

'Hatred', 'envy' destroyed Blatter's reputation: daughter

Swiss court rejects FIFA executive Esquivel's bid to be freed

ZURICH, Oct 5. (Agencies): A Swiss court rejected an appeal from an executive of world soccer body FIFA held in prison as part of a corruption probe to be freed on grounds of ill health, fearing he might abscond.

Lawyers for Venezuela's Rafael Esquivel, 69, had asked the Federal Court's appeals chamber to release him.

He has been in custody since a dawn raid in Zurich on May 27 nabbed him and six other soccer executives on US arrest warrants, throwing the governing body of global soccer into turmoil.

"The court held that there was a risk that the appellant would abscond if released. The arguments put forward in support of his release, such as his advanced age and poor state of health, were not regarded as sufficient to counter the risk of absconding," the court said in a statement on Monday.

The court did not identify him by name but said he had headed Venezuela's soccer association and was a member of the executive committee of the South American Football Confederation. A law enforcement source confirmed it was Esquivel.

Meanwhile, envy and hatred among the media is what ruined FIFA President Sepp Blatter's reputation, his daughter said on Sunday in an interview published by the Swiss newspaper Blick.

"The media ruined his reputation. Why

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are they picking on him? What did he do to them? I don't know," said Corinne Blatter, who was a top advisor to her father as he rose the ranks of world football's governing body.

"It's not just envy. It's hatred," she was quoted as saying.

Blatter became engulfed in the worst-ever scandal at FIFA last month when Swiss prosecutors opened a criminal investigation against him over mismanagement.

"I am shocked that he is accused of criminal acts. My father is not a criminal," Corinne Blatter told the paper, according to a version of the interview posted online.

In related story, International Olympic Committee boss Thomas Bach would welcome FIFA following the IOC example by undertaking far-reaching reforms, as Sepp Blatter faces fresh calls to resign as president of football's governing body, he said on Monday.

"The IOC carried out reforms in many areas 15 years ago," IOC president Bach told the Camp Beckenbauer sports conference in Kitzbuehel, Austria.

"If another sports organisation wants to do the same, we wouldn't mind and we'd even welcome it," he added drily.

In another reports, South Korea's FIFA sponsor Hyundai Motor on Monday called for "prompt and transparent" reforms of world football's governing body without commenting directly on its scandal-tainted chief.

"The current reforms by FIFA should be conducted in a prompt and transparent manner," the auto group said in a brief statement.



Riders Alejandro Valverde (center), of Spain, Vincenzo Nibali (second right), of Italy, Ivan Basso (forth right), of Italy, Alberto Contador (third right), of Spain and Peter Sagan of Slovakia (fifth right), pose during the presentation of the Giro d'Italia (Tour of Italy) 2016 cycling race on Oct 5, in Milan. (AFP)

Giro route presented at Milan Expo

Giro d'Italia officials have put together a balanced route for next year's race, which they hope will attract some of the best riders in the world.

Organizers revealed the 21-stage route on Monday at a presentation at the Milan Expo in the presence of numerous cyclists, including reigning champion Alberto Contador, new world champion Peter Sagan and former winners Vincenzo Nibali and Ivan Basso — who announced his retirement from cycling.

The route for the 2016 Giro includes four days in the high mountains and seven medium mountain stages. There are also seven legs for sprinters, two individual time trials and a team one.

The 99th edition of the famous race will take the riders from Apeldoorn in the Netherlands to Turin, via the south of Italy, the Dolomites and the Alps — where it also crosses over briefly into France — over a total of 3,383 kms (2,102 miles) from May 6-29. (AP)

BMX test event receives poor grade

Honduras get semifinal spot

CARSON, California, Oct 5. (AP): Antony Lozano and Alberth Elis scored to help Honduras beat Costa Rica 2-0 on Sunday, and Honduras got a spot in the semifinals in CONCACAF qualifying for the 2016 Rio Olympics when Mexico beat Haiti.

