

What to WATCH
TEN 2
Serie A
 Torino v AC Milan
 Live from 1:00am (Friday)

DAY'S EVENT

Walton U-18 Football Tournament
 Bashundhara Kings v Nofel SC

Time: 5:00pm
 Venue: Bangabandhu National Stadium, Dhaka

RIVERA CERTIFIED AT 76

Gianni Rivera could potentially take charge of the next Serie A team to dump their manager after the former Italy attacker and AC Milan hero earned Europe's most important coaching licence at the tender age of 76. Rivera, a Ballon d'Or winner in 1969 and former Member of the European parliament, was one of the "famous faces", alongside 2006 World Cup winner Mauro Camoranesi, announced by the Italian Football Federation (FIGC) to have gained the Italian equivalent of the 'UEFA Pro' licence, which enables him to coach in Italy's top division. According to the Gazzetta however, Rivera, who won the 1968 European championships with Italy and two European Cups with Milan, is not interested in a top coaching role and simply wants to remain "up-to-date" with the football's inner workings. Other big names to have gained the UEFA Pro licence include former Brazil midfielder Toninho Cerezo, now 64, and former Arsenal and Barcelona full-back Sylvinho.



Booters' focus on Qatar

SPORTS REPORTER

Having enjoyed nearly two weeks of rest, members of the national football team returned yesterday to their camp in preparation for next month's Joint Qualifiers for the World Cup and Asian Cup against Qatar and India.

Bangladesh will host Qatar on October 10 at the Bangabandhu National Stadium before travelling to Kolkata to play an away match against India on October 15.

After losing 1-0 to Afghanistan in Tajikistan, British coach Jamie Day -- who is scheduled to return to Dhaka in the morning today to conduct training from the afternoon -- rested his charges. He believed that long-term training may have a negative impact on the players ahead of next month's home and away matches, during which they will have a gap of only four days.

"It was a much-needed rest for us and a two-week break really helped us a lot because we played domestic and international matches continuously for our clubs," said Abahani striker Nabib Newaj Jibon. "However, we have been training individually as per instructions from the coach in order to maintain fitness levels and we did everything we needed to stay fit."

Bashundhara Kings winger Mohammad Ibrahim echoed Jibon's sentiments.

"We have returned to the camp refreshed mentally and physically. We needed a break to recover as we had a tough season during which we played a lot of matches and travelled a lot. Afterwards, we joined the national football camp and there was almost no rest," Ibrahim said, adding that they had been in action as Bashundhara Kings began their pre-season on September 17 and he



With the preparatory camp for their upcoming assignments against India and Qatar beginning today, the Bangladesh football team reported to the team manager at a city hotel yesterday.

joined the camp three days later.

However, both players are looking forward to a good show in the upcoming matches.

"We are focusing match by match because our aim is to try to secure points every game. If we defend well and play well upfront, then it is possible to get points," said Jibon.

"Qatar are a strong side but they were held to a goalless draw by India as Qatar squandered a lot of scoring chances. However, it is important that India held them and we will also try to get one point against Qatar, even though India have improved more technically than Bangladesh," the 29-year-old striker said.

"No doubt Qatar are a strong team. They are

'Players need to be ready'

AGENCIES, New Delhi

India coach Igor Stimac stated yesterday that he looks forward to having all his players match fit for their next fixture of the FIFA World Cup Qualifiers against Bangladesh, set to take place at the YBK Stadium in Kolkata on 15 October.

Stimac also announced a list of 29 probable players for the Bangladesh match.

"The list will be further cut for another four names until the end of the week," Stimac was quoted as saying by the official website of the All India Football Federation. "We still have some uncertainties with small injury problems with few players."

"The Bangladesh game is going to be very different from the last one against Qatar. We need all the players to be fully fit, and ready for the day," he added.

India are currently at 1 point from 2 matches after earning a hard-earned draw against Asian champions Qatar.

Masuk ruled out with torn ACL

SPORTS REPORTER

Bangladesh midfielder Masuk Mia Jonny has been ruled out of the Joint Qualifiers of the Qatar World Cup and China Asian Cup after undergoing surgery on his knee at a city hospital on Monday.

