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# Qaradawi slams Egyptian media for distortion

Old speeches being telecast as new

**DOHA:** Prominent Islamic scholar Dr Yusuf Al Qaradawi (pictured) has accused the Egyptian TV channels supporting the military regime of distorting his speeches. Dr Al Qaradawi stated yesterday that Egyptian TV channels were taking selective excerpts from his old speeches and telecasting them as new. He condemned the media for their false propaganda, clarifying that those speeches were delivered way back in 2013, much before the military coup in Egypt. A statement issued by his office said: "The TV channels that support the military coup regime are broadcasting selective parts of my speech on 'martyrdom operation' giving a wrong impression to the audience that I am speaking about the current situation in Egypt." The fact is that the speech was delivered on March 21, 2013. Anyone who has been following Al Qaradawi's speeches and statements can find that he has always emphasized a peaceful revolution. He has always made it clear that he supported non-violent revolutions, despite detention, torture, snoring and deaths that the protestors face, the statement added. The statement further said: It is not surprising to see some



of the scholars who back the regime actively involved in the campaign against Al Qaradawi. These are people who have already lost their credibility because of their support to injustice and support to a "non-legitimate" regime. The statement noted that Al Qaradawi's view on "martyrdom operations" has been explained in his book "Jurisprudence of Jihad". He had said "martyrdom operations" were allowed only for Palestinians due to their exceptional situations. Explaining further he notes: Palestinians now manage to make rockets, which are capable of hitting deep inside Israel, though not as effective as Israeli weapons. But they have emerged as a medium of self-defence. Therefore, martyrdom operations are not a mode of resistance in Palestine. The exceptional situation in Palestine is not applicable to Algeria, Egypt, Yemen, Saudi Arabia Iraq, Pakistan and other countries. It is not legitimate to follow the Palestinian method in these places. Al Qaradawi's views on "martyrdom operations" are not limited to him alone. Dozens of Muslim scholars subscribe to his view on the issue, the statement added.

THE PENINSULA

## Gaza power outage



Palestinian boys stand inside their damaged home in Al Tufah, in the east of Gaza City, yesterday during a power outage. Residents of Gaza, home to 1.8 million people, have been experiencing up to 15 hours of electricity outage a day for the past two weeks due to fuel and power shortages.

## Trade surplus declines 52pc

**DOHA:** Qatar's trade surplus in June 2015 fell to QR14.3bn (\$4.09bn), registering a decline of QR16.4bn (\$4.5bn), or 52.5 percent, from a year ago. The value of total exports of goods in June 2015, (including exports of goods of domestic origin and re-exports) amounted to QR24.1bn (\$6.62bn), a decrease of 40.4 percent compared to June 2014. Whereas the total exports of goods in June decreased by 2.9 percent compared to May 2015, according to Ministry of development Planning and Statistics. On the other hand, the import value of goods in June 2015 amounted to QR9.2bn (\$2.53bn), an increase of 1.6 percent over June 2014. However, on a month-on-month (m-o-m) basis the

imports decreased by 3.6 percent. The year-on-year (y-o-y) decrease in total value of exports was mainly due to lower exports of Petroleum gases and other gaseous hydrocarbons (LNG, condensates, propane, butane, etc.) reaching QR14.5bn in June 2015, i.e. a decrease of 44.6 percent. Petroleum oils & oils from bituminous minerals (crude) reaching QR3.2bn 57.5 percent, and Petroleum oils & oils from bituminous minerals (not crude) reaching QR1.3bn 46.6 percent. In June 2015, Japan was at the top of the countries of destination of Qatar's exports with QR4.5bn, a share of 18.5 percent of total exports, followed by South Korea with QR4.3bn 17.8 percent and India with QR2.3bn 9.6 percent.

During June 2015, Parts of aircraft and helicopters etc., were at the top of the imported group of commodities, with QR0.9bn, showing an increase of 97.3 percent compared to June 2014. Motor cars and other passenger vehicles ranked second with QR800m, an increase of 26.1 percent, followed by electrical apparatus for line telephony/ telegraphy, telephone sets etc. with QR200m. In June 2015, United States of America was the leading country of origin of Qatar's imports with QR1.1bn, a share of 12.3 percent of the total imports, followed by China with QR1bn 10.9 percent, and United Arab Emirates with QR900m 9.6 percent.

