.

In addition, Chelsea were fined 600,000 Swiss francs (\$600,000, 530,000 euros) and given a period of 90 days to regularise the situation of the minor players concerned.

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OUTLETS
BANANI GULSHAN BARIDHARA JPP UTTARA DHAMMONDI MIRPUR BALAKA SHIMANTO

Chelsea midfielder Callum Hudson-Odoi (C) celebrates after scoring the third goal with teammates during their Europa League Round of 32 second leg match against Malmo at Stamford Bridge on Thursday.

PHOTO: REUTERS

Arsenal, Chelsea cruise

AFP, Paris

EUROPA LEAGUE
Arsenal and Chelsea reached the last 16 of the Europa League on Thursday after Malmo's Rasmus Bengtsson was sent off for his second bookable offence, before 18-year-old Callum Hudson-Odoi made the most of a rare start by crashing home the third.

"The boys really played well today. We worked hard throughout the game," said highly-rated Hudson Odoi, a Bayern Munich target in January.

"The goal that came at the end was definitely a bonus for the way that we played."

Carlo Ancelotti's Napoli breezed to a 2-0 win over FC Zurich that saw them win 5-1 on aggregate, while Inter Milan went through 5-0 after sweeping four goals past Rapid Vienna without reply at the San Siro.

French side Rennes are into the last 16 of a major European tournament for the first time after winning possibly the most entertaining tie of the round 6-4 on aggregate following a barnstorming 3-1 win at Real Betis.

Goals from Ramy Bensebaini and Adrien Hunou fired Rennes into a two-goal lead within the opening half-hour but the tie was put back in

the balance when Giovani Lo Celso pulled one back four minutes before half-time.

With Betis pushing to equalise and go through on away goals, M'Baye Niang finished off an injury time break to see the mid-table Ligue 1 side through.

RB Salzburg, Dinamo Zagreb and Zenit Saint Petersburg all overturned first-leg deficits, with Austrians Salzburg hammering Club Brugge 4-0 to go through 5-2 and Croatian champions Dinamo 4-2 winners on aggregate after a storming 3-0 victory over Viktoria Plzen.

Zenit overcame Fenerbahce 3-1 in Russia, Magomed Ozdoev and Sardar Azmoun giving the hosts an aggregate lead before Mehmet Topal put the Turks ahead on away goals just before the break.

However, on his home debut for Zenit, Iranian international Azmoun struck again 14 minutes from the end to see Sergei Semak's side through.

Pablo Fornals snuck Villarreal past Sporting Lisbon with a fine curling strike that gave the La Liga side a 1-1 draw on the night and a 2-1 win overall, while Benfica eased past Galatasaray 2-1 after a goalless draw in Portugal.

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