

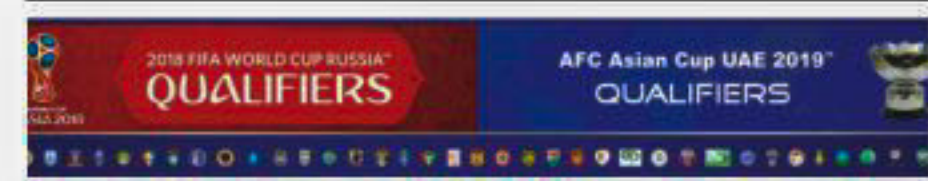


Bangladesh football captain Mamumul Islam shoots for the target at the Scholastica School's Mirpur branch yesterday during a promotional campaign, aimed at providing lucky winners with match tickets for Bangladesh's World Cup qualifying fixture against Australia at the Bangabandhu National Stadium on Tuesday.

PHOTO: COURTESY

Socceroos arrive this evening

SPORTS REPORTER



A 42-member contingent of the Australia national football team will arrive here this evening, less than 24 hours ahead of Tuesday's World Cup qualifier against Bangladesh, on a chartered flight from Singapore, where they are currently based.

The Socceroos will check in at the Hotel Westin in Gulshan and will hold no training sessions ahead of the game, which will kick off at 5:30pm at the Bangabandhu National Stadium tomorrow. The Socceroos will not even join the traditional pre-match joint press briefing with their Bangladesh counterparts, but they are supposed to hold a media session at 8:00pm at the hotel, informed Bangladesh Football Federation general secretary Abu Nayeem Shohag.

Meanwhile, to hold the match successfully, an Iranian match commissioner, match referees and match officials, an AFC official and a FIFA security officer have

already arrived here. To tighten security measures, all shops at the BNS will remain closed today and tomorrow while the archway -- metal detectors gates -- and CC cameras will be set up at all 11 gates, entrances to the galleries. The FIFA security officer also instructed the BFF to keep the match venue vacant today as sniffer dog squads are supposed to sanitise the galleries and the ground.

Meanwhile, Bangladesh coach Fabio Lopez conducted a closed-door training session under the floodlights at the BNS last night. Defender Tapu Barman and midfielder Monaem Khan Raju have returned to the squad after serving one match suspension each while centre-back Nasiruddin Chowdhury has been released on fitness grounds. Veteran winger Zahid Hossain, who got a late call-up, has so far declined to join the squad.

Bangladesh are at the bottom of Group B in these qualifiers with a single point from six matches while Australia are in second position with 12 points, one point behind leaders Jordan.

Asif relishing new role

SPORTS REPORTER

Asif Hossain Khan had once been in constant focus during any international and domestic competitions for success as well as failure, but the most illustrious shooter of Bangladesh has been completely out of focus since his last international success in the 2010 Dhaka South Asian Games.

The veteran, who won the first gold medal for Bangladesh in the 2002 Commonwealth Games in Manchester, has been going through an all-time low as he even failed to qualify for the eight-man final round in his pet event in the last edition of the national shooting championships in July, which prompted him to see himself in a different role.

Asif is now concentrating on building a coaching career as the former BKSP student believes if the former national shooters come forward to taking up the coaching profession, Bangladesh can see more success at international level.

Asif has been involved with coaching since 2011 under BKSP's talent hunt programme where he scouts new shooters from the grass-roots level and trains them before recommending them for to enrolment.

He, however, has no background regarding coaching methods and has started to acquire knowledge on the coaching through participating in a five-day ISSF D Coaches' Course, a certificate course for the beginners, which concluded yesterday. The course was organised by the Bangladesh Sport Shooting Federation and was supervised by two International instructors.

"To be honest, at the moment I don't have as much concentration as a player needs to perform. I also don't want to play as token participation, so I have decided not to grab the rifle in next two to three years; rather I want to share my eight to ten years' of experience with the upcoming shooters,"

said Asif.

Having attended the course, Asif has realised that he now understands the mistakes he made during his playing career and sees a little hope of coming back as a shooter for a short period in future.