THE PENINSULA

## Jail term for four expats in forgery case

**DOHA:** A criminal court has sentenced four expatriates, including two women, to five year imprisonment for forging bank documents and embezzlement. The court has also ordered the first and second accused to together pay a fine of QR1,735m. In addition, the first accused will have to return another QR1,735m to the bank. According to the court order, three of the accused will be deported to their respective home countries, once they complete their jail term, *Al Shary* reported. The court ordered the employer to sack the first accused, a bank employee, from his job. The first, second and fourth accused will be deported after completing the period of imprisonment and all forged documents will be confiscated. A witness to the case, who is also a bank employee, deposed before the court that she saw one of the female accused coming to the bank with the third accused, who is an account holder in another branch of the same bank. "The accused was in a veil and wanted to withdraw money. She requested for a counter cheque, saying she doesn't have a permanent cheque book yet. The amount demanded was QR900,000. I handed it over to the third accused," the witness told the court.

## Kerry to meet Lavrov in Doha

**WASHINGTON:** US Secretary of State John Kerry will travel to Egypt and the Gulf next week for talks on Iran and the fight against IS militants. Kerry will visit Cairo on August 2. On August 3, he will travel to Doha to meet with GCC counterparts. In Doha, Kerry will also meet his Russian counterpart Sergei Lavrov. **REUTERS**

## Arab ministers to meet after Al Aqsa clashes

**CAIRO:** Arab League foreign ministers will meet in Cairo early next month to discuss clashes involving Israeli police at the Al Aqsa mosque compound in Jerusalem, a senior Palestinian official said yesterday. Chief Palestinian negotiator Saeb Erakat said that foreign ministers from 15 Arab states will meet on August 5 to discuss what he called the "dangerous development" in Jerusalem. They will discuss "Israeli escalations at Al-Aqsa mosque, continuing settlements, extrajudicial arrests and assassinations and forced displacements" of Palestinians, he said. **AFP**

**A P J Abdul Kalam dead, India mourns**  
**SHILLONG:** A P J Abdul Kalam, who rose from humble beginnings to become one of India's leading scientists and later a hugely popular president, died in Shillong yesterday after collapsing during a lecture at the IIM-Shillong, plunging the entire country in mourning. Kalam breathed his last at 7:45pm at Bethany Hospital. Doctors said Kalam was brought "almost dead" after suffering a cardiac arrest. Full report on page 13



A Houthi militant walks in front of a government compound, destroyed by recent Saudi-led air strikes, in Yemen's northwestern city of Amran yesterday.

## Friendly fire kills 12 Hadi loyalists

**ADEN:** Warplanes from the Saudi-led coalition fighting Iran-backed rebels in Yemen hit positions of pro-government forces by mistake yesterday despite a humanitarian truce, killing a dozen people, military sources said. Clashes also broke out on the ground in several areas of the country in spite of UN calls for all sides to respect a ceasefire to allow desperately needed aid deliveries. The Houthi rebels said they had not been consulted about the truce that began at midnight (Sunday 2100 GMT). The Arab regional coalition,

which has waged four months of air strikes in support of exiled President Abdrabbuh Mansur Hadi, announced the five-day ceasefire to allow emergency supplies to flow into the war-scarred nation. It reserved the right to respond to "military activity or movement". Although there were no reports of air strikes on the rebels yesterday, military sources reported a "friendly fire" incident in which coalition warplanes hit positions of Hadi loyalists in the southern province of Lahj, killing 12 people. At least 30 others were wounded in the strikes on hills overlooking the rebel-held Al Anad airbase

EU foreign affairs chief Federica Mogherini held talks in Riyadh with Saudi Foreign Minister Adel Al Jubeir, and both said they agreed on the need for a political solution in Yemen. Overnight the Huthis bombed areas in the southern province of Tuez, Lahj and Dhaleh, according to witnesses and military sources. Rebel tanks fired on residential areas in Jebel Sabr in Taz, sparking clashes with loyalist troops, witnesses said. Military sources said 11 rebels, five civilians and four loyalists were killed. **AFP**

