

# Iran's Tasisat Daryaei Comes 8th at Futsal Int'l Cup



Iran's Tasisat Daryaei

TEHRAN (Tasnim) - Iran's Tasisat Daryaei lost to Portuguese champion Benfica 2-1 on Tuesday and finished in eighth place at the 2016 Futsal Intercontinental Cup.

Tasisat Daryaei lost to FC Barcelona Lassa 4-2 and Carlos Barbosa 4-3 in Group A and was held to a 2-2 draw against Dinamo Moscow in Doha, Qatar.

Carlos Barbosa and Magnus Futsal will play in the final match on Wednesday.

The Intercontinental Futsal Cup is considered to be one of the best club tournaments in the world.

The inaugural edition of the tournament was held at Porto Alegre in Brazil in 1997 when Sport Club Internacional of Brazil won the title beating FC Barcelona 4-2 in the final.

## Maradona, Argentine President and Fans Beg Messi Not to Quit



President Mauricio Macri

BEUNOS AIRES (DAWN) - Argentine football legend Diego Maradona and the country's President Mauricio Macri urged Lionel Messi on Monday not to leave the national team despite his vow to quit after a humiliating defeat.

The Barcelona superstar left the field in tears after missing a spot-kick in the Copa America Centenario final shootout against Chile on Sunday.

He promptly told reporters he was quitting, throwing Argentine football into turmoil ahead of the 2018 World Cup in Russia.

"He has to stay because he still has playing days ahead of him," Maradona was quoted as saying by La Nacion newspaper online. "He will go to Russia in form to be world champion."

Messi, 29, is widely rated as the best player in the world, but Sunday's loss was his fourth defeat in an international final for Argentina.

After an outpouring of disappointment by fans online, Argentinian President Macri joined the calls for the Barcelona superstar to stay with Argentina.

Macri on Twitter said that "more than ever I feel great pride for our team. I hope we can continue to have the joy of seeing the world's best player for many years."

"He called him and told him how proud he feels of the national team's performance and asked him not to listen to the criticism," a spokesman for the president told AFP by telephone.

Argentine football 'disaster' The 1986 World Cup winner Maradona, 55, blamed Argentina's recent lack of trophies on the country's football association (AFA).

He accused it of not supporting Messi and letting him take the blame for Sunday's defeat.

"Those who are saying he should quit are doing it so that we won't see what a disaster Argentine football has become," La Nacion quoted Maradona as saying.

Messi and the squad landed back in Buenos Aires on Monday evening after the tournament in the United States.

Television cameras followed their coach but the players had yet to make any comment to the media.

"Saturated with criticism" Messi is loved in Barcelona but his friends complained of how harshly he has been judged in his homeland.

"This land is just saturated with criticism and being so badly treated," said Ernesto Vecchio, who was Messi's first coach in his native city of Rosario.

"I don't want him to quit but when I put myself in his shoes it seems

unfair that they should look to him as the savior when there are 11 players on the team."

Messi's cool head on the pitch makes him an efficient goal scorer, but his reserved manner has drawn criticism.

Ahead of this month's Copa, Maradona himself accused Messi of having "no personality" for a captain.

Messi has been named FIFA World Player of the Year five times. But he has been haunted by comparisons with Maradona, who led Argentina to World Cup triumph in 1986.

Players 'devastated' The star's departure could herald a broader change in the Argentina line-up.

Manchester City star Sergio Aguero warned other players could also quit the national side.

"We were all devastated in the dressing room, particularly Leo, I'd never seen him in such a state," he said. "Several players are wondering whether to continue."

Aguero did not say whether he would follow Messi in quitting but he, Javier Mascherano and Gonzalo Higuain were mentioned in media reports.

Sergio Romero, Argentina's goalkeeper, said Messi spoke in the heat of the moment and he wants him to reconsider. "It's sad because once again a beautiful chance slipped away," Romero said.

String of defeats Argentina was beaten 1-0 by Germany in the final of the 2014 World Cup and lost on penalties, also to Chile, in the 2015 Copa America final.

Messi also tasted defeat with Argentina in the final of the 2007 Copa America.

In this month's Copa semi-final win over the United States, he became Argentina's top international scorer of all time with his 55th goal.

But after Sunday's final, his typical composure gave way to tears of frustration.

"I've done all I can, I've been in four finals and it hurts not to be a champion," Messi told reporters. "It's a hard moment for me and the team, and it's difficult to say, but it's over with the Argentina team."

"On top of everything, I missed the penalty kick," he said. "I think this is best for everyone. First of all for me, and then for everyone."

I think there are a lot of people who want this, who obviously are not satisfied, as we are not satisfied reaching a final and not winning it."

His departure left many fans no longer thinking about the Copa.