"I never understood some mistakes I made during my playing career, but now I can easily find out those mistakes while training the boys. It even inspires me to come back to shooting. Though I am now involved with coaching, I am still in practice



which is, however, not like what the others shooters do," said the shooter from Pabna.

"Earlier I had one aim which was to shoot the target, but as a coach, I have different roles. Sometimes I am a doctor, sometimes I am a parent, sometimes I am an administrator and sometimes I am a servant," said Asif. "A coach not only produces a shooter, he produces a good human being, who finally represents the nation," Said Asif.

Former shooters Atiqur Rahman, Sabrina Sultana, Naznin Sultana Tumpa and Selim were also among the 34 participants who

Diarra's cousin dies in attacks

Griezmann's sister unharmed; Martin Kelly also safe

AGENCIES, Paris

The cousin of French international footballer Lassana Diarra was killed in the Paris attacks, the 30-year-old Marseille and former Real Madrid star confirmed on Saturday.

Ironically, Diarra was close to Friday's drama himself as he played in France's 2-0 win over Germany at the Stade de France as three suicide bombers struck outside the arena.

"Following the dramatic events in Paris, it is with a heavy heart that I heard this news today," wrote the 30-year-old Diarra on Twitter.

"As you may have read, I was affected personally by the attacks. My cousin, Asta Diakite, was among the victims of one of the shootings, along with hundreds of other innocent French people.

"She was like a big sister to me, a guide and support."

France and Atletico Madrid forward Antoine Griezmann also revealed that his sister survived the attack on the Bataclan theatre in Paris.

There was a hostage-situation at the Bataclan theatre, where American rock band Eagles of Death Metal were playing, fortunately Griezmann's sister escaped physically unharmed.

Griezmann, who was playing for France in the friendly, revealed his sister had been one of those in the theatre but had escaped.

"My thoughts are with the victims of the attacks. May God take care of my sister and the people of France," he wrote on Twitter. "Thank God my sister was able to get out of the Bataclan. All my prayers are with the victims and their families."

Meanwhile, Crystal Palace confirmed that defender Martin Kelly was safe after the defender posted a picture of one of the restaurants targeted by gunmen on Instagram.

Kelly, 25, sent a text message to Palace programme editor Jonathon Rogers to confirm that he was safe.

Ibra's ninth in nine gives Sweden edge

AFP, Paris



European football paid tribute to the victims of attacks in Euro 2016 hosts France during Saturday's qualifying play-offs which saw Sweden edge Denmark 2-1 and Ukraine beat Slovenia 2-0 in first leg ties.

A minute's silence was observed before Saturday's games for victims of the Paris attacks on Friday, one of which was outside the Stade de France where world champions Germany were playing a friendly against France.

In Solna, Paris Saint-Germain star Zlatan Ibrahimovic scored his ninth goal in as many qualifiers as Sweden took a slight advantage over 1992 champions Denmark.

Ibrahimovic converted a second half penalty after Emil Forsberg had scored his first international goal on the stroke of half-time.

But substitute Nicolai Jorgensen grabbed an away-goal lifeline for Denmark 10 minutes from time ahead of the second leg in Copenhagen on Tuesday.

A backheel from Jimmy Durmaz allowed Mikael Lustig to sprint away down the right flank and his pass reached Forsberg at speed and the Leipzig winger buried a first-time shot into the corner past Kasper Schmeichel.

The Denmark goalkeeper rescued his team just before the half-time whistle with a diving save to deny Ibrahimovic's power-packed free-kick from just outside the box.

Ibrahimovic made it 2-0 five minutes into the second period, converting a penalty after Thomas Kahlenburg had clumsily tripped Forsberg.

It was the 34-year-old's first goal against the Danes in seven matches. But with 10 minutes left, substitute Jorgensen latched

onto a Yussuf Poulsen flick-on from an Eriksen corner to boost Denmark's hopes of making the finals in France next summer.

Sweden captain Zlatan Ibrahimovic has expressed his sympathies for his fellow Parisians after gun and bomb attacks in the French capital on Friday left 129 killed, hundreds injured and the city traumatised.

"It's sad, tragic. Things like that shouldn't happen," the Paris Saint Germain player told broadcaster Kanal 5 after Sweden beat Denmark 2-1 in the first leg of their Euro 2016 playoff. "I stand behind those who have passed on and the families there.

