

## Fortis FC stun Mohammedan

SPORTS REPORTER

Newcomers Fortis FC stunned Mohammedan Sporting Club to a 4-3 defeat in a high-scoring thriller of the Bangladesh Premier League at the Shaheed Dhirendra Nath Dutta Stadium in Cumilla yesterday.

It was an unexpected result for the Black Whites, who had come off a 6-0 thrashing of Azampur FC in their previous match, pushing them down to seventh position with nine points from nine games.

Fortis, meanwhile, moved up to sixth position with 11 points following their second win of the campaign.

Mohammedan started brightly and opened the scoring in the 21st minute through Minhajul Abedin in the 21st minute before captain Souleymane Diabate doubled their lead a minute after the break.

But Borhanuddin and Mojibur Rahman scored in space of eight minutes, on 56th and 64th minutes, to get the newcomers on level terms. Afghan forward Amiruddin Sharifi gave them the lead in the 70th minute before Arif Hossain equalised for Mohammedan in the 77th minute. However, Brazilian forward Danilo Quippa's 79th-minute strike ensured all three points for the Badda-based club.

Meanwhile, Sheikh Russel KC were held to a 1-1 draw by Rahmatganj MFS at the Bashundhara Kings Arena in Dhaka. Congolese striker Junior Mapuku gave Sheikh Russel a 29th minute lead but Uzbek defender Shokhrukhbek Kholmatov hit back a minute before the break to ensure the spoils were shared.

Former champions Sheikh Russel remained in fourth position with 14 points while Rahmatganj were in eighth position with nine points.

Elsewhere, Chittagong Abahani got a much-needed victory with a 2-0 win over Muktiyoddha Sangsad KC at the Birshreshtho Ft Lt Matiur Rahman Stadium in Munshiganj.

Shukurali Pulatov and Emtiaz Raihan scored the goals for the port city side, who moved to seven points from nine matches, in 10th position. Muktiyoddha were in ninth position with same number of points but having a superior goal difference over Chittagong Abahani.



Arsenal forward Gabriel Martinelli celebrates scoring his side's fourth goal as the league leaders stormed back from 2-1 down to beat Aston Villa 4-2 in a thrilling Premier League fixture at the Villa Park on Saturday. The win took the Gunners three points clear of defending champions Manchester City.

PHOTO: REUTERS

## Di Maria questions PSG's treatment of Messi

AGENCIES

Angel Di Maria has questioned Paris Saint-Germain's decision to give Kylian Mbappe 'all the power' - especially when they also have Lionel Messi in their ranks.

The French giants tied superstar forward Mbappe down to a new three-year deal in May, reportedly worth £4million a month, plus a £100m signing on fee, making him the highest-paid player in the world.

PSG's contract is also said to include authority over picking the team and hiring and firing managers, which has led to tensions with high-profile team-mates like Brazilian forward Neymar.

And Di Maria told ESPN Argentina that he is 'surprised' PSG have bestowed so much responsibility on Mbappe.

He said: "I think France in general have given Mbappe a lot of responsibility. The people, the president, PSG.

"They made him stay when he could have left and gave him all the power to be him and no one else.

"But there's a big difference, they gave him all that power with the best in history [Messi] next to him.

"I think they gave him all that power and strength because he's French, he was born there, won a World Cup and has an extraordinary career ahead of him. But all that aside, when I was at PSG he was a good boy and I don't think he's changed so much."

## BFF looking for part-time coaches

SPORTS REPORTER

Bangladesh Football Federation is looking to rope in some members of the national team's coaching staff based on assignments rather than giving them long-term contracts, according to its general secretary Abu Nayeem Shohag.

The BFF recently renewed the contract of head coach Javier Cabrera by one year. He has a local assistant coach in the form of Hasan Al Mamun. However, the positions of goalkeeping coach and physiotherapist are currently vacant.

"We are looking to have foreign coaches on assignment basis. We have a few CVs at our hand. We will prefer Spanish coaches as our head coach is Spanish. We will try to have a foreign assistant coach, a foreign goalkeeping coach and a foreign physiotherapist for the March friendlies," Shohag told reporters yesterday.

Bangladesh are scheduled to host a tri-nation tournament in the March FIFA window, involving Seychelles and Brunei. This will be a battle of three of the lowest-ranked sides in the world, with Brunei leading at 190, followed by Bangladesh at 192 and Seychelles at 199.

Shohag said they are trying to arrange an overseas training camp for the booters ahead of the tri-nation series.

"We always try to hold an overseas training camp before a tournament. So we communicated with Qatar FA whether they could host us for a week or two ahead of the March window. However, due to their own busy schedule, they have communicated of their inability.

"But we are in contact with Saudi Arabian FA and we are hopeful that we can hold a training camp there for at least a week. Our residential training camp here will begin on March 3," the BFF official added.

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## John Terry leads Atsu tributes

AGENCIES

John Terry led tributes to former Chelsea and Newcastle United winger Christian Atsu, who was confirmed to have died in the earthquakes that hit Turkey earlier this month.

Atsu was reported to be missing in the immediate aftermath of the tremors that struck southern Turkey and northern Syria on February 6.

The former Ghana international joined Turkish Super Lig outfit Hatayspor last September and scored for the side the day before the earthquakes.

Following confirmation of Atsu's death on Saturday, Terry - who was a team mate of Atsu's during the Ghanaian's four-year spell at Chelsea, for whom he did not make a competitive appearance - paid tribute on social media.

"RIP my friend," the former England captain wrote on Twitter, alongside an image of Atsu.

Atsu's former clubs also expressed their condolences on Saturday, with Chelsea saying his death caused "enormous sadness" and Newcastle calling him: "A talented player and a special person, he will always be fondly remembered by our players, staff and supporters."

Other former teammates paid tribute on Instagram, with Cesc Fabregas calling his death "heart-breaking" and Michael Essien saying: "Rest well king".

Bournemouth, where Atsu spent the first half of the 2015-16 season on loan, will join Chelsea and Newcastle in paying tribute to Atsu during Saturday's Premier League games.

Players from all three clubs will wear commemorative black armbands for their respective fixtures.

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