

What to WATCH

DAY'S EVENT

BTV & CHANNEL 9

Sheikh Kamal Int'l Club Cup Semifinal

Terengganu v Mohun Bagan

Live from 7:00pm

TEN 2

Serie A

Parma v Verona

Live from 12:00am (Wednesday)

Brescia v Inter Milan

Live from 2:00am (Wednesday)

National Cricket League

Four-Day Match, Day Four

Time (All Matches): 9:00am

Dhaka Div v Khulna

Venue: SKICS, Cox's Bazar

Rajshahi v Rangpur

Venue: SKICS, Cox's Bazar

Barisal v Dhaka

Venue: SCS, Bogra

Chattogram v Sylhet

Venue: SKS, Rajshahi

Sheikh Kamal Int'l Club Cup

Semifinal

Terengganu FC v Mohun Bagan

Time: 7:00pm

Venue: MA Aziz Stadium, Chattogram

Chattogram Abahani forward Chinedu Matthew (C) celebrates his winning goal with teammates during their Sheikh Kamal International Club Cup semifinal against Gokulam Kerala at the MA Aziz Stadium yesterday.

PHOTO: RAJIB RAIHAN

# Chattogram Abahani fight their way back into final

ATIQUE ANAM from Chattogram

Chattogram Abahani twice fought back to beat Gokulam Kerala 3-2 in an entertaining first semifinal of the Sheikh Kamal International Club Cup at the MA Aziz Stadium in Chattogram yesterday.

The 2015 edition champions twice found themselves a goal down against the Durand Cup winners, but Ivorian midfielder Jean Charles Didier twice got the hosts back into the match before Chinedu Matthew's extra-time goal gave them a well-deserved victory.

The home side, who were knocked out from the semifinals of the last edition, will face the winners of the second semifinal between Terengganu FC and Mohun Bagan in Thursday's final.

Chattogram Abahani coach Maruful Haque made five changes from the previous match, going back to his preferred starting eleven and the home side looked the more adventurous in the early passage of the game even though their attacks found no end result.

Matthew and Arifur Rahman tried

some incisive moves down the flanks but Luka Rotkovic, playing ahead of the two, somehow failed to find a way past the opposition defence.

Gokulam Kerala broke the deadlock in the 29th minute, somewhat against the run of play when Henry Kisekka shrugged off

<b>Ctg Abahani</b>	<b>3 – 2 Gokulam Kerala</b>
(Didier 46', 89'; Matthew 105')	(Kisekka 29'; Joseph 80')

his marker Ikbol Jon, and despite a slight tackle from Riyadul Hasan, the Ugandan striker managed to poke the ball home past Chattogram Abahani keeper Mohammad Nehal.

The Durand Cup winners looked stronger and stronger as the match progressed despite not being too adventurous, but Didier got his side right back into the game with a clever finish a minute after restart following a through-pass from Arifur Rahman.

Gokulam Kerala upped the ante and skipper Marcus Joseph almost got his side the lead back on the hour-

mark, his shot from an acute angle tipped over by Nehal. The Trinidadian striker, though, was on target from a similar attempt 20 minutes later after being set up by Kisekka.

With the clock running down on Chattogram Abahani, Didier once again stepped up to rescue his side with a thumping shot from inside the box on 89 minutes after following a cutback from substitute Sohel Rana.

Both sides looked weary as the game entered extra time, but the home side, buoyed by a strong crowd at their own backyard, found a way to raise their game.

Substitute midfielder Kawsar Ali Rabbi made a mazy run down the left and delivered an excellent cross for Matthew, whose initial effort was blocked by a defender. The Nigerian had a second bite of the cherry and made no mistake to smash the rebound home in the last minute of the first half of extra time.

Skipper Jamal Bhuiyan limped out soon to a rousing ovation from the crowd and the home side threw everything, including substitute defender Plane Petar, to keep Gokulam Kerala at bay and salvage a victory.

## Arambagh miss transfer window

SPORTS REPORTER

Arambagh Krira Shanga's last effort to extend the players' transfer window for the upcoming Bangladesh Premier League went in vain and virtually lead them to make the final decision to pull out of the transfers yesterday.

Arambagh KS general secretary Yaqub Ali sought an extension for the transfers' window at yesterday's meeting of the professional football league committee, which however stuck to its previous decision to close the window on November 20.

"Everyone sympathises with Arambagh KS as its general secretary Yaqub Ali sought the extension of the players' transfers but it was not possible to extend the window as all other clubs have already invested and formed their respective squads and

they can't sit idle for one club. Besides, we can't keep other clubs waiting because of one club," said BFF general secretary Abu Nayeem Shohag after the meeting.

