

What to WATCH

GTV

Bangladesh v Zimbabwe
First ODI (D/N)
Live from 1:00pm
STAR SPORTS SELECT 2
English Premier League

Tottenham v Wolves
Live from 7:50pm
Bundesliga
Werder Bremen v
Eintracht Frankfurt
Live from 10:50pm

STAR SPORTS 1
New Zealand v India
Second Test, Day 3
Live from 4:30am (Monday)
STAR SPORTS 2
ICC Women's T20 World Cup

Pakistan v South Africa
Live from 10:00am
England v West Indies
Live from 2:00pm
SONY SIX
Sri Lanka v West Indies

Third ODI (D/N)
Live from 3:00pm
TEN 2
Serie A
Cagliari v AS Roma
Live from 11:00pm

DAY'S EVENT

Bangladesh v Zimbabwe
First ODI
Time: 1:00pm

Venue: Sylhet Int'l Cricket Stadium
Bangladesh Premier League
Abahani v Rahmatganj

Time: 6:30pm
Venue: Bangabandhu National Stadium,
Dhaka



Following his four-goal haul against Eibar, Lionel Messi would want to turn up in similar form when Barcelona travel to Bernabeu to face Real Madrid in La Liga tonight.

PHOTO: AFP

Setien puts pressure on Zidane

Real host Barca at Bernabeu tonight following CL debacle

AFP, Madrid



Zinedine Zidane said the Clasicos on Sunday will not decide the title race even if Real Madrid lose to Barcelona and fall five points behind them in La Liga.

Yet opposite number Quique Setien believes Barca's two-point cushion at the top makes the match at the Santiago Bernabeu "much more important for Madrid" than his team.

Victory for the Catalans would effectively give them a six-point advantage over Madrid, given what would be a superior head-to-head, with 12 games left to play.

But Zidane insists there would be still be a way back. "I don't think anyone will lose anything this weekend," he said in a press conference on Saturday. "There are still 12 games left, we'll still be in the title race regardless of the result. But we're going to try to win, 100 per cent."

Setien, also speaking Saturday, said the pressure was all on Real.

"For Madrid this match is certainly much more important than for us. In relation to their situation in the table, it is a key match, I don't know if it's decisive, but it's very important."

After Madrid, Barcelona will only have one away game left against the top six, when they face Sevilla in April, yet Setien thinks there will be more twists to come.

"A victory would give us an advantage but I don't know if it would be enough," said Setien. "I think probably not because we've already seen a lot of surprises."

Both teams have endured a bumpy few weeks but Barcelona arrive in a better mood after Madrid's 2-1 defeat to Manchester City on

Wednesday made it one win from five games for Zidane's side.

Asked if his job would be under threat if they fail to win the title this term, Zidane said: "I don't know, that's a question for someone else. I know what I have to do."

"We're going to try to win something, that's what we're working for but you can only have one winner."

"You lose two games, you get criticised," Zidane added. "I get it, I am responsible. It's what is happening, it's nothing new. But I have



Sergio Ramos would want to redeem himself against Barcelona following his sending off against Manchester City in the Champions League last week.

PHOTO: REUTERS

the strength to continue, I have faith in my players and I believe we can turn this around."

Barcelona have already sacked their coach this season, with Setien replacing Ernesto Valverde in January, while a number of off-field controversies have created tension between key players and the board.

Former Real Madrid forward Jorge Valdano said this week the Clasico would be a battle of "two lame ducks" but Zidane said the criticism has been harsh.

"When teams start dropping points, people sometimes over analyse," Zidane said. "Real Madrid and Barcelona are first and second in the league so what does it say about the others?"

"I don't think people can say we are a disaster if we are first and second in the table. There are always periods where you are good and periods where you are less good."

Setien was at the Santiago Bernabeu to watch City's win over Madrid in the Champions League and spoke to Pep Guardiola after the match.

"I didn't go to see Guardiola, I went to see the game and to watch an opponent very similar in terms of style to ours," Setien said.

"We talked about different things. There are some things City did that could be good for us and other things that are not for us and we aren't interested in."

Jordi Alba was given the green light on Saturday to play after recovering from an adductor injury while Setien confirmed Gerard Pique is fit, despite turning his ankle against Napoli on Tuesday. "It's not damaged and he will not have any problem," Setien said about Pique. On Alba, he added: "We're feeling positive, it's just whether we start him or not. We'll see how he feels tomorrow."

Alonso double rescues a draw

AFP, London



Chelsea needed a double from Marcos Alonso to salvage a 2-2 draw at struggling Bournemouth as West Ham boosted their chances of survival with a 3-1 win over Southampton on Saturday.

After a 3-0 thrashing on home soil by Bayern Munich in the first leg of their Champions League last-16 tie on Tuesday, Frank Lampard was hoping for a response after what he called a "reality check".

Instead, Bournemouth were minutes away from securing just their third league win since they also beat Chelsea at Stamford Bridge in December. Philip Billing missed two big early chances for the Cherries and Eddie Howe's men were punished as Alonso's calm finish after Olivier Giroud hit the bar gave Chelsea a half-time lead.

Two goals in three minutes from Jefferson Lerma and Josh King turned the game around and inflicted another blow to Chelsea's chances of holding onto their place in the top four.

