

'SHUT UP!'

Liverpool striker Mario Balotelli hit out at his detractors in an angry video published on his Instagram account late on Tuesday, telling them: "Shut up!" Speaking directly to camera in the short clip, he says: "Do you know me? Did you ever talk to me, personally? Do you know what I've been through in my life? You just saw me play football on the pitch, so man, shut up!" An accompanying caption read: "For those with an easy judge (sic) without knowing s*** about others. Good night #idowhatiwant-remember!"

-- AFP



Bangladesh U-23 lose to MSC

SPORTS REPORTER



The Bangladesh U-23 national team suffered a 0-2 defeat to Mohammedan Sporting Club in their first practice match at the Bangladesh Krira Shikkha Protisthan ground yesterday in preparation of the AFC U-23 Championship

Qualifiers.

Guinean hitman Ismael Bangoura gave the Black and Whites a first-half lead with a solo effort before Touhidul Alam Sabuz sealed the game in the second half with a perfect header to stun the charges of Lodewijk de Kruif, who still needs much improvement in his team if he wants to pull off surprising results in the Qualifiers involving Uzbekistan U-23, Syria U-23 and India U-23.

Uzbekistan and Syria are considerably stronger opponents in the group.

Uzbekistan have been in action since the start of February as they took part in the International King Cup in Thailand last month where they beat Thailand 5-2 but lost to South Korea 0-1 and Honduras U-20 2-5.

They also played out a goalless draw against their Vietnam counterparts in a friendly on Saturday.

Uzbekistan are coming to Dhaka tomorrow five days before the official arrival in a bid to acclimatise to the condition of Bangladesh.

Though Syria did not play any tournament like Uzbekistan, they won both friendlies against Indonesia (3-0) and Kuwait (4-1) recently to provide a strong message to other opponents.

India and Syria are scheduled to arrive here on March 23 and 25 respectively while the Qualifiers will get underway from March 27 at the Bangabandhu National Stadium.



The BCB draped part of the home of Bangladesh cricket in Mirpur with a giant national flag yesterday ahead of Bangladesh's quarterfinal clash against India.

PHOTO: FIROZ AHMED

Parma boss arrested

AFP, Rome

Parma's chairman was arrested on Wednesday on money-laundering charges, police source said, deepening the crisis at the financially stricken Italian club which is on the brink of having to stop playing.

The arrest of Giampietro Manenti came on the eve of a bankruptcy hearing which could result in the club being wound up and prevented from completing the rest of its Serie A fixtures.

Prosecutors were due to give details of the charges against Manenti at a press conference later in the day.

The club has already been docked a total of three points this season over its failure to pay players' wages on time.

Although there is little doubt that the club is effectively bankrupt, it has been offered a lifeline by the Italian professional football league (Lega), which has offered to lend it five million euros to see out the rest of the season.

Atletico squeeze thru'

AFP, Madrid



Atletico Madrid progressed to the Champions League quarterfinals for the second successive season after squeezing past Bayer Leverkusen 3-2 on penalties after the scores were locked at 1-1 on aggregate.

The Spanish champions won 1-0 on the night thanks to Mario Suarez's deflected first-half strike in 120 minutes short on clear-cut chances.

And after a topsy turvy shootout including five missed penalties, Stefan Kiessling blazed Leverkusen's final effort over the bar to hand Atletico a place in the last eight.

Atletico boss Diego Simeone sprung a huge surprise prior to kick-off by handing on-loan Villarreal midfielder Cani his full debut at the expense of captain Gabi.

Mario Mandzukic was also recalled up front at the expense of Fernando Torres, but it was at the other end where the Croatian proved his worth early on as he cleared a shot from Son Heung-Min off his own line after Atletico

struggled to clear a Leverkusen corner.

The Korean had an even better chance moments later as the Germans counter-attacked with menace, but a poor touch allowed Miguel Angel Moya to scurry from his goal and collect the loose ball.

