

TSPORTS

La Liga
Mallorca vs Osasuna
Live from 6:00 pm
Barcelona vs Levante
Live from 8:15 pm

Real Sociedad Vs Elche

Live from 10:30 pm
Real Betis Vs Getafe
Live from 1:00 am
(Monday)
STAR SPORTS SELECT 1

IPL

CSK vs KKR
Live from 4:00 pm
RCB vs MI
Live from 8:00 pm
STAR SPORTS SELECT 2

EPL

Southampton vs Wolves
Live from 7:00 pm
Arsenal vs Tottenham
Live from 9:30 pm

Suman's confidence on the rise

ANISUR RAHMAN

Interim coach Oscar Bruzon has already announced his intention to implement an attacking style of football in the upcoming SAFF Championship, but an inability to find the net has been a long-standing problem for Bangladesh, evidenced by their failure to go past the group stages in their past four attempts in the biennial competition.

The Spanish coach's attacking plans will undoubtedly require forwards to play a key role, but Bangladesh may face similar problems as they go into the competition without any prolific forwards and their top striker, Nabib Newaj Jibon, sidelined by a knee injury.

Hope may rest with Suman Reza, the promising striker who struck a brilliant brace against Kyrgyzstan U-23 earlier this month.

Suman netted both goals with dipping shots from outside the box, stunning the Kyrgyzstan goalkeeper. It was obviously not a fluke from Suman, who scored 10 goals to finish as the joint-top



PHOTO: FIROZ AHMED

scorer among local footballers in the just-concluded Bangladesh Premier League.

"I got five to ten minutes in international matches instead of the full 90. I played from

in Dhaka earlier this year.

Since his debut, Suman started only two matches before getting the full 90 against Kyrgyzstan U-23.

"If you play the full match, you get some goal-scoring opportunities. I got full starts against the Kyrgyzstan U-23 team and capitalised on both chances," he said.

The 26-year-old added that he grew in confidence after striking the brace.

"I lacked confidence before but that grew after the brace in the last match. I think I will now get more game time and more opportunities to score. I will try my best to strike goals in the SAFF Championship if I get enough match time," said Suman, who believes the forwards can score against any team if they get proper service.

"We usually played defensive before and train on how to defend against big teams. But Bruzon is training us to play attacking football and creating a defensive line in midfield instead of defending deep. He also wants a united team, which will attack collectively and press opponents as soon as the ball is lost. I think the players are responsible for implementing the game plan."



Fahim surprise enlivens elections

SPORTS REPORTER



There is not much excitement about the Bangladesh Cricket Board's (BCB's) upcoming elections, set to be held on October 6, but veteran coach Nazmul Abedeem Fahim created a buzz at the Sher-e-Bangla National Stadium yesterday after collecting nomination papers and announcing that he would contest the lone director's post in category three against former national captain Khaled Mahmud.

"I was a BCB councillor twice in the past when I was in BKSP. I had the opportunity to contest the elections but sacrificed for others. I think I have gained enough knowledge after serving the game in different capacities, whether it is on expanding the game or human resources, and I firmly believe I will be able to contribute to the improvement of the game and float new ideas," Fahim told reporters on the last day of collection for nomination papers.

However, he conceded that Mahmud was the favourite candidate, adding that it was good that capable individuals were coming

forward to work for cricket.

"I had previously contested against Lipu bhai (Gazi Ashraf Hossain Lipu) in my first election. Fahim bhai is my coach and he has worked under me in the game development committee. I wish him all the best and I hope the voters will assess the work I have done and consider that," Mahmud said.

BCB president Nazmul Hassan collected his nomination form from category 2 yesterday as councillor of Abahani Limited.

The last date to submit nomination papers is September 30.

A total of 12 directors will be elected from category 1 from among Dhaka League Clubs. In category two, 10 directors will be elected by the district sports associations. The two other directors will be nominated by the National Sports Council.

In category three -- which Fahim and Mahmud will contest -- there will be one post for a director to be elected with votes from 43 councillors from university, education board, government agencies and former captains and cricketers.

The 25 new directors will run Bangladesh cricket for the next four years.

TT team off to global stage

SPORTS REPORTER

Bangladesh Table Tennis team leave for Qatar today to take part in the Asian Table Tennis Championships with the qualification for the World Table Tennis Championships in sight.

Comprising four men and three women, Bangladesh's players will be featuring in all events at the Asian Championships -- to serve as a qualifier for the World Table Tennis Championships -- scheduled for September 28-October 5, in Doha.

Of the participating 31 nations, top 12 countries from the team events will qualify for the world event.

"We're hoping that the players will perform better than before and try to qualify in the team events for the World Table Tennis Championships, likely to take place in South Korea," said Bangladesh Table Tennis Federation (BTTF)



Vice President Munir Hassan during the revelation of the national jersey sponsored by Stag International, BTTF's new sponsor.

