

# What to WATCH

**SONY ESPN**  
**UEFA Champions League**  
 Lyon v Zenit  
 Live from 10:55pm  
**SONY SIX**  
**UEFA Champions League**

**Chelsea v Valencia**  
 Live from 1:00am (Wednesday)  
**TEN 1**  
**UEFA Champions League**  
 Dortmund v Barcelona  
 Live from 1:00am (Wednesday)

**TEN 2**  
**UEFA Champions League**  
 Inter Milan v Slavia Praha  
 Live from 10:55pm  
 Napoli v Liverpool  
 Live from 1:00am (Wednesday)

**Walton U-18 Football Tournament**  
 Brothers Union v Ctg Abahani  
 Time: 4:00pm

Sheikh Russel v Saif SC  
 Time: 6:30pm  
 Venue: Bangabandhu National Stadium, Dhaka

**DAY'S EVENT**

## BANGLADESH FOR SHOOTING'S INCLUSION IN 2022 CWG

Bangladesh has joined India and Australia in calling for shooting's inclusion in the 2022 Birmingham Commonwealth Games roster. State Minister for Youth and Sports Zahid Ahsan Russel on Sunday wrote to UK Minister of State for the Commonwealth, the United Nations, and South Asia, Tariq Ahmad and sought his "personal intervention" in the matter. "You may be aware that football, cricket, archery and shooting are our potential games right now. In this context, I am writing to you with regard to shooting and its proposed exclusion from Commonwealth Games 2022, scheduled to be held in Birmingham. It would be deeply appreciated if you kindly extend your personal intervention so that shooting may be included in the Commonwealth Games 2022."



Two amputee footballers vie for possession during a seven-a-side football fest organised at the Bangladesh Football Federation turf yesterday.

PHOTO: RASHED SUMON

# A different kind of football

SPORTS REPORTER

Having thrown his loft-strand crutches to the wind after striking the decisive goal, Bayezid Bostami raced back to his own half post-haste while punching his fists through the air. Bayezid, who lost his left leg in an accident 10 years ago, then embraced his teammates during a seven-a-side football fest, a first of its kind initiative in Bangladesh, at the BFF astro-turf yesterday.

At the age of six, Bayezid was playing football by the roadside in Savar. At one stage the ball got away from him and when he went to collect it off the road, a truck ran over his leg. The leg then had to be amputated and the now 16-year-old's life was forever changed.

However, the accident did not slow Bayezid down in the slightest. A well-known sportsman in Kuliarchar of Kishorganj, the eighth grade student has shown promise in football and cricket despite his impairment. Bayezid even competes against able-bodied athletes without his crutches and is sometimes hired by neighbouring villages to play cricket or football.

"I play football and cricket in our village without crutches. I even ran in more speed than what you saw today. I

even climb up trees and I love playing cricket more than football. I think I play better cricket than those who play wheelchair cricket," Bayezid said. "It would feel really good to represent Bangladesh at the international level and play nationally."

The other players present at the football fest were also survivors of either road collisions or wrongful diagnosis with some of the players having undergone amputation at birth. Each tale was a unique and heart touching one but nothing could stop these youths from playing the sports they love or continue studying.

In 2014, Rahmatullah Babu fell under a bus in the capital's Badda area while trying to get on said bus and subsequently had to have his right leg amputated. Rahmatullah, who trained with the Rahmatganj MFS youth team a one point, dreamed of becoming professional football player and so, even the loss of a leg could not stop him from playing the sport.

Rahmatullah also competes in athletics, swimming and basketball events under different organisations such as BRAC, ICRC and CRP.

"I have been playing sports since my school going days and have lot of certificates in sports," Babu said. "I feel really good after playing such

football which I never dreamt of. I feel like I am lucky as no one thinks of us."

Nafiur Rahman, who was one of the players who had undergone amputation at birth, wasn't allowed to play sports alongside the able-bodied children. This may have hurt him deeply but the now 12th grade student never gave up and continues to play amputee football and wheelchair cricket while also taking part in swimming events.

"During my childhood, I watched other boys playing football, cricket and other sports but I wasn't allowed to play. I started playing football wheelchair cricket and at the age of 14. I can now ride a cycle and bike. We can win too," said 19-year-old Nafiur.

