

# What to WATCH

**GTV & MAASRANGA**  
**BBPL**  
**Dhaka v Cumilla**  
**Live from 1:30pm**  
**Khulna v Rajshahi**  
**Live from 6:30pm**

**SONY ESPN**  
**Pakistan v Sri Lanka**  
**Second Test, Day Five**  
**Live from 11:00am**

**DAY'S EVENT**

**Bangabandhu Bangladesh Premier League**  
**Venue: Zahur Ahmed Chowdhury Stadium, Chattogram**

**Dhaka v Cumilla**  
**Time: 1:30pm**  
**Khulna v Rajshahi**  
**Time: 6:30pm**

## Blind's heart procedure successful

REUTERS, Amsterdam

Dutch-born Ajax Amsterdam defender Daley Blind has undergone a successful heart operation, the Eredivisie club has said.

Blind who previously played for Manchester United between 2014 and 2018, suffered from dizziness in Ajax's Champions League match against Valencia this month, but continued playing.

The 29-year-old has been fitted with a subcutaneous implantable cardioverter defibrillator, the club confirmed on Saturday.

"The most important thing is that I'm feeling good at the moment and trying to come back as soon as possible," Blind said in a video posted on Twitter.

# Three 'Abahani players' suspended

SPORTS REPORTER



Three footballers -- Raihan Hasan, Sohel Rana and Mohammad Sohel Rana -- have been handed injunction over playing for any club in the 2019-2020 season by a High Court division bench after Sheikh Russel KC filed a First Miscellaneous Appeal against those three players after being rejected at a District Judge Court.

On December 18, a High Court bench passed an order of injunction, restricting the three players from playing for any club other than Sheikh Russel for competitions organised by the Bangladesh Football Federation (BFF).

Due to the instruction, those three players, who are currently wiith Abahani, will miss the ongoing Federation Cup even though all of them were part of Abahani's 4-0 win over Bangladesh Police in their opening match.

The BFF sent the court injunction to Abahani after receiving a copy of the court

order on December 18, the day Abahani played their first match of the Federation Cup.

"These three players have taken money from us regarding which we have all the documents, but they have signed for another club. We went to court to give a lesson to the players, who do such things every season. Our fight is against the players, not against Abahani," Sheikh Russel director of sports Saleh Jamal Selim said yesterday. He also said that these players did not even return the money they took initially from the club.

"We received the copy of injunction from the BFF. We have informed our higher authority about the issue and they will take decision," Abahani manager Satyajit Das Rupu said, adding that those three players played the first match after getting clearance from BFF's players' status committee.

Relying to a query, Rupu said, "Yes, these three players will miss the next matches but I believe we have alternative for them at the bench and it won't hurt us much."



Sheikh Jamal's Yusuke Kato (R) skips past Rahmatganj defender Mahmudul Hasan Kiron during their Federation Cup encounter at the Bangabandhu National Stadium yesterday. The match ended in a 1-1 draw.

PHOTO: BFF

# Ctg Abahani in last 8

## Rahmatganj hold Sheikh Jamal

SPORTS REPORTER



Chattogram Abahani became the first team to move into the quarterfinals of TVS Federation Cup with a 2-0 win over former champions Brothers Union in their opening match at the Bangabandhu National Stadium yesterday.

The outcome of this Group B fixture also ensured last-eight berth for last edition's runners-up Bashundhara Kings, who will take on the port city outfit on Friday to decide the group winners.

Chattogram Abahani came into season's curtain-raising tournament after clinching the title of a three-team Mymensingh Challenge tournament and a runners-up trophy in September's Sheikh Kamal International Club Cup tournament. They proved their superiority over Brothers Union, who came into the tournament on the back of only 10 days of preparation.

The port city side went very close to breaking the deadlock in the 17th minute but Brazilian Nixon Brizolara saw his left-footed shot superbly fisted by goalkeeper Titumir Chowdhury before defender Sajol denied Uzbek midfielder Shukur Ali

with a goal-line clearance.

Chattogram Abahani broke the deadlock in the 34th minute when Rakib Hossain from the right flank.

After resumption, Brothers' Uzbek forward Jonov Otabek rattled the post before Chattogram Abahani's Ivorian forward Chinedu Mathew sealed the victory in the 83rd minute with a powerful left-footed shot.

<b>RAHMATGANJ</b> (Younussa 61')	<b>1 – 1</b>	<b>SK JAMAL</b> (Monday 75')
<b>BROTHERS</b>	<b>0 – 2</b>	<b>CTG ABAHANI</b> (Nixon 34', Matthew 83')

"We are happy to accomplish our first target of qualifying for the quarterfinals. We are now looking forward to emerging group champions and take it to the final from there," Chattogram Abahani coach Maruful Haque said at post-match conference.

Brothers Union coach Mohidur Rahman Miraz said, "Every defeat is sad but we are happy with the performance of the boys because we have been checking out our weak and strong points through Federation Cup ahead of upcoming Bangladesh Premier League."

In the day's other match, Rahmatganj MFS played out a 1-1 draw against three-time champions

Sheikh Jamal DC to keep their hopes of qualifying for the quarterfinals alive with two points from two outings.

Sheikh Jamal and Saif SC are on one point each after having played one match each. If the match between Sheikh Jamal and Saif SC produce any outright result, Rahmatganj will be the second team from Group C to book a berth for quarterfinals.

After a barren first half, Rahmatganj took the lead in the 61st minute through a strike from Camara Younoussa before Nigerian forward Monday Osagie equalised for Sheikh

Jamal in the 76th minute.

