# Indian Football Coach Stimac Picked Team On Astrologer's Advice

### Why In The News?

 On June 9, 2022, India Were Scheduled To Face Afghanistan In A Crucial Asian Cup Qualifier In Kolkata, National Football Team Coach Igor Stimac Sent Message To Bhupesh Sharma, An Astrologer From Delhi NCR, Who Was Introduced To Him By Secretary-General Of AIFF Kushal Das.

## **♦** The Indian **EXPRESS**

Asian Cup prelims: India football coach gave details of players to astrologer, picked team on his advice

## Who Is Stimac?

Igor Stimac Is A Croatian Professional Football Manager And Former Player
 Who Is The Current Head Coach (Manager) Of The India National Team.

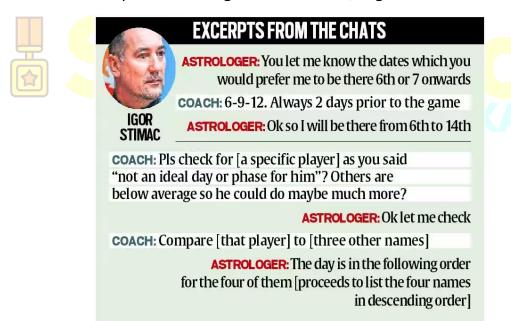




#### What Do We Know?

- The "List" Stimac Referred To Had The Names Of The **Probable 11 For The Game**, A Must-win For An Out-of-form And Injury-ridden India To Remain In

  Contention For The Prestigious Continental Championship.
- Within Hours, The Astrologer Replied With His Remarks Against Each Name:
   "Good"; "Can Do Very Well". Needs To Avoid Over Confidence"; "A Below
   Average Day"; "A Very Good Day For Him But Might Get Over Aggressive"; "Not
   Recommended For The Day".
- An Hour Before Kick-off On June 11, When India's Team For The Match Was
  Declared, Two Established Names Whose Stars Weren't Favourable, According
  To The Astrologer, Did Not Make The Cut.
- Indeed, There Are Close To 100 Messages, Purportedly Exchanged Between Stimac, A Former Croatian International, And Sharma In May-June 2022. India Played Four Matches During This Period: A Friendly Against Jordan Followed By Three Asian Cup Qualifiers Against Cambodia, Afghanistan And Hong Kong.



- Before Each Game, The Messages Show Stimac Was In Touch With Sharma. Not Only Do These Messages Put A Question Mark On The Integrity Of The Indian Team's Selection Process, But They Also Raise Issues Of Propriety - Vital Team Information Shared With An "Outsider" Runs The Risk Of Being Misused.
- Then Secretary-general Of AIFF, Kushal Das, Admitted He Introduced Stimac To Sharma In May 2022. When Asked Das Said: "Since We Used His Professional

#### **SSBCrack**

Services For Two Months, **We Paid Him Around Rs 12-15 Lakh**. That Didn't Seem A Huge Amount Since India Qualified For The Asian Cup."



 Recently, The AIFF Issued A Show-cause Notice To The Coach Following An Interview With The Indian Express, Where Stimac Said, Among Other Things, That He "Wasn't Afraid Of Telling The Truth."

