

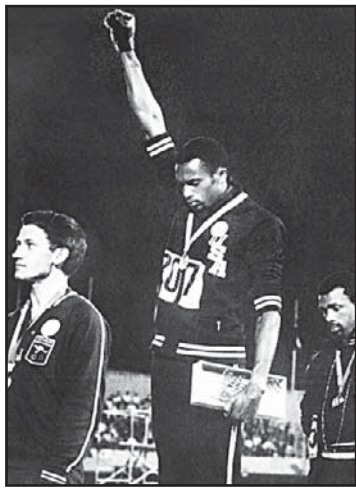
Greece to grant permits for Eldorado Gold's Olympias project this week

Tokyo 2020 domestic sponsor revenue at record \$2.8 billion

LIMA, Sept 13, (RTRS): Domestic sponsorship for the Tokyo 2020 Olympics has so far reached a record \$2.8 billion — almost three times as much as in any previous summer Games — the International Olympic Committee said on Wednesday.

John Coates, the head of the IOC's Tokyo Games co-ordination commission, praised organisers for their achievement, during his address to the IOC session in the Peruvian capital.

"The report (of Tokyo 2020) confirms the very positive impression that the co-ordination commission has," Coates said, adding that revenue from the 43 domestic sponsorship deals



This file photo taken on Oct 17, 1968 shows US athletes Tommie Smith (center), and John Carlos (right), raising their gloved fists in the Black Power salute to express their opposition to racism in the USA during the US national anthem, after receiving their medals for first and third place in the men's 200m event at the Mexico Olympic Games. At left is Peter Norman of Australia who took second place. (AFP)

after being awarded the Games in 2013, having to scrap expensive plans for a new stadium, sharply reducing a ballooning budget last year from more than

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signed by Tokyo organisers so far had exceeded expectations.

"Forty-three domestic partnerships — that's three times their initial budget (of around \$1 billion for domestic sponsorship) — and the gross amount is \$2.8 billion, a remarkable achievement for domestic sponsorship," Coates said.

The London 2012 Games raised about \$1.1 billion, while Rio de Janeiro in 2016 had claimed it had slightly surpassed London, but final accounts are sketchy given the current investigations for corruption linked to Olympic Games projects in Brazil.

Tokyo struggled with prepara-

Monument push for Australia's 'Black Power' hero

SYDNEY, Sept 13, (AFP): A campaign was launched Wednesday for a monument to recognise an unsung Australian athlete who supported two Americans in their famous Black Power salute at the 1968 Olympics.

Peter Norman, silver medalist in the 200m at Mexico City, stood on the podium alongside US sprinters

Tommie Smith and John Carlos, who both put a black-gloved fist in the air in a civil rights protest.

He backed their gesture and wore an Olympic Project for Human Rights badge in support, but was then frozen out of future Games selection and airbrushed from Australian Olympic history until recently.

"His contribution to racial equality

has never really been recognised in this country," Peter Norman Commemoration Committee convenor Joseph Toscano told AFP.

"I think Australian society has changed. I think we are seeing the rise of political movements and organisations promoting racial inequality and hatred.

"We felt that it's important... to re-

ognise not just Peter Norman and his family, but also the stand he took because every man, every woman who stands up makes a difference."

The push follows American protests over Confederate statues that hark back to the nation's slave-owning past, although Toscano said the campaign was not sparked by the US debate over monuments.

\$26 billion to \$16.8 billion and dealing with a number of environmental issues.

"We are very impressed with the quality of the team. We are confident that their (Tokyo 2020) project will impress the world and bring new audiences, especially with the addition of new sports."

The IOC approved the inclusion of skateboarding, sport climbing, surfing, karate and baseball/softball at the request of organisers in an effort to attract a younger generation of viewers.

Meanwhile, Greece's Energy Minister assured protesting Eldorado Gold workers on Wednesday that it would grant outstanding permits this week to enable the Canadian miner to fully operate one of its Greek projects.

Eldorado Gold threatened on Monday to suspend investment at three Greek projects, demanding permits and clarifications on an upcoming arbitration process.

Dozens of Eldorado Gold workers rallied outside the energy ministry earlier in protest at potential job losses.

