



Chelsea players celebrate with the Europa League trophy after winning the final against Arsenal at the Baku Olympic Stadium on Wednesday.

PHOTO: AFP

# Hazard gifts Chelsea trophy

AFP, Baku

Eden Hazard scored twice and then admitted it was his parting gift as the Belgian's brace helped Chelsea sweep away Arsenal to win 4-1 in the Europa League final in Baku. This match started at 11pm local time on Wednesday in Azerbaijan, but it was Thursday by the time it came to life with a flood of second-half goals started by Olivier Giroud's 49th-minute opener against his old club. Hazard then set up Pedro Rodriguez for Chelsea's second before grabbing a double of his own -- including a penalty -- either side of Alex Iwobi's consolation for Arsenal. The Belgian is widely expected to leave Chelsea for Real Madrid after seven years in England, and this was the perfect way for him to bow out. "I think it is a goodbye, but in football you never know," the 28-year-old told BT Sport. "My dream was to play in the Premier League and I have done that for one of the biggest clubs so maybe now it is the time for a new challenge." It is his, and Chelsea's, second

## PAST WINNERS

- 2019**  
Chelsea (ENG)
- 2018**  
Atletico Madrid (ESP)
- 2017**  
Man United (ENG)
- 2016**  
Sevilla (ESP)
- 2015**  
Sevilla (ESP)
- 2014**  
Sevilla (ESP)

Europa League this decade, while it is Maurizio Sarri's first major trophy as a coach.

"I am really very happy but the trophy is very important for the club," Sarri said.

"In the Europa League we played 15 matches, won 12 and drew three, so I think we deserved to win it."

Chelsea will be back in the Champions League next season, but there will be no return to Europe's top table for Arsenal.

Unai Emery's side had to win here to qualify, yet they were not good enough on a bizarre night.

Emery was hoping to win this competition for the fourth time. He will get another chance next season, but for now Arsenal's 25-year wait to bring back a European trophy to north London goes on.

"We tried and we worked but Chelsea were better than us and congratulations to them," Emery said.

Chelsea will remember their evening with fondness, as will Sarri, who 24 hours earlier had stolen the headlines when he angrily stormed off the pitch here during a training session in front of the television cameras.

"Sarri is a great guy, a great coach and he deserves this," said David Luiz of his coach.

The players seemed short of rhythm in a match played two and a half weeks after the Premier League season ended.

It came to life though, with a moment of controversy when referee Gianluca Rocchi dismissed Arsenal appeals for a penalty as Alexandre Lacazette went down under goalkeeper Kepa Arrizabalaga's challenge.

Granit Xhaka then saw his powerful strike from 25 yards

graze the crossbar as the half-hour approached.

Only after that did Chelsea stir, but Petr Cech -- in his final match before retiring -- blocked Emerson Palmieri's shot and denied Giroud at the end of a fine move.

However, as the clock ticked past midnight after a goalless first half, Chelsea went ahead when Giroud stole in front of Laurent Koscielny and stooped to head home Emerson's cross.

It was his 11th goal in this season's competition, and there was to be no comeback from Arsenal, with Chelsea quickly putting this final beyond their opponents' reach as Hazard took over.

He set up Pedro for a clipped finish beyond Cech and into the far corner on the hour mark, and five minutes later Hazard calmly rolled in a penalty awarded after Ainsley Maitland-Niles barged into Giroud.

Substitute Iwobi's sublime volleyed reply followed, but Arsenal had left themselves with too much to do, and Giroud and Hazard combined brilliantly for the latter to get his second and Chelsea's fourth in the 72nd minute.

## ARCHERY WORLD CHAMPIONSHIPS

# Bangladesh set sights on Olympic quota places

SPORTS REPORTER

Following a good performance in recently-concluded Archery World Cup (Stage-2) in Shanghai earlier this month, Bangladesh have set their sights on a top-eight finish in the upcoming World Archery Championships, scheduled to begin on June 9 in the Netherlands. The men's Recurve team consists of Ruman Sana, Tamimul Islam and Hakim Ahmed Rubel.