Masuk sustained the injury during the training camp for Bangladesh's away match against Afghanistan in Dushanbe. The workhorse travelled with the team to Tajikistan despite injury but was on the sidelines in both practice matches as well as during the match against Afghanistan on September 10.

The midfielder has been an important part of the starting eleven and has played each game since British coach Jamie Day took charge of the national team in May 2018. Day also kept him in the 26-member preliminary squad for the two matches against Qatar and India.

"I underwent ACL [anterior cruciate ligament] surgery on September 23 under the supervision of Dr Nanda Kumar. It needs nine to ten months to recover fully but it depends on how you are taking care of the injury," said Masuk over the phone from his hospital bed yesterday.

The Bangladesh national football team will play their group stage match against Oman on June 9, 2020, eight months after the home match against Qatar on October 10 in Dhaka.

"Initially I thought it was a calf-muscle injury. Later, I had an MRI following recommendations from my club, Bashundhara Kings, soon after returning from Tajikistan. The report says the ACL has torn," added Masuk, who is likely to miss the next domestic season.

Juve topple Balotelli's Brescia sans Ronaldo

AFP, Milan

Mario Balotelli made his first start for Brescia but the promoted northerners still fell to a 2-1 defeat which sent champions Juventus top of Serie A on Tuesday.

Former Manchester City and Inter Milan striker Balotelli has returned to Italy to play for his hometown club, but his debut was delayed as he sat out a four-game suspension for previous club Marseille.

Juventus were without Portuguese forward Cristiano Ronaldo, rested with a slight thigh problem, but the champions recovered from going behind after less than four minutes to an Alfredo Donnarumma goal -- his fourth in five games.

Juventus goalkeeper Wojciech Szczesny got two hands to Donnarumma's powerful strike, but could only push the ball into the net. Brescia defender Jhon Chancellor let the champions off the hook five minutes

before the break, diverting the ball into his own goal, with Bosnian midfielder Miralem Pjanic completing the comeback, volleying in on 63 minutes.

Balotelli, back in Italy for the first time since 2016, was denied after half an hour with Polish keeper Szczesny tipping his 30-year free-kick over the bar.

Reeling after going behind, Juventus pushed forward with Gonzalo Higuain threatening for the visitors and Aaron Ramsey nodding over. The equaliser came when Brescia goalkeeper Jesse Joronen shoved a Paulo Dybala corner into Chancellor's path.

Pjanic drilled in the winner after Dybala struck his free-kick into the wall and the Bosnian met the loose ball with a rasping volley.

Federico Bernardeschi came on for Ramsey in the 70th minute, with Dybala making way for Blaise Matuidi ten minutes later with the visitors holding on for all three points.

Two charged over Mesut, Sead robbery

AFP, London

Two men have been charged following the attempted robbery of Arsenal stars Mesut Ozil and Sead Kolasinac, according to British media reports on Tuesday.

Germany midfielder Ozil and Bosnia defender Kolasinac were targeted by knife-wielding men riding mopeds who tried to car-jack them in north London on July 25.

