Grameenphone Super Cup Sheikh Russel KC vs Feni Soccer Club

Time 5:00pm Abahani vs Muktijoddha Sangsad Time 7:00pm Venue: Bangabandhu National Stadium



FIXTURES

Group A: Brazil, Japan, Mexico, Italy Group B: Spain, Uruguay, Tahiti, Nigeria

GROUP STAGE 16/06 01:00 Brazil-Japan 17/06 01:00 Mexico-Italy 17/06 04:00 Spain-Uruguay 18/06 01:00 Tahiti-Nigeria

20/06 04:00 Italy-Japan 21/06 01:00 Spain-Tahiti 21/06 04:00 Nigeria-Uruguay 23/06 01 00 Italy-Brazil

20/06 01:00 Brazil-Mexico

23/06 01:00 Japan-Mexico 24/06 01:00 Nigeria-Spain 24/06 01:00 Uruguay-Tahiti

Semi-final 27/06 01:00 1A-2B 28/06 01:00 1B-2A Match for third place 30/06 22:00 L (Semi 1):L (Semi Final

01/07 04:00 W (Semi 1):W (Semi 2)

Messi falls foul of the taxman

REUTERS, Madrid



Lionel Messi's picture was on the front pages rather then in the sports sections of the Spanish media on Thursday, after the World Player of the

Year and his father were accused of tax fraud.

The news is damaging to the Argentina and Barcelona forward's image, and he joins a long list of top athletes who have been investigated by the tax authorities, including Luis Figo, Boris Becker and Diego Maradona.

"Leo Messi marked financially by the tax man," wrote daily El Pais, while sports paper Marca's front page said: "A symbol under suspicion."

The 25-year-old player and his father Jorge Messi were accused on Wednesday of defrauding the Spanish state of more than four million euros after allegedly filing fraudulent tax returns for the years 2006 to 2009.

The prosecutor's office for tax crimes in Catalonia alleged that the sale of Messi's image rights had been hidden from the authorities via a complex web of shell companies in Uruguay, Belize, Switzerland and the United Kingdom.

"It is something that surprises us because we have never committed any offence," Messi said in a statement on his Facebook page. Under Spanish law an examining magis-

trate has to decide whether to continue the investigation and whether to bring formal

"If an (examining) judge accepts the case, he would call Messi and his father to give evidence, which is what the tax authority has called for," the prosecutor's office said.

With the Spanish government under pressure to reach tough European deficit

reduction targets, they have cranked up their efforts against tax evasion.

Former tennis world number one Arantxa Sanchez Vicario was ordered to pay 3.5 million euros in unpaid income tax in 2009 after it was deemed she was a resident of Spain rather than of Andorra, as she had said.

Last June, a Spanish public prosecutor accused Cameroon striker Samuel Eto'o of conspiring to evade 3.5 million euros in taxes owed on income from his image rights when he was playing for Barcelona between 2006-2009.

Eto'o allegedly created two companies, one in Hungary and another in Spain, and used them to channel income obtained from ceding his image rights to Barca and sportswear maker Puma, the prosecutor said.

In March last year, former World Player of Year Figo was ordered to pay some 2.4 million euros in income tax to the Spanish government from his time as a Barcelona player, in a supreme court ruling.

The former Portugal international had appealed against a 2008 demand from the Spanish tax authorities which claimed monies due from 1997 to 1999 relating to his image rights when he was a player at the Nou Camp.

Outside Spain, former tennis world number one Steffi Graf's father went to prison after a tax investigation in Germany and compatriot Becker, another former tennis world number one, was fined for tax evasion in 2002.

In Italy, former MotoGP world champion Valentino Rossi agreed to pay \$51 million to Italy's tax agency in 2008 after a lengthy investigation.

Argentine great Maradona recently denied that he owed Italian authorities 38 million euros in unpaid taxes.



Brazilian football legend Pelé poses after the ceremony of the unveiling clock designed by the late architect Oscar Niemeyer to mark the one-year countdown to next year's World Cup in Copacabana Beach on Wednesday.



