DHAKA TUESDAY OCTOBER 20, 2026, KARTIK 4, 1433 BS

SPORT



"This is the most difficult thing I have ever had to share. Everyone knows how much Ukraine means to me. What I have rarely spoken about is what the war has done to me inside."

ELINA SVITOLINA
announcing her divorce from Gael Monfils

'SAFF to better show our progress'



Bangladesh defender Topu Barman is "very optimistic" about November's SAFF Championship on home soil following the inclusion of several expatriate players over the past few years. "Our players are now competing in the domestic league and gaining match fitness, so we should enter the tournament in better competitive shape than we were for the ASEAN Cup," Topu told The Daily Star's Anisur Rahman in an interview, where he reflects on the ASEAN Cup campaign, discusses the national team's tactical evolution under Thomas Dooley and addresses the challenges facing domestic football. He also talks about his role in the team and balancing professional commitments with Durga Puja celebrations.

**** Read the full interview on The Daily Star website.*

Nayeem's maiden ton, Shuvagata's record

SPORTS REPORTER

Nayeem Ahmed struck his maiden first-class century as Rajshahi Division reached 424 for five against Barishal Division on the second day of the third round of the National Cricket League (NCL) 2026-27 yesterday, building a 195-run first-innings lead after resuming on 24 for one.

Nayeem was unbeaten on 176 off 233 balls, hitting 25 fours, while Sabbir Rahman made 86 and S M Meherob Hasan remained not out on 57.

In Cox's Bazar, Mymensingh Division all-rounder Shuvagata Hom became the first Bangladeshi to score 7,000 runs and take 300 wickets in first-class cricket, reaching the milestone on his way to 71. Resuming on 226 for four, Mymensingh slumped to 232 for seven before Shuvagata and skipper Rakibul Hasan (61) added 128 to lift them to 387 against Dhaka Division. Aminul Islam Biplob took four wickets and Sumon Khan three for Dhaka, who reached 120 for three in reply, with Mohammad Naim unbeaten on 64.

In Chattogram, Sylhet Division took a seven-run lead over Rangpur after reaching 34 without loss in their second innings. Rangpur were bowled out for 206 after slipping from 199 for six, with Akbar Ali making 74 and Mim Mosaddeak 59. Off-spinner Nayeem Ahmed claimed four for 33 and Nasum Ahmed three wickets.

In Sylhet, Khulna Division extended their lead over Chattogram to 112, reaching 161 for six in their second innings. Afif Hossain was unbeaten on 58 and Anamul Haque Bijoy made 53. Earlier, Chattogram were dismissed for 250, with Irfan Shukkur, Shahadat Hossain Dipu and Shamim Hossain scoring half-centuries. Sheikh Parvez Jibon took four for 47 for Khulna, while Samiun Basir claimed three wickets.

WHAT TO WATCH



T SPORTS
Pakistan ODI Tri-Series
Pakistan vs England
Live from 2:00 pm

SONY SPORTS 1, 2, 5
UEFA Champions League
Live from 10:45 pm
Fenerbahce vs Slavia Prague
Sabah vs Dortmund
Live from 01:00 pm
PSG vs Barcelona
Man City vs AEK
Liverpool vs Villarreal

PSG host Barca in blockbuster UCL clash

STAR SPORTS DESK

A blockbuster clash headlines the Champions League tonight as back-to-back kings PSG welcome arguably their biggest usurpers -- a flying, flawless Barcelona.

Both giants boast perfect 2026-27 European records so far. Luis Enrique's PSG have dispatched Slovan Bratislava and Manchester City, while Hansi Flick's Barca have utterly dismantled Galatasaray and Feyenoord.

Having scored five and four goals in their first two games, Barca have now netted atleast four in four consecutive Champions League games -- a compeition record.

After a winless three-game domestic start, PSG are now riding a six-game winning streak across all competitions, recently staging a Ligue 1 comeback win against Strasbourg. They've plundered 19 goals during this run, but Enrique's defense has let goals in. The holders have managed one clean sheet in 10 matches and have conceded in four straight.

That fragile backline now faces Europe's most lethal attack. Barcelona are a perfect 11-for-11 across all competitions this season, smashing in a jaw-dropping 48 goals at an average of 4.4 per game.

