

Real Madrid player: Racism is normal in La Liga

Vinicius Júnior has called La Liga and Spain racist after Real Madrid's Brazil forward received racial slurs from the stands in Sunday's defeat at Valencia's Mestalla stadium. Vinicius Júnior pointed out the fans who were insulting him, leading to the match being stopped for 10 minutes, and then got into an altercation with Valencia's players which led to his sending-off in added time, The Guardian wrote.

"It was not the first time, nor the second, nor the third. Racism is normal in La Liga. The competition considers it normal, the federation considers it normal and the rivals encourage it," Vinicius posted on Twitter after the game.

"The championship that once belonged to Ronaldinho, Ronaldo, Cristiano and Messi today belongs to the racists.

"A beautiful nation, which welcomed me and which I love, but which accepted to export to the world the image of a racist country. I am sorry for those Spaniards who disagree but today, in Brazil, Spain is known as a country of racists.

"I am strong and I will go all the way against the racists. Even if it is far away from here," he added. Real's manager, Carlo Ancelotti, also spoke out against the incident on social media, saying: "Today has been a sad day at Mestalla, where a group of fans have shown their worst version. It is time to stop talking and act forcefully. Racism has no place in football or in society. NO TO RACISM ANYWHERE".



Real Madrid's Brazilian forward Vinicius Júnior (C) leaves after being sent off the pitch by the referee during the Spanish league football match between Valencia CF and Real Madrid CF at the Mestalla stadium in Valencia on May 21, 2023.

JOSE JORDAN/AFP

Vinicius Júnior's team mate and fellow Brazil international Éder Militão expressed his support for the forward. "It's a disgrace! To suffer racism, to defend yourself and then be sent off trying to defend yourself! How long do we have to put up with this?" The president of the Brazilian football confederation,

Ednaldo Rodrigues, also sent a message of support to the 22-year-old player. "How long are we going to experience, in the middle of the 21st century, episodes like the one we just witnessed, once again, in La Liga? There is no joy where there is racism. Skin colour can no longer bother," he said on social media.

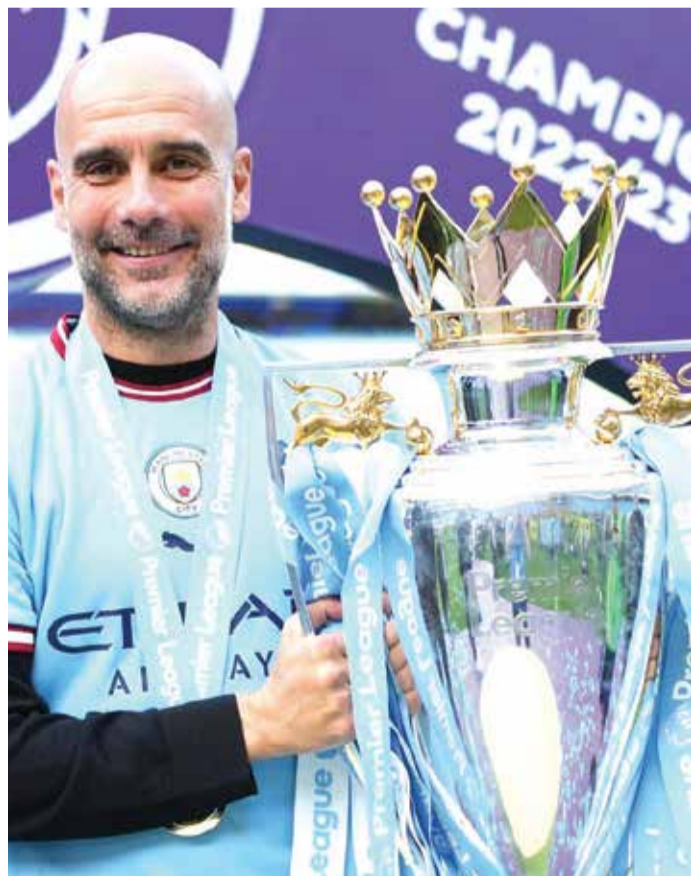
La Liga will request all available images in order to investigate what took place in light of the incident. "If any hate crime is identified, we will take the appropriate legal action," it said in a statement.

The Spanish league has previously lodged complaints of racist chanting or insults against Vinicius Júnior; the

latest of which was a claim before a court in Mallorca after fans were filmed racially abusing the forward. Spanish police are also investigating a possible hate crime against Vinicius Júnior after a mannequin wearing his No 20 shirt was hung from a bridge outside Real Madrid's training ground in January.

Diego López struck in the first half for a 1-0 win that moves Valencia further away from relegation danger. With three games to go, Valencia are 13th in La Liga on 40 points, five clear of the relegation spots. Real are third on 71 points, 14 behind Barcelona, who secured the title last week with four games to spare.