Pabitra Kumar, who lost his leg in a train accident, was also present. The 29-year-old from Kurigram has not allowed his disadvantage to hold him back as he completed his masters in 2016. Kumar is currently searching for an occupation apart from playing sports.

The Imago Sports Welfare Association, in association with Confidence Group, Muslim Sweets, organised the football fest in a bid to give the amputee footballers a platform to play nationally and internationally.

## 'Irregularities' in BFF financial statement

SPORTS REPORTER

Bangladesh Football Federation (BFF) vice president and Brothers Union director in charge, Mohiuddin Ahmed Mohi, has demanded that a probe committee be formed after he noticed massive irregularities in the BFF's three-year financial statement.

The game's local governing body recently sent the audit reports of its 2016 to 2018 fiscal years to the councillors for their observation ahead of the annual general meeting to be held on November 16. However, Mohi discovered that there seemed to be evidence of misappropriation on the financial reports.

"There have been huge irregularities in the income-and expenditure of the three-year financial statement worth Tk 17 crore, which was actually the income-and expenditure of the financial year of 2009 to 2015 and showing it in the financial year of 2016 to 2018 is illegal and immoral," Mohi said of the two-page document which was sent to BFF president Kazi Salahuddin.

Mohi also claimed that two of the three years mentioned in the financial statement were audited by three different firms without consent following an annual general meeting. He also said that the audit firm mentioned that the vouchers on white paper were tagged against the expenditures, which is unacceptable.

Another observation Mohi made was that Tk 8.99 crore was included twice in the 2017 financial statement, first as a direct expenditure and then as an outstanding expenditure, which is also unacceptable.

The BFF vice president stated that the BFF took a Tk 8.10 crore loan from IFIC Bank while they were hosting the Argentina-Nigeria match in 2011 which is yet to be cleared and questioned how long the BFF would be liable for that loan.

Finally, Mohi requested BFF president Kazi Salahuddin to include his personal observations on the matter during the next executive meeting to discuss it in detail.

When attention was drawn towards these allegations, BFF senior vice president and finance committee chairman, Abdus Salam Mursheedy, said: "A BFF member may have observations on the audit report but we have tried to do it in line with the rules and regulations and no misdeeds occurred."

"Mr Mohi is also a member of the finance committee, so why did he not mention it at the meeting?"

# Klopp expects daunting ride as Champions League returns

AFP, London

Jürgen Klopp has warned Liverpool that retaining the Champions League will be even harder than their incredible march to victory in Madrid last season.

Klopp's side start their bid to win a seventh European Cup with a trip to Napoli for their Group E opener on Tuesday.

The Reds have reached the last two Champions League finals, beating Tottenham in the Spanish capital in June after losing to Real Madrid 12 months earlier.

But Klopp believes Liverpool face a daunting task to make it to the final in Istanbul's Ataturk Stadium -- a venue which carries extra resonance for the club after they won the 2005 Champions League with an astonishing comeback against AC Milan in the same stadium.

Before Liverpool can dream of emulating Steven Gerrard and company's triumph by the banks of the Bosphorus, Klopp knows they will have to run the gauntlet in what he expects to be a fiercely contested tournament.

Napoli are expected to pose

FIXTURES	
Olympique Lyonnais	v Zenit
Internazionale	v Slavia Praha
Chelsea	v Valencia
Ajax	v Lille
Benfica	v RB Leipzig
Borussia Dortmund	v Barcelona
Napoli	v Liverpool
Salzburg	v Genk



With prolific striker Mohamed Salah (2nd from L) in the spotlight during training yesterday, defending champions Liverpool start their campaign with a tricky tie against Napoli at Anfield tonight. PHOTO: REUTERS

the sternest test to Liverpool in a group which also includes unfancied Salzburg and Genk.

Carlo Ancelotti's team came within a whisker of ending Liverpool's European campaign in the group stage last season when Alisson Becker's superb late save denied Arkadiusz Milik to preserve a 1-0 win at Anfield that sent the Reds into the last 16 at the expense of Napoli.

Even if Liverpool should

advance to the knockout rounds without so much drama this season, Klopp is wary of the restocked superpowers certain to be lying in wait in the latter stages.

"I will have no problem with it (reaching the final) if it happens again, but at this moment I am not too sure it will," he said when the draw was made in August.

"We have the same chance like everyone else, but that is all, and I don't see us, the English teams,

dominating. I really think a lot of teams have a good chance.