See also page 5

## US, Turkey to create 'IS-free zone' in Syria

**ANKARA:** The US and Turkey have agreed to work together to drive Islamic State (IS) jihadists from northern Syria, senior US officials said yesterday, as Turkish Prime Minister Ahmet Davutoglu vowed to press ahead with parallel strikes against Kurdish militants. The potentially game-changing accord with the US was revealed as Turkey fuelled the growing anger of its Kurdish minority by shelling a Kurdish-held village in northern Syria while its warplanes continued to pound Kurdish targets in northern Iraq. Referring to Islamic State, a senior US official said that Ankara and Washington aimed "to establish an ISIL-free zone and ensure greater security and stability along Turkey's border with Syria". Details of the zone "remain to be worked out", the official said and added that "any joint military efforts will not include the imposition of a no-fly zone" — a long standing Turkish demand. But many question whether Turkey is more interested in limiting Kurdish capabilities in Syria and Iraq than tackling IS. Davutoglu said Turkey would press ahead with military operations against the outlawed Kurdistan Workers' Party (PKK) until the group disarmed. "We will continue our fight until we obtain

a certain result," he told ATV television, urging the Kurdish separatists to deliver on its 2013 promise to lay down arms. Turkey has called an extraordinary Nato meeting today over its "anti-terror" offensive against the Kurdish rebels and IS. Nato chief Jens Stoltenberg backed Turkey's right to defend itself but told the BBC Sunday "of course self-defence has to be proportionate". He also cautioned Ankara about burning bridges with the Kurds. "For years there has been progress to try to find a peaceful political solution," he told Norwegian state broadcaster NRK. Davutoglu told a group of Turkish newspaper editors that Ankara's intervention in Iraq and Syria would "change the balance" in the region, but ruled out sending ground troops into Syria. Davutoglu said Ankara's demands for a no-fly zone were addressed "to a certain extent", according to the Hurriyet daily. "Air cover is important, the air protection, but ruled out sending ground troops into Syria." Davutoglu said Ankara's demands for a no-fly zone were addressed "to a certain extent", according to the Hurriyet daily. "Air cover is important, the air protection, but ruled out sending ground troops into Syria." Davutoglu said Ankara's demands for a no-fly zone were addressed "to a certain extent", according to the Hurriyet daily. "Air cover is important, the air protection, but ruled out sending ground troops into Syria." **AFP**

See also page 4

# Doha Goals starts in Los Angeles

Qatar is committed to developing sport for the nation, says H E Sheikh Faisal

BY ARMSTRONG VAS

**LOS ANGELES:** Qatar – which has emerged as one of the leading sports hub of global sports – is looking forward to developing long-term initiatives to promote sport as vehicle for creating a more inclusive society, commented H E Sheikh Faisal bin Mubarak Al Thani Executive Director of Doha Goals Forum.

Speaking at the inaugural ceremony of the Doha Goals Forum H E Sheikh Faisal said: "As a nation, Qatar is a strong advocate for the power of sport: it is one of the pillars of our country's vision. Through the leadership of H H Sheikh Tamim bin Hamad Al Thani, the Emir of Qatar, the country is committed to developing sport for the nation, for our citizens, and most importantly for our next generation."

The three-day forum, a leading platform for social and economic progress through sport, opened on Sunday in Los Angeles, California – the first time the event is being held outside Qatar.

"Sport is an integral part of our education system, and we treat it with equal importance whether our elite young athletes are training at Aspire Academy, or through community projects encouraging everyone to become more active," he added.

"Based on the conviction (sport is a powerful tool of change), we decided to create a platform, the Doha Goals Forum. Goals stands for A Gathering Of All Leaders In Sport. In fact, it is a gathering of all people, who share our vision that sport is a unique tool for social progress and economic development, and for building a more inclusive society," added Sheikh Faisal.

For the last three editions world-class athletes, policy makers, global chief executive officers and leading non-governmental organisations met in Doha to create a roadmap for social improvement through sports and launch cross-border initiatives.