"Losing a final is something that happens in sport," wrote one fan, Fede Ruiz, on Twitter. "But losing you is the most painful defeat of all."

## Brazil Launches Olympic Anti-Terrorism Campaign

RIO DE JANEIRO (Xinhua) -- Brazil has launched an awareness campaign designed to foil terror plots during the Rio Olympics in August.

The South American country is not a traditional terrorist target and the government hopes the initiative will reduce Rio's vulnerability to possible attacks.

"It's a simple, informative campaign without calling for hysteria," defense ministry

official Luiz Felipe Linhares said in a statement on Tuesday.

The campaign involves the distribution of brochures, posters and booklets explaining how to identify people engaging in suspicious activity, the government said.

"Our country has never faced this type of threat so we need to make sure that people are more alert," Brazilian defense force anti-

terrorism chief, Mauro Sinott said. "The message that we want to pass on is that if you think a certain situation is suspicious, it is because it is in fact suspicious."

Earlier this month the government said Brazil's intelligence agencies were working alongside counterparts in the United States, England, France, Israel and Russia to counter the threat of terrorism.

Brazil will also deploy tens of

thousands of troops in Rio's streets to ensure the safety of athletes, officials, residents and an estimated 600,000 foreign visitors during the August 5-21 Games.

In total there will be 85,000 security personnel - including armed forces, police and security agents - patrolling the city. The figure is more than double the number used at the London 2012 Olympics.

## Anthony, Durant Lead USA Basketball Rio Squad



The US men's Olympic basketball team poses for a photo with head coach Mike Krzyzewski, left, and managing director Jerry Colangelo, right, during a news conference

NEW YORK (China Daily) - USA Basketball named a 12-man squad for the Rio de Janeiro Olympics Games on Monday with Oklahoma City star Kevin Durant and New York Knicks' Carmelo Anthony leading the team.

The squad also includes Kyrie Irving, Harrison Barnes, Toronto's Kyle Lowry and DeMar DeRozan, Indiana's Paul George, Golden State's Draymond Green and Klay Thompson, Sacramento's DeMarcus Cousins, Chicago's Jimmy Butler and the Clippers' DeAndre Jordan.

Nine players - Anthony, Jimmy Butler, DeMarcus Cousins,

DeMar DeRozan, Durant, Paul George, Green, Kyle Lowry and Thompson - were 2016 NBA All-Stars.

It's not as experienced as recent US teams, as only Durant and Anthony have played in the Olympics. The Americans lost a number of potential selections to injuries or other reasons in recent months, including James Harden, Anthony Davis and Blake Griffin.

Anthony will set a record by playing on his fourth US team and could become the most decorated Olympic men's basketball player ever if he helps the Americans to a third straight gold medal.

## Brazilian Hulk to Sign for Sven's Shanghai Side

MOSCOW (AFP) - Zenit St Petersburg's Brazilian international Hulk arrived in Shanghai Wednesday to sign for Sven-Goran Eriksson's Shanghai SIPG team, as the cash-flush Chinese Super League embarks on a new round of transfer spending.

A horde of cheering red-shirted fans mobbed the 29-year-old at Shanghai airport as he made his way through the arrivals halls carrying two bouquets of flowers.

Russian media have said Zenit would be paid around 55 million euros (\$61 million) for his services. But according to posts on China's Twitter-like Weibo, SIPG's general manager Sui Guoyang has said the figure was "not that high".

Website transfermarkt, which tracks dealings in the sport, put the fee at 58 million euros.

SIPG said on a verified Weibo account the "Incredible Hulk" would

undergo a medical on Thursday, after which he would be officially signed, with a press conference to follow later.

The deal could break the Asian transfer record of 50 million euros, paid by Jiangsu Suning for Shakhtar Donetsk's Alex Teixeira earlier this year in China's world-leading transfer splurge.

President Xi Jinping has ambitions to make the Asian giant a footballing power. During the winter transfer window in January and February, Chinese teams broke the Asian transfer record four times in an acquisition spree that outstripped even the mega-rich English Premier League.

But the big spending did not pay off for all of them. Guangzhou Evergrande and Jiangsu Suning flopped in the regional AFC Champions League, a route to a coveted FIFA Club World Cup



The deal for Brazil's Hulk could break the Asian transfer record of 50 million euros, paid by Jiangsu Suning for Shakhtar Donetsk's Alex Teixeira earlier this year in China's world-leading transfer splurge

spot -- while Shanghai SIPG is through to the quarter-finals.

Because Shanghai SIPG already has the maximum five foreign players, Hulk's arrival would mean one would have to leave the club.

Shanghai SIPG is fourth in the Chinese Super League table but has struggled in recent matches and are winless in five games.

On Saturday they could only manage a 1-1 draw at home to mid-ranked Tianjin Teda.