

What to WATCH

DAY'S EVENT

STAR SPORTS 1

India v South Africa
Third Test, Day Three
Live from 10:00am
STAR SPORTS SELECT 1
English Premier League

Sheffield Utd v Arsenal
Live from 1:00am (Tuesday)
TEN 2
Serie A
Brescia v Fiorentina
Live from 12:45am (Tuesday)

Faraaz Intersvarsity Gold Cup
Final
South East v Gono University

Time:3:00pm
Venue: Bangabandhu National Stadium, Dhaka



Bangladesh players celebrate with the champion's trophy after winning the UEFA Assist U-16 Football Tournament by thrashing Maldives 6-0 to record their third straight win at the Bangabandhu National Stadium yesterday.

PHOTO: FIROZ AHMED

UEFA-ASSIST U-16 DEVELOPMENT TOURNAMENT

Bangladesh secure first trophy of the season

SPORTS REPORTER

Bangladesh became unbeaten champions of the UEFA-Assist U-16 Development football tournament as a treble from Moinul Islam powered the hosts to a massive 6-0 win over Maldives in the four-team group final match at the Bangabandhu National Stadium yesterday.

With three wins in a row, Bangladesh finished on top of the round-robin league based tournament with the maximum of nine points, three more than second-placed Faroe Islands, who beat Cambodia 2-0 in the day's first match. Maldives and Cambodia finished with one point each.

The boys in red and green, who needed just a single point against the Islanders to win the competition after having clinched a 3-1 win over Faroe Islands in the second match on Friday, just toyed with their South Asian opponents, who were helpless throughout the match and could hardly produce any resistance against Bangladesh's onslaught.

The charges of Robert Martin Ryles took only seven minutes to break the deadlock with Moinul Islam making a few exchanges with Jony Shikdar before playing a cross from the left side to Emo Islam Babu, who rose high to nod home before Moinul drove off target in the 11th minute.

With Bangladesh playing in Maldives' half, Sajed Hasan Jummon suddenly let loose a powerful shot from outside the box which reached the back of the net following a deflection off a Maldivian defender in the 14th minute. Apurbo Mali widened the lead with a header in the 23rd minute.

Moinul, who struck a brace against both Cambodia and Faroe Islands, made it 4-0 in the 37th minute by driving an Emon square-pass home from inside the box.

After resumption, Moinul scored Bangladesh's fifth goal by converting a penalty in the 52nd minute before an unwanted incident marred the match.

Maldivian forward Mohammed Raif Fazeel was involved in a scuffle

with Bangladeshi players following a foul and was subsequently sent off by Kuwaiti referee Ali Shaban, who was also forced to give marching orders to a Maldivian official. The Maldivian officials seemed frustrated with the decision from the referee, who also sent off head coach Mohammad Nizam in the latter part of the match.

The match resumed after seven minutes and Bangladesh kept their possession intact against 10-man Maldives, pressing hard to widen the margin with Saiful Islam rattling the crossbar in the 82nd minute.

Moinul eventually completed a hat-trick with his seventh goal of the tournament to wrap up the victory in the 86th minute. The lad from Barisal made space behind himself by receiving a cut-back from before turning around to drive a powerful shot from inside the box past goalkeeper Zaidhaan Mohamed. The win not only secured the first trophy of the season for Bangladesh but also put their disappointment of the SAFF U-15 and AFC U-16 campaigns behind.



--AFP

Yeasin's redemption

ATTIQUE ANAM from Chattogram

Yeasin Khan was once regarded as one of the stalwarts of defence in the Bangladesh national team alongside his long-time mate, Topu Barman.

But while Topu's influence as a centre-back has only grown with his assured performances down the years, Yeasin, who made his debut for the Red and Greens in a 2014 FIFA friendly against India, lost his place in the national team in March, 2016 due to a six-month suspension owing to alleged indiscipline in March, 2016.

And then as he was trying to get back, he suffered a career-threatening ACL injury while playing for Sheikh Jamal against Saif Sporting Club.

Such a suspension and the long lay-offs due to debilitating injuries could potentially derail a player's career. Yeasin, too, had feared whether he will ever make it back to the national team. But he got full support from his family, for which he is grateful.

"It was hard for me at that time. It's difficult to come back to full form from an injury like that. But I got full support from my family. They told me to keep training and not worry about getting back into the team. The suspension was frustrating as I felt I was not liable. However, I forgot everything and started things afresh," Yeasin reflected while looking back at that period at a hotel in Chattogram on Saturday.

Following the injury, Yeasin moved from the powerhouse of Sheikh Jamal to Sheikh Russel, where he slowly started to find his feet again.

Thanks to some assured performances with Sheikh Russel, Yeasin was once again called up to the national team after more than two years



PHOTO: ATTIQUE ANAM

but he found it hard to get into the starting eleven, with the likes of Topu, Tutul Hossain Badsha and Nasiruddin Chowdhury being the preferred options.