H E Sheikh Faisal said sports



H E Sheikh Faisal bin Mubarak Al Thani, Executive Director of Doha Goals Forum speaks during the opening ceremony of the Doha Goals which kicked off in Los Angeles on Sunday. RIGHT: Speakers hold discussion during the session – Qatar and California developing a Sports Tourism Culture – on the opening day.



has a strong role to play in society.

"Sport not only brings us together, but history has showed it has a unique role in fostering peace, cross cultural understanding and changing the 'World for the Better,'" he added, while addressing a gathering which included students from around 23 top sport management programmes in the US and Canada.

"From the day we launched, Doha Goals has been vocal in its commitment to facilitating real change. We have announced a series of initiatives – many that have come from ideas provided by the Doha Goals community over the last 3 years," he said. "These initiatives are proof of

our commitment to be a catalyst for new ideas, as they are all built around partnerships (new and old) with the private sector, inter-government bodies, NGOs and individuals," he added.

Change, he said, cannot occur by itself, and the best chance any new initiative has to succeed – and to last – is for it to be built on solid connections and relationships.

He also emphasised on the need to use sports as a catalyst for change in society. Explaining the decision to tie up with Special Olympics Games, which began here on Saturday night H E Sheikh Faisal said: "In 2015, Doha Goals has to the

"home of sport and entertainment," due to our friendship and shared vision with the Special Olympics, the world's most wide-reaching organisation focusing on sport for development. On behalf of Doha Goals Forum, we extend our personal congratulations to Mr Tim Shriver and his family for their historic leadership in developing the Special Olympics into a Global Social Movement.

"Our partnership will go beyond this week's presence during the World Games, and we look forward to developing long-term initiatives to promote sport as vehicle for creating a more inclusive society," he said, while welcoming delegates to two exciting

days of collaboration and engaging discussion in Los Angeles. "We have tried to bring a little piece of Qatar with us to Los Angeles and I hope that the Doha Goals Forum 2015 will give you the will to support our initiatives and join us in our call to action.

"This year's Forum is very much about what we, as individuals, and as local, national and global citizens, can do to promote the many facets of sport. Over the past three years, thousands of participants have come together under the Doha Goals umbrella. They have held up their hands to be counted as we build a platform for change.

"Let's use the platform we

have here in LA, during the Special Olympics World Games, and the attention that sporting events attract to address some of the greatest divisions and problems that exist in our society," he added.

Some of the top athletes who are attending the meet in LA are 22-time medalist and world champion Michael Phelps, three-time Olympic gold medal-winning gymnast Nadia Comaneci, nine-time Olympic gold medalist Carl Lewis, two-time Olympic gold medal-winning gymnast Bart Conner, nine-time Olympic champion swimmer Mark Spitz and former Brazil captain Cafu.

THE PENINSULA

## Rival kings rumble as Chelsea take on Barcelona

**WASHINGTON:** Reigning European kings Barcelona and English Premier League champions Chelsea, each training in the first steps of defending their crowns, meet today in a pre-season friendly in suburban Washington.

Chelsea manager Jose Mourinho says evaluating talent and testing combinations is more important than winning, even with the International Champions Cup tournament linking numerous pre-season matches for some of the world's top clubs as they fill huge stadiums in a rare treat for US fans.

"This is a match in which you are not obsessed with the result,"

Mourinho said. "You want to train. You make changes in the team because you have a plan for a certain amount of minutes, but all the people make it a big atmosphere."

Barcelona manager Luis Enrique likes the idea of facing top-flight foes early in training. His side became the first European club to sweep the treble twice after taking the Champions League and La Liga plus the Copa del Rey last season, six years after first achieving the feat.

"At this point of the pre-season we've got a good tempo," Enrique said. "It's really effective to play against top-level sides. It's interesting. It's important to see



Jose Mourinho

players in these types of games. They can show what they are able to do."

Both clubs are off the pace in the trophy chase for the pre-season event. Chelsea dropped an opener 4-2 to the New York



Luis Enrique

Red Bulls while beating Paris St. Germain 6-5 on penalty kicks after playing to a 1-1 draw. Barcelona vanquished the Los Angeles Galaxy 2-1 to start but fell 3-1 Saturday to Manchester United.

Barcelona have used a depleted squad missing such stars as Argentina's Lionel Messi and Brazil's Neymar, both excused after playing in the Copa America.

