

# What to WATCH

**STAR SPORTS SELECT 1**  
**Indian Premier League**  
**Kolkata v Delhi**  
**Live from 8:30pm**  
**STAR SPORTS SELECT 2**  
**English Premier League**

**Leicester v Newcastle**  
**Live from 1:00am (Saturday)**  
**MAASRANGA TV**  
**Kool-BSPA Sports Award 2018**  
**Time 10:30pm**

## DAY'S EVENT

**Bangladesh Premier League**  
**NoFel SC v Ctg Abahani**  
**Time: 3:30pm**  
**Venue: Shahid Bulu Stadium, Noakhali**

**Muktijoddha v Mohammedan**  
**Time: 3:30pm**  
**Venue: Sheikh Fazlul Haque Mani Stadium, Gopalganj**

# Kings consolidate top spot

SPORTS REPORTER



Unbeaten Bashundhara Kings crossed seemingly the last hurdle of the first phase to consolidate their lead in Bangladesh Premier League following a 3-2 win against Saif SC at the Sheikh Kamal Stadium in Nilphamari yesterday.

The 10th win in 11 matches means title aspirants Bashundhara Kings have now 31 points went four points, four clear of second-placed Abahani and seven ahead of third-placed Sheikh Russel KC, who notched up a 2-0 win over Rahmatganj MFS at Bangabandhu National Stadium in the other match of the day.

The win over Saif SC also ensured Bashundhara a top-place finish in the first leg with a match in hand against Chittagong Abahani. The win also kept the newcomers' hundred percent success rate on home ground, breaking Saif SC's unbeaten record in away matches.

Even though Bashundhara Kings fielded a full-strength side for the first time with the inclusion of all four foreign players, they were stunned by the visiting Saif SC in the very third minute when Colombian striker Deiner Cordoba found the back of the net with a side-volley on a corner from Sajjad Hossain.

Bashundhara Kings then pressed hard for the equaliser, which finally came in the

32nd minute, thanks to a fine strike from Marcos Vinicius, who chested down a lob from Emon Babu before hammering a left-footer at the far post. 10 minutes later, Daniel Colindres gave the home side the lead, capitalising on a fumble from the Saif SC defenders as the Costa Rican forward headed into the open net from close range.

Bashundhara Kings took the game away from their opposition in the stoppage time of the first half when Bakhtiyar Duyshobekov drove home availing a poor clearance after Matin Mia darted into the box from the right to take a low shot.

Saif SC pulled one goal back in the 56th minute when Riadul Hossain Rafi headed in a lob from Jamal Bhuiyan, but the visitors could not find the equalising goal as they remained on 20 points following a third defeat in 11 matches.

At the BNS, Sheikh Russel, who came into the match on the back of a goalless draw against Muktijoddha Sangsad, took only four minutes to take the lead against Rahmatganj MFS as Sohel Rana tapped in from close range after a Raphael Odoyin header came his way. Odoyin doubled the lead in the 17th minute, driving home a forward-pass from Azizov Alisher. After resumption, Rahmatganj created a few chances but failed to cash in on those and left the field with their fourth defeat in 11 matches.

**BASHUNDHARA 3 - 2 SAIF SC**  
 VINICIUS 32', COLINDRES 42',  
 DUYSHOBKOV 45+2'  
**RAHMATGANJ 0 - 2 SK RUSSEL**  
 RANA 4', ODYOIN 17'



Colombian female footballers Katerin Fabiola Castro Munoz (L) and Jessica Hurtado attend a press conference at the BFF House yesterday.

PHOTO: STAR

## Moumita, Ridoy clinch TT titles

SPORTS REPORTER

Veteran Moumita Alam Rumi of Bangladesh Ansar clinched the title of women's singles in the 38th National Table Tennis Championships after registering a hard-fought 4-3 sets win over Saleha Setu of Bangladesh Army in the final at the Shaheed Tajuddin Ahmed Indoor Stadium yesterday.

It was double delight for Rumi, who paired up with Sonom Sultana Soma to clinch the title of women's doubles by beating Setu and Mahi pair of Bangladesh Army in straight sets.

