

What to WATCH

SONY ESPN

UEFA Champions League

Galatasaray v Club Brugge

Live from 11:55pm

Crvena Zvezda v Bayern Munich

Live from 2:00am (Wednesday)

TEN 2

UEFA Champions League

Lokomotiv Moscow v Leverkusen

Live from 11:55pm

Juventus v Atletico Madrid

Live from 2:00am (Wednesday)

SONY SIX

UEFA Champions League

Man City v Shakhtar Donetsk

Live from 2:00am (Wednesday)

TEN 1

UEFA Champions League

Real Madrid v PSG

Live from 2:00am (Wednesday)

Nadal inspires Spain to sixth triumph

AFP, Madrid



Rafael Nadal put the finishing touches to his extraordinary year by clinching a sixth Davis Cup title for Spain on Sunday as he beat Denis Shapovalov in Madrid to seal victory over Canada.

Nadal's 6-3, 7-6 (9/7) win over Shapovalov in front of an adoring home crowd at the Caja Magica gave Spain an unassailable 2-0 lead after Roberto Bautista Agut earlier battled past Felix Auger-Aliassime 7-6 (7/3), 6-3.

"I'm incredibly happy to end the year like this," said Nadal afterwards.

The 33-year-old had been an unstoppable force in Spain's pulsating semi-final against Britain on Saturday and never looked like letting this chance slip, with King Felipe VI and Real Madrid's Sergio Ramos watching on, along with Barcelona defender Gerard Pique.

Pique's marketing company Kosmos have been at the heart of the raft of changes to this 119-year-old competition but Nadal's brilliance has been familiar, even if this will surely go down as one of the finest seasons of the 19-time Grand Slam champion's sparkling career.

He added a fourth Davis Cup final success -- three more than Roger Federer -- to the ones he claimed in 2004, 2009 and 2011, while capping a remarkable 12

months that has included winning the French and US Opens, and ending the year as world number one.

The Spanish team will also pocket a cheque worth \$2.1 million.

Nadal won eight out of eight rubbers played this week and at times on Saturday, as when he stormed to singles and doubles victories against Britain, it was tempting to view Spain's progress as something of a solo effort.

But, unlike Canada, Spain have used all five of their squad, with Bautista Agut, Pablo Carreno Busta and Feliciano Lopez all playing at least one singles match, and Lopez and Marcel Granollers joining forces in the doubles.

There has also been the undeniable advantage of the home crowd and although Spain's success has delivered a huge boost to the event in its inaugural year, some will argue it might have been fairer to find a new venue in 2020.

Hosting and mixed attendances are among several issues for Pique and the International Tennis Federation to solve in the coming months but on the court, some gripping ties have ensured the new Davis Cup has got off to an encouraging start.

Bautista Agut's win over Auger-Aliassime was particularly poignant, given the world number nine was returning after withdrawing from the team on Thursday.



Spain's Rafael Nadal (R) takes a group selfie with teammates as they celebrate with the Davis Cup trophy after winning the finals against Canada in Madrid on Sunday.

PHOTO: AFP

21st ASIAN ARCHERY Bangladeshi archers eliminated

SPORTS REPORTER



All the Bangladeshi archers including Ruman Sana were eliminated from respective individual events of the 21st Asian Archery Championships in Bangkok, Thailand yesterday.

Sana, who directly qualified for Tokyo Olympics after winning a bronze medal in World Archery Championship in Thailand earlier this year, suffered a 6-2 sets defeat against Thailand's Pathairat Tanapat in the third round of men's individual recurve, where Tamimul Islam and Hakib Ahmed Rubel also lost in the second round.

In women's individual recurve event, Nasrin Akter lost by 6-2 sets against Ankita Bhakat; Beauty Roy lost by 7-3 sets to Ohashi Tomoka; Iti Khatun lost by 6-0 sets to An Qixuan while Mehnaz Akter lost by 6-5 sets to Mazlan Nuramalia. All four archers were eliminated from the second round.

In men's compound event, Sohel Rana and Ashim Kumar Das lost to Abhishek Verma (145-140) and Bhardwaj Mohan Ramswaroop (147-143) while Shaymoli Roy and Susmita Banik lost to Kiran Muskan (143-143) and Lin Ming-Ching (143-137) in women's recurve event.

In recurve mixed event, Bangladesh lost by 5-1 sets to North Korea while Bangladesh compound mixed team suffered a 155-154 points defeat to South Korea in the quarterfinals.

The elimination of all the archers is a worrying sign for Bangladesh ahead of next week's South Asian Games where Bangladesh is hoping to win a few gold medals in archery events.