Chelsea had been without Colombian striker Radamel Falcao, on loan to the Blues from Monaco, due to Copa America service. But he and countryman Juan Cuadrado and Willian each played 20 minutes against PSG.

Falcao pleased Mourinho in his Chelsea debut. "He was not so tired as the others. He trained two days and the others 10 days and they are accumulating fatigue," Mourinho said. "Falcao, Willian and Juan Cuadrado are with the sharpness

but without the fatigue so they looked good. It was good for them to play this 20 minutes. And it was good for Falcao from the penalty spot to put the ball in the net."

Enrique used midfielder Sergi Roberto on the bench against Manchester United after benching Brazilian defender Douglas for soreness and liked what he saw. "Sergi Roberto at right back is an option," Enrique said.

Mourinho noted the growth in interest by Americans in football, citing his inability to anonymously move around US cities.

"Ten years ago when my players and I walked down the street it was paradise," the Portuguese coach said. AFP

## PSG handball team arrives in Qatar for training camp

**DOHA:** Players and staff of the Paris Saint-Germain handball team arrived yesterday in Doha for the Qatar handball Tour, their traditional pre-season training camp.

For the third consecutive year, the Parisian players and staff will set up camp at Aspire Zone – the state-of-the-art sports complex in Doha – and will be hosted by Qatar Tourism Authority (QTA) for a mix of physical preparation and tourism activities.

Each year, as part of its association with Paris Saint-Germain, QTA hosts the club's various teams in Doha for training camps.

Last April, the Paris Saint-Germain Women's Team came to train in Qatar, the host of

the last Men's Handball World Championship.

"We are delighted to welcome back members of the Paris Saint-Germain Handball team following the global championship held in Doha last January, and hope the team members who are visiting for the first time will enjoy Qatar's offerings, both as a world-class sports destination and a cultural hub," commented Rashed Al Qureshi, Chief Marketing and Promotions Officer at Qatar Tourism Authority.

On July 30th, the players will have a day off during which they will take the opportunity to discover Qatar, the club's official destination. The sightseeing break will provide an opportunity for the

senior players and new recruits to visit historic destinations and get a taste of modern Qatar through its innovative landmarks.

Four winners of a digital competition organised by QTA will accompany Paris Saint-Germain players.

The four loyal supporters of the team will be flown to Doha for the unique experience of following the Qatar Handball Tour and discovering Qatar alongside their favourite players.

Paris Saint-Germain players will stay at the Aspire Zone for a week and will benefit from its state of the art training facilities in their daily practice combining work-outs, cardio and training sessions. THE PENINSULA



This July 2014 file photo shows Paris Saint-Germain (PSG) handball team arriving in Doha for a pre-season training camp. The team returns for training camp in Doha yesterday.

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## Michael Jordan inspired me: Phelps

### Most decorated Olympian of all time chats with Ato Boldon at Doha Goals Forum

BY ARMSTRONG VAS

**LOS ANGELES, California:** Swimmer Michael Phelps said he looked up to basketball legend Michael Jordan for inspiration as a kid.

Speaking at the Doha Goals Forum here on Sunday, the Olympic champion who is making a comeback said: "As a kid I looked up to Jordan, because of what he did and how he changed the sport of basketball. That's what I wanted to do in the sport of swimming. We've come a long way since 2000 and my first Olympic Games."

The American legend who has won an astonishing 28 medals at the Olympic Games is one of several Olympic legends who are attending the two-day meet in Los Angeles, one of the greatest gatherings of Olympic legends outside of the Olympic Games.

The list included Carl Lewis, Nadia Comaneci, Bart Conner, Greg Louganis, Apolo Ohno, Yuna Kim, Michelle Kwan, Scott Hamilton, Meryl Davis, Hannah Teter, Abby Wambach, John Carlos and Ato Boldon.

Phelps was interviewed by Boldon, a four-time Olympic medallist and IAAF Global Ambassador from Trinidad and Tobago. The swimmer also took questions from the audience.

