

## UEFA launch probe into Barcelona refereeing scandal



A general view of the inside of the Camp Nou stadium

AFP | Barcelona

European football's governing body UEFA said yesterday it was launching an investigation into claims Barcelona paid for favourable refereeing decisions.

UEFA said its ethics and disciplinary inspectors would probe "a potential violation of UEFA's legal framework by FC Barcelona in connection with the so-called 'Caso Negreira'", referring to the Spanish league's former refereeing chief Jose Maria Enriquez Negreira.

Barcelona have already been charged with corruption by Spanish prosecutors for payments between 2001 and 2018 to a company owned by Negreira, totalling around 7.3 million euros (\$7.95 million).

The club say they were paying for reports and advice on refereeing but prosecutors have accused the club of seeking to gain favourable decision-making from officials.

Charges were filed earlier this month against the club, Negreira and two former Barcelona presidents, Sandro Rosell and Josep Maria Bar-

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toeu, among others.

Negreira, a former referee, was the vice president of the refereeing committee of the Spanish football federation between 1994 and 2018.

The investigation began after Spain's tax authorities identified irregularities in tax payments made between 2016 and 2018 by the company Dasnil 95, owned by Negreira.

Dasnil 95 reportedly received payments from Barcelona between those years.

# Bahrain teams set for international friendlies

Senior men's football team and under-23 Olympic team in action in coming week

● **Senior men's team to take on Palestine tomorrow and then face off with Syria on Tuesday**

● **Olympic side will be facing Estonia tonight and then again on Sunday**

TDT | Manama

**B**ahrain's senior men's national football team and under-23 Olympic team are both set to play a pair of international friendly matches over the next week at home.

The senior men are first set to take on Palestine on Saturday and then face off with Syria on Tuesday. Meanwhile, the Olympic side will be facing Estonia tonight and then again on Sunday.

The matches are scheduled for 9.30pm kick-off.

Both teams have begun their local training gatherings in preparation for their tune-up games. The seniors are being supervised by national team head coach Helio Sousa, while the Olympic team are practising under head coach Dario Basic.

The senior team friendlies be their first international games since competing in the 25th Arab Gulf Cup in Iraq in January.



National team midfielder Ali Haram in action during training



Olympic team coach Dario Basic during his team's practice session

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**Senior men's national team using friendly matches to prepare for upcoming competitions, including the 2023 AFC Asian Cup next January**

They are using the matches to prepare for their upcoming competitions, including the 2023 AFC Asian Cup, to be held in Doha. The tournament was originally scheduled to take

place this summer, but has been rescheduled to January of next year.

Bahrain are one of 24 teams who have qualified for the Asian Cup. The draw for the preliminary round has yet to be held by the AFC.

Bahrain's friendlies with Palestine and Syria have emerged after the national team withdrew from the West Asian Football federation (WAFF) Championship, which was supposed to be held in March.

Sousa has called up a 25-player squad for their upcoming friendly games. The roster includes Ali Madan from Ajman in the UAE and Mohammed Jassim Marhoon from Kuwait SC in Kuwait; Ali Haram, Sayed Hashim Issa, Jassim Al Shaikh and K-mail Al Aswad from defending Bahrain league champions Riffa;

and Ahmed Bughammar, Mahdi Humaidan, Mohammed Adel, Mohammed Hardan and Sayed Dhiya Saeed from Al Khaldiya.

From Manama are Ahmed Nabeel, Ammar Abbas, Ebrahim Al Khattal, Mahdi Abduljabbar and Mahdi Abdullatif; while from Muharraq are Abdulla Al Khalasi, Amine Hasan, Hamza Juban, Waleed Al Hayyam and veteran goalkeeper Sayed Mohammed Jaafar.

Abbas Fadhel and Ebrahim Al Luthfallah have been called up from Al Ahli, while completing the squad list are Omar Salem from Budaiya and Hussein Ali Abdulla from Shabab.

Meanwhile, the Olympic team are using the friendlies to help prepare for their qualifiers to the AFC U23 Asian Cup 2024, which are set to take place later this year.

## Bangladesh thrash dismal Ireland by 10 wickets to win series 2-0

AFP | London

**L**iton Das and Tamim Iqbal breezed past Ireland's dismal 101-run total in less than 14 overs for Bangladesh's first-ever 10-wicket win, sealing a 2-0 series victory during yesterday's final one-day-international in Sylhet.

Liton was unbeaten on 50 alongside Tamim with 41, both untroubled by an Irish bowling attack that served up 10 wides and a leg bye.

Pacer Hasan Mahmud claimed his maiden five-wicket ODI haul while conceding only 32 runs after the tourists elected to bat first.



**The way we played the whole series was very nice. Now I can proudly say we have a solid, solid, solid fast-bowling department. We need to keep believing in our players, there will be ups and downs but we have the unit to be the best in the world**

TAMIM IQBAL



Tamim Iqbal and Litton Das celebrate the winning moment

Taskin Ahmed and Ebadot Hossain also shone with the ball to claim 3-26 and 2-29 respectively, with Ireland recording the lowest one-day score against Bangladesh.

"The way we played the whole series was very nice. Now I can proudly say we have a solid, solid, solid fast-bowling department," said skipper Tamim,

according to Cricinfo.

"We need to keep believing in our players, there will be ups and downs but we have the unit to be the best in the world," he said.

"The wicket was very good, the way we chased down with authority was a message."

Curtis Campher top-scored with 36, while Lorcan Tucker

made 28 after surviving a golden duck when Liton dropped his catch at slip.

"We're very disappointed. Don't think the cricket over the past three days reflects the type of cricket we've played in the last 2-3 years," said Ireland captain Andy Balbirnie.

"We did expect spin to play a big part, but our defence with the bat wasn't good enough. We did not adapt well enough."

Hasan struck in his opening spell to leave Ireland tottering at 22-3 in the ninth over.

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**The drubbing was Bangladesh's first 10-wicket win in any format, with the hosts smashing records in each match. Saturday's opener marked their biggest ODI victory margin**

## Dutch lose Gakpo, De Ligt and others for France clash due to virus



Netherlands' Cody Gakpo and Leandro Paredes fall during a match (file photo)

AFP | Paris

**L**iverpool forward Cody Gakpo, Bayern Munich defender Matthijs de Ligt and three other Netherlands players have a virus and will miss the Euro 2024 qualifier against France, the Dutch federation said yesterday.

The Netherlands were already without Barcelona playmaker Frenkie de Jong and winger Steven Bergwijn due to injuries for the match against

the World Cup finalists at the Stade de France on Friday.

They will now also have to do without 23-year-old Gakpo, who has netted four Premier League goals since joining Liverpool in January from PSV Eindhoven after he shone at the World Cup for the Dutch.

Gakpo, De Ligt, Newcastle United's Sven Botman, Anderlecht goalkeeper Bart Verbruggen and Joey Veerman from PSV Eindhoven all had to leave the Dutch training camp.