While his performances did not always match his reputation, Yeasin returned a more mature player, atoning for the past indiscipline. As time went by, he became more dependable for club and country, helping Sheikh Russel concede the second lowest number of goals in the league last season.

After Topu suffered a long-term injury in the middle of the last season, Yeasin once again became the go-to man at the centre of defence for the national team.

"It's very competitive now. Young players are coming in and they have more energy. You have to maintain good fitness to be in the team. If you get injured, someone else will take your place and it will be tough to get back," said the

28-year-old, who was recently signed up by league champions Bashundhara Kings for the next season.

But he is facing the challenge with more aplomb and clinical performances with every passing game, while improving his goal-scoring skill from set-pieces, which Topu used to do on a regular basis.

The centre-back scored two goals against Bhutan as Bangladesh warmed up for the challenge of World Cup Qualifiers against Qatar and India.

Marshalling a defence with three very young players, Yeasin helped keep the Asian champions at bay for most of the match in an eventual 2-0 defeat. But that performance was even surpassed by his performance against India, where despite suffering a head injury very early in the match, he made sure Indian forwards like Sunil Chhetri and Ashique Kuruniyan never found free space to operate in and around the box.

"I was dizzy for five minutes after that injury. But after heading the ball a few times, things settled. Our plan was to not give them free space and block the channels around the danger zone. The coach told us not to get overwhelmed by the crowd and play without pressure," said the veteran, who was inquired about by Mohun Bagan officials following that performance.

While there is more competition among the players for the national team, Yeasin believes it only bodes well for the future.

"With the young players showing good form, I believe we will be a much better side in the coming days. I am quite sure it won't be easy for India to take three points from our home in the return fixture next year. And if the improvement continues, we will be a very strong side in next year's SAFF Championship," Yeasin opined.

No matches today as fixtures keep changing

SPORTS REPORTER from Chattogram

While the Sheikh Kamal International Club Cup has created quite a bit of excitement among the football lovers in Chattogram and elsewhere, the tournament has also kept everyone guessing with its constant change of fixtures and teams.

In a pre-tournament event in Dhaka a week before the start, organisers had claimed that the third edition of this tournament would be the best one. While it remains to be seen whether the competition on the pitch lives up to the claim, a fixtures fiasco has already turned it into one of the most confusing events of recent times.

The tournament is being organised by Chattogram Abahani, with the Bangladesh Football Federation providing technical support. But when it comes to taking responsibility, neither party is willing to take the lead, instead shying away from it. The most disappointing aspect is the dissemination of information as there is no official spokesman to answer the queries, with different versions coming from different persons.

Even before the tournament started, the organisers continued to change the names of participating teams before settling on the final line-up for the 'October 19-29' tournament. But soon the deadline was shifted to October 19-30 to trim one match

from the opening day to allow for an opening ceremony.

The big confusion started on the night of October 16 when Abahani -- one of the most popular clubs of the country -- withdrew their name. Gokulam Kerala were contacted to replace Abahani, but instead of the Indian club's greenlight, the organisers could not officially confirm their participation, keeping the media and other participating teams guessing.

Eventually when the Kerala outfit were officially confirmed yesterday, the fixtures were altered twice within hours, with the first one scheduling one match each on October 21 and 22 before the second one fixed two matches on October 22, with October 21 as a rest day.

According to the latest schedule, there will be no matches today while Chennai City FC will take on Terengganu FC at 4:00pm tomorrow, followed by the match between Bashundhara Kings and Gokulam Kerala at 7:00pm.

The latest change in fixtures have been made to allow Chennai City FC, who were scheduled to arrive yesterday, and Gokulam Kerala, who are scheduled to arrive today, some preparation and adjustment time.

The change of date of these matches means the group stages will now end on October 26, with both semifinals taking place on October 28.

FARAAZ GOLD CUP South East face Gono in final

SPORTS REPORTER

The curtains are set to fall on this year's United Group Faraaz Inter-University Gold Cup football tournament after South East University take on Gono University in the final at the Bangabandhu National Stadium today.

South East, who lost to Fareast University in tiebreakers in last edition's final, will hope to put that disappointment behind them by securing the title. South East stormed into the final with a 4-1 win over Bangladesh University of Textile in the semifinal.

Meanwhile, Gono University showed consistency to reach the final of the tournament for the first time. They entered the competition having clinched the Bangabandhu Inter-University title. Gono University could have the edge over South East as they beat the same opponent 1-0 in a group stage match.

State minister for youth and sports Zahid Ahsan Russell, the mother of Faraaz Ayaaz Hossain, Simin Hossain, advocate Saifuzzaman Shekhur MP and sponsor United Power Generation and Distribution director Nizamuddin Hasan are expected to be present during the prize-giving ceremony.

