

# Uproar over Ibra salary

 Football

AFP, Paris

Football superstar Zlatan Ibrahimovic's record-breaking salary at his new Paris club has sparked a fierce backlash from French politicians denouncing it as "indecent" at a time of financial hardship.

The 30-year-old Swedish striker's transfer to Paris Saint-Germain from AC Milan was hailed by fans with hundreds chanting "Ibra! Ibra!" as he was presented to them Wednesday at a ceremony in front of the Eiffel Tower.

He has been hired on a reported annual net salary of about 14 million euros (\$17 million) - the most ever paid to a player in France.

But with France struggling to avoid recession and unemployment on the rise, Socialist politicians have reacted angrily to the figure, denouncing it as a sign of rampant excess.

Even one former sports minister from the right-wing UMP party has denounced the salary.

France's new Socialist government is insisting that Ibrahimovic will have no choice but to pay the 75-per cent tax rate it intends to impose on annual salaries in excess of one million euros from next year.

"These numbers are not impressive, they are indecent," Budget Minister Jerome Cahuzac told Europe 1 radio Thursday when asked about Ibrahimovic's salary.

"They are indecent at a time when everyone in the entire world is making efforts and knows the terrible consequences of a crisis," he said.

Sports Minister Valerie Fourneyron attacked the salary as "astronomical and unreasonable" while government spokeswoman Najat Vallaud-Belkacem said the sum "shocked a lot of people".

Vallaud-Belkacem said there was no way Ibrahimovic would "escape" from paying the 75-per cent tax rate. Some ministers even rejoiced that his salary would bring so much

revenue to state coffers.

"I am delighted that he will be paying taxes in France," said Benoit Hamon, a junior economy minister. "This is a demonstration that this tax was not an argument to prevent great players from coming to play in France."

Former sports minister Roselyne Bachelot of the right-wing UMP also expressed her "indignation, almost disgust" with the vast sums involved when asked about Ibrahimovic's transfer.

Even President Francois Hollande joined the fray.

Although he didn't criticise Ibrahimovic's salary itself, he pointed to the relatively modest salaries at French league champions Montpellier as an example.

"There are teams that manage to win... without necessarily having very significant salaries," Hollande said during a visit to France's national sport institute.

PSG President Nasser al-Khelaifi told reporters Wednesday that the club's owners, Qatar Sports Investments (QSI), would follow French law when it came to paying Ibrahimovic's taxes.

"As we have already said, we respect French laws. We do it today and we will do it tomorrow. Ibrahimovic's signing is very positive for PSG but also for French football," he said.

Tax experts said that to guarantee Ibrahimovic a 14-million-euro net salary the club will have to set aside enormous amounts.

"If you want the part taxed at 75 per cent a year paid entirely to the player, the club will have to pay four times that much," said French tax lawyer Frederic Naim.

Experts said Ibrahimovic would be required to take French residency and pay French taxes, though he might benefit from a deduction for temporary residency allowing him to cut his taxable income in half.



PHOTO: REUTERS  
Paris Saint-Germain's latest signing Swedish superstar Zlatan Ibrahimovic poses with his new jersey at Trocadero Square in front of the Eiffel Tower on Wednesday.

## Diarra goes AWOL

AFP, Marseille

Marseille coach Elie Baup on Wednesday said that he still has no news of midfielder Alou Diarra, two days after the resumption of training.

"At the moment I can say that he hasn't been here for the first two days when he should have been. Every day he has been marked down as absent," Baup told a news conference.

"I left him a message on Monday. I told him, 'You know that we're really counting on you'. I haven't had a reply."

Former Bordeaux coach Baup, who took over from Didier Deschamps earlier this month, said that all the players had signed a form saying that they would be back for pre-season training on July 16.

Sanctions for Diarra's no-show was a matter for the club's management, he said but added that he was an essential part of the team.

"On a sporting level, he's a player I'm counting on obviously."

