



ATHLETE, OWNER, PRESIDENT. Retired Houston Rockets center Yao Ming speaks during his jersey number retirement ceremony at halftime of a National Basketball Association (NBA) game between the Rockets and the Chicago Bulls in Houston, on February 3, 2017. The Chinese Basketball Association has voted unanimously to appoint NBA Hall of Famer Yao as its new president. (AP Photo/Eric Christian Smith)

Chinese Basketball Association elects Yao Ming as president

BEIJING (AP) — Yao Ming has moved into management in a bid to hasten China's basketball development. The Chinese Basketball Association (CBA) voted unanimously to appoint the former Houston Rockets star as its president, in a step toward reform for an organization which has in past been led by government bureaucrats.

The CBA's social-media account quoted the Hall of Famer as saying he hoped to make improvements to the domestic league's draft system and push more Chinese players into the international arena.

In comments after the vote, Yao said he would introduce scientific training methods to Chinese clubs, improve the tactical education of players, and forge exchanges with leagues in the United States, Europe, and elsewhere.

"Our next move will be to borrow from international advanced experience, to thoroughly study China's actual conditions and carve ourselves a path of innovation," Yao said. Reforms would cover all aspects of the game in China, from the national team to youth programs, he said.

Yao, 36, was one of the first Chinese athletes to become an international household name when the Houston Rockets drafted him with the first pick in 2002. The 7'6" center played for eight seasons in the National Basketball Association (NBA) before retiring in 2011, citing chronic injuries.

A two-time Olympian, the Shanghai-born Yao was elected to the Hall of Fame in 2016. In 2009, he purchased the Shanghai Sharks, his former CBA team.

Over the past decade, NBA stars such as Stephon Marbury, Tracy McGrady, J.R. Smith, and Gilbert Arenas have spent one or more seasons playing in the CBA as the league grew in prominence. But Chinese sports fans say the league could be made stronger still and their country's basketball talent pipeline remains underwhelming despite the sport's grassroots popularity.

Yang Ming, a Chinese sports commentator, praised the appointment of Yao over a government official, saying that Yao had broad experience as a player in the NBA and a CBA club owner.

"For many years we haven't seen any admirable or acceptable reform measures introduced by the CBA," Yang said. "Yao Ming is not only a brilliant player, but intelligent with his independent ideas."

Bangladesh rolls out welcome for unusual sport on skates

By Julhas Alam
The Associated Press

DHAKA, Bangladesh — If basketball and soccer had a baby and put it on skates, it might look like roll ball, a little-known sport whose top performers worldwide recently vied for the championship in Bangladesh.

Played on a basketball court, with a small soccer-type goal in lieu of a basket, roll ball requires players on roller skates to dribble and pass a basketball-sized ball as they try to score.

Some 750 competitors from 40 countries, including host Bangladesh, participated in the meet at three venues in Dhaka, the capital. Most were from Asia or Africa, but Europe, South America, and the South Pacific island nation of Fiji were also represented. All participating nations sent men's teams and 27 sent women.

Uganda had initially been expected to host the fourth Roll Ball World Cup, but Bangladesh stepped in after the African nation declined it, said Ahmed Asiful Hasan, general secretary of the Bangladesh Roller Skating Federation.

"This is a little known game in the



LITTLE-KNOWN SPORT. Aija Apsipe, left, of Latvia follows the ball during a Roll Ball World Cup quarterfinal match against India at Shaheed Sohrwardi Indoor Stadium in Dhaka, Bangladesh. If basketball and soccer had a baby and put it on skates, it might look like roll ball, a little-known sport whose top performers worldwide recently vied for the championship in Bangladesh. Top hon-ors, both for men and women, went to India, where the sport was invented. (AP Photo/A.M. Ahad)

country. Hosting such a big tournament gives us an opportunity to make it known," he said. "The amount of support we got from the government's top level and the public is amazing."

Roll ball originated in neighboring India, as the results might suggest. In the finals, both the Indian men and women won their respective

championships, in each case defeating teams from Iran.

Bangladesh's men reached the semifinals, and team captain Mohammad Asif Iqbal said his country's hosting of the tournament will help the sport grow.

"Roll ball is now a known game in Bangladesh and it has good prospect in the future," he said.

Death, diplomatic spat could cost North Korea a rare friend

Continued from page 4

But it can be hard to parse the level of vitriol in North Korea's official statements, which often include tsunamis of angry accusations and casual threats of nuclear annihilation.

"The North Koreans have a long-standing tradition of diplomatic bluster," said Er-win Tan, a scholar at the University of Malaya who has studied North Korea. "They have a very deeply embedded siege mentality, so I wouldn't read too much into what North Korea is saying." And if the two countries were not best friends "prior to this episode, the ties were relatively good, driven mostly by economic and trade considerations."

Many observers note that North Korea has little space — diplomatically or economically — to drive away the few friends it has. While trade between North Korea and Malaysia totalled just \$5.1 million in

2015, that's a serious number in a country that exported just \$3.1 billion in goods in 2014, and imported just \$3.9 billion.

Lee, the South Korean analyst, said North Korea-Malaysia ties have clearly been dealt a blow, though he doubted Malaysia would completely sever ties with Pyongyang. The diplomatic troubles could also pull in Vietnam and Indonesia, since the two female attackers were reportedly from those

countries, and at least one has said she was tricked into joining in the attack after being told it was a prank for a comedy TV show.

Lee expects many nations in Southeast Asia to re-examine their ties with North Korea, and probably also increase monitoring of North Korean diplomats posted in their countries.

Sullivan reported from New Delhi. Associated Press writer Hyung-jin Kim contributed from Seoul.

TALKING STORY IN ASIAN AMERICA



■ Polo

Polo's "Talking Story" column will return soon.

"Diabetes is a serious disease, but you can manage it."



Did you know that diabetes is the leading cause of adult blindness, kidney failure, and amputations?

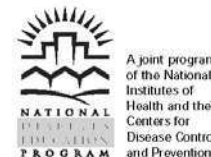
Diabetes is a growing problem for Asian Americans and Pacific Islanders. But you can manage your diabetes and stay healthy — now and in the future — by controlling your blood sugar levels.

Keep your blood sugar close to normal by choosing healthy foods and getting regular exercise. Take your prescribed medications and test your blood sugar on a regular basis.

Manage your diabetes. You'll feel better and have more energy. Best of all, you will lower your chances for serious health problems.



Call 1-800-860-8747 to learn more. Or visit www.ndep.nih.gov.



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5			3		6	9
2			6			4
				2	5	
	8			6	4	
7			9			1
		6	8			9
	9		4			
1			5			3
8	2		1			6

Difficulty level: Medium #53692

Instructions: Fill in the grid so that the digits 1 through 9 appear one time each in every row, column, and 3x3 box.

Solution to last issue's puzzle

Puzzle #49582 (Easy)

All solutions available at www.sudoku.com.

4	9	6	5	1	8	7	2	3
5	7	2	9	6	3	4	1	8
1	8	3	2	4	7	6	5	9
6	1	7	3	9	2	8	4	5
3	4	8	7	5	1	2	9	6
2	5	9	4	8	6	1	3	7
8	6	4	1	3	5	9	7	2
7	3	1	6	2	9	5	8	4
9	2	5	8	7	4	3	6	1

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