"It was a do-or-die match for us because we needed points to keep our hopes alive. We could have ensured the quarterfinals had we secured full three points. Anyway, we are still hopeful of advancing to the last eight though it depends on the outcomes of last match between Sheikh Jamal and Saif SC," said Rahmatganj MFS coach Syed Golam Jilani.

"It was important for us to come back in the match. I am happy with the performance of the boys in the season's first competitive match and I'm looking forward to the next match to qualify for the quarterfinals," said Sheikh Jamal coach Shafiqul Islam Manik.



Liverpool forward Roberto Firmino (L) and goalkeeper Alisson Becker celebrate with the Club World Cup trophy after defeating Flamengo 1-0 in the tournament final at the Khalifa International Stadium in Doha on Saturday.

PHOTO: AFP

# Atalanta thrash Milan

REUTERS, Milan



Alejandro Gomez scored a stunning individual goal and Josip Ilicic notched a second-half brace as Atalanta thrashed a rudderless AC Milan 5-0 yesterday, handing their opponents their joint-heaviest Serie A defeat.

Former Milan player Mario Pasalic rubbed further salt into their wounds by also scoring. It was the fourth time Milan have lost a Serie A match by a five-goal margin and the first since 1998.

Milan are tenth in the table with 21 points while Atalanta climbed to fifth with 31 as they capped an outstanding year which saw them qualify for the Champions League for the first time and reach the last 16.

His opposite number Stefano Pioli said that Milan "approached the match in the wrong way and you just can't afford to do that against this team. This cannot be the real Milan."

Gomez opened the scoring in the 10th minute, nutmegging a hapless Andrea Conti before firing a right-foot shot past Gianluigi Donnarumma in the tenth minute.

## Flick named as Bayern head coach

REUTERS, Munich

Bayern Munich interim coach Hansi Flick will remain in charge until the end of the season, the German Bundesliga champions said yesterday.

Flick was promoted from the coaching staff after Niko Kovac's dismissal following Bayern's 5-1 thrashing away to Eintracht Frankfurt last month.

He was initially hired for two matches against Olympiakos in the Champions League and against Borussia Dortmund in the league. But after two wins he was trusted to continue until the winter break.

Following Bayern's 2-0 win at home to VfL Wolfsburg on Saturday, CEO Karl-Heinz Rummenigge and sporting director Hasan Salihamidzic agreed that continuing with Flick is "explicitly a viable option".

"Under him as head coach, the on-field development has been outstanding, both in terms of the quality of our play and the results achieved," Rummenigge said in a statement.

## Mahrez, Mane and Salah up for CAF award

REUTERS, Cairo

Liverpool pair Sadio Mane and Mohamed Salah, plus Riyad Mahrez from Manchester City, were named as the three candidates for this year's African Footballer of the Year award, to be decided next month.

Senegal talisman Mane will be the favourite for the award ahead of his Egyptian club mate after Liverpool won the Champions League. However, he faces stiff opposition from Mahrez, who won the Premier League with City and also captained Algeria to the Africa Cup of Nations title in mid-year.

The nominees were named on Sunday after being selected by a panel of technical experts from the Confederation of African Football plus former players and media.

The coaches and captains of the 54 African national teams will now vote for the winner, to be announced on Jan. 7 at a ceremony at Hurgada in Egypt.

Salah has been African Footballer of the Year the last two years while Mahrez was the winner in 2016.

Sane was third in 2016 and runner-up to Salah the last two years.

# Pakistan zero in despite Oshada century

AFP, Karachi



Sri Lanka opener Oshada Fernando struck a maiden century to delay Pakistan's victory quest after the home team's top four all scored hundreds in the second Test in Karachi yesterday.

Set a daunting 476 runs to win, Sri Lanka were tottering at 97 for five before Oshada and Niroshan Dickwella halted the slide with a resolute 104-run stand for the sixth wicket.

But the last three overs of the day saw Dickwella fall for 65 -- bowled while attempting a reverse sweep off spinner Haris Sohail -- and Dilruwan Perera caught behind off Naseem Shah for five.

The 16-year-old Naseem had the best figures of 3-31.

At the close, Sri Lanka were 212 for seven with Oshada (102 not out) at the crease and with the visitors needing an unlikely 264 runs for victory.

Pakistan need just three wickets on Monday to win the series -- their first at home since the 2009 attack on the Sri Lanka side resulted in international cricket being suspended in the country.

Pakistan earlier declared their second innings at lunch on 555 for three after Azhar returned to form with 118 and Babar Azam struck 100 not out.

It was a dismal batting show by the Sri Lankans on a National Stadium pitch where the home batsmen flourished.

Skipper Dimuth Karunaratne went for 16, Kusal Mendis for a duck and



Pakistan bowler Haris Sohail (2nd from L) celebrates with teammates after taking the wicket of Sri Lanka's Niroshan Dickwella on the fourth day of the second Test at the National Cricket Stadium in Karachi yesterday.

PHOTO: AFP

Angelo Matthews for 19 before tea.

Pace spearhead Mohammad Abbas had Karunaratne caught behind in the tenth over of the innings before Naseem had Mendis snapped up in the slips.

It became 70 for three when Mathews, Sri Lanka's most experienced batsman, edged a short delivery from Shaheen Shah Afridi to wicketkeeper Mohammad Rizwan.

After tea, young Naseem accounted for Dinesh Chandimal (two) and leg-spinner Yasir Shah dismissed Dhananjaya de Silva (nought) to leave Sri Lanka struggling at 97 for five.

## Career Opportunity

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