Bangladeshi archers had participated before in the biennial World Archery Championships thrice in 2011, 2013 and 2015 but failed to turn up in Mexico in 2017 due to trouble with their visas. Although there were hardly any expectations then, this time around there are high hopes of securing quota places for the Tokyo Olympics by finishing among the top eight in the Men's Recurve team event.

"Before we had participated to gain experience, but this time we will be participating to do something good because the results of Shanghai World Cup have inspired us. We could not win a medal there but our archers battled in the bronze medal match in recurve team event," said Bangladesh Archery Federation general secretary Kazi Razibuddin Ahmed Chapal at press conference.

"Finishing fourth in a World Cup tournament means Bangladesh are knocking on the door of going further. It is the same team with the same mood and fighting spirit and they will fight bravely against the mighty opponents I believe," said German coach Martin Fredrick. "The World Archery Championship is an

important meet, from which eight men's recurve teams will get tickets to take part in the Tokyo Olympics directly."

"The first target is to finish among top 24 teams out of 58 in the qualification round of the men's recurve team event. Afterwards, if we can win two more matches, we will reach the quarterfinals which will be a very good result for us and it is our goal although the task is very for the boys," said Fredrick, adding that the top eight men's recurve teams will secure tickets to participate in the Tokyo Olympics directly.

Bangladesh will also be competing in the men's recurve individual, women's recurve individual, recurve mixed, men's compound individual, women's compound individual and mixed compound but Fredrick is focused on the men's recurve team event, as they reached the semifinals in World Cup (Stage-2) in Shanghai.

"Ruman Sana is an experienced archer and if he can move into 16/2 round, then I will be happy with his performance but it is still a tough task for him because he has to first place among 104 archers out of 211 during the elimination round," said Fredrick. "Tamimul Islam and Hakim Ahmed Rubel are inexperienced archers and I will be happy if they enter the elimination round in men's recurve individual event."

Team manager Faruque Dhali will accompany six archers and two coaches, who are scheduled to leave here for Netherlands on June 7.



MARTIN FREDRICK

## BFF mulls resuming women's league

SPORTS REPORTER



The clubs, organisations or corporate houses willing to take part in Women's Football League will have to obtain club licensing as the Bangladesh Football Federation (BFF) mulls resuming the women's league in October-November, some six-and-a-half years after the second women's league was held in March 2013.

Resuming the women's football league has become an increasing demand from different clubs, organisations and corporate houses following the international successes of the age-group girls' teams but the game's governing body has overlooked the matter citing a lack of interest from clubs and sponsors.

"We have been saying for a long time that we would resume the women's football league which had started under the leadership of BFF president Kazi Salahuddin. We had before held two women's leagues [2011 and 2013] and a corporate league [2012] at a time when there was no shape of women's football and there was also a shortage of sponsors as well as a lack of interest from participating teams."

"We think women's football is on the right track and we will invite clubs, DFAs and corporate houses to take part in the women's football league to be started in late October or in the first week of November this year," BFF women's wing chairman and FIFA council member Mahfuza Akter Kiron said at a press conference yesterday.

"The participating teams have to obtain the BFF prescribed club licensing, because we want to hold the league regularly. We will select 6 to 8 teams finally after examining everything," said Kiron, adding that girls aged above 15 would be eligible to play in the league while national players of different age-group would take on certain conditions.

## WHAT TO WATCH

- STAR SPORTS SELECT 1  
ICC CRICKET WORLD CUP  
PAKISTAN V WEST INDIES  
LIVE FROM 3:30PM
- STAR SPORTS SELECT 2  
FRENCH OPEN  
ROUND-2  
LIVE FROM 3:00PM

## Madrid plans robust security for final

AFP, Madrid

Madrid will deploy an unprecedented number of police and security personnel for Saturday's all-English Champions League final, and use a drone for the first time to monitor fan activity.

With Spain's terror alert set at its second-highest level, Spanish authorities have also banned trucks weighing over 3.5 tonnes from driving near the Wanda Metropolitano stadium which will host the match between Liverpool and Tottenham deemed "high risk".

Trucks will also be barred from the vicinity of the two fan zones that will be set up in the city centre.

"We will have a very, very robust security apparatus in place to try to ensure everything takes place normally and everyone can enjoy (the match)," the director general of Spain's National Police, Francisco Pardo, told a news conference Tuesday to outline the security measures for the game.

