

Sports

US women's
basketball
dynasty
rolls into Rio



Sanchez wins 10th
straight as Blue
Jays beat Padres



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S AFRICA TO INTRODUCE RACIAL QUOTAS FOR NATIONAL TEAMS

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LONDON: This file photo taken on August 11, 2012 shows Russia's Yury Postrigay (R) and Alexander Dyachenko celebrating after winning the gold medal in the kayak double (K2) 200m men's final during the London 2012 Olympic Games, at Eton Dorney Rowing Centre in Eton, west of London. Canoeing's governing body has banned five Russians, including a gold medalist and a five-times world champion, from next month's Rio Olympics after an explosive independent report revealed state-run doping across Russian sport. The five were named as Elena Anishina, Natalia Podolskaya, Alexander Dyachenko, Andrey Kraitov and Alexey Korovashkov. —AFP

85 RUSSIANS BARRED FROM RIO OVER DOPING

CANOE FEDERATION BANS FIVE RUSSIANS

MOSCOW: At least 85 athletes from the 387-strong Russian Olympic team announced last week have so far been barred from the Rio Games in connection with the country's doping scandal.

International federations in canoeing and modern pentathlon ruled out seven yesterday, including an Olympic gold medalist, following earlier rulings in swimming and rowing. Some appeals are likely.

Russian President Vladimir Putin's spokesman Dmitry Peskov told Russian media that Putin had discussed the doping issue with his national security council. "The topic of the recent International Olympic Committee ruling relating to Russian athletes was raised ahead of Putin's planned meeting tomorrow with the Russian Olympic team," Peskov was quoted as saying.

The vast majority of the Russian athletes who miss out are in track and field, where 67 athletes were ruled out when a ban on the Russian team was upheld at the Court of Arbitration for Sport last week.

More are falling foul of new rules imposed in the wake of the country's doping scandal. While Russia avoided a blanket ban from the International Olympic Committee, it has lost several medal contenders to new IOC rules imposed Sunday banning Russia from entering athletes who previously doped.

Alexander Dyachenko, an Olympic champion in 2012, was among five canoeists ruled out after being named in a recent report by World Anti-Doping Agency investigator Richard McLaren alleging a state-sponsored doping cover-up.

McLaren's report last week specifically detailed how Russian state officials allegedly intervened to

cover up hundreds of failed drug tests. Dyachenko won gold in the men's double kayak 200 meters at the 2012 London Games.

"The ICF will continue its strong zero-tolerance stance and remove all athletes that contravene its rules in anyway," said Simon Toulson, the International Canoe Federation's general secretary. "If you step out of line you won't make the start line."

The four other banned canoeists are Alexei Korovashkov - a 2012 bronze medalist in the C2 1,000 meters event - Andrei Kraitov, Elena Anyushina and Nataliya Podolskaya.

The ICF also said that Russia would not be allowed to enter boats in four events in which the excluded athletes would have raced. Therefore, Austria, Germany, Sweden and Iran are in line to receive their places. Meanwhile, the International Modern Pentathlon Union named the two Russians it had suspended as Maxim Kustov and Ilya Frolov, saying they both featured in the McLaren report. Kustov's place in the men's event passes to a Latvian athlete, while Frolov had only been entered for Rio as a reserve.

Three Russian rowers have also been excluded. Ivan Podshivalov and Anastasia Karabelshchikova were excluded because they previously served doping bans, while Ivan Balandin from Russia's men's eight was implicated in the McLaren report, World Rowing said.

Meanwhile, volleyball player Alexander Markin told local media he had been dropped due to a positive test earlier this year for the banned substance meldonium, even though he had not been banned. The international volleyball federation did not immediately respond to a request for comment.

The head of the Russian Wrestling Federation told the R-Sport agency that two-time world champion Viktor Lebedev was ineligible because he was given a doping ban in 2006. On Monday, swimming's world governing body FINA ruled out seven Russians including reigning world 100m breaststroke champion Yulia Efimova.

Legal challenges are looming. Efimova's agent has said he is preparing an appeal to the Court of Arbitration for Sport, and the Russian Canoe Federation's general secretary Irina Sirayeva said that the five banned could follow suit.

