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SPORT

Mohammedan stay perfect as BFL goes into break

SPORTS REPORTER

Mohammedan Sporting Club maintained their perfect start to the Bangladesh Football League as the competition went into a month-long break on Saturday.

The Black and Whites thrashed Dhaka Wanderers Club 4-0 at the Birshreshtha Flight Lieutenant Matiur Rahman Stadium in Munshiganj to collect 12 points from four matches. Shahriar Emon, Souleymane Diabate, Muzaffarov and Arif Hossain scored in the one-sided encounter.

Mohammedan, however, trail Police FC by a point after the latter beat PWD 1-0 in their fifth match of the campaign.

Ngong Sam Junior Stephen scored his second goal of the season in the 13th minute at the Shaheed Miraj-Topon Stadium in Manikganj, taking Police to 13 points from five matches and back to the top of the table.

Defending champions Bashundhara Kings retained third place with a 4-2 victory over Chattogram City FC. Caique da Silva scored twice, while Robson Robinho and Rakib Hossain netted the other goals. Aashish Sonam and Jafar Iqbal scored for Chattogram City, who remain without a point after five consecutive defeats.

Meanwhile, Pakistani forward Shayak Dost struck twice as City Club beat 10-man Arambagh 4-0. Enamul Islam Gazi and Onyekachi Ekafor scored the other goals as the season's surprise package stayed fourth with 10 points from five matches.

The league will resume on November 27 following a month-long break due to the national team's participation in the SAFF Championship in Dhaka.



PHOTO: BCB

Bangladesh veteran Mushfiqur Rahim chats with assistant coach Malibongwe Maketa during an optional practice session at the BCB Academy Ground in Mirpur yesterday. A few Bangladesh players geared up on Saturday ahead of the Tigers' two-match Test series against West Indies, which begins on October 28 at the Sher-e-Bangla National Cricket Stadium in Mirpur. The Windies, having played a two-day warm-up game against BCB XI, took a rest day. The second and final Test, part of the World Test Championship, will be held in Sylhet from November 5.





PHOTO: REAL MADRID/X

Flawless Barca face Mourinho's Real

"We've been in a good dynamic, winning games, playing well, scoring goals, but in the Clasico, it doesn't matter what you did before, it has no influence."

Real Madrid coach **JOSE MOURINHO**

"We have to grow as a team. Tomorrow we play against one of the best teams in the world so it's a good opportunity to grow."

Barcelona coach **HANSI FLICK**

Hansi Flick's Barcelona host Real Madrid at Camp Nou for the season's first El Clasico, with the stakes heightened by Jose Mourinho's return to the Real dugout and the six-point gap between the archrivals. Real sit third in LaLiga with 21 points, behind leaders Barcelona who won all nine of their league games. Barca's only setback of the season came in a 4-2 defeat away to PSG in the Champions League last week, but they go into the game as favourites, while Mourinho faces the uphill task of ending their winning streak and getting Real firmly back in the title race. On the eve of the 2026 Ballon d'Or ceremony, Sunday's clash (Monday in Bangladesh) will also see two leading contenders go head-to-head, with Kylian Mbappe hoping to inspire Los Blancos and Lamine Yamal spearheading Blaugranas' star-studded attack.

- Lamine Yamal has scored eight goals in nine LaLiga games this season, the most by any player under 20 at this stage of a campaign in the 21st century.
- Kylian Mbappe has scored 12 goals in 10 games against Barcelona in all competitions – four in three appearances for PSG and eight in seven for Real. Only Cristiano Ronaldo (20) and Karim Benzema (16) have scored more against Barca in the 21st century.
- Since August 31, Yamal has recorded 14 goal involvements, the most by any player in Europe's top five leagues. Barcelona teammate Raphinha is next with 11.
- Barcelona are only the second team to win their opening nine LaLiga games, after Real in 1968-69. They can become the first team to win their first 10.
- Barcelona scored 39 goals in their opening nine LaLiga games. Only Sevilla, with 42 in 1940-41, have made a better start in the competition's history.
- Barcelona have won their last two home LaLiga games against Real. Their only three-match home winning streak against Real this century came under Pep Guardiola between 2008 and 2010.
- Real, however, have won three of their last six LaLiga away games against Barcelona, matching their tally from the previous 16 visits (W3 D6 L7).
- Mourinho will take charge of his first Clasico in 13 years. He could now become the third Real coach to go unbeaten in six consecutive Clasicos.

Ronan, Mahe earn maiden call-ups

SPORTS REPORTER

U-20 final hero Ronan Sullivan and English ninth-tier striker Mohammed Mahe Khan have earned their maiden senior call-ups as Bangladesh coach Thomas Dooley named a 28-man preliminary squad for next month's SAFF Championship in Dhaka.

Ronan famously scored the winning penalty with a Panenka in Bangladesh's U-20 final triumph. Mahe Khan, 18, earned his place after a prolific start to the season for Moulton FC in the ninth tier of English football.