In men's singles, Ridoy became the new champion after beating experienced Manosh Chowdhury in 4-3 sets in the final.

Bangladesh Army became champions in women's team event following their victory over Bangladesh Ansar.

## Munoz, Hurtado eager to meet girls

SPORTS REPORTER



Two female Colombian footballers, Katerin Fabiola Castro Munoz and Jessica Hurtado, cannot wait to meet the Bangladeshi footballers after coming here to inspire the home side as well as to promote the Bangamata U-19 Women's International Gold Cup.

Munoz and Hurtado, who arrived in the capital on Wednesday following a proposal from tournament rightsholders K-Sports, were introduced to the media at the BFF house yesterday, where they disclosed their schedules for Friday and Saturday.

Munoz played for Colombia in the FIFA Women's World Cup while Hurtado represented Colombia in the Olympic Games.

"I'm happy to be here because it is a type of adventure. We came here to support the girls and are waiting to interact with them and see them. We are expect some questions from them," said Hurtado, who is an also ambassador of the United Arab Emirates women's team.

"The message to the girls is that dreams can come true and they have to support each other," continued Hurtado, adding that football in Colombia was more than just a passion.

"I feel like this is a family and it is like the environment in Colombia. I'm excited to be here," said Munoz, who is current a national footballer.

Hurtado and Munoz are scheduled to spend their day with 90 school girls and footballers from BKSP at the Forties Sports Club ground to share their experience. They will also spend some one-and-a-half hours with female footballers at the BFF astro-turf on Saturday before flying back on the same day.



