T Sports and GTV ICC Cricket World Cup Bangladesh vs South Live from 2:30 pm

Galatasaray vs Bayern Live from 10:45 pm Braga vs Real Madrid Live from 1:00 am (Wednesday)

**Sony Sports 1** Inter vs Salzburg Live from 10:45 pm Sevilla vs Arsenal Live from 1:00 am (Wednesday)

## 'Tired' Kings take on Mohun Bagan

SPORTS REPORTER

Bashundhara Kings players will hope to shake off the weariness from their hasty arrival to India and put forth a brave show against Mohun Bagan Super Giant in their AFC Cup Group I encounter at the Kalinga Stadium in Odisha today.

The match will begin at 10:00pm (Bangladesh time).

The Bangladesh Premier League champions were supposed to land in Odisha on Sunday, train on Monday and then take on the Indian outfits the following day. However, the Kings had to postpone their trip by a day due to a delay in receiving visas.

The Kings' contingent finally left for India yesterday morning and reached Bhubaneswar via Kolkata in the afternoon. On the eve of the match, Kings' coach Oscar Bruzon admitted that it wasn't the ideal preparation for his side ahead of a tough fixture.

"It is not the ideal scenario, to bring the players this late and then demand a huge physical effort tomorrow (Tuesday). But we are quite cool and quite calm...We have cancelled the official training session (on Monday) because we don't have the energy to do it," said Bruzon. The Kings have so far won one and lost one in their AFC

Cup campaign and are currently third in the four-team Now, the Kings will face the group leaders in a chance

to test themselves with one of the best clubs in South Asia, said Bruzon

"In the last match against Odisha, we proved that we are a competitive unit. Tomorrow is another opportunity for us to challenge and measure our level.

## INDEPENDENCE CUP Abahani, Kings in separate groups

SPORTS REPORTER

Heavyweights Abahani and Bashundhara Kings are set to collide before the final of the upcoming 13th edition of the Independence Cup.

The two local powerhouses were pitted in separate groups during the draw of the season's curtain-raising tournament - held at the BFF House yesterday.

Split into four groups, 13 teams -- 10 from Bangladesh

Premier League and three from qualifiers -- will play the round-robin league matches before the top two from each group advance to the quarterfinals.

If Abahani and two-time champions and holders Kings top their respective groups, they will meet in the semifinals. The last time it happened, in 2018, Kings ousted Abahani 7-6 in tiebreakers after extra-time ended 1-1.

As far as venues as concerned, the district cricket league has prevented Cumilla District Sports Association from using the district stadium. Thus, instead of four, the tournament will be held at three different locations: Bashundhara Kings Arena in Dhaka, Birshreshtha Shaheed Flight Lt. Matiur Rahman Stadium in Mymensingh, and Sheikh Fazlul Haque Moni Stadium in Gopalganj.

The business end of the tournament will get underway on October 27, featuring three matches – including last edition's quarterfinalists Abahani taking on Air Force Football Team, who were the last outfit to make the cut in the prestigious competition following a 2-0 win over Dhaka University on Monday.

#### **GROUP A** Bangladesh Police FC,

Sheikh Jamal DC, and **Brothers Union** 

### **GROUP C**

Mohammedan SC, Fortis FC, and Army FT

#### **GROUP B**

Abahani Ltd., Sheikh Russel KC, Rahmatganj MFS, and Air Force FT

#### **GROUP D**

Bashundhara Kings, Chittagong Abahani, and Navy FT



Arsenal players enjoy a training session in London yesterday, ahead of today's Champions League fixture against Sevilla. After being beaten by Lens 2-1 on Match Day 2 following a 4-0 win over PSV Eindhoven in their opening game, the English side would be looking to bounce back against the Spaniards.

# Martinez, Thuram leading Inter's CL charge

Lautaro Martinez and Marcus Thuram have rapidly struck up a formidable attacking partnership which will lead Inter Milan into Tuesday's Champions League Group D clash with Salzburg.

With 16 goals already scored between them so far this season, Inter's dynamic striking duo have made fans forget former idol and Martinez's one-time strike partner Romelu Lukaku.

The pair have also made last season's losing finalists one of the Serie A title favourites after an uncertain summer in which they were forced to let go key players in attack and defence.

Inter the temporary lead in Italy's for Italy, comfortable speaking top flight and took Martinez's the language despite leaving the all-competitions tally to 12 in 11 matches.

Since the departures of Edin Dzeko and Lukaku in the summer Martinez has taken on the mantle of attacking focal point for Inter who are also the highest scorers in Serie A with 24 goals.