That was to be Moya's last involvement as he limped off with an injury to be replaced by Jan Oblak.

However, fortune favoured the home side 27 minutes in when Suarez's shot from Cani's cushioned header was deflected past the helpless Bernd Leno.

Mandzukic then had a huge chance to put last season's beaten finalists ahead in the tie when he latched onto Arda Turan's through ball, but he was caught for pace by Wendell and the Brazilian full-back made a fine last-ditch challenge.

The visitors ended the first 45 minutes the better and only a fine interception from Miranda prevented them from having a goal to show for it as he cut out Wendell's dangerous low cross with Leverkusen bodies waiting to add the final touch.

Jardim slams Wenger

AFP, Monaco



Monaco coach Leonardo Jardim blasted Arsene Wenger's accusations that his side did not deserve to qualify for the Champions League quarterfinals and said the Frenchman showed a lack of respect after the Ligue 1 club went through on away goals.

Despite a remarkable turnaround, the Gunners paid the price for a sloppy 3-1 first leg defeat at home but restored their pride with a 2-0 win that sent them out of the competition after the two clubs finished 3-3 on aggregate.

Arsenal manager Wenger, who enjoyed great success at Monaco between 1987 and 1994, said following the tie that his team deserved to be in Friday's draw as the two men failed to shake hands after the match for the second straight time.

"No, we didn't shake hands, I left the pitch because my work was done. During the first leg, the opposing coach (Wenger) did not acknowledge me so I replied in the same manner," said the 40-year-old, Venezuelan-born coach.

"Arsenal were not respectful towards us during the first match but today we can celebrate. For me, we deserved to qualify.

"When a team like Monaco plays against Arsenal and wins the first leg 3-1 away from home, the qualification is justified.

"We were able to benefit from the first match and it's the first time I've been in the quarter-finals of the Champions League so I'm very happy.

"The match was very intense as we expected but no one would have believed that at the start of the competition we would reach the quarterfinals.

"Even in France or Monaco, nobody believed it was possible.

"Despite all the talk before the match, we showed that we were able to qualify and my players deserve credit. We were the only team to qualify that wasn't expected too and it's a great reward for the work put in by the players. They deserve to be respected.

Wenger, who has failed to take Arsenal past the last-16 for five straight seasons, struggled, not for the first time, to accept his side had been second best.

When asked if Monaco deserved their place in the last eight, the Frenchman replied: "I don't believe so. If you look at the number of shots on target they had you will be surprised. Every defeat hurts but we didn't lose."

Triple blow for Atletico

AFP, Madrid

Atletico Madrid were left counting the cost of their progression to the quarterfinals of the Champions League on penalties over Bayer Leverkusen on Tuesday with three key players set for a spell on the sidelines.

Goalkeeper Miguel Angel Moya had to be replaced after just 23 minutes with a hamstring injury in his left leg.

Mario Mandzukic was also withdrawn after suffering a twisted ankle, whilst Raul Garcia has had his left arm put in a brace due to an elbow injury.

Sabina fires hattrick

SPORTS REPORTER

Bangladesh international Sabina Khatun began her campaign in Maldives' domestic circuit with a hattrick when her side, the Police Club, handed a 7-0 defeat to the Ministry of Environment and Energy in the second match of the Milo 18/30 WFF 2015 in Maldives yesterday.

Sabina, the first Bangladeshi woman footballer playing in overseas tournament, celebrated her debut in Maldives with four goals and was chosen as the queen of the match and scorer of the Allied Salhi Goal, according to a message from Bangladesh Football Federation.

RONALDINHO aka Robberdinho

REUTERS, Mexico City



Former Barcelona forward Ronaldinho has been dropped by Mexican side Queretaro while unhappy supporters have dubbed him 'Robberdinho' for producing sub-par displays amid media reports of too much partying.

The Brazilian signed for the club in September but has showed glimpses of the form that won him two World Player of the Year awards with Barca in 2004 and 2005.

Ronaldinho missed a penalty on his debut and has been unable to win over the fans since.