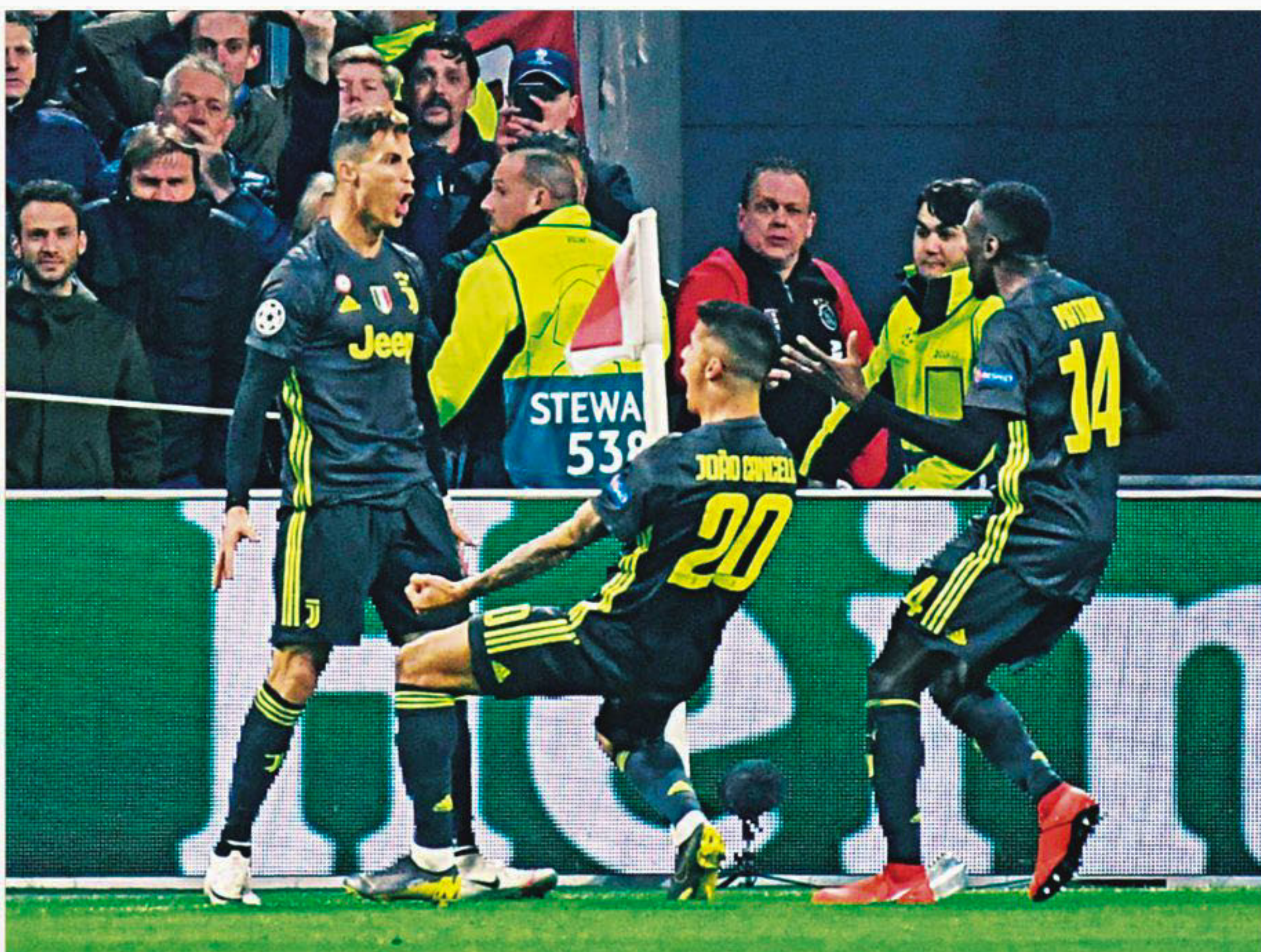
PHOTO: COLLECTED

Sunnydale girls' and boys' handball teams became champions in the Hurray Wafer School Mini Handball Tournament, beating Scholastica girls' and boys' handball teams respectively at the Shaheed Captain M Mansur Ali National Handball Stadium recently.

## DIEGO COSTA HANDED 8-MATCH BAN

Atletico Madrid striker Diego Costa will miss the rest of the season after being handed an eight-match suspension by the Spanish Football Federation (RFEF) on Thursday. Costa was sent off in the first half of Atletico's 2-0 defeat to Barcelona on Saturday for directing a crude insult towards referee Gil Manzano. Manzano also reported that Costa had "grabbed" him by the arms during the incident. The lengthy ban means Costa will not play again this season as Atletico have seven games left in La Liga, having been knocked out of the Champions League and Copa del Rey. According to the match report submitted by Manzano, Costa insulted his mother in a foul-mouthed outburst before "grabbing me by the arms to prevent me showing cards to numbers 24 and 2 respectively".

--AFP



Juventus superstar Cristiano Ronaldo (L) celebrates his opening goal with teammates during their Champions League quarterfinal first leg encounter against Ajax at the Johan Cruyff Arena in Amsterdam on Wednesday.

PHOTO: AFP

## Advantage Juventus

*MU pray for another miracle*

AFP, Amsterdam

Cristiano Ronaldo was again hailed by Juventus coach Massimiliano Allegri after scoring with his side's only shot on target to earn a 1-1 draw away to an excellent Ajax in the first leg of their Champions League quarterfinal in Amsterdam on Wednesday.

On his return from a thigh injury, Ronaldo subdued the 50,000 home fans in the Johan Cruyff Arena when he headed Juventus in front on the stroke of half-time to take his record goal tally in the competition to 125.

However, Brazilian winger David Neres conjured a stunning equaliser almost immediately after half-time to give Ajax a draw that was the very least they deserved.

"Ronaldo showed that he is on a different level. His timing and movement are different to everyone else's, there's nothing you can do about it," said Allegri.

The Ajax coach, Erik ten Hag, added: "It is not the result you hope for, but it is a result. Last time we lost 2-1 to Madrid at home so we are still in it."

Meanwhile, Manchester United's powers of recovery carried them to a first Champions League quarterfinal in five years but even Ole Gunnar Solskjaer admits beating Barcelona in the Camp Nou is maybe one mountain too many to climb.

Unlike their experience in losing the first leg of their last-16 tie on home soil 2-0 to Paris Saint-Germain, United were not outclassed by the Catalan giants in a 1-0 defeat.

However, on a night when Lionel Messi was left bloodied by a charging Chris Smalling and had little impact after playing his part in creating Luke Shaw's 12th-minute own goal, Barca were still comfortable winners.