Argentina striker Martinez is already five goals ahead of Victor Osimhen, his nearest rival at the top of Italy's scoring charts, and at his current rate of 11 strikes in nine league matches he would smash the record single-season haul of 36 set by Gonzalo Higuain in 2016.

"He's a great player, one of the best strikers in the world. Playing with him makes everything easier," hammering of AC Milan, in which part of Serie A's top-scoring team.



the France forward scored with a sumptuous strike.

French World Cup-winning icon much from the first training Both were on target in Saturday's
3-0 stroll at Torino which gave in Parma and has a clear affinity come along quickly," said Inzaghi country while still a child to begin his youth career in France.

It was at Parma where his father played for five seasons, winning the UEFA Cup and Italian Cup in 1999 as part of a star-studded outfit which also featured Azzurri icons Fabio Cannavaro and Gianluigi Buffon.

Cannavaro said on Wednesday that Thuram reminded him of Zlatan Ibrahimovic in his early days at Juventus and after picking Inter over AC Milan he has made an instant impact.

Thuram has only scored four times in all competitions in his first season as an out-and-out striker but five assists -- including three said Thuram after last month's 5-1 for Martinez -- have made him a key

"When he first came here I thought he might need some time The 26-year-old is the son of to get used to things, but pretty on Saturday. The pair have also been crucial to

Inter being level on four points with Group D leaders Real Sociedad, scoring Inter's only goals in their first two matches.

Martinez made sure Inter scraped a draw in their opener at Sociedad where they were dominated for much of the match.

And it was Thuram who secured his team's 1-0 win over Benfica earlier this month with a smart first-time strike from Denzel Dumfries' low cross, a similar finish to the one which opened the scoring on Saturday.

With Salzburg trailing Inter by a point and Sociedad at bottom side Benfica, Tuesday's clash is a great chance to create a cushion in the group which makes another assault on the knockout stages more likely.

## **BS Bedi: Spin** champion and cricket crusader

Former skipper Bishan Singh Bedi was a bold and sometimes rash voice in Indian cricket known as much for impetuous commentary on other players as his stellar left-arm spin.

Bedi, who died aged 77 on Monday, claimed 266 wickets in 67 Tests, leading the team on 22 occasions after succeeding Mansur Ali Khan Pataudi as captain. His younger peers revered him as a grand

statesman of the sport, never shy on offering trenchant opinions on issues plaguing the game, or backing other cricketers.

"Critics would call Bishan a rebel. Wrong. To me, he was a cricketer who knew his rights well," former captain Kapil Dev wrote in a book on Bedi.

"He stood up for the cricketers, fighting for better match fees, travel facilities and accommodation... (He) made Indian cricket immensely proud."

But he could also be harsh in his pronouncements, and during his short stint as India coach he reportedly threatened to dump the team in the Pacific Ocean while returning from a



humiliating loss to Australia in 1990.

He said the comment had been misreported and insisted he would not have stopped any player who wanted to jump into the sea out of shame.

During England's tour of India in 1976-77, Bedi accused bowler John Lever of using petroleum jelly to polish the ball illegally -- a charge later dismissed.

He was also the first captain to concede an international match in 1978, during a 50-over clash with Pakistan, when umpires declined to call a wide after four successive bouncers by Sarfraz

Bedi was born in Amritsar, the spiritual home of his Sikh faith, the youngest of 13 children.

He was the most prolific of the spin quartet at the forefront of India's bowling attack through the 1960s and 70s, alongside Erapalli Prasanna, Srinivas Venkataraghavan and Bhagwath Chandrasekhar.

Dedication to his craft occasionally manifested as criticism of the spin generation that succeeded him, and he once accused Sri Lankan legend Muttiah Muralitharan – whose 800 Test wickets are a world record -- of throwing.

"If Murali doesn't chuck, then show me how to bowl. How can you call it bowling?" he said.

"He has no follow-through and he makes no use of his shoulders. He looks like a good javelin thrower.'

After his playing career ended, Bedi's yearlong stint as India coach earned him praise for his tutelage from the legendary Sachin Tendulkar, who was in his teens and just beginning his international career.

"I had the privilege of facing him in the nets... and I had to be at my absolute best while facing him," Tendulkar said.

But his short time at the helm of state team Jammu and Kashmir was marred by acrimony, with players accusing him of bias.

He is survived by two sons and two daughters -- a pair each from his two marriages. His younger son Angad is married to Neha Dhupia, an actress and model crowned Miss India in 2002.