Quality foreigners dominate BPL transfer window

SPORTS REPORTER



Country's top-flight football, over the last decade, witnessed physically imposing African footballers who often lacked quality, but the scenario is rapidly changing in the Bangladesh Premier League since the last season with the presence of quality foreign players in all the clubs.

Though the giants used to hire comparatively skilled African footballers, the mid-and-lower-table sides used to rely on physically imposing African players without thinking of their quality, with low payment being one of the major reasons to sign them in previous years.

However, the scenario is changing rapidly, especially after the game's local governing body made it a must to include at least one player in each side under Asian quota.

The recent seven-week transfer window closed on November 20 where some 66 foreign players from 24 countries were signed up by the participating 13 clubs. Of those foreign recruits, 36 are new signings who came to Bangladesh for the first time.

Like the previous editions, African players still dominated the transfer market, with 29 players from the continent -- Nigeria (13), Gambia (5), Cameroon (3), Mali (2), Guinea (2), Egypt (2), Rwanda (1) and Sierra Leone (1). However, there is a big contingent of 20 Asian players -- Uzbekistan (7), Kyrgyzstan (5), Japan (3), Tajikistan (3), Lebanon (1), East Timor (1) this time around.

Apart from Asia and Africa, there are also players from Montenegro, Bulgaria, Brazil, Argentina, USA, Colombia, Haiti, Costa Rica, Ivory Coast and Australia.

Maruful Haque, one of the top coaches of the country, believes modern technology and an open transfer market are helping club officials and coaching staff to choose quality players.

"The clubs can nowadays search for quality players in the open market and easily get video footages of 20 quality footballers within an hour through agents. That's why players from other continents, with good academic background, are being preferred over African players and," Chattogram Abahani coach Marful said.

"Compared to the previous

years, better quality foreign players are coming into the Bangladesh Premier League and they have been contributing to change the standard of Bangladesh football because they are technically and tactically superior to the physical ones. The local players are also learning from them, especially their technique," Maruful added.

Sheikh Russel coach Saiful Bari Titu believes the Bangladesh Premier League is getting more competitive due to the presence of quality foreign players.

"The last league was one of the most competitive one I have seen and I think the upcoming season will be even more competitive as every team is trying to bring quality foreign players," said Titu, who believes the mandatory norm of having Asian players raised the bar of the league.

"Clubs have tried to rope in national players from Asian nations, especially from Uzbekistan, Tajikistan and Kyrgyzstan who are better than Bangladeshi players. Besides, clubs have also shown tendency to rope in European and South American players because they are easy to deal with compared to African players," said Titu.

Neymar has 'matured'

AFP, Paris



When Paris Saint-Germain travel to Spain on Tuesday to face Real Madrid in the Champions League it will be with a Neymar who has, according to his teammate Marquinhos, grown up.

"Neymar has lived things that have matured him as a person, and as a player," the PSG vice-captain told AFP.

There is no doubt that there have been plenty of concerns for the French side over their record 222 million euro signing since he joined from Barcelona in 2017.

The 27-year-old forward has helped PSG to two titles in a weak Ligue 1 but has failed to inspire them to the heights in the Champions League, the main reason for the Qatar-financed club indulging in such a massive outlay in the first place.

He is generally respected by the fans but not loved. Indeed there was some jeering when he was substituted during Friday's win over Lille, his first game in six weeks following a hamstring injury.

Part of the antipathy was his exerted and ultimately failed efforts to secure a transfer back to Barcelona during the summer.

Marquinhos, however, is in no doubt about the commitment that his fellow Brazilian brings to the Parisian cause.

"Ney has always been thorough," says the 25-year-old central defender.

"He is someone who doesn't do things by halves. It shows on the field. When he takes the ball he wants to be decisive.

"Once he's on the pitch, even after all that happened during the transfer window and the other stories, he's back on the pitch to win, to score, to make a difference.

"He's not hiding. He proves that he is totally committed alongside us."

Neymar's return on Friday was his first appearance for PSG since October 5, having suffered a hamstring injury playing for Brazil against Nigeria a week later.

"There are other things to say as well. He worked well during the week, he did everything right," says Marquinhos.

"I think we should put more emphasis on the good things he does rather than the negative things.

"As a friend, he always does good things but we don't talk about them."

BCF plans to revive school chess

SPORTS REPORTER

The Bangladesh Chess Federation (BCF) is planning to resurrect school chess tournament and produce at least two Grand Masters within the next two years, claimed a top official of the federation yesterday.