"The intention to defend the athletes is there," she told R-Sport. Triple jumper Ekaterina Koneva - a former world championship silver medalist - told local media she was considering a lawsuit in civil court.

There was good news for Russia as its team of 18 shooters received approval to compete from the sport's international federation. Also, Russia also looks set to field a full team of four players in Olympic badminton, the Russian Badminton Federation said Tuesday, citing assurances from the Badminton World Federation.

Previously, archery and equestrian sport's world governing bodies said they had no objection to the Russians entered in their sports.

Lists of Russian athletes approved by international federations must still be approved by CAS arbiters who can reject athletes not tested outside Russia.

The IOC refused to accept testing done by Russian agencies because of evidence that the process was corrupted. — AP

LIST OF RUSSIANS BANNED FROM RIO

MOSCOW: International sports federations and Russia's Olympic Committee on Monday began to announce the Russian competitors who will be sidelined from the Rio Games over past doping offences. The announcements come one day after the International Olympic Committee (IOC) said it would be up to sports federations to determine which Russians are eligible to compete in Rio.

In addition to the 67 track and field athletes banned from international competition by the International Association of Athletics Federation (IAAF), here is a preliminary list of 13 Russian competitors who have been sidelined from Rio:

SWIMMING
metre breaststroke at the 2012 London Games. Four-time world champion. Vladimir Morozov, 24, won bronze in the 4x100 freestyle relay at the 2012 London Games.
Nikita Lobintsev, 27, won bronze in the 4x100 freestyle relay at the 2012 London

Games, won silver at the 2008 Beijing Olympics.
Mikhail Dovgalyuk, 21, 4x200m freestyle relay.
Natalia Lovtsova, 28, 50m freestyle.
Anastasia Krapivina, 21, marathon swimmer.
Daria Ustinova, 17, won bronze at the 2013 world championships.

ROWING
Ivan Balandin, 27, men's eight.
Anastasia Karabelshchikova, 31, women's eight.
Ivan Podshivalov, 34, men's four.

WEIGHTLIFTING
Tatiana Kashirina, won silver at the 2012 London Games.
Anastasia Romanova, 24, won bronze at the 2015 world championships.

FREESTYLE WRESTLING
Viktor Lebedev, 28, two-time world champion. — AFP



Gonzalo Higuain

HIGUAIN COMPLETES JUVENTUS MOVE

MILAN: Gonzalo Higuain completed his move to Juventus after the Italian champions reportedly agreed to pay a 94.7m euros (\$104m) buyout clause to wrest the Argentine striker from Napoli yesterday. In what could become the biggest ever transfer between Serie A clubs, Higuain's move to Turin was published on the 'transfers' section of the official Serie A website www.seriea.it.

Napoli had slapped a 94.7m euros buyout clause on Higuain's contract after he hit a record 36 goals in the league last season. But after weeks of negotiations, Juventus finally buckled to capture the 28-year-old striker whom they believe can make the difference between success and failure in the Champions League next season.

Reports yesterday said Juve CEO Beppe Marotta had negotiated with Napoli president Aurelio De Laurentiis to pay the transfer fee over two instalments. After leaving the offices of Serie A, Marotta gave no details when asked by waiting media but confirmed the move when he said: "We've deposited Higuain's contract (with league officials). We've concluded everything." Higuain will be expected to partner fellow Argentina striker Paulo Dybala, who in his maiden season with Juventus was their top scorer with 19 league goals, when the club return from their pre-season tour of Australia. The transfer of Higuain, who cost Napoli 40m euros when he arrived from Real Madrid in 2013, could now

spark a succession of other, high-profile transfers.

Italian media reports have claimed Juventus would sign Higuain if they convinced Manchester United to meet their asking price of 125m euros for star midfielder Paul Pogba.

Napoli, who finished runners-up to Juventus to secure their place in next season's Champions League, are now in the hunt for a top striker with Inter Milan's Mauro Icardi top of their shopping list. Higuain's arrival in Turin, meanwhile, will add fresh impetus to their ambition of winning the Champions League. Juventus reached the final in 2015 only to be outclassed in a 3-1 defeat in Berlin to Barcelona. — AFP