One Special Olympics Games athlete asked Phelps where he keeps his medals and whether he looks at them for inspiration. Phelps answered: "I think there's only one person, maybe a handful of people in this world who know where my medals are... I probably have only looked at them about once or twice all together because there are so many other things



Olympian Ato Boldon (left) from Trinidad and Tobago interviews Olympian Michael Phelps from USA during the Doha Goals Forum in Los Angeles on Sunday.

that I want to do, whether it's in the pool or out of the pool. My goals are nonstop."

Phelps said he aims to have 'fun' on his comeback while the situation was different in 2012. "Going into 2012, I felt like I had to finish there. I had to make it to 2012. Now, I'm just having fun."

Asked to elaborate on the sequence leading to his comeback, he said: "It was like 9:30, 10 o'clock

at night one day and I called him [coach Bob Bowman]. I was like, 'what do you think about me coming back?' he was like, 'call me in the morning.' So I called him the next morning and he knew that I was for real. I got back to Baltimore and we had a meeting and he's like, 'we're going to do this the right way.' That's the way we've been doing it. I'm in a much better place now than I probably have ever been in my career."

Walking down memory lane, Phelps said he did not win any medals at the Sydney Olympics in 2000 which made him very sad.

"I was so discouraged that I didn't medal. I was fifth in my first Olympics at 15 [in his only race, the 200m butterfly]. I didn't see my suit. It was my first time out of the country. I was literally not prepared at all. But I wanted so much more, and I could never, ever settle unless I was the

absolute best," he recalled.

Regarding his Olympic memories he said: "The first [gold medal] was one of the coolest [the 400m individual medley at the Athens 2004 Olympics in world-record time]. Sort of never, ever forgetting exactly where my mom and I shared that first gold medal through a chain-link fence in Athens, Greece, because I was unable to get to my mom. So I passed it through this little

chain-link fence [while holding a peanut butter sandwich and telling his mom, "Look what I did," as has been reported often since 2004]. I think 2008, probably 200m free. I look at that race, and today, still, and say that's probably my best race I've ever swam in my life from start to finish. It was kind of over at 15 meters. I was in the best shape possible. My stroke was perfect. Everything about that race, to me, was the best. [Phelps broke his world record in that event by nine tenths of a second]"

Phelps, who is a brand ambassador for the Special Olympics and took part in the march-past during the opening ceremony of the Special Olympics Games on Saturday, recalled his experiences in school where he was mocked at. "As a kid, I was picked on. I was made fun of. I used to remember kids flicking [my ears] in school. I can still remember to this day, I remember the teacher and her name in middle school who told me that I would never succeed in anything that I would ever put my mind to."

"I stood right at the bottom of the tunnel and watched all the athletes come out. You could feel the energy that was coming out... I guess I kind of thought back to what it would have been like if I was able to experience that [Phelps who has never attended an Olympic Opening Ceremony]... It just sent chills up my body," Phelps said.

The ongoing Special Olympics Games features 25 sports. Hosts USA, with 491 athletes, has the biggest contingent at the Games while India have sent 338 athletes and Russia have 252 athletes taking part. **THE PENINSULA**

## IOC strikes Middle East broadcast deal with *beIN Sports*



**LAUSANNE:** The International Olympic Committee yesterday awarded the Middle East and North Africa broadcast rights for Olympic games between 2018 and 2024 to *beIN Sports*.

Broadcasting sources said the Qatar-owned *beIN*, which is moving into a growing number of sports markets, had paid more than \$150m (£96.7m, 135.6m euros) for its first direct deal

with the IOC which will cover four Games.

The IOC has again broken with tradition in the accord. It had previously dealt with the Arab States Broadcast Union which paid a reported \$32m for the rights to the 2014 Winter Olympics in Sochi and next year's summer Games in Rio de Janeiro.

Last month the IOC awarded the broadcast rights to most of

Europe to *Eurosport*, owned by Discovery Communications of the United States, for the Olympics in 2018-2024 for \$1.3bn.

The IOC did not give a figure for the Middle East-North Africa contract which covers an area running from Algeria to Djibouti.

In announcing that *beIN* had won a tender, IOC President Thomas Bach said: "With its excellent track record in

broadcasting, we believe that it will provide fantastic coverage across the region of each edition of the Olympic Games, including free-to-air television coverage."