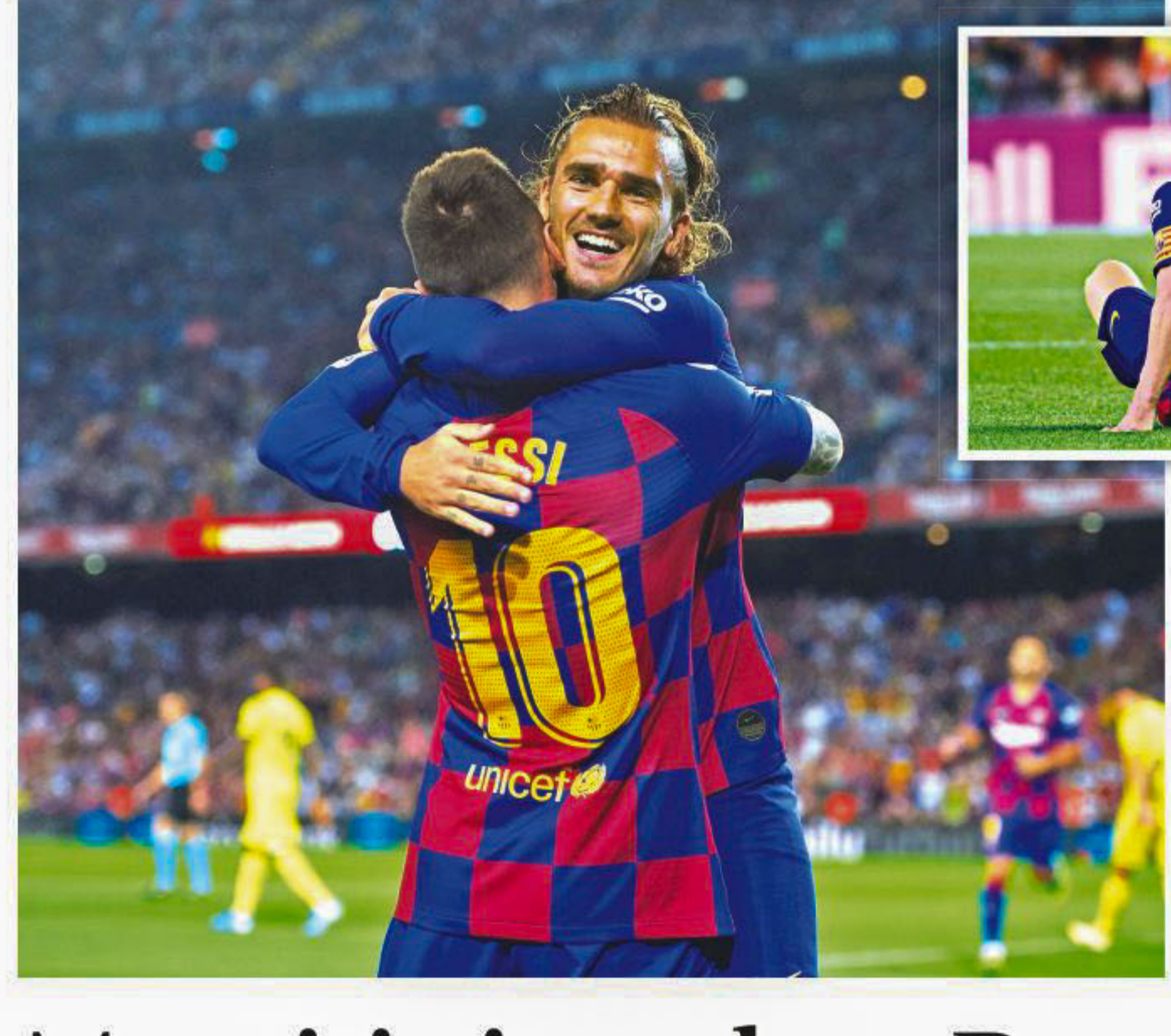
Kolasinac was seen chasing attackers away from the car that he and Ozil had been driving in before they eventually found safety at a local restaurant.

The two players have only recently returned to playing for the Premier League side after missing several matches following concerns about their security at the start of the season.

Reports in the UK said that Ashley Smith, 30, of Cardinals Way in north London, has been charged with attempted robbery and threatening a person with an offensive weapon on September 5.

Jordan Northover, 26, of West Yorkshire, faces the same two charges.

Smith, who also faces a charge of possession of cannabis, was remanded in custody and will appear at Snaresbrook Crown Court in London on Thursday.



Barcelona forward Antoine Griezmann scored the opener in just the sixth minute of a La Liga encounter against Villarreal at the Camp Nou on Tuesday. However, (inset) Lionel Messi, was sidelined by injury just half-an-hour into the game.

Messi injured as Barca down Villarreal

AFP, Madrid

Lionel Messi endured yet more injury frustration on Tuesday after going off at half-time against Villarreal but Barcelona gave their coach Ernesto Valverde some much-needed relief with a comfortable 2-1 victory.

Messi received treatment in the first half for what looked like a problem with his left thigh and was then unable to continue after the interval, replaced by Ousmane Dembele.

His withdrawal will be a major concern for Barca, particularly given this was Messi's first start of the season after just recovering from a niggling calf injury sustained at the start of August.

