

What to WATCH

GTV & MAASRANGA
Bangladesh Premier League
Dhaka v Rajshahi
Live from 1:30pm
Khulna v Chattogram
Live from 6:30pm

SONY ESPN
Sri Lanka v Pakistan
First Test, Day Two
Live from 10:45am

SONY SIX
Australia v New Zealand
First Test, Day One
Live from 11:00am

TEN 2
UEFA Europa League
Liece v Arsenal
Live from 11:55pm
Man United v Alkmaar
Live from 2:00am (Friday)

DAY'S EVENT

Bangladesh Premier League
Venue: Sher-e-Bangla National Stadium, Dhaka
Dhaka v Rajshahi

Time: 1:30pm
Khulna v Chattogram
Time: 6:30pm

GATTUSO IN FOR AXED ANCELOTTI

Carlo Ancelotti's reign at Napoli came to an abrupt end on Tuesday as the coach was sacked despite a 4-0 win over Genoa sealing their spot in the Champions League last 16. The 60-year-old is set to be replaced by his friend and former AC Milan player Gennaro Gattuso later on Wednesday. Napoli finished second in Group E to break a nine-match winless run amid dressing room unrest and friction between the club, Ancelotti and the players. The former Real Madrid, Chelsea and PSG coach had been defiant after the game. "Resignation? I have never resigned in my life and I never will," he said.

-AFP



Barcelona's teenage sensation Ansu Fati netted a superb winner in a Champions League clash with Inter Milan and in the process became the youngest goalscorer in the tournament's history aged just 17 years and 40 days. The previous record was held by Peter Ofori-Quaye, who was 17 years and 195 days when he struck for Olympiakos in 1997, five years before Fati was born.

PHOTO: FC BARCELONA

Fati makes history to dump Inter

AFP, Milan



Teenage prodigy Ansu Fati became the youngest player to score a Champions League goal as a second-string Barcelona side beat Inter Milan 2-1 to send the Italians crashing out of the competition on Tuesday.

The 17-year-old Guinea-Bissau-born attacker picked up a Luis Suarez cross to fire home four minutes from time to become the youngest player to score in the Champions League.

Barcelona were already through to the knockout stages as Group F winners and they left six-time Ballon d'Or winner Lionel Messi at home.

But Serie A leaders Inter needed a win over the La Liga leaders or to match Borussia Dortmund's result at home to Slavia Prague to qualify on their superior head-to-head record.

Instead the Germans made it through to the knockout rounds with a 2-1 win to finish three points ahead of third-placed Inter, who go into the Europa League.

"Seeing replays of Fati's goal hurt," said Inter coach Antonio Conte. "It's a goal that cut our legs from under us and killed us from all points of view."

"We lacked that pinch of cynicism and precision to finish off. I have little to reproach my players, they have given everything." - Born scorer -

Debutant Carles Perez had put the Spaniards ahead after 23 minutes at the San Siro, but Romelu Lukaku drilled in a

equaliser just before the break to keep the hosts in the tie.

Inter's forward pair of Lukaku and Lautaro Martinez had three goals ruled offside between them, two for the Argentine who has already scored five times in the competition this year.

"There was a lot of newness because we also changed our system," said Barcelona coach Ernesto Valverde. "We had a few problems at the beginning because they put us under pressure, but little by little we managed to come out better."

"The scorers were young players, even very young for Ansu, who is a born scorer. It's a matter of pride that it's a player who is from our team. We want to win the Champions League, like the others."

Suarez had started on the bench with Antoine Griezmann and Perez leading the Spaniards attack. The Spaniards weathered an early Inter blitz on goal buoyed by the 72,000 crowd.

Daniilo D'Ambrosio blasted over in front of goal after just five minutes, with Lukaku having a goal ruled offside minutes later.

But Perez made the breakthrough with Arturo Vidal setting up the 21-year-old to beat Samir Handanovic in the Inter goal.

Martinez sent Lukaku through for the equaliser and the Belgium forward's effort took a slight deflection to beat Neto.

Martinez had the ball in the net again on 80 minutes, but again it was ruled out for Lukaku's offside position.

Finally Fati broke through to seal the win and deny Inter a return to the knockout stages for the first time since 2011/12.