"The federation is thinking of reviving the school chess tournament. We are trying to rope in a big sponsor for five years. If we can provide a good platform like school tournament, we can get some good players in future," said BCF president and RAB director general Benazir Ahmed during the inauguration programme of 1st SAARC Chess Championships at a hotel in the capital yesterday.

"Bangladesh chess is progressing and we want to produce two to three GMs within the next two years. If we can arrange big tournaments more, players will get more opportunities to play and earn GM norms," said the BCF president.

Some 87 male and 22 female players including two GMs and six IMs from Afghanistan, Bangladesh, India, Maldives, Nepal, Pakistan and Sri Lanka are taking part in the inaugural SAARC Chess Championships.



Real Madrid star Gareth Bale (C) jogs with teammates during a training session at the club's sports facilities in Madrid yesterday, the eve of their Champions League clash against Paris Saint-Germain.

PHOTO: REUTERS

Bale in focus as Real face PSG

AFP, Madrid



When Zinedine Zidane dropped Gareth Bale for a Champions League game against Paris Saint-Germain last year, Bale believed it was the beginning of the end at Real Madrid.

Two seasons on he remains but Madrid face PSG again at the Santiago Bernabeu on Tuesday, with the Welshman's future still in doubt and his standing among the fans perhaps never lower.

Madrid's two last 16 legs against PSG in the Champions League in 2018, towards the end of Zidane's

first spell as coach and en route to their third consecutive European triumph, marked a turning-point between Bale and his coach.

By leaving him out, Zidane's message was clear: he did not trust Bale in the biggest matches. The pair hardly spoke for the rest of the season, even as Bale scored twice as a substitute in the final against Liverpool.

Bale was set upon leaving that summer, only for Zidane to go instead, and while Bale stayed, Zidane came back and their relationship has been frosty ever since.

But in the last few weeks, as Bale's behaviour has wavered and

the criticism increased, Zidane has become his staunchest defender.

When Bale joined up with Wales despite missing six Real Madrid games through injury, Zidane said it was bad timing.

And when Bale celebrated behind a flag that put his club lower down his list of priorities than his country and playing golf, Zidane urged the fans to remember his achievements.

"There's a lot of noise, too much. He wants to be with us and do well and he's done that. Talk, talk, talk, it's not necessary. He's a big part of the group and we are together."

Basketball coach refrained from his job

SPORTS REPORTER

Bangladesh women's basketball team's coach Sabuj Miah has been refrained from working with the team until Bangladesh Basketball Federation (BBF) looks into allegations against him of slapping a female national player within the next two days.

The Bangladesh Olympic Association (BOA) took the decision yesterday after talking to both parties following the allegation brought by the father of that player.

"We called on both parties and talked to them separately. There might be some ifs and buts and we asked the federation to investigate the matter within two days and submit a report to BOA by November 27. Till that time, coach Sabuj Miah will refrain from his job with women's national team," said BOA director general Fakruddin Haider adding that BOA has a zero-tolerance stance on such issues.

Sabuj Miah appeared at the BOA headquarters with eight other national female players, but BOA committee did not hear anything from those players.

প্রাইভেট ইকোনমিক জোনস এসোসিয়েশন অব বাংলাদেশ এর ২০১৯-২০২১ মেয়াদের নবনির্বাচিত পরিচালনা পর্ষদের দায়িত্ব গ্রহন।

সভাপতি
জনাব এ এস এম মঈনউদ্দিন মোনেম

সম্প্রতি প্রাইভেট ইকোনমিক জোনস এসোসিয়েশন অব বাংলাদেশ এর ২০১৯-২০২১ মেয়াদকালের পরিচালনা পর্ষদের নির্বাচন সম্পন্ন হয়েছে। গত ৩ সেপ্টেম্বর, ২০১৯ তারিখে এক অনুষ্ঠানের মাধ্যমে নবনির্বাচিত কমিটি আনুষ্ঠানিকভাবে দায়িত্ব গ্রহন করেছে। উক্ত অনুষ্ঠানে এসোসিয়েশনের নব-নির্বাচিত সভাপতি জনাব এ এস এম মঈনউদ্দিন মোনেম, সিনিয়র সহ-সভাপতি জনাব জিয়াউর রহমান, সহ-সভাপতি জনাব মালিক তালহা ইসলাম বারী, পরিচালক জনাব সালাউদ্দিন কাশেম খান, জনাব রফিকুল ইসলাম, জনাব মোস্তফা কামাল, জনাব আসলামুল হক এমপি দায়িত্ব গ্রহন করেন।