Lozano scored in the 41st minute, and Elis added a late goal after Costa Rica's Luis Sequeira was sent off in the 75th minute for his second yellow card in a minute.

Honduras and Mexico, a 1-0 winner in the second game of the doubleheader, are 2-0 in Group B, while Costa Rica and Haiti are 0-2. Seeking its third straight berth in the Olympics and fourth overall, Honduras will finish the round robin Wednesday night against Mexico in Commerce City, Colorado, with the winner getting the top spot from the group in the Oct 10 semifinals in Sandy, Utah.

Last week major sponsors including Coca-Cola, McDonald's, Visa and Budweiser called for Sepp Blatter's immediate resignation, after Swiss prosecutors opened a criminal investigation against the 79-year-old over mismanagement.

LAUSANNE: World governing body FIFA on Monday announced a series of

On Friday, Honduras beat Haiti 1-0, and Mexico topped Costa Rica 4-0. (AP)

The BMX track for next year's Rio Olympics hosted its first test event on Sunday but received a poor grade from riders.

The two-day test event was reduced to one day after some of the world's top riders declined to race on Saturday, citing dangerous jumps and turns.

Organizers tried to modify the

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track for Sunday, but both men and women wound up using the women's circuit as the men's course was deemed too risky. To add to the problems, Sunday's racing was washed out by a downpour after three hours.

sanctions against the Football Association of Malaysia (FAM) as punishment for the crowd trouble that wrecked the World Cup qualifier against Saudi Arabia on September 8.

Militant fans angry at the 10-0 humiliation in a previous match to the United Arab Emirates fired flares billowing orange smoke at Shah Alam Stadium as Malaysia trailed the Saudis 2-1 in the final minutes of the tie.

Klopp, Ancelotti top Liverpool list

Advocaat exit bad for League: Bilic

Best of the Rest

LONDON, Oct 5. (Agencies): Juergen Klopp and Carlo Ancelotti are the leading candidates to succeed sacked Liverpool manager Brendan Rodgers, according to reports in the British media on Monday.

Rodgers, 42, was sacked on Sunday after a 1-1 draw with Everton left Liverpool 10th in the Premier League table, albeit only three points below the Champions League places, following a sixth-place finish last season.

Klopp, 48, has been out of work since stepping down at Borussia Dortmund at the end of last season, while 56-year-old Ancelotti, who previously worked in England with Chelsea, was sacked by Real Madrid last May.

Several news outlets, including Sky and the BBC, reported that Klopp was the frontrunner, having led Dortmund to two Bundesliga titles and a Champions League final appearance in 2013.

Announcing Rodgers' departure, Liverpool's American owners Fenway Sports Group said: "The search for a new manager is under way and we hope to make an appointment in a decisive and timely manner."



Ancelotti

Rodgers, who took over in June 2012, led Liverpool to a second-place finish in the Premier League in 2014.

But Liverpool have since lost Luis Suarez, Steven Gerrard and Raheem Sterling and despite significant investment in new players, Rodgers struggled to reproduce a winning formula.

The Premier League will be worse off without Dick Advocaat, West Ham United manager Slaven Bilic has said.

Advocaat stepped down as Sunderland manager on Sunday after less than seven months in the job, with his side second from bottom in the table and without a win in eight league games this season.

"I told him (Advocaat) I would like (him) to stay. You saw on the touchline he is a man full of energy and passion. The Premier League will be worse off without him," Croatian Bilic told West Ham's website (www.whufc.com).

"He is a man of knowledge, and his experience at different clubs in different countries and at international level is unbelievable."

The 68-year-old Advocaat took over from Uruguayan Gus Poyet in March and saved Sunderland from relegation last season and had initially intended to retire after their escape, but changed his mind and stayed on.

