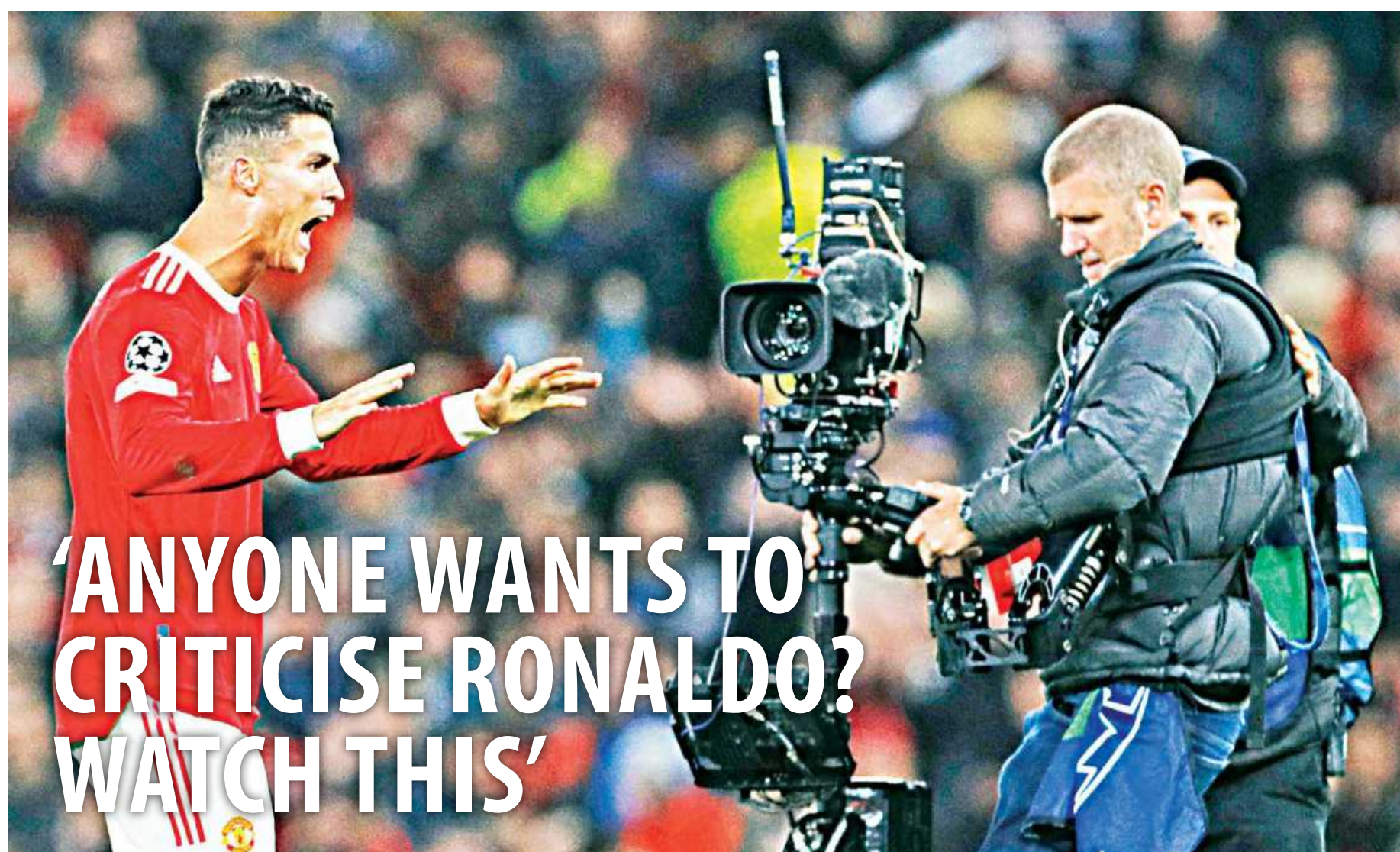


What to WATCH

T SPORTS & GTV
ICC Men's T20 World Cup
Namibia vs Ireland
Live from 04:00 pm
Sri Lanka vs Netherlands

Live from 08:00 pm
T SPORTS
La Liga
Osasuna vs Granada
Live from 01:00 am (Saturday)

STAR SPORTS HD 1
EPL
Arsenal vs Aston Villa
Live from 01:00 am
(Saturday)



'ANYONE WANTS TO CRITICISE RONALDO? WATCH THIS'

REUTERS, Manchester

Manchester United manager Ole Gunnar Solskjaer said Cristiano Ronaldo had answered many critics of his value to the team with his display in the 3-2 Champions League win over Atalanta on Wednesday.

Solskjaer took aim at those who had questioned whether the Portuguese forward, the Champions League record goalscorer, contributed enough work-rate to his side.