Differences over the investment, one of the biggest in Greece in years, have dragged on for years, especially over compliance with environmental regulations, testing Greece's resolve to encourage foreign investments.

The company said on Monday that no additional investment would be made into Olympias and Skouries projects and the Stratoni mine from Sept 22, only days after the leftist-led government urged investors to show confidence in Greece as it emerges from crisis.

"Licensing for Olympias ... will be concluded in the coming days, today and tomorrow," Greek Energy Minister George Stathakis said in an effort to di-

fuse tension. "Three permits will be issued as we announced in August, allowing Olympias to be fully operational."

Eldorado spent about 2 billion dollars to acquire the Greek assets in 2012 and has invested over 1 billion dollars in developing them. It says it employs about 2,000 people in Greece, where unemployment stands at 21.2 percent, the euro zone's highest.

About 100 workers, in yellow vests, rallied outside the ministry early on Wednesday unfurling a banner reading "Occupation" in front of a police cordon. Some of them stormed into the building, according to one police official.

Police later fired some rounds of tear gas to disperse them.

Eldorado's Greek unit Hellas Gold welcomed Stathakis' comments: "We are pleased to hear the minister's com-

mments although we've not received any permits yet. We look forward to receiving the outstanding permits for both Olympias and Skouries soon."

Eldorado's plans to develop its mine operations in the northern region of Halkidiki have provoked violent protests by locals who fear they will ruin a landscape of pristine beaches and lush forests.

It is sensitive for Prime Minister Alexis Tsipras' Syriza party, which strongly opposed the investment before coming to power in 2015. His government now says it wants the project as long as it is "environmentally and economically sound".

Stathakis said on Tuesday the ores that will be produced will contain arsenic, which will well exceed accepted levels, and therefore the government should make sure the company fully abides by environmental rules.

WADA 'clears' 95 Russian athletes of doping charges

WASHINGTON, Sept 13, (AFP): The World Anti-Doping Agency (WADA) is set to clear 95 Russian athletes investigated over involvement in the country's alleged mammoth doping programme, the New York Times reported Wednesday.

A leaked internal WADA report published by the newspaper Tuesday said the agency found it could not gather enough evidence against 95 out of 96 Russian athletes who it has been probing.

"The available evidence was insufficient to support the assertion of an anti-doping rule violation against these 95 athletes," WADA Director General Olivier Niggli wrote in the document. The report did not name any of the athletes under investigation.

A string of WADA reports has previously uncovered reams of evidence that the Russian authorities ran a large-scale programme to help competitors cheat internationally.

Russia's Anti-Doping Agency (RUSADA) was declared "non-compliant" with international sport's anti-doping code in November 2015 and its track and field Olympics squad and entire Paralympics team were barred from Rio 2016.

An independent investigation for the agency by professor Richard McLaren in 2016 implicated some 1,000 athletes in the doping system. Moscow has furiously denied that

it ran a state-sponsored scheme to cheat at international sporting events and insists it is doing its best to crack down on dopers.

And Russian officials said WADA's decision only served to shed doubt on the revelations in McLaren's report.

"In general the information of the McLaren report appears to be incomplete and moreover in many cases unreliable," R-Sport agency quoted Stanislav Pozdnyakov, the deputy chief of Russia's Olympic

Committee, as saying.

"For the moment none of Russia's 1,000 athletes mentioned in the McLaren report has been found guilty or banned on the basis of his information. Meanwhile, a year has already passed (since the report was issued)."

While this latest twist may help bolster the Kremlin's claims, Niggli suggested to the New York Times that an absence of evidence did not necessarily prove Russia's innocence.

"The system was very well-organized," Niggli said. "On top of it, years after the fact, the remaining evidence is often very limited."

Niggli said that investigations into other athletes implicated in the doping scheme are ongoing.

ATHLETICS

Holder disappointed

Windies face tough WC challenge after washout

BELFAST, Sept 13, (AFP): West Indies will need to smash hosts England in the upcoming one-day international series to avoid the ignominy of being forced to qualify for the World Cup after a washout against Ireland on Wednesday.

The game at Stormont was scrapped without a ball being bowled after fresh rain followed an overnight soaking for the pitch, leaving the umpires with no choice.

It means the 1975 and 1979 World Cup winners will have to beat England 5-0 or 4-0 with either a tie or a no-result in order to qualify ahead of eighth-placed Sri Lanka, who are eight points ahead in the rankings.