TEAM NEWS

PSG's three-peat ambitions suffered a devastating blow with Nuno Mendes ruled out for weeks with a thigh injury. However, Enrique will recall a rested sextet -- Willian Pacho, Vitinha, Fabian Ruiz, Achraf Hakimi, Ousmane Dembele, and Desire Doue -- to the starting XI, alongside evergreen captain Marquinhos, all of whom were rested at the weekend.

Barca arrive without Jules Kounde and Eric Garcia, both injured against Real Betis. Gerard Martin and Gabriel Jesus picked up knocks but made the travelling squad. However, Flick may drop Jesus regardless; the electric 14-goal Raphinha returned from a muscle issue on Saturday and is primed to reclaim his frontline spot.





- PSG will face Barcelona for the 17th time in major European competition (W6 D4 L6).
- PSG have won their last two meetings with Barcelona, most recently 2-1 at Camp Nou in the 2025-26 Champions League league phase.
- Among European Cup/Champions League fixtures played at least 10 times, only Ajax-Bayern Munich (3.9) has a higher goals-per-game average than PSG-Barcelona (3.8, 57 goals in 15 meetings).
- PSG are unbeaten in 12 consecutive Champions League games, one short of their competition record.
- Barca have won all 11 games this season, scoring 48 goals at an average of 4.4 per match -- the highest among teams from Europe's top five leagues.
- Flick has the highest goals-per-game average (3.0) and goals-conceded-per-game average (1.6) of any Barcelona manager to oversee at least five Champions League matches.
- Lamine Yamal has five goal involvements in two CL appearances in 2026-27 (one goal, four assists), providing two assists in each game.
- Ousmane Dembele has 33 goal involvements in 42 Champions League appearances for PSG (21 goals, 12 assists).

Can Tigers' middle order bat smarter?

SPORTS REPORTER

Bangladesh's middle-order collapse against Zimbabwe has left head coach Phil Simmons looking for better game awareness from his batters as the Tigers seek to bounce back from a 99-run defeat in the ODI tri-series opener. With captain Litton Das ruled out of the series through a hip injury, Bangladesh must find a way to steady their innings and take control of the small but decisive moments against Afghanistan.

"The energy is still good. We had a nice meeting this morning and put things on the table, what we did and didn't do well, and we know what we have to do now. It's not like we've been playing badly; we've been playing very well. We had a day when nothing really went right, so we know how to come back from that," Simmons said ahead of training in Abu Dhabi on Monday.

Litton's absence is a significant setback, given his role in Bangladesh's middle-order partnerships over the past year. Of the eight stands of 50 or more runs between positions four and six in that period, Litton featured in four, including the only century stand, a 160-run partnership with Najmul Hossain Shanto against New Zealand.

Tawhid Hridoy, meanwhile, featured alongside Litton in three of those eight partnerships. But the right-hander has struggled to turn his contributions into match-winning performances, with each of his last three ODI fifties coming in defeats.

Bangladesh failed to build on a decent start against Zimbabwe, struggling to rotate strike as pressure mounted. Hridoy tried to force the pace and fell, triggering a collapse that saw the Tigers bowled out for 172 in 33.4 overs while chasing 272.



Simmons pointed to that lack of awareness as a key reason for the defeat in the tri-series opener, saying Bangladesh had failed to recognise what the situation demanded after their promising start.

"When we batted, we just lacked the understanding of the situation and knowing that with a start like that, we just had to make sure we bat for the fifty overs and we'd have won the game. So just a few little points here and there, but things that add up and you lose the game. So we know that that's the small points we have to make sure that we take control of," he said.

Bangladesh will need to put those lessons into practice against Afghanistan in Sharjah, where another batting stumble could leave their hopes of reaching the final hanging in the balance. The Tigers will also keep an eye on Monday's Zimbabwe-Afghanistan match, which could shape the qualification equation.

There was some encouragement on the personnel front, with all-rounder Mehidy Hasan Miraz returning to training on Sunday after missing the Zimbabwe match with fever. But with Litton unavailable for the remainder of the series, Bangladesh need their remaining middle-order batters to show greater composure and take responsibility when the game is there to be controlled.