"The preparation has been remarkable this time under the Indian coach," said national player Mutahsin Ahmed Ridoy.

"But you know, with opponents like China, Japan, Korea, Malaysia, Chinese Taipei, we have nothing to say about our target. Rather, we'll try to give our best."

Apart from Ridoy, Bangladesh will be represented by Ramhim Lian Bawm, Rifat Mahmud Sabbir, Mufradul Karim Hamza, Nowrin Sultana Mahi, Sadia Rahman Mou and Sonam Sultana Soma.

Soma also expressed her optimism, like Ridoy.

"Usually we went to play previous tournaments with self-preparation but this time, we've prepared for two-and-a-half months under the Indian coach so that we can put up better performances than before," said the national table tennis player.



Gabriel Jesus celebrates, pointing to the heavens, after his decisive strike in the second half edged Manchester City past Chelsea 1-0 at the Stamford Bridge yesterday. Aston Villa's Kortney Hause breaks away to celebrate after scoring the all-important goal from a glancing header in front of a dejected looking Bruno Fernandes, who later missed an injury-time penalty as Manchester United lost 0-1 at the Old Trafford.

PHOTO: REUTERS

Villa stun Man United, Jesus sinks Chelsea

AGENCIES



Bruno Fernandes blazed a stoppage-time penalty over the crossbar as Aston Villa earned a shock 1-0 victory at a below-par Manchester United in the Premier League on Saturday.

Kortney Hause's 88th-minute header put Villa on course for their first league win over United since 2009, but the defender's handball gifted United an opportunity to steal a point, only for Fernandes to miss the target.

Since Cristiano Ronaldo re-signed for United, there has been much debate over who will take penalties and free kicks this season -- last term's spot-kick taker Fernandes or his fellow Portuguese.

It was Fernandes who took the first direct free kick on Saturday, firing into the wall, with Ronaldo getting the next one, and Fernandes, following Hause's handball, never looked back as he placed

the ball on the spot in the 92nd minute.

But last season's top scorer missed only his second spot-kick for the club to the dismay of an expectant crowd.

"First of all the way they (Villa players) get round the penalty spot, get round Bruno and that, that's not to my liking," United manager Ole Gunnar Solskjaer said.

"Bruno is usually very good in those positions and unfortunately he missed this one."

In truth, United got what they deserved. Villa had two great opportunities to break the deadlock in the first half with full back Matt Targett blazing over from two metres out, before Ollie Watkins was denied by a fine save from United goalkeeper David de Gea.

The home side, encouraged by a frustrated Old Trafford crowd, stepped it up late in the match, but Hause climbed highest to stun the hosts before Fernandes' miss and United tasted league defeat for

the first time this season.

Meanwhile, a second-half goal from Gabriel Jesus earned Premier League champions Manchester City a deserved 1-0 win over Chelsea and inflicted a first defeat of the season on Thomas Tuchel's side.

Jesus pushed the ball home with a deflection off Jorginho after a goalmouth melee in the 53rd minute following City's 10th corner of the game. It was the game's first shot on target.

It was Jesus's 52nd goal for City and they have never lost a Premier League game in which he has scored.

The victory also broke a three-match losing streak for the Manchester side against Chelsea, the most recent in the Champions League final in Porto in May.

Thomas Tuchel admitted his Chelsea side were not good enough. "We lost the game and City deserved to win. Until the goal we were very strong in the last 20 metres of the field, but only there unfortunately," Tuchel told reporters.

"Everywhere else we were not good enough to relieve pressure and to hurt them. The performance was not complex enough.

"Overall, simply, we were not at our best level."

Chelsea did try and raise the tempo in a bid to salvage the game but it was too little too late.

"After the goal it felt a little bit like the belief in winning was bigger than the fear of losing, I don't know why. We tried to push and get the crowd behind us. It was a very emotional game but never on our highest level," Tuchel said.

City produced their best display of the season, pressing the ball relentlessly and smothering the home side who failed to register a shot on target.

Manager Pep Guardiola, a keen golfer fan, said his side's teamwork reminded him of the Ryder Cup.

"Today we played for each other," the Spaniard said.



PHOTO: BCB

Despite starting the day at a decent position, on 170 for four with a 51-run lead, Bangladesh Under-19 could only set a 110-run target for their Afghan counterparts on the final day of their lone four-dayer in Sylhet yesterday. Afghanistan stuttered along their chase of a modest total, but managed to end their tour with a three-wicket victory.

Mustafizur Rahman caught smiling after scalping the wicket of Shimron Hetmyer, who was looking dangerous at the crease for Rajasthan Royals. Fizz's impressive display, of two wickets for 22 runs, however, went in vain as Delhi Capitals won by 33 runs during yesterday's Indian Premier League encounter at Abu Dhabi.

PHOTO: IPL