BFF technical and strategic director Smalley quits post

SPORTS REPORTER

The Bangladesh Football Federation's (BFF) technical and strategic director, Paul Smalley, flew out for Melbourne, Australia last night after failing to secure an extension for his contract, which came to an end in August.

Smalley, who was initially given a two-year deal in August 2016 which was extended by a year, had been working here on an ad-hoc basis for the last two months. The reason behind his departure was that he allegedly demanded a higher salary and a long-term contract, which the game's local governing body refused to accept.

"He is leaving tonight and is probably not coming back this year," announced BFF president Kazi Salahuddin during a hurriedly arranged press briefing at the BFF house, where Smalley was present, yesterday.

"I personally thanked him for his effort, hard-work and thinking and I understand the reasons behind his departure. We worked with him for the last three years and you saw the progress of Bangladesh football in every sector. He did tremendous work with the coaches' education and the miracle development in women's football," said Salahuddin, whose tenure will expired in April next year.

"It is a bad time as well as a pleasing time for me. Bad time because I feel that it is time to leave and pleasing time since we accomplished a lot of things in the last three years," Smalley said. "I had a long chat with the president, who has a vision for 2020, but I think we need a long vision to go to the next level.

"We reached a high level at age-group-junior level tournaments with the coaches' education and there is a lot of positivity in national football team. I quit because of two reasons, firstly I needed a career change and the second is that I need longevity in my occupation because I believe in confirmation [of my post]."

Young Elephants down Mohun Bagan

SPORTS REPORTER from Chattogram

Young Elephants of Laos staged a massive surprise on the second day of the Sheikh Kamal International Club Cup, beating Kolkata giants Mohun Bagan 2-1 in an entertaining Group A fixture at the MA Aziz Stadium in Chattogram yesterday.

The unfancied side from Southeast Asia, who have come with a very young group of home grown players, fought back from a goal down to cancel out Mohun Bagan's early lead. And then down to 10 men, the Laotians scored the winning goal to make a massive dent in the chances and pride of one of the oldest and most decorated clubs of South Asia.

Despite it being a pre-season tournament for them, Mohun Bagan came to Chattogram with high ambitions and boasting five foreign players. But their performance on the pitch failed to match their reputation as they found it hard to get the better of the Young Elephants.

The match could have gone either way, but the tactical superiority of Young Elephants coach coupled with a clinical effort from their players eventually had the Southeast Asians on the winning side.

Kibu Vicuna's Mohun Bagan took the lead in the 18th minute when Joseba Beitia's corner was headed towards the far post, where Julen Olaziola found the net with a diving header.

The Spaniard then hit the post with a powerful header on 36 minutes before Somxay Keohanam scored the equaliser six minutes later with



Laos club Young Elephants' striker Somxay Keohanam (top) scored twice to stun Kolkata giants Mohun Bagan with a 2-1 defeat in a Sheikh Kamal Club Cup fixture at the MA Aziz Stadium in Chattogram yesterday.

PHOTO: RAJIB RAIHAN

a clever chip after Chanthachone Thinolath had set him up following a mazy dribble into the box.

Both sides had chances to win the game in the second half as a brilliant 25-yard strike in the 72nd minute from Keohanam cannoned off the crossbar before Mohun Bagan were awarded a powerful volley on a superb cross penalty in the 86th minute after Olaziola from skipper Vanna Bounlovobgsa.

was brought down inside the box.

Young Elephants were reduced to 10 men for that offence but Beita's effort was blocked by Young Elephants goalkeeper Xaysavath. The 25-yard strike in the 72nd minute from Keohanam finished the move with a powerful volley on a superb cross penalty in the 86th minute after Olaziola from skipper Vanna Bounlovobgsa.

Mallorca stun insipid Real

REUTERS, Madrid

Real Madrid's unbeaten start to La Liga came to an abrupt end as Real Mallorca claimed a stunning 1-0 victory at Son Moix on Saturday to climb out of the relegation zone.

The Balearic Islanders had only managed six goals in their opening eight games of their first season back in the big time, but one -- from Lago Junior -- was enough to down their illustrious visitors.

Defeat cost Real the chance to reclaim top spot from Barcelona.

Rohit's 212 pummels SA

AFP, Ranchi

Rohit Sharma Sunday described his maiden Test double ton as "most challenging" after putting India in control of the third game versus South Africa.

Sharma made 212 as India declared on 497 for nine on day two in Ranchi. Ajinkya Rahane made 115 and the pair had a 267-run fourth-wicket stand.

"I (have) played only 30 Tests," said Sharma. "In terms of what was thrown at me, I would say this was probably the most challenging one."

The tourists were in trouble at nine for two after India's pacer cause havoc.