No serious damage to Litton's injured hip

SPORTS REPORTER

Bangladesh white-ball skipper Litton Das has received a major boost after scans revealed no serious damage to his injured hip, keeping him in contention for upcoming World Test Championship (WTC) matches.

Ruled out of the UAE tri-nation series on Saturday, Litton returned to the country and went in for an assessment yesterday, yielding positive updates.

"He has been given light exercises and physiotherapy. He has no pain at the moment, but doctors will keep monitoring," a BCB official told The Daily Star yesterday.

Litton will balance resting with his physiotherapy regimen. The BCB medical team will monitor his progress for the next two days before a follow-up assessment.

If he remains pain-free, Litton can begin preparing for Bangladesh's high-priority WTC assignments. The Tigers host the West Indies first, with Tests starting October 28 in Dhaka and November 5 in Sylhet. They will then embark on their tour of South Africa, with Tests scheduled for November 15 and November 23.



Kylian Mbappe celebrates after completing his brace with a cheeky Panenka penalty in Real Madrid's 4-1 victory in their La Liga match against Sevilla at the Santiago Bernabeu yesterday. Arda Guler and Yan Diomande also found the net, with the latter becoming the youngest Real Madrid player this century to register a goal and an assist in a league match, aged 19 years and 338 days. The win keeps third-placed Madrid six points behind leaders Barcelona. PHOTO: REUTERS

U19s win Super Over thriller

STAR SPORTS REPORT

Rubay Islam Rizon's all-round brilliance guided Bangladesh U-19 to a dramatic Super Over victory against Afghanistan in Oman yesterday, securing a 2-0 lead in the four-match Youth ODI series.

After both teams tied on 304 runs in regulation, Bangladesh posted 10 for one in the Super Over. Pacer Rizon then brilliantly restricted Afghanistan to three for one to seal the win.

Earlier, Afghanistan posted 304 for nine, with Noman Salarzai scoring 76 and Rizon claiming 4-72. In reply, despite fifties from Alamin Hossain Rony (71), Ahsan Al Mumin (56), and Abdullah Al Muhi (50), Bangladesh stumbled, needing 15 off the final over. Rizon's unbeaten 19-ball 33 dramatically forced the tie.

পাওয়ার গ্রিড বাংলাদেশ পিএলসি
POWER GRID BANGLADESH PLC
(An Enterprise of Bangladesh Power Development Board)

Grid Bhaban, Avenue-3, Jahurul Islam City, Aftabnagar, Badda, Dhaka-1212 Web: www.powergrid.gov.bd
স্মারক নং- ২৭.২১.০০০০.৭৫২.১৮.০০১.২৬.৭৬৮ তারিখঃ ১৮/১০/২০২৬খ্রিঃ

e-Tender বিজ্ঞপ্তি

পাওয়ার গ্রিডের গ্রিড সার্কেল, খুলনা দপ্তরের আওতাধীন নিম্নলিখিত দরপত্র e-GP পোর্টালে প্রকাশিত হয়েছে।

ID	Title of Works	Last selling Date and Time	Tender Closing Date and Time
1343743	Repair and Maintenance of Transmission Line (132 kV, 230 kV & 400 kV Dead-Line Checking) of Amtali, Gopalganj and Payra 400 kV Grid Substation under Grid Circle, Khulna, Power Grid.	04 Nov 2026 at 16:00	05 Nov 2026 at 16:00
1349065	Supplying, Installation, Testing and Commissioning of 10 kWp On-Grid Solar System at Amtali 400 kV Switching Station & Payra 400/132/33 kV Substation Under Grid Circle, Khulna.		
1353689	Cutting Jungles and Shrub of Switchyard and Surrounding Area on Annual Basis at Gopalganj 400/230/132 kV Grid Substation under Grid Circle, Khulna.		

আগ্রহী ঠিকাদারী প্রতিষ্ঠানকে www.eprocure.gov.bd সাইটের মাধ্যমে দরপত্রে অংশগ্রহণের জন্য অনুরোধ করা যাচ্ছে।

মোঃ আরিফুর রহমান
তত্ত্বাবধায়ক প্রকৌশলী (অঃদাঃ), গ্রিড সার্কেল, খুলনা