
AMBASSADOR: TURKEY TO ACTIVELY PARTAKE IN SPORTS EVENTS IN IRAQ

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30.04.2018

Iraqi News (28 April 2018)

by Mohamed Mostafa

Baghdad (IraqiNews.com) Turkey will actively partake in soccer matches in Iraq after a ban was lifted from Iraqi fields, its ambassador to Baghdad was quoted saying on Saturday.

A statement by the Iraq youth ministry quoted ambassador Fatih Yildiz saying that a delegation of Turkey's national sports stars arrived in Baghdad to deliver a message to the world's soccer governing body, FIFA, that Iraq deserves to have the ban lifted, especially the capital, Baghdad.

Turkish national and local teams will be actively present in Iraq, and will play in Basra and Najaf after the ban was lifted, the ambassador said, noting that Turkey was prepared to open prospects for sports cooperation.

Iraqi pitches have not seen international games since its 1990 invasion of Kuwait under late leader Saddam Hussein based on a FIFA decision that excluded domestic matches.

But last month, FIFA decided to allow international matches to be staged in the cities of Erbil, Basra and Karbala.

Late February, Iraq's national team hosted an international friendly with Saudi Arabia in Basra, their first on Iraqi playfields in 40 years.

Earlier this month, Iraqi Foreign Ministry spokesperson, Ahmed Maghoub, told Alsumaria News that Sándor Csányi, FIFA's deputy president, informed the Iraqi mission to Budapest he supports a lift of the ban on all Iraqi fields during FIFA's next meeting, slated for June in Moscow.

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