'We need to change the system'

ANISUR RAHMAN

The country's footballing hopes were illuminated after a considerable time in the doldrums following the national team's impressive recent performances against higher-ranked sides in the ongoing Joint Qualifiers of the World Cup and Asia Cup. Under the guidance of British coach Jamie Day, the booters provided glimpses of hope of restoring Bangladesh football's glory days, but their performance in the just-concluded South Asian (SA) Games brought them back to the same old reality.

It was not because a Bangladesh Olympic team featuring 16 national players failed to regain the gold medal in Nepal, but instead the brand of football they exhibited during the region's biggest sporting extravaganza has become a major cause for concern.

Day was least bothered with talks of the gold medal because he never promised it. He told The Daily Star after the end of the SA Games that it would have been satisfactory had his charges reached the final, but also gave the impression that he was content with bronze.

Still, the poor performance in Nepal compelled the 40-year old to raise his fingers towards loopholes in the country's domestic football



JAMIE DAY

philosophy for the first time in his one-and-a-half-year tenure.

He also came up with some strong recommendations for the betterment of football in the country and, as usual, defended his charges' lack of goalscoring prowess.

"I think the first game [against Bhutan], we played poorly by our standards but we played much better in the other three matches and I'm pleased with the performances. We would have liked to play the final but it didn't happen. I'm happy we got a medal. I would have been very disappointed if we had not," Day said, summarising his opinion on the team's overall performance in the SA Games.

Bangladesh forwards struggled throughout the SA Games as they netted just twice in four games. Day's charges finished third in the five-team table with four points - two defeats against Bhutan and Nepal, a win against Sri Lanka and a draw against Maldives.

And Day believed the problem with scoring goals will not change any time soon.

"The issue of scoring goals will always be a problem [for Bangladesh] unless we make changes.

"The changes I believe need to happen are foreign players being reduced to two per team [in the Bangladesh Premier League], [keeping] under-23 players in starting 11s and matchday squads at

all clubs, a league season that runs in line with the international window and doesn't change, and [improved] facilities and grounds.

Day also recommended that no international games be allowed outside the window so players get enough rest and time to recover and that younger players be fielded in a league "so they can develop their skills because they just train and never play".

It was evident Day's team are good on the counter against higher-ranked sides, but they are not fluent when it comes to attacking football against sides of similar strength.

"I would agree that when we play better teams than us, we are hard to beat. We don't have much of the ball, which in a way suits us. But when we play teams who are equals, we have more possession but the problem is that our players don't play in correct positions, [in domestic leagues] so they struggle with the ball in certain areas. They are also expected to win and that creates more pressure," Day explained.

He also admitted that players from teams in other parts of the sub-continent are technically better.

"I think technically they [players of Nepal, Bhutan, Maldives, Sri Lanka] are better but that's not our players' fault. They haven't been coached correctly as younger players and these others countries have academies from a young age."

DAY'S RECOMMENDATIONS

- Foreign players being reduced to two per team
- Naming U-23 players in starting 11s and matchday squad for all clubs
- A league season that runs in line with the international window
- Improve the facilities and grounds
- No international friendly outside FIFA window
- Need to give players enough time to recover and rest
- Need to provide the young players enough room in league to develop their skills



India opener Lokesh Rahul scored a team-high 91 runs off 56 balls, smashing nine fours and four sixes, as India posted a mammoth 240 in the third and series-deciding T20I against the West Indies yesterday.

PHOTO: AFP

Urmi advances to pre-quarters

SPORTS REPORTER

Urmi Akter moved into the women's singles pre-quarterfinals of the Yonex-Sunrise Bangladesh International Challenge Badminton tournament, beating Maisa Fathuhullah Ismail at the Shaheed Tajuddin Ahmed Indoor Stadium yesterday.

Urmi overcame the Maldivian 13-21, 12-17, 25-23 to book her next match against India's Ira Sharman.

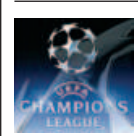
The women's doubles pair of Urmi and Dulali Halder beat Maldives' Maasha Rasheed and Moosa Aminat 24-22, 21-12 to book a quarterfinal place.

Alina Sultana and Shapla Akter also ensured a last-eight berth in women's doubles by beating Maldivian pair Maisa and Neela Najeeb 16-21, 21-10, 21-16. Two other Bangladeshi pairs lost.

In men's singles, none of Gourav Singha, Salman Khan, Tuhsar Krishna, Abdul Hamid, Mohammad Minhaz and Shuva Khandokar won.