Only the top seven ODI sides, apart from hosts England, currently ranked fourth, as of September 30 will qualify directly for the 50-over showpiece event in 2019.

Teams that do not gain direct entry will get another shot through a qualifying tournament.

West Indies captain Jason Holder

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said qualifying automatically would be a tough task but he is looking forward to the series, which starts in Manchester next week.

"England are a quality cricket side and they are playing at home," said the skipper.

"We're at the stage where we are looking to turn a corner and qualify for the World Cup, whether we have to go through the qualifiers or qualify automatically. We're excited for the series and hopefully we can play some good cricket."

"It won't be an embarrassment to play in the qualifiers. We are where we are and if we do have to play in them, we will take it one step at a time."

The West Indies, who lost the recent Test series against England 2-1, have been boosted by the return of Chris Gayle while Marlon Samuels will join up with the squad after a family bereavement.

"We are still a work in progress and hopefully more players are coming



West Indies' captain Jason Holder bowls on the first day of the third Test match between England and the West Indies at Lord's cricket ground in London on Sept 7. (AP)

back," said Holder. "Meantime, we have a young group of players challenging for places and hopefully they can come in and make their presence felt and feel more comfortable in the international arena."

Holder was disappointed at missing out on playing on Wednesday but could not disagree with the umpires' decision.

"Very disappointed. It was set to be a good occasion for Irish cricket and it's great to be here, albeit it's very, very cold," he said.

"It's just unfortunate the weather intervened but it was very wet out there and the last shower settled it."

The abandonment means Ireland are still waiting to play their first match against a Test-playing side since being granted full member status by the International Cricket Council in June.

West Indies fly to England on Thursday ahead of a one-off Twenty20 international at Chester-le-Street on Saturday. The ODI series starts at Old Trafford on Sept 19.

LAHORE, Pakistan, Sept 13, (AFP): Sri Lanka all-rounder Thisara Perera hit a towering six off the penultimate ball to steer the World XI to a thrilling seven-wicket win over Pakistan in the second Twenty20 Wednesday.

Perera made a whirlwind 19-ball 47 not out with five sixes, while Hashim Amla finished not out 72 off 55 balls to help the World XI overhaul a 175-run target and level the three-match series 1-1 before a packed Gaddafi stadium in Lahore.

That left the series intriguingly placed with the final match on Friday, also in Lahore.

Pakistan had registered a 20-run

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win in Tuesday's first match, which marked the return of international cricket to Pakistan.

Left-hander Perera went on a rampage as the visitors needed 33 off the last two overs, smashing two sixes off the 19th over bowled by Sohail Khan before sealing the match in the last over.

Amla, who scored his seventh international Twenty20 half-century, was the steadier of the two, with two sixes and five fours as he helped Perera add 69 runs for the fourth wicket off just 35 balls.

That partnership lifted the World XI after they lost Tamim Iqbal (23), Tim Paine (10) and skipper Faf du Plessis (20).

Pakistan captain Sarfraz Ahmed



World XI batsman Hashim Amla (right), plays a shot as Pakistani captain and wicketkeeper Sarfraz Ahmed looks on during the second Twenty20 international cricket match between the World XI and Pakistan at The Gaddafi Cricket Stadium in Lahore on Sept 13. (AFP)

gave credit to the visitors.

"World XI deserves the credit," said Ahmed. "Amla and Perera kept it till late and did it. Our bowlers are young and this is an occasion for them to learn how to bowl in such situations."

Pakistan had scored 174-6 in their 20 overs.

Babar Azam (45), Ahmed Shehzad (43) and Shoab Malik (39) had good

starts but none of them went on to score big, as Pakistan found it tough going on a slow and low pitch after winning the toss.

Opener Fakhar Zaman fell for 21 in the fifth over before Shehzad and Azam steadied the innings with a 59-run stand for the second wicket.

Malik hit two sixes in the last over before holing out off the last delivery

of the innings.

During his 23-ball knock Malik became the leading run scorer for Pakistan in Twenty20 international cricket, overhauling Umar Akmal's aggregate of 1,690 runs in 88 matches by two runs.