The manager had hinted strongly at his intentions on Saturday when he refused to confirm he was staying at the club after the West Ham game, from which the Hammers salvaged a point after coming from two goals down following Jermain Lens' sending off.

Japan's Sunwolves debut: The first Japanese team to play in Super Rugby has been christened the "Sunwolves", organisers announced Monday, as the tournament looks to expand its global footprint for the 2016 season.

The "new era" in Super Rugby will see an expanded 18-team competition featuring debut appearances from both a Japanese and an Argentinean team, the first time those countries have been included.

They will join existing member teams from Australia, New Zealand and South Africa to fight across four conferences for a new chrome and gold-plated trophy.

Tournament organisers said the Japanese team's name was taken from the country's moniker as the "Land of the Rising Sun". (AFP)

Nibali wins Il Lombardia: Italy's Vincenzo Nibali ended a disappointing season by winning Il Lombardia in style on Sunday to claim his first Monument victory.

Nibali, who is one of the strongest riders on descents, pulled away at the top of the penultimate climb. The Astana cyclist finished the 245-kilometer (152-mile) race from Bergamo to Como 21 seconds ahead of Daniel Moreno of Spain and 32 ahead of Thibaut Pinot of France.

"What a fantastic day," the 30-year-old Nibali said. "I tried to attack twice on the climb, but I was too closely marked and I realized I would have to try in another way. (AP)

SA team postpones tour: South Africa's women's cricket team has postponed a planned tour to Bangladesh later this month citing security concerns, the Bangladesh Cricket Board (BCB) said Monday, in the wake of the killing of two foreigners in the South Asian nation.

The cancellation follows the Australian cricket squad's decision to call off their two-match Test series in Bangladesh after official warnings that

militants may attack Western interests. (AFP)

Basso retires: Two-time Giro d'Italia winner Ivan Basso is retiring from professional cycling after recovering from cancer.

Basso, who was expected to resume his career after being cleared following treatment, said at the 2016 Giro route presentation on Monday that he would instead take a managerial role within his Tinkoff-Saxo team.

The 37-year-old Italian said "every athlete knows that his light will not shine bright throughout his career. Inevitably, at some stage it will start dimming and it's the sign of a wise athlete to know when the moment has come to turn it off." (AP)

Court won't hear challenge: The US Supreme Court on Monday rejected a challenge to Major League Baseball's long-standing exemption from US antitrust laws brought by San Jose as part of the California's city's effort to become the new home of the Oakland Athletics.

The court's decision not to take the case means a January appeals court ruling that said San Jose cannot seek a court order allowing the Athletics to move to the city in Silicon Valley remains intact.

The justices declined to hear the case without comment. The high court decided in 1922 that Major League Baseball was not subject to federal antitrust laws, ruling against a challenge brought by a team from a defunct rival league. (RTRS)

Dolphins coach Philbin fired: Joe Philbin has been fired four games into his fourth season as coach of the Miami Dolphins, and one day after a flop on an international stage sealed his fate.

The firing came Monday after the Dolphins (1-3) lost their third game in a row and turned in their fourth consecutive lackluster performance. They were beaten Sunday in London by the archrival New York Jets, 27-14. (AP)

Evans' rape conviction sent to CA

LONDON, Oct 5. (AFP): British footballer Ched Evans' conviction for rape has been referred to Britain's Court of Appeal, a body that investigates alleged miscarriages of justice announced on Monday.

The former Wales striker, who maintains his innocence, was released from prison last year after serving half of a five-year sentence for raping a 19-year-old woman in a north Wales hotel room in May 2011.

Evans, 26, subsequently saw an attempt to resurrect his career with English third-tier club Oldham Athletic collapse amid a public outcry, but new evidence that could have supported his defence has since been unearthed by the Criminal Cases Review Commission (CCRC).

The CCRC, which probes potential miscarriages of justice in England, Wales and Northern Ireland, said there was "a real possibility that the Court of Appeal may now quash the conviction".

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