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Roma appoint Garcia as coach

REUTERS, Roma



AS Roma appointed former Lille boss Rudi Garcia as their new coach on Wednesday, the latest in a long line

of managers tasked with trying to turn vast potential into elusive silverware.

The well-supported club, who play in Rome's huge Stadio Olimpico and have boasted a number of famous players such as Brazil World Cup winner Cafu, have only won the Italian title three times with the last scudetto coming in 2001.

"We are very excited and confident that Rudi Garcia is the right coach for AS Roma. He is a proven winner with a great football mind who we believe fits in perfectly with our vision for the future," Roma President James Pallotta said in a statement. He succeeds Aurelio Andreazzoli,

who led Roma to a sixth place finish in Serie A this season but was widely seen as a temporary appointment.

Former assistant boss Andreazzoli took over in mid-season from Zdenek Zeman but the club lost in the final of the Italian Cup to city rivals Lazio, missing out on a place in the Europa League.

Garcia, 49, who will sign a two-year contract, was at Lille for five seasons and guided the team to the Ligue 1 title and the French Cup in 2011. Last season the club finished in sixth place and Garcia's departure looked on the cards.

"The players need to feel comfortable, you must never forget a birthday, sometimes it's the little things that count," Garcia, Roma's first French coach, was

quoted as saying on the club's website. "I don't command, I discuss things, tweak things and bring the players along," he said.

The usually fast-paced Italian managerial merry-go-round has gone into overdrive since the end of the season, with Rafael Benitez joining Napoli from Chelsea and Walter Mazzarri leaving Napoli to join Inter Milan.

Lille issued a statement thanking

"His name will stay in the club's history forever," it said.

Brazil will be ready, say FIFA

REUTERS, Rio de Janeiro



Three days before the start of the Confederations Cup and exactly a year before the World Cup kickoff, FIFA Secretary General Jerome Valcke dismissed concerns that Brazil will not be ready for the bigger

tournament.

Flanked by soccer great Pelé, who urged Brazilian fans to stand unified behind their still evolving national team, Valcke unveiled a clock in Rio de Janeiro counting down the days until the World Cup starts.

Valcke said that 12 months is enough time to finish work at airport terminals and the 12 stadiums that will play host to the event.

Aldo Rebelo, Brazil's sports minister, has said repeatedly that the stadiums will be completed by a December deadline.

"That is going to happen," Valcke said on Wednesday, echoing the comments by Rebelo, who was also at the unveiling of the

"There is no Plan B. There is no solution

other than having those 12 stadiums," Valcke added.

Six of the stadiums, including in Rio, Brasília, Belo Horizonte and three cities in Brazil's northeast, are mostly completed and are gearing up for the two-week Confederations Cup. The smaller tournament, an eight-team

competition that starts on Saturday, will serve as a World Cup warmup and will help organisers test facilities ahead of the marquee event.

Pelé urged Brazil fans, known for booing the national team for anything other than outright dominance on the field, to be patient.

The three-times World Cup winner said the team's play is still a work in progress because the squad is predominantly made up of younger players including Neymar, the forward who recently joined Barcelona from Pele's former club Santos.

"Barcelona is the best collective team in recent memory," Pelé said. "This full year that he spends with Barcelona will be great training before coming back to the national team."

Laporta bats for Messi

AP, Barcelona

Former Barcelona president Joan Laporta is defending Lionel Messi against allegations of tax fraud, a case that experts say could carry a prison sentence for the Argentina star.

A Spanish state prosecutor filed a fraud complaint on Wednesday alleging that Messi and his father Jorge avoided paying 4 million euros (\$5.3 million) in back taxes through illegal overseas tax havens.

Laporta told Cope radio he is "convinced that they have not committed any irregularity."

Laporta's presidency coincided with the period the complaint covers from 2006-09.