Some 4,700 police officers and private security guards will be deployed for the match, more than the nearly 4,000 used for last year's Copa Libertadores final between Argentine rivals River Plate and Boca Juniors in Madrid, a match that was also declared "high risk" by authorities.

"This will probably be the biggest deployment to guarantee security which we will carry out at a sporting event" in Madrid, said Pardo. Police will for the first time deploy a drone to provide aerial monitoring to prevent fan trouble at a sporting event, which will work in coordination with police helicopters, he added.

## SHORT CORNER

### BFF to host UEFA Assist U-16 Tournament

The Union of European Football Associations (UEFA) has awarded Bangladesh Football Federation (BFF) rights to host UEFA Assist U-16 Football Tournament in Dhaka from October 16-20.

"We appealed to UEFA through the AFC to host its development tournament and they sanctioned the four-nation U-16 tournament where a European team and three Asian teams -- one from South Asian, one from ASEAN and hosts Bangladesh will take part," said BFF general secretary Abu Nayeem Shohag yesterday.

Shohag informed that the AFC will let them know about the participating teams.

Meanwhile, Bangladesh took part in UEFA Assist U-14 Football tournament in Thailand last year along with Cyprus, Sri Lanka and hosts Thailand. --SPORTS REPORTER

### 'No regrets' for retiring Cech despite loss

Arsenal goalkeeper Petr Cech said he had "no regrets" as he played the final match of his career in Wednesday's 4-1 Europa League defeat by former club Chelsea.

"I have to say I have done everything, so I can look back and have no regrets," Cech told BT Sport following the final in Baku.



The 37-year-old won the Champions League and four Premier League titles at Chelsea and there have been reports linking him with a return to Stamford Bridge in an upstairs capacity.

"I wanted lift the trophy and sit down and think. Until June 30 I am an Arsenal player. Until that point I won't decide on anything," he said. --AFP

### Ronaldo joins Portugal camp for Nations League

Cristiano Ronaldo linked up with the Portugal squad on Wednesday as the European champions began their preparations for next month's inaugural UEFA Nations League Finals.

Portugal will meet Switzerland in the semifinals on June 5 in Porto, with the winner set to play England or the Netherlands for the title on June 9 at the same venue. --AFP

# Djokovic wins in front of son

AFP, Paris



Top seed and world number one Novak Djokovic cruised into the French Open third round on Thursday and admitted it had been an emotional day playing for the first time in front of his four-year-old son.

Djokovic, bidding to become just the second man to hold all four Slams at the same time twice, cruised to a 6-1, 6-4, 6-3 win over Swiss lucky loser Henri Laaksonen.

Watching from the player's box on Court Suzanne Lenglen was Djokovic's son Stefan.

"It's a very special day for me as it's the first time in my life that I have played in front of my son," said the 32-year-old Serb.

"He showed incredible patience to sit there for an hour and a half."

Djokovic goes on to face Italian qualifier Salvatore Caruso, ranked 147, for a place in the last 16 in Paris. Caruso, 26, upset French 26th seed Gilles Simon 6-1, 6-2, 6-4 to reach the third round of a Slam for the first time.

Meanwhile, Serena Williams put her nery start to the French Open behind her by thrashing Japanese qualifier Kurumi Nara to step up her bid for a record-equalling 24th Grand Slam title.



PHOTO: REUTERS

Novak Djokovic celebrates after winning against Henri Laaksonen in the men's singles second round match of the French Open in Paris yesterday.

The 37-year-old cruised into the third round with a 6-3, 6-2 victory on Court Philippe Chatrier.

Williams will face Sofia Kenin for a last-16 spot, after her fellow American received a walkover following Canadian Bianca Andreescu's withdrawal through injury.

"I'm very serious when I play, but I'm happy," she said. A mouthwatering quarterfinal

clash with Naomi Osaka, who famously beat Williams in a dramatic 2018 US Open final, remains a possibility after the world number one's thrilling three-set win over Victoria Azarenka.

World number one Osaka, bidding to add the French Open to her US and Australian Open titles, came back from a set and 2-4 down to defeat former world number one Azarenka 4-6, 7-5, 6-3.