

WHAT TO WATCH

T SPORTS & GTV

Bangladesh vs Pakistan
Second Test (Day 1)
Live from 10:00 am
Independence Cup
Bangladesh Navy vs
Chittagong Abahani
Live from 6:00 pm
STAR SPORTS 1

India vs New Zealand
Second Test (Day 2)
Live from 9:30 am
MTV INDIA
La Liga
Barcelona vs Betis
Live from 9:15 pm
Atletico Madrid vs Mallorca
Live from 11:30 pm

MTV INDIA & T SPORTS
Real Sociedad vs Real Madrid
Live from 2:00 am (Sunday)
STAR SPORTS SELECT HD 1
English Premier League
West Ham vs Chelsea
Live from 6:30 pm
Wolves vs Liverpool
Live from 9:00 pm

Watford vs Manchester City
Live from 11:30 pm
STAR SPORTS SELECT HD 2
English Premier League
Southampton vs Brighton
Live from 9:00 pm
TEN 2
Bundesliga
Mainz vs Wolfsburg

Live from 8:30 pm
Borussia Dortmund vs Bayern
Munich
Live from 11:30 pm

PSG wait for Messi to find Ballon d'Or form

AFP, Paris

Paris Saint-Germain have been milking the fact that they have this year's Ballon d'Or winner in their ranks, but Lionel Messi was crowned the world's best player for the seventh time in his glittering career entirely because of what he achieved elsewhere. At 34, perhaps Messi was principally rewarded for his enduring brilliance by jurors as he won the prize ahead of much-fancied rivals including Robert Lewandowski and Karim Benzema.

However, he still scored 38 goals in his final campaign with Barcelona, was top scorer in La Liga, won the Copa del Rey and captained Argentina to victory at the Copa America.

As he collected his prize in a ceremony in the French capital on Monday, PSG president Nasser al-Khelaifi was there and spoke of his "immense pride that one of our players has won the most prestigious and coveted award".

On Wednesday, as PSG played host to Nice, the message "Paris Golden City", in English, covered the main entrance to the Parc des Princes. Inside Messi was paraded before kick-off on a stage on the pitch as he showed off his reward.

Yet he proceeded to produce another

rather flat performance as his side was held to a 0-0 draw, and Messi has still scored just once in eight appearances in Ligue 1.

He has saved his best moments so far in a PSG shirt for the Champions League, with three goals in four games in Europe.

Messi, who has struggled with varying fitness issues, has not yet played like a Ballon d'Or winner for his new club -- certainly George Weah's victory in the 1995 Ballon d'Or owed much more to what he did with PSG, even though he had left to join AC Milan earlier that year.

Mauricio Pochettino's PSG are 12 points clear at the top of Ligue 1 before Saturday's game at Lens, where one of the best atmospheres in French football will await the Parisian superstars at the 37,000-capacity Stade Bollaert.

If Messi should be there alongside Kylian Mbappe, Neymar will not be, the Brazilian beginning his latest spell on the sidelines with an ankle injury.

Neymar, who has endured a disappointing 2021, is not expected back until at least mid-January.

Now, however, Pochettino needs to try to get his team -- still regularly playing well below their potential -- firing on all cylinders without the world's most expensive player.



Rangnick aims to bring balance



AFP, Manchester

Ralf Rangnick said Friday he wanted to "balance" Manchester United by strengthening the club's leaky defence. The 63-year-old German's first press conference since being appointed interim manager until the end of the season following the sacking of Ole Gunnar Solskjaer came after United's see-saw 3-2 win over Arsenal in the Premier League on Thursday overseen by caretaker boss Michael Carrick.

Solskjaer was dismissed following a humiliating 4-1 loss at lowly Watford. "We are talking about six-and-a-half months, one third of the games, and we have agreed on a two-year advisory deal. If Manchester United contacts you for such a role you cannot turn it down," said Rangnick. "This is one of the biggest clubs, if not the biggest club, in the world. I am excited to work with the players we have here. "I have watched the latest games,

"You always have to adapt to the players you have. Seeing Ronaldo at 36 -- I have never seen anyone as fit at 36. But it's not just about him, it's about developing the squad as a whole." **RALF RANGNICK**

Watford, Chelsea, Arsenal, and I also watched on TV the games against Liverpool and Manchester City."

Rangnick added: "I am well acquainted. It's pretty obvious the team has an abundance of young, talented players and experienced players. The major target for me is to bring more balance into the team.

"Even yesterday (Thursday) we conceded two and needed three to win. We concede on average two a game and this is too much. "I want to bring more balance and more control. Yesterday's game, for me as the future coach, they are not the games you need. I will try and bring these outstanding, talented players away from their own goal."

Rangnick's deal is set to see him move into a consultancy role at Old Trafford after the end of the current campaign.

As for the possibility he might replace Solskjaer on a permanent basis, Rangnick said: "If we do well and we stabilise, I might even recommend that we keep working with me. This is all hypothetical; we cannot speak about that."

