

## What to WATCH

**T SPORTS**  
Bangladesh Premier League  
Dhaka vs Barisal  
Live from 1:30 pm  
Comilla vs Khulna  
Live from 6:30 pm

**SONY SPORTS 5**  
Sri Lanka vs Afghanistan  
3rd ODI  
Live from 3:00 pm  
**SONY SPORTS 1**  
UEFA Champions League

Lazio vs Bayern Munich  
Live from 2:00 am (Thursday)  
**SONY SPORTS 2**  
PSG vs Real Sociedad  
Live from 2:00 am (Thursday)

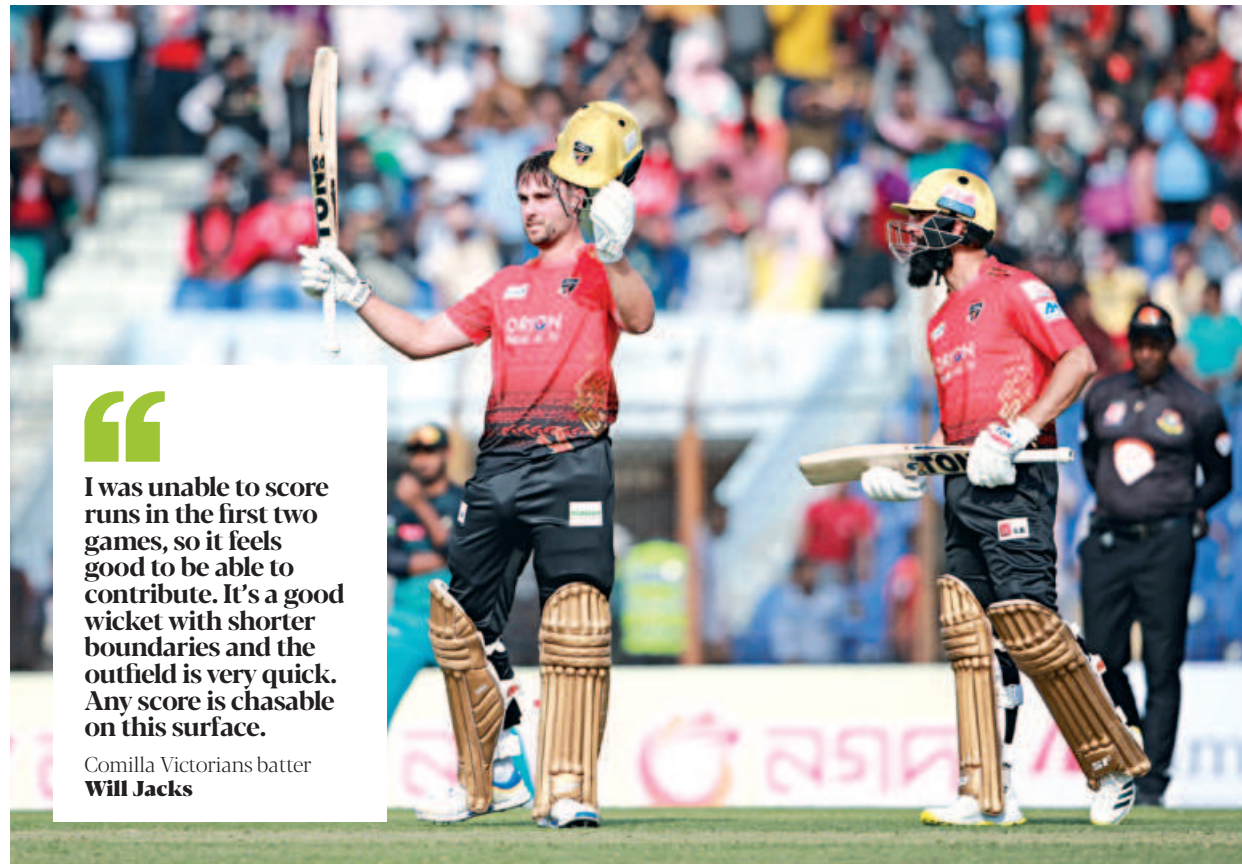
## Mystery spinner Aliss makes the cut

Mystery spinner Aliss Al Islam earned his maiden call-up to the Bangladesh team for next month's Twenty20 series against Sri Lanka on the back of his performances for the Comilla Victorians in the ongoing edition of the Bangladesh Premier League (BPL). The off-spinner, who was touted as an 'asset for Bangladesh cricket' by Comilla coach Mohammad Salahuddin, has taken eight wickets in six wickets so far this season at an economy rate of 6.68.



**T20I SQUAD:** Najmul Hossain Shanto (Captain), Liton Das, Anamul Haque, Naim Sheikh, Tawhid Hridoy, Soumya Sarkar, Mahedi Hasan, Mahmudullah Riyad, Tajul Islam, Rishad Hossain, Taskin Ahmed, Mustafizur Rahman, Shoriful Islam, Tanzim Hasan Sakib and Aliss Al Islam.