## Macheda lifts MU

 Football

AFP, Durban

Manchester United started a six-game pre-season world tour with a 1-0 win over AmaZulu before a capacity 50,000 crowd at Moses Mabhida Stadium Wednesday.

Federico Macheda scored the winner midway through the first half for the Red Devils, who came closest to increasing the lead just before time when another Italian, substitute Davide Petrucci, rattled the crossbar.

It was a closer match than anticipated, with many South Africans believing mid-table AmaZulu would be swept aside by the former European champions even though they were lacking many first choices like Wayne Rooney.

Political icon Nelson Mandela, the first democratically elected president of South Africa, was remembered before the kick-off with the teams wishing him a happy 94th birthday in song.

United left new signing Shinji Kagawa from Japan on the bench as they started with a mix of experienced stars like captain Rio Ferdinand and young players Robbie Brady, Scott Wootton, Frederic Veseli and Jesse Lingard.

The Red Devils were quick into their stride on a clear mid-winter evening in the Indian Ocean city and could have taken the lead inside two minutes had Javier Hernandez been sharper.

Kapini failed to grasp a close-range Macheda shot and the ball fell invitingly for the Mexican in front of goal but he failed to connect with the ball and it was hastily cleared.

United were dominant in the early stages against nervous opponents and the 2012 English Premier League runners-up to Manchester City would not have been flattered by a three-goal lead after 10 minutes.

Machedo broke the deadlock on 20 minutes by finishing off good work from Paul Scholes and Dimitar Berbatov with a close-range shot that touched the hand of the AmaZulu goalkeeper and the foot of a defender before crossing the line.

The goal triggered greater urgency from AmaZulu, a mid-table South African Premiership side coached by Swede Roger Palmgren, and Ayanda Dlamini twice threatened the visiting defence.

Bulgarian Berbatov was unlucky not to score a second goal for United before half-time as his sweetly struck volley off a corner was brilliantly tipped over the bar by Zimbabwean Kapini.

A frenetic start to the second half saw both teams come close to scoring and AmaZulu posed more of a threat as it progressed, although they were continually let down by wild shooting.

Kagawa, a June signing from German champions Borussia Dortmund, finally came on one minute from time after a prolonged wait on the touchline before the ball went out of play.



Manchester United striker Federico Macheda (L) scores the all-important goal past AmaZulu goalkeeper Tapuwa Kapini during their pre-season friendly match in Durban on Wednesday.

PHOTO: REUTERS

## 'Modric won't go cheaply'

AFP, London

Tottenham manager Andre Villas-Boas insists Luka Modric will only be sold if his club receive an offer that matches their valuation of the Croatia midfielder.

Modric is keen to leave White Hart Lane after Tottenham's failure to qualify for the Champions League and Villas-Boas confirmed that three teams, believed to be Real Madrid, Manchester United and Paris Saint-Germain, have all expressed an interest.

Tottenham rejected an offer of around £30 million (\$46.9 million, 38.2 million euros) for the 26-year-old from Chelsea last year and it has been reported they will only consider bids of £35 million or more.

Modric, resting after Euro 2012, was absent as Tottenham kicked off their pre-season preparations with a 2-0 friendly win at Stevenage on Wednesday but Villas-Boas took the opportunity to underline his club's position on the Croatian.

"There has been continuous interest from three different clubs in Luka. But it is important for Tottenham to hold onto their rights," Villas-Boas told The Sun newspaper.

"His situation will continue as it is until the price is right. It's important to understand his feelings. We have been speaking and I understand his point and he understands the club's point."

## Bin Hammam wins appeal

 Football

REUTERS, Paris

Former FIFA presidential candidate Mohamed Bin Hammam has won his appeal against a life ban from all soccer-related activity over bribery allegations, the Court of Arbitration for Sport said on Thursday.