'PHENOMENAL' RONALDO CROSSES 800-GOAL MARK

Cristiano Ronaldo passed the 800-goal mark for club and country, scoring twice as Manchester United beat Arsenal 3-2 in an incident-packed Premier League match on Thursday. Ronaldo has scored 686 club goals for Sporting Lisbon, United, Real Madrid and Juventus, and 115 goals for Portugal. He is United's top scorer this season with 12 goals in 16 appearances in all competitions. There is some debate over his status as the most prolific scorer in men's football, with Brazil's Pele and Romario both claiming over 1,000 goals, but statisticians say the Portugal forward tops the scoring charts in official competitions. The Premier League's all-time top scorer Alan Shearer was stunned by Ronaldo's performance in United's 3-2 win. "You just have to sit there and say 'wow' and applaud the guy," Shearer said. "It's just phenomenal what he's done."



'Like living in a fool's paradise'

Bangladeshi shuttlers have been participating in the Yonex-Sunrise Bangladesh International at home since 2012 in a quest to develop and make up for a lack of overseas tournaments, but improvement remains a distant prospect. Only Shapla Aktar and Alina Sultana have made an impression so far -- grabbing bronze in the women's doubles in the 2018 edition -- while the rest usually faced eliminated in the first or second round. Former summer and national champion Enamul Haque, who once took part in the tournament regularly, spoke to The Daily Star's Anisur Rahman about the players' performances and the tournament.

The Daily Star: What are you doing at present?

Enamul Haque: While I am the distributor of Ashaway, a badminton accessories company, I am still playing badminton at the national level and conducting a badminton academy in Sylhet. **DS:** Why did you establish an academy?

EH: Since the sudden death of coach Jahangir Alam and the departure of some senior shuttlers, a vacuum was created in coaching in Sylhet, so I came forward as a senior player to make an academy in 2010. The academy has approximately 30 players but we have to contend with a lack of practice courts. 12 to 15 players have already played for the national badminton team. But we can't keep talented shuttlers in Sylhet. They leave for the country for a better life because they don't get anything by playing for the national team. Talented shuttlers like Milad bhai, Saim Bhai, Tarek, Jainal, Dipon and Mangal left the country despite showing promise in national and junior national championships. **DS:** Local shuttlers once again failed to shine in the edition of the Yonex-Sunrise badminton tournament, an event you once played regularly. What were the returns for shuttlers playing in the tournament?

EH: Nothing other than the



self-satisfaction of getting an opportunity to play against foreign players in an international tournament. Hoping to achieve something from this tournament is akin to living in a fool's paradise because we don't have any proper preparation or sponsorship for players. It is like fighting on a battlefield with guns but no bullets. **DS:** Was the condition the same when you represented Bangladesh in the Yonex-Sunrise tournament?

EH: The present condition is far poorer than what we were used to in the past. The whole world is going forward but we are crawling back. To be honest, badminton has no patronisation like cricket or football. I have heard that national players practiced with used shuttles in the two-week training camp this time. Then tell

me how the players will deliver in an international tournament?

DS: What hindrances do you see to the progress of badminton in Bangladesh?

EH: Do you know that five types of poor-quality shuttles were used in the national championship, which was completed in just two days instead of five? The games were even till midnight. Meanwhile, players had to bear the cost of accommodation and food while also paying high entry fees to take part in the ranking tournament, but the prize money was a token amount. Then how a shuttler will compete in Dhaka? Besides that, the premier league, which is the lone source of income, was last held about eight years ago. How will we progress?

DS: What should the federation do to get a return from the international tournament?

EH: There is no alternative but to conduct long-term training and send players abroad to participate in overseas tournaments while also increasing the number of competitions in the domestic circuit. We had long-term training ahead of the 2010 SAFF Games and we repaid that by winning bronze medals.



Lewy, Haaland to clash as Dortmund host Bayern



AFP, Berlin

Bundesliga star strikers Erling Haaland and Robert Lewandowski go head-to-head on Saturday when Borussia Dortmund host Bayern Munich in the top-of-the-table clash.

League leaders Bayern head to Signal Iduna Park just one point ahead of second-placed Dortmund.

Haaland, 21, who has scored 19 goals for Dortmund and Norway this season, proved a hip injury is behind him with a stunning volley in last weekend's 3-1 win at Wolfsburg.

The same can be said for Bayern's Lewandowski, who after scoring a record 41 Bundesliga goals in 2020-21, has backed that up this season with 25 goals for the club and five for Poland.

Bayern have won all of their last six games against Dortmund, but the Bavarians could be missing two key midfielders for the game which will be played in front of a reduced crowd of 15,000 due to increasing Covid-19 cases.

Milestone win for Swadhinata

SPORTS REPORTER

Newcomers Swadhinata Kirira Sangha kept their quarterfinal hopes alive in the Riviera Independence Cup with a come-from-behind 3-2 win over Rahmatganj in three-team Group A encounter at the Shaheed Mostafa Kamal Stadium in Kamalapur yesterday.

Swadhinata KS, who suffered a 1-2 defeat to Abahani in their debut match in top-flight football, now have three points alongside Abahani, who will play against Rahmatganj in the group-deciding final match on December 7.

Rahmatganj, featuring three foreign players, took only three minute to break the deadlock when Ghanaian forward Philip Adjah Tetty availed a through-ball from Sanowar Hossain and advanced into the box before beating goalkeeper Sarwar Jahan.

But the lead lasted only 13 minutes as Polish striker Rafal Zaborowski scored before Sabbir Hossain whipped in a cross for Bosnian forward Nedo Turkovic, who made no mistake.

Rahmatganj substitute defender Al Amin struck his own net in the 72nd minute to give the Bangladesh Championship League champions the joy of leaving the field with a maiden victory in the top-flight football.