**ODI SQUAD (for 1st & 2nd ODIs):** Najmul Hossain Shanto (Captain), Anamul Haque, Soumya Sarkar, Tanzid Hasan Tamim, Liton Das, Mushfiqur Rahim, Tawhid Hridoy, Mahmudullah Riyad, Mehedi Hassan Miraz, Tajul Islam, Rishad Hossain, Taskin Ahmed, Shoriful Islam, Tanzim Hasan Sakib and Mustafizur Rahman.



**“**I was unable to score runs in the first two games, so it feels good to be able to contribute. It's a good wicket with shorter boundaries and the outfield is very quick. Any score is chasable on this surface.  
**”**

Comilla Victorians batter **Will Jacks**

Comilla Victorians opener Will Jacks celebrates with teammate Moeen Ali after notching up his third T20 ton in a Bangladesh Premier League (BPL) fixture against Chattogram Challengers in Chattogram yesterday. Jacks brought up his century with a six, taking 50 balls to get there as he finished with an unbeaten 53-ball 108, laced with 10 sixes and five fours, which powered Comilla to 239 for three, the joint-highest total in BPL history.

PHOTO: FIROZ AHMED

## JACKS' CENTURY AND MOEEN'S HATTRICK

- Holders Comilla Victorians registered a thumping 73-run win over Chattogram Challengers yesterday as the Chattogram leg of the Bangladesh Premier League (BPL) began in a high-scoring fixture which saw a few records registered.
- Comilla's 239 for three is now the joint-highest total in the history of BPL, equalling Rangpur Riders' 239 for four against Chittagong Vikings in 2019.
- Will Jacks followed Towhid Hridoy to smash the second century of the ongoing BPL. The right-handed English opener, who scored the 31st hundred in BPL history, struck 10 sixes and five fours for his unbeaten 53-ball 108.
- England all-rounder Moeen Ali registered the second hattrick of the season and the eighth BPL hattrick overall after Durdanto Dhaka's Shoriful Islam pulled off the feat in the tournament opener.

## No foreigners in DPL this year

SPORTS REPORTER

Cricket Committee of Dhaka Metropolis (CCDM) announced yesterday that the next edition of the List A competition Dhaka Premier League (DPL) will not have any foreign players as most clubs were uninterested to bear the expense of overseas recruits.

"Clubs had proposed it last year and it was under discussion," said CCDM chairman said Mohammad Salahuddin when asked if the dollar crisis was a reason for not allowing foreign stars.

"Majority of the clubs favoured having no foreigners, plus for the expense of one foreigner the clubs can afford to accommodate more local players," he added when asked how many clubs wanted this change.

Many of the players had also complained that they were yet to receive payments for last season from the clubs.

The CCDM chairman said, "From our side, we have handed out penalties when it was warranted. Today [Tuesday] we have taken another step to penalise clubs after talking to the players and the clubs," Salahuddin said.

"[At one club] There was a clause that they can cut salary [on the basis of performance] and the players agreed to it and signed it. Players should be careful about signing these kinds of agreements," he added.

At the meeting, the CCDM also fixed March 9 as the starting date of the tournament, which will be played in four venues—BKSP 3 and 4 in Savar, Sher-e-Bangla National Cricket Stadium in Mirpur and Khan Shaheb Osman Ali Stadium in Fatullah.

The players' transfer would take place on February 28 and 29.

## Who selected THE CHIEF SELECTOR?

SPORTS REPORTER

Who authorised the selection of the national selector became a pertinent question yesterday after vice-chairman of cricket operations committee and national team director Khaled Mahmud Sujon expressed surprise at the manner of Gazi Ashraf Hossain Lipu's appointment.

Bangladesh Cricket Board (BCB) brought in wholesale changes to the selection committee on Monday, replacing two of the most senior figures in the panel in Minhajul Abedin and Habibul Bashar, with Lipu appointed the chief selector and Hannan Sarkar appointed a member selector.

"It was really surprising for me. I had not heard his (Lipu's) name mentioned as a candidate. Many other names were floating around. I am the vice-chairman of cricket operation and yet I knew nothing. This is what surprised me the most," Mahmud told reporters in Chattogram yesterday.

Despite Lipu having served many roles at the board, it came as a surprise to many that he was made chief selector—a role he had never served in under any board. On Monday when the decision to appoint Lipu was announced to the media, many of the top officials of the board, who should have had knowledge about the appointment, felt surprised too.

One BCB official said on conditions of anonymity that board members were not aware as the BCB president Nazmul

Hassan Papon had asked director Enayet Hossain to hold a talk with Lipu regarding his availability. Only after Lipu decided to take the role was it placed in the board meeting on Monday.

Since the selection panel is under cricket operations' jurisdictions, the vice-chairman was supposed to be aware of the candidates being sought. It could be argued that the board high-ups wanted to keep things secretive to prevent others from vetoing the proposal.

**“**

**“I've not heard his (Lipu's) name mentioned as a candidate. Many other names were floating around. I'm the vice-chairman of cricket operations and yet I knew nothing. This is what surprised me the most,”**

Cricket ops vice-chairman **Khaled Mahmud Sujon**



Mahmud, however, said that there is no question regarding the appointment of Lipu given his knowledge.