"Though the Arambagh official told the meeting that they will be trying to form a squad after discussing the matter with other officials, it seems that they won't be able to form the squad within the time-frame," continued Shohag, adding that Mohammedan also sought a two-week extensions for the transfers but have nevertheless begun the processes of forming a squad.

An Arambagh KS official on Sunday told The Daily Star that they decided in principle to pull out of the ongoing transfer window due to financial constraints as the club has remained closed since RAB busted several illegal gambling dens at clubs which included Arambagh KS.

## Federer pulls out from Paris Masters

AFP, Paris

World number three Roger Federer announced on Monday that he was withdrawing from this week's Paris Masters in order to "pace" himself for the next year.

"I am extremely disappointed to have to pull out of the Paris Masters," he said in a statement.

"I am sorry for my French fans who I will see next year at Roland Garros."

## Hockey will progress in its own way: Serniabat

SPORTS REPORTER

Bangladesh Hockey Federation (BHF) president and Bangladesh Air Force Chief Marshal Masihuzzaman Serniabat said yesterday that the country's hockey scene will develop in its own way as 'progress cannot be halted due to a single individual'. Serniabat made these remarks in reference to BHF general secretary AKM Mominul Haque Shaeed, who is currently abroad following his alleged involvement in illegal gambling, after the game's local governing body yesterday sat for its third meeting sans Shaeed.

At the meeting, nine sub-committees were formed to run the regular activities of hockey and discussed how to celebrate the 100th birthday of Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman next year.

"It was a routine meeting which is very important for us because we discussed the programmes we want to hold in celebration of the 100th birthday of the father of nation, Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman. We also discussed about how we could take the country's hockey forward in the future," said Serniabat during an interval of the meeting at Falcon Hall of Bangladesh Air Force yesterday.

"Those who are here are working to take hockey forward. The progress of hockey is not dependant on an individual, rather it is the collective effort of all stakeholders of the past and present. What we lack are artificial turfs at the district level. We should provide them but we could not.

However, we sought the allocation from the government and hope to get the budget as we want to play the Hockey World Cup in 2022," said the Air Chief Marshal.

Replying to a query, Serniabat said, "If anyone is accused of anything and that is taken before the court, then we can take action in line with the constitution of the hockey federation. Besides, there is also a provision to take action against the person who remains absent for three successive meetings or stays away from hockey activities for successive six months. But the time hasn't come yet. Besides, no one has made any allegations against him [Mominul Haque Shaeed] to me though the things came in the media. Nothing depends on an individual. There is no chance to discuss it since everything is written in the constitution."

The BHF president added that, "Everything has an alternative. If I'm not here, then there is the deputy. There are two joint secretaries if the general secretary is not there. The joint secretary will take over responsibilities and at this point we don't have any problem."

Serniabat seems more eager to learn how to take the country's hockey forward, install tournaments for junior players, hold the premier league as well as continue training for players. He is also equally interested in taking women's hockey forward following the national team's good performance in the just concluded Women's Junior (U-21) AHF Cup in Singapore.

## Mohun Bagan face Terengganu juggernaut

SPORTS REPORTER from Chattogram

Terengganu FC of Malaysia will be the favourites when they take on Mohun Bagan from Kolkata in the second semifinal of the Sheikh Kamal International Club Cup at the MA Aziz Stadium in Chattogram today.

The match will kick off at 7:00pm.

The Malaysian side topped Group B with two comprehensive wins and a draw and they scored the most number of goals (9) in the tournament so far.

They have a quality forward line, which includes lethal centre-forward Bruno Suzuki, playmaker Andrew Lee Tuck and the very skilful Syafik Bin Kamal.

The first two have scored seven goals in the tournament while Syafik has been involved in setting up some of their goals.

The team's coach, Nafuzi Mohamad Zain, was confident of his team making it to the final.

"It will not be easy against Mohun Bagan, but I believe if my players can do what they have done in the three games, we will be in the final," Zain said in his pre-semifinal analysis.

The Malaysian admitted that his opponents have a physical advantage, but

believes the technical ability of his players makes them the better side.

"Mohun Bagan are a very physical team with six foreigners. Our team are not as physical, shorter players. But our team have more players with technical ability," the coach added.

The team's captain, Lee Tuck, assessed the challenge from the Indian side. "We've got a tough game against Mohun Bagan; they're very physical, they run very hard. We need to raise our game to compete physically," he said.

"The only target is to win, doesn't matter if we play beautiful football or have a fight within the game. It's all about winning now. The goal is to get to the final," the Englishman added.