Certainly, Barcelona would have been eager to see Messi in the line-up, having suffered a humbling 2-0 loss at newly-promoted Granada on Saturday, a result that left them with seven points from five games, their worst start to a season since 1995. They arrived at Camp Nou with doubts hovering, particularly over Valverde, but delivered a far more convincing win than the scoreline suggested, thanks to early goals from Antoine Griezmann, his third of the season, and Arthur Melo.

Santi Cazorla put Villarreal in touch on the stroke of half-time but in truth the visitors barely threatened thereafter, with Barcelona impressively composed when nerves might easily have taken over. It means Valverde's side climb to fourth in the table, one point behind Real Madrid and level on points with Atletico Madrid, who both play on Wednesday. Villarreal's encouraging start stalls a little as they drop to eighth.

Barcelona started well, with Griezmann heading in after just six minutes, darting to the near post to flick home Messi's floated corner.

Seven minutes later, there was a second and another goal almost from nothing. Arthur collected the ball 30 yards out and harpooned a shot straight past Sergio Asenjo and into the top right-hand corner.

Messi took treatment on the sideline just after the half-hour mark and Cazorla pulled one back soon after with a swerving effort from distance.



Juventus' Miralem Pjanic (C) celebrates after scoring the winner in a 2-1 victory over Brescia in a Serie A encounter at the Stadio Mario Rigamonti on Tuesday.

Coe retains IAAF presidency

AFP, Doha

Britain's Sebastian Coe was re-elected unopposed yesterday as president of the IAAF for a second term following four years dominated by doping and the issue of gender.

The former Olympic and world champion middle-distance runner became head of world athletics' governing body in 2015 and received his second mandate just two days before the World Athletics Championships open in Doha.

"I genuinely am very pleased and proud of the way the sport has come together," said Coe, 62, following his re-election.

"Two-hundred changes, the Athletics Integrity Unit -- no sport has a unit in the same space, it's about malpractice, corruption," he continued.

Coe, who took over the reins during a period of turmoil in world athletics, was re-elected by unanimous vote of the 203 delegates attending the International Association of Athletics Federations' Congress in Doha.

Hoeness threatens player deprivation

AFP, Berlin

Bayern Munich president Uli Hoeness has threatened to deprive the German national side of Bayern players if Manuel Neuer loses the number one goalkeeper spot, Sport Bild said Wednesday.

Barcelona keeper Marc-Andre Ter Stegen, 27, is currently Neuer's understudy and has voiced frustration at being kept out of the Germany side by the Bayern veteran.

The two players have traded barbed remarks with Ter Stegen last week accusing Neuer of making "inappropriate" comments.

Hoeness, however, has spoken up for Neuer and criticised German coach Joachim Low and the national federation for not backing the Bayern star more vocally.

"We will never accept that there

will be a change," the sports daily quoted Hoeness as saying.

"Before that happens we would prevent any of our players turning out for the national side."

Along with Neuer, Bayern contributes several key players to the national squad with any boycott would deprive Low of defender Niklas Sule, midfielders Joshua Kimmich and Leon Goretzka as well as attacker Serge Gnabry.

Low had promised to give Ter Stegen more playing time in 2019 but so far he has made just one appearance for Germany, a 45-minute cameo in a friendly against Serbia last March.

Under FIFA rules, Bayern could face sanctions running from fines to exclusion from competitions for depriving the national team of players.



Independent University Bangladesh secured a 2-0 win over Shanto-Mariam University in their Faraaz Intervarsity Gold Cup encounter at the Bir Shrestha Shaheed Mustafa Kamal Stadium in Kamalapur yesterday.

SAFF U-18S C'SHIP BD beaten to top spot by coin toss

SPORTS REPORTER

Bangladesh emerged as Group B runners-up in the SAFF U-18 Championship by virtue of a toss after India had joined Bangladesh on top with a 3-0 win over Sri Lanka in the last group match at the Armed Police Force ground in Kathmandu yesterday.

The two teams had finished on top with points each and could not be separated by head-to-head or goal difference either. A toss was required to determine positions and India, who won the toss, were declared Group B champions.