

Iran Ready to Assist OIC in Terms of Sports, Youths Plans

TEHRAN - Iran's Minister of Youth Affairs and Sports of Iran Hamid Sajjadi has expressed the Islamic Republic's readiness to help the Organization of Islamic Cooperation (OIC) over its outlook plans for 2025 regarding sport and youth areas.

Sajjadi made the remarks on the second day of the fifth session of the Islamic Conference of youth and sports ministers (ICYSM) in Jeddah, Saudi Arabia, on Thursday. The Islamic Republic of Iran's Ministry of Youth Affairs and Sports is prepared to assist the organization to materialize its sports and youth goals set for 2025, the



minister said. Development of sports infra-structures, participation in holding sports events, investment in sports,

improvement of human resources, research in sports know-how, as well as empowerment of NGOs, promotion of employment and decrease of unemployment ration among youths, expansion of the culture of entrepreneurship, and fight against extremism are part of the objectives of the OIC designated for 2025.

Sports ministers from 57 member states of the OIC took part in the conference.

The ministers are going to determine the time and venue of the sixth session of the Islamic Conference of Youth and Sport Ministers in today's meeting.

Russia to Play Iran in Friendly Match

TEHRAN – The Russian men's national football team have announced upcoming friendly matches against Kyrgyzstan and Iran, with the latter likely to take place in Tehran, according to Russian football federation.

Russian teams at all levels remain banned from UEFA and FIFA competitions following the onset of Moscow's military campaign in Ukraine – a situation which prevented the men's team from attempting to qualify for the 2022 Qatar World Cup, Russia Today reported.

But they can play friendly in-

ternationals and will take on an Iran team which will play at the World Cup in a group alongside the USA, England and Wales.

The Iranians will host the Russian team managed by Valeri Karpin in a game planned for November, with a date and location to be confirmed but which will likely take place in Tehran, according to Match TV.

The match against Kyrgyzstan is scheduled for September 24 in Bishkek's Dolen Omurzakov Stadium and will be a first football meeting at this level between the two nations.

Liverpool Crash to 4-1 Defeat at Inspired Napoli



Napoli's team players celebrate as they won the group A Champions League soccer match between Napoli and Liverpool at the Diego Armando Maradona stadium in Naples, Italy, on Sept 7, 2022.

opening Group A game at the Diego Armando Maradona Stadium.

The Italian side were magnificent in the opening 45 minutes, going in 3-0 up at the break having opened up a woeful Liverpool defense at will.

Juergen Klopp's team looked nothing like the side who reached the final last season, disorganized at the back and lacking any edge in midfield or attack.

Napoli have now beaten Liverpool on all three occasions they have hosted them in the competition's group stage and Luciano Spalletti's side will feel they have a real chance of getting out of a group that also features Ajax and Rangers.

Napoli were quick out of the blocks with Victor Osimhen hitting the post in the second minute and three minutes later they grabbed the lead when James Milner handled in the box and Piotr Zielinski converted the penalty.

Napoli were opening up Liverpool with ease and were awarded a second penalty when a VAR review ruled that Osimhen had been brought down by Virgil van Dijk. The Napoli forward opted to take the kick himself but his effort was saved by Alisson Becker.

Van Dijk had to clear off the line to keep out an effort by the outstanding Khvicha Kvaratskhelia after Osimhen had robbed a struggling Joe Gomez.

Man United Slump to Sociedad Loss



Real Sociedad's Brais Mendez scores his side's first goal of the game during group E Europa League soccer match between Manchester United and Real Sociedad at Old Trafford in Manchester, England on Sept 8, 2022.

MANCHESTER (Reuters) - Manchester United kicked off their Europa League campaign poorly with a 1-0 home defeat by Real Sociedad as Arsenal's new signing Marquinhos scored in a 2-1 win at FC Zurich on Thursday.

A minute's silence was observed in Zurich and Manchester following the death of Britain's Queen Elizabeth, which was marred by booing from the crowd in Switzerland.

"UEFA and European football are truly saddened by the passing away of Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth II, one of the world's most-respected figures," European football governing body UEFA said in a statement.

"Our thoughts are with her family and the President of the English Football Association Prince William, as well as with the citizens of the United Kingdom and Commonwealth

realms."

The evening was marred by crowd trouble in Nice, where the start of the Europa Conference League game against Cologne was delayed by almost an hour and left one person in critical condition.