"Cristiano is great in front of goal. If anyone wants to criticise him for effort and work-rate just watch this game. Watch how he runs around," said the Norwegian.

"I was really, really pleased with how he led the line, we asked him to run the channels, drop in, press more, because we are at home. He was also even back in his own six-yard box and making blocks at the end, defending, you could see him sprinting."

"He did everything a centre-forward should do, leading the line and defending and of course, the goal is just what

he does better than most," he added.

Ronaldo has scored six goals in eight games for United in all competitions so far this season.

Solskjaer, who has faced plenty of criticism himself after Saturday's 4-2 defeat to Leicester City in the Premier League, praised his side's attitude after going into the break two goals down.

"I thought we played well and they scored a goal out of nothing and then another set piece. But they never stopped believing and kept going," he said.

'Nothing matches India-Pakistan rivalry'

AFP, Dubai



Former Australian opener Matthew Hayden admitted hostile cricket rivalry between India and Pakistan is unmatched and will test the two teams when they play a high voltage game in the Twenty20 World Cup in Dubai on Sunday.

Hayden is serving a short stint as Pakistan's batting consultant and transferring his vast experience on how to tackle pressure in as intense a rivalry as the Ashes between Australia and England.

"For Australia, England is their old guard as they would say, as at various stages we have been ruled by the Kingdom of the UK and cricket wouldn't be on our shores if it hadn't been the case," Hayden told a virtual media conference.

"But nothing also, that I have ever seen throughout various elements of the game that I have been part of, ever matches the rivalry between India and Pakistan."

Hayden accepts there is enormous pressure of an India-Pakistan match, often resulting in bitter public reaction for the losing side. "There is an obvious pressure of an Indo-Pak match, as there is obvious pressure if you play against England if you are an Australian, but the pressure is only what you allow it to be."

"It's a history-making opportunity. We can present all the stats, homework and research and nothing can replace what will be the state, what we dream about, write about and coach about, which will be the event itself."

After the eight-team qualifying rounds, the Super 12 stage starts from Saturday. Hayden, who joined the Pakistan team last week, said players were in a good place.



Lemos to get a go before Bruzon sees out 2022

SPORTS REPORTER



Due to the unavailability of Bashundhara Kings head coach Oscar Bruzon, Abahani manager Mario Lemos has been appointed as interim head coach of Bangladesh for next month's four-nation invitational tournament in Sri Lanka.

Lemos, currently in Portugal, is expected to return to Dhaka by September 23 and start the national camp on September 25. He will return to Abahani after the completion of the invitational tournament, which also includes Sri Lanka, Maldives and Seychelles.

"We spoke to Bruzon but he is unavailable. That's why Mario has been appointed interim coach for the invitational tournament in Sri Lanka. After finishing that task, Mario will go back to Abahani," National Teams Committee (NTC) chairman and BFF vice president Kazi Nabil Ahmed told

was that he would join the national team in January, 2022 and work during the Asian Cup Qualification as well as the friendly matches throughout 2022 as interim coach," Salahuddin said.

Bruzon recently also signed a new agreement with Bashundhara Kings for the upcoming season of the domestic league, meaning he will work with the national team on the basis of assignments.

"If I want to appoint a new coach, he has to come here and watch the domestic league. But it is not possible at the moment because none of the foreign coaches want to come in during a pandemic and quarantine upon returning to their own countries. We have already made offers to five or six coaches, who asked us to talk to them when the situation had improved."

When asked about appointing a coach who also has a contract with a club side, Salahuddin said: "I don't have any other option because it is a difficult time. I would definitely not



Grant in Dhaka to assist development

SPORTS REPORTER

Bangladesh Football Federation (BFF) president Kazi Salahuddin is expecting one of the world's top clubs to establish a football academy in Bangladesh after a meeting with former Chelsea manager Abraham Grant at the BFF office yesterday.

Grant arrived in Dhaka on Wednesday along with three other personnel to observe the developments in Bangladesh football and yesterday they met with BFF officials including Salahuddin, vice president Mohuddin Mohi and other executive members.

"He [Grant] intends to find out what Bangladesh has been up to. He has worked with a lot of organisations in the field of football development and is engaged with FIFA and other institutions to see what kind of support can be given to us," said Salahuddin at a press conference after the meeting.

The BFF president also added that he is expecting to be associated with one of the world's top clubs who would come to Bangladesh with a project like a football academy among other things.

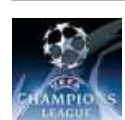
Grant expressed his objectives and his side of the experience so far.

"I had a good meeting with the president, who explained to me what they were doing here. I'm still analysing the situation and will try to share the experiences of others who came before me and give my opinion on how we can develop football here."