Alonso's predatory header after Aaron Ramsdale parried Pedro Rodriguez's shot at least ensured the visitors left the Vitality Stadium with a point.

However, Lampard's men have now won just five of their last 16 league games and could see their lead over fifth-placed Manchester United cut to just a point if the Red Devils win at Everton on Sunday.

"We had a bad 10-minute spell where they scored and that I don't like. I'm pleased with the character to get a draw but we should win the game," said Lampard.



Defender Marcos Alonso (C) scored two goals to help Chelsea get a point with a 2-2 draw against Bournemouth in a Premier League encounter yesterday.

PHOTO: REUTERS

Infantino backs 'daylight' offside change plan

AFP, Belfast



Calls for football to introduce a 'daylight' offside rule in a bid to provide greater clarity have been backed by FIFA president Gianni Infantino.

This season's English Premier League has witnessed several controversies revolving around offside and in particular how a number of goals have been ruled out by the barest of margins following a check by the Video Assistant Referee (VAR).

Arsene Wenger, FIFA's chief of global development, said last week the law should be changed so that a player is onside if any part of their body that can score a goal is behind or level with the relevant defender.

Infantino backed the former Arsenal manager's position by saying: "I'm certainly in favour of discussing a new way of looking at the offside rule, to see if it can help, because I think the issue is more an issue of understanding."

"Some of (the decisions) are very, very close and it's difficult for the people who are watching to see whether it's offside, so we have to look at whether we can make the offside rule clearer by having light in between."

Infantino was speaking as he arrived in Belfast ahead of Saturday's annual general meeting of the International Football Association Board, the sport's rule-making body.

Saturday's meeting does not have the power to alter the offside rule, with any changes have to be examined first by IFAB's football and technical panels before a vote.

Infantino said introducing a margin of error for VAR would not resolve rows over offside.

"It doesn't solve the issue," he insisted. "Even if you put a margin of 10 centimetres and then if it's 11, it's still one more, if it's 10 and a half... so it doesn't solve it. It should be clear."

Meanwhile Infantino said this year's Olympic Games in Tokyo would be the ideal event for football to trial concussion substitutes as the sport looks to deal with the impact of head injuries.

"This is a subject that needs to be discussed more and trialled as well," he said. "Maybe it's important there are trials before next season."

"We have the Olympic Games for example where we could, as FIFA, trial something like that and see what happens."

BANGABANDHU, BANGAMATA GOLD CUPS

Barisal, Khulna clinch titles

SPORTS REPORTER



Barisal division won the title of Bangladesh National Gold Cup (u-17) football tournament while

Khulna division won the title of Bangamata National Gold Cup (u-17) football tournament yesterday. Both the finals were held at the Bangabandhu National Stadium, with Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina as the chief guest. The PM later handed over the prizes to the teams and award winners.

In the boys' event, Barisal earned a 2-1 victory over Chattogram

division in extra time. After a barren first half, Tawhidul gave Chattogram the lead in the 48th minute but Rashedul equalised for Barisal in the 66th minute. The match rolled into extra time where Rabbi of Barisal snatched the winner in the 101th minute with a superb effort. The Barisal forward saw the opposition goalkeeper out of his position and picked the back of the net with a long-range effort from close to the centre circle.

Rabbi was adjudged as the man of the final as well as the top scorer of the tournament while Saiful Islam of the same team was adjudged as the player of the tournament.

Meanwhile, the final of Bangamata National Gold Cup (u-17) football tournament proved to be a seesaw affair. Rawshan Jahan gave Dhaka division an 11th-minute lead but Kurshia Jannath equalised for Khulna six minutes later. Unnoti Khatun gave Khulna the lead in the 45th minute but Sadia equalised 10 minutes after restart. There were no more goals in regulation and extra time before Khulna won the match 4-3 in tiebreaker.

Swarna Rani Mondol of Khulna was adjudged as the player of the final while Unnoti Khatun of the same team took both the top-scorer and player of the tournament awards.



Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina, alongside other dignitaries, poses with the winners of the Bangamata Gold Cup Football Tournament at the Bangabandhu National Stadium yesterday.

PHOTO: BFF

Serie A in quarantine

REUTERS, Rome

Five Serie A matches which had been scheduled to go ahead behind closed doors this weekend, including the key clash between Juventus and Inter Milan, have been postponed because of the coronavirus crisis, Italy's soccer League said on Saturday.

All five games, which also include AC Milan v Genoa, Parma v Spal, Sassuolo v Brescia and Udinese v Fiorentina, will now be played on May 13, Serie A said in a statement.

The matches had been due to go ahead behind closed doors after the government banned public gatherings in an effort to slow the spread of the coronavirus.

However, a soccer official, speaking off the record, said broadcasters and fans did not want the matches to be played in empty stadiums and the clubs themselves were concerned about the loss of gate receipts.

Nearly 900 people have tested positive for the coronavirus in Italy, and cafes and schools have been closed as daily life has ground to a halt.

Serie A said in a statement that the decision was made "considering the succession of numerous urgent regulatory interventions by the Government to respond to this extraordinary emergency to protect public health and safety."

Four matches were cancelled last weekend including Inter Milan's home game against Sampdoria.

Five Serie A matches will go ahead as planned -- Lazio-Bologna and Napoli-Torino on Saturday, Lecce-Atalanta and Cagliari-Roma on Sunday and Sampdoria-Verona on Monday.