He was axed for Sunday's game at Toluca by new coach Victor Manuel Vucetich, a renowned disciplinarian, after he reportedly missed training in the week.

Queretaro lost 1-0 and are second from bottom in the league with eight points from 10 games.

"They (the fans) are calling him 'Robberdinho' ... and it is undeniable the Brazilian star's time in Mexican football has left a lot to be desired where it matters most: on the field," said the Estadio newspaper.

"The world champion has not dropped his party lifestyle in the land of the Aztecs."

Ronaldinho, who turns 35 next week, has always been known for his love of night life but Queretaro appear to be losing patience with him.

An executive who declined to be identified told Reuters the club had no intention of extending his two-year contract and expected him to head to the United States once his time in Mexico was over.



Liverpool set Malaysia date

AFP, Liverpool



English Premier League giants Liverpool will return to Kuala Lumpur to play the Malaysian national side in July, organisers confirmed.

Liverpool previously toured football-mad Malaysia in 2011 and are scheduled to again play in the Bukit Jalil National Stadium on July 24, where over 80,000 fans turned out four years ago.

"The tour gives our supporters a chance to see the team up close, no matter how far away from Anfield they might live," Liverpool chief executive Ian Ayre said.

'Bayern the team to beat'

AFP, Berlin

Bayern Munich will be the team to beat when the draw for the Champions League's quarterfinals is made on Friday, according to their Germany star Thomas Mueller.

Pep Guardiola's Bayern threw down a marker for their European rivals when they hammered Shakhtar Donetsk 7-0 in Munich last week in the last 16, second leg clash, having been held to a goalless draw in Ukraine.

The 2013 Champions League winners are eager to play in the June 6 final at Berlin's Olympic Stadium and Mueller, who scored twice in the Donetsk rout, said Bayern will be one of the top names out of the hat when the draw for the last eight is made in Nyon, Switzerland.

We'll prove it on the field

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always come to the field and keep supporting us. That's amazing to see. I'm sure they'll do it tomorrow as well," Mashrafe hoped.

The captain further stated that havingaced the group stages, the boys were 'relaxed'.

"The group stage was more important for us because we knew that we had to go through because back home everyone expected us to beat a bigger side and go through. That was more pressure, I think.

"From tomorrow, the boys will be very relaxed. They just want to perform on the biggest ground. They have played already on

this ground, but that match wasn't good for us. Hopefully we'll play our best shot tomorrow, and the boys are really excited," he explained.

The last time Bangladesh played here was against Sri Lanka in the World Cup; a match which saw their fielders falter under pressure.

However, the skipper was confident of a turn around. The confidence instilled in him was perhaps best reflected when he was asked if it was possible for Bangladesh to beat India at all.

"You never know. It depends on the day. We'll play our best cricket and see what happens after that," he concluded.

'They can win this one'

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that India's middle order can be tested if there's pressure on them.

"Our batsmen also did a good job. True we were yet to get enough runs from the opening stand but if you consider the conditions; I must say our openers did a decent job. Looking at this wicket I feel that our bowlers may get support in the first five to seven overs. Our middle order is in-form

and Shakib [Al Hasan] is a big occasion player," Faruque said while pointing out Bangladesh's positives.

Despite the positive vibe, Faruque admits that India are the clear favourites of this game. As Bangladesh approach what could be their last game of an eventful World Cup, Faruque has just one last message for the boys: "I don't want to see our team give up hope at any stage of the game."

History's boys

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maiden triumph back in 1996, Sri Lanka have produced players like Sangakkara and Jayawardene - not to mention Sanath Jayasuriya, Muttiah Muralidaran and Chaminda Vaas - to sustain their success over lengthy periods of time. Who knows: maybe Lahiru Thirimanne and Dinesh Chandimal will step into the shoes of Sangakkara and Jayawardene. Maybe Tharindu kaushal will turn out to be the new Murali and Dushmantha Chameera the new Malinga. Hope springs eternal.

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