CAS said in a statement that it had upheld Bin Hammam's appeal due to "insufficient evidence" in the case against the former head of the Asian Football Confederation (AFC).

It said, however, that the ruling did not amount to an "affirmative finding of innocence" for Bin Hammam, noting that FIFA's investigation had not been thorough enough.

"The CAS has upheld Bin Hammam's appeal, annulled the decision rendered by the FIFA Appeal Committee and Lifted the life ban imposed on Mr Bin Hammam," the CAS statement read.

Bin Hammam, a former member of FIFA's executive committee, challenged Sepp Blatter for the presidency of soccer's world ruling body last year.

He withdrew his candidacy, and was then provisionally suspended, days before the June election over allegations that he had tried to buy the votes of Caribbean officials by handing them \$40,000 each in brown envelopes.

Blatter was subsequently re-elected unopposed for a fourth term as FIFA president, while Bin Hammam was found guilty of breaking seven articles of FIFA's ethics code, including one on bribery.

He was banned for life and subsequently lost an appeal at FIFA. Proceedings against former CONCACAF president Jack Warner, also present, were dropped after he resigned his post.

CAS said the three-man panel voted 2-1 in Bin Hammam's favour but added that his behaviour was "not of the highest ethical standard."

"In this way, his conduct, in collaboration with and most likely induced by Mr Warner, may not have complied with the highest ethical standards that should govern the world of football and other sports," said CAS.

"This is all the more so at the elevated levels of football governance at which individuals such as Mr. Bin Hammam and Mr. Warner have operated in the past."

## Maradona renews Riquelme feud

AP, Buenos Aires

Diego Maradona called Juan Roman Riquelme a "traitor" on Wednesday for leaving Boca Juniors, renewing an ongoing feud.

Maradona used the term in a radio interview.

"If one wants to fight with Maradona, that's not important to me," Maradona said on Radio Metro. "But what you can't do is be a traitor to the fans at Boca."

Riquelme, a former Barcelona and Villarreal playmaker, shocked Boca fans this month by announcing he was leaving after the club lost to Corinthians in the final of the Copa Libertadores - the top club championship in Latin America.

Riquelme said he was "empty" and had nothing left to give to the club, with reports suggesting he might move to another Argentine team or to a club in China or in the Middle East.

"You can't be empty just after losing the final of the Copa Libertadores," Maradona said. "If you're empty, then fill up the tank."

Maradona gained his early fame at Boca Juniors and, like Riquelme, was a fan favourite.

When he was coaching Argentina's national team, Maradona often overlooked Riquelme, declining to call him up for the 2010 World Cup.

Riquelme played for Argentina at the 2006 World Cup, leading the team to the quarterfinals under coach Jose Pekerman.

### SPORTS POLL

Is Roger Federer the greatest tennis player of all-time?

Yes 77.9%

No 22.1%

TOTAL VOTES: 149

### WEEKLY QUESTION

Did Milan make a mistake by selling Ibrahimovic to PSG or was it smart business?

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### STAR Cricket

England v South Africa

First Test, Day 2

Live from 4:00pm

TEN Action

Tour de France

Stage 18



### Premier Div Hockey

Bangladesh SC v Usha KC

Time: 2:30pm

Police AC v Wari Club

Time: 4:15pm

Venue: Maulana Bhasani Hockey

## কলকারখানা থেকে সৃষ্টি কালো ধোঁয়া রোধ করি স্বাস্থ্যসম্মত শহর গড়ি

- আবাসিক এলাকা থেকে দূরে কলকারখানা স্থাপন করি
- কালো ধোঁয়ামুক্ত পরিবেশ গড়ি

বায়ুদূষণ রোধ করি  
বাসযোগ্য ভবিষ্যৎ গড়ি



পরিবেশ অধিদপ্তর

নির্মল বায়ু এবং টেকসই পরিবেশ (CASE) প্রকল্প



পরিবেশ ও বন মন্ত্রণালয়