If found guilty and barring an out-of-court deal with the tax office, Messi and his father could face 2-6 years in jail, according to Professor Sandalio Gomez, a sports finance analyst at the IESE Business School.

Fiorentina rope in Joaquin REUTERS, Madrid

Serie A club Fiorentina have agreed to buy former Spain winger Joaquin from La Liga side Malaga pending a medical, the two clubs said on Wednesday.

Joaquin, who will be 32 next month, began his professional career at Real Betis and joined Malaga in 2011 after a five-year stint at Valencia.

He became a firm favourite with the fans and scored several vital goals on the Qatar-owned club's run to the last eight of the Champions League

last season. Neither club disclosed financial details of the deal but Joaquin is valued at 3.5 million euros (\$4.7 million) on website

Transfermarkt.com, which tracks soccer transfers. "Malaga would like to thank Joaquin for his

dedication, professionalism and commitment to the club and wish him good luck in his first professional experience outside Spain," the club said on their website (www.malagacf.com).

Fiorentina finished fourth in Serie A last season and qualified for the Europa League, the continent's second-tier club competition.

Mourinho swoops for Schurrle

REUTERS, London



Jose Mourinho, back for a second spell as coach of Chelsea, set up his first signing when the Europa League winners agreed on Thursday to buy winger

Andre Schuerrle from Bayer Leverkusen. "Chelsea Football Club and Bayer Leverkusen have reached an agreement for the transfer of Andre Schuerrle subject to the completion of legal documentation and related matters, including personal terms and passing a medical," the Londoners said in a statement.

The transfer fee was not disclosed but media reports have put it at 18 million pounds (\$28.2 million). German international Schuerrle scored

11 Bundesliga goals last season.

The 22-year-old has enjoyed a meteoric rise over the last three seasons, with his lightning-quick speed on the wing and excellent first touch making him a regular starter in the national team.

fellow German Marko Marin, a disappoint-

ment since joining Chelsea from Werder Bremen 12 months ago, Victor Moses or even Juan Mata could be heading for the Stamford Bridge exit door.

Spain midfielder Mata has become a big

crowd favourite in his two years in London, scooping two successive Player of the Year awards at the club. Media reports have suggested Mourinho may move him on although the former Real Madrid, Inter Milan and Porto coach told

his first news conference back at Stamford Bridge that every Chelsea player would be given a chance to prove his worth. "I need to work with the players and not

commit injustice," the 50-year-old Portuguese said on Monday. "I need to give them a chance, be fair with

them. After that we'll have time to make decisions. Mata is now on Confederations Cup duty

in Brazil with world and European champions Spain. Mourinho, who was also in charge of

Chelsea from 2004-07, will find out which opposition team he will start the season The signing of Schuerrle could mean that against when the Premier League announces the new fixture list on Wednesday.

Warner out till Ashes

AFP, Birmingham



Australia's David Warner has been suspended until the start of the Ashes series and fined after attacking England's Joe Root in a bar, Cricket Australia said on Thursday.

"@davidwarner31 has been suspended up until the First Test of #TheAshes and fined \$11,500 (£7,000, \$11,000)," the federation said on its Twitter account @CricketAus after a disciplinary hearing.

The 26-year-old was dropped for Australia's match against New Zealand on Wednesday after the incident at an Australian theme pub in the central English city of Birmingham at the weekend. The hearing was the second in three weeks for the explo-

sive opener and has raised concerns about the culture of the Australian cricket team going into the Ashes, which starts on July 10 at Trent Bridge, Nottingham. Cricket Australia said Warner had been reported for

breaching its code of conduct relating to "unbecoming behaviour" after England complained of an "unprovoked physical attack" on batsman Joe Root. The latest spat involving Warner comes barely three weeks after he was fined Aus\$5,750 over an expletive-ridden

Twitter tirade at two Australian journalists. The incident with Root came after England's comfortable 48-run nvictory over Australia at Edgbaston on Sunday. Cricket Australia charged Warner with breaching its code of conduct relating to "unbecoming behaviour".

