

INDER President Analyses Cuba's Performance at Pan Am Games in Toronto

Cuba Expects Good Results at Rio 2016 Olympic Games

We are in conditions to "get good results" in the 2016 Olympic Games in Rio de Janeiro, Antonio Becali, president of the Cuban Sports Institute (INDER), said in remarks published today in Granma newspaper. We will create a strategy for the Games in Brazil, because we are potentially in a condition to obtain good results there. We should concentrate our efforts, see the aspects that failed in Toronto and face the coming challenge, Becali said.

The official analyzed Cuba's performance in the recently concluded 17th Pan-American Games in Toronto, where the delegation of the island ended fourth in the medals table.

We finished fourth behind three powers of the area: the United States, Canada and Brazil.

As we stated before leaving Cuba, we went to a complicated commitment in Canada, that used the host country's values very well, because it took advantage of the opportunities of medals that the United States and other rivals gave the island, he said.

The INDER president also highlighted the performance of the Brazilians, who brought "a strong delegation" in preparation for Rio de Janeiro 2016, "and with that objective put together an important number of nationalized athletes in recent years, including coaches from different countries."

Even facing those opponents, we maintained our commitment to fight to retain second place, but the loss of some medals that we would have won, made the difference of five golds less than Brazil, Becali said.

Baseball

Cuba suffered its 2nd defeat today in the 2nd World Baseball Championship, U-12 category, headquartered in Taipei, China, being shutout 4-0 to Nicaragua, corresponding to the 2nd round.

The Nicaraguan opener Elian Rayo limited Cuba's offensive to just 1 hit in 5 innings with 9 strikeouts and 3 tickets to claim the victory, while Oscar Piñera took the loss after admitting 1 clean in 5 episodes.

The Cuban team had a poor defensive work with 4 errors, along with a pale offensive job.

In other matches of the day, the United States beat Venezuela 10-2 while the locals beat Japan 7-3.

Now the hosts and the U.S. command the 2nd round with 3 wins and no defeats, followed by Nicaragua (2-1), Cuba (1-2), Japan and Venezuela (0-3).

During the 1st phase, the Cuban team beat Russia 13-0, Brazil (4-1), South Korea (5-0) and Venezuela (8-2), and a failure to Chinese Taipei (6-5).

Tomorrow Friday Cubans faces Japan, Venezuela rivals Nicaragua and the United States runs into the host in an undefeated clash.

FIFA's Presidency

I have to fight the mafia that still remains inside FIFA,' says Diego Maradona. Argentine football great Maradona said on Wednesday he wants to fight the "mafia" responsible for the corruption scandal that has rocked FIFA, but he stopped short of saying he wants to be the next president of global soccer's governing body.

"I have to fight the mafia that still remains inside FIFA. I have to fight those who have for a long time

stolen from inside FIFA," Maradona told local television channel America.

Asked whether he would run for the FIFA presidency, the 54-year old replied ambiguously: "I really want to be in FIFA."

In late May, federal prosecutors in New York indicted nine soccer officials, most of whom held or had held FIFA positions, and five sports media and promotions executives in schemes involving \$150 million in bribes over a period of 24 years. Prosecutors said their investigation exposed complex money laundering schemes, millions of dollars in untaxed income and tens of millions of dollars in offshore accounts held by the soccer officials.

Maradona has launched scathing attacks on the ruling elite of FIFA, and in particular its head Sepp Blatter, who announced in June that he was quitting over the bribery scandal.

Blatter was not charged by U.S. justice officials and denies any misconduct.

Maradona has long accused Blatter of running FIFA like a criminal organisation and expressed delight in seeing U.S. authorities hitting several of FIFA's top former and current officials with corruption charges. He used to bemoan that his warnings were being ignored.

"Now in my favour, I am walking in step with the yanquis," Maradona said in the interview, using Spanish-language slang for Americans. "And these yanquis are serious," he added.

Maradona was one of soccer's most gifted players and led Argentina to a World Cup victory in 1986.

Russian Sports Minister Says He Will Talk to FIBA on Suspension

Russian Sports Minister Vitaly Mutko said today he would personally hold negotiations with the administration of the International Basketball Federation (FIBA) over Russia's suspension from international tournaments.

"Tomorrow I am flying to Moscow and will study all the documents," Mutko said in an interview with the press. "I promise that I will be personally talking to FIBA in order to resolve the situation. Russia should not be treated like this."

The Russia Basketball Federation received a letter from the international federation and it states that the Russian basketball federation was not listed among the FIBA members.

FIBA's final decision would be announced at a session of the federations Central Board, scheduled to convene on August 8-9 in Tokyo, Japan.

According to various reports, FIBA sanctions came as a result of Russian courts interference in the decisions of the RBF while governments are not allowed to interfere into the activities of the public sports organizations.

Minister Vitaly Mutko said that the government was not interfering in the affairs of the Russian Basketball Federation.

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