"Lipu bhai is a very knowledgeable person. He can do well in this position," Mahmud remarked.

The biggest factor for any selection panel in BCB is the amount of interference from outside the selection panel and the freedom to make their own calls. Former board officials said that they were unsure of whether someone like Lipu can remain in the selection panel amid interference from the board.

Back in 2016, the then selector Faruque Ahmed had resigned because Chandika Hathurusingha was included in the selection panel. While the current selection panel of Minhajul Abedin had no qualms regarding Hathurusingha's involvement in selection, Lipu may end up disagreeing.

When the newly appointed chief selector attended a press conference yesterday, he was asked about the freedom in his role.

"There will be freedom; it was discussed with me. But I don't want to talk about the previous process," Lipu said.

"Without freedom there is no enjoyment in working. The path is always open to come and also to leave," he added.

Lipu, however, did identify that he would talk to the players and also learn about Hathurusingha's philosophy once he gets to meet the head coach.

As the process for appointing a chief selector did not involve voices which could have expressed a difference of opinion, it thus remains to be seen how much of the process will be followed in selection and giving freedom to selectors in time.

## SHORT CORNER

### Stokes awaits 100th Test cap

Ben Stokes will earn his 100th Test cap when he leads England against India in the third Test beginning Thursday in Rajkot. The five-match series is on a knife-edge at 1-1 after India's 106-run victory in the second Test in Visakhapatnam followed England's 28-run win in Hyderabad.

### Record-setting West Indies beat Australia in 3rd T20I

Andre Russell and Sherfane Rutherford put on the biggest sixth-wicket partnership in a Twenty20 international to steer the West Indies past Australia by 37 runs in their third and final clash on Tuesday. Both men crunched quickfire half-centuries to propel the visitors to 220-6 in Perth with Australia managing just 183-5 in reply, David Warner top-scoring on 81 in his last appearance for Australia at home.

### 'Hard graft' from all-rounders leads South Africa fightback

All-rounders Ruan de Swardt and Shaun von Berg used "hard graft" to lead a South African rearguard on Tuesday as they reached 220-6 after New Zealand had dominated the start of the second Test.

### Messi has 'invitation' to play for Argentina at Olympics: Mascherano

The door is open for Lionel Messi to play at this year's Paris Olympics, Argentina's under-23 manager Javier Mascherano said. Argentina secured their place at the Games after beating Brazil 1-0 on Sunday in the final four of South America's qualifying tournament.

\*Read full stories on The Daily Star website



Mohammedan players celebrate one of two goals from Emmanuel Sunday during a 2-1 victory against Abahani in their Federation Cup Group B fixture at the Sheikh Fazlul Haque Moni Stadium in Gopalganj yesterday. Cornelius Stewart scored the only goal for Abahani, who moved into the quarterfinals as group runners-up behind group winners Mohammedan. The Black and Whites will face Sheikh Russel while the Sky Blues will meet Fortis FC in the last eight. Bashundhara Kings will square off against Rahmatganj MFS while Sheikh Jamal and Police FC will meet in the other match.

PHOTO: BFF

## Under-fire Bayern turn focus to Lazio

AFP, Berlin

Stung by a 3-0 humiliation at the hands of Bayer Leverkusen, Bayern Munich head to Lazio on Wednesday knowing only a deep run in Europe will salvage their season. Thomas Tuchel's side were humbled by an outstanding Leverkusen on Saturday and are now five clear in the league and remain unbeaten after 31 games in all competitions.

A poor showing against Lazio, who sit eighth in the Serie A table, could push Tuchel closer to an unthinkable exit, less than a year after joining the German champions.

With 13 games remaining, Bayern could still bridge the five-point gap—particularly given Leverkusen's reputation for second-place finishes—but it was the manner of the defeat which was most troubling.

Despite Tuchel's previous success, the highlight of which was winning the Champions League with Chelsea in 2021, he has failed to put his stamp on a Bayern side too often reliant on individuals.

Already eliminated in the German Cup by third-division Saarbruecken, Bayern are looking down the barrel of a first trophyless season since 2012.

That this should happen after the

famously trophyless Harry Kane arrived at the club has not been lost on football pundits on either side of the pond, who asked if the England captain was jinxed.

Bayern would however be in a far worse position without their 100-million-euro (S108 million) striker, who has scored 28 goals in 28 matches in all competitions this season.

Meanwhile, Paris Saint-Germain host Real Sociedad on Wednesday, hoping to avoid a third straight exit from the competition in the first knock-out round.

PSG are still waiting to lift the European Cup for the first time, despite reaching the knock-out phase in 12 consecutive seasons under their Qatari owners.

The reigning French champions appear set to comfortably defend their league title, sitting 11 points clear of second-placed Nice at the top of the table.

PSG edged through their Champions League group as runners up behind Borussia Dortmund, and are unbeaten in 16 games in all competitions since a loss to AC Milan in November.

PSG avoided Bayern Munich, Real Madrid and Manchester City, who have each knocked them out over the past three seasons, in the last-16 draw despite failing to win Group F.