"Look at the squad Borussia Dortmund has and tell me we are stronger than them. That is incredible. They can make five changes and you think: 'Really, they didn't play last week? Why? There are a lot of quality teams.

"Juventus will be there, PSG will be there. Real Madrid? Do you think they gave up already? Bayern Munich now finally brought in Perisic and Coutinho

which is a big boost."

While Liverpool will always have a special relationship with the Champions League after the club's dominance of the competition in the 1970s and 1980s, it is not hard to believe that some die-hard Kopites would happily exchange their continental supremacy for a season of domestic bliss.

Having erased the pain of that 2018 final defeat against Real, Liverpool's main goal this term is to end the club's long wait to win the English title.

Pipped to the Premier League trophy by Manchester City on the final day of last season, Liverpool are desperate to win the title for the first time since 1990.

That desire has been clear to see in a blistering five-game winning streak which has already taken them to the top of the table this season.

Even an injury to Alisson has failed to interrupt their flow and the Brazilian keeper's replacement Adrian admits Liverpool's rock-solid defence -- marshalled by the imperious Virgil van Dijk -- has made his life much easier as the former West Ham player adapts to his new club.

"It's easy to play with them; you have some of the best players in the world, the best defenders, midfielders and attackers. From the back, I need to help on the occasions when I have to," Adrian said.

"I'm really proud to have won the last few games. We are in a good moment, we are like a rock - all together, the manager, the staff, players and fans. The club is living a great moment."

## BD to host SAFF C'ship in Sept, 2020

SPORTS REPORTER

The next edition of the South Asian Football Federation (SAFF) Championship will be held in September 2020 in Bangladesh, according to a decision of the regional football governing body's congress held in Kuala Lumpur yesterday.

The congress, attended by SAFF president Kazi Salahuddin and general secretary Anwarul Haque Helal along with representatives of seven member countries, also decided to host the regional tournament on odd years after the next edition.

The last edition of the SAFF Championship was held in Bangladesh where Maldives won the title, beating seven-time champions India in the final.



Despite his ripe age, LA Galaxy forward Zlatan Ibrahimovic shows no signs of easing off as he scored a hat-trick in a 7-2 thrashing of Sporting Kansas City in a Major League Soccer fixture in Los Angeles on Monday.

## Reus plots Barca downfall

AFP, Berlin

Borussia Dortmund captain Marco Reus insisted Monday that his team could beat Barcelona regardless of whether Lionel Messi plays or not, but feared however that Dortmund would 'have to suffer' when the two sides meet in the Champions League on Tuesday.

Messi is a doubt for Tuesday's game amid ongoing struggles with a calf injury, but Reus suggested Dortmund could win if they play to their own strengths instead of obsessing over the opponent.

"We have to concentrate on ourselves. We have a good team, we are at home, and we can win the game," said Reus at a press conference on Monday.

"It will of course be a tough game tomorrow, and we are going to have to suffer a lot," he said.

Tuesday's Champions League opener is a baptism of fire for Dortmund as they look to qualify from a fiercely difficult group which pits them against Barcelona, Inter Milan and Slavia Prague. Yet Reus said his side were confident they could make a perfect start by beating Barcelona on Tuesday.

"It is important to start well in the group. We are confident enough to say that we can win the game," he said.

"We want to test ourselves against

the best clubs. We have to be bold, push forward and try to score goals."

Both sides come into the game on the back of impressive results against top-four rivals in their domestic leagues at the weekend, as Dortmund thrashed Bayer Leverkusen 4-0, and Barcelona beat Valencia 5-2. Reus said he hoped that Messi would be on the pitch on Tuesday evening.

"I would be happy if he played. They are better with him because he has abilities which nobody else has," said the Dortmund captain.

Dortmund coach Lucien Favre said that it made little difference to his preparations whether Messi would play or not.

"They are good with or without him. They play 4-3-3," said the Swiss.

"They were very good against Valencia, when they had a 16-year-old playing in Ansu Fati."

"They can play football, but they are also good on the counter-attack. We will have to be on our game for 95 minutes tomorrow, and be ready for everything."

Meanwhile, Dortmund sharpshooter Paco Alcacer, a former bench-warmer at Barcelona, will look to hurt his former club when the two teams meet. Alcacer, 26, joined Dortmund in 2018 after struggling to hold down a place in the first team in two seasons at star-studded Barcelona.