Ajax crash out; L'pool, Chelsea through

AFP, Paris



Holders Liverpool safely negotiated Tuesday's trip to Salzburg to take their place in the last 16 of this season's Champions League and Chelsea are also through, but Ajax suffered a shock group-stage exit.

Six clubs secured spots in the draw for the first knockout round in their final group games, with Ajax and Inter the big names to miss out.

Jurgen Klopp's side just needed to draw in Austria to keep alive their bid to retain the European Cup, and they duly beat Salzburg 2-0 thanks to two goals in two second-half minutes, by Naby Keita and Mohamed Salah.

The result allowed Liverpool to progress as Group E winners, with Napoli going through in second place, while Salzburg are out and drop into the Europa League instead.

"What a team," Klopp said. "What an effort. It was a tough game."

"We scored two wonderful goals. We could have scored six or seven which is crazy. We won the group, we won the game, all good."

There was high drama in Group H as Valencia beat Ajax 1-0 in Amsterdam, Rodrigo Moreno's



Ajax players are despondent after a 1-0 loss to Valencia meant last edition's surprise semifinalists were eliminated from the group stages of the Champions League this time around.

PHOTO: AFP

strike taking the Spaniards through to the last 16 at the expense of last season's semi-finalists, and leaving their hosts stunned.

Ajax had again been impressive this season but were left to rue their inability to win either of their two matches against Chelsea, as Frank Lampard's team progressed in second place, a point ahead of the Dutch giants, thanks to a 2-1

victory against Lille.

Tammy Abraham and Cesar Azpilicueta netted first-half goals for Chelsea, who held on after Loic Remy pulled one back for Lille.

Chelsea, the 2012 Champions League winners, finish level on points with Valencia but come second due to their inferior head-to-head record.

"The Champions League is

where Chelsea belong. We knew it was a tough group. We had to fight and recover after losing against Valencia at home in our first game," Azpilicueta told BT Sport.

Ajax drop into the Europa League along with Inter, as Antonio Conte's team contrived to lose 2-1 at home to a makeshift Barcelona.

Borussia Dortmund needed to better Inter's result and they did so, beating Slavia Prague 2-1 to progress in second.

Meanwhile, Lyon went through in dramatic fashion in Group G, coming from behind to draw 2-2 with RB Leipzig.

The Germans were two goals ahead at half-time thanks to two penalties, one scored by Emil Forsberg and the other by Timo Werner.

However, Houssein Aouar's curler gave Lyon hope just after the break and Memphis Depay levelled matters with eight minutes left.

Leipzig win the group, while the draw proved enough for Lyon to finish second because Zenit Saint Petersburg lost 3-0 to Benfica in Lisbon.

Franco Cervi gave Benfica the lead before a Pizzi penalty and a Sardar Azmoun own goal, as the Portuguese side finish third.

India hit their way to series win

AFP, Mumbai



Skipper Virat Kohli led the sixes charge with seven hits over the fence to set up India's series-clinching 67-run win over the West Indies in the third T20I yesterday.

Roohan Sharma, KL Rahul and Kohli, who smashed an unbeaten 70 off 29 balls, combined to hit 16 sixes between them as the hosts posted 240 for three in Mumbai.

The Indian bowlers then kept the West Indies to 173 for eight to win the three-match series 2-1.

Sharma, who hit 71, and Rahul, who top-scored with 91, put on 135 runs for the opening wicket. Kohli soon joined the party to play the West Indies attack as he completed his fifty in just 21 deliveries.

West Indies slipped to 17-3 and were forever playing catch-up with the towering run-rate despite a valiant 39-ball 68 from skipper Kieron Pollard who hit six of the 12 maximums in the chase.

Pacemen Bhuvneshwar Kumar, Mohammed Shami, Deepak Chahar and left-arm wrist spinner Kuldeep Yadav claimed two wickets each.

"Hitman" Sharma led the batting onslaught with an attacking fifty that was brought about with two sixes and a boundary. He finally fell while attempting another big heave to be caught by Hayden Walsh Jr off Keskrick Williams.

Rahul then put on 95 runs with Kohli before getting out in the last over.
SCORES IN BRIEF
INDIA: 240 for 3 (Sharma 71, Rahul 91, Kohli 70 not out; Williams 1-37, Pollard 1-33)
WEST INDIES: 173 for 8 (Pollard 68, Hetmyer 41; Chahar 2-20, Shami 2-25, Kumar 2-41)
Result: India won by 67 runs and win series 2-1
Player-of-the-match: KL Rahul