

What to WATCH

T SPORTS & GTV
ICC Men's T20 World Cup
2021 Semifinals
Australia vs Pakistan
Live from 08:00 pm
T SPORTS & TEN 1

World Cup Qualifiers
Greece vs Spain
Live from 01:45 am (Friday)
TEN 2
World Cup Qualifiers
Georgia vs Sweden

Live from 11:00 pm
Ireland vs Portugal
Live from 01:45 am (Friday)
TEN 3
World Cup Qualifiers

Germany vs Liechtenstein
Live from 01:45 am (Friday)
SONY SIX
World Cup Qualifiers
Russia vs Cyprus
Live from 11:00 pm

Profligate booters held by Seychelles

SPORTS REPORTER

Bangladesh surrendered their first-half lead in the dying minutes as they started their campaign in the Prime Minister Mahinda Rajapaksa Trophy with a disappointing 1-1 draw against Seychelles at the Race Course Stadium in Colombo yesterday. Mohammad Ibrahim gave Bangladesh a 17th-minute lead with a nice strike before Bangladesh wasted numerous opportunities and left room for substitute Rashid Dan Labrosse to hit an equaliser in the 88th minute. The nation of Seychelles suspended domestic football in December 2020 due to a surge in Covid-19 cases and their players came into the tournament with just one month of preparation and a lack of fitness led to multiple players seeking medical care due to muscle cramps. But the men in red and green, who went to the tournament on the back of a good campaign in the SAFF Championship, lagged behind, especially in the last 30 minutes, allowing the Africans to find a deserved equalizer and leave with their heads held high. Meanwhile, Bangladesh's target of

reaching the final became tougher as they next face a strong Maldives side and hosts Sri Lanka. Although five key players were absent from Bangladesh's squad, Mario Lemos's charges looked well ahead of Seychelles from the onset in terms of skill, fitness and tactics as Bangladesh dominated the first half but lacked that telling spark in the attacking third. With Bangladesh enjoying better possession, centre-back Tutul Hossain Badsha lofted through a long ball in the 17th minute that



was tapped forward by Saad Uddin to Ibrahim, who danced past defender Don Maxime Fanchette and drove home from inside the box to give Bangladesh the lead. Ibrahim got a chance to double the lead off a Saad Uddin cross the next minute, but he could not beat goalkeeper Alvin Roddy Michel from inside the six-yard box. Jamal also drove wide from inside the box in the 29th minute with only the goalkeeper to beat. Defender Tapu Barman ran deep down the left to muster a shot from the top of the box that missed the target in the 37th minute before Ibrahim squandered another chance in the 42nd minute as coach Lemos was left to wonder why his side were not up at least 3-0 at the break. After resumption, it was assumed that Bangladesh would put the game out of Seychelles' reach but the scenario played out in reverse as Seychelles created at least five opportunities in the last 30 minutes and cashed in one of them. A poor clearance saw substitute Flijah Woodely Tambo bring down the ball on the top of the box before Labrosse beat Anisur Rahman Zico with a left-footed drive from the top of the box.

Tigresses thrash Zim

SPORTS REPORTER

Nigar Sultana's first match as skipper of Bangladesh women's national cricket team got off to a brilliant start as the Tigresses secured a comfortable eight-wicket victory with 236 balls to spare against their Zimbabwean counterpart in the first ODI in Bulawayo yesterday. Having sent the hosts to bat first, the Tigresses bundled Zimbabwe out for a paltry 48 runs.

Precious Marange was the only Zimbabwean batter who was able to reach double figures, scoring a team-high of 30-ball 17. The left-handed batter was later removed by off-spinner Salma Khatun, who scalped two more wickets on the day and ended with exceptional figures of three for six in seven overs that included four maidens. Alongside Salma, Jahanara Alam and Nahida Akter also took three wickets each. Unbeaten scores of 11 and 16 from Fargana Hoque and Rumana Ahmed respectively helped the Tigresses romp to victory with ease.



Qatar beckons BRAZIL, ARGENTINA

AFP, Montevideo



Brazil host Colombia in Sao Paulo on Thursday knowing victory will book their ticket to Qatar with six World Cup qualifiers to spare following a near perfect record so far. Even a draw for the Selecao would be enough if Uruguay lose at home to Argentina on Friday, and Brazilian media have reported that coach Tite is already planning to head to the Arab Cup in Qatar next month to check out World Cup venues and facilities. Publicly, though, Tite is not getting ahead of himself with a trip to face

Brazil have dominated the single CONMEBOL World Cup qualifying group, winning 10 of their 11 matches and scoring 26 goals.

Their only blemish was a 0-0 draw away to Colombia last month that brought to an end a nine-match winning run.

MESSI A DOUBT
Like Brazil, second-placed Argentina could also secure qualification this month, although they would need other results to go their way.

And they may have to do without star player Lionel Messi, who is suffering from knee and hamstring problems and has missed his



arch rivals Argentina in San Juan on the horizon next week.

"We have two important matches against two teams that, for me, are of the highest level," said Tite.

"A good performance and a good result against Colombia will provide us with a good preparation for Argentina."

Tite caused a surprise by recalling Barcelona's Philippe Coutinho to his squad after more than a year out, largely due to a nine-month absence with a knee injury that required three surgeries.

"It feels like it did the first time, that's how I see it every time I'm in the squad. It's an honour to wear this jersey," said Coutinho, who has struggled for playing time this season at his club.

club Paris Saint-Germain's last two matches.

After their trip to Uruguay, Argentina, unbeaten in 25 matches, host Brazil next week and victories in both could be enough to book their ticket to Qatar.