"*beIN Sports* has also committed to providing unprecedented promotion of Olympic sports all year round, including significant support for the Olympic Channel in the future," he added.

*beIN Media Group CEO*

Nasser Al Khelaifi (pictured) said: "Our direct acquisition of the Olympic Games from the IOC fulfills our ambition of bringing all premium sports to our viewers in the region. We look forward to further growing our relationship with the IOC."

The deal covers all broadcast platforms, including free-to-air television, subscription television, internet and mobile phone in all languages. **AFP**

## Race to succeed Blatter is 'poker' game: FIFA official

**AMSTERDAM:** The race to succeed Sepp Blatter as FIFA president is like a "poker game", long-serving FIFA executive committee member Michel D'Hooghe (pictured) said yesterday.

"A poker game is currently being played. I think there will be a number of candidates, one from Europe," Belgian D'Hooghe told Dutch broadcaster NOS.

D'Hooghe said UEFA president Michel Platini would be a good candidate. "Michel Platini has led UEFA well and he has taken on all the challenges. He is a wonderful man, though, in his own way. Michel is highly appreciated in European football."

The 69-year-old D'Hooghe, who has been a member of the powerful cabinet of world football



for 27 years, will step down in two years, frustrated by allegations of corruption hanging over FIFA. "I will not be a candidate for re-election in 2017," he said. "I have family commitments and I can tell you that last two years have been very difficult for me. Having to insist all the time that I have done nothing wrong becomes a heavy burden to bear." D'Hooghe was cleared in February of ethics breaches over a gift from Russia 2018 World Cup organisers. "Everything you do comes under suspicion, everything. I

have attempted to do everything ethically correct," he said.

"And if at the end of your career's work is held in doubt, that is not enjoyable."

D'Hooghe last month criticised Blatter's refusal to take responsibility for the corruption crisis following the arrest of several top officials in Zurich ahead of the FIFA Congress in May.

"If there some that are corrupt, they have had a crushing impact," he said.

"They have tarnished the reputation of all the people who give them their best for the Institution that is FIFA. And I find that very disappointing."

"I can name hundreds of FIFA employees who do their work seriously but now have to walk a little with their heads bowed below their shoulders." **REUTERS**

## Villa scores twice as New York City FC win on Pirlo's debut

**NEW YORK:** David Villa scored twice to help ensure new team-mate Andrea Pirlo launched his Major League Soccer career in style with New York City FC's 5-3 victory over Orlando.

Pirlo, a 36-year-old World Cup-winning midfielder who enjoyed start turns at AC Milan — where he won two Champions League titles and for the past four seasons at Juventus where he won four Serie A crowns — was the center of attention in the match at Yankee Stadium between the two MLS expansion clubs.

Chants of "We want Pirlo!" were answered in the 57th minute, when the Italian entered the game to a standing ovation from the crowd of 32,041. He spoke briefly to former Milan team-mate and now

Orlando star Kaka then settled in quickly, his deft touch enchanting fans who cheered his every touch of the ball.

"It was very emotional when I got on the pitch," Pirlo said. "Despite the heat, it felt great." Pirlo's skill and poise immediately affected his new team-mates. "Special, special player, obviously, a guy who sees passes that most of us don't, who can really open up the game," New York city coach Jason Kreis said.

"From what I saw right away is our team opening up and really using every ounce of space out there because they felt like he could find them."

Added Spanish forward Villa, NYCFC's top scorer and captain: "His half-an-hour was fantastic." But it was Villa who was the main difference-maker.

Villa's first strike gave the hosts a 1-0 lead on the stroke of halftime, controlling a ball from Angelino with one touch, turning and blasting a right-footed shot past Orlando keeper Tally Hall.

His second goal in the 67th minute saw NYCFC edge ahead 3-2. Villa's strike from the top of the penalty area taking a deflection past Hall.

Thomas McNamara made it 4-2 just four minutes later after Pirlo threaded a ball to Kwado Poku, who found McNamara.

Orlando forward Cyle Larin's hat-trick — with goals in the 50th, 61st and 85th minutes — kept the tension high but ultimately wasn't enough. Javier Calle also scored for New York City, in the 53rd minute, and Mix Diskerud tucked on one more for the home side to complete the triumph. **AFP**