The newcomers join a squad heavily reliant on overseas-based players, led by Hamza Choudhury. Shamit Shome, Farhaan Ali Wahid, Fahamedul Islam and Zayyan Ahmed.



Ronan

Meanwhile, Bashundhara Kings defenders Topu Barman and Bishwanath Ghosh return to strengthen the backline after missing the recent ASEAN Cup due to injuries.

Bangladesh will open their SAFF Championship campaign against Bhutan on Nov 5 before facing Sri Lanka in their final group-stage fixture on Nov 11.

PRELIMINARY SQUAD

Goalkeepers: Mitul, Sujon, Srabon

Defenders: Topu, Bishwanath, Saad Uddin, Rahmat, Zidane, Isa, Tariq, Zayyan

Midfielders: Sohel Sr, Sohel Jr, Ridoy, Hamza, Shamit, Quazem, Jamal, Ronan

Forwards: Farhaan, Morsalin, Rakib, Fahim, Fahamedul, Ibrahim, Shuki, Shadin, Mahe.

Striker solution at SAFF?

SPORTS REPORTER

Bangladesh's search for a reliable centre-forward has led head coach Thomas Dooley to English non-league football, where 18-year-old Mohammed Mahe Khan has been making his mark.

Khan has reportedly scored nine goals in seven appearances for Moulton FC this season, earning a place in Bangladesh's 28-man preliminary squad for next month's SAFF Championship in Dhaka. His form offers another option to a side struggling for goals.



Mahe

Born in England, Khan plays for Moulton in the United Counties League Premier Division South, the ninth tier of English football. He spent seven years in Kettering Town's youth system before moving into senior football with Rushden & Higham United in 2024. He joined Moulton's senior side in July 2026 after gaining experience with the club's youth and senior teams.

The 1.83-metre, right-footed forward primarily operates as a centre-forward but can also play on either wing. He scored regularly for Rushden & Higham, and his latest run strengthened his case for a step up.

Khan has also represented Bangladesh at U-20 level, making three second-half substitute appearances in the AFC U-20 Asian Cup qualifiers against Uzbekistan, Syria and India. He played 192 minutes without scoring.

Khan's scoring record makes him an intriguing prospect, though he has produced it in England's ninth tier. Whether he can replicate that form against international opposition remains the key question.

Dooley acknowledged the gamble involved in selecting Khan before assessing him in training.

"Selecting him now is almost like leaving it to chance," the Bangladesh coach said, adding that the staff believed the teenager might be able to do the job required.



JACKSON BRACE ENDS CITY'S PERFECT START

Nicolas Jackson celebrates one of his two goals as Aston Villa ended Manchester City's perfect Premier League start with a 2-1 victory yesterday. Jackson blasted home the opener just six minutes into the game, before Erling Haaland briefly levelled early in the second half. Villa, however, responded on the hour mark when Jackson drilled home Ibrahim Mbaye's cross to seal the victory. Enzo Maresca had become the first manager to win his first seven Premier League games in charge of a new club, but he failed to find a solution to City's struggles at Villa Park, where they have now lost in each of the past four seasons. Just hours later, Arsenal went level on points (21) with leaders City following a 2-0 home win over Everton. PHOTO: REUTERS

IN BRIEF

Two more records in Summer Athletics

SPORTS REPORTER

Two national records were set on the second day of the Koko 18th National Summer Athletics Championship at the National Stadium in Dhaka on Saturday, taking the tally to seven in the first two days.

Bangladesh Navy's Rinki Biswas broke her own record in the women's 5,000 metres, winning gold in 18 minutes 8.50 seconds. She had set the previous record of 18:20.00 in 2025.

Navy teammate Priya Akter established a new national record in the women's 3,000 metres, winning gold in 10:24.38. The previous record of 10:27.60 was set by Rinki in 2025.

Meanwhile, Bangladesh Army's Lusad Islam won the men's 400 metres in 47.59 seconds, while teammate Barsha Khatun claimed the women's title in 56.20 seconds.

Mahfizul, Naim notch third NCL tons

SPORTS REPORTER

Opening batters Mahfizul Islam Robin and Mohammad Naim struck their third centuries of the National Cricket League (NCL) 2026-27 season on the opening day of the fourth round yesterday.

Mahfizul smashed an unbeaten career-best 156 off 229 balls against Chattogram Division, helping Mymensingh Division reach 299 for four at stumps in Bogura. Left-arm spinner Hasan Murad took three wickets.

In Rajshahi, meanwhile, Dhaka Division's Naim struck an unbeaten 171 off 242 balls, sharing an unbroken 205-run stand with Mahidul Islam Ankon (84 not out) after his side slipped to 88 for three.

Elsewhere, Rangpur reached 320 for five against Barishal in Sylhet, while rain prevented play in the Sylhet-Khulna fixture.

WHAT TO WATCH



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

LaLiga
Barcelona vs Real Madrid
Live from 2:00 am (Monday)

STAR SPORTS SELECT 1, 2, RAJDHANI TV
English Premier League
Liverpool vs Brighton
Man Utd vs Bournemouth
Live from 8:00 pm