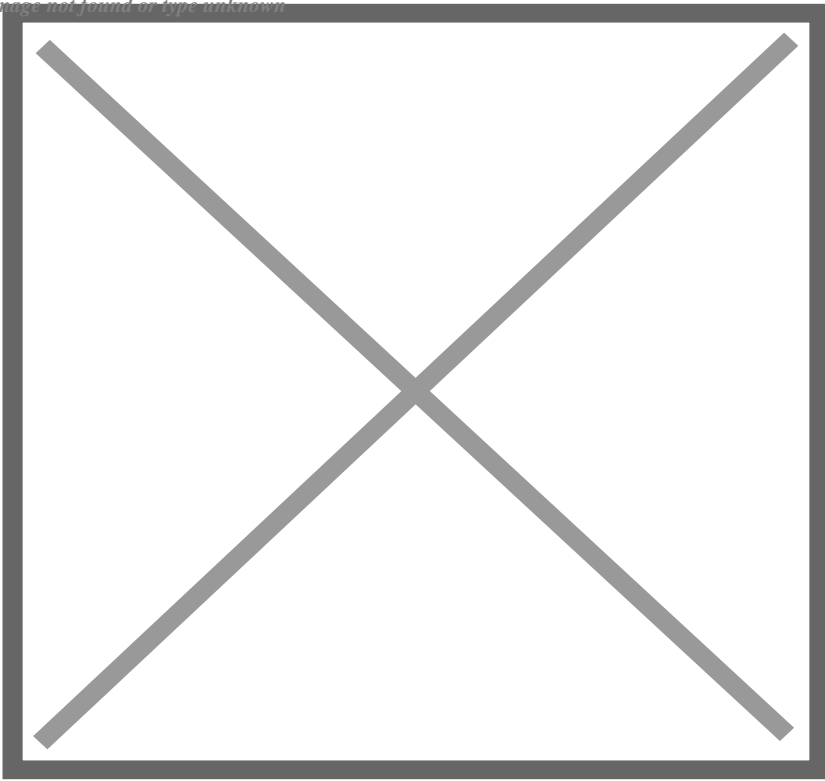


Cuban national soccer team to play friendlies in Dominican Republic

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Havana, November 1 (JIT)-- The Cuban Football Association (AFC) announced the holding of two friendly matches in the international window set by Fifa for the second half of November.

The matches will take place in Santo Domingo, Dominican Republic, on November 15 and 18, as agreed with the federation of that country.

The Quintana Roo national team is ranked 153rd in the Fifa ranking, 14 steps ahead of the Cuban national team, ranked 167th.

"We have great expectations with these matches after, for reasons beyond our control, we could not play in the last Fifa date, in which the countries we invited canceled because of problems with air transportation," said the secretary general of the AFC, Miguel Angel Diaz.

The matches represent an opportunity for the national coach, Pablo Elier Sanchez, in order to gather the group prior to the upcoming March commitments in the CONCACAF Nations League 2022-2023.

The opponent shows a qualitative level superior to Barbados and Guadeloupe, rivals of the Lions of the Caribbean at the close of the B league of the competition of nations in the area.

These matches can be vital in the dynamics of the group, but also propitiate the call-up of players who would be part of the Cuban senior team in the future, taking into account the time that separates the friendlies from the official competition.

The Dominicans could not take advantage of the past Fifa dates. They had to cancel the match against Puerto Rico due to the impossibility of air travel.

As a result, they have not played a match since June of this year, when they lost 2-0 to Guatemala in the CONCACAF Nations League.

The team coached by the Spaniard Iñaki Bea has outstanding players such as captain Tanno Bonnín, a central defender who played in the lower divisions of Spain with clubs such as Real Madrid and Valencia. He now plays in Italy's Serie D. They also count on his teammate in the back, Carlos Julio Martínez, who also played in the lower divisions of the Iberian country.

In the attack, Dorny Romero and Nowend Lorenzo stand out, forming a trio with Edarlyn Reyes, who played in the Arab Emirates and now plays in Bolivia.

In the next few days the Cuban squad for these matches will be announced, said Diaz, who is also head coach of the National Football Commission.

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