"Messi received a black eye and a bloodied nose but Manchester United did not lay a glove on Barcelona," was the verdict of the Daily Telegraph.

# Women's league this year?

*Speakers at a roundtable discuss women's football's success, challenges and its greater impact*

SPORTS REPORTER



The Bangladesh Football Federation (BFF) has decided to introduce the women's football league towards the end of this year in a bid to make women's football more competitive for the international stage as well as give the women footballers a source of income.

BFF general secretary Abu Nayeem Shohag disclosed this at a roundtable discussion at The Daily Star Centre yesterday.

The roundtable discussion, titled 'Women's football in Bangladesh: Success, challenges and impact beyond the pitch' was jointly organised by The Daily Star and K-Sports ahead of the Bangamata U-19 Women's International Gold Cup, which will be held in Dhaka from April 22 to May 3.

"We have decided to start a women's football league from either October or November this year. The details of the league will be disclosed on 23rd April, the day after the start of the Bangamata U-19 Women's International Gold Cup," Shohag said while replying to a query regarding what the game's local governing body was thinking in order to make the senior women's team more competitive, especially following the recent debacle in the SAFF

Women's Championship.

Although the BFF spokesman did not give out any details regarding the format and scope of the tournament, he did say that the BFF was against the idea of letting players under its programme -- currently 53 female footballers reside and train at the BFF camp -- take part in the league as it thinks this might adversely impact their performance in the long run.

Even though the BFF organised a National Championship in 2008 and later ran a club league and corporate leagues for a few seasons, most of these events were irregular, and have not been held for the last few seasons.

The discussion was attended by a cross section of stakeholders for women's football, including the BFF, club officials, organisers, footballers, coaches, development partners and journalists.

The Daily Star's editor and publisher Mahfuz Anam praised the success of women's football and expressed his commitment to continue to promote women's football.

"I have tremendous respect for the girls, who overcame many challenges to reach the level that they have. I praise the success they have achieved despite facing those challenges. We pledge to support these footballers and we will continue to promote women's football," he said.

Mahfuza Akter Kiron, FIFA Council member and women's wing chairman of BFF, spoke of the challenges they have to face at the administrative level to organise women's football. "Finance is a big issue for us. We have to run the training camp out of our own coffers. Sponsors and other stakeholders should come forward to help us take women's football forward," she said, adding that they needed infrastructural improvement in the form of playing fields and training centres to expedite the development of women's football.

Ali Reza, deputy director of the Mass and Primary Education department of the government, said that they were working on ideas of how to keep primary school graduates involved in football by introducing a country-wide football tournament for high-school students, modelled after the Bangabandhu Primary School Gold Cup and the Bangamata Primary School Gold Cup.

Among others in the roundtable were national women's team coach Golam Rabbani Choton, women's team captain Sabina Khatun, K-Sports CEO Fahad Karim, Head of Communications of Unicef, Bangladesh Jean Jacques Simon, Brothers Union manager Amer Khan and senior journalists Sanat Babla and Masud Alam.

## CSK win a thriller

PTI, Jaipur

Mitchell Santner smashed Ben Stokes into the stands off the final delivery to guide Chennai Super Kings to a thrilling four wicket victory in an IPL game which saw a very public outburst from winning captain Mahendra Singh Dhoni yesterday.

CSK recorded their sixth win in seven games as they made rough weather of a 152 run target before Santner's six sealed a dramatic final over in which CSK needed 18 runs.

Dhoni scored 58 off 43 and added 95 with Ambati Rayudu for the fifth wicket. However Stokes got him with a yorker before a clear waist high no-ball to Santner was ruled out by Ulhas Gandhe.

This prompted an angry Dhoni to enter the ground and blast Gandhe before leg umpire Bruce Oxenford calmed him and sent him back before Santner finished it off in style.

**SCORES IN BRIEF**  
**RAJASTHAN:** 151 for 7 (Stokes 28, Buttler 23; Jadeja 2-20)  
**CHENNAI:** 155 for six in 20 overs (Dhoni 58, Rayudu 57; Stokes 2-39)  
**Result:** CSK won by 4 wkts.  
**Player-of-the-match:** Dhoni

# EVERYDAY

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