He now has 1,692 in 88 matches. Perera (2-23) and West Indian spinner Badree (2-31) were the main wicket takers for the visitors.

Pakistan vs World XI Scoreboard

LAHORE, Pakistan, Sept 13, (AFP): Scoreboard of the second Twenty20 international between Pakistan and World XI played at Gaddafi Stadium, Lahore on Wednesday.

PAKISTAN
F. Zaman lbw b Badree 21
A. Shehzad c Miller b Tahir 43
B. Azam c Miller b Badree 45
S. Malik c Collingwood b Cutting 39
I. Wasim c Tahir b Perera 15
A. Ahmed c Tahir b Perera 0
S. Khan not out 1
Extras: (lb1, nb1, w8) 10
Total: (for six wickets; 20 overs) 174
Did not bat: Mohammad Nawaz, Shadab Khan, Usman Shinwari, Rumman Raees
Fall of wickets: 1-41 (Zaman), 2-100 (Shehzad), 3-135 (Azam), 4-156 (Wasim), 5-157 (Ahmed), 6-174 (Malik)
Bowling: Morkel 4-0-20-0 (3w),

Cutting 4-0-52-1 (2w), Badree 4-0-31-2 (1w), Collingwood 2-0-18-0 (1w), Perera 3-0-23-2 (1nb), Tahir 3-0-29-1 (1w)

WORLD XI
Tamim Iqbal c Malik b Khan 23
Hashim Amla not out 72
T. Paine b Wasim 10
F. du Plessis c Shadab b Nawaz 20
T. Perera not out 47
Extras: (lb1, w2) 3
Total: (for 3 wickets; 19.5 overs) 175
Fall of wickets: 1-47 (Iqbal), 2-71 (Paine), 3-106 (du Plessis)
Did not bat: D. Miller, P. Collingwood, B. Cutting, S. Badree, M. Morkel, Imran Tahir
Bowling: Wasim 4-0-27-1, Khan 4-0-44-1 (1w), Shinwari 1-0-10-0, Raees 3.5-0-36-0 (1w), Nawaz 3-0-25-1, Shadab 4-0-32-0
Result: World XI win by seven wickets

'Stepping stone in the right direction'

ICC backs Pakistan's bid to host full cricket series

LAHORE, Pakistan, Sept 13, (AP): World cricket's governing body wants international teams back in Pakistan after an eight-year absence due to security concerns but cautioned that it could be a "long process."

The Pakistan Cricket Board is currently hosting a three-match Twenty20 series between Pakistan and a World XI in Lahore amid heavy security.

"ICC has already agreed to invest in security and develop security capabilities (of Pakistan) for a three-year period," International Cricket Council chief executive David Richardson said Wednesday. "Certainly I think the intention would be to bring member countries to tour Pakistan, not a World XI tour, and that would be the ideal to have international cricket return to Pakistan in normal circumstances."

Richardson said it was too early to say when the PCB could host a full bilateral series and organize international games in other big cities like Karachi and Rawalpindi.

"It's a long process," Richardson said. "This is a stepping stone in the right direction. I think the next step is to improve capabilities to areas and cities outside of Lahore itself."

over the next two months — a one-off match against Sri Lanka and a three-match series against West Indies in November.

The ICC will give the PCB \$1.1 million over the next three years to improve security and will also share its expertise. ICC security experts are in Lahore, monitoring arrangements to protect the World XI team.

Fourteen players from seven countries — South Africa, Australia, Eng-

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land, West Indies, Sri Lanka, Bangladesh and New Zealand — formed the World XI which is led by South Africa's Faf du Plessis.

Richardson explained why no Indian player was part of the World XI team.

"The fact is you can't ignore the situation that exists between India and Pakistan at a political level," he said. "Any Indian player being part of the tour, you can imagine the focus that would've been on that player and the pressures that would've brought from the security point of view."

The Punjab provincial government has deployed several thousand security officials around the 25,000 capacity Gaddafi Stadium for the matches against the World XI. Fans have to go through at least four security checkpoints before entering into the stadium.



International Cricket Council (ICC) Chief Executive David Richardson (left), addresses a press conference along with Chairman of Pakistan Cricket Board (PCB) Najam Sethi at the Gaddafi Cricket Stadium in Lahore on Sept 13. (AFP)