At Old Trafford, United pinned Real Sociedad in their own half, with Christian Eriksen finding spaces for Anthony Elanga and Ronaldo but the Spanish side held on thanks to their centre backs.

Ronaldo netted in the first half, only to see the offside flag be raised.

With Eriksen replaced by Bruno Fernandes for the second half, United lacked creativity and Real Sociedad started to grow more confident.

They were rewarded in the 59th minute when Brais Mendez converted a penalty following a handball by Lisandro Martinez.

FIFA Report Shows \$5bn Spent on International Transfers in Latest Window

ZURICH (Reuters) - The number of international transfers in men's football hit an all-time high as \$5 billion was spent in total fees during the latest transfer window, a report by world soccer's governing body FIFA said on Thursday.

The report, labelled the "International Transfer Snapshot", included an analysis of international player transfer activity from Jun 1 to Sep 1 during the transfer window.

The key findings of the report showed that 9,717 international transfers involving male players took place during the mid-year registration period, which was 16.2 per cent more than in the same period in 2021 and a record high.

The \$5 billion spent in total fees



on those transfers was 29.7 per cent more than the same period in 2021.

Darwin Nunez's move from Benfica to Liverpool was reported to be worth €100 million (US\$99.98 million) by

British media, while Aurelien Tchouameni joined Real Madrid from AS Monaco for the same amount.

In the women's game, international transfers during the mid-year reg-

istration period reached an all-time high with 684 transfers, which was 14.4 per cent more than the same period in 2021.

The report also showed that Portuguese clubs made a particularly strong recovery, more than tripling their receipts from transfer fees compared to the same period in 2021 after back-to-back years of significant decreases.

The total amount of service fees for club agents declared in transfers was \$494.4 million.

Over the last 10 years, the ratio of agent service fees to transfer fees during the mid-year registration window has grown from 6.1 per cent in 2012 to 9.9 per cent in 2022, the report said.

Lewandowski's Landmark Treble Sounds Warning to Barca Rivals



Barcelona's Robert Lewandowski celebrates after scoring his side's fourth goal during a Group C Champions League soccer match between FC Barcelona and Viktoria Plzen at the Camp Nou stadium in Barcelona, Spain, Sept 7, 2022.

BARCELONA (Reuters) - It didn't take long for Robert Lewandowski to leave his mark with Barcelona in the Champions League.

Lewandowski scored three goals in the team's opening 5-1 rout of Viktoria Plzen on Wednesday, becoming the first player to get a hat-trick with

three different clubs in the Champions League.

The 34-year-old Poland striker now has seven Champions League hat-tricks, with the others coming with Bayern Munich and Borussia Dortmund.

Barcelona's biggest signing of the year continued his great start to the season, taking his tally to eight goals from his first five matches.

"I knew from the beginning here it was going to be important to adapt right from the first game," Lewandowski said. "People ask about the goals, but it's important to be in the right position, to help my team because my teammates have helped me a lot on and off the pitch."

Lewandowski said the goals were a gift to his wife, who was at Camp Nou celebrating her birthday.

Barcelona coach Xavi Hernan-

dez said he was running out of words to praise his new striker.

Franck Kessie, another Barcelona signing, and Ferran Torres also scored for the host in the Group C match.

RB Leipzig Sack Head Coach Domenico Tedesco

BERLIN (AFP) – RB Leipzig reacted quickly to a 4-1 home defeat to Shakhtar Donetsk and dismissed head coach Domenico Tedesco with immediate effect, the Bundesliga side confirmed.

After a run of two hammering defeats, the Red Bulls parted ways with the 36-year-old head coach and his assistants Andreas Hinkel and Max Urwantschky.

"The decision to release Domenico Tedesco was a very difficult one for us. However, after the moderate start into

the Bundesliga season with five points from five games, especially after the most recent games at Eintracht Frankfurt and at home against Shakhtar Donetsk, we lacked the conviction that an immediate turnaround could take place in the current constellation," said sporting director Oliver Mintzlaff.

Tedesco joined Leipzig in December 2021 with the club seven points adrift of the UEFA Champions League spots. His

arrival gave the team an impetus and helped Leipzig qualify for the Champions League. He also has a large share of the most successful season in Leipzig's history, after leading the club to their first major title, winning the German Cup after a 4-2 win on penalties over Freiburg in the final.

Leipzig hosts in-form Borussia Dortmund in the Bundesliga on Saturday before the Red Bulls travel to Real Madrid in the Champions League.