"I tried hard to focus on the game, which was very hard," added the 34-year-old, who is in his fourth season at PSG, having moved to the French capital in July 2012 from AC Milan.

The Friends Arena in Stockholm was lit up in the red, white and blue national colours of France, with a minute's silence observed before play while the players also wore black armbands.

Sweden coach Erik Hamren said the attacks in the French capital had affected his side's preparations.

"The terrible and despicable has happened," Hamren told reporters. "We had a chat when we assembled and we must show that evil cannot be allowed to win, that football is important on days such as this."

Earlier Ukraine took a comfortable 2-0

RESULTS (1ST LEG)

Ukraine Yarmolenko 22, Seleznov 54	2 - 0	Slovenia
Sweden Forsberg 45, Ibrahimovic 50-pen	2 - 1	Denmark Jorgensen 80

Bomber was turned away from stadium

WALL STREET JOURNAL

At least one of the attackers outside France's national soccer stadium had a ticket to the game and attempted to enter the 80,000-person venue, according to a Stade de France security guard who was on duty and French police.

The guard -- who asked to be identified only by his first name, Zouheir -- said the attacker was discovered wearing an explosives vest when he was frisked at the entrance to the stadium about 15 minutes into the game as France was playing a friendly against Germany inside.

Zouheir said that while attempting to back away from security, the attacker detonated the vest. Zouheir, who was stationed by the players' tunnel, said he was briefed on the sequence by the security frisking team at the gate.

A police officer confirmed the sequence, adding that police suspect the attacker aimed to detonate his vest inside the stadium in order to provoke a deadly stampede.

Around three minutes later, a second person also blew himself up outside the stadium. A third suicide attacker detonated explosives at a nearby McDonald's, police said.

The account sheds light on why the suicide attacks on Stade de France failed to cause the carnage that occurred at the Bataclan concert hall and restaurants across Paris.

The blasts occurred during the first half of the game, sowing confusion throughout the stadium. At least two blasts were heard clearly

inside the stadium and on the television broadcast. However, loud blasts aren't uncommon at soccer matches on the European continent where fans sometimes set off firecrackers.

At first, Zouheir said he too thought the early blast was a firecracker. Then his walkie-talkie came alive with chatter, and he noticed that French President François Hollande was being ushered out of the stadium.

"Once I saw Hollande being evacuated, I knew it wasn't firecrackers," said Zouheir, who could see the VIP box from his post.

French soccer federation head Noel le Graet said that the information wasn't communicated to the fans or the players in order to avoid a panic. Witnesses reported that news began to spread inside the stadium late in the second half.

A video Zouheir shot on his phone Saturday showed the gate where the suicide bomber was turned away and what appeared to be blood and viscera on the sidewalk outside the gate. On Saturday, street-cleaning crews spent several hours hosing down the area.

However, leading French daily L'Equipe have reported their version of events of what happened at the Stade de France, with some noticeable differences.

Unlike the WSJ, L'Equipe say two terrorists tried getting in the stadium. They wrote that two men tried to get into the stadium, but neither men had a ticket for the game,

Second day washed out

AFP, Bangalore

Bad weather washed out the entire day's play at the second Test between India and South Africa in Bangalore Sunday, with more rain forecast that could see the match end in a draw.

The scheduled start was initially delayed by an hour as constant rain since early morning left the outfield too wet for play at the Chinnaswamy stadium.

A slight let up in the drizzle raised hopes the match might resume, but the covers were back on a few minutes before the umpires were due to walk out and play was finally called off at 2 pm (0830 GMT).

The forecast is for more rain for the remaining three days with a cyclonic depression hovering over the Bay of Bengal.

On the rain-free first day, South Africa were shot out for 214 after being sent in to bat in overcast conditions and India replied with 80 for no loss by stumps.

India lead the four-match series 1-0. The third Test



OLD FRIENDS REUNITE: Shane Warne chats with his ex-wife actress Elizabeth Hurley (R) at the Dodger Stadium yesterday. Warne's Warriors overcame Sachin's Blasters' 219-run target with just one ball to spare to claim their third victory of the three-match Cricket All Stars Series.

PHOTO: AFP