Uruguay, though, will be out for revenge after their 3-0 capitulation in Buenos Aires last month.

They will be without injured Manchester United forward Edinson Cavani, although Atletico Madrid's Luis Suarez has travelled back to South America. Uruguay coach Oscar Tabarez finds himself under pressure, with many fans believing the 74-year-old's record-breaking 15-year tenure should come to an end.

Nazmul helps Dhaka win a thriller

SPORTS REPORTER



The final day of the fourth round of the ongoing 23rd National Cricket League (NCL) witnessed a thriller as left-arm spinner Nazmul Islam's four for 43 helped Dhaka Division eke out a three-run victory against Sylhet Division at the Sylhet International Cricket Stadium yesterday.

Dhaka had resumed the day on 234 for eight in 103 overs with a 92-run lead. However, Dhaka, who had batted the entire third day of play, could only survive 6.3 overs yesterday as they were bundled out for 243. Chasing Dhaka's modest

102-run target, Sylhet were put on the backfoot in the very beginning by pacer Sumon Khan, who removed both openers Intiaz Hossain and Sayem Alam early.

Nazmul then ran through Sylhet's middle order, removing skipper Zakir Hasan, Rahatul Ferdous and experienced Alok Kapali for single-digit scores before wrapping with the wicket of Ebadot Hossain as Dhaka bundled out Sylhet for just 98, winning the game by a slim margin.

Nazmul ended with match figures of nine for 115. Sylhet spinner Nasum Ahmed also had a memorable outing as he returned career-best figures of 12 for 113 in first-class career although his side ended up losing.

In the other game in



Sylhet, a fifty from Tanbir Hayder and contributions from Naeem Islam and skipper Akbar Ali helped Rangpur Division beat Khulna Division by three wickets.

Rangpur resumed the day on 53 for one, needing 195 more runs to win.

Overnight batsman Tanbir scored a patient 149-ball 74, laced

with nine boundaries and a solitary maximum, while Naeem's 41 and an unbeaten 33 from young wicketkeeper-batter Akbar drove Rangpur home.

The other game between Rajshahi Division and Dhaka Metropolis at the BKSP 4 ended in an expected draw despite Rajshahi's Junaid Siddique scoring a ton.

Meanwhile, the Bangladesh Cricket Board (BCB) Bowling Action Review Committee expressed its concern regarding a delivery by Barishal Division's Mohammad Ashraful against Chattogram Division in their fourth-round match at BKSP 3.

The committee mentioned that it is still in discussion regarding the matter.

Chattogram had won the game by an innings and 73 runs on the third day.



Spain and Italy face decisive dates

AFP, Paris



The first stage of European qualifying for next year's World Cup concludes over the next week with Portugal, Spain, Italy and the Netherlands among the nations facing crucial games in the quest to make it to Qatar.

The 10 group winners will secure qualification for football's global showpiece which kicks off on November 21, 2022. The 10 runners-up will get another chance to qualify in play-offs next March. SPAIN HAVE ALL TO PLAY FOR Spain showed on their runs to the Euro 2020 semi-finals and the Nations League final that they are again a force to be reckoned with. However, the 2010 world champions still have work to do to secure their place in Qatar from qualifying Group B.

Luis Enrique's side sit second, two points behind leaders Sweden. They head to Athens on Thursday to play Greece, who held them to a 1-1 draw at home in March. Failure

to win this time would give Sweden the chance to clinch top spot with victory in Georgia. Otherwise the group will be decided when Spain host Sweden -- including a 40-year-old Zlatan Ibrahimovic -- in Seville on Sunday.



ITALY, DUTCH BACK ON BIG STAGE?

European champions Italy, who failed to qualify in 2018, are not there yet either. With two games left in Group C they are locked on 14 points with Switzerland, and

the sides clash on Friday in Rome, five months after Italy won 3-0 there when the teams met in Euro 2020's opening game.

Whoever wins will be left requiring just a point in their final qualifier, with the Azzurri going to Northern Ireland on Monday while the Swiss host Bulgaria.

The Netherlands are tantalisingly close to returning to the World Cup after also missing out in 2018. Louis van Gaal's side are two points clear of Norway atop Group G with a superior goal difference to that of the Norwegians or third-placed Turkey. That effectively means a draw in Montenegro on Saturday should not damage them, as long as they then avoid defeat against Norway -- who are without injured forward Erling Haaland -- in Rotterdam.

The battle between Russia and 2018 World Cup runners-up Croatia in Group H is tight, with the Russians currently two points ahead before hosting Cyprus on Thursday.

Country's first triple centurion no more

SPORTS REPORTER

Tariquzzaman Munir, the first triple centurion of independent Bangladesh, passed away following a cardiac arrest in Brahmanbaria yesterday. He was 62.

He represented the Bangladesh National Team in two matches against touring Sri Lanka in 1985.

Tariquzzaman, a stocky right-handed batsman and sharp close-in fielder, is best remembered for scoring the first triple century in independent Bangladesh when he made 308 for Dhaka University against Chittagong University in the semifinal

of the 1984-85 National Cricket Championship at the Dhanmondi Cricket Stadium [Abahani Ground].

In his club career, Tariquzzaman appeared for prominent teams like Abahani, Mohammedan, Biman and GMCC.

He also served as the member secretary of the BCB Logistics & Protocol Committee and acted as the tournament manager of the Local Organising Committee (LOC), Bangladesh for the

ICC Cricket World Cup 2011. The BCB extended its heartfelt condolences and sympathies to the family of the departed.