Mohun Bagan started the tournament with a defeat before registering two victories to sneak into the semifinals. They have scored only four goals, but also conceded only two. They have been less than impressive so far and will need to play their best if they are to get past the Malaysian side. "We are trying to play a good match and advance to the final," Mohun Bagan coach Kibu Vicuna said. "We are going to prepare as well as possible. We are playing better every day."

## Tigresses lose T20 series 2-0

SPORTS REPORTER

The visiting Bangladesh women's team have lost the three-match T20I series against their Pakistani counterparts 2-0 as Salma Khatun and her troops succumbed to a 15-run defeat in the second match at the Gaddafi Stadium in Lahore yesterday.

In chase of a challenging 168-run target, Bangladesh ended on 152 for seven in 20 overs. Sanjida Islam top scored for the Tigresses with 45. Sadia Iqbal was the pick of the bowlers for Pakistan as she bagged three wickets.

Earlier, Pakistan posted 167 for three in 20 after being asked to bat with skipper Bismah Maroof remaining not out on 70 runs off 50 balls while opener Javeria Khan added 52.

Jahanara Alam was the pick of the bowlers for Bangladesh as she scalped two wickets for just 27 runs.

Bangladesh will look to avoid a whitewash when they take on the hosts in the third and final match of the series tomorrow.

(Inset) After the first two days were washed out by rain, the third day of the four-day match between the Bangladesh under-19 cricket team and their Sri Lankan counterparts saw the visitors post 155 for three at the Shaheed Abdur Rab Serniabat Stadium in Barishal yesterday. Fans turned up in droves to witness the match as the venue rarely sees international fixtures being played.

PHOTO: TITU DAS

AFP, Paris

Mauro Icardi and Kylian Mbappe both scored twice as Paris Saint-Germain demolished their old rivals Marseille 4-0 on Sunday in a game that further laid bare the gulf that exists between the sides and allowed the reigning champions to extend their lead at the top of Ligue 1.

Icardi scored twice in the first 26 minutes at the Parc des Princes and Mbappe, on his return to the starting line-up after a recent struggle with injury, added a brace of his own before the interval against Andre Villas-Boas's hapless visitors in the 'Classique'.

Again preferred to all-time club record goal-scorer Edinson Cavani in attack, on-loan Inter Milan striker Icardi now has seven goals in PSG's last five games.

"Coming to PSG, I knew I would have to score goals. That is what I have always done and that is what I wanted to do here," Icardi told Canal Plus.

"I have played with some really great players but this is clearly the best team I have played in."

Mbappe, scorer of a hattrick in the 5-0 win at Club Brugge in the Champions League in midweek, has six in his last three matches -- he scored a hattrick as a substitute in Belgium before starting here for the first time in two months.

PSG are eight points clear already at the top of Ligue 1, with this win coming after second-placed Nantes lost 1-0 at home to Monaco on Friday.

Another league title already looks inevitable, with Thomas Tuchel's team once more far too strong for one of the clubs seen as their most likely challengers at the beginning of the campaign.

PSG were again without the injured Neymar, while Idrissa Gueye -- their most impressive midfielder

Paris Saint-Germain superstar Kylian Mbappe celebrates his second goal against Olympique Marseille during their Ligue 1 encounter at the Parc des Princes on Sunday.

PHOTO: AFP

this season -- was also sidelined, but neither was missed.

There remains much hype around this fixture in France as it brings together the country's two best-supported clubs, yet it is a long time since Marseille have been a match for their rivals from the capital.

For a period in the 1990s, the sides were fighting it out with one another for the title. Now, with PSG transformed into the dominant force in Ligue 1 since the Qatari takeover of the club in 2011, Marseille simply cannot compete.

They have not beaten PSG since November 2011, with American owner Frank McCourt in attendance here to see their winless run in the intervening period stretch to 20 matches.

"I was very proud of the way we played in the second half but the result doesn't interest me against this team," admitted Villas-Boas, whose team remain seventh, two points adrift of the top three. "Our objective remains the podium."

This game may have been very

different had Valere Germain converted an excellent chance in the 10th minute. Instead, PSG went straight up to the other end of the field and seized the lead.

Angel Di Maria crossed for Icardi, whose header was saved by Steve Mandanda. However, Icardi was on hand to convert the rebound.

Icardi was then denied by Mandanda after Mbappe set up the Argentine, but he snatched his second of the night on 26 minutes, getting to Marco Verratti's ball into the box before Mandanda and nodding in.

PSG then began to toy with their visitors and got their third just after the half-hour as Verratti's pass sprung the offside trap and found Di Maria, who squared for Mbappe to tap in.

Di Maria has been in outstanding form recently and got his second assist of this game with a stunning outside-of-the-boot pass to release Mbappe to make it 4-0 at the end of a mesmerising team move.