"Paul [BFF's technical director] is doing a great job in educating as it's very important because good teachers produce good students. But I need more time for analysis and tomorrow I'll visit the training field and other areas and try to understand football here," said the 66-year-old Polish coach.

Talking points from the Champions League

AFP, Paris



Cristiano Ronaldo rescued Manchester United again, while Lionel Messi scored twice for Paris Saint-Germain and Liverpool beat Atletico Madrid in the Champions League this week.

Messi still reigns supreme in Europe

Paris Saint-Germain brought in Lionel Messi hoping that the Argentinian great would be the final piece of the jigsaw as they bid to finally land the Champions League title. He is yet to score in Ligue 1, but has so far done what he was signed to do by netting three times in as many games in Europe.

The six-time Ballon d'Or winner stepped up when PSG were trailing RB Leipzig in Paris, netting twice, including a Panenka penalty, to rescue a vital 3-2 win.

Real bounce back, Barcelona earn vital win

Real Madrid's Vinicius Jr scored twice to lead them to a 5-0 win at Shakhtar Donetsk on Tuesday as they put behind them their home defeat by Sheriff Tiraspol in their last Group D game. Gerard Pique scored the vital goal to earn Barcelona a nervy 1-0 win over Dynamo on Wednesday and keep alive the Spanish side's hopes of reaching the knockout rounds.

Ronaldo pulls off another escape act

For the second time in as many games in Europe, Manchester United had Ronaldo to thank for another come-

from-behind victory at Old Trafford. Ronaldo grabbed the 81st minute winner with a superbly executed header to maintain his 100% scoring record in group F after three games.

Favourites Bayern, Man City in ominous form

Bayern Munich producing a scintillating four-goal burst in 15 minutes that blew away Benfica in Lisbon, while Pep Guardiola described Manchester City's 5-1 rout of Club Brugge as one of their "best performances in Europe".

Six-time champions Bayern



overcame key absences -- including that of unwell coach Julian Nagelsmann -- to make it three wins from three, with 12 goals scored and none conceded.

An untimely injury to Robert Lewandowski derailed Bayern's title defence last season, when they exited on away goals to PSG in the quarter-finals. While the Poland star is back doing what he does best, the return to form of Leroy Sane has boosted Bayern even more.

As for City, who lack an out-and-out striker after being rebuffed in

their pursuit of Harry Kane, Phil Foden showed he is more than capable of leading the attack as a false nine.

His outstanding display in Bruges helped City overpower a side that had drawn with PSG and then beaten RB Leipzig in Germany.

Lukaku, Werner injuries mar Chelsea's win

Chelsea were rocked by injuries to Romelu Lukaku and Timo Werner as the holders got their Champions League campaign back on track with a 4-0 win against Malmö on Wednesday.

Atletico continue run of Spanish woe

Diego Simeone led Atletico to a memorable La Liga title last season but Spanish clubs appear to not be the forces they were in recent years. His side are in danger of missing out on a last-16 place for only the second time in nine seasons after a dramatic 3-2 home loss to Liverpool, while Barcelona are struggling in their group and Real Madrid lost at home to minnows Sheriff Tiraspol last month.

Atletico, losing finalists in all-Madrid finals in 2014 and 2016, are second in Group B but level on points with third-placed Porto and have to visit Anfield next time out.

Ten Hag's Ajax dark horses again

Dutch champions Ajax raised hopes they could at least replicate their surprise run to the 2018-19 semi-finals with an impressive 4-0 dismantling of Borussia Dortmund in Amsterdam.



The Daily Star.

Bruzon was appointed last month after British coach Jamie Day was released from his duties for two months and the Spaniard was in the dugout for the recent SAFF Championship. The Bangladesh Football Federation (BFF) intend to do the same with Lemos, assigning him for one tournament with Jamie in limbo.

BFF president Kazi Salahuddin told The Daily Star that he asked the BFF secretariat as well as the NTC to settle the Jamie issue as soon as possible. The BFF boss also informed that they wanted to appoint Bruzon as interim coach for the entirety of 2022 before appointing a new coach for the following two-year cycle.

"During a meeting on September 19, Bruzon expressed his desire to go on vacation after round-the-year work at the club level and expressed an inability to take charge of the national team for the Sri Lanka trip. His offer

have done this if it times were normal. You look back and we have changed our coach a few times during normal times, but you have to understand it is not a normal time. I don't have the option to appoint a new coach.

Salahuddin also said the BFF would spend 2022 doing their homework on candidates for the head coach position so there would not be problems in the future.

"I will actually give him responsibility as an interim coach until I find another new coach for the national team. Before appointing a new coach in 2023, I will complete my research on them before making any decision so I won't face further problems in future. We are not hiring a new coach in 2022. We will spend the year with an interim coach. Because Bruzon will work with us in 2022, I don't think it will be a problem for the players," said Salahuddin.