Man City boss: We need to win Champions League to be great



Pep Guardiola has described Man City's achievements as "exceptional".

eurosport.co.uk

Man City boss Pep Guardiola described his side's achievements as "exceptional" and "extraordinary" after they celebrated clinching a fifth Premier League title in six years, but admitted they would need to go on to win the Champions League to be regarded among the greats.

Arsenal's loss to Nottingham Forest on Saturday ensured City wrapped up a third straight title win, and they sealed the achievement in style by defeating Chelsea 1-0 for their 12th consecutive league win, skysports.com reported.

City hope the Premier League will prove the first leg of a treble, with the FA Cup and Champions League finals to follow next month. They face United in the FA Cup final on June 3 before meeting Inter Milan a week later as they chase a first Champions League crown. Guardiola, who won the European competition twice as Barcelona manager, said: "A fifth Premier League in six years, seven in 12, I could not imagine winning five in six.

"I have the feeling we've done something exceptional. It's something extraordinary. People know how exceptional it is.

"But to be considered one of the greatest we have to win the Cham-

pions League, otherwise it's not complete.

"You have to win in Europe, the Champions League, to be considered one of the best teams like Manchester United or Liverpool but also it's unfair to say if you don't win it, the Premier League doesn't make sense."

He added: "Of course, it makes sense, of course it's important. It's every day, every week. This club won five of the last six but six of the last 10 and seven of the last 12. It's amazing.

"It can be unfair that you need to win the Champions League to give credit and value to what you have done but we have to accept it. It is good.

"A long time ago, people did not say I had to come here and win the Champions League but after what we have done, I know it will not be complete if I do not win the Champions League, if we do not win the Champions League.

"But sometimes training with this pressure is so nice. It is necessary. We talked to each other a lot, [saying] we have to do it.

"At the same time, if the club continues in this way, sooner or later we will do it. But we are there so we have to try."

Guardiola also insisted Manches-

ter City's latest Premier League title success should not be demeaned by suggestions Arsenal 'bottled it' in the run-in.

The Gunners had led City by eight points as recently as last month but their form deserted them at a crucial stage.

Guardiola, however, paid tribute to his former assistant Mikel Arteta's team after City celebrated their triumph with a 1-0 victory over Chelsea on Sunday.

Guardiola said: "There's a tendency to underestimate. They are winners.

"We pushed Arsenal but they are exceptional. They should be proud of where they have come from. They have to sustain it, that is the reality, but for me they are winners.

"They made me think a lot what I had to do to beat them, and they did it to us. Our relentlessness and not giving up, and having the feeling that we had to win otherwise it would not be possible, helped us a lot.

"With the relationship I have with Mikel - congratulations for what they've done. He's brought them back to what Arsenal was in the past.

"Similar to Liverpool in previous seasons, they took us to our limits."

Iranian sprinter wins in Jamaican tournament



MEHRNEWS

Hasan Taftian, an Iranian sprinter has ranked first at an international tournament held in Jamaica.

Taftian finished first in 100 meters with a time of 10.24 seconds at the sporting event to become champion, Mehr News Agency wrote.

The Iranian sportsman is in Jamaica as part of his training camp.

In July 2017, Taftian became the first Iranian ever to win the gold medal in 100 meters with a time of 10.25 seconds at the 2017 Asian Athletics Championships in India.

Iran's Shahdab come 4th at 2023 Asian Club Volleyball C'ship



FARSNEWS

Shahdab Yazd of Iran finished in fourth place in the 2023 Asian Club Volleyball Championship.

Shahdab lost to Police of Qatar 3-1 (24-26, 25-16, 25-20, 25-19) on Sunday, Tasnim News Agency reported.

Suntory Sunbirds made history to become Japan's first team ever to win the Asian Men's Club Volleyball Championship after defeating Jakarta Bhayangkara Presisi in thrilling final showdown at Isa Bin Rashid Hall.

The 28-26, 25-23, 23-25, 25-17 win not only handed Suntory Sunbirds their unprecedented title with unbeaten record in the eight-day championship, but also secured them a place in the FIVB Volleyball Men's Club World Championship, due to be held in December in India, asianvolleyball.net wrote.

Jakarta Bhayangkara Presisi entered the final round with two losses to hosts Al-Ahli and Suntory Sunbirds in the pool play, while Suntory Sunbirds became the only unbeaten team with seven wins overall.

The event started on May 14 in Manama, Bahrain and finished on May 21.

Paykan Tehran holds the record for most victories, winning the competition eight times. Teams from Iran have won the tournament 16 times, the most for any nation.

Iran's Paykan Tehran defeated Japan's Suntory Sunbirds 3-2 in the final of the 2022 Asian champions.